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BOOK PLATE

CHILDREN AND SOCIETY IN NEW SOUTH WALES AND VICTORIA

1860 - 1914

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAAS	Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science
AEHR	*Australian Economic History Review*
AHA	Australian Historical Association
AKM	*Australian Kindergarten Magazine*
AMG	*Australasian Medical Gazette*
ANJ	*Australasian Nurses' Journal*
ANU	Australian National University
BMA	British Medical Association
ed.	edited by
edn.	edition
JRAHS	*Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*
JRH	*Journal of Religious History*
MJA	*Medical Journal of Australia*
ML	Mitchell Library
NSW LA *PP*	New South Wales Legislative Assembly *Parliamentary Papers*
NSW LA *V&P*	New South Wales Legislative Assembly *Votes and Proceedings*
NSW LC	New South Wales Legislative Council
NSWPD	*New South Wales Parliamentary Debates*
P.S.	Public School
repr.	reprinted
SCRB	State Children's Relief Board
SMH	*Sydney Morning Herald*
SU	Sydney University
Trans. AMC	*Transactions of Australasian Medical Congress*
UNSW	University of New South Wales
Vic. LA *PP*	Legislative Assembly of Victoria *Parliamentary Papers*
Vic. LA *V&P*	Legislative Assembly of Victoria *Votes and Proceedings*
VPD	*Victoria Parliamentary Debates*
WCTU	Women's Christian Temperance Union

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Colonial childhood, to a large extent, eludes historical enquiry. Even by the time of the settlement at Botany Bay, and more so by 1860, conflicting ideals of child-raising were so prevalent that observations of colonial family life were highly coloured by current pedagogical opinion. Thus there are wide variations in the descriptions which are available to the historian. This is the case even if one begins by considering a single source of these images, the published descriptions of articulate observers, recently arrived from overseas.

For instance, in 1864, local balladist Charles Thatcher[1] described colonial children as more precocious and self-reliant than their counterparts in the Old World. Autonomous, irreverent miniature adults, they were seen to have acquired special abilities and local knowledge which enabled them to cope independently in an undomesticated environment:

> Here the boys grow up without
> The slightest education
> To teach them to succeed in life,
> In following their vocation:
> Of course they cannot read at all,
> Nor can they write their names,
> And the only mark they ever make
> Is when they mark out claims.
>
> Their want of grammar I must own
> Quite causes me a pang,
> Although it's proved beyond a doubt
> That they're well up in slang:
> They know nothing of arithmetic,
> But you'll find that each young pup,
> Though ignorant of figures, knows
> The way to reckon you up....
>
> I left a hole I'd shepherded,
> Of course I was to blame,
> And I found a child in petticoats
> Had been and jumped my claim;
> And when I asked him to come out,
> He at me took a sight,
> And said, "Old boy, that slews you,"
> And pulled out a miner's right![2]

Though in Thatcher's case, this image was not intended to be taken as a factual piece of sociological investigation, up to this time other writers had more seriously presented the idea that colonial parents neglected to foster

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1. Charles Thatcher (1831-1878) had arrived in Victoria seeking gold in Nov. 1852.

2. "The Rising Generation" in Thatcher's Colonial Songs (Melbourne 1864) p.101-3.

childhood in children and that this had resulted in a robust self-reliance and independence which they condoned. Though often referring principally to the way the colonial environment had allowed the children of convicts to transcend the disadvantages of their parentage, there had been a tendency to congratulate the colonial attitude to child-rearing on being unique, and to assign to the colonial child something of the primitive simplicity of the eighteenth-century ideal of the Noble Savage. Indeed, failing to find the aborigine as a suitable vehicle for this image, from the first decades of the settlement, observers had proved remarkably willing to bestow these characteristics on the native-born child. J.T. Bigge had reported in 1820 that the colonial boy was "tall", "slender", "capable of undergoing more fatigue" and morally and physically superior to his parents.[3] In 1827, P. Cunningham had argued that the native-born boy displayed a "manly simplicity of character" and was not prone to drunkenness or dishonesty.[4] In 1852 G.C. Mundy noted that the native-born boy was made self-reliant and resourceful by virtue of his early employment in adult tasks[5], and Frank Fowler in 1859 agreed. The boy was "learned in all the ways and by-ways of life" by thirteen.[6]

By the 1860s, both the image, and approval of it, appeared to be changing. Comments by visiting or resident writers became increasingly critical of that colonial disregard for the needs of childhood which they projected as typical. Though in 1865, J.F. Mortlock restated the older view that the native-born child was mentally and physically a superior specimen,[7] English novelist Anthony Trollope, who visited in 1871-2 and 1875, declared that the young "of all classes" displayed an undesirable "self-dependence", "absence of reverence", "indifference to the claims of age" and a "bold self-assertion".[8] In particular, colonial girls were not bashful or diffident, but were physically and intellectually precocious. Though allowance ought to be made for the fact that puberty was attained earlier in warm climates, nevertheless prolonged education was needed to mitigate this "evil".[9]

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3. Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry on the State of Agriculture and Trade in the Colony of New South Wales (London 1823) p.81-2.

4. P. Cunningham Two Years in New South Wales (London 1827) Vol.2, p.47, cited in R. Ward and K. McNab "The Nature and the Nurture of the First Generation of Native-born Australians" Historical Studies Vol.10, No. 39, Nov. 1962, p.291.

5. G.C. Mundy Our Antipodes (London 1852) Vol.3, p.40-2.

6. Frank Fowler Southern Lights and Shadows (London 1859) p.22.

7. J.F. Mortlock Experiences of a Convict (Sydney 1965) p.98-9.

8. Anthony Trollope Australia (St. Lucia 1967) p.450. (First published 1873.)

9. Ibid. p.455-6.

To some extent, Thatcher's 1864 image itself subtly depended on subscription to this view. He had discovered that he might make a better living from writing ballads and topical songs than seeking gold, and that themes dealing with "The Queer Ways of Australia" and how these levelled the pretensions of "New Chums" were especially marketable among gold-rush emigrants like himself. His affected astonishment at the unruly, semi-barbaric ways of the colony depended upon the assumption that the alternative customs of the home country were not only thoroughly understood by the reader, but even perhaps fundamentally endorsed as civilized social norms. Thatcher might be seen as suggesting that the uncouth colony was itself in its childhood, not yet having been guided towards the mature and wiser ways of the mother country. The idea of the colonial child as all the better for having thrown off childish dependence early and for having been reared other than by effete, Old World mores, was no longer to be taken seriously.

In 1883 recently-arrived journalist, R.E.N. Twopeny, contributed a different version of this reaction: the colonial child was not so much neglected as spoilt. Twopeny argued that colonial mothers were far too child-centred. Because they failed to separate and prolong the childhood of their offspring, they were unable to discipline and control them. This spoiling began with the infant, who was permitted to participate in all family activities, to be "omnipotent" and "omnipresent".[10] "Lashed" to its chair beside its mother at meals it accompanied her in her household duties and on railways and omnibuses, and was suckled publicly at concerts and exhibitions. According to Twopeny, separate nurseries were a rarity and even in the family of a solicitor on £500 - £1000 a year, the two youngest children slept in the parents' room with the three or four others crowded promiscuously into the second bedroom. Corporal punishment was both rare and mild. Children, especially boys, were not taught respect for authority, order and regularity, but reigned supreme in the household, for the colonial mother was far too preoccupied with their happiness to exercise discipline. "She has had her fling", he wrote of the colonial girl after marriage, "and for the rest of her life she lives but to serve her children and make them happy".[11]

Allegations similar to Twopeny's, of parental laxity, were still being made by English observers at the end of the period under study. Thus Beatrice Webb, though her impression of child-rearing on bush stations was by no means a uniform one, presented this picture of the family of a native-born manager of Irish emigrant parents on a station on the Murrumbidgee in 1898:

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10. R.E.N. Twopeny Town Life in Australia (Sydney 1973) p.82.

11. Ibid. p.46, 87, 89.

> They had three little girls aged six, four and three, who were "tumbling up", like so many children in the bush, with plenty of food and no discipline or training, spending the whole life long day playing in the garden or by the river .[12]

C.E. Jacomb, an English immigrant fruit-grower near Mildura, in 1914 agreed that "lack of servants and small homes" had resulted in a failure of parents sufficiently to distance the children from the adult world. For instance, colonial children were allowed to take their meals with their parents, and thus to "hear all the conversations of their elders". What was worse, "the method of house-building" allowed "almost everything done in one room" to be "distinctly audible in all the other rooms of the house". Since many parents had nobody to leave in charge at home when they went out on social occasions the children accompanied them. To "a church, to a concert, to a garden party or a dance", even if it entailed "a ten-mile drive home and getting to bed at 2 o'clock in the morning", the children had to go too.[13]

Further, because the mothers were so busy and because of the absence of nurse maids, the children were unrestrained.

> Time is only found to give an angry reproof and an order which is not enforced, because to enforce it means catching the children, which in its turn, is often no easy matter. Practically there is no supervision from the mothers, and until they go to school, nine-tenths of the Australian children run absolutely wild.[14]

Visiting American feminist Jessie Ackermann agreed. Though inclined to suggest that if colonial parents had relaxed English child-rearing standards, this might have certain advantages to the child, nevertheless she concluded:

> It is perfectly true that the great majority of children are sadly deficient in the personal charm of pleasing manners.... They are very excitable by temperament, and scamper to the doors, windows, fence or gate, at every possible opportunity to cheer or yell. They love to watch processions, funerals, or a circus; crowd to football games, prize-fights, races, or any manner of sport at which those of tender years are allowed. They bet, barrack and manifest for their "side", regardless of fair play or other considerations. Crowding the picture-shows, they scream, shout, and fairly roar, hoot or clap in following the key-note sounded by the audience... A love for healthy sport is wholesome, ... but an over-developed love for pleasure and excitement is bad, very bad.[15]

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12. A.G. Austin (ed.) The Webbs' Australian Diary 1898 (Melbourne 1965) p.56-7.

13. C.E. Jacomb "God's Own Country" An Appreciation of Australia (London 1914) p.70.

14. Ibid. p.69-70.

15. J. Ackermann Australia From a Woman's Point of View (London 1913) p.88.

While perhaps obscuring rather than illuminating understanding of actual child-rearing practice, these observations do illustrate the importance of allowing for preconceptions about child nature in sources of childhood history. Different observers and writers single out different areas of experience for praise or denigration, according to their own perceptions of what is proper to childhood, and these perceptions change over time.

Similar problems attend most other main sources of information about colonial family life. For instance, not only the comments of observers but the evidence from diaries, autobiography and private correspondence is neither consistent nor free of ideological bias. On the one hand, there is the problem that this evidence suggests that colonial child-rearing practice was so varied as almost to defy generalization. No experience of any one child can be made accurately and easily to fit into any set pattern. On the other, there is the problem that the authors of these sources, just as much as the articulate observer, were influenced by preconceptions about what constituted child-rearing ideals and norms. In the case of autobiography, there is the additional problem that the material is often shaped both by the author's experiences and by changes in theory in the interim between his or her childhood and writing about it. Indeed, all of the main literary sources are themselves likely to tell as much about theoretical concepts of childhood as actual practice.

Nor is the ideological colouring which blurs the evidence from the personal, written sources easily filtered out, for it may take any of several, sometimes overlapping forms. For instance, up to the 1890s, when constructions of child nature and needs had not yet been firmly appropriated by theorists in education and medicine, cultural ideas provided by the man or woman of letters were very influential. During the 60s, 70s and 80s in particular, creative writers, journalists, artists and children's book illustrators, made a strong impact on the way in which childhood was conceptualized, both in Britain and the colonies.

The Literary Construction of Childhood:

The image of child nature perpetuated from these sources was highly romanticized. Notwithstanding the strictures of observers such as Twopeny, ideas based on seventeenth-century "Puritan" theory[16], that children were in need of rigorous discipline to prevent spoiling, had long been outlawed by new secular theorists claiming expertise on child nature and needs. This was in

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16. Though Catholic pedagogues also subscribed to this theory, during the seventeenth century, its most comprehensive and influential interpreters were Puritans. See Robert Cleaver and John Dod A Godly Form of Household Government (1621), (quoted in L. De Mause (ed.) The History of Childhood (New York 1974) p.316-7); John Robinson Of Children and their Education (1628); James Janeway A Token for Children (1671). John Locke's Some Thoughts Concerning Education (1690) advised against the use of physical punishment, preferring the use of shame, but otherwise strongly subscribed to the notion of disciplining the will in childhood.

spite of the fact that the religious revival, which began among Non-Conformists in the late eighteenth century, and later spread to other denominations, ensured continuance of these doctrines in some circles. Mrs.Sherwood's influential book for children, The Fairchild Family (1815), which remained popular with some parents into the 1880s, testified to the survival of the view that children partook of the sinful nature of mankind occasioned by the Fall, and that parents must ensure rote learning of religious doctrine and employ corporal and other punishments, in order to break this wilful propensity towards vice. Thus, religious theorists had argued, was the child to be saved from poverty in this world and perdition in the next.[17]

Over the previous century, this view of child nature had been strongly criticised. In an "Age of Reason", sceptical of the religious profession to expertise both in interpreting the unknown and monitoring moral behaviour, new secular experts had envisaged child nature in terms of the Aristotelian concept of the tabula rasa, a blank sheet whose character was determined, not by the degree to which it overcame inherent sinfulness, but by its environment.[18]

To the nineteenth-century writers, both these views of child nature were erroneous. Children were not intrinsically sinful, but neither were they mere empty vessels, waiting to be filled by life's experiences, passively absorbing knowledge by the mechanistic process known as the association of ideas. Based on concepts present in Rousseau's Emile (1762) but developed by the English Romantic poets, a theory was developed in which children were assigned innate spiritual qualities of goodness, said to be present from birth. Childish, spontaneous and imaginative, children had access to special knowledge which existed beyond the sensory world and which could only be apprehended intuitively. It was lost to the blunted sensibilities of most adults.[19]

This theory found wide acceptance. Though not yet constituting a distinct occupation by which one could live by the printed word, the writing and publishing industry had been rapidly expanding since the eighteenth century, when literacy was increasing and newspapers, political and religious tracts abounded. The keeping of introspective diaries and the writing of accounts of one's own life and that of other people became important, while an entirely new literary form, the novel, had emerged to explore the life experiences of fictional figures.

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17. Other statements of the "Puritan" theory which remained influential included Susanna Wesley On the Education of Her Family (1732); John Wesley Sermon on the Education of Children (c. 1783).

18. J. Cleverley and D.C. Phillips From Locke to Spock (Melbourne 1976) p.12-16.

19. J.J. Rousseau Emile (London 1974) esp. p.56, 71, 239ff. P. Coveney The Image of Childhood (London 1967) esp. p.37-44. 52 ff.

The Romantic theory of knowledge placed unprecedented importance on the writer as interpreter of what was proper to childhood, for, it was claimed, he or she shared with the child that special access to the world beyond the commercial and commonplace.[20] Accordingly, details of what the projection of innocence onto child nature entailed were largely filled in by writers such as Charles Dickens, whose novels demonstrated the outcome for child and society when the innocence of childhood was corrupted. Oliver Twist (1838) showed the victimization of the child cast adrift without parental care in the heartless world of the urban slum, Dombey and Son (1848) castigated the corruption of parental love itself by the intrusion of adult lust for power and wealth into the purity of the child's world, and David Copperfield (1850), retraced the history of Dickens' own childhood while also pointing to the traumatic effects likely to ensue from depriving the child of that protective and prolonged nurture which was its due.[21]

Though free of any propensity to sinfulness, the innocence of the child was perceived as highly vulnerable, a quality which must be preserved for as long as possible before allowing contact with the coarse, brutalized adult world. Children not afforded a protected childhood within the family, or who were made unhappy by indifferent parenting, were shown as helpless victims, fragile, often ill or close to death,[22] and, it was implied, much of the social upheaval which threatened English society during the 1840s, had its source in this kind of corruption of the young.

Under the influence of these ideas, experience beyond the family or the school was increasingly seen as unfit for the sensitive child. Ideally the home should be a safe mooring located as far as possible from the urban world of work, if not in a rural retreat, as Rousseau had recommended, then at least in a large private garden remote from the street.[23]

This process of turning away from the urban and industrial was related not only to space but time. Pre-industrial and especially medieval ages, in which life was believed to have been more simple and elemental, were celebrated in art[24] and fiction. Childhood itself became symptomatic of a past happier age in the life of every individual, the memory of which was vital to refresh the adult mind and help it cope with the complexities of the present.

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20. P. Coveney Op.Cit. p.73-7, citing Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" (1798), "My heart leaps up when I behold..." (1802) and "Prelude" (1805).

21. Since the influence of this one writer on the creation and transmission of this view of childhood was so pervasive, this construction is here called "Dickensian".

22. P. Coveney Op.Cit. p.158.

23. John Holt Escape From Childhood (Penguin 1975) 32-3.

24. G. Rattray Taylor The Angel Makers (London 1973) p.233-42.



THE "DICKENSIAN" CHILD

1. To the modern eye, depictions of the innocence and vulnerability of the child, both in literature and art, have a sensuous quality.

Illustrated Australian News 31 Mar. 1888.

This generation of writers not only helped to conceptualize this view of the child in literature for adults, they also demanded an entirely new literature for children to match it. Those claiming expertise in this field, such as Charles Lamb and, by the 1860s, John Ruskin, favoured tales from fairy folklore, long discarded by adult readers and remote from crass everyday realities. They castigated the Utilitarian theorists who looked back to the didactic moral tale which the eighteenth-century rationalists had created for their children.[25] For older boys, slightly more grown-up fairy stories of Crusoe-like adventure in distant, exotic realms were favoured.[26]

For the younger child, the influence of the creative writers, both on theory and practice, was seen in the fashion for dressing children in garbs from past eras considered more Romantic than the present. Rustic eighteenth-century styles became popular with the commercial success of Kate Greenaway from 1868. The bright eyes, curly heads and (to the modern eye) sensual limbs present in the colonial image of the ideal nursery reflected illustrations in the special magazines for children, such as Chatterbox and Little Folk, becoming available both in England and the colonies by the early 1870s. John Everett Millais' "Bubbles" and Frances Hodgson Burnett's Little Lord Fauntleroy, with its verbal images of the innocent redemptive child and detailed description of velvet suits, lace collars and cavalier hats, continued this trend into the late 1880s.

The role of the mother in the protection of innocence became of increasing importance. Under the impact of the rationalist construction of human nature based on the tabula rasa, women in the late eighteenth century had, in theory at least, made considerable gains. Mary Wollstonecraft's Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792) saw women's inferior status in society as caused by the disadvantages of their environment, not lack of intrinsic abilities, and argued that equal educational opportunities would improve both sexes, fostering the social and moral improvement of mankind.[27]

The Romantic theory of knowledge, however, challenged the basis of this call for the equality of women. Already in 1762, Rousseau envisaged Sophie's education as totally different from Emile's, the purpose being merely to prevent her from being a vain, sexual object and prepare her for captivating child-like

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25. F.J. Harvey Darton Children's Books in England (Cambridge 1970) p.230-1, 248; J.H. Plumb "The New World of Children in Eighteenth Century England" Past and Present Vol. 67 (1975) p.70, 80-5.

26. James Fenimore Cooper Mark's Reef or The Crater (1847); R.M. Ballantyne The Young Fur Traders (1856), The Coral Island (1858), The Pirate City An Algerian Tale (1875); Mayne Reid The English Family Robinson (1851); The Boy's Own Paper (1879). Robinson Crusoe was the one book recommended by Rousseau for the young.

27. Mary Wollstonecraft A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (Penguin 1975), esp. p.219, 229.

wifedom and devoted motherhood.[28] By 1800, Wordsworth's "Lucy" poems, with their implication that the "natural" child-like woman might share the Romantic vision, also lent support to the idea that woman's importance lay in her special "feminine" characteristics.[29] In 1801 Pestalozzi saw the importance of women specifically in terms of motherhood, assigning to them a unique competence as first educators of the child and shapers of its impressionable mind.[30] By 1869, J.S Mill's restatement of the rationalist case for equality of the sexes[31] was lost, as latter-day Romantics such as Ruskin and Carlyle bestowed on women unprecedented status as wives and mothers creating a nest for their children and a haven for their husbands.[32]

Under the terms of this construction of their natures, women were permitted to play a small public role in transmitting the literary image of the vulnerable child and the importance of stable, loving, protective family life, as writers such as Charlotte Yonge (Abbeychurch, 1844), Charlotte Bronte (Jane Eyre, 1847) and George Eliot (Silas Marner, 1861) demonstrated. Also published in 1861 was Mrs. Henry Wood's enormously popular novel East Lynne, in which the aristocratic Lady Isabella was punished for the unnatural act of deserting her husband and children for a lover, by being made to slip down the social ladder to the lowly position of governess.

English books, both for adults and children, found a ready market in the colonies during the 70s and 80s, where literacy rates were high. The boom years following the gold rushes favoured the growth of towns and cities where for many, family life might, at least in theory, approximate the literary ideal. Dickens was widely read[33] and colonial newspapers and journals imported or copied the Dickensian stereotype.

Colonial fiction especially mirrored the overseas view. Far from being seen as either resourceful and independent through parental neglect, or obstreperous and disrespectful, through being spoilt, fictional images depicted the child as innocent and vulnerable, totally helpless without the guidance and

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28. J.J. Rousseau Op.Cit. p.5, 321ff.

29. See especially "Three years she grew in sun and shower" and "She dwelt among the untrodden ways", published in the Lyrical Ballads (1800).

30. J.H. Pestalozzi How Gertrude Teaches Her Children (New York 1898) especially p.229,300-1.

31. J.S. Mill The Subjection of Women (1869).

32. John Ruskin "Of Queen's Gardens" in Sesame and Lilies (1865) cited in Kate Millett Sexual Politics (London 1971) p.89-93.

33. Coral Lansbury "Charles Dickens and his Australia" JRAHS Vol.52, June 1966, p.115, Elizabeth Webby "English Literature in Early Australia: 1840-1849" Southerly Vol.39 No.2 1976 p.203-13.



"TWO FAMILIES"

2. The "Dickensian" Ideal of Motherhood - rustic, protective, devoted and possessing intuitive knowledge of the needs of the young.

Illustrated Australian News 22 Jun. 1889.

protection of mother and home. In colonial fiction, the child was often "lost", the bush replacing the urban slum as the symbolic agent of destruction.

In the following passage from Henry Kingsley's novel, Geoffry Hamlyn (1859), a little child astray in the bush is shown as pathetically incapable of surviving on its own resources in the treacherous colonial environment, particularly hostile to the vulnerable young:

> When the solemn morning came up again he was still tottering along the leading range, bewildered; crying, from time to time, "Mother, mother!", still nursing his little bear, his only companion, to his bosom, and holding still in his hand a few poor flowers he had gathered the day before....
>
> Under some fern-trees they buried him, on a knoll which looked across the river, into the treacherous beautiful forest which had lured him to his destruction.[34]

Henry Kingsley had spent only five years in Australia (in 1853-8) and thus his attitude might be held to be unrepresentative of local perceptions. However, resident journalist, Marcus Clarke, treated a similar theme in similar terms. In the following extract, the little son of a shepherd, is like Kingsley's child, lost in the bush:

> He had no idea of where he was... He could only stagger along from tree to tree in the gloomy woods, and cry, "Mother! Mother!" But there was no mother to help him... - nothing but grim Death, waiting remorselessly in the iron solitude of the hills.[35]

In the original version of this story, Clarke had given the child's age as 12 years, and this stimulated a sceptical reviewer in the Argus to point out that:

> Bush lads of that mature age are generally strapping fellows who do not easily get lost, and are more likely to wander in the direction of the public-house than to sentimentalize upon the margins of mysterious swamps.[36]

Even so Clarke merely reduced the boy's age to seven years and otherwise left the story unchanged.

During these decades, journalists too, transmitted the concept of the special vulnerability of the colonial child and the need for extra resources of loving care for its protection. Articles in the temperance press urged parents to use "natural" forms of discipline rather than old-fashioned, brutal ones[37] and like the novelists, journalists were drawn to the idea of the mother's special role in the protection of the young. She appeared as the family's guiding spirit, preventing contamination of the child by treacherous, sensual or commercial pressures which lurked in the world outside the home. Though the precise details of her sheltering role were not spelled out, the centrality of

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34. Henry Kingsley Geoffry Hamlyn (Hawthorn 1970) p.285-9.
35. Repr. in M. Wilding (ed.) Marcus Clarke (St. Lucia 1976) p.565-6.
36. The Argus 2 Apr. 1869, cited in M. Wilding Op.Cit. p.xxiii.
37. Australian Home Companion and Band of Hope Journal VI 1861 p.37-8.



"INNOCENTS ABROAD."

3. The innocence of children was seen as highly vulnerable, likely to be lost should they stray too far from the protective confines of mother and home.

Illustrated Australian News Supplement 26 Dec. 1884.

her presence was strongly emphasized. In the extract which follows, from the "Children's Portfolio" of the Australian Home Companion in 1860, the narrator affects the role of an outsider being treated to a glimpse of a very private domestic ritual, in which the importance of the mother's personal care of her children is underlined. The husband is noticeably absent, and the sensual descriptions of the children suggest that it was as a mother rather than a wife that the woman's emotional fulfillment and responsibilities lie:

> I looked into a large room, no blinds were before its windows, for they looked into the garden, nobody but me could peep in .... Five little children, all busy and bustling, and undressing and hunting after their playthings and each other... Look, how a little shoulder creeps forth from the dress, now a plump little leg peeps out, and then a stocking is pulled off, and a tiny rosy foot makes its appearance. How pretty they are! There stands the happy mother in the middle of them and watches the sweet rosy faces and their sparkling eyes.... The curly heads crowd all around Mamma and each little mouth is pointed for a pretty kiss....[38]

Reproduction of the idea of the vulnerable child and the importance of the mother in its protection was apparent not only in colonial adult literature but also in material provided for the use of children themselves. In both the children's pages of the denominational newspapers and in lay reading material for the young, children were encouraged to see themselves as helpless little innocents totally dependent on adult figures of authority for their material sustenance and moral guidance:

> There were cracks and caves in that wild part, and savage dingoes and blackfellows - to name these is enough. And so little Willie was lost, and never heard of since....
>
> Now, dear children, this is like our lost condition before God.... There are many finger-posts, too, at various points, showing the broad road that leadeth to destruction, and the narrow way that leadeth unto life.... But our lost condition is wilful, and not accidental.
>
> We are born "far-off", and by our sinful life we wander wider and wider from God....[39]

Though the child was not quite as theoretically innocent as in secular literature, the non-conformist revival had shared the Dickensian view of the "feminine", mothering role for women, allowing them an expanded role as Sunday School teachers, dispensers of charity[40] and writers, especially of religious material for children. As early as 1800 Ann and Jane Taylor published their Hymns for Infant Minds, and numerous new religious songs and verses followed. Many of these replaced the idea of disciplining children with the notion of a wrathful deity, with the idea of God as a protective, parental figure who would

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38. Ibid. V 1860 p.307-8.

39. Wesleyan Chronicle (Children's Chronicle) Jul. 1872, p.26.

40. See further, Chapter Three.



HOMEWARDS.

4. The bush symbolized the temptations and dangers awaiting the child outside the home.

Illustrated Australian News 11 Jul. 1883.

rescue innocent children who strayed from the paths of righteousness.[41] Heaven itself, though not quite the fairyland later favoured by the secular experts, was already a "happy home".[42] Much emphasis was placed on the childhood of Jesus himself, children being expected to display similar meekness and obedience.[43]

A similar emphasis on rule by love characterized secular children's literature, where also there was special emphasis on the mother and home as symbols of permanency in an otherwise flawed and fluxing world:

A mother's heart is ever
  Affectionate and true,
And naught but death can sever
  The love she feels for you.
The world, though cold and dreary,
  Breaks not that sacred tie;
Her voice is always cheery,
  To save you she would die![44]

Children's writers were also agreed that the young should be reminded that these domestic values transcended class:

Blessings on the hand of woman!
  Angels guard its strength and grace,
In the palace, cottage, hovel -
  Oh, no matter where the place!
Would that never storms assailed it,
  Rainbows ever round it curled,
For the hand that rocks the cradle
  Is the hand that rocks the world.[45]

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41. F.J. Harvey Darton Op.Cit. p.187-90. Though the use of the new hymns in colonial home and Sunday School is difficult to verify until the appearance of local hymn books with special sections for children in the early 1900s, it seems reasonable to assume they were known and sung much earlier. Popular hymns in which now only the tempter was villainous included "Jesus who call'st little ones to Thee..." (Methodist Hymn Book) Aust. edn. [1904] No.878, "Jesus when He left the sky..." (Ibid. No.865; author Mrs. Rumsey). Depiction of heaven as fairyland is described in Deirdre Hyslop "Illustrated Books by Women in Australia 1896-1945" BA Thesis SU 1979 p.38.

42. "O happy home..." (Methodist Hymn Book Op.Cit. No.899; author Spitta, translated Mrs. Findlater; "I think when I read that sweet story of old..." (Ibid. No.866; author Mrs. Luke, written 1841).

43. "Once in royal David's city..." (Ibid. No.863; author Mrs. Alexander (1823-95); "I love to hear the story..." (Ibid. No. 867; author Mrs. Emily Miller b. 1833).

44. "A Mother is a Mother after All", Cole's Funny Picture Book No.2 (Melbourne 6th edn. 1922) p.71.

45. "The Hand that Rocks the World" by W.R. Wallace, Ibid. p.69. Cf. "The Royal Children" Wesleyan Chronicle (Children's Chronicle) July 1873, p.27.



MUSIC.

"A protection against vice,
An incentive to virtue."

5. In the Dickensian ideal, the happy, well-ordered home would guide the child towards desired goals by methods based not on fear or force, but sentiment and love.

Australian Etiquette (Melbourne and Sydney 1885)

The Influence of the Literary Construction Upon the Sources:

Reflecting the fact that many of the sources available for colonial childhood experience are written records of an educated, articulate class, many of whom had literary aspirations, the information available from diaries, letters and reminiscence during the 60s, 70s and 80s shows a strong conformity with the image of childhood then prevailing in English and colonial creative literature and journalism. In some cases the authors of these sources were not only familiar with the Dickensian stereotype, but actually contributors to its fictional form.

Thus Menie Parkes, (1839-1915) whose correspondence is a valuable source for domestic life from the 1860s to the 1880s, was a contributor to the temperance press and author of a number of novels in one of which the plight of the lost child was given classic expression. In her novel "Mrs Ord", a "fragile" and "delicate" child prematurely cast out into the adult world, achieves the reunion of the family in domestic bliss, though she is almost run down by a cart in the streets of Sydney and almost drowned in the waters of Tarban Creek.[46]

The picture of colonial childhood which may be assembled from this author's correspondence, shows the mother as conforming to the literary stereotype. She appears devoted to the task of creating a happy family life, even under adverse pioneering and financial conditions. If the arrival of a new baby was not hailed as an occasion for joy this was not recorded. Neither was it considered appropriate to hint at resentment of siblings. Menie Parkes's verbal descriptions of her mother's and her own babies could have served as a model for Burnett or Millais,[47] while the intimacy between mother and child, so condemned by Twopeny, was seen as a source of delight. "You should see him in church," she wrote of her son in 1870:

> I take the bottle and a crust with me, and he deals with these, and occasionally speaks to the people around him and puts his hands out to them. Now and then if his father [the minister] lifts his voice, he shouts too, but he never cries. He sits to table at every meal now tied to his chair with a silk handkerchief and has a crust to gnaw.... I tie him in a chair while I do my morning's work, but if I go too near his little fists fasten on to my skirt and the little rogue laughs... [48]

Menie's evidence also showed the devotion to guiding the will and the intellect which the Dickensian theorists demanded of the mother. "I am much interested in Harry's mental awakening just now," she wrote in 1876, asking her father to send her a copy of a two-volume "Aids to Development" which had been

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46. Sydney Mail 10 Aug. 1878 - 16 Nov. 1878. See also article "Home" Sydney Mail Jun. 1868. I am indebted to Professor A.W. Martin for this information.

47. A.W. Martin (ed.) Letters from Menie (forthcoming), letters dated 18 Feb. 1862 and 12 Aug. 1870.

48. Ibid. 12 Aug. 1870.



OUR CHILDRENS' PICNIC.

6. The home ideally isolated the child in a protective world, presided over by the loving mother. Illustrated Australian News 18 Dec. 1878.

used in her own upbringing and that of her brothers and sisters.[49]

Also apparent in this evidence is the way in which, for the writing and reading classes, the idea of innocence and vulnerability functioned so as to reconcile both child and parent to a period of prolonged formal education. Failure to educate boys for a career and girls to be accomplished, was seen as a disservice to the child, condemning it to a life of hardship and poverty in the lower ranks of society. Thus, Menie Parkes, looking about for some means to support herself and six surviving children after the death of her husband in 1877, wrote that "absolutely the first consideration is that I should be near a good public school". Deciding to take up a selection near Mount Victoria (NSW) in 1879, labour was employed to work the farm while the boys attended school. Letters to her father dwelt on their academic achievements, despite the fact that stationery, school books and school fees, plus additional music lessons and coaching in Latin and Euclid were eating into a tight family budget. Menie wrote that she was loath to stop the additional lessons and could not manage the farm without servants, and not till in desperate financial straits did she begin to consider putting the boys to work.[50]

A similar picture of devoted motherhood was provided by Ada Cambridge (1844-1906). The wife of an Anglican Minister who arrived in 1870, she was the author of numerous novels as well as the autobiographical Thirty Years in Australia. (1903). Though she had no compunction in engaging servants who were under school-age[51] her account suggests acute consciousness on the part of mothers of her acquaintance, of the importance of education in fitting their sons "for the professions and a good place in the world":

> I know one poor country clergyman who, with his wife and daughters, lived servantless and on next to nothing to give the only son his chance. Half their little income must have gone to pay for it... [52]

Similar concern was shown for the education of her own children, while the amount of personal care devoted to babies was also stressed.[53] This writer also expressed preference for the greater intimacy which the inadequacies of colonial housing forced on the family, implying that this not only had its pleasures, but was acceptable etiquette, not a loss of rank occurring under haphazard colonial conditions. According to this source, so great was this colonial compliance with the ideal of intimacy between mother and child that in the rural church, "the mothers peacefully suckled their babies as they listened to the sermon."[54]

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49. Ibid. 10 Mar. 1876.
50. Ibid. 6 Aug. 1877; 30 Dec. 1879; 24 Jan. 1882; 20 Mar. 1883.
51. Ada Cambridge Thirty Years in Australia (London 1903) p.87.
52. Ibid. p.282.
53. Ibid. p.87, 281-4.
54. Ibid. p.20, 106.

Rachel Henning, (1826-1914) who married late in life and remained childless, offered a somewhat more detached view of the pleasures of family life, but nevertheless confirmed the picture of the intense concern of colonial mothers to draw the child's activities as far as possible into the home, or at least the backyard, where protection and supervision could be closely maintained:

> Baby has taken to crawl, and of course makes himself as black as possible. He is a dear little fellow, very lively and full of fun, and getting to that lamentable age when he takes up everything he sees and proceeds to eat it, so that Amy lives in a constant state of terror lest he should choke.... Another great fear of hers is the well in the backyard.... It is only since I have been here that they have gone out to play in the paddock at all, and we keep a very sharp look-out after them....[55]

Authors of this generation who wrote of their childhood rather than of parenting, tend to confirm and approve of the protective solicitude of the colonial mother and her compliance with the literary stereotype. Thus Rosa Praed (1851-1935) author of several novels, in addition to the autobiographical Australian Life Black and White (1885) and My Australian Girlhood (1902), an admirer of Dickens and Mrs. Gaskell,[56] left an uncritical account of the efforts of her parents to protect the children from moral and physical dangers of uncouth colonial life; for instance, of their prohibiting play in the shearing shed lest "our baby ears be polluted by shearers' oaths."[57] Rather it is the kindness to children which is stressed, and not only of parents and grandparents, but of unmarried bush workers: "If they hadn't store goodies to give us... they would give us emu-eggs or tufts of yellow cockatoo feathers and such-like, or perhaps a tame wallaby for a plaything..."[58] The enforced intimacy of the colonial family was approved, children being depicted as "sprawling" on the veranda in the company of the adults, while inside, mere paper-covered partitions of canvas served to divide rooms.[59]

In his account of growing up in Sydney in the 1880s, Christopher Brennan (1870-1932) was similarly uncritical of the vigilance of his parents, even though he declared his upbringing was strict, with reading carefully policed ("books of devotion, no more"). He wrote that he was kept longer at an inferior parochial school because the parents believed the walk from Harbour Street across Hyde Park to the new Jesuit school at Woolloomooloo was too hazardous

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55. David Adams (ed.) The Letters of Rachel Henning (Penguin 1977) p.70. (20 Jul. 1861).

56. Rosa Praed My Australian Girlhood (London 1902) p.55; Colin Roderick In Mortal Bondage The Strange Life of Rosa Praed (Sydney 1948) p.45.

57. Rosa Praed Op.Cit. p.63.

58. Ibid. p.58.

59. Ibid. p.59, 98.

for an 11-year-old to undertake alone. Nor was he allowed to go on the street at night except to attend church accompanied by his family. Yet these attitudes remained uncondemned. Cooking and eating together as a family in one large "living room" was commended.[60]

The account left by Frances Lepherd (1862-1935) of her Sydney childhood was similarly without reproach or mockery of her mother's protectiveness. She mentioned that her mother was one of three in Surry Hills in 1872, anxious that it was safe to allow their sons to make the journey to Fort Street National School when they had been offered this opportunity after doing well at the local denominational one.[61] This author also recalled with pleasure the protective care offered by an urban neighbour while her mother was at work, and noted her mother's intense concern lest the fact that she and her daughter had to earn a living might prejudice her children's upbringing and prospects in any way.[62]

Authors of this generation were also uncritical of the efforts of their mothers to instil religious belief. By the 1830s in England, the special responsibilities being assigned to women as mothers under the impact of Dickensian ideology, included responsibility for inculcating religious ideas in the home.[63] The eighteenth-century rationalists had argued that the human environment, not God, was responsible for defects in child and society, but the Romantic vision had not necessarily implied a denial of religious belief. Indeed by postulating the existence of a priori knowledge, it suggested new grounds for belief in the supernatural. In Romantic poetry children were often depicted as divine agents of redemption, bringing a spirituality to earth direct from God.[64] Further developed by the Dickensian novelists, this notion and the godliness of the child had much in common with the emphasis in Non-Conformist thought on the domestic environment as a spiritual adjunct to the church, and on Christian concepts which linked family and religion.[65]

Mothers had much to gain from this convergence of religious and Dickensian ideas, since where religion was domesticated, motherhood and the home were spiritualized. For instance, in the Dickensian ideal of the happy mother serving personally her children's needs, it was becoming assumed that the

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60. "Curriculum Vitae" an unpublished autobiographical statement written a few years before Brennan's death, held in the Mitchell Library.

61. Frances Lepherd A Surry Hills Childhood: 1870 (University of New England 1981) p.35. See also Herbert Moran Viewless Winds (London 1939) p.25.

62. Frances Lepherd Op.Cit. p.21, 26.

63. Gordon Rattray Taylor Op.Cit. p.119.

64. P. Coveney Op.Cit. p.77-81.

65. Ibid. p.160ff; Catherine Hall "The Early Formation of Victorian Domestic Ideology" in Sandra Burman (ed.) Fit Work for Women (London 1979) p.23-4.

mother's increasing responsibilities and skills included the inculcation of religious values:

> ... But now Mamma orders them to be quiet, for the little sister is to say the Lord's Prayer. I wish you could see the dear little thing, kneeling down upon the white smooth sheets of her bed. She is scarcely three years old, but can say her prayers as well as any of them....[66]

Evidence from the literary sources testifies to and approves a willingness of the colonial mother to perform this duty. Mary Gilmore (1865-1962) wrote of a busy rural mother of twelve, memorizing Biblical texts in the morning while sewing, so that "in the evening, when the dusk did not allow of reading, she verbally taught the family the texts and the lessons she herself had learned." As a child, she herself was required to sing a hymn or say a verse out of the Bible while hammering (or "beetling") the towels, a task which fell on the girls in homes where ironing the linen to soften it was a luxury.[67]

The Challenge to the Dickensian Ideal:

For many authors born in the 1860s or later, and publishing by or after the 1890s, the image of colonial child-life in the personal sources changes. Whether male or female, writers begin to single out different areas of experience for comment, and those writing of their childhood tend to judge it from the perspective of other child-rearing ideals. New professional ideals, then or later current in educational and medical study of the child, become influential.

This trend is especially marked where one or both parents was a professional figure. Thus, T.W. Edgeworth David, Assistant Geological Surveyor in the NSW Department of Mines (appointed Professor of Geology at Sydney University in 1891) and his wife Caroline Mallett, former principal of Hurlstone College (1882-5) are shown as ensuring that their three children ate only a plain supper of bread and milk, "well-boiled because of the typhoid", a practice then demanded by medical theory.[68] According to their daughter Mary (born 1888), two bedrooms were added to the six-roomed bungalow the family occupied at Ashfield, one for the parents the other for the maid. In addition, special holiday accommodation was purchased on 26 acres in the Blue Mountains where the children could enjoy an active rural life, also recommended by doctors as conducive to health but where household help was employed to spare them any work, and there was a doctor within call.[69]

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66. Australian Home Companion and Band of Hope Journal V 1860 p.307.

67. Mary Gilmore Old Days Old Ways (Sydney 1934) p.24, 81.

68. Mary Edgeworth David Passages of Time (St. Lucia 1975) p.14. Medical ideals of child-rearing are discussed in Chapter Four.

69. Ibid. p.12, 24-5, 37.

In this kind of account, many of the features of the Dickensian stereotype may also be present. For instance, the devotion of the colonial mother to constructing a happy family in which childhood might be separated and prolonged may still be emphasized and approved[70], but the consciousness of the latest professional theory is more apparent. For instance, in the Edgeworth David family, punishments are shown to have been carefully adjusted to allow for age and sex. Thus girls were never punished corporally, even for such a serious misdemeanour as spilling the castor oil on the floor covering while attempting to hide the bottle, while at the age of six, the boy was considered "not old enough to be thrashed" for a misdeed and was punished instead by the "bitter disappointment" of not being taken to the Diamond Jubilee celebration.[71]

More often there is a criticism of the parents' attempts to control their children's movements, which is new. The more recently written the account, the more likely that the concepts of current professional child-raising theory judge the efforts of the parents (and especially the mother) to control their offspring. Henry Handel Richardson's Myself When Young (1948) is a case in point. Here there is provided a classic picture of a nineteenth-century medical father concerned to provide his two children (born 1870 and 1872) with the factors believed to promote a healthy childhood - a "decent", "airy" home with its own outdoor playroom, approved children's books and vigorous sea bathing.[72] However, the mother's anxiety to ensure that the two girls learned the piano at the premature age of four and five, is seen as a misguided belief that this was "an accomplishment no young ladies of our class could afford to neglect. Judging by her own distinctly wooden performance she herself had probably had difficulties with the rudiments, and so was determined to take us betimes." The only happy experiences recorded tend to be moments of unsupervised play away from maternal vigilance.[73]

This trend in the evidence from the literary sources reflected the fact that the literary stereotype was itself changing as medical and educative theory turned against the a-sexual Dickensian construction of innocence to create the more knowing and robust ideal of the adolescent male. In 1911 in England, Frances Hodgson Burnett's redemptive little innocent had given way to the cult of independent outdoor play of The Secret Garden, while in the colonies, these developments were given a unique edge by virtue of their being cast in a

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70. As in Katharine Susannah Prichard's Child of the Hurricane (Sydney 1963) p.26 (family prayers), 36 (rule by love), 52 (formal education).

71. Mary Edgeworth David Op.Cit. p.11,13.

72. Henry Handel Richardson Myself When Young (Melbourne 1964) p.15, 16, 21, 23.

73. Ibid. p.13, 37-8.

nationalistic mould by the influential novelists, journalists and poets who modelled their work on the values of the Sydney Bulletin. Aspects of the Dickensian image were strongly attacked as unaustralian and an image more like the hardy little adult was declared to characterize the local young, especially if male. In accounts influenced by this trend, the vulnerability of the colonial child is abandoned and there is a self-conscious attempt to stress the unique skills and ingenuity of the bush-bred child, skills seen as achieved by the absence of protective nurture and surveillance by family, church and school.[74]

This was a theme which, like the influence of the Bulletin writers on Australian culture in general, ranged far beyond the immediate members of that group. Aspects of it were adopted by writers who otherwise subscribed to the Dickensian model. Mary Edgeworth David's and Eugenie McNeil's accounts of the children's resourcefulness in dealing with the dangers of their unprotected bush environment, dispatching snakes, keeping pets[75] and riding horses[76] may be seen as evidence of this trend, as almost certainly is Amie Stirling's image of country-reared girls as different from "townies." According to Amie, Mr. Stirling's "wild children from Omeo" were more curious, vital and independent than those of suburban Elwood.[77] In fact, any special qualities which they may have developed from unrepressed, pioneering life in the bush were more likely the result of conscious direction on the part of the parents, than unsupervised leisure. Like Mary Edgeworth David, the parents of Amie Stirling (1880-1945) were well-educated and the father (a Government Surveyor, and later a geologist with the Mines Department of Victoria) was especially in close touch with the latest theories of child nature and needs.[78]

This tendency to see a unique independence and resourcefulness in Australian childhood becomes most pronounced in authors who were writing in the 1890s or at the turn of the century and who consciously sought the acclamation of the Bulletin group, or who were continuing this tradition into the 1920s and 30s, when effort to identify and celebrate experiences seen as distinctive to Australian culture and history was intensifying. Thus Mary Fullerton (1868 - 1946) in her account of growing up near Sale, (Bark House Days, 1921) declared that colonial childhood was less structured and more conducive to independence

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74. The transmission of this ideal of childhood is discussed at greater length in Chapter Eight.

75. Eugenie McNeil A Bunyip Close Behind Me (Melbourne 1972) p.27, 32, 48.

76. Mary Edgeworth David Op.Cit. p.32-6.

77. Amie Stirling Memories of an Australian Childhood 1880-1900 (Melbourne 1980) p.55, 60, 61-2, 113-4.

78. Ibid. p.25 (lessons from Nature), p.84 (camping in the bush). For the father's interest in education, see Ibid. p.17.

and individualism, especially if spent in the bush. She cited the pleasures of eating the native raspberries and wild fruits, exploring and climbing, swimming in the waterholes and gathering wild honey.[79]

A related legacy of the influence of the Bulletin school on childhood reminiscences of writers with literary ambitions is seen in endorsement of a vagabond childhood, often taken to extreme lengths. Thus George Clune (Why Gather Moss? 1940) after emphasizing that his father had joined every gold rush that had occurred, leaving his mother to rear her three sons and lecture them on "the value of settling down," provided this romanticized picture of his adventures as an urban street "arab" in the 1890s:

> For three weeks I enjoyed freedom, with none to hinder my movements. Each morning I would go to the baths, wash my shirt and sox under the water tap, then swim, or sit in the sun, until they dried. About noon, up to town I would go, walk into a hotel bar, and help myself to liberal portions of counter lunch which was supplied free to customers.... During the afternoon and evening I would sell the Star. Then, tired, footsore and weary, I would drop into my waste-paper bin, and sleep the sleep of the innocent and the just.[80]

On the other hand, Randolph Bedford (Naught to Thirty-Three, 1944) could still not resist giving his account of the joys of unprotected moments in an urban childhood an unmistakenly Dickensian touch:

> When the conductor was on the roof collecting fares, there were chances of stolen rides on the steps for short distances, rides often cut short by a mean and cowardly boy ... calling to the driver 'Whip behind!' At the cry one fell off quickly enough to avoid the whip, or one didn't, but just fell off and endured the sting. My little mate, George Green was killed by a following waggon, while avoiding the whip-lash.[81]

In this kind of account, approval of the protective mother is reversed and she is castigated as repressing the spontaneity and resourcefulness of the bush-bred child and especially for resorting to out-dated methods to achieve this, such as the use of fear[82] and corporal punishment.[83] Her attempts to inculcate religious belief brand her as a "wowser"[84] and to monitor playmates, as a snob.[85]

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79. Mary Fullerton Bark House Days (Melbourne 1964) p.59, 66, 68-9, 84.

80. George Clune Why Gather Moss? (Sydney 1940) p.3, 9.

81. Randolph Bedford Naught to Thirty-Three (Melbourne 1976) p.27-8.

82 Henry Lawson "A Fragment of Autobiography" [1903] [p.27].
R. Bedford Op.Cit. p.3.

83. Miles Franklin Childhood at Brindabella (Sydney 1963) p.7, 112.
Norman Lindsay My Mask (Sydney 1970) p.50.

84. Lewis Rodd A Gentle Shipwreck (Melbourne 1975) p.74-5, 119.

85. Henry Handel Richardson Op.Cit. 28-9; Norman Lindsay Op.Cit. p.11-18, 39.
This trend in accounts of childhood is discussed at greater length in Ch. Ten.

Parents, and especially mothers, also stand condemned because of the inadequacy of the sex education which they were said to have provided. Henry Lawson wrote that he was told by adults in Sydney that babies were manufactured on Pinchgut Island, and that when his brother was born, his mother attributed his arrival to a Chinese hawker selling fancy goods, even going so far as to take £2/10/- from his money box and to say that it had been used to effect the purchase. "I didn't think Peter was worth two pounds ten as a baby, and I couldn't see why I should be called upon to pay for him," recorded the disgruntled son.[86]

Neither the alleged joys of unprotected child-life nor the criticism of the anxious solicitude of mothers, appears in those too rare accounts of post-1890s childhood written by people noticeably out of touch with literary and psychological stereotypes, and who were earning their living by manual labour rather than the pen. Thus A.B. Facey's account of a family which followed the father to the Western Australian goldfields in the 1890s, lacks the ingredients of the conventional accounts of a pioneering child's life in the bush.[87] There is neither celebration of the nomadic male worker and a vagabond child life, nor Dickensian self-pity for the victimization of the innocent child, though the author was mistreated and exploited by some of the families for whom he was sent to work from the age of eight. Denigration of colonial women was also conspicuous by its absence.

Similarly, John Shaw Neilson, (1872-1942) though a Bulletin contributor who was encouraged to write by A.G Stephens, remained remarkably divorced from either Dickensian or nationalistic postures. The autobiography too, simply left a picture of the hardships encountered by the bush worker.[88]

The Implications for Childhood History:

These problems indicate something of the caution with which the bulk of the sources describing personal childhood experience must be used and the limitations in the conclusions which may be drawn from them. Though not discounting the value of this kind of evidence in its entirety, it would seem that one must begin by unravelling the ideological intricacies in the various images, and that to do so it is necessary to identify not only the different theories of child nature current in the past, but also their relationships to those current to-day. Understanding of childhood in the past depends upon critical detachment from recent professional theory. Just as the theory about

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86. "A Fragment of Autobiography" [p.31, 33]. Evasive or repressive sex education is also singled out for comment in the testimony of Randolph Bedford (Op.Cit. p.7, 12-13, 42), Norman Lindsay (Op.Cit. p.48-50), Amie Stirling (Op.Cit. p.128), Katharine Susannah Prichard (Op.Cit. p.30, 238) and Eugenie McNeil (Op.Cit. p.64).

87. A.B. Facey A Fortunate Life (Penguin 1981).

88. John Shaw Neilson Autobiography (Canberra 1978).

what is proper to childhood has been built into the sources, so too it may very easily colour childhood history itself.

This is especially important given that modern professional theory of children's needs favours empathic, child-centred methods and believes that departures from this ideal have profound effects on the child, lasting into adulthood. For historians sharing this view, there is the danger that alternative attitudes held by theorists in the past are rendered simply inexplicable. Childhood of the past is all too easily judged in the context of the present, to become a "nightmare from which we have only recently awakened."[89]

There is another, related problem in allowing the child-centred approach of modern professional theory to influence childhood history. It prompts historians to structure their study around themes which are of importance in modern theory, such as teething, weaning, toilet training and parent-child relationships at puberty. These become of crucial importance, while political and economic factors influencing these practices from outside the domestic realm, and possibly explaining why they have become of importance today, become merely peripheral.[90]

In some historical accounts emphasis on factors seen as important by modern child raising theorists leads to the view that these practices were not only of individual consequence, influencing the development of the child, but of collective importance, influencing the course of history itself.[91] Childhood history is made to turn in upon itself, inflating the importance of what is believed to have occurred inside the families of the past, but largely evading or excluding explanation of where socialization ideals came from and why they have changed over time. In consequence, much childhood history becomes merely the chronicle of mysterious cyclical or linear "progress" towards current "norms."[92]

For writers of such accounts, there is the additional problem that they must depend on an uncritical use of the main literary sources. These must be accepted as a picture of actual family practice, and made to sustain vast

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89. Lloyd De Mause Op.Cit. p.1.

90. David Hunt Parents and Children in History (New York 1970) and John Demos A Little Commonwealth (Oxford 1969) exemplify this trend, though Hunt does raise the question of the application of modern psychological techniques as universals, irrespective of time and place.

91. E. Erikson Childhood and Society (1951), especially Part Four "Youth and the Evolution of Identity" (St. Albans 1977) p.251 ff; Lloyd De Mause Op.Cit. p.2-3, "The Evolution of Childhood" Journal of Psychohistory I 1973-4, p.503.

92. See further J. Kociumbas "Childhood History as Ideology" Australian Historical Association Conference, University of NSW, Aug. 1982.

generalizations about "the" family and "the" child in the past. Yet whether the remarks of observers, or the testimony of private correspondence and autobiography, the evidence is confined to the literate members of society, and of these, those who were of sufficient importance, or sufficiently self-conscious, to pass on a written record to posterity. The fact that relatively little can be known of actual practice of families in the past, while a great deal can be discerned about the adults who created and transmitted theories about ideal child-raising, would seem to be another reason to begin with the more straight-forward task of identifying theory, before attempting to understand the experience of childhood, even of the literate minority. The process of entrenchment of various ideas about childhood in professional pedagogical theory must form a central part of the story, as must the methods by which these ideas were in turn transmitted to other groups projected as unaware of or unwilling to conform to the ideal. Institutions other than the family, but sharing with it the function of child-care and education, are also important in the context of this approach. Not only the child, but those adults who advocated, established and administered the various schools, orphanages, reformatories and courts on behalf of children, must also be assigned a central role, especially in a colonial study where large numbers of children were institutionalized over the period.

This approach would seem to confirm that, where relatively little use should be made of the written observations, diaries and descriptions of actual childhood experience, a great deal might be made of other sources of a prescriptive nature, such as medical advice to mothers, legislative debate on methods of achieving greater protection of children or of changing their status with respect to the law, and government enquiries into the family life of the poor. The reason for placing greater reliance on these kinds of prescriptive sources is not that they are considered less ideologically coloured than diaries, letters or autobiography. Rather it is because they are more so, which means that their relationship to the efforts of various discernible groups in society to mobilize certain child-rearing rules as norms, can be more positively established, the makers identified and the process of, and reasons for, entrenchment of their values charted and explained.

Two kinds of existing overseas study illuminate the possibilities of this approach. On the one hand there are those studies which focus on the institutionalization of the child in orphanages, reformatories, industrial and elementary school and explain this in terms of the Gramscian concept of hegemony, that is of a pattern growing in the second half of the nineteenth century, by which the cultural values of a dominant class were infused through society so as to help maintain class structure. Thus overseas studies such as Anthony Platt's <u>The Child Savers</u> and Michael Katz's <u>The Irony of Early School</u>

Reform, specifically see the intervention in the family by State or charity, ostensibly on behalf of the child, as a form of "social control", joining other institutions such as the legal system and police force in the maintenance of social order and the regulation of social change.[93]

The other kind of alternative approach is illustrated by those studies which see childhood and adolescence as merely ideological constructions. This was a view first put by Philippe Aries in his study of childhood in France under the ancien regime.[94] He argued that the idea of the child as vastly different from that of the adult, having its own special physical and emotional needs which must be met and requiring prolonged parental nurture, protection and education, was unknown before the rise of Capitalism and the middle class. According to Aries, this concept was developed initially with the Christian Reformation of manners and morals during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when Christian moralists and pedagogues became increasingly aware of a potential for moral improvement assumed to lie in the early training of the young. Taken up by the middle class as an idea appropriate to its social and economic needs, childhood began to be seen as a special period of preparation for participation in the adult world, a time when independence should be delayed and attention devoted to the formal learning of values and skills.

For the writer of childhood history, although these approaches offer greater capacity for explaining changing attitudes to children over time, both approaches also introduce new problems. The concept of social control, for instance, is open to various forms of attack.[95] Historian of colonial schooling, J. Ely, suggests that the "social control" arguments, as put by Katz, are not applicable because a study of popular education "from below" is likely to reveal that the poorer parent approved of the system that was set up and sought to profit by it.[96] In fact this particular objection is easily dealt with by pointing out that evidence of a preoccupation of the poor with the advancement of their own children, via prolonging education, might be seen as evidence of the success of common schooling as a form of hegemony, turning the poor away from radical ideas for the restructuring of society, towards attempts

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93. Michael Katz The Irony of Early School Reform (Toronto 1968); Anthony M. Platt The Child Savers The Invention of Delinquency (Chicago 1969); A.P. Donajgrodski Social Control in Nineteenth-Century Britain (London 1977).

94. Philippe Aries Centuries of Childhood (London 1973). (First published 1960).

95. For a succinct summary of these criticisms, see M. Grellier "Social Control Theory: One perspective on Social Relationships in Australia in 1838" Push From the Bush No.6, 1980 p.4-7.

96. J. Ely Reality and Rhetoric An Alternative History of Australian Education (Sydney 1979) p.6.

to compete on its terms. The more serious problem with this approach is that it imputes a motive to the child-savers of which they may not have been conscious and which many would have specifically denied. That is, it creates an impression of conscious conspiracy which the evidence cannot sustain.

In the case of the Aries thesis, the conceptual difficulties relate chiefly to the underlying point that there was no concept of childhood before the rise of Capitalism. This remains tenuous and unproved. Related to this is the problem that, as Aries' critics have pointed out, to dismiss childhood as simply an idea, is unsatisfactory because clearly children, especially infants, do have certain biological needs which must be met and very young children have much to gain from increased interest in their welfare. Besides, there must have been some concept of infancy in the Middle Ages, some classification of this condition as different from maturity, by virtue of its helplessness and dependency.[97] Aries in fact did not argue that in medieval society children were necessarily unloved and neglected, but only that there was no concept that their youth entitled them to special guidance and care within the institution of family and school. However, this distinction is difficult to sustain when writing about childhood and leaves the historian in the position of appearing to over-simplify and under-rate the needs of the child.

This problem of appearing to dismiss the undeniable dependency of the very young, may be simply evaded by focussing on the older child, for instance, on young people aged from puberty upwards. Recent studies by J.R. Gillis and Joseph Kett[98] demonstrate the advantages of this solution, their arguments that adolescence was a late-nineteenth century ideological construction being strongly established.

For a study of children which includes younger age groups, Aries' view of childhood as ideology can offer a starting-point, provided it is modified and clarified in two ways. In the first place, more explicit recognition is needed that children do have certain needs which inevitably render them different from and dependent upon adults. This is a timeless phenomenon, universal to the human condition, past and present and therefore not an issue which is open to historical scrutiny. Rather it is the age at, and extent to which these needs have been discerned and the way in which they have been defined and met, which must be examined, for this is what is changeable over time.

Secondly, there is no necessity for sharing the view implied by Aries, that pre-Reformation society was not interested in child socialization. It would seem that more explicit acceptance is needed that every society has some

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97. David Hunt Op.Cit. p.41.

98. J.R. Gillis Youth and History (New York 1974), "The Evolution of Juvenile Delinquency in England 1890-1914" Past and Present Vol.67 1975 p.96-126; Joseph Kett, Rites of Passage (New York 1977).

concept of childhood as a time when skills must be taught and values implanted so that the child may later fit into adult roles prescribed by that society. As with acceptance of the fact of dependency, so too with acceptance of the inevitability of socialization, it must be recognized that great variations in the degree and nature of indoctrination are possible and in the groups in society which exercise this control. It is these concepts and methods which change over time and which are therefore open to historical investigation.

While retaining Aries' essential point, that there is a sense in which childhood may be seen as ideology, changing over time, it would seem that additional questions should dwell not merely on the shifting images of the child, but on the sources of these ideas. The changing makers of childhood ideology must be identified and the process examined by which their various evaluations of child nature and needs were translated into action.

Australian history has been well served by accounts of the socialization of the young, especially outside the home. Education, for instance has a vast and long-standing historiography,[99] while more recently, studies of the growth of orphanages and reformatories have engaged the attention of an increasing number of historians.[1] Also, that other medium by which changing attitudes to child socialization might be examined, literature written especially for children, has not suffered from neglect by historians.[2]

These studies have not been concerned with identifying and explaining changing attitudes to children and interpretations of their needs. Rather they have shared the tendency of much childhood history to assume the validity of modern prescriptions for child-rearing, and to view their subject on these terms. Consequently, accounts of the institutionalization of the child in the orphanages and reformatories, for instance, simply describe this process,

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99. Comprehensive general studies include A.G. Austin Australian Education 1788-1900 (Melbourne 1961) and Alan Barcan A Short History of Education in New South Wales (Sydney 1965). More recent and more critical is W.E. Anderson and J.F. Cleverley (eds.) Exploring Education (Carlton 1975). Studies focussing on influential personalities in the history of education include J.O. Anchen Frank Tate Melbourne 1956), A.R. Crane and W.G. Walker Peter Board (Melbourne 1957), and C. Turney (ed.) Pioneers of Australian Education (Sydney 1969). A descriptive survey of the development of the Kindergarten is provided by M.L. Walker "The Development of Kindergartens in Australia" M.Ed. Thesis SU 1964.

1. Brian Dickey "Charity in New South Wales 1850-1914. A Study of Public, Private and State Provision for the Poor" Ph.D. Thesis ANU 1966; Michael Horsburgh "Child Care in NSW in 1870" Australian Social Work Vol.29, No.1, Mar. 1976, "The Apprenticing of Dependent Children in NSW Between 1850 and 1885" Journal of Australian Studies 7 (1980) 33-54; John Ramsland "The Development of Boarding-Out Systems in Australia: A Series of Welfare Experiments in Child Care 1860-1910" JRAHS Vol.60, 1974, p.186-98; Anthea Hyslop "The Social Reform Movement in Melbourne 1890-1914" Ph.D. Thesis Latrobe 1980.

2. H.M. Saxby A History of Australian Children's Literature 1841-1941 (Sydney 1969).

sharing the perspective of those groups of nineteenth-century reformers who subscribed to the empathic view favoured in modern theory, and denigrating those who did not. Changes in this field are explained simply as evolutionary progress, away from the punitive and ill-founded ideas of ignorant, if well-meaning amateurs, towards more enlightened relations between adult and child.

Most local studies of the institutionalization of the child in the elementary school are similar. For instance, those nineteenth-century child-savers who advocated the principle of compulsory education, tend to be celebrated as wise and forward-looking reformers, in touch with the needs both of child and State. It follows that these studies have tended not to ask what it was about nineteenth-century society which demanded this kind of "reform", nor how it made possible the reproduction of social values on an unprecedented scale.[3]

Accounts of the expansion of the children's book industry have tended to depend even more overtly on location and celebration of those authors who anticipated modern theories of children's needs at various stages of growth. In general, the object has not been to relate the content of the material offered to the social, moral and political assumptions of their authors. Also sources considered to be of lesser literary excellence, such as school text books or Sunday School hymns, are not normally explored, even though they may have been much more widely read.[4]

Similarly, with the exception of T.S. Pensabene's recent study,[5] histories of the medical profession and its role in pressing for legislative change and institutional facilities for the "rescue" of the children of the poor, have left unexplained the question of the relationship of the profession's apparent altruism to the preservation of the status quo. Nor have they noted the claim of the profession to speak for the moral and mental as well as the physical needs of the child.[6] The late nineteenth-century phenomenon of the

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3. Notable exceptions to this pattern in the history of schools and schooling are Peter Spearritt's "The Kindergarten Movement: Tradition and Change" in D.E. Edgar (ed.) Social Change in Australia: Readings in Sociology (Melbourne 1974); J. Lawry and J.F. Cleverley (eds.) Australian Education in the Twentieth Century (Melbourne 1972).

4. S.G. Firth's "Social Values in the New South Wales Primary School 1880-1914: An Analysis of School Texts" in Melbourne Studies in Education (Melbourne 1970) p.123-59 is a valuable contribution.

5. T.S. Pensabene The Rise of the Medical Practitioner in Victoria (ANU Health Research Project Monograph No.2) (Canberra 1980).

6. Bryan Gandevia Tears Often Shed Child Health and Welfare in Australia From 1788 (Sydney 1978) and Milton Lewis "Populate or Perish; Aspects of Infant and Maternal Health in Sydney 1870-1939" (Ph.D. Thesis ANU 1976) are useful descriptive studies of the participation of doctors in moves to improve upon child health, but they have not been concerned to explore the deeper issues raised for the historian of childhood.

declining birth rate has been traced in detail by demographic historians, but its relationship to childhood ideology remains obscure.[7] Studies of the challenges to the religious profession during the late nineteenth century, though frequent, have not been concerned to relate these challenges to the growth of secular professions claiming expert scientific knowledge of how to guide the young towards desired social and national goals.[8]

Nor have general studies of childhood transcended these problems. For instance in the account of Ailsa Burns' and Jacqueline Goodnow's Children and Families in Australia, an underlying subscription to a construction of childhood based on modern psychological theory limits the study to a description of the struggles to establish the "normal", stable, child-centred family in the face of allegedly hostile colonial conditions. Although there is a moment where the authors do feel the need to ask about the source of the attitudes they are describing, and to note that idealization of this form of family left Australian women at a disadvantage in a society where there was so much desertion and dislocation in domestic life, the implications of these issues are not pursued.[9]

Some feminist accounts have been more able to avoid these difficulties. Searching for the historical origins of constructions of the feminine stereotype, they have been able to question modern theories of human nature and needs, based on categories such as age or sex. Rather than viewing the past in terms of these theories, they have looked instead at the sources of the theories themselves. For instance, Anne Summers' use of Aries' thesis in her study of women in Australia's past allowed her both to break away from the conceptual nexus between woman and child, and also focus on power dynamics without, as well as within, the family.[10] Sabine Willis' account of the NSW Girls' Reformatory, does not view this institution as a landmark in the evolution of modern State care of the impressionable colonial child, but looks instead at its

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7. Neville Hicks "Evidence and Contemporary Opinion About the Peopling of Australia 1890-1911" (Ph.D. Thesis ANU 1971), This Sin and Scandal Australia's Population Debate 1890-1911 (Canberra 1978); L.T. Ruzicka and J.C. Caldwell The End of Demographic Transition in Australia (Canberra 1977).

8. W.W. Phillips "Christianity and its Defence in New South Wales Circa 1880 to 1890" (Ph.D. Thesis ANU 1969); J.S. Gregory Church and State (Melbourne 1973); R.L. Broome "Protestantism in New South Wales Society 1900-1914" (Ph.D. Thesis SU 1974).

9. Ailsa Burns and Jacqueline Goodnow Children and Families in Australia (Sydney 1979) p.37, 51.

10. Anne Summers Damned Whores and God's Police The Colonization of Women in Australia (Penguin 1981) p.166-7.

function in the transmission of social values and the suppression of alternative cultural mores.[11]

However, a feminist perspective does not in itself guarantee a solution, for feminist historiography necessarily dwells on women rather than children. Given the fact that from the second half of the nineteenth century, child-raising theory saw the fortunes of the two as irrevocably inter-twined, it would seem that it is absolutely essential that it should do so. That is, separation of the rights of women from the needs of children is a sine-qua-non in feminist history.

The problem of a conceptual link between woman and child has not proved easy to solve. Even in feminist history there is a tendency to employ such a link when the subject touches upon childhood. The ideology of motherhood and mothering continues to haunt many feminist accounts of childhood in the past. This is seen, for example, in the work of Miriam Dixson, whose study of women and identity in Australian history focusses on alleged moral and psychic damage done to children by a careless, convict environment and the absence of the protective, stable family life, which modern theory believes is so essential to healthy personality growth. She speculates that Australian cultural attitudes were fundamentally informed by this primary experience in the nation's childhood and that these attitudes were transmitted by psychic links over generations.[12] This approach offers no scope for raising the question of whether the identity problem which she diagnoses in Australian women may have been caused by precisely this kind of assumption, that is, of the need to link the status of women with that of children and family. Her study must be seen as joining those which affirm rather than explain modern theories of the importance to childhood of the "normal", stable home.

Accordingly, the present study is not structured around providing a picture of actual child-rearing practice in "the" colonial family. Rather, it begins with the issue of schools and schooling, where State was replacing Church in the formulation of rules about child nature, and beginning to demand the limitation of parents' rights, in order to apply its interpretation of children's needs. The study then traces further areas in which first, private philanthropy, but later the State, continued to usurp parental authority in order to implement its perception of child-rearing ideals.

The increasing power of the State to monitor relations between parent and child is seen as generating the need for expert advice on how to classify and reform the increasing number of children being separated from their parents

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11. Sabine Willis "Purified at Parramatta The Industrial School for Girls" in J. Mackinolty and H. Radi (eds.) In Pursuit of Justice (Sydney 1979) p.77-82.

12. Miriam Dixson The Real Matilda Women and Identity in Australia 1788 to 1975 (Penguin 1976) p.16, 49, 103-4.

and made dependent upon it. This need is in turn seen to foster further developments in secular theories of child nature, for it offered to various professional groups the possibility of acquiring a special status and autonomy, provided they could establish that they possessed knowledge of new, more efficient and scientific methods of raising the young in both school and home.

The study focusses on children aged from infancy to fourteen years, and of these, only on white ones. Reflecting the fact that the aborigines were regarded as an inferior race, their young are largely absent from the images of childhood and interpretations of children's needs in the sources here employed. Though in some respects their experience was similar to that of the children of the urban poor, the State intervening between parent and child for the "protection" of the young, aboriginal childhood demands a study of its own.

The aim always is to focus on the interaction between the domestic sphere and the public world with a view to identifying the makers and transmitters of child-rearing rules and explaining who or what required their views to be universalized. Only in this way is it possible to proceed towards understanding how much can be known about colonial childhood experience, even of the articulate few.

CHAPTER TWO

SECULARIZATION

The State, the Teacher and the Child

A perfect blank's the infant mind
Not yet to prejudices blind,
But soon, alas, parental kindness
Inflicts us with their mental blindness;
For what our parents hold as truth,
They on us all impress in youth,
And if we dare their faith to question
They quickly flog us to subjection.
No proof or evidence they show,
The only proof they give's a blow...[1]

One of the legacies of the challenge to ecclesiastical authority which had characterized the Enlightenment in Europe, was the formation of groups of intellectuals united in the belief that many of the imperfections of society stemmed from the Church's misconstruction of child nature and needs. Though the views of the political and moral philosophers, from Locke and Hume to Rousseau, included ideas for political change based on the Social Contract,[2] most placed great emphasis on what might be achieved by the improvement of human behaviour simply by beginning with the young. It was argued that if parents could be prevented from brutalizing their children, instilling into them the divisive and irrational doctrines demanded by the Church, then mankind which was born "free" and with infinite potential for goodness, would begin to progress towards earthly perfection.[3]

An essential starting-point for the achievement of this goal was that the State must assume responsibility for education. Though charity schools dated from the previous century, it was claimed that the Church had denied the common man enlightenment because it feared the effect of allowing access to dangerous and subversive ideas, whereas it was the extension of schooling to all classes that was the best way to replace an intemperate and criminal workforce with an honest, diligent and contented one.[4]

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1. "An Antidote for Superstition" by "R", Harbinger of Light Apr. 1874 p.600.

2. John Locke Two Treatises on Government (1690); David Hume Of the Original Contract (1748); J.J. Rousseau Du Contrat Social (1762).

3. J.J. Rousseau Emile (Penguin 1976) p.5-10, 270; Claude Adrien Helvetius A Treatise on Man: His Intellectual Faculties and His Education (1772), cited in J. Cleverley and D.C. Phillips From Locke to Spock (Melbourne 1976) p.15-16.

4. J.H. Pestalozzi How Gertrude Teaches Her Children (New York 1898) p.126, 169-70, 241; William Wordsworth The Excursion (1814) Bk. 9.

Secondly, there must be new methods of education, both in home and school, methods which avoided the use of fear and the teaching of sectarian superstitions, while developing the intellectual and moral potential of the child. Children were to be expertly guided towards acquiring wanted moral values and skills by developing their "sense perceptions", which could be achieved at a voluntary, virtually a subconscious level.[5] By the end of the eighteenth century, theorists such as the Edgeworths, Erasmus Darwin, Thomas Day and James Mill were experimenting with Rousseauistic ideas in the education of their own or adopted children and publishing treatises on the results. In spite of some notable failures, such as Rousseau's personal disapproval of Edgeworth's son at a meeting arranged to show off the child at eight, they further publicized in England the view of new possibilities to be achieved by the secular expert in pedagogical "science".

In the colonies, the seeds of this secularist faith in education fell on fertile soil. Here the convict presence was early seen to demand that the existing commitment of the Anglican church to the education and moralization of the young be assisted by the State, while a policy of State aid to the four main denominations for the building both of churches and schools, was established in 1837.

Even with State funding, the colonial churches encountered special difficulties in supplying accommodation, equipment and personnel to educate children in a new country, where there was no existing framework on which to build, and where population was both expanding and geographically mobile. By the late 1840s, the principle of providing largely State-funded and State-administered schools was introduced. The new "national schools" were to co-exist with the State-assisted, denominational ones.

These developments were accelerated in the colonies also because of sectarian hostilities. In part this reflected the position in England, where from the end of the eighteenth century, the increasing strength of Nonconformity had occasioned conflict between Church and Chapel over the kinds of religious doctrine to be taught in the new day schools each was establishing to provide low cost education for the children of the poor. Debate had centred on the relative merits of Joseph Lancaster's schools, which taught carefully selected religious material of a non-controversial kind, and which were strongly supported by Dissenters, and those who favoured Dr. Bell's new monitor system, where specifically Anglican doctrine was taught. These sectarian preoccupations had been increased by Catholic emancipation in 1829, which intensified the rush to provide forms of denominational schooling for the poor. Rival religious organizations such as the new Sunday School movement, founded by Robert Raikes and Hannah More during the 1780s now vied with each other not only to ensure the

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5. J.J. Rousseau Op. Cit. p.107-8, 126, 195-6; J.H. Pestalozzi Op Cit. p.61, 67, 132, 220.



First Methodist Church School, Hill End (Built 1867)

7. For the churches, providing the facilities for denominational education was a daunting task.

Holtermann Collection ML Box 8 No.18807.

salvation of the poor by imparting to them that which each believed was the one true doctrine, but also to expand their congregations by gaining in childhood the adherence of the young.

Sectarian rivalry was especially acute in the colonies, where the numerical strength of Nonconformity and Catholicism was greater, and where the main denominations were less geographically isolated from each other. Also the early policy of allocating State aid for the building of churches and schools to the four denominations which were most strongly represented, had encouraged a proliferation of rival institutions in some areas, while others were left without any schools at all. It also encouraged heated debate over the form which further State aid to education should take. Thus during the 1830s, Bourke's suggestion that additional elementary schools, which were to be state-funded, should be non-denominational, was blocked by sectarian issues. Even in 1844, when a similar plan by Gipps, now endorsed by Protestant groups, was implemented, this support was still based largely on frustrating the denominational ambition of their rivals, or in the case of the smaller sects, reluctant acceptance of the impossibility of providing schools of their own in remote areas with the limited resources at their disposal.

These hostilities had the effect of rekindling in a particularly intense way, eighteenth-century secularist ideals,[6] especially those which discredited the role of the religious profession in formulating rules for the moral training of the young. Thus local followers of James Mill (Schools for All and Not Schools for Churchmen Only (1812) and Jeremy Bentham (Chrestomathia, 1815-17), who in England had further defined the Lancastrian ideal, argued that the only "right system of education", fitted for "training onwards to perfection of the entire human family", was one in which rote learning of religious superstition and sectarian hostilities was not permitted.[7]

From the late 1860s, these arguments were strengthened by the new challenges to religious authority which followed publication of the theories of Darwin and Wallace in 1859. These ideas found a receptive audience, especially in Melbourne, where prominent members of the legal and medical professions and some politicians expressed unorthodox theological views, either modifying doctrine to make it compatible with the evidence from history and science, or rejecting it entirely. For instance members of an Eclectic Society founded in 1867, included James Duerdin, solicitor and member of the Royal Society, and historian H.G. Turner. By 1872, this Society had a membership of 155, and a

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6. Michael Roe Quest for Authority in Eastern Australia 1835-1851 (Melbourne 1965) esp. p.149-53.

7. Henry Carmichael Lecture Delivered at the Twelfth Session of the Sydney Mechanics Institution (1844), cited in C. Turney (ed.) Pioneers of Australian Education (Sydney 1969) p.72-3. Carmichael had established a private, non-denominational school in Sydney where the Bible was treated merely as a reference book.

library of works by Voltaire, Paine, Owen, Colenso, Renan, F.W. Newman and Charles Darwin.[8] Of the Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists founded in 1870, prominent members included Dr. Walter Richardson and Secretary of the Royal Society of Victoria, H.K. Rusden, whose older brother, G.W. Rusden, was an active supporter of secular schooling (National Education 1853). Victorian politicians who contributed to secular intellectual debate at this time included Deakin, Gillies, Pearson, Syme and Higinbotham. The appearance of the Victorian Review (1876) and the Melbourne Review (1879) provided a forum for articulate members of society to discuss the implications of Darwinian theory and a thriving secularist press also aired radical views.[9] Fashionable and wealthy members of Melbourne society attended services at Dr. Strong's Australian Church, formed in 1885 after his dispute with orthodox Presbyterianism regarding literal interpretation of the Bible, and a vengeful interpretation of the Godhead. Ada Cambridge, wife of an Anglican minister, attending a "service" of the Australasian Secular Association (formed in 1882) in Melbourne during the 1880s, was surprised at the number and "social quality" of those present.[10]

The size and social composition of support for religious unorthodoxy during the 70s and 80s helped to expand the ranks of influential intellectuals drawn from various secular professions and committed to the idea that State must replace Church in the monitoring of social relationships, especially those pertaining to private domestic life and the rearing of the young. Thus Charles Pearson, former lecturer in Political Economy and History at Melbourne University and Principal of Presbyterian Ladies' College, argued that as science superseded religion in the interpretation of the past and the divination of the future, so the Church was being superseded by the State in its hold on the popular imagination. To Pearson, the connecting link between the enlarged role both for Science and the State, was the child. Now to be watched over by both from birth, it had a "right" to be protected from ecclesiastical and parental mismanagement. The State must guard children against exploitation and guarantee them an education, preferably in a secular school:

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8. J.S. Gregory Church and State (Melbourne 1973) p.112.

9. Jill Roe "Challenge and Response: Religious Life in Melbourne 1876-1886" JRH Vol.5 No.2 1968 p.149-52; G. Serle The Rush to be Rich (Melbourne 1971) p.127-33; W.W. Phillips "Christianity and its Defence in NSW circa 1880 to 1890" Ph.D. Thesis ANU 1969 p. 184, 226-7; Timothy Suttor "The Criticism of Religious Certitude in Australia 1875-1900" JRH Vol.1 No.1 June 1960 p.30-5.

10. C.R. Badger The Reverend Charles Strong and the Australian Church (Melbourne 1971) p.99; G. Serle Op. Cit p.134-41; Ada Cambridge Thirty Years in Australia (London 1903) p.293.

> The State is the natural guardian of children against their parents; and much of the progress of civilization consists in limitations of the parental right, from old times when the parent might expose the newly-born infant or sentence the grown-up son to death, to later times when the State watches that the child be vaccinated, clothed and fed, and not tasked beyond its strength. Every child born into the world has a right to demand that it shall receive at least that minimum of instruction which is given to others, which is generally required to make its labour remunerative, and which it cannot obtain, or can only obtain at a disproportionate cost afterwards.[11]

Other than legislation to allow the State to monitor directly the health and education of the child, members of secularist groups endorsed issues such as terminating religious proscription of family planning, this being seen as a rational and scientific solution to the problems of infanticide and child destitution, and divorce law reform, arguments for which included that an unhappy marriage was a damaging environment in which to bear and rear the vulnerable child.[12] Others believed the State should be endowed with authority to apprehend children engaged in street trades, separating them permanently from their parents. "They must be treated as orphans and the State must mother them." More extreme forms of social engineering discussed in the 1870s included introducing State control of parentage itself, in order to lessen the burden of an allegedly increasing class of criminals and paupers.[13]

Though some secularist intellectuals did call for reform of the economic structure of society,[14] more often they preferred the less disruptive idea that social improvement depended on State intervention to ensure that the childhood of all was protected and prolonged. Much emphasis was placed on the doctrine of the "innate goodness of humanity", and this was taken to mean that all social problems had their source not in faults in the economic system, but

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11. Charles Pearson Report on the State of Public Education in Victoria Vic. LA V&P 1877-8 Vol.3 p.38-9. See also National Life and Character (London 1894) p.226, 229, 237-8, 274.

12. For the opinions of the theological radicals on divorce, see review of A.M. Davis The Genesis and Ethics of Conjugal Love, Harbinger of Light Feb. 1875 p.769; "Spiritualism and Radicalism" Ibid. Mar. 1877 p.1169; "Legislation of Female Slavery in England" by Annie Besant, repr. from the National Reformer, The Stockwhip Vol.4 No.2 Aug. 1876 p.22-3; "Gentile Marriages" Ibid. Vol.2 No.7 Oct. 1875 p.537-9; Charles Pearson National Life and Character p.204-208. Catherine Spence's novels Gathered In (serialized in the Adelaide Observer 1881-2 (repr. Sydney 1977) and "Handfasted" (unpublished) also expressed the views of a religious radical on divorce law reform. Secularist views on birth control are discussed in Chapter Five.

13. The Stockwhip Vol.1 No.11 1875 p.139. Secularist views on eugenic engineering are discussed in Chapter Seven.

14. Some Spiritualists saw their theological radicalism as the counterpart of wider reform such as vesting the land in the State for the benefit of all citizens. ("Spiritualism and Radicalism" Harbinger of Light Mar. 1877 p.1167-70).

in errors made by parents and churchmen in the socialization of the innocent child.[15] A contributor to the Sydney Stockwhip in 1876 went so far as to complain of the association of Free Thought with "radical, ultra-democratic, revolutionary ... and detestable" political doctrines. He believed that the progress of mankind had been facilitated by the balance of power falling "into the hands of the middle classes, where one may reasonably conclude, it ought to remain."[16]

For some defectors from conventional belief, commitment to the concept of the innocence and vulnerability of child nature may have functioned merely as a weapon with which to attack Anglican and Catholic Baptism ritual. Certainly, much use was made of it for this purpose:

> This silly dogma has taken root, that ten thousand masses could not save the poor innocent infant from eternal damnation. Can any one believe that such a horrible law could emanate from the Deity, and be brought to bear upon a guiltless soul, because forsooth, no priest or parson has sprinkled a little water over him?[17]

Other secularist writers took up the argument that the material which the Churches allegedly encouraged children to read was quite unsuitable, likely to corrupt the impressionable mind of the innocent child. Even the Bible, with "its stories of sexual immorality and cruelty" was now suspect, according to former President of the Australasian Secular Society, Thomas Walker.[18]

Hymns in use in orthodox Sunday Schools were attacked as brutalizing by fear. Although in 1876, a correspondent in the Spiritualist journal, Harbinger of Light, congratulated "Methodists" on recent excisions from their hymn book, he claimed that much unsuitable material remained, and cited the following:

> There is a never ending Hell,
> And never dying pains,
> Where Children must with Demons dwell,
> In darkness, fire and chains:
> For Hell is crammed with Infants damned,
> Without a day of grace![19]

For others, the concept of the mind of the child either as a "perfect blank" or as endowed with a special innocence, was a veritable article of their new faith in the way in which increased forms of State intervention in family life might perfect society in the here and now, simply by preventing the corruption of human nature at its source. Certainly it was so for Catherine

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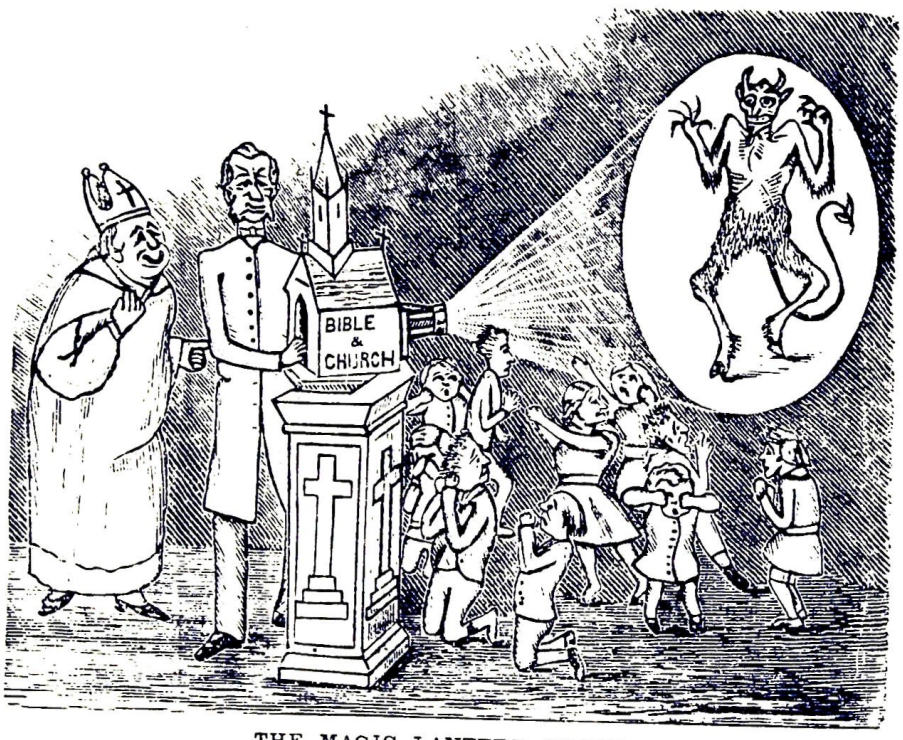
15. "Lyceums and the Training of Youth" Harbinger of Light Jan. 1876 p.939.

16. "Freethought and Politics" The Stockwhip Vol. 2 No.20 Jan. 1876 p.753-4.

17. "W.J.L." The Stockwhip Apr. 1875 p.117. Similar views were expressed by a correspondent in The Liberator Mar. 1887 p.250.

18. "Lecture in Reply to Mr. Jefferies" The Liberator Aug. 1884 p.196-8; see also Liberator June 1884 p.33. Walker had founded this Society in 1882.

19. Harbinger of Light May 1876 p.1007. From other contributions to this journal, it appears that this correspondent was a Unitarian (see Mar.1876 p.989; Jun. 1876 p.1020.



THE MAGIC LANTERN TRICK.

"THIS IS OLD NICK WHO TAKES ALL CHILDREN WHO DON'T GO TO CHURCH."

8. The Liberator 29 Nov.1885.

Spence, who wrote that the doctrine of infant depravity and forms of child socialization based on it, was "one of the most paralyzing dogmas that human fear invented or priestcraft encouraged."[20] For her, it was also a chief reason for defecting from orthodox Presbyterianism to become a "convinced Unitarian", in which capacity she gave occasional sermons at Dr. Strong's Australian Church.[21]

In either case, the questioning of the relevance of religious authority to childhood by the new wave of critics greatly speeded up the expansion of the State's role in intervening between parent and child with respect to elementary schooling. Public Instruction Acts, passed in 1872 (Victoria) and 1880 (NSW) making formal instruction to the age of fourteen compulsory, marked the State's increasing commitment to the principle of providing a prolonged and protected childhood environment for every child, and to the idea that the State should usurp parental authority where necessary in order to achieve this. Such was the strength of secularist views that these Acts also contained provision for terminating State assistance to denominational schools.[22]

A "Secular" Education:

The discrediting of the influence of the religious profession in the elementary school must be seen as largely a victory for secularist rhetoric. The "feminine" influence on religious training in home and Sunday School had outlawed the use of fear, at least in theory, well before the 1870s, even if there remained opposition to the new techniques on the part of some churchmen. A spokesmen for Protestant Sunday Schooling, William Haigh, pointed out in 1858, that the notion that the innocence of children precluded rote learning of religious doctrine, far from achieving a more rational faith and a superior moral nature, would ensure that the child became either a "sceptic or an infidel".[23]

There was also some resistance to secularist theories of child nature and needs in Catholic circles. The Catholic Catechism approved by the 1885 Plenary Council for use in Australia did not spare children the notion that their natures were tainted by the sin of their first parents, and this edition

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20. Catherine Helen Spence An Autobiography (Adelaide 1910) p.63.

21. Ibid. p.28; R.B. Walker "Catherine Helen Spence, Unitarian Utopian" Australian Literary Studies Vol.5 No.1 1971 p.32.

22. State aid for the building and maintenance of churches and Sunday Schools had already been terminated in 1863 (NSW) and 1875 (Vic.).

23. William Haigh The Juvenile Scripture Pearl Society; or, Observations on the Design of Protestant Sabbath Schools (Sydney 1858) p.9. The idea of delaying religious education until the teenage years had been propounded by Rousseau (Op. Cit. p.218-20).

would remain essentially unchanged for the next 80 years.[24]

Catholics were using hymns on the new themes of passivity and rule by love by 1891,[25] and of secularists themselves, very few believed that the innocence of the child was such that it could do without some form of religious authority to endorse moral training. What most secularists wanted was a form of religious doctrine which would unify rather than divide society. Children were to be taught forms of Christian belief, stripped of controversial, divisive elements and the use of fear. Moral values were to be endorsed by a form of Christianity reduced to essentials, which did not cause debate between the sects, or in the case of Spiritualists, by a new doctrine composed of elements held in common by the major religions of the world.

This continuing belief in the relevance of religious authority to childhood was apparent in the special Sunday Schools or Lyceums which members of the Melbourne secularist community established for their own children during the 1870s and 80s. By 1876, the conductor of the Melbourne Spiritualist Lyceum, Alfred Deakin, was able to muster 100 children and officers for an "Exhibition Session", while average attendance that year was 55.[26] The Australasian Secular Association founded its Lyceum in 1884. Branches opened at South and Port Melbourne in 1887, and there were about 180 children on the three rolls by the end of that year.[27]

Both Lyceums held an annual picnic,[28] but on ordinary Sundays, activities were centred around recitation from special books of prose and verse selected by bookseller W.H. Terry and schoolteachers, Deakin and Bernard O'Dowd. These were based on themes which taught moral values similar to those endorsed in Cole's Funny Picture Book,[29] and more particularly, the children's pages of the denominational press. Thus children reading O'Dowd's selection for the

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24. Gerard Rummery "The Development of a Concept of Religious Education in Catholic Schools 1872-1972" JRH Vol.9 No.3 p.305.

25. St. Patrick's Vesperal and Hymn Book (Melbourne 1891) p.85.

26. Harbinger of Light Mar. 1876 p.983. Three Spiritualist Sunday Schools were still active in Victoria in 1911, with 18 teachers and 102 children listed on their rolls. (Victorian Statistical Register 1911 p.201).

27. F.B. Smith "Joseph Symes and the Australasian Secular Association" Labour History No.5. 1963 p.30.

28. At Lyceum picnics, the opportunity was taken to draw attention to secularist ideals, with much use of processions, bands and emblems. See Harbinger of Light Dec. 1876 p.1124; F.B. Smith Op. Cit. p.30.

29. Though E.W. Cole was himself a member of Melbourne's free-thinking society (librarian of the Eclectic Association, 1862, author of The Real Place in History of Jesus and Paul, 1868), he was in no doubt that religious values had a place in "Childland", the world of the child. See the poem contributed by him to the Funny Picture Book in memory of his eight-year old daughter Ruby who died in 1890 (Cole Turnley Cole of the Book Arcade (Melbourne 1974) p.96).

Wicked Willie.

Willie was a wicked boy,
Snubbed his poor old mother;
Willie was a dreadful boy,
Quarrelled with his brother;
Willie was a spiteful boy,
Often pinched his sister,
Once he gave her such a blow,
Raised a great big blister!

Willie was a sulky boy,
Sadly plagued his cousins,
Often broke folks' window panes,
Throwing stones by dozens;
Often worried little girls,
Bullied smaller boys,
Often broke their biggest dolls,
Jumped upon their toys

If he smelt a smoking tart,
Willie longed to steal it;
If he saw a pulpy peach,
Willie tried to peel it;
Could he reach a new plum-cake,
Greedy Willie picked it,
If he spied a pot of jam,
Dirty Willie licked it.

If he saw a poor old dog,
Wicked Willie whacked it;
If it had a spot of white,
Silly Willie blacked it,
If he saw a sleeping cat,
Horrid Willie kicked it;
If he caught a pretty moth,
Cruel Willie pricked it.

If his pony would not trot,
Angry Willie thrashed it;
If he saw a clinging snail,
Thoughtless Willie smashed it;
If he found a sparrow's nest,
Unkind Willie hit it.
All the mischief ever done,
Folks knew Willie did it

No one liked that horrid boy,
Can you wonder at it?
No one who saw his ugly head,
Ever tried to pat it
No one took him for a ride—
Folks too gladly skipped him,
No one gave him bats or balls,
No one ever "tipped" him

No one taught him how to skate,
Or to play at cricket;
No one helped him if he stuck
In a prickly thicket
No! for the boys all said
Willie loved to tease them,
And that if he had the chance,
Willie would not please them

And they shunned him every one,
And they would not know him,
And their games and picture-books
They would never show him
And their tops they would not spin
If they saw him near them
And they treated him with scorn
Till he learnt to fear them

They all left him to himself,
And he was so lonely,
It of course it was his fault,
Willie's own fault only
A boy's a wicked boy,
Shy of him folks fight then,
It makes him dull and sad.
Why, it serves him right then!



This is the Naughty Boy who would go making Mud Pies, and get his nice new clothes all over mud.

He said he would be Good, but he got into the mud, and was a Naughty, Bad, Bad Boy!!!

The Wicked, Rude, Bad, Naughty, Cross, Nasty, Bold, Dirty-faced Boy.

Boys, stop your noise! Girls, stop your jumping and skipping!
While I tell you about a bad boy, who often deserves a whipping
If this boy to you were named, to speak to him you'd feel ashamed,
So to-day I'll only say—He's a wicked, rude, bad, naughty, cross, nasty, bold, dirty-faced boy!

I won't tell you his age, nor the colour of his hair,
Nor say anything about the clothes he sometimes does wear,
You never see them neat and clean, and seldom without a tear,
Because—He's a wicked, rude, bad, naughty, cross, nasty, bold, dirty-faced boy!

If he's sent on a message, such a long time he stops,
To pelt stones at Chinamen, and stare in the shops;
Running behind drays, and wastes time so many ways,
That when he gets home his mother says—
Oh you wicked, rude, bad, naughty, cross, nasty, bold, dirty-faced boy!

If his mother gives him lolly, cake, piece of beef or mutton,
In a corner he'll eat it by himself, he's such a nasty, greedy glutton,
And he'll smug from his playmates a marble, top or button
That scarcely any one can with him have any fun,
Because—He's such a wicked, rude, bad, naughty, cross, nasty, bold, dirty-faced boy!

He's been going to school for years, I can't tell you how long,
If you ask him to spell three words, two are sure to be wrong;
If you saw the dirty books and broken slate which to him belong,
You'd easily guess from such a mess that—
He's a wicked, rude, bad, naughty, cross, nasty, bold, dirty-faced boy!

You can't believe a word he says, he tells so many lies,
He's such a coward he'll only hi. a girl or boy much less than his size,
But if he gets a blow himself, he howls, bawls, yelps, and cries,
That anyone who sees him never tries to please him,
Because—He's a wicked, rude, bad, naughty cross, nasty, bold, dirty-faced boy!

He won't play any game without being always cheating,
I often wonder how he so many times escapes a beating.
And he never says grace before or after eating,
He's scarcely better in the least than a brute beast,
Because—He's a wicked, rude, bad, naughty, cross, nasty, bold, dirty-faced boy!

What school he goes to at present I won't tell
But I mean to watch him, and if he don't mind and behave well,
I'll go to every school and ring a little bell,
I'll make a great noise, and show all the girls and boys
This wicked, rude, bad, naughty, cross, nasty, bold dirty-faced boy

"BOYLAND"

9. Dirtiness, disobedience, greed, mischief, cruelty to animals and failure to say Grace were some of the vices which were not to be tolerated in boys.

Cole's Funny Picture Book No. 1 (Melbourne 1879).

Australasian Secular Association, encountered the need for obedience to parents, for control over the passions, industry and frugality, temperance, charity and modesty. They were also reminded of the not unchristian doctrine that "The reformer's first duty was to reform himself..."[30]

The less atheistical selection of the Spiritualists, Deakin and Terry, was even more inclined to the view that these fundamental values ought still to be invested with a religious significance. Borrowings were made from world religions to tell children that if they valued obedience, modesty, gratitude, charity, temperance, "fortune shall attend them", sincerity, justice, diligence, and "their wealth shall increase", benevolence and science, "and their lives shall be useful", religion, "and their deaths shall be happy". They were also to love and serve their parents. Attention to temperance was especially in evidence at the Spiritualist Lyceum founded at Sandhurst where in 1874, of 67 children on the roll, all the officers and "most of the children" subscribed to "a pledge of total abstinence from alcoholic beverages and narcotic preparations."[31]

Both books taught children the importance of ensuring that homes were both "happy" and "beautiful", but warned that rule by love did not mean spoiling:

> Cond. - Loving mothers are those who really love their children, not those who show how little they care for them, by spoiling them.
> Lyc. - If all parents loved them, all children would be happy, the world would be as one family, want would be unknown, crime disappear, and earth a real paradise.[32]

Similarly, readers of the Leader learned that woman was an "angel", innocent and virtuous, and that her heart was "the mansion of purity and goodness". From Schiller they learned "A country of true homes is a country of true greatness. A beautiful home, musical with loving voices, is the nursery of heaven." They recited that "Thy mother is the guardian angel of thy life; her virtues are registered indelibly upon thy heart".[33]

The main departure from conventional denominational values was made by O'Dowd, who went so far as to provide an alternative, rationalist burial service for children, which avoided the idea that the dead child had been transported to a new home in heaven, presided over by a protective, parental deity:

> Cond. - Life is a mighty river wending its way through many lands and beneath many skies.
> Ch. - Death is when that river joins the ocean, and sleeps, a wanderer no longer, in ocean cradles.
> Cond. - Such are life and death to most.

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30. Bernard O'Dowd (ed.) The Lyceum Tutor (Melbourne 1888) p.13, 15, 19, 46, 77-8.

31. W.H. Terry (ed.) The Lyceum Leader (Melbourne 1884) p.50; Harbinger of Light Oct. 1874 p.711. The first edition of the Leader, (1877) was edited by Deakin.

32. Bernard O'Dowd Op. Cit. p.37, 46, 99.

33. W.H. Terry Op Cit. p.14, 35.

Ch. - But when little children die, then life has been only a rill.
Cond. - A child's death is one of the saddest of deaths, but it is unavoidable.
Ch. - And when a thing cannot be helped, we should not grieve too much over it.
Cond.- Strew flowers and Australia's leaves on your little friend's grave. He (or she) has gone back to the elements from which he sprung.
Ch. - Good-bye for ever, little ___, we grieve so much for you, for we shall never see you again. You have lived your little life. Good-bye!

The children were to "stand in as orderly a manner as possible round the little grave, and answer as well as they can".[34]

In the national schools themselves, a "secular" education did not mean a godless one. As Mr. Blair argued in support of the Public Instruction Bill in Victoria in 1869, "enlightening the mind, dispelling ignorance and darkness, raising from barbarism and savagery" was not "irreligious". Rather it was "educating the powers which the Great Creator has given us."[35]

In New South Wales national schools, religion was taught as a separate subject on the curriculum, with Dr. Whately's Scripture Lessons a prescribed text. These contained information on subjects considered non-divisive and held in common by all Christians, such as the Lives of Patriarchs and of Christ, and did not spare children the account of the Fall of man.

In class-rooms where the children of the lower orders would now be found, traditional Christian endorsement of values such as obedience, honesty and respect for property were seen as especially relevant. The difference was that these subjects would now be taught by the trained, secular expert. In NSW, provision was made for some denominational religious instruction by clergymen, but this was strictly limited to a weekly visit. Secular school teachers took the other "Scripture Lessons".

In Victoria, the clauses of the Education Act outlawing religious instruction in the State school were more extreme,[36] and changes were made to text books in use so as to reduce doctrinal content and make them more in tune with secular ideals. Thus, in the Royal Reader No.6, an exercise in reading comprehension based on "Paul at Athens" was replaced by a passage on the Wonders of Cotton Manufacture. However, as a Royal Commission investigating the subject in 1883-4 found, there remained numerous references to religious concepts in the texts.[37] Moreover by 1882, provision had been made under Section 18 of the Act, to introduce facilities for religious instruction in State schools on one

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34. "Responses for a Child's Funeral" Bernard O'Dowd Op. Cit. p.114.

35. VPD 1869 (Vol. 8) p.1850.

36. 36 Vict. Act No.447, 1872, Section 12.

37. Third and Final Report of the Royal Commission on Education Vic LA V&P 1884 Vol.3 p.238; Ibid. Appendix C p.228-33.

or two days of the week. In 1900, a Royal Commission on Religious Instruction submitted a complete series of non-doctrinal lessons and hymns, recommended for use in Victorian schools, and by 1908, there was provision for religious instruction, other than by State teachers, before and after school.[38]

Not content with claiming that the content of their education was different from that of the denominational school, secularists also argued that their methods were superior. The agents of the Church, with their mis-construction of child nature, were prevented from having access to those new rational educational techniques by which instead of violent and harmful breaking of the child's will, the child might be peacefully led towards desired social goals. A new, scientific educational "Psychology" was being evolved, grounded in "Cerebral Science".[39] This however, was in its infancy, and during the 70s and 80s, spokesmen for secularist education chiefly relied either on rationalist metaphysical theory, or on Dickensian appeal to the helplessness of the young, when explaining teaching techniques. For instance, they claimed that in their Sunday Schools:

> ... the pestalozzian system is fully recognized, the exercises and instruction are made as attractive as possible to the children, and love, not force, is the motor to discipline and obedience.[40]

These arguments passed into the language of the legislators in support of the Public Instruction Bills. In the national school, they argued, the young were to be liberated from the tyranny and brutality of a religious education based on the model of sinfulness. Indeed, the education offered in the national school was to be the opposite of manipulative. Unlike the clergyman, who tried to get as many of the young as possible into his flock, the secular teacher would merely "prepare the child's mind as the photographer prepares his glass to receive the picture, then the child can reason for himself as to the doctrines placed before him."[41]

The passing of the secular Public Instruction Acts marked the beginning of a landslide which would complete the erosion of the authority of the churches with respect to formulating rules for child-rearing. This was in spite of the similarities in the content of secularist and denominational education and the fact that direct ecclesiastical influence in the secondary school was untouched,

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38. Minister of Public Instruction Report 1882-3 Regulation XVI; Vic LA V&P 1900 Vol.3; Minister of Public Instruction Report 1907-8 p.19.

39. "The Relations of the Human Brain to Spiritual Phenomena" by Professor Joseph R. Buchanan Harbinger of Light Jul. 1875 p.884. Spiritualists especially were interested in the scientific study of the brain, believing it would succeed in establishing the location of the human spirit.

40. Harbinger of Light Jan. 1876 p.939; see also W.H. Terry Op. Cit. p.4.

41. Mr. Farnell NSWPD 1879 (Vol.1 First Series) p.464.

(the education of the older child being left, as before, to the churches). In the meantime, Catholics were left to establish an autonomous system of elementary schools, no easy task for a denomination which was under-represented in the upper socio-economic level,[42] while Protestants attempted to compensate for the "secularity" of the national school by expanding the Sunday School movement.[43]

The Sunday School:

Initially a lay charity organization aiming to convert, instruct and moralize the offspring of the poor, by the 1870s, the function and social composition of the Sunday School had changed. It now aimed to provide a purely religious education for all children not receiving doctrinal instruction specific to their sect in the elementary school.

Attendances during the 1870s suggest considerable success in this aspiration. For instance during that decade in NSW, 40% of all children aged between five and fourteen attended on an average Sunday, and 60% in Victoria.[44] One of the reasons why Melbourne secularists founded their own Schools at this time, was to provide an alternative occupation for children on Sundays, so engrained was the idea that on that day of the week, the Sunday School was the only proper place for a child to be.

This apparent expansion of the Sunday School movement in these years must be qualified by the fact that for parents, the Schools had functions other than ensuring that children received a measure of religious doctrine in childhood from sources outside the home. For instance, they offered mothers a temporary measure of relief from the demands of their offspring, especially since it became customary to send children aged two or even younger, in the care of older ones, to join the "Cradle Roll". By the 1870s, this function of the Sunday School, accentuated by the difference between adult attendance at church and children's attendance at Sunday School was occasioning accusations by churchmen that mothers were becoming all too willing to delegate their special responsibility for religious education to others. Children were only sent to Sunday School to be "out of the way" and many parents slept away the whole of the Sabbath afternoon while the children were out of the house. [45]

With the expansion of national schooling to educate the children of the poor, the Sunday School was ceasing to attract the "poor miserable outcasts, ragged and dirty"[46] on whose behalf the movement had originally been

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42. W.W. Phillips Op Cit. Appendix IIIA and IIIB, p.443-5.

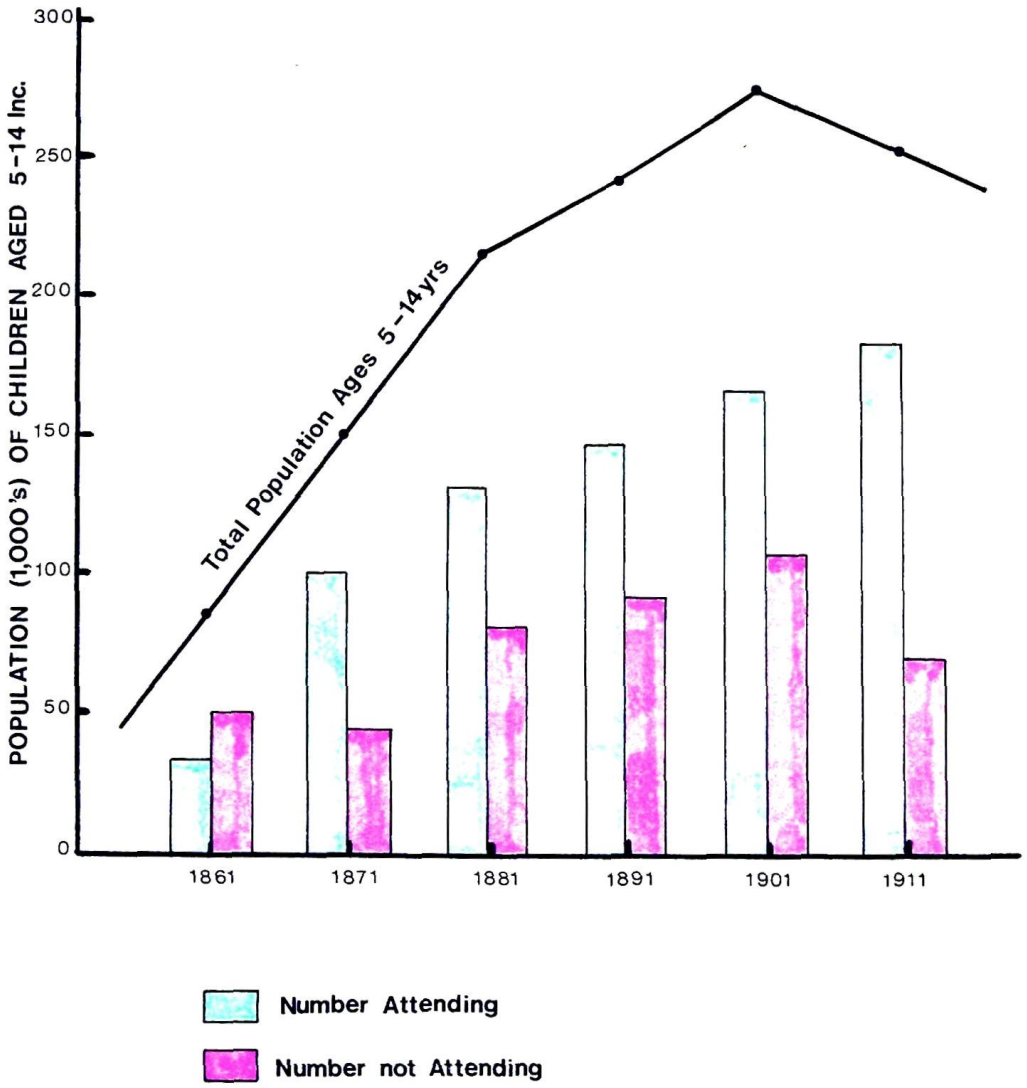
43. Though Catholics also established Sunday Schools, their need to do so lessened with the expansion of their elementary schools.

44. See Fig. 1 p.42a; W.W. Phillips Op. Cit. p.448; R.D. Broome "Protestantism in NSW Society 1900-1914" Ph.D. Thesis SU 1974 p.568-71.

45. Wesleyan Chronicle 19 Oct. 1872 p.145.

46. Ibid. p.147.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF ALL DENOMINATIONS ATTENDING SUNDAY SCHOOL IN VICTORIA 1861 – 1911



Compiled from Vic. Statistical Register 1861 – 1911°

°Approximate figures only as some children younger than 5 years attended Sunday School.

Fig. 1

conceived, and had become a means by which middle-class parents might dress up and display their children:

> we were first induced to send our children to the [Sunday] School not because we cared for the teaching they might get, but because we saw the neighbour's children clean and nicely dressed going away to School and we thought it would be nice to dress our children and send them to School also. [47]

For parents, sending the children to Sunday School also ensured that leisure time was profitably spent in contact with members of like social class and denominational affiliation, while reinforcing parental authority and inculcating approved moral values. For example, at Bathurst Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School, the Rules in 1864 stipulated that the children were to be silent, respectful and obedient and to behave with reverence during singing and prayer. The children were to come to school clean and decent, be punctual in attendance, and were "to walk quietly to and from School, and not to play or loiter on the way".[48]

In particular, the Sunday School became a bastion for the temperance cause. Juvenile Temperance Societies and Bands of Hope had been linked to Methodist Sunday Schools from the early 1860s[49] and the scholars were encouraged to join by taking a temperance pledge. In so doing, children undertook to abstain from that range of temptations, considered most likely to cause a "fall" - alcohol, tobacco, profane language and gambling.[50]

The Principle of Compulsion:

The religious profession was not only disadvantaged by secularist rhetoric, justifying the principle of "secularity" in the elementary school. It also fatally allowed itself to become dissociated from secularist arguments of the benefits to child and society to be derived from making education compulsory.

As in the justification for the principle of "secularity", so also for compulsion, the ideology of innocence proved an invaluable tool for secularists, allowing them to seem to be on the side which was unequivocally modern, progressive and just. Moreover, the image of helplessness and vulnerability was easily extended by legislators to prove that what secularist expertise had

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47. T.J. Clapham of Brunswick St. Fitzroy Wesleyan Church, quoted in R. Howe "Social Composition of the Wesleyan Church in Victoria During the Nineteenth Century" JRH June 1967 p.212.

48. Bathurst Wesleyan Methodist Sabbath School Rules (Bathurst 1864) p.10.

49. Australian Home Companion and Band of Hope Journal VI 1861 p.45; Mt. Erica Methodist Church and Sabbath School Jubilee Souvenir (Melbourne 1905) p.20; Laws and Regulations of the Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Church (Melbourne 1895) p.134-6.

50. Wesleyan Chronicle (Children's Chronicle) Feb. 1872 p.1.

identified as best for the child, was also what was best for the nation:

> It is just, in the interests of the child, to extract from a careless unnatural parent not only the bodily sustenance of his child, but a fair, decent, primary education as well. If he neglect that duty he cannot take the consequences upon himself; he transmits them not only to his innocent child but to the country at large; and as prevention is better than cure, let us not punish the child for the offence of the parent, let us rather save the child while we can from the consequences of parental neglect.[51]

In addition to Dickensian notions of parental guilt, secularists had access to the old arguments of their eighteenth-century forebears, that expansion of education guaranteed the "security" of the State because it did away with inherited privilege. It was said that extending an elementary education to every child meant that all would be free to rise to a level limited only by their ability and enterprise. At the same time, "social distinctions" and "class feelings" which presently prevented "common accord" and a healthy "national life" would be removed.[52]

Not surprisingly, these views were shared by spokesmen for the expanding secular teaching profession. Thus William Wilkins, a disciple of Pestalozzi, who had been appointed headmaster of the new Fort Street Model School in 1851 and who steered the expansion of national schools in NSW over the next two decades, argued that, even without the question of compulsion, a national schooling was more egalitarian:

> It is emphatically a system intended to benefit all, and none are excluded from the advantages it offers. It recognizes no distinctions of rank and wealth, no differences of party, and no variations of creed; but all are admitted to its privileges upon equal terms.[53]

In addition, legislators exploring the ramifications of the compulsion argument, pointed out that in all countries where this principle, together with a State-funded system of non-denominational schools had been introduced, "beneficient and wonderful results" had ensued for society. Not only had vice and crime been prevented but also the democratic political structure assured. This was because the vote of the newly educated worker neutralized "the weight of Capital". Besides, how unwise it would be to put political power into the hands of "an ignorant multitude".[54]

According to its advocates, not only did compulsory education ensure the survival of the existing political system and help to make it work, it also had an essential role to play in developing the economic system of the

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51. Mr. Greenwood NSWPD Op. Cit. p. 342. See also Mr. Roseby p.369, Mr. Barton p.460.

52. Mr. Berry, in support of Higinbotham's Public Instruction Bill VPD 1872 Vol.15 p.1552.

53. William Wilkins National Education (Sydney 1865) p.24.

54. Mr. Dillon NSWPD Op. Cit. p.359; see also Mr. Hungerford p.365, Mr. Barton p.457, Mr. Murphy p.469, and Mr. Wrixon VPD 1869 Vol.8 p.1861.

burgeoning nation. As Charles Pearson put it in 1878, "an educated community" was "more moral, more law-abiding, and more capable of work than an uneducated; and therefore ... the State is justified in enforcing education that it may economize its revenue and develop its resources". Getting the children out of the workforce would remove cheap labour from the job market, thereby improving the pay of adult male breadwinners, while also providing the employer with "a supply of steady and instructed workmen".[55]

Just as the secularist case against the methods and content of a denominational education was at least partly unfounded, so too there was no reason in principle why the religious profession should have opposed the compulsory prolongation and protection of children in the school as a moral and political force. Church, just as easily as State, could pose as the guardian of childhood and agent of economic progress and political stability. However, there were practical considerations which prevented it from doing so. For one thing, when the principle of compulsion was introduced in colonial legislature, it was included in the same Bills as the secularization of national schooling, so that to oppose one was to oppose the other. Secondly, the principle of compulsion greatly added to the problems of any denomination attempting at all costs to prevent their young from attending the State schools, bringing new urgency to the task of building and staffing its own institutions. Faced with this problem, only Catholics continued to pursue this goal. Though few priests were prepared to argue that children should attend no school rather than a non-Catholic one,[56] all were agreed that it was "with great pain that we see our young Catholics, our hopes," attending Protestant institutions.[57] The national schools, "built and supported from the funds of the State, equipped with everything needed to attract young people to them", were seen, not as a vindication of the rights of childhood, but as sources of temptation in which the mind and heart of Catholic youth would be "warped" and "corrupted".[58]

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55. Charles Pearson Report on the State of Public Education in Victoria Op. Cit. p.38.

56. This was implied by Patrick Geoghegan, Bishop of Adelaide, in a letter to Rev. Dr. Thomas Heptonstall. (Letter dated 24 Jul. 1860, held in Archives of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, Lyons, and quoted in J. Waldersee A Grain of Mustard Seed. The Society for the Propagation of the Faith in Australia 1837-1977 (in press, Sydney 1983) p.109-110.

57. Etienne Chastagnon, Missionary Priest at Bathurst. (Letter to the Paris Council of Work, Society for the Propagation of the Faith, 15 May, 1866, held in Archives of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, No.5, Rue Monsieur, Paris).

58. James Murray, Bishop of Maitland. (Letters of 20 Dec. 1866, 1 Oct. 1876, held in Archives of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, No.12, Rue Sala, Lyons). I am indebted to Dr. J. Waldersee for all information from the Archives of this Society.

This dilemma was in turn passed on to the Catholic parent, who was expected to support the provision of a separate system of elementary schools. Parents choosing to send their children to a State school when a "suitable and effective Catholic school was available "were threatened with various penalties over the period, including the withholding of sacraments from them and their children, and even excommunication.[59]

Despite ecclesiastical pressure, during the 1870s, many Catholic children were attending non-Catholic Schools, where equipment and teaching were superior.[60] According to Herbert Moran, even in the 1890s, "Catholic primary schools were extremely bad. Their teachers were often uneducated and always untrained. Piety rather than scholarship was aimed at, and in piety, fervour rather than first principles.... The Irish families were often torn between religious loyalty and the desire to give their children a sound education". [61]

In response to these problems, Catholic supporters were led to oppose the principle of compulsion, thereby cutting themselves off from secularist claims to knowledge of what was best for the individual child and the liberal State. For instance, those opposing compulsion fell into the trap of denying that the Church was the guardian of childhood, and identified religion not with the democratic principle of the rights of the child but with the anachronistic concept of the divine rights of parents. In NSW, Mr. O'Connor, opposing the Public Instruction Bill of 1879, argued that,

> Government is based on the parental right.... The offspring belongs to the parent, who is answerable to the Almighty for the well-being of his child, and the power that would come in between them and try to rob the father of the care of the child, and destroy its faith, would be doing the act of a barbaric spirit.[62]

Applied to the principle of compulsion, this argument marked the Church's case as autocratic and illiberal. For example, J.K. Heydon argued that, just as misuse or waste of property did not entitle the State to alienate that property, so failure to educate the child should not lead to deprivation of parental rights.[63]

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59. Archbishop Goold threatened excommunication during his opposition to Higinbotham's Public Instruction Bill 1867-72 (P. O'Farrell The Catholic Church in Australia Melbourne 1972 p.115; the Bishop of Maitland in 1900 refused parents the sacraments and children Confirmation on the same grounds. ("Regulations for the Holy Season of Lent" , Almanac and Family Home Annual for the Diocese of Maitland, 1900 p.35.) See also Australasian Catholic Record Vol.18 1912 p.126-7.

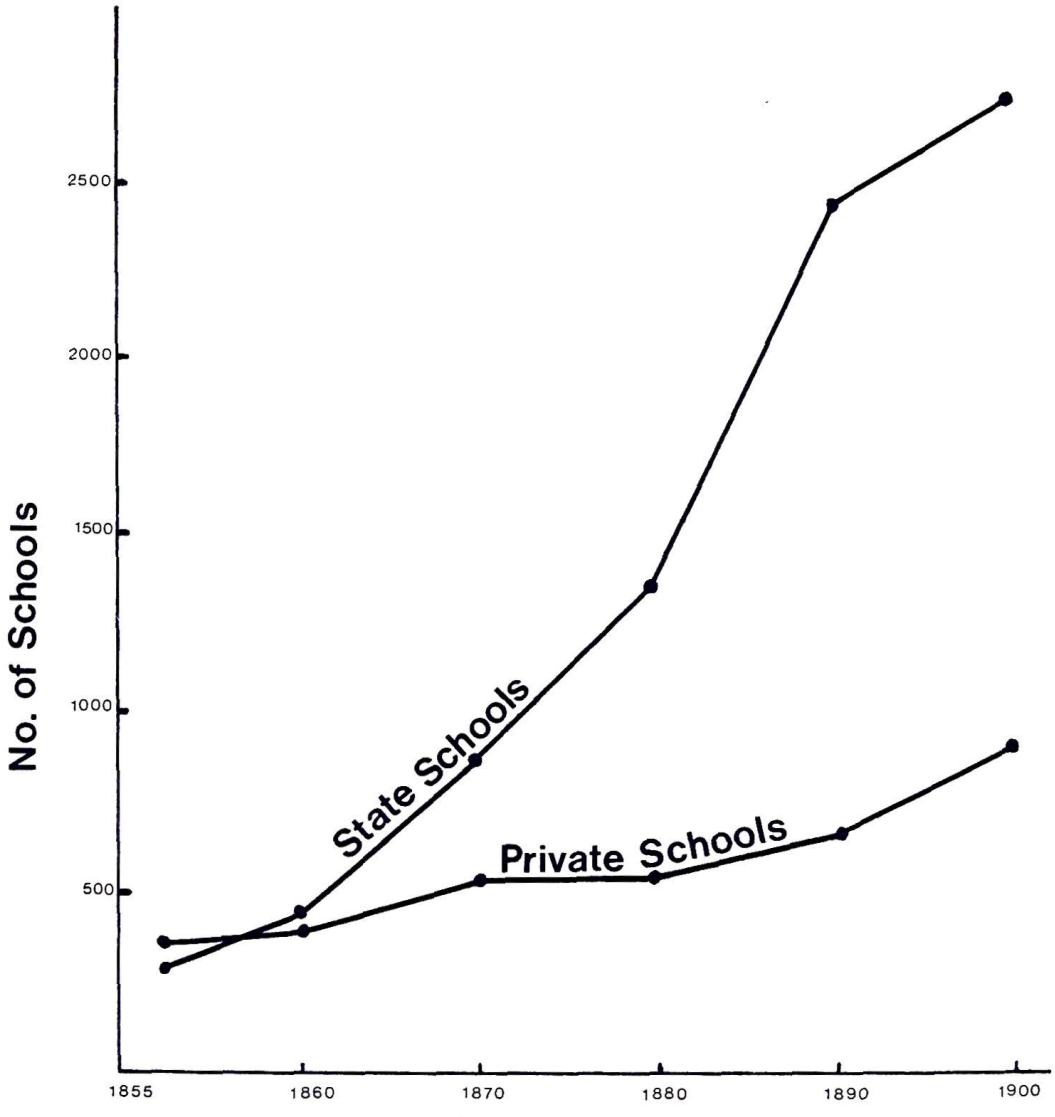
60. P. O'Farrell Op. Cit. p.118.

61. Herbert Moran Viewless Winds (London 1939) p.21. See also Christopher Brennan "Curriculum Vitae", unpublished MS, Mitchell Library, n.p.

62. NSWPD Op. Cit. p.376; see also Mr. Fellows, VPD 1872 Vol.15 p.1355-7.

63. J.K. Heydon Civil and Religious Liberty in Education (Sydney 1877) p.23-4.

SECULARIZATION OF EDUCATION
NO. OF STATE AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS°
NSW 1855-1900



Source: NSW Statistical Register 1911 p.1074.

°Secondary Institutions are included.

Fig. 2

In contrast, spokesmen for the Protestant churches, having largely abandoned attempts to prevent attendance at national schools, were less inclined to oppose compulsion and were concentrating on the issue of the secularity of the state-funded school. However, they too were drawn into arguments which militated against any claim to new expertise in child socialization, able to save both child and society. In particular, they were trapped into restatements of the doctrine of original sin. Thus, in 1878, the Anglican Bishop of Melbourne told a public meeting on the reintroduction of scriptural instruction in state schools in Victoria, that if crime had diminished as education increased, then this was because of a religious element still retained in education. Of the effects of a purely secular education, the civilized world as yet had no experience but, when it was tried, it was likely to be found that though "educated selfishness" might keep the people out of prison, it would not prevent them from wallowing in "those vices of sense which, though beyond the range of legal punishment, emasculate individuals and ruin nations."[64]

For both Catholic and Protestant alike, these lines of defence fatally allowed the religious profession to fit the secularist case against them - that they were exploiting and corrupting childhood in order to sustain superstition and sectarian ambition. As radical secularist Joseph Symes' letter to Dr. Moorhouse, published in The Liberator in 1884, bluntly put it:

> If you had any love of children, you would not give them religious instruction. To do so is to make sure they will grow up to hate each other until scepticism shall rescue them from the bitter slavery your teachings must create. Why not teach them truth, and so develop their intellectual and moral nature as to ensure their voluntary choice of what is right and proper when they come to the years of discretion?.... I am fully aware that to pervert the young is your only chance of success for the future.... You must pervert in infancy, or your superstition will soon die out.[65]

The Professionalization of The Teacher:

Where members of the religious profession were emerging from the debate over compulsion with their traditional status and authority in matters pertaining to the younger child further tarnished, the position of the secular teaching profession in this respect had undoubtedly improved. The growing commitment of the State increased the number of children institutionalized and generated the need for new professional input regarding their care and education.

Though teachers being recruited to staff the national schools were as yet lacking in unity and organization, spokesmen for them were already claiming expertise in the protective socialization of the young and the amelioration of the social problems. The emphasis on the State as the guardian of innocent childhood against greedy parent or capitalist, usefully put the issue in terms

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64. The Argus 8 Oct. 1878. p.6.

65. The Liberator Vol.4 No.1 Nov. 1885 p.3.

other than the transfer of authority for the moralization of the child from an old profession to a new and helped to conceal any vested interest on the part of the new class of teachers which was being created.

Thus William Wilkins, writing of the child's need for protection by the school from poor parental example and exploitation in fields, factories and mines, said that to make the child feel prematurely "something of the cares, the labours and the anxieties that properly belong to manhood", was a cruel thing from which "in cultured society" every parent strove "to shield his children." To Wilkins, not only was the isolated, protected world of the secular school the proper place for all children to be, but even the subjects taught there should not be pragmatically related to equipping the child to earn its own living in the adult world, but should be devoted to drawing out and developing the moral nature of the young.[66]

On behalf of the teacher, secularist intellectuals early pointed out that the superior proficiency of the State-trained staff demanded that the status, training and remuneration of the profession be improved.[67] This notion was supported by legislators in favour of the Public Instruction Acts:

> I desire that the profession of a teacher should be one of honourable ambition on the part of our best men, and of the highest talent, and not that it should be a refuge for those who have failed in other walks of life...[68]

By the late 1880s, where the strength of the theological radicalism itself was declining,[69] many of its ideas were being taken up by influential spokesmen for the individual professions. Advocacy of a strong role for the State in the monitoring of human relations no longer needed to be accompanied by attacks on the competence of the Church. The position of the secular expert, in touch with the latest scientific knowledge of human nature and needs, was becoming more assured. Some of the secularist theories of how human nature might be perfected at its source, for instance by reducing family size or by eugenic selection of parentage, remained several decades ahead of the time when, given the authority of medical science, they would become more widely advocated. However others, such as Divorce Law reform, were already winning the approval of such influential and theologically orthodox figures as Sir Alfred Stephen, for whom the support of free-thinkers like Thomas Walker had become an embarrassment.[70]

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66. The Principles That Underlie the Art of Teaching (Sydney 1886) p.35, 71.

67. Mr. Higinbotham VPD 1867 Vol. 4 p.1172 ; Charles Pearson Report on the State of Public Education in Vic. p.71-3.

68. Mr. Vale VPD 1867 Vol.4 p.1146.

69. F.B. Smith Op. Cit. p.34-47; G. Serle Op. Cit. p.147, 149.

70. Martha Rutledge "Sir Alfred Stephen and Divorce Law Reform in NSW 1886-1892" MA Thesis ANU 1966 p.123.



A PRIVATE SCHOOL AT HILL END, 1872

10. Schools such as these would vanish with the professionalization of teaching.

Holtermann Collection ML Box 8, No.18784.

For teachers, still lacking a method grounded in mental science, considerable theoretical conflict was present in their claims to knowledge of professional method in educating the young. This was derived from the differences between those who took a sentimental, literal interpretation of the theories expounded by Rousseau and Pestalozzi, based on the protection of the innocent, and those who favoured the more "rational" and Utilitarian methods based on the concept of child nature as a tabula rasa.

The idea of basing school methods on principles derived from the concept of innocence, developed in England by Blake and Wordsworth at the turn of the eighteenth century, had been further popularized during the 1840s by Charles Dickens. In Nicholas Nickleby (1839), Dombey and Son (1848) and Hard Times (1854) Dickens passionately attacked the repression of existing methods of schooling, in a vision of ignorant, insensitive masters who, concentrating on mechanically drilling in facts, corrupted and brutalized the vulnerable mind and body of the child. "Pale and haggard faces, lank and bony figures, children with countenances of old men, ... childhood with the light of its age quenched, its beauty gone, its helplessness alone remaining", was the image which Dickens created of "Gradgrindery", the kind of school method from which the child at all costs must be protected.

For advocates of school methods based on the Dickensian concept of child nature, the inherent goodness of the child required new, more child-centred techniques which avoided rote learning, in preference for ensuring that the desired moral values and skills already present in the child, were developed or "drawn out". Thus Higinbotham argued that a moral precept like "thou shalt not steal" should not be taught by rote to children, for such virtues were already present in their minds:

> I say you will find it more permanently written upon the tablets of the child's own nature, where that and all those precepts are written, not, it may be in ink, but in such a manner that the functions and action of education must draw it out and make it readable.[71]

In contrast, from the model of childhood based on the idea of the mind as a tabula rasa, there had developed a rather different view of secular teaching method. This reasoned that though the mind at birth was a blank sheet, and had no inborn ideas, it did have powers or faculties of perceiving, retaining and associating ideas, and that the overall strength of these could be improved by specific forms of exercise, such as the learning of a language, mathematics or science.[72] It followed that any cultivation of these powers was intrinsically worthwhile, contributing to the mental and moral strength of individual and society.

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71. VPD 1869 Vol.8 p.1823.

72. J. Cleverley and D.C. Phillips Op. Cit. p.16-20.

Versions of this theory also proved useful for exponents of the secular ideal to explain precisely how the social benefits which they forecast, would ensue. For instance, Henry Parkes, introducing the NSW Public Instruction Bill in 1879, agreed that "forms of mental training" were "the foundation of every virtue."[73] One of his supporters also revealed a debt to this theory. In postulating a connection between ignorance and intemperance, he said that the illiterate man went to the public house to seek "a state of oblivion" because his "intellectual faculties" were "undeveloped", his mind "a complete blank." Had he had the benefit of an education, even merely to the extent of being able to read and write, he would instead have been capable of spending his time profitably.[74]

Translated into a prescription for professional school-room method for teachers, both these accounts of secular child socialization techniques underwent considerable modification. For instance, in 1877 F.J. Gladman, who had been brought out from England especially to undertake duties associated with the expansion of State education and whose book on School Method was used as a prescribed text for teaching training courses,[75] ostensibly subscribed to the Dickensian method. Teachers, he wrote, must look back to their own childhood and seek an empathic rather than authoritarian relationship with the child:

> Children are no worse than we used to be; they are amenable to the same influences as we were; and it is unwise and cruel to think of them or deal with them as though they were exceptionally wicked. [76]

William Wilkins agreed. Teachers must study the emotional nature of the child and use "gentle methods", so that pupils would be "cheerful, tractable, yet full of life andenthusiastic of learning", not "sullen, defiant, yielding only to the rod."[77]

At the same time, firm discipline and rote learning were also advocated. William Wilkins, in spite of his vision of the teacher as the protector of the innocent child, was also drawn to the theories of Bain that senses, intellect, emotions and the will expanded together in parallel lines, each strengthened by the other and thus believed that all four should be "well and truly educated."[78] This also led him to advise teachers to use methods which

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73. NSWPD Op. Cit. p.262.

74. Mr. Dillon Ibid. p.357.

75. School Method (London 1877). A second book School Work was published posthumously in 1885.

76. School Work (London [1885]) p.13.

77. William Wilkins Op. Cit. p.10, 59.

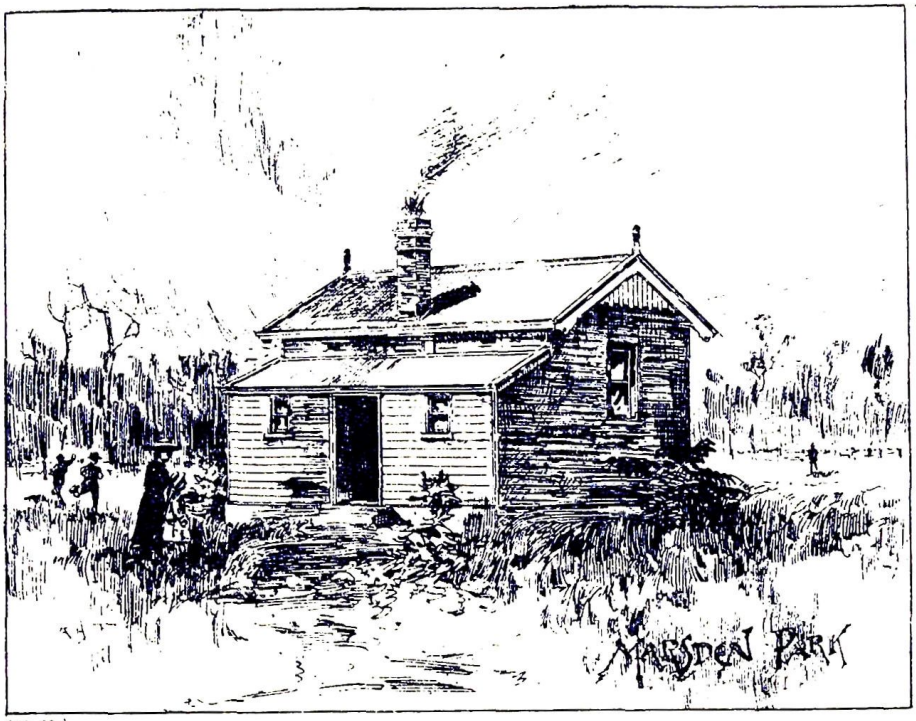
78. Ibid. p.17, 72.



SURRY HILLS SOUTH represents a 1st class school of three departments, affording accommodation for from 600 to 1,000 pupils, with all necessary class-rooms, lavatories, &c. These buildings are constructed of stone. Cost, £ 15,615 15s. 6d.

11. Secularist ideals in education carried over into school architecture. School buildings were intended to be both efficient and inspiring.

Minister for Public Instruction (NSW) Annual Report 1890.



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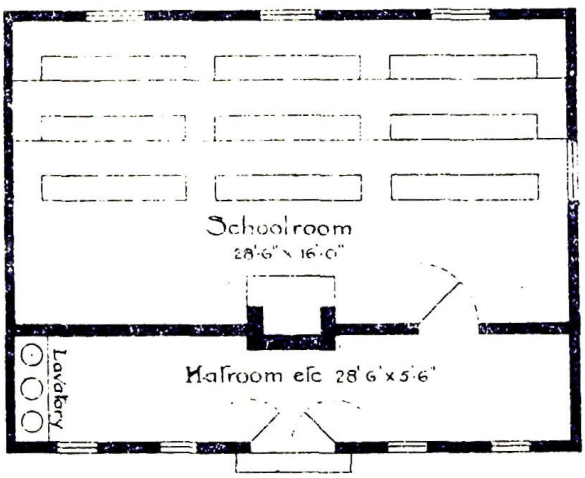
MARSDEN PARK.—Designed for an 8th class school, constructed of wood, and giving accommodation for 40 pupils. Cost, £ 228 5s. 3d.



MARSDEN PARK

Scale of feet



12. Even the bush school was in theory to be expertly geared to the needs and number of the children in the district.

Minister of Public Instruction (NSW) Annual Report 1890.

secularists would have condemned if advocated by members of the religious profession:

> ... individuality of character in children is less destructible than is generally supposed. From personal observation I conclude that in children it is almost impossible to destroy the idiosyncrasy, ... even if subjected for years to a course of discipline...[79]

This conflict in the advice on teaching technique would later be projected by a second generation of national school teachers as a betrayal of the sacred, more child-centred principles of Pestalozzi and Rousseau and a retreat towards the "Gradgrindery" of faculty psychology. However, they would prove scarcely more willing than their forebears to allow a more liberal class room method, while the mystique of the more subtle, empathic approach would similarly serve the same purpose of inflating the expertise of the secular teacher and his potential ability to smooth away class conflict and accelerate national progress.

Instructions to teachers in the national schools similarly made clear that the gains which were to be made for society by the professional teacher were to be achieved not by any liberation of the individual child, but by enforcement of the code of moral values which pedagogues and moralists had long evolved as appropriate to childhood. In NSW in 1865, the instructions to teachers included advice that,

> The strictest attention ... should be given to the moral training of the Scholars under their care; it will be their incumbent duty to repress quarrelling, profanity, cruelty to animals, and every approach to vice; to enforce the duty of obedience to parents and the observance to respectful behaviour to all persons; and to lose no opportunity of inculcating the principles of truth, honesty and self-reliance, industry, temperance, and other social virtues; the Teachers themselves being required to set an example of correct moral conduct.[80]

A copy of these "Practical Directions" was to hang on the wall of every national school.

In NSW after the 1880 Act, there was little change in the list of moral values to be inculcated except that with the principle of compulsion had come a new consciousness of the presence of the working-class child. In addition to the traditional virtues, there was now included the idea of counteracting any subversive ideas of class-consciousness emanating from the home, by arousing a sense of national unity and educating the child to appreciate democracy. As of old, teachers were instructed to "instil into the minds of their pupils the necessity of orderly and modest behaviour", "obedience to teachers", and "respect for the property of others", and aversion to "idleness, profanity and falsehood." In addition, they were to "impress on the minds of their pupils" principles of "justice and patriotism" and "to instruct them in the principles

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79. William Wilkins National Education: An Exposition of the National System of NSW (Sydney 1865) p.33-4.

80. Cited in William Wilkins Op. Cit. p.49.

of a free Government", and "the rights, duties and dignity of citizenship."[81] To ensure that teachers were aware of these ideals, they were required to study the Act as part of their training course.

To some extent, this belief that the national school ought to concentrate on implanting moral and social values in the child, was a reaction to the objection that education without religion would foster immorality and vice. For example, supporters of the NSW Public Instruction Bill in 1879 were acutely conscious of R.B. Vaughan's recent description of the national schools as "a system of practical paganism", causing "corruption of morals" and "national effeminacy."[82] According to Vaughan, in secular schools,

> The reason might have been exercised, and the intellect may have been informed, but ... the moral nature had not been educated, nor the passions elevated and refined.[83]

This made colonial advocates of the nations school strong supporters of the theory that to exercise the mind was to form the character. In practice, what this amounted to was that children were to be taught strong lessons in moral virtues via their reading material[84] and by the discipline of the school day. As the Principal of the Central Training College in Victoria, F.J. Gladman pointed out, the school's main task was to provide a moral education, to teach "some great lessons for life conduct".[85] For example, he pointed out that a history lesson provided opportunities for a new kind of subtle didacticism:

> Frequent appeals can be made to high principles, and to the nobler instincts of the pupils, the history lesson may thus become a great means of moral training. The right-minded teacher has the opportunity of inculcating a righteous indignation of wrong-doing, a detestation of meanness, a love for what is noble in intention and act.[86]

History had only recently won such approval as a suitable subject for young minds, previously having been considered too fraught with sectarian difficulties to be taught in the school.[87]

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81. The Public Instruction Act 1880 and Regulations Framed thereunder; together with Instructions to Teachers (Sydney 1891) p.36, 50.

82. See Parkes' reply to these accusations, NSWPD 1879 (Vol.1 First Series) p.268.

83. R.B. Vaughan A Pastoral Letter of the Archbishops and Bishops Exercising Jurisdiction in NSW June 1879 (Sydney 1880) p.5.

84. See The Australian Reading Books, introduced in NSW schools by William Wilkins from 1876.

85. Quoted in R.J.W. Selleck "F.J. Gladman - Trainer of Teachers" in C. Turney Pioneers of Australian Education Vol.2 (Sydney 1972) p.100.

86. F.J. Gladman School Work (London [1885]) p.258.

87. For the new approval of history as a means of moral training see NSWPD Op. Cit. p.278 (Mr. Buchanan) and 359 (Mr. Dillon).

Inside the National School:

The conflicts and inconsistencies in educational theory were reflected in class-room practice. Despite a rhetoric dwelling on the use of more child-centred techniques, professionalism in teaching was increasingly equated with outward visible conformity to rules and measurable results. A regular system of inspection checked the proficiency of students and the efficiency of teachers, while the hierarchical, centralized administrative systems, which developed in both States to administer the Acts, gave little scope for teachers to depart from approved departmental procedures. A system of training by the pupil-teacher method, together with promotion and, in Victoria, payment by results, also ensured compliance with recommended policies.

Apart from the deficiencies of their students, teachers could be held responsible for the failure of a pupil teacher to perform satisfactorily in his or her examinations. Especially if any carelessness or laziness on the pupil's part had not been previously reported, failure could be attributed to the teacher's want of efficiency or skill.[88]

Despite careful and sometimes grandiose plans for an impressive school architecture, buildings became overcrowded and poorly maintained. Staff in smaller schools were expected to control large classes of children of variable ages, working at rigidly prescribed curriculums, accommodated in the one room, and as late as the 1890s, seated at long forms, from which one child could not leave without disturbing the whole row. As enrolments increased in both city schools and in country centres, classes overflowed onto verandahs or were accommodated temporarily in tents. Here conditions were especially inimical to experimental teaching methods based on mild discipline and tolerance. Parents at Casino School in the summer of 1883 threatened to withdraw their children when the temperature in the school tent reached 98 degrees.[89] By the 80s and 90s, school buildings which had been in use for two or more decades were badly in need of repair. At Casino, the main school building was an unlined wooden edifice, its floor partly destroyed by white ants.[90]

School buildings were not only inadequate and uncomfortable, but sometimes unhealthy. At East Maitland in March 1893, the walls of the school were so saturated by the flood that, the teacher reported, they remained damp for "upwards of six months" afterwards.[91] At Cleveland St. in 1891, a pupil-teacher requested removal to another school on the grounds that she was required to"teach in a lavatory". The Inspector endorsed her complaint, remarking that

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88. See for example NSW State Archives School Files, Casino P.S. 25 Jul. 1883 (5/15325), East Maitland P.S. 24 Nov. 1887 (5/16694).

89. NSW State Archives School Files Casino P.S. (1883).

90. Ibid. (1878).

91. NSW State Archives School Files East Maitland P.S.

the basement to which she referred was "a very objectionable place to teach in, in cold, windy or inclement weather" but that the staff taught there by turns. Four years later, classes were still accommodated in this basement, the only alternative being, according to the Inspector, "to crowd the lobbies".[92] At Broken Hill in 1891, the teacher telegraphed for the means to enclose the foundations with wire netting in order to keep out the rabbits, which were dying under the floorboards and causing a "sickening smell."[93]

In NSW, teachers were held responsible for the "sanitary condition" of the schools, and when occasionally prosecuted by local council's Inspector of Nuisances, were not necessarily supported by the Department, even if they had requested that the facilities be improved. When in 1881, the teacher at Bourke Street School, Sydney, was prosecuted on the grounds that the schools' two water closets were dangerous to the health, not merely of the pupils, but of the surrounding residents, the Department censured him for his "neglect". For the "state of filth" and the "offensive smell" he was held responsible, "the only extenuation being that the place is so dark it is not possible to see what is inside, except with the aid of a light."[94]

Themselves subjected to the values of subordination to established authority, hard work, self-discipline, thrift, temperance and the avoidance of controversial public issues, teachers were not inclined to tolerate deviance from these values on the part of their charges. In any case, a strict daily routine was prescribed, to which all schools were expected to conform. For instance, in NSW, children assembled in the playground at 8.45 am; ten minutes later they were "arranged in ranks, inspected as to cleanliness and marched into school".[95]

Although the use of school uniforms and colours and banners was as yet absent, it was clear that in the national schools, monastic influence would be replaced with a militaristic one. The emphasis in educational theory on exercising the faculties, was being expanded to include the notion that teaching should exercise every muscle and nerve centre in the body. [96] In secularist Sunday Schools, though this had early taken the form of gymnastics and calisthenics done to music, it had been increasingly expressed in emphasis on marching, with much use made of emblems and flags.[97]

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92. NSW State Archives School Files Cleveland St. P.S. (5/15395).

93. NSW State Archives School Files Broken Hill P.S. (5/15099).

94. NSW State Archives School Files Bourke St. P.S. (5/15046.3) (1881). See also Bega P.S. (5/14846) (Sep. 1884).

95. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Report 1890 (NSW LA V&P 1891-2 Vol.3) p.310.

96. Harbinger of Light Apr. 1876 p.997-8.

97. Ibid. Dec. 1876 p.1124.



FIG. 1—POSITION FOR WAND MOVEMENTS.

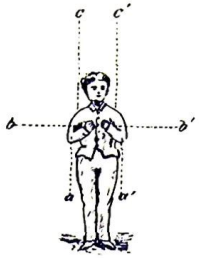

FIG. 2—POSITION FOR CALISTHENICS.

6th *Command.*—POSITION FOR WAND MOVEMENTS: Erect as at Fig. 1. Music plays first strain of tune in double or quadruple time. At the first beat of the repeat, extend right arm to *a*, palm horizontal; at second, to *b*, palm in front; third to *c*, palm to front; and at fourth beat, to *d*. Repeat four times, and then execute similar movements with left hand. Then, right and left alternately; and last, both hands together. The body should gracefully participate in the movement. The Wand Movements may then be followed by the

7th *Command.*—POSITION FOR CALISTHENICS: Position as in Fig. 2.

The drawing sufficiently explains the exercise. Keeping time to the music, commence with the right arm thrusting downward and back to position alternately, bending only at the elbow. Having repeated this four times, follow with the left arm through a similar exercise, and then right and left alternately, concluding with both together. Repeat the above to *b* and *b*," *c* and *c*," ending the series with a similar striking movement directly in front.

There are various combinations of the above arm movements that may be devised, and of which what we have given will be sufficient as a guide.

FIG. 3.



FIG. 4.





FIG. 5.

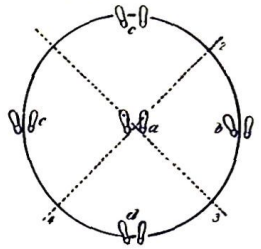

FIG. 6.

SECOND SERIES.

Position.—REST ARMS, as in Fig. 5.

Take position with shoulders well back at centre *a*; step to right with right foot, from *a* to *b*; follow with left; return; repeat four times; step to left with left foot, *a* to *c*, and follow with right; return; repeat. Similar movements to *e* forward and *d* backward.

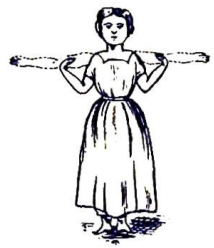

FIG. 7.



FIG. 8

Position, as in Fig. 7,

Extend right arm to *a*; return; repeat four times. Extend left in the same way; alternate four times; simultaneously, four times. In concluding bring both arms to front, as in Fig. 8, *a*.

Then keeping arms rigid, swing them through the circle as shown in Fig. 8; first forward, then backward; at conclusion, bring hands to breast as Fig. 2. At next beat of music, extend both down simultaneously; repeat; out-repeat; up-repeat; front-repeat. Slap the hands four times, bow twice.

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13. In spite of the Secularists' belief in "liberating" the child, activities recommended for use in their Sunday Schools required rote learning and prompt obedience.

W.H. Terry The Lyceum Leader (Melbourne 1884).

Spokesmen for State educational policy also approved of the growing idea of physical and quasi-military training, as a means of disciplining the will. "Most school movement should be executed at the word of command, which may be given verbally, and in military style," Gladman advised in 1885.[98]

In the National Schools, not only drill, marching and marking time, but the formal learning of lessons by rote was seen as a valuable disciplinary activity. For instance, in NSW, children in Third Class were beginning Geography, which meant learning "Towns of NSW and Europe" and "Mapping" from memory. By Fourth Class, the History course included memorizing the achievements of Australian explorers and learning the names and reigns of English monarchs from "Henry VII to Victoria." In Arithmetic, children in this grade were required to master "Vulgar and Decimal Fractions, Interest, Discount, Profit and Loss, Mensuration of Surfaces, and Mental Arithmetic." Fourth Class children also were expected to have reached proficiency in Grammar, "All the Parts of Speech" and "Parsing and Analysis Generally."[99]

Though compulsory attendance at a National School was of mixed value to all children, it was on those of the poorer classes that the conflict between rhetoric and reality chiefly rebounded. For instance, though in theory, national education was "free", in practice parents were required to contribute weekly on behalf of each child attending the school. Teachers were instructed to use their "best efforts to avoid an accumulation of arrears, and that long-standing debts must be regarded as a Teacher's want of attention to this part of his duties."[1] This task involved the teacher in personal enquiry into the circumstances of debtors and putting pressure on them to pay. On the routine form which they were obliged to return to the Department in these cases, they had to state the debtor's occupation, number of children, the efforts made by the teacher to collect the debt, and the teacher's recommendation, which was expected to be an unequivocal judgement of a family's capacity to pay. Even a comment from a teacher like, "Judging from the appearance of his wife and small family of unkempt children and also the household surroundings, I am inclined to think he is not in a position to pay ..." was not acceptable. This teacher was instructed to make "proper inquiries" before submitting his report, and from then on appeared to do so. Pursuing a debt of 16/6 in 1888, he said that he applied "personally" to the debtor "time after time", and of a persistent defaulter, wrote that the eldest daughter "could easily earn 10/- to 12/- per week at service", and if the father "were not exceedingly lazy and self-indulgent, he could pay his fees."[2]

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98. F.J. Gladman Op. Cit. p.20.

99. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Op. Cit. p.311.

1. Printed memorandum distributed to teachers in NSW during the 1880s and 1890s (NSW State Archives School Files).

2. NSW State Archives School Files Casino P.S. Feb. 1884 and June 1888.

Backgrounds in unskilled labour were under-represented in the ranks of the teachers, who were drawn chiefly from families where the father was a clergyman, teacher, railway official, policeman, gaol warder, clerk or shopkeeper.[3] It followed that teachers were unlikely to question the moral and political values of education ideology, and indeed were likely to assume that a major part of their role ought to be to act as parent surrogates in the transmission of these values. Meanwhile, the duty of fee-collecting moved them into the role of moral judges of the personal worth of the poor.

The collection of fees also constituted an unofficial lesson in moral and social values for the children, especially those of defaulters:

> We were required to pay threepence a week school fees, and each Monday morning in every class the roll was publicly called and the pupil paid up. The boys who did not have the money always looked uncomfortable. There was something humiliating about it all, especially as each guilty-faced youngster had to proffer publicly some excuse for the default.[4]

Complaints from parents that their child was being victimised by their inability to pay were not infrequent. A mother in the Casino district in 1888 warned the teacher, "... as you insist on having the money and exposing the children before the school... I shall have to keep them home and report the reason to the Inspector,"[5] "I can't understand the government pushing a poor man like this. If I am compelled to pay, I must take them from School," wrote the parent of a child at Cleveland Street School in September 1889.[6]

In the confrontations over fees, teachers could prove powerful adversaries, using their professional position to full advantage. This was evident in the case of Mrs. Ellen Burton of Surry Hills, who in 1889 objected that, though she had sent a note to the Cleveland Street school, explaining her inability to pay, her child had been kept in and made an example of, as the only child who had not paid her threepence. According to Mrs. Burton, after several days of this treatment, the child had said "Mother is coming up":

> ... and Miss Niland said I hope she dose[sic]. I went up Monday Evening to have an understanding and all the trouble was about 3d and I got fritened[sic] of their rude behaviour to me.... each time I was to the school they treated me unfair...[7]

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3. Bruce Mitchell "Improving Teachers" Journal of Australian Studies No.11, Nov. 1982, P.57-60.

4. H. Moran Op. Cit. p.14-15, of Darlington P.S. during the 1890s.

5. NSW State Archives School Files Casino P.S. 1888 (Mrs George Marshall).

6. NSW State Archives School Files Cleveland St. P.S. 24 Sep. 1889. This parent was prosecuted following a visit to his grocery shop by the Chief Inspector to investigate personally the circumstances of the case.

7. Ibid. 16 Apr. 1889.

Teachers enjoyed a similar professional and social advantage in respect to parental objections to the use of corporal punishment, another area where the gap between professional ideology and practice was extreme. Corporal punishment, long a feature of school-rooms, though perhaps resorted to from expediency rather than from belief in its efficacy for breaking the will and driving out intrinsic sin, was now officially condemned. In NSW, Regulations framed for the administration of the Public Instruction Act of 1880, carefully defined and limited its use in the national school. They stipulated that corporal punishment was to be inflicted by the head of the school only, or under his direction, never by a pupil-teacher, and was to be used only in "extreme cases". "Failure or inability to learn is not to be regarded as an extreme case; and corporal punishment is not to be recognized as a proper aid to teaching...." "Boxing of pupils' ears and the tapping of children on the head" were also forbidden, as was corporal punishment of female pupils twelve years and over.[8]

In spite of theoretical safeguards in this respect, caning remained a routine aspect of a national education. A teacher at Casino in 1886, who appears to have taken the Pestalozzian mystification of educational method literally, was asked to explain the "weakness in discipline" which an Inspector had reported of the school. He replied that,

> ... from a desire to avoid corporal punishment, I have endeavoured to lead my pupils to industry and good conduct by precept and example, instead of silently and promptly punishing every deviation therefrom.

The decision of the District Inspector made it clear that such an attitude was unacceptable:

> I recommend that Mr. Law be informed that a very material improvement in discipline and attainments will be expected at next inspection; also that his explanation is unsatisfactory.[9]

In Victoria, the Royal Commission of 1883-4 was critical even of the theory that corporal punishment should be controlled. Under regulations introduced in 1880, punishments were to be inflicted only with the authority of the head teacher, and with a strap rather than a rod. Any punishment was to be recorded in a Register and was on no account to be applied to girls.[10] Teachers however, declared that discipline had deteriorated as a result of these regulations, and the Commission recommended that the head teacher should be "left unfettered by the Department to exercise his authority and apply his correction."[11]

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8. The Public Instruction Act of 1880 and Regulations Framed Thereunder; Together with Instructions to Teachers (Sydney 1891) p.49.
9. NSW State Archives School Files Casino P.S. 18 Aug. and 13 Sep. 1886.
10. Minister of Public Instruction Report 1881 Circular 80 / 10 Jul. 1880.
11. Second Report of the Royal Commission ... to Enquire Into ... the Administration, Organization and General Conditions of the Existing System of Public Instruction (Vic LA V&P 1883 Vol.2 [First Session] p.viii-ix).

Cases where the punishment was so extreme as to cause parental complaint were investigated by a Departmental enquiry, presided over by the Inspector. At these enquiries, the testimony of children, though necessarily formalized by the officialdom of the occasion, nevertheless suggests a laconic acceptance of physical violence as an inevitable part of the school world:

> He [the teacher, Mr. Anstey] told George that he had better stop kicking or he would have to get me to hold him. The teacher took the boy across his knee and beat him on the seat with the cane. The boy then stood up and Mr. Anstey caned him on the hand. I do not know how many strokes were given.[12]

Though it would seem that children were punished irrespective of social rank, if a parent lodging a complaint was sufficiently confident, articulate and experienced in community matters, a charge of cruelty against a teacher could be won. Thus at Cleveland Street in November 1890, a ten year-old boy, who allegedly called a female pupil-teacher, Miss Maloney, a "Fenian Cat" when she was passing his house in Strawberry Hills, was caned at school next day by the principal teacher. In this case, the boy ran home and the mother took him immediately to the Clerk of Petty Sessions, who verified that the legs were swollen and bleeding and "the flogging was excessive." At the Departmental enquiry which followed, this judgement, plus the fact that the parents were able to prove that it was not their child who made the offending remark, resulted in the teacher being reprimanded for "hasty action" without more searching enquiry of the facts and for "administering the punishment in an improper manner and with undue severity, as evidenced by the marks".[13]

Similarly at East Maitland in 1896, a teacher, Miss Noad, was confident that her punishment of two girls for not preparing their History lesson at home, as instructed, was entirely warranted:

> As it was a case of <u>direct disobedience</u>, I thought a little corporal punishment would act as a deterrent.

Both girls were caned on the hands and one given "two slaps on the shoulders for <u>obstinacy</u>." Miss Noad also felt justified in taking one of the parents to task for having the audacity to complain:

> Allow me to add that if you, as a parent, upheld the teacher's authority, and insisted on obedience to orders at School, it would be an aid to obedience at home.

This parent was a local storekeeper. However, one of the parents of the other girl was the principal teacher at the Maitland Boys' High School, and this may have influenced the decision of the ensuing enquiry, that Miss Noad be reprimanded for using corporal punishment in a matter pertaining to homework, and upon girls over twelve years.[14]

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12. NSW State Archives <u>School Files</u> Bega P.S. Nov. 1885. (Statement of Arthur Keir aged 14, at enquiry into corporal punishment of a class mate. The child had been caned for truancy).

13. NSW State Archives <u>School Files</u> Cleveland St. P.S. Nov. 1890. (Case of Sidney Westacott).

14. NSW State Archives <u>School Files</u> East Maitland P.S. May 1896.

In inner city areas, some boys reacted to their punitive treatment within the school not with the humiliation suggested by Moran, but by making the building a target for vandalism after school hours. At Cleveland Street school in 1895, four boys were caught by the police for breaking windows, damaging the water closets and writing on the walls of the school, while at Bourke Street Woolloomooloo, where a night school was being conducted in 1881, the teacher complained that boys were throwing stones onto the roof to disrupt proceedings. At the teacher's request, police were put on duty every night to catch the culprits but succeeded only in arresting two small boys "who were making a noise in front of the door."[15]

Teachers were inclined to see this kind of behaviour as the fault of the home, not the school:

> The mere fact of asking the parents to pay the comparatively trifling cost of the last breakages would not, in my opinion, have any deterrent effect on boys whose fathers have not sufficient control over them.[16]

In spite of these discrepancies between theory and practice, clearly even rank-and-file teachers were beginning to assume a certain professional expertise on childhood, seeing themselves as implementing an ideology which had a universal relevance, grounded in the nature of childhood and not dependent on social class. This became especially evident with respect to enforcement of the compulsion principle, where considerable difficulties were experienced.

For many colonial families, both urban and rural, full-time labour of children was an economic necessity. Even for those who were better off, the part-time labour of children was often required on a seasonal basis or during emergencies such as the illness or accident affecting the breadwinner. For the children of selectors, there was both seasonal and daily work to be done by the young, as Mary Fullerton recalled:

> ... there was a theory amongst our elders that young hands are most expert in potato-picking. Fathers of the pioneer type regarded it as child's work; the hired men had long backs, and, besides, disdained it.... Even school was preferable to most of us, but none ever played truant from homework for all that; it wasn't feasible. There were many home duties that called for a break in our attendance at school... [17]

Fathers who were gardeners, dairymen, mechanics and brickmakers often relied on the labour of their children, for these were labour-intensive occupations where even a small child could make a large contribution. Also, while possibly having no quarrel with the moral values being taught in the National School, many parents did not see the curriculum as having a great deal of relevance to the

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15. NSW State Archives School Files Bourke St. P.S. 18 Aug. 1881.
16. NSW State Archives School Files Cleveland St. P.S. 21 Jan 1895. (Principal Teacher).
17. Mary Fullerton Bark House Days (Melbourne 1964) p.14.

world of work. To them, getting a permanent job depended less on proof of formal skills learned at school, than on factors such as access to information of where work was available provided by family or friends, and experience.[18] By the age of seven or eight, city children found employment in a variety of light, unskilled tasks. For instance, they could carry up the lumps of clay to be shaped by the brick-maker or sort tobacco and tie it up in bundles. Children were also employed in tailors' and drapers' workshops, and in the food trade. For older boys, a preferred job was conductor on the horse-drawn omnibuses.[19] Also for boys, paper-selling offered part-time work, while for girls, minding younger siblings was a source of intermittent absences from school, especially if the mother was employed outside the home.[20]

The professionalization of education however, depended on compulsion. For the teacher both theory and practice required that every child should proceed at the pace set for its age, and this demanded regular attendance. As a Truant Officer explained in 1883, the "big boy" with his pipe and tobacco, aged twelve or so but defectively educated, was a problem in the school, for he had to be put in a class with the little ones. Though he got along with them very well, from him they learned "more than they should". The result was that parents complained and some even withdrew their children. The intermittent absentee was a problem affecting the efficiency of the whole system.[21]

Despite additional legislation, in neither State were the administrators of the education system able successfully to enforce school attendance by 1914.[22] Meanwhile, their attempts to do so accelerated the process whereby their construction of childhood would come to be seen as a classless, human norm, applicable to every child. In Victoria, paid full-time Truant Officers collected lists of names of absentees from teachers and called on parents to ascertain the cause. In the cities, they visited door-to-door in an attempt to round up cases where children had not been enrolled at any school. Some accosted children found playing in the street during school hours, or employed

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18. Ian Davies "Transitions: School and Work in the Family Economy" Australia 1888 Bulletin No.10 Sep. 1982 p.55.

19. NSW Select Committee on the Employment of Children 1875-6 (NSW LA V&P 1875-6, Vol.6) p.730, 881-2, 889-93, 901-8.

20. See Annual Reports of Sydney Ragged Schools, e.g. Twenty-First Annual Report 1881 p.8; evidence of Traunt Officers at Third and Final Report of the Royal Commission on Education Vic LA V&P 1884 Vol.3 p.53-4 and at Royal Commission on Employees in Shops... Vic LA V&P 1884 Vol.2 p.92 ff.

21. Third and Final Report of Royal Commission on Education 1884 p.48.

22. See estimates of the numbers not attending for the required number of days despite a recent tightening of the powers of the Traunt Officer under the Education Act of 1910, in Minister of Public Instruction (Vic.) Report 1912-1913 p.10.

in factories, though these methods were usually effective only in gaining a saucy reply:

> In one place I went to ... a youngster about the height of this table, said he was eighteen years of age. I said "Eight or ten, my boy, you mean," he said "No eighteen." "Who told you that?" "My mother, and she ought to know", and that shut me up.[23]

In NSW, spokesmen appointed by the Department of Public Instruction in 1880 to administer the compulsion clauses of the Act, saw the issue in terms of the model of innocence. This masked the economic basis of poverty, and projected social problems in moral and personal terms. The innocence of the child implied parental guilt, as parents prosecuted under the Act in NSW found. In many cases, "excuses" such as that a child's earnings were required "because his father has no work" or "that mother, a widow, required his earnings," were not accepted and such parents were fined.[24]

Even in cases where the administration accepted that the poverty of the parents entitled them to "our sympathy", it was still believed "the clear duty of the Department to see that the law is obeyed." In a case of a thirteen-year-old boy who had attended only 16 days of the 70 required in each half year, the School Attendance Officer admitted that the reason given, that his earnings were required, was "no doubt true." "The mother is a widow with four children and a bed-ridden father to support. An older boy and this son are the only ones who earn anything. The mother goes out washing and takes in mangling."[25] No conviction was recorded in this case. However, in general, the attitude was that the underlying issues were less the financial pressure on families, than the absence of further statutory law to make factory owners, as well as families, liable to prosecution. In its absence, it was said, there were always parents to be found who were "prepared to sacrifice their children's education for the sake of a trifling present gain."[26] According to the Minister for Public Instruction, a conviction was difficult to obtain, and of no use. "It only means a small fine, and then it is done with. The parents consider it pays them to pay the fine."[27]

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23. Royal Commission on Employees in Shops (Vic LA V&P 1884 Vol.2 p.96 (J.E. Griffiths, Traunt Officer).

24. NSW State Archives Compulsory Education (20/12584).

25. Ibid. (Case of James Shearer, Dulwich Hill P.S. 1891).

26. Ibid. ("Progress Report" on employment of children in factories 15 Apr. 1891.).

27. Ibid. (Deputation from NSW Trades and Labour Council to Minister for Public Instruction, complaining of employment of young people in factories, 18 May 1891).

Despite this view of the administrators, that the fine was no deterrent, the usual sum exacted, 5/- plus 5/6 costs, did constitute considerable hardship, since it amounted to at least a full week's wages brought in by the child. Since it was now assumed that it was "the first instinct of a conscientious parent to make a great sacrifice if necessary, in order to secure the advantages of the best education possible for his child,"[28] then all families were expected to be able to survive not only without the income from the labour of their younger members, but also while paying out school fees. If families did not share these ends and have the means to effect them, then they violated the essential qualities of parenthood itself.

Despite the egalitarian sentiments of the secular intellectuals and teachers, a successfully completed elementary education did not in itself allow the poorer child to climb into positions of leadership, authority and wealth in colonial society. For entry to professional careers, some form of secondary training was needed, and for this, parents had to be able to pay. Admittedly, success in the bookish subjects on the curriculum, together with passing the unwritten tests in cleanliness, industry and subordination, could lead to entrance to the teaching service, for in addition to the city training college, the national schools offered their own system of training on the job. In NSW, attempts were made to provide state-funded High, "Continuation" and "Superior" schools, but these were limited in number and charged daunting fees.[29] Government scholarships, to enable the poorer children to extend their education beyond the elementary level, and so qualify for entrance to civil service or the university, were also few. In NSW, the Act of 1880 established some 60 scholarships, bursaries and half-bursaries, enabling children who were successful in competitive examinations to prolong their education at the State High and Continuation schools and Sydney Grammar. There were also 10 bursaries established to enable a three-year free attendance at Sydney University.

In Victoria, scholarships were somewhat more numerous. Under Pearson's ministry (1886-90), 200 were offered annually for attendance at private secondary schools, plus 12 Exhibitions which enabled attendance at University. Though the number of these awards was halved in 1891 and the scheme discontinued altogether in 1893, private schools were offering some 65 Resident and 260 Non-Resident

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28. Mr. Cohen NSWPD 1879 (Vol.1 First Series) p.447.

29. After the closure of the State Girls' and Boys' High Schools at Goulburn (1886) and Bathurst (1898), State High Schools were confined to Sydney and Maitland Girls' and Boys' High Schools and Fort Street. Fees at the State High Schools were 2 gns. per term during the 1880s, raised to 3 gns in 1893. There were 4 terms per year. In the early 1890s, Sydney Grammar charged £3 per term in the junior and £4 in the senior school. (I am indebted to Geoff Sherington for this information.)

awards in 1898-9, and State Scholarships were reintroduced in 1900.[30]

Though waiving payment of fees, and in some cases, paying an allowance, the scholarships were of no help to a child whose family could not forgo the income earned by the prospective student while engaged in full-time study instead of full-time work. In many cases, the scholarship-holder had to be the youngest and last of the children, and was in any case likely to discover that the scholarship brought with it the stigma of poverty at secondary and tertiary institutions.[31]

Although educational theorists had no quarrel with making social stratification depend on moral and intellectual qualities, instead of inherited power and wealth,[32] the economic or social questions affecting a child's acquisition and demonstration of "ability and intellect" were not raised. Certainly the University was to be open to "the poor child with intellect," but even the most liberal of reformers tended to assume that there would not be many of these to disturb the existing class structure. Nor did they ask whether this scarcity was related to social or economic issues, but explained it by qualifying the secular environmental model of childhood. "Nature" had made some "distinctions" which it was not for them to balance. There was"no such thing as equality... You might level, but you could not equalize."[33]

For the children of the poor, compulsory attendance at a national school, while it may have facilitated entry into a trade, did not guarantee access to a white-collar career. Nor did it contribute to their understanding of their position in society. Formal lessons in parsing and analysis, profit and loss and the intricacies of English history, had no relevance to what the children of the working class needed to know. This exclusion of the realities of working-class experience, together with the stigmatization of poverty and the wielding of professional and social power by teachers, rather than illuminating to children the economic basis of poverty, tended to obfuscate it, by suggesting that the failure of themselves and their parents to rise in society was due to individual moral and intellectual limitations. As an experience, it may also have generated the view that formal education was useless and best terminated as early as possible, an attitude which in turn suited the placid assumptions of legislators and theorists, that few children of

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30. Minister of Public Instruction Annual Reports 1887-8 p.xix-xxii, 1898-9 p.24-5, 1899-1900 p.23. In NSW by 1911, some 859 Public School Scholarships and Bursaries were awarded (NSW Statistical Register p.447).

31. Lewis Rodd A Gentle Shipwreck (Melbourne 1965) p.26, 66, 105, 111, 135-6. According to Dymphna Cusack, the scholarship-holder continued to be disadvantaged by "snobbery" into the 1920s. (Dymphna Cusack and Norman Freehill Dymphna Cusack Melbourne 1975, p.25).

32. Mr. Barton NSWPD Op. Cit. p.460.

33. Ibid. Mr. Greenwood p.1058; Mr. Lucas p.1051.

the lower classes would avail themselves of the opportunity to climb the educational ladder, now generously and justly made available to them.

Some parents displayed considerable initiative in endeavouring to meet the ideal of parenting as constructed by the secular intellectuals and their followers who advocated compulsory education. For example, during the 1880s, families living in the ephemeral settlements which accompanied the construction of the railways, were writing to request schools for their children.

A storekeeper at the Main Camp on the Illawarra line wrote in 1885 that some forty children presently had to travel two or three miles along "a most dangress[sic] track along the line now being constructed... whilst ther[sic] is a great number that does not go anewher[sic] I have two little girls myself, that does not go.... We would be well satisfied with a tent School and it could easily be shifted when the Section is finished..."[34]

Evidence of support for education by people of lower social rank modifies the views of the teachers and administrators regarding parental opposition to, and frustration of, their efforts on behalf of the young. It also illustrates the dangers of making assumptions about attitudes to childhood based on class.

It does not, however, alter the fact that the ideology which such parents were in effect endorsing, was not designed to achieve the upward mobility of their children but their moralization. Evidence of the preoccupation of the poor with the advancement of their own children might be seen as a measure of the success of the ideal underlying the secularist concept of the State as the guardian of the innocent child - that of turning the working classes away from organization on class lines and towards acceptance of the terms of the existing socio-economic system.

Meanwhile, the principle of State intervention between parent and child was being tested in areas other than the national school. Charitable organizations to "save" the child from the neglectful parent were establishing facilities for full-time, state-assisted, institutional care. In so doing, they were laying the foundation for implementation of another secularist ideal, that of permanent care by the State for children presently evading the protective vigilance of the national school.

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34. NSW State Archives Ragged Schools 3 Feb. 1885 (20/13030) (Mr. Bramley).

CHAPTER THREE

RESCUE

State and Charitable Care of the Destitute Child

> There are numbers of children in this city, who were at their mothers' bosoms but yesterday, who are false and cold and greedy before their time. Infants almost, they practise the arts and selfishness of old men. Behind their childish faces are wiles and wickedness, and a hideous precocity of artifice. Quite in their early lives, they are polluted in heart and imagination, and corrupt and wicked of tongue.[1]

During the 1870s and 1880s, interest in the moral education of the working-class child was not confined to secular intellectuals and professional teachers. Members of charitable organizations were also concerned that the childhood of all classes should be protected and prolonged, and were taking action to effect this.

Unlike the educational theorists, the focus of these groups was on forms of socialization other than that provided by formal secular schooling, and they displayed little interest as yet in the construction of a scientific or rational pedagogy. They were motivated by the ideal of Christian service in general, and in particular by the Dickensian sentiment that children should be open, artless and innocent, little angels rather than little adults.

The literary cult of childhood, reaching its apotheosis in the Dickensian construction, was especially influential when enlarged to include the children of the poor. In this context, the image of the "lost" child acquired a unique poignancy which, converging with Evangelical initiatives, generated a strong charitable response on behalf of the young. The numerous urban children who did not fit the Dickensian image were seen as neglected and exploited, and as such, in need of immediate "rescue" from the "fearful evil" of their environment. It was believed that, if separated from exposure to the street and provided with religious and industrial training, they could be saved from physical and moral degradation and made into "virtuous, good and useful citizens".[2]

Colonial charities to assist, or if necessary replace, the role played by the family in child care, followed precedents set in Britain. There, the increase in family distress in the wake of industrialization, coinciding with the growth of Non-Conformist faiths which stressed the importance of good works, had produced a plethora of charitable activities by the late eighteenth century.[3]

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1. First Annual Report of the Sussex Street Ragged School 1861 p.7.
2. Ibid.
3. Anne Summers "A Home From Home - Women's Philanthropic Work in the Nineteenth Century" in Sandra Burman (ed.) Fit Work for Women (London 1979) p.37-41.

Though catering for all ages, many of the new charities in Britain had focussed on the young, the destitute child being seen as specially deserving of assistance. Under the impact of the ideology of innocence, the child was, unlike the adult pauper, seen as in no way responsible for its fate and totally unable to help itself. For instance, children who were not only poor, but ill or dying, were a popular object of charity by the mid-nineteenth century. The London Hospital for Sick Children was founded in 1858, having been personally promoted by Dickens himself.

Similarly, institutions to shelter foundlings, which had been growing in European cities during the eighteenth century, found new favour from the 1840s. Though the earlier institutions were known to have become hopelessly overcrowded, stimulating the idea that they were but an encouragement to sexual improvidence by both the married and unmarried poor, in the rising tide of Dickensian sentiment, infanticide and abandonment figured as the ultimate symbols of the moral corruption of the poor. Further, these practices lent themselves to projection as a moral lapse on the part of the sinful adult, and writers rarely had to confront the economic factors which forced mothers to such desperate extremes. By 1872, the intolerable pathos of this vision of the problem had found expression in an Infant Life Protection Act in England.

Almost as pathetic a symbol of what seemed to the writing and reading public, evidence of the brutal indifference of the adult poor, were the older children of the slums, whose attempts to supplement the family income by various street trades earned them the title of "arabs". From the 1840s in Britain and the colonies, they became the special object of attention of writers and journalists, who envisaged their plight as an unjust deprivation of a happy childhood and a potential source of vice and crime.

Like the secularist faith in universal education, the charitable concept of rescue flourished under colonial conditions. Even during the years of economic prosperity which followed the turbulent 1850s, the circumstances of many families were ill-suited to realization of the Dickensian image of home and childhood. Though children had largely escaped the extremes of exploitation in the workforce which had characterized the growth of industrial Capitalism in Britain, for many families, economic, geographical and climatic conditions had never favoured the ideal of a sole breadwinner providing a settled home in which a full-time mother attended expertly and lovingly to the separation, protection and prolongation of the childhood of their offspring. Some families either with good luck or considerable capital were able to prosper, building homes which conformed, outwardly at least, to the Dickensian idea of domestic bliss. For others however, the realities of a pastoral/mining economy were particularly inimical to the achievement of happy, protected family life. The social distress and polarization of classes of industrial England were absent, but



A FAMILY AT HILL END, 1872

14. Holtermann Collection, ML, Box 8, No.18757.

colonial conditions had generated their own form of outcast poor.

Employment opportunities outside urban centres had comprised wage labour on scattered large holdings, where little provision was made for workers with dependent families. As Anthony Trollope remarked of the 1870s, on a station, the bulk of the labour was still performed by,

> a nomad tribe, who wander in quest of their work, and are hired only for a time.... The squatter seldom knows whether the men he employs are married or single. They come and go, and are known by queer nick-names or by no names at all. They probably have their wives elsewhere, and return to them for a season.[4]

For many families, the social dislocation occasioned by the promise of gold, did not cease with the 1850s. Smaller, but successive rushes to new areas continued throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, militating against the settled family ideal. A NSW Select Committee on the Condition of the Working Classes, called in the wake of gold-rush upheaval in 1859, found that working men were frequently absent from home, seeking gold or other employment outside the city, leaving their wives and families "without protection or any regular means of subsistence", to face "destitution and misery."[5]

Desertion of wives and children was not prevented by legislation intended to coerce the husband and father to accept his responsibility as provider. In NSW, the Maintenance of Deserted Wives and Children Act, passed in 1840, and amended in 1858, proved largely ineffective and afforded little relief, yet remained unchanged until the twentieth century.[6] Over the period, deserted wives were always prominent among those seeking relief from the various city sources of charity. In 1898 in NSW, of mothers receiving help under the State Children's Relief Act, one in five was a deserted wife.[7]

The Selection Acts of the 1860s, which like desertion legislation, may be seen as an attempt to bolster the family ideal as a viable economic unit, were weakened by the same geographical conditions which unrealistically they sought to circumvent. For those without capital, attempting to work small holdings for mixed farming, dairying or fruit growing, survival without recourse to the labour of wife and children or travelling to wage labour elsewhere was found to be virtually impossible, making realization of the ideal of full-time mothering and protective nurture out of the question. In NSW in 1901, one married man in seven was absent from home on the night of the Census, considerably more than in England and Wales in 1901, where the proportion was

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4. Australia (St. Lucia 1967) p.314.
5. Select Committee on the Condition of the Working Classes of the Metropolis 1859-60 (NSW LA V&P 1859-60 Vol.4) p.6,59.
6. Anne O'Brien "Left in the Lurch" in J. MacKinolty and H. Radi (eds.) In Pursuit of Justice (Sydney 1979) p.96.
7. SCRB Annual Report 1898 p.21. (This Act is discussed in Chapter 6).



TWO MOTHERS AT HILL END, 1872

15. Holtermann Collection ML Box 8, No.18752.

one in fifteen.[8]

Also militating against application of the child-centred ideal, was the fact that some women, especially those having a first baby, were not married at all. The number of unmarried mothers was always considerable, especially in the cities, to which many girls came to be confined. For instance, in Sydney, (city and suburbs) extra-nuptial births comprised 5.11% of total registered births in the period 1871 to 1875, and 6.60% in 1881 to 1885.[9]

As the overseas observers noted, in some families, in city or country, the home was likely to be ill-equipped to offer the kind of sanctuary presided over by a maternal angel, that ideology required. Though families were large, houses were small. Average number of children born to married women in Australia was rising in the 1860s to reach 7.1 in 1871,[10] but housing for many remained primitive. As late as 1891 in NSW, one third of the population lived in houses of one or two bedrooms only. Also, 3.6% were accommodated in one-room houses, and 10% in tiny houses of wattle-and-dab, mud and bark, while 1.6% were under canvas.[11]

In the inner city especially, housing conditions were the antithesis of the Dickensian ideal. Numerous families lived in cramped, insanitary dwellings crowded together close to the sources of casual, unskilled work. Reflecting an economy which focussed on the arrival and dispatch of cargoes, the seasonal washing and processing of the wool clip, an unreliable construction industry, and small-scale manufacturing, each city had its streets of tiny houses, functioning not only to accommodate private families, but also as lodging houses, brothels, and refuges.[12] Numerous drinking houses also jostled into these areas. As the NSW Select Committee on the Working Classes reported in 1860, in the lanes off Kent and Sussex Streets, Sydney, the houses had tiny rooms, "scarcely high enough for a man to stand erect." Often the floor was lower than the ground outside, so that in addition to the rain which came in through the roof, "filth of all kinds" was washed in at the door. High rents induced some families to lease a whole house from the landlord and live in one room only, subletting the remainder to other families. If the father was engaged in a light trade such as shoe-making, this could be carried out in the

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8. Census of NSW 1901 (Sydney 1904) p.449; Census of England and Wales 1901 (London 1903) Index to Population Tables p.67.

9. T.A. Coghlan Wealth and Progress of NSW 1890-91 (Sydney 1891) p.807. Illegitimacy (and its method of calculation) is further discussed in Chapter Six.

10. E.F. Jones "Fertility Decline in Australia and New Zealand 1861-1936" Population Index Vol.37 No.4 1971 p.313.

11. Census of NSW 1891 (Sydney 1894) p.574-5.

12. Shirley Fisher "The Family and the Sydney Economy" Australia 1888 Bulletin No.9 Apr. 1982 p.85.



THE WIDOW S—— AND HER CHILDREN.

(SEE PAGE 10.)

16. Urban poverty during the depression, Sydney 1891.

The Dawn Vol.4 No.6 Oct.1891.

room accommodating the family.[13]

Colonial wages and employment opportunities for labourers and mechanics were neither uniform nor high, as the NSW Select Committee of the Condition of the Working Class in Sydney in 1860 found. Far from devoting themselves to the socialization of their children, mothers needed to supplement the family income by taking in washing, sewing or outwork. Paid foster-care of the babies of unmarried or other mothers was another possible source of income, as was midwifery, especially if the mother's own children were old enough to be left while she attended to patients.[14] Wet-nursing was also a possible avenue of employment for the impoverished mother, though it meant that the mother's own infant had to be partly or totally hand-fed.[15]

Family income was earned or supplemented not only by the mother, but by the children. Even before reaching the age of six, when they were required to attend school, children of the poor could contribute to the family maintenance, by collecting empty bottles for the bottle-o man, picking up lumps of coal which fell from carts, or going to the markets to collect any vegetables or pieces of fruit dropped or thrown away.[16] From the age of about eight, many of the children whom school authorities were appalled to discover in full or part-time paid employment, were working because their father was unemployed, dead, in gaol or had deserted.[17]

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13. Select Commission on the Condition of the Working Classes 1859-60 p.9, 55.

14. P. Fitzsimons "Childbirth and the Professions in NSW 1890-1930" BA Thesis SU 1981 p.18; A.B. Facey A Fortunate Life (Fremantle 1981) p.4.

15. Medical books of advice to well-to-do mothers continued to recommend employing a wet-nurse rather than hand-feeding up to and beyond 1914. See J. Jamieson How to Feed Infants (Melbourne 1871) p.45; Australian Health Society Sanitary Tracts (Melbourne 1882) p.3; George Fullerton The Family Medical Guide (Sydney 1875) p.472-3; P. Muskett The Feeding and Management of Australian Infants in Health and Disease (Sydney 1903) p.43-6, The Illustrated Australian Medical Guide 1909 Vol. 1 p.480; E. Aitkin The Australian Mother's Own Book (Sydney 1912) p.34-5; "The Australian Baby" By a Medical Practitioner, in Lady Hackett (ed.) The Australian Household Guide (Perth 1916) p.46. During the 1870s, wet-nurses were employed by some of the institutions which housed abandoned infants. See Second Report of the Commission on Public Charities, 1873-4 NSW LA V&P 1873-4 Vol. 6, p.12 (S.W. Mansefield), p.111 (Mrs. Blundell); Ashfield Infants' Home Annual Report 1875 p.10; Inspector of Industrial and Reformatory Schools Report 1882 Appendix p.51. According to Dr. Snowball, in 1890, wet-nurses employed in private families might earn £1 a week (Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions 1892-3 VPP 1892-3 Vol.4 p.277). Caddie The Autobiography of a Sydney Barmaid (Melbourne 1966) p.36-9 suggested that wet-nursing remained a possible source of income for the impoverished mother into the 1920s.

16. Lewis Rodd A Gentle Shipwreck (Melbourne 1975) p.100; NSW Royal Commission on Public Charities 1898, Report on the Benevolent Asylum (NSW LA PP 1898 Vol.3) Appendix p.95.

17. NSW Select Committee on the Employment of Children 1875-6 (NSW LA V&P 1875-6 Vol.6) p.28.

It followed that those with a large family of young children still too young to supplement the family income by casual or permanent wage labour, were the ones most at risk from poverty and breakdown, a point which was tacitly recognized by the Inspectors implementing the State Children's Relief Amendment Act in NSW. Fourteen years was the statutory age for school attendance, but maintenance was paid only to children under twelve.[18]

For those families whose economic position initially permitted compliance with the requirements of childhood ideology, the death of the breadwinner could spell the end of the domestic idyll. Even if they were fortunate enough to have relatives in the colony able and willing to lend assistance, this was more likely to be in the form of taking in one or more of the children, rather than finance to support separately the original, nuclear unit.

For many women and children, the loss of the breadwinner meant turning to one or more of the forms of labour available to them. Thus, Frances Lepherd recalled that after the death of her father in 1870, her mother opened a small dairy in Surry Hills (Sydney), by which she was able to "retain her independence and keep her children with her." However, her daughter aged eight, was obliged to deliver the milk daily on foot to customers living over a wide area, a task which entailed rising at 5.30 a.m. in all weathers and arriving late and tired for school.[19]

For the less fortunate, the loss of the breadwinner meant destitution. This in turn meant consigning the children to the charitable asylums which had been founded in response to the high incidence of family breakdown.

Some writers, such as Menie Parkes, envisaged the tragedy of the children of the slums as comprising the fact that they were not really children at all. As in Dickens, having lost their childish vulnerability and dependence, they were seen as "ancient", prematurely aged by the complexities of adult responsibilities and corrupted by parental brutality.[20] Other writers preferred to make the slum child younger than its years. Thus, in a description calculated to inspire attempts to rescue the vulnerable child, the Melbourne journalist, the "Vagabond", ascribed the unsteady gait of a toddler to a six year-old, allegedly forced to sell matches on the street at night while the

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18. Applications for assistance under NSW State Children's Relief Amendment Act (1896) Section 16, NSW State Archives Dept. of Attorney-General and Justice Special Bundles 7/7211 Jan-May 1909. I am indebted to Anne O'Brien for this information.

19. A Surry Hills Childhood 1870 (University of New England Press 1981) p.3,6.

20. Menie Parkes "Mrs Ord" (Chapter 17) Sydney Mail 5 Oct. 1878; First Annual Report of the Sussex Street Ragged School 1861 p.10.

unnatural mother spent the earnings on rum.[21]

The "Vagabond" declared that he intervened personally in this particular case, "rescuing" the boy from his mother and having him accommodated in an orphanage. Here the child "devoted his time principally to eating and play" and the writer confidently predicted that "education and training" would soon "efface from his childish mind all reminiscences of his old evil life." Of two little girls, promiscuously crowded into a tiny, inner city house with another mother and her children, the "Vagabond" however, held out little hope; "in a few years, what will be their fate? A boy or youth may be reclaimed, but a girl once lost is, as a rule, depraved for ever. That is the unfortunate experience of the best authorities."[22]

By the 1860s and 70s, those concerned to rescue the children of the poor and restore them to childhood, protected and prolonged, were by no means in agreement as to what was the best means of doing so. Some, like the "Vagabond", believed that separation from the neglectful improvident parent was the best solution. The precedent for this method had been set early in the colonies, where State-funded "orphanages" to sever "the... (at present, innocent) members of the community from their vicious parents"[23] were established, firstly for girls, in 1802, and belatedly, for the allegedly more easily reclaimed boys, in 1819. In spite of their name, these institutions principally housed children who appeared to have been abandoned or neglected by their parents, and for whom restoration to a state of innocence consisted of housing them separately from adult paupers and teaching them religious and moral principles, together with a trade or service likely to be useful to the colonial employer. It was expected that all facets of this education might afterwards be continued at no cost to the State by apprenticeship of the children to members of this class.

The practice of apprenticing pauper children when aged about twelve, from the charitable orphanage, had accompanied the growth of these institutions during the eighteenth century and was an underlying reason for the support they received. Preceding the Sunday and common schools movements, the charitable orphanages shared with those movements the idea that the children of the poor constituted a threat to civil stability. Advocates of these institutions added that such children needed also to be trained in useful labour and then placed

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21. John Stanley James "The Waifs and Strays of Sydney" SMH 25 Jan.-Feb. 1878 repr. in Michael Cannon (ed.) The Vagabond Papers (Melbourne 1969) p.60.

22. Ibid. p.58.

23. David Collins Account of the English Colony in New South Wales (Sydney 1975) Vol.2 p.51 (first published 1802).

out in domestic service, shop or trade.[24] When translated into practice in the form of the charitable orphanage, the concept of rescue had a dual function, aiming both to shelter and train children, "saving" them from a life of vice and crime, and to provide a ready pool of cheap labour for employers. It was small wonder that it found early and strong support in the labour-starved colonies.

By the 1830s, the growth of wealthy urban groups committed to the notion of personal philanthropic endeavour as a means of alleviating distress, preventing crime and facilitating the recruitment of trained servants, allowed the State to pass responsibility for altruistic rescue of the innocent child into the hands of private charities, though most of these continued to be State-subsidized. The existing children's institutions became the Protestant Orphan Schools, while Catholics established an additional orphanage in 1837.

A greater range of charities to rescue the children of the poor developed in response to the social problems generated by the gold rushes. In Melbourne in 1853, an Immigrants' Aid Society, formed to alleviate social distress in Canvas Town, offered care and sustenance to deserted wives and neglected or orphaned children[25] while plans for the orphanage at Emerald Hill also arose from private benevolence during these years.[26] In Sydney, a Society for the Relief of Destitute Children, formed in 1852, opened a refuge the following year at Paddington, housing 89 children. In 1858, when this institution moved into larger premises at Randwick, the number of children accommodated doubled. Though catering only for children over four years who were considered in good physical health and who had not been convicted of a criminal offence, Randwick Asylum admitted increasing numbers of children, reaching 789 in 1873.[27]

Inside the children's institutions, separation from parents was considered ideal and could be rendered permanent. The Destitute Children's Society had been granted legal guardianship of its inmates by the Act of Incorporation (1857), while at the NSW Protestant and Catholic Orphan Schools, a parental request for the discharge of their children could be refused if the

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24. Isaac Watts An Essay Upon the Encouragement of Charity Schools (London 1728) cited in P. Rooke and R. Schnell "Childhood and Charity; Poor Relief and Religious Benevolence in British North America 1800-1930" (Unpublished Paper, kindly lent by Professor Schnell); Michael Horsburgh "The Apprenticing of Dependent Children in New South Wales between 1850 and 1885" Journal of Australian Studies, No. 7 Nov. 1980 p.33-4.

25. Joan Gillison A History of the Lyceum Club (Melbourne 1974) p.2.

26. Sketches of Australian Life and Scenery By One Who Has Been a Resident for Thirty Years (London 1876) p.68.

27. Dora Peyser "A Study of the History of Welfare Work in Sydney From 1788 to about 1900" JRAHS Vol.25 Part 3 1939 p.172-3.

parents were considered to have a poor reputation or insufficient means.[28] This policy marked the suspicion that the allegedly careless and irresponsible parent would take advantage of the institution to rear his or her child while dependent and then claim it back when it had reached an age when it might make a significant contribution to the family income. It was this view which had stimulated clarification and extension of the law binding children as apprentices in 1834.[29] Reinforced by the Dickensian concept of parental guilt, it contributed to the policy of adjusting admissions and discharge policies to prevent the institutions from providing a temporary means of relief during family crisis. Even parental contact with inmates was discouraged, on the grounds that it was a bad influence, disturbing and unsettling the children, who rarely showed any desire to return to their parents anyway.[30]

Inside the institutions, the method by which the children were to be protected from learning habits of vice and placed on the path of civilization and virtue, continued to consist essentially of rote learning of Christian moral principles together with a trade considered useful to colonial employers, and thus seen as likely to ensure an honest living. This meant that, though it was considered undesirable to return children to their parents when at an age to enter the workforce, a high proportion of children from the institutions were apprenticed at 12 to other masters, their earnings held in trust to be given to them at the expiry of their term.[31] Thus it was clear, that for these children, as Locke had recommended, labour, rather than learning, was the foe to vice.[32] Once children had been apprenticed out, parents could not claim them.[33]

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28. Michael Horsburgh "Child Care in NSW in 1870" Australian Social Work Vol.29 No.1 Mar. 1976 p.13-14.

29. Bryan Gandevia Tears Often Shed (Sydney 1978) p.58; Michael Horsburgh "The Apprenticing of Dependent Children in NSW" p.42.

30. Select Committee on the Employment of Children 1875-6, evidence of John Matthew May, Superintendent of Randwick Asylum p.922, 925.

31. Michael Horsburgh's study of children apprenticed from the Protestant and Catholic Orphan Schools and the Randwick Asylum in NSW 1850-1885 showed that 41% were apprenticed, 53% were returned to their families and 6% died ("The Apprenticing of Dependent Children" p.36). Whether these figures warrant his conclusion that the institutions did fulfil a temporary care function (p.41) would seem debatable.

32. John Locke Report for the Reform of the Poor Law (1697) cited in Ivy Pinchbeck and Margaret Hewett Children in English Society Vol.1 (London 1972) p.309-10. Horsburgh showed that of children apprenticed from the three NSW institutions which he examined, 1850-83, 64% went into domestic service, 27% to agricultural occupations and only 9% to "skilled trades" ("The Apprenticing of Dependent Children" p.50).

33. Ibid. p.44-8; "Child Care in NSW in 1870" p.13-14.

In other charitable initiatives on behalf of the children of the poor, the aim was not to separate the child from the parent, but rather to save the child by awakening in the parent a sense of the duties and practices required by childhood ideology. An objective envisaged earlier by the Sunday School movement, this was a notion especially prevalent in charities where "ladies"[34] were permitted to direct or influence policy. Whether initiating or managing philanthropic work, the ladies' committees of the various charities were developing a considerable confidence in the possibilities of reforming the working-class family itself, and in their own ability to guide that process from without.

The Impact of the "Lady Bountiful":

By the second half of the nineteenth century, middle and upper-class women had achieved an expanding public role, not only as writers, but as dispensers of charity to the poor. This was a duty condoned both by the Romantic construction of the "feminine" character, and the Evangelical emphasis on neighbourly service. As Hannah More put it in her novel Coelebs in Search of a Wife (1809), it was not true that ladies had no profession. "Charity is the calling of a lady, the care of the poor was her profession."[35]

Where writers such as Dickens and Ruskin were inclined to caricature the philanthropic activities of the "Lady Bountiful",[36] in Non-Conformist circles, it was assumed that women not only had special expertise with respect to the socialization of their own children, but also special beneficient, self-sacrificing and compassionate qualities which enabled them to act as missionaries across classes, alleviating distress and preventing further social upheaval by reaching and influencing the families of the poor.[37]

In the colonies, the close involvement of Mrs. King and Mrs. Paterson in the policies of the first orphanage, marked the beginning of specifically female involvement in moves to shelter and educate the child judged as abandoned or neglected.[38] The assumption that ladies had a special role to play in

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34. Judith Godden "Lady: Woman: Female: Philanthropy and the Woman's Sphere Sydney 1870-1900" Women and Labour Conference Papers 1982 p.325.

35. Catherine Hall "The Early Formation of Victorian Domestic Ideology" in Sandra Burman (Op.Cit) p.28.

36. Charles Dickens' Mrs. Jellyby, portrayed as neglectful of her own children while pursuing charitable missions (Bleak House, 1852-3), is said to be based on Caroline Chisholm, whom he met in Feb. 1850. (Coral Lansbury Arcady in Australia (Melbourne 1970) p.69). For Ruskin's criticism of the "Lady Bountiful" as an inefficient encouragement of pauperization, see F.K. Prochaska Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth Century England (Oxford 1980) p.130.

37. For the extent of female involvement in nineteenth-century English charity, F.K. Prochaska Op.Cit. passim; for its role in smoothing away class conflict, Anne Summers Op.Cit. p.45.

38. John F. Cleverley The First Generation School and Society in Early Australia (Sydney 1971) p.91-5.

charitable work in general, and that touching upon childhood in particular, was further established during the 1820s, when Lady Darling, in addition to taking an interest in the Female Orphan School and the Sunday School movement, founded a Female School of Industry in 1827.[39]

By the 1840s, the social spectrum of colonial women involved in charitable work was broadening, as those lower down on the social scale began to participate in a range of public activities associated with the temperance movement. Modelled on a similar organization formed in Evangelical circles in England, this attracted the wives of businessmen and tradespeople, chiefly Non-Conformist ones, and did much to further the belief that the "feminine" woman had a legitimate role in the philanthropic sphere. At the same time, charitable work by women began to acquire a feminist aura, for its objects were very often women and children seen as cheated of the domestic ideal by male irresponsibility and intemperance.[40] As missionaries urging sobriety or abstinence on the poor, the temperance women believed they might prevent what they saw as a chief reason why the poorer breadwinner neglected or abandoned his children.

In the expansion of colonial philanthropy during the 1850s and 60s, the role played by women became of increasing importance, especially with respect to those activities which focussed on child bearing and rearing. In Melbourne, the ladies' committee of the Immigrants' Aid Society had 600 children under its care by 1864. In 1856 a special hospital to take in impoverished women for confinement, was established by Mrs. Edward Barker, the wife of a doctor, and Mrs. Francis Perry, the wife of the Bishop. Later known as the Women's Hospital, it also conducted an infirmary to treat sick women and children and remained under Mrs. Perry's Presidency until 1876.[41] At the Melbourne Hospital for Sick Children, founded in 1870, though an executive of six gentlemen looked after business administration, the day-to-day affairs were conducted by a committee of twenty-five ladies. The wives of prominent merchants, lawyers, ministers of religion, and public servants, the ladies' committee was at first under the Presidency of Mrs. Perry and Mrs. Bromby, while Mrs. Wilberforce Stephen held the position from 1873 to 1884.[42] Other philanthropic organizations established or administered by Melbourne included the Maternity Aid Society (1883), the District Nursing Society founded by Selina Sutherland in 1885 and the Elizabeth Fry Retreat, established by Mrs. S.J.

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39. Brian Fletcher "Eliza Darling: Colonial Benefactress and Governor's Lady" JRAHS Vol.67 Pt. 4 1982 p.309-13.

40. Elizabeth Windschuttle "Women,Class and Temperance: Moral Reform in Eastern Australia 1832-1857" Push From the Bush No. 3 May 1979 p.5-25.

41. J. Gillison Op.Cit. p.2,3.

42. H. Boyd Graham "Beacons on Our Way: Some Memories of the Children's Hospital" MJA 3 Oct. 1953 p.518-19; Lyndsay Gardiner Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne 1870-1970 (Melbourne 1970) p.6, 32.



CAUSE AND EFFECT.

'Were you present at Girdwood's execution, this morning, Tom?'

'I was; and won't forget the scene in a hurry. I don't generally make one of the hangman's flock, but the most of his shopmates and old acquaintances were present. I think it has done me good though; for if I hated the drinking system before, to see a noble young fellow sacrificed to it in this way, and a good wife and beautiful family made wretched, who, but for drink, might be united and happy, makes me hate it with tenfold the bitterness I did this morning.'

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17. In temperance tracts, though it was recognized that women might succumb to alcohol, more usually it was the father who was the guilty party, his insobriety and brutality being seen as a major cause of family breakdown.

Australian Home Companion and Band of Hope Journal Vol.6 1861.

Swinbourne as a refuge and training centre for discharged female prisoners in 1885. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, founded in the United States in 1874, was established in Melbourne in 1887 by Mrs. Mary Love and Mrs. Marie E. Kirk.[43]

Similarly in Sydney, charities for women and children where ladies played an active and influential role were numerous by the 70s and 80s. These included the Sydney Female Refuge Society, to shelter and reform girls who had been involved in prostitution, and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. The establishment of the Children's Hospital in 1880 owed much to the initiative of Mrs. W.C. Browne, wife of the member for Singleton. Lady Allen was its Vice-President, and of its managing committee of 40, over half were ladies.[44] A Home of Hope for Friendless and Fallen Women, which from 1887 also provided a lying-in hospital, was managed by Louisa Ardill, wife of the founder. This hospital also offered training in midwifery, part of which was provided by Louisa herself.

These new, female-influenced attempts to provide care for the poor in the colonies, also included the establishment of institutions to shelter foundlings. By the 1870s, local cases of infanticide and abandonment were being reported with increasing frequency and greater detail in the colonial press:

> What appears to be a clear case of concealment of birth, if not of infanticide, was reported to the police at Prahran last night. The circumstances as reported were, that a young woman of about 25, named Sarah Pillar, in the service of a gentleman living on the Dandenong-road, Prahran, ... was noticed by her mistress to be ill yesterday morning, and Dr. Fetherston was sent for. The doctor arrived at about 2 o'clock, and saw that the girl, who was in a very weak state, had lately been delivered of a child, and she confessed to him that she had ... put the infant down the water closet, but did not say whether it was born dead or alive. Dr. Fetherston sent her to the Lying-In Hospital, and gave information to the police. Sergeant Brown last night caused the closet to be emptied, and the dead body of a newly-born female child was found in the cesspit. The baby bore distinct marks of strangulation about the neck... [45]

Male journalists reporting such cases showed little sympathy for the sexual vulnerability of the girl in domestic service. Their interest in the subject was part of their established role of alerting the middle-class reader to the moral corruption of the times. By the 1880s, the issue was also becoming of interest to a different and new kind of journalism. Seeking a broader

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43. Anthea Hyslop "Agents and Objects Women and Social Reform in Melbourne 1890 to 1914" Women and Labour Conference Papers 1980 p.746-8; "Christian Temperance and Social Reform The Women's Christian Temperance Union of Victoria 1887 to 1912" in Sabine Willis (ed.) Women, Faith and Fetes (Melbourne 1977) p.43-4.

44. P.L. Hipsley Early History of the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children Sydney 1880-1905 (Sydney 1952) p.1; Judith Godden Op.Cit. p.321, 325; NSW Royal Commission on Public Charities 1898 Fourth Report, Hospitals of the Colonies (NSW LA V&P Vol.3 1899) p.lxxii.

45. The Argus 10 Oct. 1872 p.5.

readership, this sought out sensational domestic scandals, preferably in high places, and reported upon the detection of crime, especially that of a violent nature.[46]

The interest of charitable ladies in infanticide and abandonment was very different. They saw these issues as the culmination of male irresponsibility, which could be traced back to the seduction of girls or the desertion of breadwinners, and as such these problems figured as a natural extension of their work in rescuing destitute and fallen women. In direct opposition to the fear of the foundling institution as an encouragement to "immoral conduct on the part of women" and "abandonment of children",[47] they established and managed infant asylums in both cities during the 1870s. Thus in Melbourne, though the founders of the Children's Hospital in 1870 had been careful to exclude infants under two from admission lest the hospital be construed as a foundling home, a Victorian Infant Asylum catering specially for the unwanted baby was established at Fitzroy in 1877 by four ladies, Mrs. Bright, Mrs. Nankivell, Lady Bowen and Mrs. Francis.[48]

Similarly in Sydney in 1874, a Foundling Hospital was opened at Paddington, aiming to prevent "the numerous cases of infanticide presently occurring and save the "poor little innocents, the victims of woman's weakness and man's faithlessness and cowardice." Mothers depositing babies had to produce testimony of "previous respectability" and proof that the father had deserted and was beyond the reach of the law. Of 64 applications, 29 were accepted in the first year. By 1878, the institution had moved into new premises at Ashfield and the number of admissions had doubled.[49]

In these charitable initiatives dealing with women and children, ladies were achieving considerable influence beyond the confines of their own homes and power over the lives of other women. In Melbourne, the Ladies Benevolent Society, formed in 1845, was by 1890 in charge of administering the entire system of outdoor relief for the Benevolent Asylum; in Sydney, the Ladies' Committee of the Benevolent Asylum also wielded considerable managerial power, especially with respect to admissions to the Lying-In Department. In the

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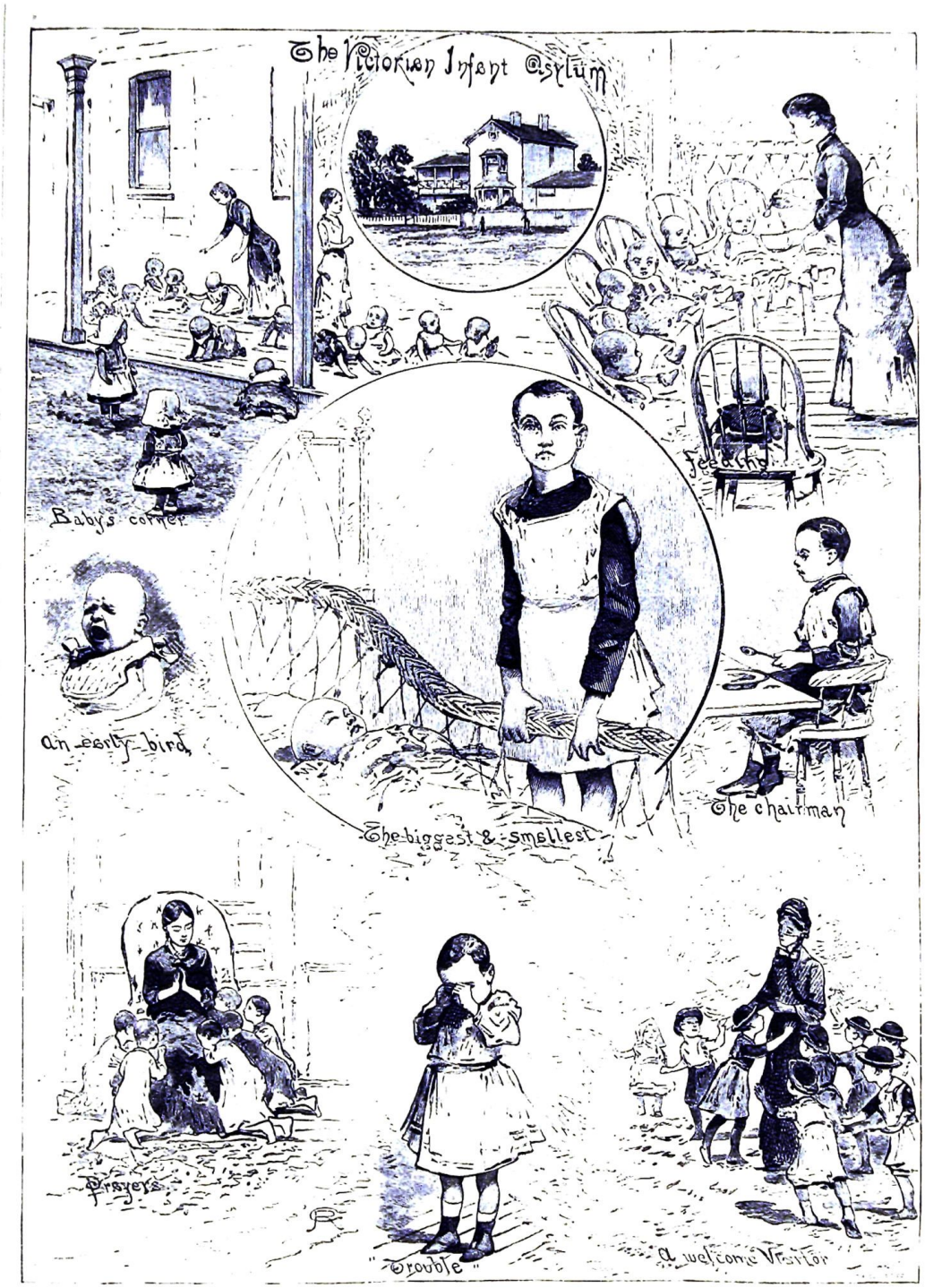
46. Peter Coleman Obscenity, Blasphemy and Sedition (Brisbane 1963) p.126. For examples of the need of the later journalist, appealing to a mass audience, to suggest that infanticide occurred among the "respectable" classes, see Randolph Bedford Naught to Thirty-Three (Melbourne 1976) p.158, Daily Telegraph (Sydney) 20 Jun. 1910 p.15.

47. Letter of Colonial Secretary appointing NSW Board of Enquiry on Public Charities 1854, quoted in D. Peyser Op.Cit. p.174.

48. Lyndsay Gardiner Op.Cit. p.11; Vic. Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions 1892-3 p.1260.

49. First Annual Report of the Sydney Foundling Hospital 1875 p.6; Fourth Annual Report 1878 p.6. The name was changed to Ashfield Infants' Home after the institution moved from Paddington in Apr. 1876.



SKETCHES AT THE VICTORIAN INFANT ASYLUM.

18. Illustrated Australian News 6 Aug. 1884.

absence as yet both of strong State commitment to this kind of rescue, and professional theory to guide such decisions, the lady administrator or superintendent of the various institutions was assumed competent to decide which of the applicants for admission were deserving or "redeemable" cases. This knowledge was in turn based on the ladies' own methods of research, usually derived from enquiries made of or actual visitation to the homes of the urban poor.[50].

The charitable lady had long been seen to have an important role in visitation. Door-to-door calls at the homes of the poor to relieve distress and offer advice were an early form of charity in which women had come to predominate, while visitation to asylums and hospitals with the object of personalizing institutional care, became another field seen as uniquely a woman's mission, offering enlarged scope for "feminine" sensibility, compassion and personal contact across classes.[51] By the 70s and 80s, this experience in visitation together with their growing managerial role in the charitable field, was manifested in the idea that ladies might be able to bolster the pauper family itself, guiding child-rearing within the home and avoiding the separation of parent and child.

The Ragged Schools:

Belief in conversion of the working-class mother to the "proper" attitude to the child was especially evident in the Ragged Schools movement. Modelled on similar organizations founded in Britain from the 1840s, the colonial Ragged Schools aimed to provide free instruction to the children of the very poor, whose attendance at the national schools was not encouraged. As Charles Pearson pointed out in 1877-8, State school authorities were reluctant to sweep the "gutter" children into their classrooms lest it impaired the "tone" of the school. This was denied by teachers in Victorian State schools in 1883-4, but a NSW School Officer affirmed in 1892 that teachers had a "strong objection" to admitting children unless they were "decently dressed."[52] Besides, the "ragged" child, in his "cut down trousers" and coats which "defied classification"[53] was made conspicuous by the trend of the better-off to dress their children in clothes considered emblematic of childhood. For the poor,

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50. Vic. Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions 1892-3 p.1265 (Mrs. A.V. Wymond, Treasurer of South Yarra Home for Fallen Women).

51. F.K. Prochaska Op.Cit. p.97-101, 142.

52. Charles Pearson Report on the State of Public Education in Victoria ... (Vic. LA V&P 1877-8 Vol.3 p.9); Third and Final Report of Royal Commission on Education 1884 (Vic. LA V&P 1884 Vol.3 p.22); Select Committee on the Infants' and Children's Protection Bill 1892 NSW LC Journal 1891-2 p.1113-14.

53. Lewis Rodd Op.Cit. p.69; Christopher Brennan "Curriculum Vitae" ML MS 344/3 n.p.; NSW Royal Commission on Public Charities 1898 Report on the Benevolent Asylum p.98 (case of "Mrs.R.", Chippendale.)



"IN THE CASUALTY WARD - VISITING DAY"

19. In her personal efforts to alleviate distress in the hospital, the Lady Visitor was said to be second only to that "ministering angel", the hospital nurse.

Illustrated Australian News 15 Sep. 1888, p.170.

lack of footwear also constituted visible evidence of social inferiority, and was a problem especially difficult for mothers to overcome, since there was no way in which shoes could be altered to fit. A brickmaker at St. Peters, a Sydney suburb, told the Select Committee on the Employment of Children in 1875-6, that one of his boys had been "sent back from school for going there without shoes," and that, he believed, separate schools were needed for the children of the poor where they would not be discriminated against on account of evident poverty.[54]

In Sydney, though the first Ragged School, opening in Sussex Street in 1860, was founded by a group of Protestant clergy and business men, ladies were important in canvassing for funds, acting as voluntary teachers, providing special excursions and "treats" for the children, and in the door-to-door visitation which was implemented in the area to distribute tracts and persuade parents to send their children to the school. Annual reports claimed that the ladies enjoyed considerable success in converting the parents. In addition to signing temperance pledges, parents were said to acquire habits of "self-respect" and "decency", and to seek the advice of visitors and teachers at the school on domestic matters. In 1862, a second school opened in Globe Street, while a third, started separately by a group of charitable ladies in Glebe, was handed over to the original committee in 1864.[55]

In Melbourne, Mrs. Hornbrook founded her Ragged Schools Association in 1862. She had opened twelve schools by the end of the 1860s, and had 1000 children on the rolls. Each was run independently by a committee of Protestant ladies who provided funds and visited frequently. As in Sydney, all were situated in what were judged as populous and destitute localities, and where close touch could be established with the parents, such as Little Bourke Street and Little Lonsdale Street, Collingwood and Prahran.[56] Inside the Ragged Schools, as in the full-time children's institutions, the emphasis was on teaching religion, and basic literacy. In Sydney girls were also taught needlework and sewing, as were their mothers if they cared to attend the mothers' meetings, arranged at the Sussex St. School by teacher, Miss Danne.[57]

Boarding-Out:

The idea of saving the child by monitoring standards in the working-class home, together with the role of charitable ladies in achieving this, became of more importance by the early 1870s, when the policy of incarcerating

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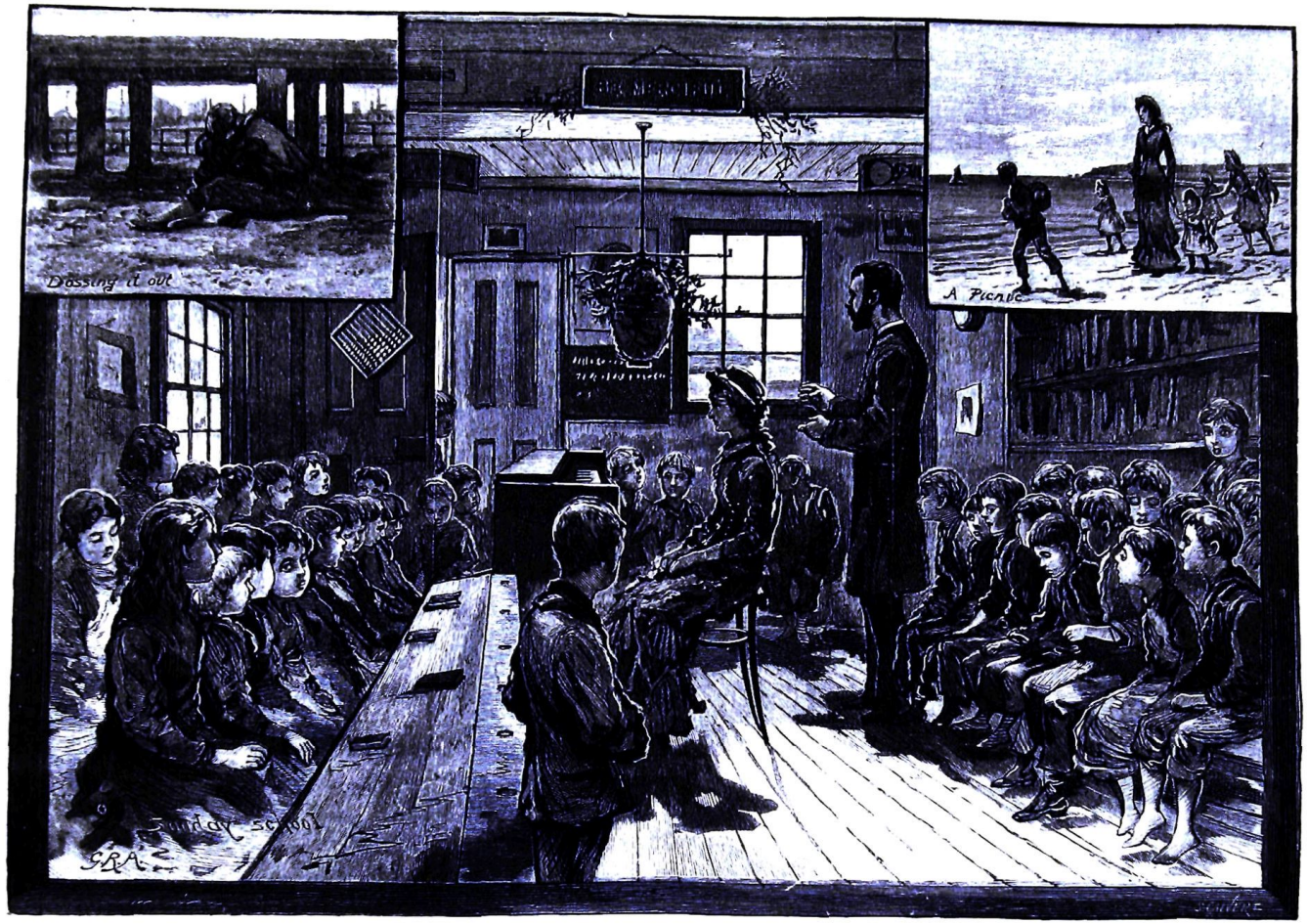
54. Select Committee on the Employment of Children 1875-6 p.887.

55. Second Annual Report of the Sussex Street Ragged School 1862 p.8; Third Annual Report 1863 p.7.

56. "Ragged Schools" The Argus 23 Sep. and 28 Oct.1876, repr. in M. Cannon Op.Cit. p.185.

57. Second Annual Report Sussex Street Ragged School 1862 p.9.



HORNBROOK RAGGED SCHOOL

20. It was believed that the Ragged Schools offered kindness as well as education, saving the child from "the brutal cuff of a drunken father or the angry voice of a mother distracted by her sorrows". At the same time, the baneful effects of drunkenness were "daily instilled into the infant mind".

Illustrated Australian News 20 Feb. 1884, p.26.

children in the large full-time orphanages and asylums came under attack. Successive government enquiries into the administration of the State-assisted charities were revealing that, despite the increasing facilities for full-time shelter of the destitute child, the philanthropic organizations could not deal adequately with the scale of the problem. In 1861, a Select Committee called to enquire into the administration of the NSW Benevolent Asylum discovered that children were still being admitted to this adult refuge to await a place in one of the special, separate children's ones. The Asylum also housed children too young or disqualified by ill-health for admission to the orphanages or Randwick, and many stayed on for years in overcrowded and unhealthy conditions where many died.[58]

In addition, there was increasing criticism of conditions inside the children's institutions themselves. As Dickens explained in his article "Little Pauper Boarders", (All the Year Round, 1869), though rescue depended on separating the child from its parents, the policy of housing the young in a large, impersonal institution, rendered them vulnerable to forms of corruption. Echoed in a Select Committee on Charitable Institutions held in NSW in 1873-4, the views of Dickens and of influential overseas female critics, the Hill sisters[59] condemned the full-time institutions as "Barracks", alleging that they were based on ease of management rather than concern for their innocent little inmates. Consequently, it was said, they lacked the very ingredients in child care which Dickensian ideology saw as necessary to ensure harmony between ruler and ruled - the development of "affection and gratitude" towards parental figures of authority who protected and cherished the young. The Barracks functioned like "a well-fitting piece of noiseless machinery," offering only "perfunctory care", if it was not "actually harsh."[60]

According to those theorists, the neglected children of the poor, presently subjected to an impersonal, mechanistic routine, should instead be consigned to surrogate families, carefully selected and periodically inspected by volunteer lady visitors. Thus was the innocent child to be rescued from the sinful parent and at the same time be prevented from deprivation of the alleged benefits of "proper" family care.

These criticisms of existing charitable institutions for the neglected child were the more significant because of the visible failure of the new State facilities for this purpose. These had been introduced in Victoria in 1864 and

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58. Select Committee on the Sydney Benevolent Asylum 1861-2 (NSW LA V&P Vol.2 1861-2) p.925, 937-8, 940-1.

59. Florence Hill The Boarding-Out System, Distinguished From Baby-Farming and Parish Apprenticing, A Paper Read Before the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science 1869.

60. Second Report of the NSW Commission on Public Charities (NSW LA V&P 1873-4 Vol.6) p.40-8.

NSW in 1866.[61] Known as "Industrial Schools", to some extent they resembled their charitable predecessors. As before, there was no recognition of the fact that most of the children were not orphans and, on admission, parental right to reclaim them was thrown into jeopardy. Also, as formerly in the denominational orphanages and charitable asylums, care was taken to investigate the fitness of parents who applied for the release of their children and general policy was to encourage apprenticeship rather than discharge to the natural parent. As before, there was great reluctance, and sometimes inability, to disclose to parents the whereabouts of children after they had been apprenticed out. Though very little information was ascertained about the character and circumstances of the masters, positions as remote as possible from the urban slum were favoured by administrators, since it was thought that, if apprenticed into local families, the children might be "thrown among their old associates" and "get back to their old habits."[62] Not surprisingly, some children were exposed to hardship and exploitation, including that of a sexual nature.[63] Apprenticeship continued to take place at twelve.

Since wages paid to apprentices, compared with those paid to adult servants, were low,[64] demand always exceeded supply. The State apprenticeship system constituted expansion of the existing source of cheap labour in the foster homes to which the children were sent.

In the State industrial schools, the inclination to see the problem of child destitution in terms of personal fault rather than financial misfortune, was much stronger than in the charitable ones. In NSW industrial schools in 1870, about one third of requests for discharge were refused.[65] Children admitted to the State institutions in NSW could be retained till the age of eighteen, and the parents could be compelled to contribute to their support.[66]

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61. The Neglected and Criminal Children's Act 1864 (27 Vict. No.216); An Act for the Relief of Destitute Children 1866 (30 Vic. No.2).

62. J.S.V. Mein, Superintendent of the Vernon, Select Committee on the Employment of Children 1875-6 p.914; Second Report of the NSW Commission on Public Charities 1873-4 p.88.

63. Michael Horsburgh "Child Care in NSW in 1870" p.16-19.

64. Girls from the NSW Industrial School in 1871 earned 1/- per week at twelve years, rising to 6/- a week at 17 years. Wages for female servants in 1871 ranged from 5/- to 15/- a week (Patricia Todd "The Industrial School for Girls" BA Thesis SU 1978 p.40.)

65. Michael Horsburgh "Child Care in NSW in 1870" p.14.

66. Act for the Relief of Destitute Children (30 Vic. No.2 of 1866) Sections 17, 19. In Victoria, an amendment to the Act of 1864, one decade later, raised the age of discharge from fifteen to sixteen for a neglected child and seventeen for one convicted of an offence. (38 Vict. No.495 1874 Section 9.) Under the 1864 Act, parents, as in NSW, could be compelled to support their institutionalized child. (27 Vict. No.216 1864 Section 24).

The State institutions also differed from the charitable ones in that the legislation which established them broadened the grounds for, and facilities by which children held to be at risk could be apprehended. Thus in NSW, children aged up to sixteen years found living with or in the company of thieves or prostitutes could be taken into custody by any police officer, as could those who had no fixed home or means of support, or who were found begging or even habitually "loitering about the streets." There was also provision for parents themselves to have children admitted, on the grounds that they were uncontrollable, or would not live at home.[67] In Victoria, it was also provided that children who absconded from a government Industrial School or Reformatory or damaged its property could be "privately whipped".[68]

Contemporary criticism, however, focussed less on admission and discharge policies of the various institutions than on the victimization of the child said to be occurring within. In the case of the State institutions, it early became evident that the treatment of the children was strongly at variance with Dickensian ideals. Unlike children attending the national schools or rescued by the charitable institutions, for whom careful plans were made (in theory at least) to cater for their special needs, no elaborate buildings emerged to accommodate the State wards. In Melbourne, following the 1864 Act, a quarantine station, immigrants' shelter sheds, disused military barracks, and even a prison hulk were called into service. In Sydney, girls were housed first in the military barracks at Newcastle (August 1867) before moving on to Cockatoo Island (March 1871), which was not rendered more comfortable by being renamed Biloela in an attempt to remove the legacy of convictism associated with the site.

In Victoria, a Royal Commission on Industrial Schools, reporting in 1872, revealed that not only were these facilities haphazard, they were also overcrowded and unhealthy. The number of children housed at Sunbury Industrial school reached 505 in December 1873; there were 344 on the "Nelson" and 159 in the Abbotsford Industrial School.[69]

In 1877-8, Charles Pearson's Report on the State of Education in Victoria, declared that the State Industrial Schools were without exception a failure. It was not merely that there were insufficient teachers and the amount of school instruction was the minimum prescribed by law, but even the vocational training was poor. For instance, the farming land at Sunbury was badly watered

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67. Act for the Relief of Destitute Children 1866 (Section 4). Similar provisions governed the apprehension and charging of children under the Victorian Act of 1864 (Section 13).

68. Neglected and Criminal Children's Act of 1864 (Section 39).

69. First Report of Royal Commission on Industrial Schools and the Sanatory Station Vic. LA V&P 1872 Vol.3 p.6-9; Inspector for Industrial and Reformatory Schools Report 1873 p.9.

and bleakly situated, while at Royal Park there was no regular provision for the instruction of the boys on the few acres of farmland there. Problems in maintaining discipline were being concealed from public knowledge.[70]

The choice of the ships the "Nelson" and the "Vernon" as a suitable site for the boys' industrial schools in Melbourne and Sydney respectively, was especially open to Dickensian attack. Though the ships had the advantage of making escape more difficult and separation from parents and previous associates more complete, discipline and activities were visibly "mechanistic". On the "Vernon" in 1875, boys aged from three to four up to eighteen, began the day by washing the decks, and then themselves. After breakfast, they spent half the day on school work and half in learning "useful" trades such as carpentering, tailoring and shoe-making, and obsolete ones, believed to be of disciplinary value, such as sail-making and how to rig a cutter. In the evening, they again cleaned up the decks, hoisted up the boats, and prepared everything on board for the night. They were not often allowed on shore, other than to undertake agricultural duties in the Botanical Gardens, it being believed by the Superintendent that "'The spade is as powerful an instrument for reform of character as it is to subdue the soil'". A total only of six hours per week was given to school instruction.[71]

Despite the fact that all were agreed on the importance of separating the destitute child from those who had already committed an offence, in practice no distinction was made between the State industrial schools and its reformatories, which had been established at the same time, and in Victoria by the same Act. Magistrates were unclear as to which institution was relevant to the individual case, while in NSW this decision was the more difficult, given that no boys' reformatory was provided until 1894 (Carpentarian, Brush Farm, Eastwood). In the interim, the "Vernon" was used to serve both purposes. At Sunbury, Charles Pearson found that children whose parents were destitute were accommodated with those who were truants or who had been charged with vagrancy or other offences under the Act.

For girls, the notion that they were harder to reclaim assured a Reformatory as well as an Industrial School, but both were located together. For instance, the NSW Royal Commission of 1873-4 reported that at Biloela, the Industrial School and the Reformatory were separated merely by a partition of galvanized iron.[72]

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70. Charles Pearson Op.Cit. p.153-4.

71. Captain J.S.V. Mein, to Select Committee on the Employment of Children 1875-6 p.913-4; Second Report of the NSW Commission of Public Charities 1873-4 p.89.

72. Second Report of the NSW Commission on Public Charities 1873-4 p.84.

No centralized system of administration and inspection was developed and no provision existed to monitor punishment. Investigation of conditions inside the institutions usually occurred only after complaints were lodged by junior members of staff against matrons or superintendents, and internecine battles between staff members and riots by the children, became a feature of the State institutions. In NSW girls alleged to have instigated the riots of the early 1870s were subjected to violent punishment. When the NSW Commission on Public Charities visited Biloela in November 1872, it found that girls had been "beaten, kicked and dragged by the hair"; eight girls were found locked in a small room without adequate clothes, bedding and toilet facilities and in absolute darkness. They had been there for five days and presented a "half-crazed appearance."[73]

The cumulative disclosures of abuses within the State system increased receptiveness to Dickensian ideals and ultimately brought the whole field of institutional care under attack. For instance, at the NSW Royal Commission of 1873-4, the large, "unhomely" Randwick Asylum fared especially badly, even though no spectacular riots or barbarous punishments had occurred there.[74] An unshakeable faith was being generated in the foster home as the best means of solving the problems of the destitute child, a faith which would become a key means by which the environmental ideal of innocence of the young, and their need for protection in a "proper" home, would assume the proportions of an established law of child nature and needs.

Moves to prevent the incarceration of neglected and destitute children in both the State and charitable institutions dated from the early 1870s. In Victoria, the First Report of the Royal Commission on Industrial Schools strongly recommended the boarding-out of children into selected foster homes, and 569 children were placed out by the end of 1873.[75]

Though supported by writers, journalists and some members of the medical and legal professions, boarding-out was initially a preserve of female philanthropy. In South Australia in 1872, the system was both recommended and introduced by women such as Catherine Spence and Mrs. Musgrave. Similarly in NSW, the scheme was introduced by the wife of the Pastor of Pitt St. Congregational Church, Mrs. Jefferis, who had been associated with the foundation of the scheme in Adelaide. Aided by Mrs. Garran, the wife of the editor of the Herald. and Mrs. Windeyer, the wife of one of the Commissioners of the 1873-4 enquiry, she formed a Boarding-Out Committee in 1879. A government subsidy was obtained from Parkes to support the payment to foster parents, and

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73. Ibid. p.75.

74. Ibid. p.99-108.

75. Inspector of Industrial and Reformatory Schools Report 1873 p.6.

the scheme was incorporated by Act of Parliament into a new department formed in 1881, the State Children's Relief Board.

In addition to the State schemes, private charities organized societies for boarding-out destitute children. The largest of these was that formed by the Committee for Neglected Children of the Presbyterian Church in Melbourne, where a committee of ladies both ran a Receiving Home and sought to find foster parents for children. One of a number of charities which claimed power to apprehend children directly under the Neglected Children's Act of 1890, by 1892 this Society was playing a major role in the boarding-out of children, having 416 children under its supervision by 1898.[76]

Whether initiated by State or private charity, boarding-out schemes depended upon inspection of foster homes, and as such offered a new field in which middle-class ladies might exercise their unique attributes in the protection of the Oliver Twists and Orphan Annies of the urban slums. In both city and country, a volunteer army of unpaid Lady Visitors was mobilized to inspect the homes where children had been placed. It was acknowledged that the success of the scheme depended on the exercise of their practical knowledge of children's needs and special skills in personal visitation to ensure that the Dickensian formula was applied.[77]

Boarding-out principles were claimed by their advocates as constituting the means by which the Dickensian ideology of protective care was to be extended to reach and rescue the neglected child. Much was made of the fact that rule by force in the institutions was to be replaced by rule by love in the private home. Instead of being "drilled into a mechanical good behaviour", children boarded-out were disciplined by "that correcting love which grieves because it must chastise."[78]

In addition to the Lady Visitor, other safeguards to prevent victimization or exploitation of the child were also provided. In Victoria, applicants either to the Secretary of Industrial and Reformatory Schools, or to the Committee for Neglected and Destitute Children, had to be recommended by a clergyman and to undertake to feed and clothe their charges adequately, send them to school as required under the new Education Act and to Sunday School and Church. State school teachers were asked to co-operate with the Lady Visitors, reporting to them cases of irregular attendance or apparent mistreatment. The Ladies themselves were instructed to exercise a "strict and constant

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76. Secretary and Inspector of the Dept. of Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools Report 1898 p.7.

77. NSW PD 1881 (Vol.4 First Series) p.973 (Sir Henry Parkes), 980 (Dr. Renwick); Secretary of Dept. of Industrial and Reformatory Schools Report 1881 p.6.

78. SCRB Annual Report 1882 p.4.

supervision", checking "cleanliness and tidiness" in the homes, and that no bad language was in use. By 1882, the Secretary recommended all districts adopt the practice of a monthly muster of children on pay-day, when the wards should be presented for additional inspection.[79]

In NSW, where foster parents similarly had to be approved by a clergyman and a magistrate, much emphasis was placed on the number of applicants who were refused as failing to meet the required standards.[80] Once selected, foster parents were to receive advice and instruction on child management and to be inspected occasionally by the Boarding-Out Officer and monthly by Lady Visitors, who would check physical conditions, bedding, clothing, together with attendance at school, church and Sunday School.

Enthusiasts of boarding-out also introduced the notion that the measure was egalitarian, and as such, helping to prevent disharmony between classes by welding society into a whole. They argued that it removed the stigma of pauperism by ensuring that the abandoned or neglected child was educated like other children. Observers reported that children boarded-out were "far healthier and happier than if mewed up in some great school or reformatory."[81] It was said that the children had shed visible evidence of pauperism, and "looked like other children":

> "One of the ladies told us that these children had a hard, defiant air about them at first, though they are well treated in the [Industrial] schools; but when a number are collected together, of course it's impossible that there can be much home feeling.[82]

"The Vagabond" agreed. Of Pay-day in the Richmond Town Hall, he wrote:

> The foster-parents were all well-dressed, comfortable-looking women and the children were the same. Some were nicely attired, and their general appearance and looks would have done credit to a far higher social position than the foster-parent can boast of.... One could hardly realize that these were neglected pauper children whose only heritage was vice and shame.[83]

The Effects on the Families of the Poor:

In practice, the effect of all of these Dickensian initiatives on behalf of the destitute child was somewhat different from that which their advocates had intended. On the one hand, the actual relevance of the new facilities to

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79. Secretary of the Dept. of Industrial and Reformatory Schools Report 1882 p.52-3, 56-7.

80. SCRB Annual Report 1882 p.14, 1883 p.28; 1887 p.14.

81. John Stanley James "Boarding-Out in Practice" The Argus 25 Nov. 1876 repr. in M. Cannon Op.Cit. p.201.

82. Sketches of Australian Life and Scenery By One Who Has Been a Resident for Thirty Years (London 1876) p.165. (Of Ballarat on the day when foster-parents collected their monthly pay from the local Ladies' Committee.)

83. John Stanley James Op.Cit. p.197. See also Dr. Arthur Renwick SCRB Annual Report 1882 p.5, Second Reading of State Children's Amendment Bill 1896 (NSW PD 1896 Vol.83) p.1103.

the needs of the impoverished mother and child was debatable. On the other, all of the facilities came increasingly to depend upon new "scientific" input, especially from medical theory of child nature and needs. This gradually qualified the ideology of innocence and relegated the role of the ladies to a subsidiary position.

The limitations in the charitable facilities to rescue the children of the poor were especially apparent with respect to the hospitals and asylums. For instance, the functions of the hospitals for sick children were necessarily limited for children suffering from infectious disease could not, on the whole, be admitted. They were directed to outpatients departments where, after a long wait and exposure to cross infection, such treatment as was available was administered. During epidemics, attendances in these departments ran into the thousands.[84] In Sydney, a separate ward was erected to accommodate diphtheria cases in 1890, but contained only four beds. Besides,of 71 cases admitted in 1891, 39 died.[85]

Further, the difficulty of feeding infants, plus the fear that the hospitals would be expected to take in unwanted babies, meant that young babies had also to be excluded, while financial considerations dictated that the chronically ill and incurable were not admitted. The hospitals were intended only for acute cases which would recover or die quickly. They were also intended only to serve the very poor, and parents who were earning what was considered a reasonable wage were turned away.[86]

For those admitted, though anaesthetics were available, surgery for children, as for adults, was still more safely performed elsewhere than in a hospital, owing to the risk of infection.[87] Indeed, the foundation of the children's hospitals owed less to the availability of cures than to the idea that the hospitalization of children should be separate from that of adults, and because closer supervision was needed of the child patient to ensure that it did not form bad "habits". This concern for the moral effects of hospitalization in an adult's institution on the impressionable child was also a factor in the foundation of the Melbourne Children's Hospital.[88]

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84. Lyndsay Gardiner Op.Cit. p.53; NSW Royal Commission on Public Charities 1898 Fourth Report, Hospitals of the Colony p.lxxii, 65, 81.

85. R.L. Hipsley Op.Cit. p.70.

86. Lyndsay Gardiner Op.Cit. p.11; NSW Royal Commission on Public Charities 1898 Fourth Report Hospitals of the Colonies p.481.

87. R.L. Hipsley Op.Cit. p.54.

88. Florence Nightingale Notes on Hospitals cited in K.S. Inglis Hospital and Community A History of the Royal Melbourne Hospital (Melbourne 1958) p.42; Lyndsay Gardiner Op.Cit. p.12.



CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, MELBOURNE

21. "The air is not that of a hospital, it is that of the domestic comfort of a family home ruled by the love of a mother; and the secret of this is the devotion of the women who govern it." In reality, the function of the hospital by 1900 was very different.

J. Lake (ed.) Childhood in Bud and Blossom (Melbourne 1900) n.p.

Similarly, for destitute women expecting to be confined, there were a number of advantages in continued dependence on those private facilities which working-class women had evolved for their own use, rather than to seek admission to one of the charitable institutions which existed for their care. For the birth itself in the 1860s and 70s, hospitalization was much more risky than the use of a private establishment or home, owing to the ravages of puerperal fever. The incidence of this disease had been increasing since the eighteenth century, following the establishment of the charitable lying-in hospitals, and the gradual medicalization of obstetric practice.[89]

The lying-in institution shared the poor reputation of the charity hospital in general.[90] Hospital doctors were forceful, bullying personalities, and midwifery constituted only a minor part of their training.[91] Further, the female poor were aware of an unfortunate social stigma cast upon themselves and their children following admission to such an institution:

> I have been called in to attend poor women who had to be on the floor, and I have asked them why they would not go to the Benevolent Asylum, and the answer was that they could not allow their children to be born in a poorhouse.[92]

Admission to these institutions involved domestic labour, both before and after confinement. It was not until the second decade of twentieth century when medical interest in pre-natal care was rising, that concern was beginning to be expressed that the women were kept "washing, ironing and scrubbing up to the last minute."[93]

Those who survived child-birth in a charitable institution and who had nowhere to go, faced the unattractive prospect of staying on for "many months" performing the "rougher domestic duties" of the institution while awaiting a

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89. Annette Rubenstein "Iatrogenic Disease and Professional Interest: The Case of Childbed Fever in the Nineteenth Century" Women and Labour Conference Papers 1980 p.401-2.

90. T.S. Pensabene The Rise of the Medical Practitioner in Victoria (Canberra 1980) p.26, 30.

91. Herbert Moran Viewless Winds (London 1939) p.90; Milton Lewis "Populate or Perish: Aspects of Infant and Maternal Health in Sydney From 1870 to 1930" Ph.D.Thesis ANU 1976 p.212, 224.

92. Dr. J. Graham NSW Royal Commission on Public Charities 1898 Second Report on the Sydney Benevolent Asylum p.91. See also Dr. J. Foreman (Gynaecologist Prince Alfred Hospital) in evidence at NSW Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth Rate 1903-1904, Vol.2 p.228.

93. Mrs.F. White "On Social Habits as they Affect Child Welfare" Report of the Proceedings of the Conference on Child Welfare (Sydney 1917) p.65. For continuance of this policy into the 1900s, W. Lowenstein Weevils in the Flour (Melbourne 1978) p.142.

position. This was usually in poorly paid domestic service, where a child was not necessarily an impediment.[94] For those who took this course of action, when a position had been found for them, their fate largely depended on the attitude of their employer. For some, the child shared the standard of physical care and education of the employer's own children. Eugenie McNeil recalled that her mother's domestic servants often had a child with them, and that in these cases, the child took lessons with their governess.[95] However, this household might not have been representative.

For the married woman, to avail oneself of these charitable alternatives was even less acceptable. For one thing, many of the institutions both for confinement and foster care discouraged admissions by those who had used their facilities on a previous occasion, this policy being seen by their administrators as a deterrent to vice and irresponsibility.[96]

Another factor militating against the use of the charitable institutions, was the policy of some to insist upon the mother staying with the child in order to wet-nurse it. In 1861, the philanthropist George Allen told the Select Committee on the Benevolent Asylum that this was the reason that so many mothers were kept on for so long after confinement. "We cannot take charge of young babies unless the mothers stay too; it would be almost certain death to the child to allow it to stay without its mother." Administrators also tried, as far as possible, not to take in motherless babies born elsewhere.[97] Similarly at Ashfield Infants Home, though the initial policy was merely to allow those mothers who wished to do so, to be admitted with their babies (infants with resident mothers constituting some 12-16% of all babies in the first few years of the institution's existence), this policy had changed by 1882 to one of pressure upon mothers to be admitted. The number of babies with mothers resident then rose to 50% where it remained for the duration of the period under study. Similar changes in admissions policy were introduced at the Victorian Infant Asylum and the Protestant Refuge at Carlton at the instigation of the medical officer of both, Dr. Youl.[98]

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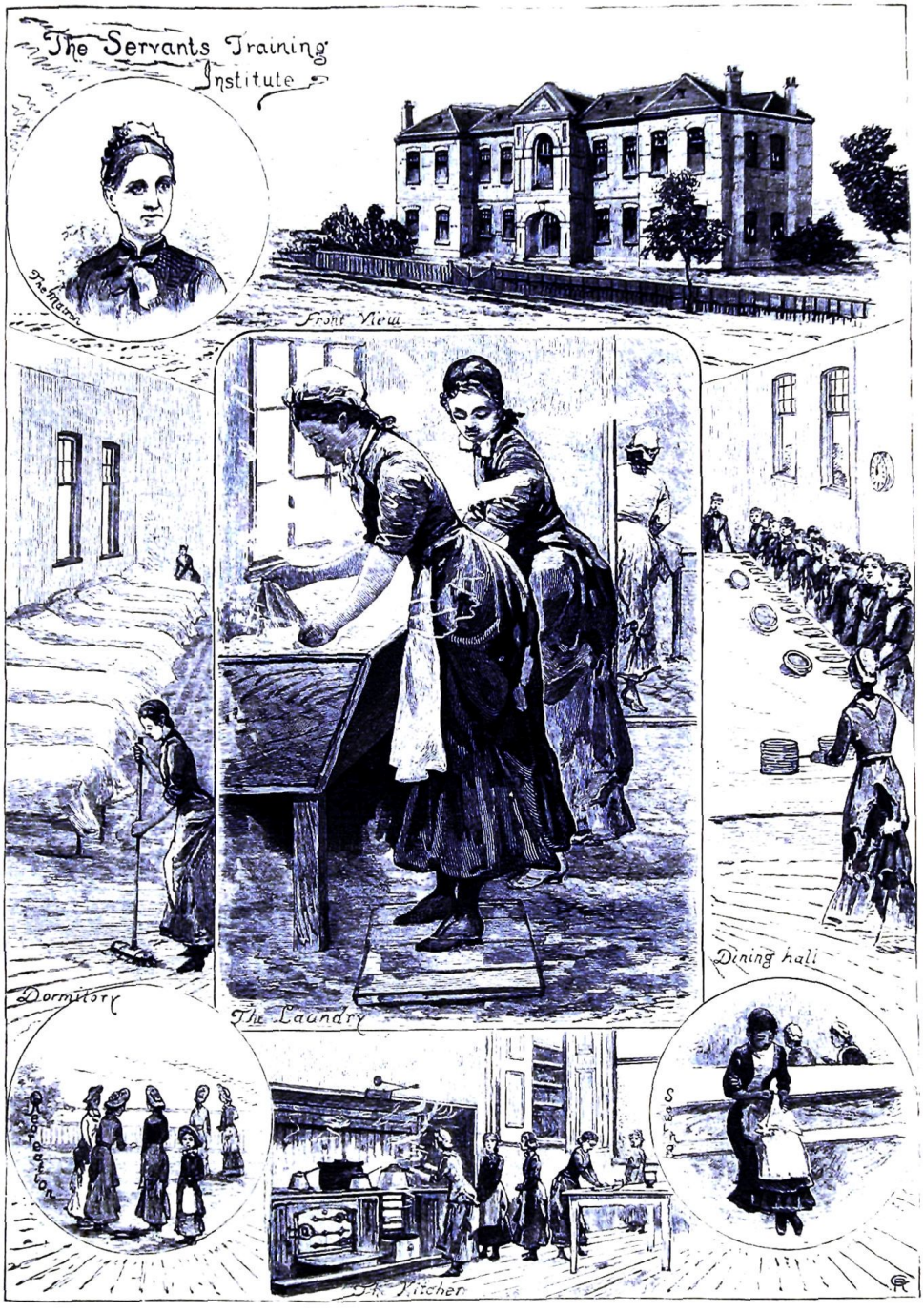
94. NSW Royal Commission on Public Charities Second Report on the Sydney Benevolent Asylum p.xxix, 19, 28.

95. Eugenie McNeil A Bunyip Close Behind Me (Melbourne 1972) p.33.

96. Ashfield Infants' Home Thirteenth Annual Report 1887 p.7, Twenty-Fourth Annual Report 1894 p.24; Victorian Infants' Asylum (Anthea Hyslop "Agents and Objects Women and Social Reform in Melbourne 1890 to 1914" p.748.

97. NSW Select Committee on the Benevolent Society 1861-2 p.925, 930.

98. Figures based on Annual Reports of Ashfield Infants' Home 1874-1913. See also Vic. Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions 1892-3 p.313, 1261-2.



SKETCHES AT THE SERVANTS' TRAINING INSTITUTE, RICHMOND.

22. Many of the charitable institutions functioned so as to provide a pool of trained labour for the employer class. Established in 1879, the Servants' Training Institute had 28 inmates aged from 10 to 15 years in 1883. All were destitute children of "good character". Only two hours each afternoon were spent on "scholastic duties".

Illustrated Australian News 28 Nov. 1883.

Further, all but the very destitute could still avail themselves of the services of the private midwife. Though often lacking formal qualifications, a midwife in private practice was always experienced and offered a low-cost confinement.[99] A midwife was less likely to transmit disease to her patients than the hospital doctor, since she neither treated the sick nor attended the dissection room.[1]

For a woman privately confined, who did not want to keep her baby, various sources of commercial foster care were available in the city. Either for payment of a total sum or for weekly instalments, there were many working-class women willing to "adopt" unwanted infants on a temporary or a permanent basis. Such an arrangement allowed the mother to keep any older children with her rather than consign them to the various charitable institutions which now existed to cater for their age group. She was then free to seek forms of employment which were better paid and allowed more personal freedom than domestic service.

Similarly, in the new schemes for boarding-out the children of the destitute mother, the relevance of the scheme to the problems faced by both mother and child was debatable. In NSW, Reports of the State Children's Relief Board quoted from selected letters from older children as testimony to the success of the scheme:

> Many thanks to you and the kind ladies who take an interest in the poor boys and girls who have no parents and no homes. I am very glad that I have got such kind guardians.... They take me to church every Sabbath day and I also go to Sabbath School. I like going there. I go every day to school and I like my teacher and all my lessons. I do try to be good and obedient, both to Mr. and Mrs.R - , and they allow me to call them father and mother. I do not get leave to play with bad boys on the street that say bad words. I am a member of the Juvenile Good Templars.... G.B.[2]

While doubtless, reassuring to the promoters of the scheme, little note was taken of the fact that these letters were not spontaneous, but written in reply to an invitation from the boarding-out officers. In many, the presence of the foster-parent was particularly palpable:

> Sir, I am very sorry to say that sometimes I am not a very good girl to Mrs. H. and she has to scold me, but after this I am going to try and do all I can for her, so that when you see her again she will give a good account of me...[3]

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99. P. Fitzsimons Op.Cit. p.14. During the 1890s a doctor in private practice was likely to charge £3 to £6 to deliver a baby, when weekly wages averaged £2 to £3.

1. Annette Rubenstein Op.Cit. p.407.

2. SCRB Annual Report 1883 p.35; see also 1884 p.14-15. Selected letters from children were also cited by authorities in Vic. See Secretary of Dept. of Industrial and Reformatory Schools Report 1881 p.30-31.

3. SCRB Annual Report 1883 p.33.

Those who framed the Acts had no illusions that the child boarded-out would be so contented as not to attempt to abscond, once the greater vigilance and control afforded by the institution had been relaxed. In Victoria, absconders from foster homes were to share the penalty of whipping provided for by the Act of 1864, while in NSW, it was the boarding-out legislation which introduced this penalty to the Statute books.[4]

Though the motives of foster-parents can never be known, administrators of the system did not assume that altruism or Romantic commitment to the pleasures of a large family was sufficient to induce people to take extra children into their families. Foster-parents were paid, and at a sufficient rate to make the proposition attractive, especially in families where an extra pair of hands made the difference between having to employ an apprentice or servant to do basically the same work. The recollections of A.B. Facey testify to the enormous amount and variety of work which could be performed by a boy from the age of eight, both on a farm and about the house, while baby-minding, washing dishes and clothes, fetching water and wood and feeding animals were some of the chores which could be performed by girls.[5] Moreover, no wage had to be paid to children under twelve to perform these tasks; it was the foster-parent who was remunerated.

Payments to foster-parents were not ungenerous. In NSW and Victoria they were paid 5/- a week to take a healthy child, or more in "special" cases. For instance, in NSW, they were paid 7/- if prepared to take a child with some physical impediment, such as having only one eye or suffering from hip disease.[6] At the age of twelve payment ceased and the children then had to be formally apprenticed and wages paid to them, or they could then be sent back to the authorities for apprenticeship elsewhere.

In NSW, the fact that this condition conflicted with the principle of compulsory education to the age of fourteen years, was acknowledged, but concern centred on the fact that this discrepancy might prevent the apprenticeship of children aged between twelve and fourteen.[7] No master would be prepared to pay wages to a child to attend school, and this problem might lead to costly institutionalization of this age group.

As a source of income, fostering of a State child was not available to the most needy and one-parent families. For instance, in NSW, it was said that in the choice of foster homes, those of the very poor were to be avoided.

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4. 38 Vict. No.495 of 1874 (Section 14); NSW State Children's Relief Act of 1881 (44 Vic. No.24) (Section 8).

5. A.B. Facey Op.Cit.; Mary Gilmore Old Days Old Ways (Sydney 1934) p.25, 76, 82-3, 117.

6. SCRB Annual Report 1882 p.13.

7. Ibid. p.17.

Preferred were those of "well-to-do mechanics in receipt of weekly wages, of respectable tradesmen and farmers and in a few cases, of independent people."[8].

Nevertheless, there was no shortage of better-off families who did qualify, and for whom the prospect of an extra person to help with the many chores associated with the servantless household, together with the regular subsidy paid by the State, made fostering very welcome. In both states, the demand for children was such that the institutions for destitute children were rapidly emptied. In Victoria, by 1881, Sunbury and the school-ship "Nelson" had been phased out, and 74% of State Wards had been placed in foster-homes.[9] Similarly, in NSW, increasing numbers of children came under the control of the State Children's Relief Board, as children previously housed at the Protestant and Catholic Orphanages were boarded-out. The Randwick Asylum had only 250 children left in 1886 and in 1887, its government subsidy was cut off. It lingered till 1915, when it was taken over by the government to house disabled soldiers.

Whereas the fact that from the inception of the system, the demand for children exceeded the supply, can be interpreted as ensuring that "only the best homes" were selected,[10] it also suggests that, like apprenticeship, the scheme had great appeal where sources of cheap labour were scarce and a subsidized helper very welcome. For example, in the family of a carter in suburban Richmond in 1876, where 3 children were boarded-out, even the "Vagabond" conceded that the mother, who had three children of her own and who took in washing, could expect "to do very well" from the 26/- she was paid by the scheme.[11] Thus, despite the theory of Florence Hill, that the scheme was different from "baby-farming" because it was public and non-profit making[12] the fact that in practice it was neither, appears to have been a major factor in its popularity.

Though it was officially stated that children should attend school, the occupations of the guardians selected suggested a continuance of the old expectation that these children should spend their leisure time in learning industrial skills. The policy of allowing only a few children per family, and for locations outside the city, made it much more difficult to check that the children, like those under apprenticeship, were not cruelly treated, much

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8. Ibid. p.14; see also Secretary of Dept. of Industrial and Reformatory Schools Report 1882 p.56.

9. Secretary of Industrial and Reformatory Schools Report 1881 p.23.

10. SCRB Annual Report 1882 p.14.

11. John Stanley James Op.Cit. p.200.

12. The Boarding-out System Distinguished From Baby-Farming... (1869) cited in Second Report of NSW Commission on Public Charities 1873-4 p.44.

depending on the surveillance of the Lady Visitors. In NSW, for example, the idea of the advantages of rural life for the moral and physical health of children and desire to prevent contact with troublesome, interfering parents, meant that younger children were sent to farmers, orchardists, storekeepers and artisans in "healthy" country districts, that is, to foster parents in labour-intensive occupations in remote areas.[13] For example in 1895, of 3174 children under the control of the Board, 983 were boarded out or apprenticed with farmers, and the other main occupations of the guardians were, orchardists (64 children), miners (43 children), storekeepers (22) and carpenters (22). Of children apprenticed, all 327 girls were in domestic service while of 578 boys, 477 were with farmers.[14]

To some extent the apprentice was more fortunately situated than the child boarded-out, since he or she was older, and at least had the protection of a formal indenture entered into between the State and the employer. Boarding-out relied on inspection only, which as administrators sometimes admitted, was not as frequent as was desired.[15]

It was also noticeable that children of an age to perform the numerous lighter tasks which any household demanded, were more easily boarded-out than babies. Figures for children boarded-out in NSW suggest that it was at about the age of seven that payment of 5/- a week together with the services which an extra child of that age could perform, that boarding-out became an attractive proposition.[16] The Victorian Infants' Asylum in 1890 found it necessary to offer 12/- per week in order to encourage foster-care of a foundling at four weeks old, with payments of 10/- and 8/- being made for children under four years.[17]

Another reason to question the altruism of the foster-parent was the fact that though children could be taken into foster homes on a permanent basis, and without remuneration, very few foster parents chose to do so. Reports of the NSW State Children's Relief Board show that the number of children "adopted" without payment was usually considerably less than those boarded out,[18] even

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13. SCRB Annual Report 1882 p.18.

14. SCRB Annual Report 1895 p.3, 5, 10.

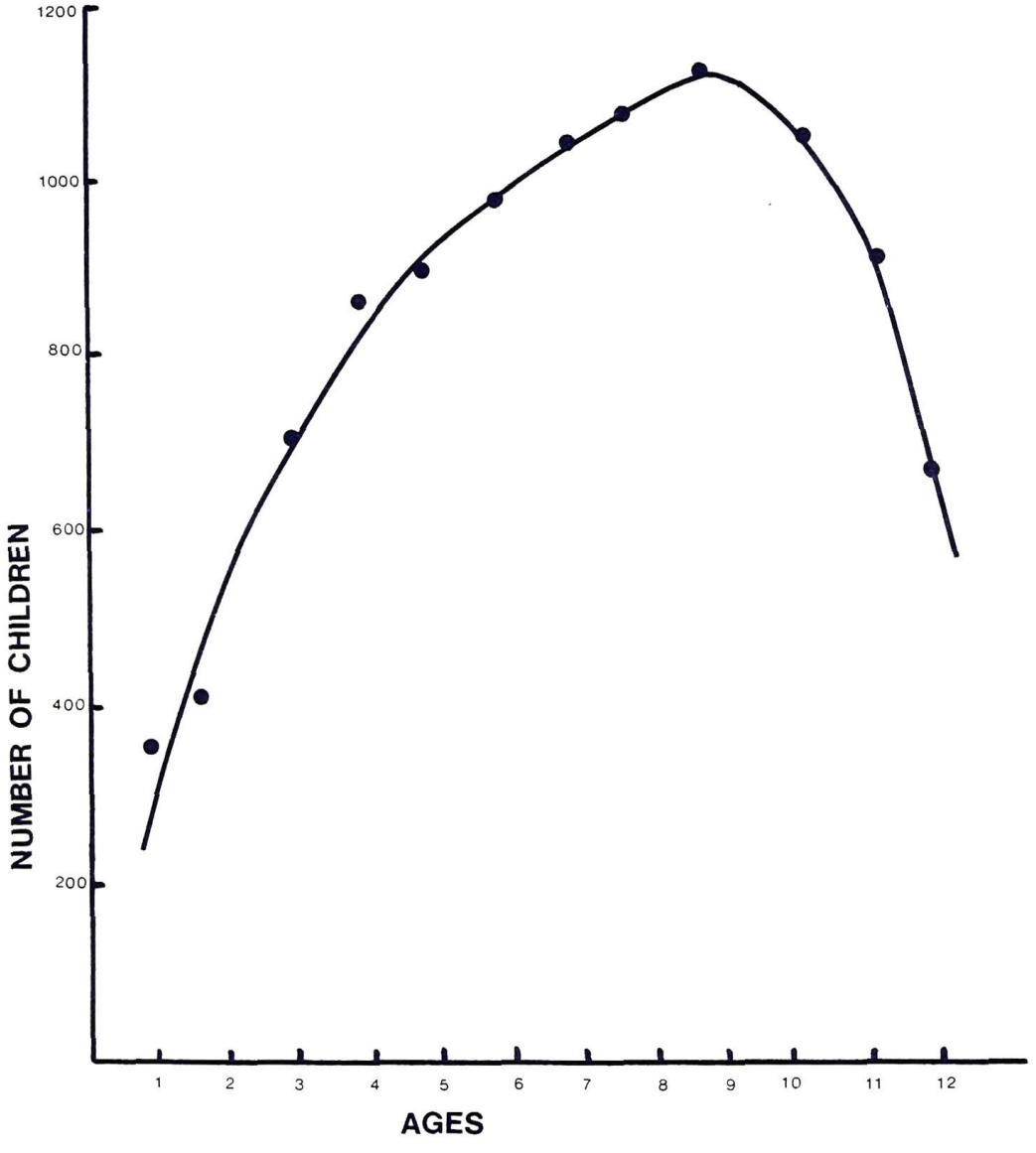
15. SCRB Annual Report 1898 p.7.

16. Of all children placed out by the SCRB 1881-1901, those aged between 6 and 10 constituted almost twice the number of children in other age groups. See Fig.3, p.93a, NSW Statistical Register 1901 p.856.

17. Vic. Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions VPP 1892-3 Vol.4 p.1263 (Mrs. Elizabeth Nankivell).

18. Of children under control of the SCRB over the period 1882 to 1895, an average of only 6% were adopted without payment each year, while some 75% were supported by the Government. (Based on figures provided in SCRB Annual Report 1895 p.3).

NUMBER OF CHILDREN PLACED OUT BY SCRB AT VARIOUS AGES 1881-1901



Source: NSW Statistical Register 1901 p.856.

Fig. 3

though this was a period of high infant mortality and rising pressure on women to construct or reconstruct a family according to the literary idealization of the mother role. By the late 1880s theories were growing that girls from childhood showed a "common tendency to be helpful, sympathetic and self-sacrificing" and these characteristics reached their apotheosis in a "self-forgetful tenderness" stimulated by the "nurture of children."[19]

Admittedly, the espousal of such theories, which left the married but childless woman as a social oddity, had not yet resulted in legal facilities for formal adoption as a permanent transfer of the rights of the natural parent. Consequently, the reluctance to "adopt" informally may have reflected a fear that as soon as the children arrived at an age when they would be useful to the natural parents, they would be claimed, even though the foster parents had all the trouble of rearing, and had become "attached" to, their charges.[20] In NSW, the President of the State Children's Relief Board was arguing that in 1883 that this was the reason why adoption without remuneration, potentially the "most desirable element of the boarding-out system", and one which should have relieved the State of a "heavy expenditure", had so far been highly limited in its operations. Under the existing legal arrangements, only children who really were orphans, or who were foundlings, could be safely "placed with women who generally being denied the joys of maternity, have thus been provided with child life in their own homes."[21]

At the same time, however, it was recognized that it was only the "prosperous colonists" and "well-to-do" citizens who would adopt without payment. Reflecting this, inspection of homes where children had been adopted was not compulsory but put at the discretion of the Lady Visitor.[22] Facilities for formal adoption, the most total and effective of all the schemes for separating the innocent child from its guilty parent without depriving it of its rightful place in the happy home, were not provided until the 1920s. This delay occurred because in the interim, approval of the savings to be effected by this procedure, conflicted with other, chiefly medical, theories. These included notions such as that, in order to guarantee the moral reclamation of the unwed mother, it was vital that she keep her baby, and especially, that child nature was not determined only by its environment, but also by its biological inheritance.[23]

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19. The Dawn Vol.2 No.8 1889 p.9.

20. John Stanley James Op.Cit. p.202.

21. SCRB Annual Report 1883 p.17; 1887 p.2.

22. SCRB Annual Report 1887 p.19; 1895 p.9.

23. "Adoption" was favoured by spokesmen for Catholic institutions, who saw it as desirable to separate the child permanently from the sinful mother, but strongly opposed by some doctors in charitable organizations, who believed non-separation was vital to the redemption of the mother. See Vic. Royal Commission on Public Charities 1892-3 p.313 (Dr. Youl), p.601 (Charles D. Grondona of St. Joseph's Home for Destitute Children). The insistence on keeping the child with the mother is further discussed in Chapter Six.

Meanwhile, in contrast with the willingness to take in children of sufficient age to be able to render useful service and in return for payment by the State, informal adoption of babies from private institutions as well as the State Children's Relief Board, remained infrequent. At the Parramatta Orphan Schools in 1870, though adoption sometimes occurred, it was not an extensive practice. Similarly at Ashfield, Annual Reports usually expressed pleasure if any of the babies were adopted, but usually only a few permanent homes were found each year. At the Victorian Infants' Asylum, twice as many babies were boarded-out as were adopted.[24]

In spite of these anomalies, the conviction widespread among journalists, philanthropists and women's organizations, of the superiority of the new scheme to "the barracks system" allowed both boarding-out and the continuing practice of apprenticeship which it so closely resembled, largely to evade criticism. For instance, a letter from a child quoted in the NSW parliamentary debate on the State Children's Bill in 1903, testifying that to go to sea or "into the country" as an apprentice was to be "an absolute slave all the time" was not taken seriously. Mr. Carruthers pointed out that one could not be guided by a child's views on such a matter, for naturally when a boy found himself on a dairy farm he would not like getting up early to milk the cows, but would rather be back with his friends on the training ship.[25]

Finally it must be noted that, though such evidence must be treated with caution, the testimony of children who led a less protected life than Dickensian ideology demanded, suggests that the moral risks were not as great as reformers believed. According to Frances Lepherd, the dangers involved in her milk run were few and the job was made onerous only by the snobbery of more protected children and the obtuseness of the headmaster, who never spared her punishment as a latecomer, though perfectly aware of the circumstances of her case.[26]

Some labouring children may have displayed something of the independence and resourcefulness projected in the accounts of earlier nineteenth-century observers, and later celebrated as uniquely Australian by the Bulletin writers. For example, children interviewed in Sydney by a Select Committee in 1891-2

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24. Michael Horsburgh "Child Care in NSW in 1870" p.21; Ashfield Infants Home Annual Reports 1876 p.6, 1888 p.4; Vic Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions 1892-3 p.1262.

25. NSW PD 1903 (Vol.12 Second Series) p.2882 (Mr. Storey); p.2884 (Mr Carruthers). From 1914, growing disclosures of abuses in the system resulted in an enquiry into the State Children's Relief Board in 1916-17. This denied any flaws in the system but provided ample evidence of the exploitation of children, and of the amount of labour they were expected to perform before and after school. (Report of the Public Service Board Into the Working of the State Children's Relief Branch... NSW LA V&P 1918 Vol.2 p.3, 11, 36-8, 40-1, 65-7.)

26. Frances Lepherd Op.Cit. p.10-11, 24.





TYPES OF BOARDED-OUT WARDS IN THE COUNTRY.

23. Propagandist photographs issued in 1914 by the State Children's Relief Board, in response to increasing allegations of exploitation of children boarded-out.

SCRB Annual Report 1914.





TYPES OF HOMES FROM WHICH THE BOARD RECEIVES WARDS.

24. SCRB Annual Report 1914.

included an eleven year-old boy, "Dutchy", one of ten children whose father was "a coal-lumper at Pyrmont." He said he had been selling papers for two years, and that having collected the papers from the news office, he employed two other boys to sell papers for him, making a net profit of 2/- per night. He also earned money from "tumbling" in private bars.[27]

The Qualification of Innocence:

Boarding-out may have been of dubious value to the impoverished mother and child, but with the favourable publicity given to the system, the concept of the "right" of children though not necessarily destitute ones, to a "proper" home environment became entrenched. The principle of inspection of the working-class home to ensure conformity to the prescribed ideal, also set important precedents.

By the late 1880s however, other aspects of the Dickensian concept of rescue were beginning to be challenged by alternative theories of child nature and needs. In the first instance, these challenges took the form of a denial of the egalitarianism of Dickensian rhetoric and the return to pragmatic acceptance that the aim of rescue work was to transform a potential source of criminality and vice into a productive and tractable juvenile labour force.

Emphasis on factors at variance with the Dickensian rhetoric of egalitarianism and innocence had already been present in the testimony of some of the witnesses, and in some of the conclusions, of the New South Wales Commission which had recommended boarding out in 1873-4. Enmeshed with statements that family care was more in accordance with "the Law of Nature" and that the standard of care in the institutions was mechanistic and impersonal, were arguments that, in the "Barracks", the destitute child was not being taught skills appropriate to its permanent position in life. For instance, large institutions which used "machines" such as hot and cold water laid on, could not adequately equip a child for later life in cottages which lacked these conveniences. Children so raised would not be able "to take and hold their place among the working classes."[28]

This kind of argument underlay much of the strong criticism which was directed at Randwick Asylum by this Commission. It was said that what was wrong with this institution, was not only that it was "unhomely", but that it provided too little industrial training, especially for girls, none of whom were taught to cook by working in the kitchen. Besides, there were eight costly attendants and a housemaid, where the smaller Orphan Schools managed with none.[29]

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27. NSW Select Committee on the Children's and Infants' Protection Bills, NSW LC Journal 1891-2 p.1121.

28. Second Report of NSW Commission on Public Charities 1873-4 p.41-2.

29. Ibid. p.106-7.

By the same token, the Orphan Schools fared somewhat better. Though at the Catholic one, it was thought that more boys should work on the farm attached to it and the girls be taught needlework earlier, at the Protestant one, where the children also did all of the work, it was emphasized that the children seemed happier than those in the large institutions.[30]

These arguments were further developed by legislators seeking enactment of boarding-out in NSW. Only in the foster home, it was said, could the child learn the virtue of "'frugality and economy'" and "to perform various household duties." In Dr. Renwick's view, this was impossible in a large institution, where food and clothing were simply handed out as if they fell "from 'Heaven'" and the children knew nothing of the valiant struggles of the cottager to maintain independence by making "ends meet." [31]

Thus, though still seen as little innocents, requiring protection and separation from an unfit environment, to some reformers and administrators, the neglected children of the poor were clearly becoming less innocent than others. They spoke "an almost unintelligible language", the"very lowest kind of slang"; they had "peculiar idiosyncracies of the mind."[32]

Though spokeswomen for the ladies involved in boarding-out continued to stress its protective role, as fostering childishness in children and guaranteeing individual, loving care,[33] by the 1890s others saw its advantages explicitly in terms of a captive labour force. Thus, Dr. Charles Strong told the Victorian Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions in 1891 that the Social Improvement, Friendly Help and Children's Aid Society, which he had founded in 1886, experienced no difficulty in finding homes for destitute children in "agricultural districts." A boy of ten was very useful for"herding cattle," and sufficient guardians had been found who were willing to take in children "as servants" to learn "farm work". He added that since this Society was not dealing with infants and younger children, it had not even found it necessary to pay the guardians. They were merely "expected to enter into a sort of contract" that they would "treat the children well, send them to school and if necessary pay them "if their services were useful." Dr. Strong's knowledge of the children's welfare was hazy in the extreme. The "50 or 60" children

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30. Ibid. p.92, 93.

31. NSW PD 1881 (Vol.4 First Series) p.973 (Sir Henry Parkes), p.975 (Mr. Kidd), p.980 (Dr. Renwick); SCRB Annual Report 1882 p.6.

32. John Matthew May to NSW Select Committee on the Employment of Children 1875-6 p.925; Mr. Frederick Cane, former clerk and storekeeper at the Girls' Industrial School, Newcastle and Biloela, then Superintendent of Government Asylum for Imbeciles, Newcastle, Second Report of NSW Commission on Public Charities 1873-4 p.160.

33. Vic. Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions 1892-3 p.509-13 (Catherine Spence), 537-8 (Selina Sutherland).

boarded-out by this Society since its inception were visited only "once or twice" a year.[34]

From the late 1880s, partly in response to the greater incidence of child destitution engendered by the depression, but also reflecting opposition to the rhetoric of boarding-out, numerous new private orphanages and industrial schools were founded. In 1887, Sydney organizer of multiple charities, George Ardill, established a "home" for older children at Liverpool, and in 1890, "Our Boys' Farm Home" at Camden. By the mid 1890s, Catholics were founding "orphanages" in dioceses throughout New South Wales; Methodists had established "Dalmar" at Woolloomooloo (later moved to Croydon) for destitute children and the Anglicans had founded Bethamy Children's Home at Balmain.[35] In Victoria, the number of orphan asylums and children's homes was also growing, with new institutions founded not only in the city but in major country centres such as Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo.[36]

Managers of some of these institutions strongly denied that the "herding" of destitute children in institutions was a damaging factor, branding the child with the stigma of poverty. They argued that their system provided a more thorough moral training and preparation for release direct to "service" at around the age of fifteen.[37]

Meanwhile, however, under the conviction that in boarding-out, an economical and effective solution to the problem of child destitution had been found, State commitment in this field continued to expand. Further protective legislation, sought by philanthropists and women's organizations, increased the incidence of State intervention between parent and child. This in turn had the effect of generating a need for professional, and, in particular, medical services and advice on the care of the rising numbers of State wards.

The expansion of the charities had itself created increased scope for medical input to the field. For instance, the charitable hospitals and foundling homes functioned so as to provide doctors with a supply of material for their own training and that of their professional auxiliaries, nurses and medically-trained midwives. The growth of the influence and expertise of doctors in this area was such that they rapidly began to displace the charitable

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34. Ibid. p.704.

35. Brian Dickey "The Evolution of Care for Destitute Children in NSW 1875-1901" Journal of Australian Studies No.4 1979 p.48.

36. Statistical Register of Victoria 1911 p.14 and 21.

37. Vic. Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions 1892-3 p.60-2 (Charles D. Grondona); p.763 (Mother Mary Xavier of Convent of Mercy Melbourne) p.799-800 (Sister Mary Kennedy of Convent of the Good Shepherd, Melbourne).

lady herself from the field. The philanthropic ladies may have been motivated by the Dickensian notion that the sick child was a special object of charity and it was they who had a special role to play in saving it. However, most of the hospitals and asylums needed medical assistance, and for this the ladies turned less to the female practitioner than the qualified male doctor. By the early 1890s, these institutions had become key areas in which medical expertise was both developed and publicized.

Indeed, for doctors, the charitable institutions had much to offer. For instance, when provision for their local training was made in Melbourne in 1862 and Sydney in 1880, this was to be by full-time study at University followed by hospital experience. Thus doctors needed the hospitals as much as the charities needed the doctors. At Sydney Children's Hospital, for example, if children were admitted for surgery during the first decade of the hospital's existence, it was to undergo amputations or fairly novel and experimental orthopaedic operations. Tracheotomy was performed from 1887, removal of tonsils and adenoids from 1889, and operations for club foot became frequent from 1890.[38]

With increasing medical input into the charitable field, so the Dickensian theory on which the concept of rescue became subject to a new kind of challenge. This became apparent especially with respect to the boarding-out system in New South Wales, where, when the State Children's Relief Board was formed to administer the scheme in 1881, it was a doctor, Arthur Renwick, who was made President, while the charitable ladies, including those who had initiated the scheme, were relegated to the auxiliary committee. As early as his first Report in 1882, Renwick was spelling out that one of the reasons for the implementation of boarding-out was the belief that it would avoid the inefficiency and "spoiling" of the "Barracks", and that it constituted a more effective form of industrial training needed to build a healthy, diligent working class:

> It is always impressed upon the guardians that the object of the system is not to 'coddle' the children; that while they are to be allowed reasonable opportunities for amusement or recreation, they must also be properly instructed in household work....[39]

Renwick was also pointing out, that far from being little angels, many of the destitute children coming under the care of the State were too insubordinate and independent to install in a foster home. Some were returned as unsatisfactory or moved from one foster home to another, thereby incurring additional expense before ultimately having to be institutionalized to an advanced age. Other children were suffering from physical or mental impediments which similarly disqualified them from boarding-out. According to Renwick, there was need for scientific diagnosis and classification of all children

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38. P.L. Hipsley Op.Cit. p.55, 59-62.

39. SCRB Annual Report 1882 p.14-15; see also p.6, 7.

coming under control of the State. In this way it was possible to identify in advance of boarding-out, the potential trouble-makers, many of whom had an inherited predisposition towards mischief or vice which no foster-home could correct.[40]

Though as in the foundling homes and hospitals, so in the boarding-out scheme, the influence of the charitable ladies' organizations was still profound, already dependence was growing upon medical opinion. By the late 1880s, a rising tide of poverty would accelerate this trend, producing new, largely medical, solutions for social problems involving the young. These would qualify the idea of the innocence of the pauper child and the role of the environment in causing and correcting the problems of child destitution. Though the notion of the child's need for individual care in a protective family, would remain, together with the principle of monitoring working-class home life to effect this, the sources of these ideas in Dickensian ideology would largely be forgotten as these concepts themselves became absorbed into a scientific theory of the psychic needs of the child. The role of the lady in their construction would be dismissed and even her influential part in their implementation would become secondary to trained experts in the field.

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40. Ibid. p.26; SCRB Annual Report 1883 p.7-8, 11.

CHAPTER FOUR

MEDICALIZATION

Child Death, Disease and The Doctor

Those who formulated rules for the moral education of children had long included medical men. By 1860 however, the importance of the doctor in the making and transmission of childhood ideology was increasing. During the eighteenth century, physicians had matched Philosophes in calling attention to the special physical and moral qualities of childhood and by 1815, a wave of medical publications on child health and training was available, to advise the middle-class mother on methods of protecting the health and morals of her children.[1]

The appearance of such works testified to rising medical awareness of the potential market which existed for the services of the medical man as a "family" doctor, provided he had the expertise to preserve the life of the young. This market was generated by the strong likelihood of child death despite intense emotional involvement with the fortunes of the individual child. As Mrs. Beeton, writing her Book of Household Management in 1857, following the death of her first child, pointed out, "maternal love" was prepared to abide by every method that "medical judgement" dictated, should this prove able to assure "the well-being of the parents' hope," and prevent disease and death invading "the guarded treasure."[2]

In the colonies, this potential increase in demand for the services of the doctor was the more acute given that during the 60s and 70s, childhood mortality was rising. Though a range of infectious enteric diseases had been present from the earliest days of the settlement, the other main infectious diseases fatal to children had largely been absent and child mortality relatively low. However, rising family emigration from the mid 1830s both increased the likelihood that diseases would survive the long voyage, and expanded the child population to a degree which facilitated the spread of infection and ensured its periodic reappearance.[3] Thus, diphtheria, unknown in the colonies before 1858, occurred in Victoria following increased family immigration during the gold rushes. Scarlet fever occurred in epidemic proportions in both New South Wales and Victoria by 1841, reaching peak mortality rates in 1875-6. Whooping cough had arrived in both states by mid-century and occurred in epidemic form at two to four year intervals thereafter. Epidemics of measles also occurred in the Eastern States from mid-century at

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1. E. Shorter The Making of the Modern Family (London 1976) p.317.
2. Mrs. Isabella Beeton Book of Household Management (London 1968) p.1026.
3. Bryan Gandevia Tears Often Shed (Sydney 1978) p.32, 35.

five to six year intervals. Rubella occurred in epidemic proportions in Victoria in 1867, 1873, and 1883 and in New South Wales in 1898, its effects being reflected in the high number of admissions of children born in those years to the charitable Institutions for the Deaf, Dumb and Blind which had been founded in both states during the 1860s.[4]

Thus, during the 60s and 70s, the child-centred colonial mother, like her English equivalent, had to face the problem of the child's very real vulnerability to disease and death. Mortality rates of children, though beginning to fall slowly from the 1880s, did not decrease significantly until the first decade of the twentieth century. Meanwhile one child in every ten died before reaching its first birthday, and all ran the risk of contracting a serious infectious disease before the age of fourteen.[5]

"Never send your child to bed crying, or angered, or under punishment, without giving him a kiss," an article in The Dawn advised in 1889. "Remember, it may be the last night on earth, or a burning fever, diphtheria or croup may deprive him of reason...." Mothers were also advised of their "duty" to have their children photographed frequently, in case of death.[6]

However, potential demand for the services of the doctor in the child-centred family had not yet been matched by significant improvements in his ability to prevent disease and death from invading the domestic nest. Dr. Charles McCarthy, addressing the Medical Society of Victoria in 1864, could well point out that doctors should not neglect the unique opportunities to impart "useful information to mothers and families" in order to alleviate the "lamentable" suffering of children and "sacrifice of life presently occurring,[7] yet in many cases, doctors' own knowledge was still severely limited. For instance, not till the 1930s would paediatricians know the composition and action of vitamins and thus what children ideally should eat.[8] For children under twelve months, all doctors were agreed that problems with

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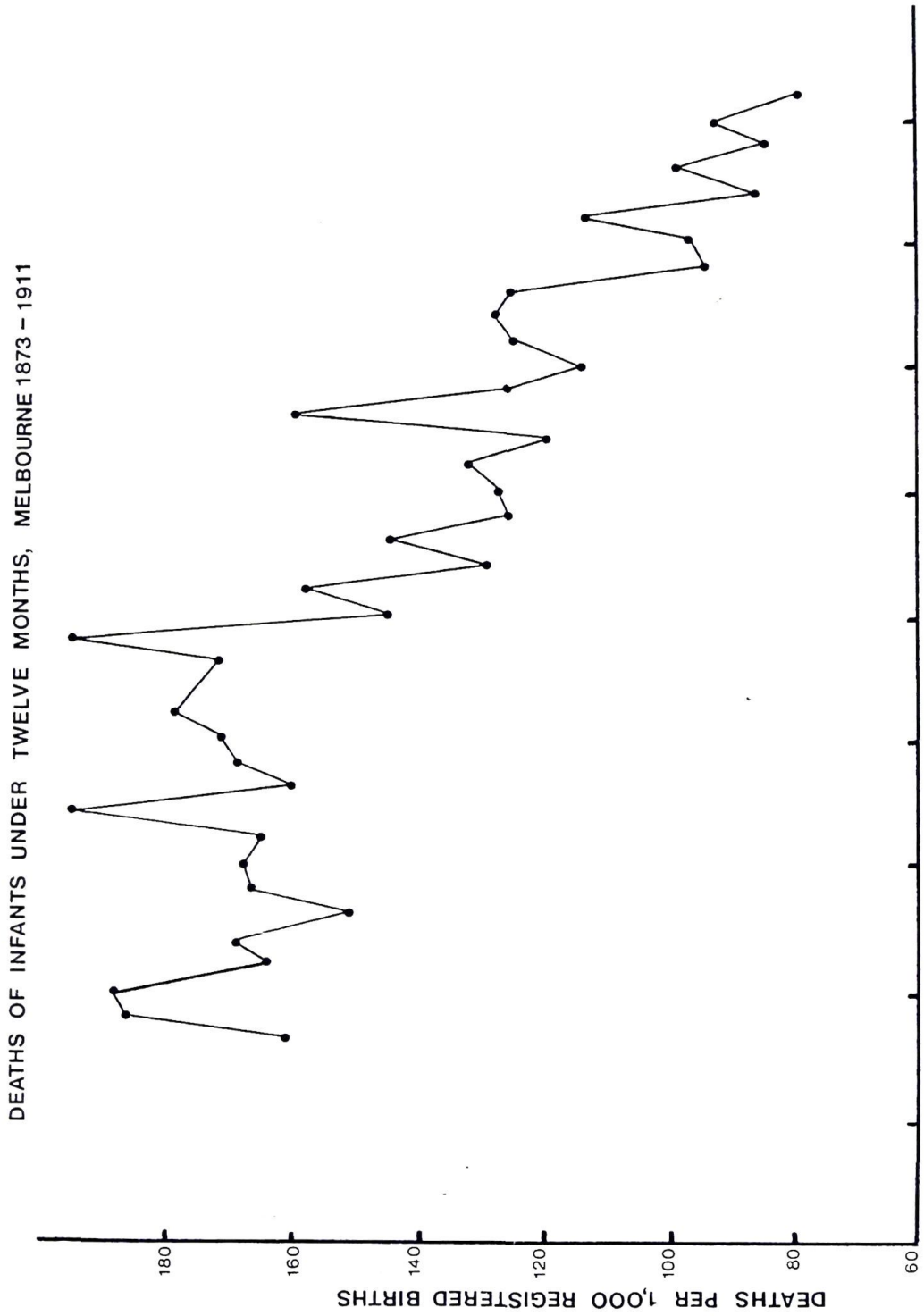
4. Ibid. p.84, 85, 87, 92. In Victoria, philanthropists had established both a Deaf and Dumb Institute and an Institute for the Blind by 1866. The NSW Institution for Deaf and Dumb Children was established in 1861 and extended in 1869 to include the blind. Providing for children over the age of seven, its enrolment increased by 55% between 1891 and 1911. (NSW Royal Commission on Public Charities 1898, NSW LA V&P Vol.3 p.1250ff; NSW Statistical Register 1891 p.460; 1911 p.452.)

5. Bryan Gandevia Op.Cit. p.80; T.S. Pensabene The Rise of the Medical Practitioner in Victoria (Canberra 1980) p.20, 49.

6. The Dawn Vol.2 No.7 1889 p.10; Vol.4 No.9 1892 p.13.

7. Dr. Charles McCarthy On the Excessive Mortality of Infants and its Causes (Melbourne 1865) p.3-4.

8. R.L. Hipsley Early History of the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children Sydney 1880-1905 (Sydney 1952) p.4; Lyndsay Gardiner Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne (Melbourne 1970) p.125.



SOURCE: VIC. STATISTICAL REGISTER 1911 p.67.

Fig. 4

feeding and diet were a major cause of death, but in the absence of accurate knowledge of the composition of breast milk, they were divided on the preparation of alternatives. In the 1870s, agreement was still not possible even on the nutritional value of the early breast milk or colostrum. Dr. Jamieson in 1871 advised breast-feeding, even if possible only in the first few days, but in 1875 Dr. Fullerton's recommendation of this practice to readers was based on the value of colostrum as an aperient.[9] Earlier, in 1864, Dr. McCarthy had argued that to breast-feed before the milk was unmistakeably present, was productive of nothing but sore nipples and, in the interim, the child should be fed on a cow's milk formula.[10] For the preparation of substitute feeding, most doctors preferred cow's milk to condensed, or to the various patent infant foods which were becoming available by the 1870s and were numerous by the turn of the century. Condensed milk, which kept well, and some brands of which were relatively cheap, was said to be favoured by the poor though as is now known, it was low in fat content and deficient in two vitamins.[11]

As early as 1874, Dr. Jenkins had suggested that scrofulous children who were badly fed or suckled by a delicate mother, were likely to suffer from rickets, but the association of the incidence of rickets in children with a diet of condensed milk was not actively pursued until the 1890s.[12] In 1889, Muskett warned that feeding with condensed milk caused children to be "pale and flabby" and to have little stamina. By 1903 he associated it with rickets, but considered over-crowding and want of cleanliness were also causes.[13] Meanwhile, Dr. Jenkins recommended treating rickets by feeding with raw eggs, lime water and by giving a daily cold bath and support for the spine.[14] As late as 1909, if breast-feeding had failed and the baby had been found unable to take a cow's milk formula, Dr. Muskett could only advise that it was "no good use losing heart" and that the mother should experiment successively with sherry

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9. Dr. J. Jamieson How to Feed Infants (Melbourne 1871) p.25; Dr. G. Fullerton The Family Medical Guide (Sydney 1875) p.425.

10. Dr. C. McCarthy Op.Cit. p.19.

11. Medical Officer of Health, Metropolitan Combined Sanitary Districts (Sydney) Annual Report Dec. 1913 p.29-30; Isla Blomfield in Conference on Child Welfare Report of the Proceedings (Sydney 1917) p.59; M.J. Lewis "Populate or Perish: Aspects of Infant and Maternal Health 1870 to 1939" Ph.D. Thesis ANU 1976 p.32, 34, 39.

12. Dr. W.H. Jenkins The Family Medical Index or What to Do in Cases of Emergency (Melbourne 1874) p.133; Dr. P.E. Muskett AMG Jul. 1891, cited in M. Lewis Op.Cit. p.36.

13. Dr. P.E. Muskett The Feeding and Management of Australian Infants (Sydney and Melbourne 1889) p.24; sixth edn. (Sydney 1903) p.124, 180.

14. Dr. W.H. Jenkins Op.Cit. p.134; see also Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.339.

and milk, malt soup, white of egg, plain whey, raw meat juice, albumen water, brandy and champagne.[15]

Further, there was no known cure for most of the infectious diseases of childhood. For example, though all were agreed that the range of enteric disease imprecisely described as summer diarrhoea, infantile cholera or gastro-enteritis, was a major cause of death, none could be confident of curing it. Medical descriptions of this disease were generally pessimistic as to its conclusion. Beginning with "looseness of the bowels", reaching "twenty or more motions during the day", then "vomiting sets in, the little sufferer becomes more and more exhausted, he becomes shrunken in appearance, the eyes are hollow, and he sinks into a state of stupor, when death - in many cases preceded by convulsions, ends the scene."[16]

Similarly for diphtheria, during the 70s and 80s, little could be done by the doctor. Though tracheotomy could be performed, many children did not survive the operation, or died later of infection. Unknown in the colonies before 1858, by 1872 mortality from diphtheria was so great that a Royal Commission was called in Victoria to enquire into its causes and treatment. Doctors advising this Commission recommended filling the patient's room with sulphurous acid in the form of vapour, common therapy at this time.[17]

The limitations in doctors' knowledge was exacerbated by their resistance to germ theory. Though the role of septicaemia in puerperal fever had been accurately described by 1795, and was well-known following the much publicized disclosure of Oliver Wendell Holmes in America and Ignaz Semmelweis in Vienna during the 1840s, in the colonies, as overseas, this information was opposed by the medical profession until the revelations of Pasteur and Lister during the 1860s and 70s initiated gradual conversion to aseptic methods, to combat infectious disease. Even then, debate continued within the profession between adherents of germ theory and those who clung to the belief that disease was spread by miasma or impure air, for which unclean hands or instruments could not be held responsible.[18]

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15. Dr. P.E. Muskett The Illustrated Australian Medical Guide (Sydney 1909) Vol.1 p.485.

16. Dr. P.E. Muskett An Australian Appeal (Sydney 1892) p.27. For a graphic, fictional account of medical inability to save a six year-old suffering from enteric disease in Victoria during the 1870s, see H.H. Richardson The Fortunes of Richard Mahony Bk. 3 "Ultima Thule" (Penguin 1976) p.86-90.

17. Dr. W.H. Jenkins Op.Cit. p.42; Royal Commission to Enquire Into the Origin of the Disease known as Diphtheria Vic LA V&P 1872 Vol.3 p.xiii ff. For an account of tracheotomy on a seven year-old during an epidemic at Elwood in 1887, see Amie Stirling Memories of an Australian Childhood 1880-1900 (Melbourne 1980) p.69.

18. K.S. Inglis Hospital and Community (Melbourne 1958) p.25, 38, 54-64; B. Barrett The Inner Suburbs (Melbourne 1971) p.55-8, 134; T.S. Pensabene Op.Cit. p.22-3, 35, 42.

During the 1870s and 80s, scarlet fever was likewise believed to be a miasmatic disease, and treatment was uncertain. Dr. William Crooke told the Royal Commission on Diphtheria in 1872 that he recommended the administration of an emetic followed by an aperient, quinine, champagne and mineral water.[19] Dr. Fullerton informed his readers that in severe cases, "some apply leeches, others take blood from the arm, and a few blister." He, however, was convinced of the efficacy only of the leech treatment, suggesting two to six leeches behind or below the ears. The head was to be kept cool by wet rags or ice, the feet warm by a foot pan of hot water rolled in flannel, and care taken that bladder and bowels were emptied regularly. In severe cases, the hair was to be shaved entirely. "Any attempt to retain it is futile, as it must fall after the fever, and its presence imperils life." "None but the best constitutions can recover from the malignant form of this fever, which often destroys life on the third or fourth day."[20]

Whooping cough completed the range of infectious diseases most to be feared in childhood, and for which there was no effective cure. Once contracted, there was nothing to do but allow it to "take its course." Though ventilation was considered important, the child might also be given ammonia "to stimulate the vital powers", while the "safety both of the lungs and the brain" required the bowels to be fully acted on by one gram of aloe and 5 grams of Epsom salts , nightly or oftener. With "proper" nursing, the child might recover in six weeks, otherwise a long convalescence could be expected, during which the child would continue to suffer the fits of coughing peculiar to the disease.[21] "The child knows when each attack is about to commence, and shows evident signs of fear. These paroxysms last until it seems the patient must be suffocated, but at last there is a rush of air into the lungs."[22] During convalescence, sea air was the recommended therapy.

Given the limitations in the doctors' ability to save the vulnerable child, many parents sought alternative sources of advice and medication. Chemists and druggists, who both diagnosed illness and dispensed drugs, charged only three or four shillings for this service. This was a boon to the poor when the standard price of consultation with a doctor cost 10/6, one third of the average wage of the lowest paid male worker. For mothers, the low-cost services provided by the midwife ensured that she dominated the market for obstetrics and gynaecology, comprising 27% of the medical labour force in Victoria in 1881.[23]

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19. Royal Commission to Enquire Into the Origin of the Disease Known as Diphtheria ... (Vic. LA V&P Vol.3 1872) p.10.
20. Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.241-2.
21. Ibid. p.52-5.
22. Dr. W.H. Jenkins Op.Cit. p.74.
23. T.S. Pensabene Op.Cit. p.6, 11.

The Medical Construction of Child Nature and Needs:

Because of these limitations in its ability to save the lives and relieve the sufferings of children, during the 70s and 80s the medical profession concentrated on advising how to prevent, rather than cure disease. In doing so, it strove to erect an aura of expertise which would conceal the gaps in its knowledge, and allow it to take advantage of the material gains to be had from expanding the field of family practice. For this purpose, the new "natural" skills assigned by Dickensian ideology to the mother had little to offer. Instead doctors tended to look back to the older code of rules for child-rearing, evolved by physicians and moralists during the seventeenth century. This both pre-dated and denied any intuitive skills said to be unique to mothers.

The result was a formula for preserving health in which sentimental calls for rule by maternal love were replaced by emphasis on discipline to prevent spoiling. As in seventeenth-century theory, the physical and the moral aspects were closely identified, good health being seen as related to eliminating intrinsic sinfulness and "humours."

For instance, the advice of John Locke and John Wesley, that allowing children only plain and unvaried food with no eating or drinking between meals, was preferable to corporal punishment for teaching children "modesty, submission and the power to forebear" and ridding them of "love of the world,"[24] reappeared as a modern medical necessity. Any departure from the "right" kind of simple dull food might by "very injurious" to the vulnerable child.[25] According to Dr. McCarthy, children were "not fed as plainly or as poorly as they ought to be", and "all the endeavours of medical men to save the children of this colony will be in vain until parents cease to cram their children's stomachs."[26]

Given this dependence on Lockean postulates, plus the fact that most doctors practising before 1900 had been trained abroad,[27] it followed that doctors tended to share the vision of parental spoiling, or laxity, which characterized the remarks of the overseas observers. Dr. Sisca in 1892 complained that the colonial child was fed very injudiciously, and consequently suffered from dyspepsia and tooth decay. The children he had treated for these complaints had been "allowed to eat meat three times a day, cakes, buns, scones,

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24. John Locke Some Thoughts Concerning Education (1690) repr. in P.J. Greven (ed.) Child Rearing Concepts 1628-1861 (Itasca Illinois 1973) p.19, 23, 39; John Wesley Sermon on the Education of Children (c.1783) repr. in P.J. Greven Op.Cit. p.63.

25. Dr. J. Jamieson Op.Cit. p.15.

26. Dr. C. McCarthy Op.Cit. p.20-1.

27. T.S. Pensabene Op.Cit. p.63-8.

etc. almost ad libitum, tarts and puddings unsparingly, and to drink tea." He believed that "in no country in the world" were children "allowed to eat so much sugar in the shape of lollies, treacles, honey, etc.", as they were in Australia.[28]

Moreover, some doctors did not hesitate to identify specifically with the moral values underlying the medical formula. For example, Dr. Fullerton believed that, even after teething, the child should not be given animal foods for they "irritate the temper and excite the evil passions of the youthful mind." Children fed regularly only on milk and farinaceous food for the first two years would not only be "more easily managed" but also be prevented from becoming a slave to their "own evil temper and passions". "Self-will" and "bad temper" were the "great causes of the feuds that convulse society" and to "pamper" these in children was to fill the prisons and "employ the executioner."[29]

To doctors, from this belief that the special vulnerability of the child demanded a plainer diet, it followed that as Susanna Wesley had recommended in 1732, the meals especially of the younger child had ideally to be taken separately from adults, or perhaps at a small table overlooked by parents. Dr. McCarthy was adamant that children under three should not sit with adults at the dinner table, Dr. Fullerton would not permit it at any age, while Dr. Muskett's advice on the care needed in presentation of food to the young implied that he too envisaged older children taking their meals separately. Mothers were to avoid "the slovenliness and utter neglect which are too frequently shown in placing food before the children," providing a tablecloth and potted plants or flowers.[30] "Trash" between meals was never to be allowed, not only because of the belief that, owing to the frailty of the child's stomach, this would cause "convulsions, dysentery, diarrhoea, vomiting or skin disease", but also because, as in the older pedagogical writing, regular feeding was conducive to the formation of "good habits" and self-discipline.[31]

Regularity and routine were also said to be important both for children's health and their morals. Even for the infant, doctors were united in their opposition to demand feeding. The breast was to be offered at regular intervals, preferably timed by the clock. "The absurd custom of allowing the

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28. Dr. N. Sisca The Management of Children in Health and Disease (Melbourne 1892) p.25.

29. Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.485, 505.

30. Susanna Wesley On the Education of Her Family reprinted in P.J. Greven Op.Cit. p.47; Dr. C. McCarthy Op.Cit. p.23; Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.504; Dr. P.E. Muskett The Health and Diet of Children in Australia (Sydney 1889) p.93.

31. Dr. P.E. Muskett Health and Diet of Children p.86, 168-9; Dr. C. McCarthy Op.Cit. p.24; Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.506.

infant to suck every time it cries, or stopping its mouth with the bosom to pacify it, is always pernicious to both mother and child," wrote Dr. Fullerton in 1871. It injured the infant's stomach, causing diarrhoea or constipation, and weakened the mother, causing her lassitude, headache, back pain and even, if the mother was "delicate", "puerperal mania, or that species of insanity which results from undue lactation in nervous temperaments."[32]

Regular bedtimes for children were also insisted upon, and on no account should children "be kept up late." Again this was authorized by the special precariousness of child health:

> Train your children to regularity in everything they have to do. To have their meals, to go to bed, to get up, to play, to go out always at the same hour, whenever possible.... Those who are regular in their habits are healthier and live longer than those who despise regularity.[33]

Endorsement of the old ideal of separation of the child from the worldly life-style of adults focussed not only on meal-times but also on providing separate beds for the young. Again, during the 70s and 80s this was put in terms of the protection of fragile child-life, and with some justification, since references to "overlaying", long offered by parents as an explanation of child death, continued to be made in the late nineteenth century. Christopher Brennan's recollections of childhood in an inner suburb of Sydney in the 1870's included the point that "overlaying" caused the death of more than one of the children in the family.[34] However, as Mary Gilmore pointed out in her recollections of pioneering life in the 1860s and 70s, even in the poorest slab or bark hut, a separate bed, at least for the baby, was not difficult to contrive. "The gin-case was universal, because it was of soft wood and had no splinters. Also it was just the right size, easy to obtain and light to carry."[35]

Nevertheless, allegations of deaths from "overlaying" were taken literally, and concern to protect children from this threat to their vulnerable health had been growing in Europe from the eighteenth century. In the colonies doctors certainly considered it necessary to remind readers of the need for separate beds and such cautions were a regular feature of advice to mothers.[36]

Cradles, on the other hand, were outlawed. They had been under attack since the eighteenth century on the grounds that rocking by mothers put the infant into a dazed condition, and besides was intended merely to make it less

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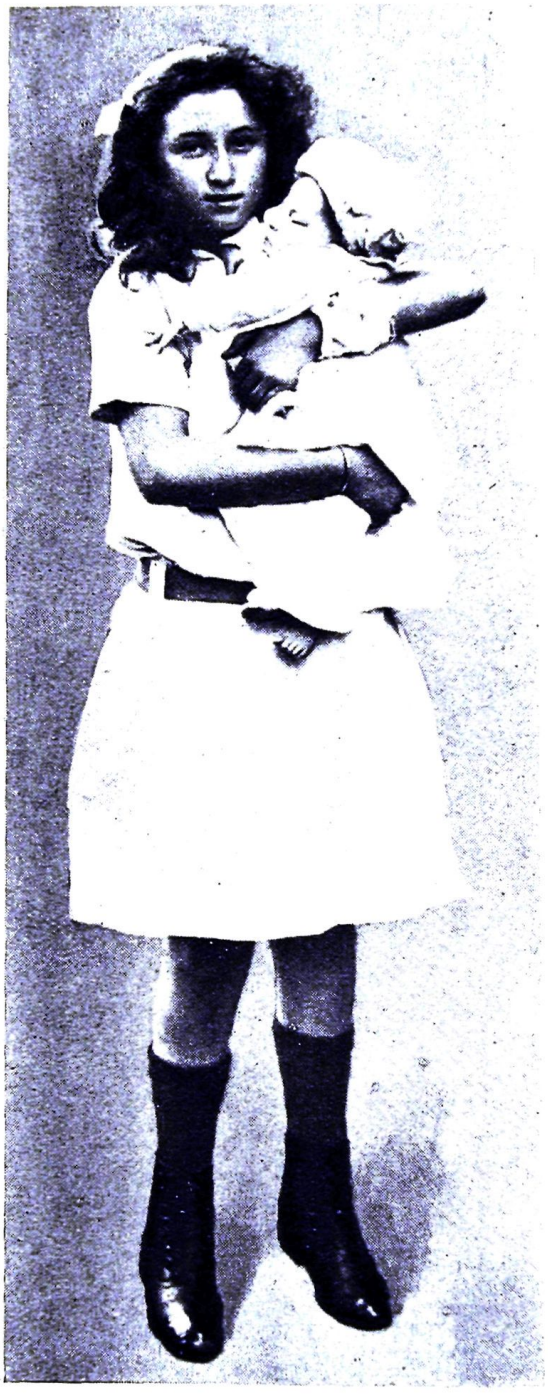
32. Dr. C. McCarthy Op.Cit. p.19; Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.469.

33. Dr. N. Sisca Op.Cit. p.35, 47.

34. Christopher Brennan "Curriculum Vitae" M.L. MS 344/3, n.p.

35. Mary Gilmore Old Days Old Ways (Sydney 1934) p.10.

36. W. Langer "Infanticide: A Historical Survey" Journal of Psychohistory I 1973-4 p.356-7; Dr. N. Sisca Op.Cit. p.44.



Babies may be killed by "kindness."

"Let baby lie in the perambulator.

25. In the medical formula for infant health, both elaborate clothing and undue fondling were condemned.

NSW Dept. of Public Instruction The Care and Feeding of Babies (Sydney 1914)

trouble to nurse. In the colonies in 1875, Dr. Fullerton described them of "barbarous" origin and a "bad habit", even if they did not cause "congestion of the brain", as was believed by some authorities.[37]

By the 70s and 80s the belief that disease was spread by inhaling impure air, carried over into medical pronouncements on the shape of domestic housing. Here, miasma theory conveniently meshed with the Dickensian cult of rusticity in the opinion that the "massing together of people in large towns" was a health risk in itself.[38] If children had to be raised in cities, then the ideal private house should be detached from its neighbours and have its own outdoor space or garden where children could play in the open air under the watchful eye of the mother. Internally, the house should be organized around the health requirements of its inmates, especially the vulnerable child. Again, the idea of providing separate rooms for children was not new, but medical opinion now agreed that the health of the child demanded that the child's room be "the loftiest, the most airy" in the house, preferably upstairs, and with a fireplace to favour ventilation.[39] There were also pronouncements on how mothers should furnish their homes. Curtains blocking sunlight and fresh air, and draped around beds were condemned, as was any "accumulation of useless articles" or old clothes stored in bedrooms or under beds.[40]

Not only the children's rooms, but the whole house, was to be kept scrupulously clean and tidy. Again the idea that "cleanliness is next to Godliness" was not new to prescriptions for child care,[41] but current belief in the relationship between health and hygiene made the cleanliness of the child's environment of unprecedented physical as well as moral importance. The public health campaigns of the Australian Health Society, formed in 1875, placed much stress on the importance of domestic hygiene in combatting miasma:

> Keep your rooms always tidy and clean,
> Let dust on the furniture never be seen.
> Much illness is caused by the want of pure air,
> Now to open your windows be ever your care;
> Old rags and old rubbish should never be kept,
> People should see that their floors are well swept...[42]

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37. G. Rattray Taylor The Angel Makers (London 1973) p.327; L. De Mause "The Evolution of Childhood" Journal of Psychohistory I 1973-4 p.533; Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.470.

38. Dr. P.E. Muskett Health and Diet of Children p.33.

39. Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.55; Dr. N. Sisca Op.Cit. p.45; Australian Health Society Sanitary Alphabet (Melbourne 1881) n.p., Sanitary Tracts (Melbourne 1882) p.3.

40. Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.470; Dr. N. Sisca Op.Cit. p.45.

41. John Wesley, quoted in G. Rattray Taylor Op.Cit. p.183; Friedrich Froebel The Education of Man (New York 1902) p.24 (1st edn. 1826).

42. Australian Health Society Sanitary Alphabet; see also Dr. N. Sisca Op.Cit. p.38.

In addition to the house, the children themselves were to be kept absolutely clean. According to Dr. Sisca, "A child that is dirty cannot be healthy.... Cleanliness is almost as necessary as food."[43] Dr. Muskett agreed. If a child was reared amidst squalid surroundings, in an atmosphere of dirt and disorder, and in a dwelling where there was no regard paid to neatness, it was morally certain that dirt would remain engrafted on that child, mind and body, to the end of the chapter. Even the humble dwelling should be clean.[44] Dr. Sisca added that the degree of domestic cleanliness was also "the most unmistakeable evidence of a mother's love for her children."[45]

It followed that bathing became an important daily ritual for child-care, some doctors following Locke in recommending cold water, though only for the strong, the "delicate" being entitled to warm water.[46] Further testifying to the new medical authorization of the old idea of "hardening", "soap and rough towels" were said to be good for the skin.[47]

Given the great importance placed on the mother's role in preventing disease, no concessions could be made to her convenience. For instance, though sterilization of feeding utensils was not suggested till the turn of the century,[48] doctors invariably recommended a thorough washing, and this led them to condemn the "favourite" "modern" bottle, "the one with a glass tube dipping into the bottle, and ending outside the cover in a piece of elastic tubing with a nipple-shaped appendage at the free end." Later, the glass tube was replaced with a rubber one. Preferred was the "old-fashioned tapering bottle, with an opening in the side for filling, and with an artificial teat fixed on the opening at one end"[49] for it could be more effectively washed. However for busy mothers, it had the disadvantage that they must hold it, whereas with the tubed invention, even the very young child could be left to feed alone.

Also adding to the mother's responsibilities, while increasing the complexity of child-raising, was the medical insistence on early toilet training. This goal had not arisen until the eighteenth century and is thought

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43. Dr. N. Sisca Op.Cit. p.36.

44. Dr. P. E. Muskett Op.Cit. p.34.

45. Dr. N. Sisca Op.Cit. p.36.

46. Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.512-13; Dr. P.E. Muskett Op.Cit. p.4; Dr. N. Sisca Op.Cit. p.37.

47. Australian Health Society Sanitary Alphabet.

48. Thus, where Dr. P.E. Muskett in 1889 advised merely careful washing (Feeding and Management of Infants p.25) in 1903, in the 6th edn. of this work, he recommended disinfection (p.71).

49. Dr. J. Jamieson Op.Cit. p.46; Dr. C. Hunter "What Kills Our Babies" Australian Health Society Sanitary Tracts No.7 (Melbourne 1878) p.16.

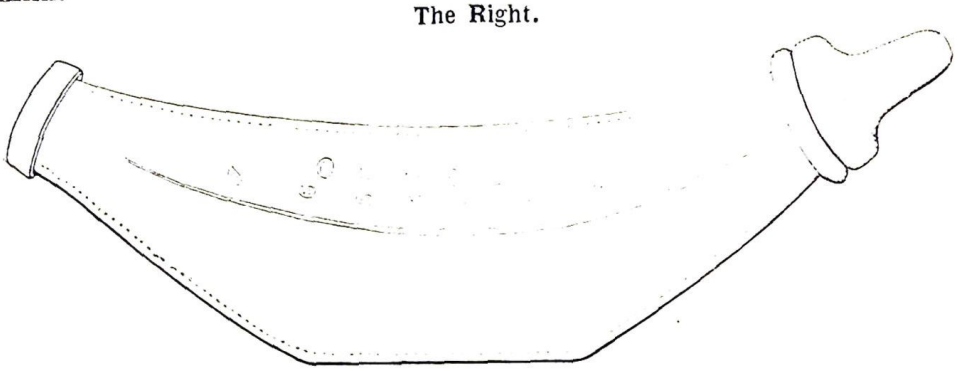
FEEDING-BOTTLES.

Use only boat-shaped bottles and large rubber teats. No tubes should be used with the bottles.

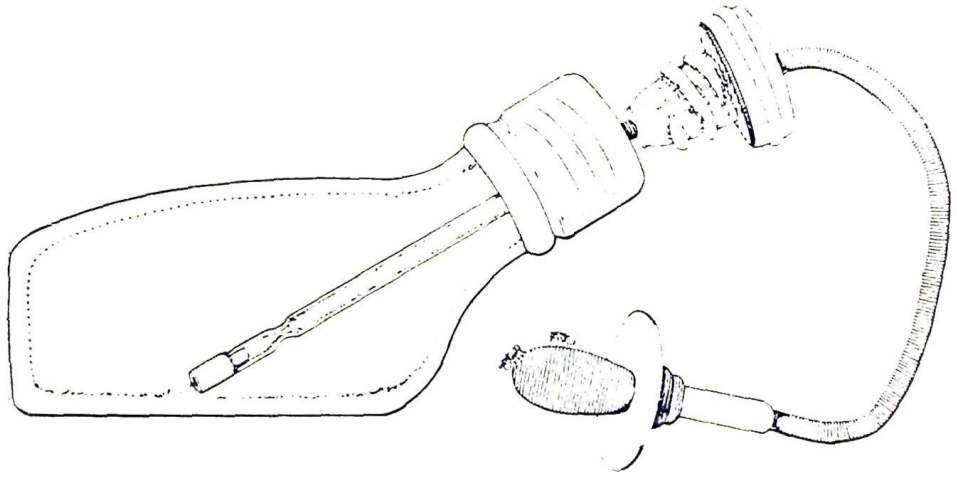
Have two bottles and **two** rubber teats.

The bottles and teats must be clean. A dirty bottle will spoil the milk.

The Right.



The Right and the Wrong.



The Wrong

26. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction The Care and Feeding of Babies (Sydney 1914)

to have been associated with the abandonment of swaddling.[50] Of colonial books of advice earlier than the 1890s, only Dr. Fullerton's was adamant on the importance of early training,[51] but by 1893 an anonymous and possibly non-professional publication, Healthy Mothers and Sturdy Children, recommended that mother "practise holding out her baby immediately after nursing it, and it will easily be taught to urinate at this time, and also to have a passage from the bowels at a stated time in the morning and evening."[52]

By the 1890s, toilet-training was also part of the medical advice to mothers offered in the new women's magazines, such as Louisa Lawson's Dawn.[53] Perhaps earlier introduction of the notion of toilet training was interrupted by the belief in the efficacy of purgatives as treatment for the common diseases of childhood[54] and the administering of castor oil as a punishment.[55] However, when adopted, the idea of early toilet-training fitted into the medical formula for child care perfectly, neatly embodying its concentration on evacuation as a cure and on cleanliness and regularity in the prevention of moral and physical disease:

> ... children should be early taught to attend to and report their wants, and all infants are docile in this respect if they are properly trained. Carelessness in these matters may induce filthy habits, that, in some unhappy instances, become so established, that they remain incurable for life.[56]

In their dependence on older theories of child care, doctors did not deny every aspect of the Dickensian construction of children's nature and needs. Those aspects of Dickensian ideology which could be interpreted so as to enlarge their authority and sphere of influence were strongly endorsed. Thus, doctors had no objection to the modern prohibition on the use of fear. Dr. Fullerton warned against teaching children that the "Creator was a God of wrath and not of mercy", adding that to terrify them with "goblins or any other false means" would "weaken their nerves and make them pusillanimous". In 1878 Dr. Hunter even qualified current medical emphasis on the importance of cleanliness at the expense of repressing the baby's desire to crawl on the floor and dirty its clothes. Dr. Fullerton stressed that "childhood is the season of joyousness,

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50. L. De Mause The History of Childhood (New York 1974) p.39.
51. Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.136, 466, 501, 511.
52. Healthy Mothers and Sturdy Children The Australian Wife's Advice Book on the Management of her own Health and that of Her Children (Melbourne 1893) p.77.
53. "About Babies" The Dawn Vol.3 No.10 1891 p.13-14.
54. See for example NSW Department of Public Instruction The Care and Feeding of Babies (Sydney 1914) p.13.
55. Amie Stirling Op.Cit. p.123-4.
56. Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.501. By "early", Fullerton meant at 3 months.

the innocent amusements of youth should not be restrained", adding a list of toys and games "to occupy the mind as well as the body" with which no Romantic could have found fault - "good" prints, and pictures of animals, "marbles, nine-pins, humming tops, wooden houses, Chinese puzzles, a safely-arranged swing, the rocking-horse and skipping-rope, are calculated to amuse and exercise."[57]

In general, however, the doctors' legitimization of their authority with respect to childhood rested on denial of the Dickensian notion both of the innocence of childhood and the role of the mother in its protection. This became especially evident in a second broad stratagem which functioned to enlarge their sphere of influence - accusations of the mother's inability to raise children without medical help. Dr. Muskett was not joking when he wrote in 1889 that, now that NSW had a bill for the supervision of dairies (Dr. Mackellar's Dairies Supervision Act 1886), what was urgently needed was one for the professional supervision of mothers.[58]

Medical allegations of female incompetence in child-rearing focussed especially on the issue of breast-feeding. The limitations of modern knowledge of milk substitutes and delayed acceptance of germ theory fostered the conviction that only breast-feeding and the exclusion of all other foods, could ensure a healthy infancy and that maternal failure to establish and practice this for at least seven to nine months was due principally to female ignorance and vanity.

As with so many aspects of the medical advice on child-rearing, the notion that mothers ought to breast-feed their infants was no novelty, having been shared by moralists and medical men at least since Erasmus.[59] However, this was an issue which became increasingly emphasized as the makers of childhood ideology began to condemn the idea of infant depravity and to explore the implications of the concept of the "rights" of the innocent child. By the eighteenth century in Britain, writers and physicians were pointing to the high mortality of artificially-fed infants, and condemning the "inhuman" practice of wet-nursing, while in France, Rousseau added that maternal breast-feeding was an essential starting-point for returning mankind to the natural and more moral sensibilities of innocent, primitive societies. "When mothers deign to nurse their own children, there will be a reform in morals, natural feeling will revive in every heart; there will be no lack of citizens for the State....

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57. Ibid. p.508, 510-11; Dr. C. Hunter Op.Cit. p.17.

58. Dr. P.E. Muskett Feeding and Management of Infants p.4.

59. David Hunt Parents and Children in History (New York 1970) p.100; Lawrence Stone The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800 (London 1977) p.426-7.

When women become good mothers, men will be good husbands and fathers."[60]

Though this was a view which potentially culminated in Dickensian celebration of the unique skills of the mother, by 1860, it was strongly endorsed by the medical profession who, lacking effective cures in general and knowledge of nutrition in particular, were obliged to place great emphasis on the fact that breast-feeding was vitally important to baby health. However, in arguing for breast-feeding, doctors inferred that the mother would not naturally attend to this aspect of child-rearing. She had to be reminded that breast-feeding was best for the baby. Also medical endorsement of this skill involved a corollary. Care of the infant had to be a full-time occupation with which neither convenience nor fashion, in the case of the well-to-do, nor the demands of wage-earning, in the case of the poor should be allowed to interfere.[61] Besides, breast-feeding was "good" for the health of the mother as well as the child. For example, Dr. Hunter warned that "cancer often arose from the refusal to suckle children," while Dr. Fullerton in 1875 pointed out the emotional raptures of breast-feeding for the mother as well as its nutritional importance to the child:

> We know that breast-milk, the delicious repast provided for the infant by the Almighty, surpasses every other form of nourishment, and that though we could command all of Earth's productions, we cannot furnish a beverage equal to this vital fluid...[62]

Medical emphasis on breast-feeding by the mother also enhanced the interests of the profession because it contributed to the disqualification of the role of mothers and kin, servants and nurses in child-raising. Though doctors may not have conceptualized the issue in these terms, it was to their advantage if the mother was increasingly isolated from contact with non-medical sources of advice, and rendered personally and intensely involved with the survival of her offspring, heeding the opinion only of the trained expert.

The Elimination of Resistance to Medical Ideas:

Given that the medical formula was in so many ways at variance with the Dickensian construction of the needs of the child, plus the fact that it so directly encroached on the woman's "sphere", it could expect to encounter considerable resistance, especially from mothers. Moreover, while ever women looked elsewhere for help in child health, acceptance of the medical message would be limited.

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60. Joseph Addison in The Spectator No.246, 1711, cited in Lawrence Stone Op.Cit. p.430; J.J. Rousseau Emile (London 1976) p.13-14. Articles by Dr. Harvey Sutton ("The Australian Child The Progress of Child Welfare" MJA 14 Nov.1931 p.606) and Dr. W.G. Armstrong ("The Infant Welfare Movement in Australia" MJA 28 Oct. 1939 p.641) contain information on the opinions of eighteenth-century physicians on breast-feeding.

61. Dr. C. Hunter Op.Cit. p.10; see also Dr. C.McCarthy Op.Cit. p.19-20 ; Dr. J. Jamieson Op.Cit. p.25; Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.499; Dr. A. Campbell How to Manage a Baby (Adelaide 1878) p.5; Dr. N. Sisca Op.Cit. p.74; Australian Health Society Sanitary Tracts p.1.

62. Dr. C. Hunter Op.Cit. p.10; Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.474.

Though written works by doctors tended to assume that colonial mothers, isolated from the services of a trained medical man and anxious to spare the lives of their children, provided a ready readership for their books of advice, this cannot be taken as indicating the extent to which the advice reflected or influenced actual practice. Nor does the fact that some local medical books sold well, necessarily prove that the information in them was read or applied. For instance, Dr. Fullerton's Family Medical Guide ran to five editions between 1870 and 1884; Dr. Muskett's Feeding and Management of Australian Infants went through six public editions in addition to one circulated privately, between 1883 and 1903. Proof of mothers reading such books is however, extremely scant and such evidence as has been found tends to suggest that mothers may have preferred older, imported works.[63]

Certainly, it would seem that the less empathic and more obsolete details of the medical formula were not winning acceptance as a blueprint for respectability in colonial life. This is indicated by denial of these aspects of the medical message in some books of etiquette. These aimed to find a readership among people newly risen on the social scale, who were anxious to ensure that their attitude to their children both demonstrated their worldly success and ensured that their offspring were not being denied the magic, expert prescription for good health and material advancement.

Thus, the authors of Australian Etiquette (1885), departed from the ideal of having parents and children dine separately, though they did endorse the overall moral and social values of the medical formula. For instance, it was argued that by eating dinner together, "the pleasures of home" were more heartily enjoyed. Besides, happiness in the home was dependent on politeness, courtesy and etiquette, and it was at the table that these qualities could most effectively be taught. Indeed, the most forceful use of parental authority suggested in this book was in reference to table manners. "A parent's wish at such time should be a law from which no appeal should be made."[64]

Nevertheless, even in 1870s, the doctors' claims to expert knowledge of "laws of health", had so enlarged their authority to speak on moral issues that their role in the community was being projected by them as analogous to that of the

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63. Amie Stirling wrote that her mother read "Mrs. Beeton's monumental work on home nursing" before the birth of her children near Omeo in the late 1870s (Op.Cit. p.21), while according to Eugenie McNeil, her mother used to consult "an antiquated medical guide"when the children were seriously ill (A Bunyip Close Behind Me (Melbourne 1972) p.17). In the latter's picture of childhood, the mother appears as totally unaware of, or flagrantly disregarding, medical advice on plain diet, airy bedrooms, hard beds and plain food for children.

64. Australian Etiquette (Sydney and Melbourne 1885) p.131, 232.

religious profession. Doctors claimed esoteric knowledge of factors controlling life, death and personal behaviour, and often expressed this in religious terms. Thus, mothers were advised that disease was "an evil" and in fighting it, "we always have God on our side." It was not "God's will" that babies died from dirt and disease.[65] On the contrary, faithful belief in and adherence to the doctrine of order and cleanliness advocated by the doctor could preserve child life and moralize the community.

By the 1890s there were new factors which allowed these claims to be put on a more substantial basis, so that medical ideas on the physical health and moral training of children began to find wider acceptance. Foremost among these was the fact that the medical message on how to prevent disease, though based on an erroneous theory of contagion, did correlate with and possibly have an effect on, reduction of mortality rates, and so could not be ignored.

From mid-century, doctors had begun to play a role in moves to protect not merely the private family, but the public in general from disease thought to be spread by impure air. In London, Dr. Edwin Chadwick's influential Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population in Great Britain (1842) initiated similar debate among colonial doctors of how the replacement of cesspits with efficient forms of waste disposal might decrease the incidence of infectious disease. By the 1850s, when the increasing population of the cities was aggravating the problem, the custom had arisen for Municipal and State governments to appoint qualified doctors to advise on community health. Dr. William McCrae administered the Central Board of Health appointed in Melbourne from 1855; Dr. Bartholomew O'Brien, Medical Adviser to the New South Wales government, gave strong testimony of the role played by noxious vapours arising from cess-pools in the spread of infection at a Select Committee of the Legislative Council appointed in 1853.[66] By the 1880s, when sewering of the cities was being extended to the suburbs, doctors continued to play an active public role in moves to reduce mortality by campaigning for legislation to improve the quality of urban water and food supplies.

Possibly as a result of these initiatives, by the 1880s mortality rates both for adult and child were beginning to fall. Though the individual causes of this phenomenon cannot be isolated,[67] it seems reasonable to suggest that in addition to the doctors' role in speeding up the process of sewerage and the purification of food and water supplies, their overall focus on a connection

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65. Dr. C. Hunter Op.Cit. p.23

66. Dan Coward "Excreta, Miasma and Disease The Origins of Sydney's Sewers" Unpublished paper Dept. of Economic History ANU n.d.; B. Barrett Op.Cit. p.55, 86.

67. Bryan Gandevia Op.Cit. p.93, 122, 129-33.

between dirt and disease in the home, did help to prevent the dissemination of germs. Certainly doctors were quick to claim credit for the decline in mortality, seeking thereby to establish an image of non-commercial, altruistic devotion to and expertise in community health.

In addition, from the mid 1870s, the gradual acceptance of germ theory by doctors moved the profession into the position where its claims to expertise in a broad range of factors affecting life and death would have a more scientific basis. Though opposition from some members of the profession was still present in the 1880s, Dr. Beaney being one of the last to be converted, [68] by the 1890s, control of bacteria in operations was making possible much more ambitious forms of surgery. The public hospital was coming to be regarded not as a place where the poor were admitted to die, but as one where seemingly miraculous cures were effected.[69] In 1892, the introduction of an anti-toxin which could neutralize diphtheria in the patient's system and also confer short-term immunity in a healthy child[70], lent some credence to the doctors' claims to divine ordinance in matters affecting child life and death.

At the same time, the doctors also began to play a more unified and active role in eliminating competition from the unqualified practitioner. Allegations of incompetence in child care in the home began to focus not only on the mother, but on the midwife.

Awareness that the low-cost services offered by the midwife both undercut the qualified practitioner and prevented him from establishing a family practice was not new. Thus, in 1864, Dr. Charles McCarthy argued that presently it was a "grievous crime" that "ignorant women" were permitted to go among their neighbours and kin and offer advice on child care, when it was the "special mission" of the medical man, "the constituted agent of the "Deity" to save human life.[71] Similarly, Dr. Jenkins, though also warning against the "unqualified quack" who was to be found in every Australian township, believed it was particularly the untrained midwife who thwarted the best intentions and skills of doctors.[72] Indeed, she exemplified female "ignorance, prejudice and obstinacy" in her frustration of a male medical and moral crusade.[73] Every civilized society had ordained that "educated medical practitioners should attend mothers in their hour of trial," Dr. Fullerton warned in 1875.[74] Thus,

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68. B. Barrett Op.Cit. P.58, 134; K.S. Inglis Op.Cit. p.53.
69. T.S. Pensabene Op.Cit. p.36-7.
70. Bryan Gandevia Op.Cit. p.85-6; T.S. Pensabene Op.Cit. p.53.
71. Dr. C. McCarthy Op.Cit. p.4.
72. Dr. W.H. Jenkins Op.Cit. p.4.
73. Dr. C. McCarthy Op.Cit. p.3.
74. Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.415.

it was "false delicacy" for a woman to prefer a midwife. No improvement in the death rate of infants and mothers could be expected, it was claimed, while women continued to engage the untrained female practitioner.[75]

Though often projected in Dickensian terms as a "Sairey Gamp",[76] according to doctors, not only did the midwife risk the life of the mother, she also encouraged inexpert or dangerous baby-rearing customs which were then practised by mothers in defiance of medical opinion. Such practises included spoon-feeding of the new-born with unsuitable and unhygienically prepared food, the use of alcohol and opiates to sedate the baby, and suffocation of infants foolishly put to sleep in the same bed as their mothers.[77]

Improper clothing was also cited as a practice encouraged by midwives which caused death. For example, Dr. McCarthy claimed to have seen a child found suffering from double hernia as a consequence of having been bandaged too tightly.[78] (A "binder" pinned or stitched around the body over the naval of the newborn was recommended throughout the period.)[79]

Spokesmen for the profession also claimed that some children were killed by unwise medication vainly administered in the hope of remedying conditions which were essentially due to improper feeding. Thus, McCarthy said he had seen a six weeks' old baby with its stomach ruptured from feeding with "maizena and sago". The child had also been given castor oil for stomach pains and gin or whisky as "a soporific".[80]

These denials of female skills and knowledge in child care were an important way in which the medical profession was to expand the market for its services across class to areas where a doctor was not normally consulted. Its need to do so was pressing, for in the colonies, the number and variations in medical services had long been somewhat too great to allow all the qualified practitioners to attain the socio-economic position to which many aspired. From the 1830s, the colonies had been well-supplied with qualified practitioners emigrating in search of opportunities lacking in a profession which was over-crowded in Europe, while by the 1890s, the number of practitioners was swelled by graduates from the local medical schools and earning power was adversely affected by the depression.[81]

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75. Dr. C. McCarthy Op.Cit. p.10.

76. Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit (1843-4).

77. Dr C. McCarthy Op.Cit. passim.

78. Ibid. p.10.

79. Dr. N. Sisca Op.Cit. p.29; Dr. P.E. Muskett The Illustrated Australian Medical Guide Vol.1 p.479; ANJ Apr. 1910 p.131.

80. Dr. C. McCarthy Op.Cit. p.13.

81. T.S. Pensabene Op.Cit. p.63-5; Amy McGrath "The History of Medical Organization in Australia" Ph.D. Thesis SU 1975 p.133, 135.

Accordingly, medical accusations of the ignorance and uncleanliness of the untrained midwife grew over the period, and doctors began to organize themselves professionally to secure legislation along the lines of the 1858 Medical Act in Britain, which gave legal definition to the qualified practitioner, and a later Act (1886) which defined compulsory qualifications for doctors in every branch of the profession.[82] Lobbying strength increased with the formation of the Medical Society of Victoria (1855-1907) while in both colonies, the branches of the BMA took up the cause from 1880. In NSW, in 1887 Dr. Creed, a member of parliament from 1872 and a surgeon at Sydney Hospital, succeeded in getting a Select Committee to enquire into unqualified medical practice.

Sexuality as a Disease:

In its efforts to establish its expertise on the physical health and moral training of children, the medical profession did not rely only on the undermining of the skills of mothers and attacks on the competence of the female practitioner. It also invented a new disease said to threaten not only the body but the mind of the vulnerable child - premature sexuality.

All of the Lockean theories, adopted by the doctors for the moral training of children, were associated by those who originally formulated them with the idea of teaching the child to deny not only the bodily appetites in general, but sexuality in particular. Plain diet, daily exercises in the open air, separate hard beds and early rising had all been variously related to the ideal of controlling "passions" in the young. Repression of sexuality however, had not been accepted as necessary for the training of the aristocratic child in seventeenth-century France, and as late as the eighteenth century, masturbation was still not listed as a mortal sin in Catholic doctrine.[83]

It was the projection of innocence onto the child which fostered medical denial of sexuality in the normal child. Rousseau went so far as to argue that even at the advanced age of twenty, the ideal young male was chaste and pure, provided he had been protected from idleness and more particularly, the flaunting attire and boldness of women,[84] and this was a view for which doctors proved willing to provide medical authority. "Save under the influence of vicious example," wrote Dr. Beaney, Honorary Surgeon of the Melbourne Hospital in 1875, in children "properly reared", there should be no manifestation of sexuality before the age of sixteen or eighteen years, and

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82. Amy McGrath Op.Cit. p.6.

83. David Hunt Op.Cit. p.161 ff; Lawrence Stone "The Massacre of the Innocents" (review of Philippe Aries Centuries of Childhood, David Hunt Parents and Children in History and L. De Mause The History of Childhood in New York Review of Books Vol.21 No.18 Nov. 1974 p.25; G. Rattray Taylor Sex in History (London 1953) p.223).

84. J.J. Rousseau Op.Cit. p.172-80, 192, 297-9.

"their blissful years of innocence" would "pass in purity."[85] As in Rousseau, the less easily denied sexuality of the physical changes at puberty was defused by spiritualizing the passions and vitality of male youth, and in girls, the arrival of a "new elegance of the whole figure" which signified potential for quasi-divine motherhood.[86]

In medical writing, this endorsement of the Romantic view was accompanied by warnings that if expert protection was not afforded, and the child was allowed to be corrupted by "sexual impressions", this would cause disease or even death. From the mid-eighteenth century, such views had been expressed in Germany and England, and various restraining devices and surgical measures were recommended for cases where evil influences had contaminated the vulnerable child.[87]

In the colonies, medical recommendation of circumcision "to lessen excitability" was scant before the early years of the twentieth century [88], but warnings of the appalling physiological consequences of failure to repress sexuality in the young were generating unprecedented interest in this subject by the 1870s. Thus, in Sydney, Dr. Fullerton warned his readers that, for boys, masturbation led to the secretion of the seed in the seminal ducts, where its presence "keeps up a constant succession of unchaste desires and renders the unfortunate victim of this pernicious habit a perfect slave to this degrading vice." Usually retained into adulthood, the habit was "immeasurably more wasting and injurious than matrimonial intercourse" and caused weakening of the intellect, effeminacy and degeneration of offspring.[89]

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85. Dr. J.G. Beaney The Generative System in Health and Disease (Melbourne 1875) p.279.

86. Ibid. p.9; for examples from American medical writing of the tendency to romanticize female puberty, see Carrol Smith-Rosenburg "Puberty to Menopause: The Cycle of Femininity in Nineteenth-Century America" in M. Hartman and L. Banner (eds.) Clio's Consciousness Raised (New York 1974) p.26-7.

87. G. Rattray Taylor Op.Cit. p.223, citing S.G Vogel (Germany 1786); L. De Mause "The Evolution of Childhood" p.550; J.H. Plumb "A New World of Children in Eighteenth-Century England" Past and Present No.67 1975 p.92-3, citing Dr. Simon Tissot (France, 1764).

88. Dr. J.G. Beaney's recommendation in 1875 of "surgical assistance" appeared to be confined to adult female patients whose various "uterine diseases" he diagnosed as due to enlargement of the clitoris by "undue excitation". In such cases, he wrote, operations by which the clitoris was "reduced in size by excision" or "completely extirpated" achieved "the most satisfactory result". (Op.Cit. p.44, 355-6). Circumcision of boys to reduce sexuality was recommended by Dr. E.S Littlejohn "The Management of Babies" ANJ Sep.1907 p.264; and by Sir T. Anderson Stuart, Conference on the Teaching of Sex Hygiene, Union Hall, SU, 1917 (The Woman's Voice Feb. 1917 p.3 "Teaching Sex Hygiene").

89. Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.146.

While warning of the physical and mental consequences of masturbation in the younger child, medical statements also focussed on the protective vigilance needed at puberty, and not only in the home, but also in the school. At this age, it was said, there occurred an "indescribable commotion agitating both sexes", during which "all their functions" might become "deranged". In boys, the "change of voice, expanded chest, firmness of muscle and hardening of bone" and "renewed vigour" all called for special training at this time. Care must be taken that the boy was not taken from the playground too early and given inactive employments. Rather he needed athletic exercises and vigorous games, all of which would help to prevent "secret abuse." Where these would develop the body and avoid fatiguing the mind, "stunted growth, ill-developed physique, a pale and cadaverous countenance" and a "listless eye" were all held to be evidence of seminal "waste".[90]

The more serious the alleged consequences of unrestrained sexuality, the more doctors legitimized their authority on the moral and even the mental training of children. Thus, Dr. Beaney argued that masturbation was bad for boys because it resulted in the condition known as Spermatorrhoea, by which the seminal fluid, the "mainstay of life" was continually drawn from the blood at a rate which the body could not bear without derangement of its other functions. The results were not only a stunted body, but eventually "complete overthrow of the reason," often culminating in suicide.[91]

In view of these warnings, the doctors' reliance on the Lockean ideas for physical and moral care achieved a new urgency and importance. If parents wished to save their offspring from this disastrous physical and mental disease, they must pay particular attention to ensuring cold showers, sea bathing, avoidance of stimulating food and drink, plus nightly sponging of the parts with cold water and "again during the night if awake." If evidence of "the habit" was discovered, parents should tie a large piece of corkwood to the back of the "patient". According to Dr. Fullerton, this would awaken the child if it attempted to lie on its back and would thus function as a deterrent.[92]

Prevention, however, was better than cure, and mothers should ensure that their boys did not "associate with servants," long thought a possible source of interference with parental discipline in general and of sexual corruption in particular.[93] Indeed, children should "be kept apart from an

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90. Dr. J.G. Beaney Op.Cit.p.10,130-1; for evidence of dissemination of these beliefs in Melbourne during the 1880s, W. Chidley Confessions (St. Lucia 1977) p.36, 38.

91. Dr. J.G. Beaney Op.Cit. p.231-47.

92. Dr G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.147.

93. John Locke Op.Cit. p.34, 40; J. Wesley Op.Cit. p.64; J.J. Rousseau Op.Cit. p.180.

untruthful nurse or servant with the same care as they should be separated from a contagious disease," for instances of sexuality were all too often due to "the ignorance and almost criminal stupidity of nurses" who had been known to soothe young children to sleep by "sporting with their private parts."[94]

Other methods recommended by doctors for preventing this particular form of corruption of innocence in older children included censoring their reading matter. "Sensational novels" must be avoided and subjects like Nature Study, Botany and Zoology encouraged. These would arouse only pure thoughts, not lascivious ones. Light clothing, especially of the private parts was advised, as "close warm breeches often tend to promote ... premature expansion." Thus it was a good rule to clothe boys "during the first years" in a "loose underfrock and not suffer them to wear breeches till a more advanced period." Older boys were to be given stern warnings of the mental and physical consequences of sexual improvidence.[95]

The medical theory of sexuality as a physical and mental disease seemed to demand acceptance of doctors' ideas on methods to be employed in home and school. For mothers, it constituted a new reason to ensure compliance with the medical formula of child-rearing, while, at the same time, it logically qualified both the Dickensian concept of innocence and the "natural" competence of the mother in its protection.

Sexuality theory may also have been found of some relevance by those parents who, as in England and Europe from the end of the eighteenth century, were placing increasing importance on prolonging the education of their sons. This in turn meant that marriage of offspring must be delayed, thereby creating an enlarged period over which sexuality had to be controlled, and a market for medical theories of how this might best be effected.[96]

What is more certain, however, is that medical notions of the need to protect the young from sexuality early influenced developing educational theory. In 1803, Immanuel Kant wrote that boys should be warned of the fatal consequences of masturbation for both body and mind,[97] while in 1826, Friedrich Froebel reiterated the medical warnings that children should never be left too long to themselves, advising hard beds, pure air, a clean room, plain simple food, to avoid bodily and mental "enervation". Froebel also advised a professional education outside the home from the age of four years. This would

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94. Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.508; Dr. J.G. Beaney Op.Cit. p.279.

95. Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.147; Dr. J.G. Beaney Op.Cit. p.277, 279.

96. J.R. Gillis Youth and History (New York 1974) p.113; G. Rattray Taylor Sex in History (London 1953) p.221.

97. I. Kant On Education (1803) quoted in J.H. Plumb Op.Cit. p.93.

both avoid the dangers of "precocity" and inculcate habits of "industry and diligence."[98] Though "the natural mother does all this instinctively," he conceded, "without instruction or direction," this was "not enough." His influential Education of Man had nothing whatever to say about the education of women, even for motherhood, and a great deal about the need to prevent the "idle, useless, indolent loafing of so many boys."[99]

In England from the 1820s, followers of Thomas Arnold, influential headmaster of Rugby (1828-41) had been similarly inclined towards medical views when devising new ways of educating the large number of older boys increasingly institutionalized in the secondary school. They had created new methods to improve vigilance, such as the prefect system, and to repress sexuality, such as energetic group activities. Strenuous sporting competition became especially important. Outside the school, counselling tracts and special religious organizations, aiming to encourage "muscular" Christianity, dated from the 1840s.[1]

The medical view of the mental changes and dangers of puberty in girls functioned so as to reinforce the downgrading of the "natural" competence of women. Rousseau and Froebel had already largely excluded girls from their educational theory but in 1852 Herbert Spencer added that intellectual pursuits placed constraints on girls' physical development, taking priority over their capacity for child bearing and rearing. Subjected to "undue mental excitement" during this critical phase, they became "pale, angular and flat-chested" and infertile. The other effect of their over-education was to make them unnecessarily erudite and totally ignorant of how to raise children without recourse to brutality and other ruinous practices. Like Froebel, Spencer had little faith in the "natural" skills of the mother. He pointed out that Pestalozzi's ideas on early mental development of the child were crude and unscientific and that knowledge of the laws of "psychology" must be brought to bear on child-rearing by scientific guidance from the expert outside the home.[2]

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98. Friedrich Froebel Op.Cit. p.28, 49, 60-1. 87.

99. Ibid. p.64, 164.

1. J.R. Gillis Op.Cit. p.106-111; J. Kett Rites of Passage (New York 1977) p.39, 95, 106-13; G. Rattray Taylor Op.Cit. The London Young Men's Christian Association was formed in 1844.

2. "A Theory of Population Deduced from the Animal Law of Fertility" Westminister Review New Series Vol.1 No.2 Apr. 1852 p.493, quoted in N. Hicks This Sin and Scandal (Canberra 1978) p.35; "What Knowledge is of most Worth?" (1859) and "Physical Education" (1859) repr. in Education, Intellectual, Moral and Physical (London 1861) p.28, 186-7.

For this construction of female nature, doctors were providing the physiological proof. Thus Dr. Beaney argued that the girl at puberty possessed "a more delicate organization," and that therefore she must be careful to curtail activity at this time and conserve her energy. He also believed that, though less frequent in girls, masturbation was "more common among females than mothers imagine" and was found to exist wherever large numbers of young women congregated, "as in schools, factories, & c." Though clearly his explanation of the debilitating effects of masturbation as caused by seminal loss had no relevance in the case of girls, Beaney nevertheless asserted that self-abuse in females also had "baneful consequences to the nervous system and general health." It was the cause of numerous "nervous and uterine" diseases in young women, such as difficult or profuse menstruation, sterility, hysteria, headaches, colic and flatulency. In 1894, Dr. Walter Balls-Headley added that "high mental culture" was antagonistic to healthy sexual development and child-bearing."[3]

The way in which the medical theory of premature sexuality as a disease qualified the Dickensian idea both of mother and child, early became apparent in the changing image of the "street arab". By the 1860s and 70s, concern for the hardship encountered by the "lost" child was tempered by a new emphasis on the hedonism, idleness and especially the sexuality of unprotected street life as a cause of vice and crime. The Select Committee on the Condition of the Working Classes, called in Sydney in 1859, was specifically directed to investigate the extent of juvenile vagrancy on the public streets. In the statements of witnesses called at this Commission, it was increasingly the dangers to society arising from the failure of working-class parents to suppress drinking, smoking, gambling and especially the sexual proclivities of the street children, which began to loom large. It was alleged not only that children of families crowded together into a single room observed "all the intercourse of domestic life ... calculated to originate impure thoughts and desires," but that unsupervised play in the streets with older children caused the younger ones to be "tainted with vice." Such factors were causes of the presence among the city's young, "at so early an age, of the desire for sexual intercourse."[4] It was alleged that many led an idle vagabond life sleeping out at night and finding irregular means of survival during the day. "Some of the boys fish about the wharfs and sell fish upon a string. They sleep in casks and old boilers on the wharfs." Others slept in omnibuses at the Glebe in carts at the Haymarket, or in empty and

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3. Dr. J.G. Beaney Op.Cit. p.10, 351-2, 355; Dr. W. Balls-Headley The Evolution of Diseases of Women (Sydney and Melbourne 1894), quoted in N. Hicks Op.Cit. p.35.

4. NSW Select Committee on the Condition of the Working Classes NSW LA V&P Vol.4 1859-60, p.91-2 (James Palmer).

unfinished houses.[5]

For girls, a vagrant life was said to involve not only idleness but early prostitution. A police witness estimated that "young children" formed at least one third of all the city's prostitutes. According to this witness, usually their mothers were living, but were often engaged in prostitution themselves. "I have myself seen the mother in bed with one man, one of the daughters, about fourteen, with another, and the youngest, about twelve, in bed on the floor with another man, all in the same room," he claimed.[6]

As sympathy for the innocent "toddler" changed to fear of the sexually precocious, criminally inclined little adult, the notion of a need for more forceful usurpation of parental authority, masked in the Dickensian idea of rescue, was made much more overt. It was alleged that magistrates were hesitating to convict children accused of an offence, for they were reluctant to expose them to cross infection from adult offenders in the common gaol. Indeed, the "evil of juvenile vagrancy" was so "pregnant with the most dangerous consequences to Society"[7] that special "Reformatories" were needed to incarcerate juvenile offenders, similar to those which had already been established in Hamburg and Tours during the 1830s.

By the 1870s, fear of the consequences for colonial society of the alleged failure of many urban parents to comply with the medical idea of child-rearing, had given currency to a new term to describe the street child, the "larrikin". Thought to be of colonial coinage, this appellation was much used especially by those observers and theorists who believed that the failure of colonial parents to discipline their offspring was widespread and unique. For instance, A.J. Boyd, a continent-educated school teacher and journalist who arrived in 1860, was not disposed to tolerant views of the "Cabbage-Tree mob"[8] but alleged that in any colonial city street, hordes of "ruffian boys" recruited from "the lowest scum of the towns" were a "pest and scourge" to passers-by, insulting unprotected females, throwing stones, harrassing wedding celebrations, destroying outhouses and extinguishing lamps. Doctors found their neat brass plates exchanged for an undertaker's sign or a publican's lamp, clergymen found a "beer-shop sign-board" swung to their gate post. According to Boyd, no amount of compulsory education could arrest this problem. Such mischievous pranks should be made an offence against the law, the larrikins arrested and incarcerated in the State reformatories.[9]

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5. Ibid. p.92 (Mr. John Speerin); p.139 (Mrs. Marion Pawsey).
6. Ibid. p.39, 40 (Inspector Charles Harrison).
7. Ibid. p.12-13.
8. A term used by G.C. Mundy in Our Antipodes (London 1852) Vol.1. p.53-4.
9. A.J. Boyd "The Larrikin" The Queenslander 6 Nov. 1875 repr. in Old Colonials (Sydney 1974) p.49-52.

In 1883, R.E.N. Twopeny's picture of the indulgence of the colonial parents went on to include allegations that the "larrikin element" was "daily increasing" especially in Melbourne where he predicted it would amount to a "social danger in a few years."[10] Other writers who were pointing to the presence of larrikinism and warning of its threat to the property of respectable citizenry at this time, included visiting pioneers of the boarding-out system, R. and F. Hill (What We Saw in Australia, 1875), T.E. Argles, (The Pilgrim (1877), J.A. Froude (Oceania 1888), and Francis Adams (Australian Essays 1886, The Australians 1893).

This hardening of attitudes of juvenile misbehaviour with the spread of medical ideas of its causes was especially evident in 1881, when the new Sydney journal, The Bulletin, spelt out the theory of a sexual basis underlying larrikinism. Though still seen as children who had been denied a childhood and prematurely aged, now the image of the miniature adult, dwarfed in stature, acquired the characteristics of the medical diagnosis of sexually corrupted youth. Also the image was specifically enlarged to include girls, and they were seen as especially diseased by premature arousal of sensual excitement. According to the Bulletin, a recent holiday excursion of young people to Clontarf had been turned into an "orgy". "Lads, girls, and still more sad, children",

> ... thronged the ground, crowded the dancing pavilion ... and jostled at the drinking bars. As their blood warmed by dancing, and their passions became enflamed by liquor, the scene ... became indescribable.... Young Australia was here represented by faces prematurely old - countenances cunning, debased, dully sensual, surmounting figures under-grown, meagre and angular. There were no manly youths .... And the girls! clinging in romping abandon to promiscuous partners, were some unworn, childish faces with the devil's mark not yet stamped on their foreheads - but ... as the orgy grew .... female children, not yet in their teens, romped around with gestures and antics which would have shocked a camp of black gins.[11]

During the 1870s, the changing attitude to the street child was apparent even in the testimony of some witnesses at the NSW Commission on Public Charities which was notable for its Dickensian condemnation of institutions in which destitute children and juvenile offenders were incarcerated. In particular, descriptions of the riots by the girls in the State Reformatories and Industrial Schools showed traces of the medical belief in the unnaturally advanced sexuality of the street child. Girls at Newcastle were alleged to have "exposed themselves naked at the windows" and run about the top of the building "completely naked."[12] In 1872, at the new site Biloela, the girls were said

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10. R.E.N. Twopeny Town Life in Australia (Sydney 1973) p.100.

11. "The Larrikin Residuum" The Bulletin 8 Jan. 1881 p.1.

12. Second Report of the NSW Commission on Public Charities 1873-4 (NSW LA V&P Vol.6 1873-4) p.174 (John Robertson, Colonial Secretary at the time of the riot.)

to sing "improper songs" and indulge in "disgusting sexual practices." Better provision should be made for separate sleeping accommodation. Older girls especially, must be prevented from sleeping together, and the more "innocent" inmates from the country must be separated from the Sydney ones who by the age of eight or nine, "knew" as much as any "big girl in the place."[13]

By the late nineteenth century, though some doctors continued to pay lip-service to the Dickensian idea of innocence, at least of infancy and early childhood, underlying their warnings of the consequences of premature sexuality was tacit recognition of the potential sexuality even of the very young. Increasing medical interest in the child was producing a body of evidence making the idea of a static innocence untenable, and overseas, some doctors were making medical denial of it more explicit. Passions such as cruelty, greed and sexuality were declared to be manifest even in the very young, suggesting a need to dispense with the idea of innocence altogether. As Englishman, Dr. Henry Maudsley commented in 1867,

> The purity and innocence of the child's mind is a part of that poetic idealism and willing hypocrisy by which man ignores realities and delights to walk in vain show. The purity and innocence of the child's mind,in so far as they do exist, testify to the absence of mind: and the impulses which actually move it are the selfish impulses of passion.[14]

In 1879, S. Lindner further undermined the ideal of innocence by suggesting that the infant's instinct to suck had a sexual basis,[15] while in 1898, Havelock Ellis provided a detailed exposition of a sexual basis said to underlie the mother-child relationship.[16]

In the colonies, tacit recognition of sexuality, even in infancy, was reflected in prohibitions against finger-sucking, which were beginning to receive increasing emphasis. In 1875, Dr Fullerton advised "stitching the new-born child's sleeves to its body-dress" in order to prevent the habit.[17]

During the 1870s, though few doctors were yet prepared to accept the idea of the presence of the sexual instinct in the infant and young child as anything other than aberrant, the idea of innocence was being qualified without

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13. Ibid. p.107, 111, 136 (Mrs. Rowland, House-Matron); 163 (Mr. Frederick Cane, former clerk and storekeeper at Newcastle and Biloela, now Superintendent of Government Asylum for Imbeciles, Newcastle).

14. Stephen Kern "Freud and the Discovery of Child Sexuality" Journal of Psychohistory Vol.1 No.1 1973 p.135.

15. Ibid. p.125.

16. Studies in the Psychology of Sex (New York 1936) p.18-9, 174 (1st edn. 1898). S. Freud's Essay on Infantile Sexuality (1904) is discussed in Chapter Eight.

17. Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.467.

quite returning to original sin. The altruistic faculties in human nature were not innate; children were not born unselfish and self-sacrificing. Indeed, it was the "lower selfish instincts" which were predominant in the child and all wise training must be directed towards developing the altruistic spirit and preventing the "prurience of thought and speech" which otherwise developed in early childhood.[18] Even in infancy, innocence was less a static passionless divinity than a kind of raw primitivism, which, like the more obvious sexual manifestations of adolescence, demanded expert professional help for its control.

Symptomatic of this view was the medical opinion that parents, guided by medical expertise, should provide a certain amount of physiological information about the consequences of premature sexual activity, for the new, qualified idea of innocence meant that the younger child needed special training in sexual matters. As Dr. Richard Arthur warned in 1894, "the innocence of ignorance, far from being a good thing, is a constant source of physical and mental harm." Children were intensely curious about sexual matters, but careful, medically-approved enlightenment could prevent them from sinning in ignorance.[19]

The new ideal of a graduated process of sexual enlightenment proved in fact to be highly evasive. Very little physiological information was provided while, as in the earlier temperance and religious organizations for the protection of youthful morals, much emphasis was placed on pledges of abstinence and chastity, together with fearful warnings of the old kind.[20]

Mental Health and Disease:

Whether continuing to envisage the young as little innocents in whom manifestations of sexuality were a pathological condition not seen in the normal child, or in the newer terms, as little savages who revealed their passions without shame, sexuality theory functioned so as to authorize medical expertise not only on the moral but also on the mental health of the child. This was possible by the alleged link between precocity of intellect and sexuality. To doctors holding to the older theory, intellectual stimulation was to be avoided because it was likely to be associated with sedentary occupations and idle

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18. Dr. Richard Arthur The Needs and Methods of Purity Teaching A Paper Read at the Conference of Young Men's Association Hobart 1902 (Sydney 1915) p.6-7.

19. Dr. Richard Arthur The Innocence of Children (Sydney 1894) p.7. By the 1890s, mothers and daughters could attend lectures by doctors on this theme. See P. Poole (ed.) The Diaries of Ethel Turner (Sydney 1979) p.131 (9 May 1895).

20. A Talk to Boys By a Doctor (White Cross League Purity Series No.8 Sydney n.d.); Dr. Richard Arthur The Moral Training of Children A Booklet for Parents (White Cross league Papers for Men No.15 n.d.), Purity or Impurity Written Especially for Giving to Lads of Fifteen Years and Upwards Who are Going Out into the World (White Cross League Purity Series No.2 Sydney n.d.).

hands. Thus, Dr. Beaney warned the more "the organs of thought and sensation were brought to perfection, the more tendency would the body have to onanism." To Dr. Fullerton however, the danger was physiological rather than occupational. Along with improper feeding, falls on the head and teething, "precocity of intellect" was a possible cause of water on the brain. To Dr. Carroll, the problem lay in the fact that the child with a "very precocious brain" became a very dull stupid adult", though he shared the view that improper diet affected both moral and mental development.[21]

As local doctors sought to expand their expertise in the mental training of the child, so they became increasingly critical of methods alleged to be employed not only by the mother and the midwife, but also the teacher in the school. In 1889, Dr. Muskett declared that present-day competition in the schools was such that the "brain is artificially spurred on without the slightest regard for the wants of the body." If the mind of the child was forced beyond its proper limits, he warned, disease of the brain and of the spinal cord would follow." Dr. Sisca believed that literacy must not be taught earlier than six years and that "brain work" must not be given priority over health. "The best part of the energies of childhood must be allowed to be spent in the growth and development of the body."[22]

By 1898, Dr. Carroll was popularizing the Froebelian idea that a professional pre-school education was necessary to occupy expertly the idle hands of the young child. Children of this age were too often left to themselves to develop precocious wickedness he wrote, or crammed with book lessons until physical health was ruined. He recommended that the first seven years be given over to professional instruction, such as Froebel had outlined for the Kindergarten, in order that the rapidly growing brain be correctly taught.[23]

By the 1890s, these perceptions brought a greater emphasis in medical advice on the need to inculcate approved masculine qualities in boys and motherly ones in girls. Though colonial mothers who could afford to do so still chose to dress their sons in the lace collars, velvet suits and cavalier hats

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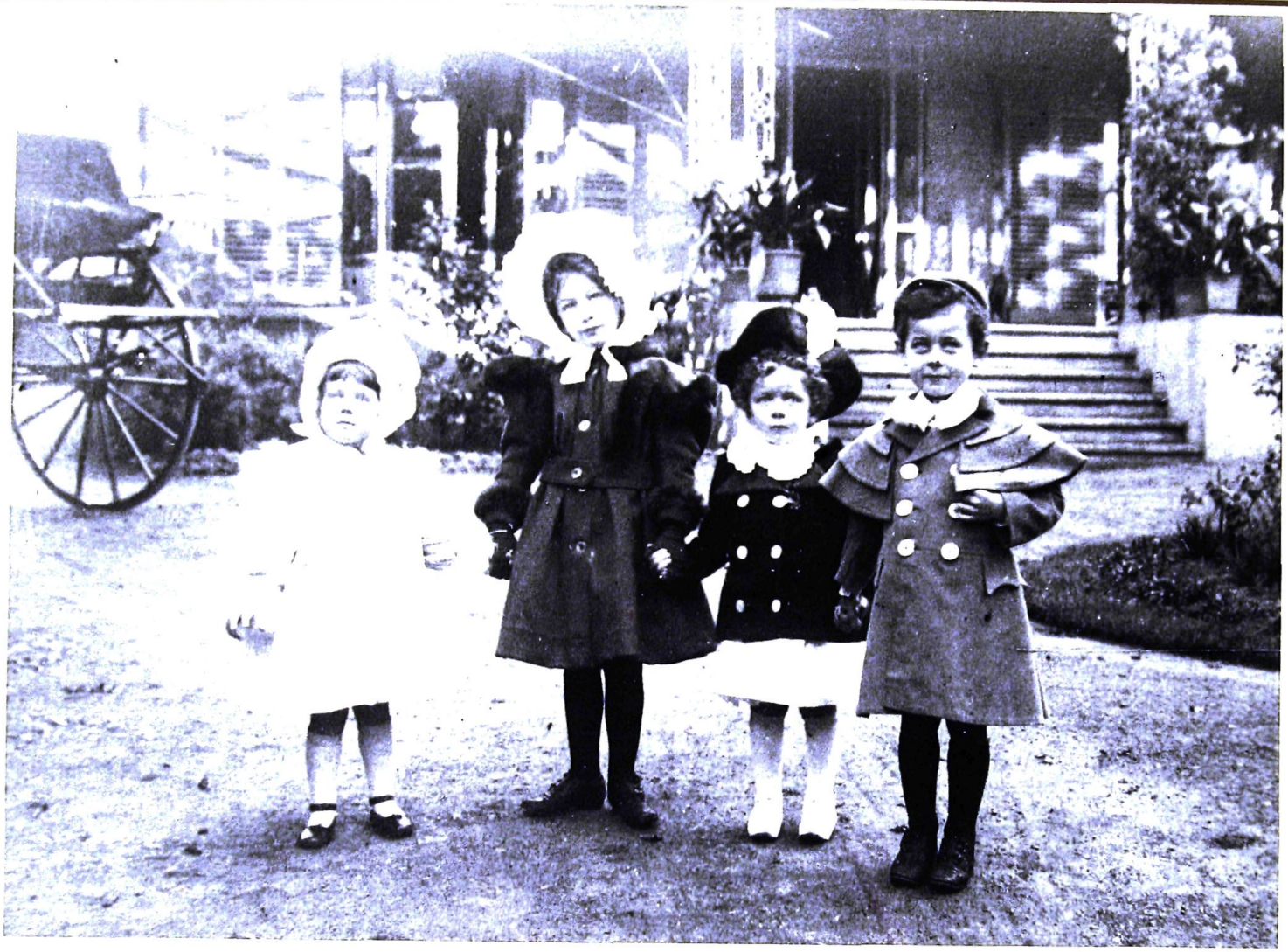
21. Dr. J.G. Beaney Op.Cit. p.278; Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.187; Dr. A. Carroll "Degeneracy; and Discussions Thereon" Science of Man Vol.1 No.7 1898 p.165 (citing the theory of Nordau, that geniuses were usually degenerates); D. Izett Health and Longevity According to the Theories of the Late Dr. Alan Carroll (Sydney 1915) p.4-5. Ada Cambridge recalled being advised by a local German doctor that her first son, whom she believed gifted, should have no formal lessons before the age of seven (Thirty Years in Australia (London 1903) p.14).

22. Dr. P.E. Muskett Health and Diet of Children p.11, 77; Dr. N. Sisca Op.Cit. p.35.

23. Dr. A. Carroll "The Bad School Systems..." Science of Man Vol.1 No.11 1898 p.237-8, "On an Improved Method of Instruction, Training and Education" Op.Cit. Vol.1 No.9 1898 p.200-1.



"DRESSED FOR AN OUTING", SYDNEY 1899

27. Little Lord Fauntleroy has had his hair cut and wears a boyish cap.

A.W. Allen Family Album ML PXD567 No.3899.

prescribed by the Dickensian image,[24] doctors were beginning to condemn this practice as likely to induce effeminacy. The custom of permitting little boys to have long hair was also coming under medical attack. Thus Dr. Muskett in 1889 argued that little boys' hair should be kept rather short, quoting medical reasons such as "cleanliness". However, he rather spoilt this connection between short hair and good health by adding that the hair of girls was to be allowed to grow as long as possible before cutting, as once cut, it would never again achieve the desired length. Dr. Sisca also disliked long hair in little boys, arguing that it required extra nourishment but adding that "to allow little boys to have long hair is the first step towards their effemination. Boys should look like boys, not girls."[25]

By the 1890s, this preoccupation with sexuality in children, alleged to affect the mind as well as the body, was accelerating medical theory of the need to differentiate between the kind of protection needed for girls and boys, especially around adolescence. In 1859 Herbert Spencer had warned that though the dangers of "infant precocity" (physical feebleness, ultimate stupidity or early death) were becoming generally known, it was not sufficiently recognized that the same principle held for youth. By 1893, Dr. Muskett was advising that a continuation of the Kindergarten system, called "Sloyd" or manual instruction, was now being used in Finland and Denmark to avoid encouraging "scholastic prodigy" in the older boy, while for girls, a non-scholastic education should centre on activities which would not take them outside the calm haven of the domestic sphere. The best equivalent of manual instruction for girls should be "home management", for after all the boy was destined to be the breadwinner, the girl the housewife. In 1895, Dr. Jamieson added that women were on the whole less fitted to endure the "stress" of professional life, and those who attempted to do so risked depleting "bodily health and nervous power." Dr. Arthur recommended that the sexual education of the adolescent girl include being taught to revere menstruation, as meaning that in the future she would be called upon "to fulfil the holy and wonderful duty of motherhood."[26]

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24. Family photographs testify to the survival of the Little Lord Fauntleroy image, at least in portraiture, despite medical disapproval of it. See Mary Edgeworth David Passages of Time (St. Lucia 1975) photograph of Billy aged four, 1895; advertisements in ANJ 1900s. The persistence of mothers in continuing this trend was strongly criticized in accounts of childhood written by or after the 1950s. See N. Lindsay My Mask (Sydney 1970 p.38) and Brian James The Advancement of Spencer Button (Sydney 1950 p.6).

25. Dr. P.E. Muskett Op.Cit. p.54; Dr. N. Sisca Op.Cit. p.48.

26. Herbert Spencer Education, Intellectual, Moral and Physical p.179, 184-5; Dr. P.E. Muskett The Art of Living in Australia (Sydney 1893) p.97, 98, 113; Dr. J. Jamieson Hereditary Disease (Sydney 1895) p.13; Dr. Richard Arthur The Moral Training of Children p.22.

Falières' Phosphatine Food

For Infants, Nursing Mothers, Invalids, and The Aged



"Rydal,"
Moreland St.,
Footscray, Vic.
Jan. 16, 1906.

Dear Sirs,—

My little girl (fourteen months old), has lived on Falieres' Phosphatine exclusively for the past five months; she takes three large cupfuls of it every day. When weaning her at eight months old I tried her with pure milk and many other foods, but she obstinately refused everything but the Phosphatine. I almost starved her for three days to try and get her to take other foods as the doctor thought she was too young for the Phosphatine, but I had to give in to her at last and let her have it and she has grown on it to be a strong bonnie babe. It is still her main food. When nursing both of my children I used the Phosphatine from birth to increase the supply of nourishment, taking it twice a day for about eight months. If you wish to use this or the photos as an advertisement in any way, do so; for your preparation has been a good friend to us.

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AGENTS FOR NEW SOUTH WALES

28. Advertisements attempting to persuade mothers to buy patent foods continued to make some concessions to the non-medical image of childhood.

Australasian Nurses' Journal 15 Feb.1907.

During the 1890s, the authority of the doctor to speak on mental training, both in the home and the school, was fostered by new developments in the study of mental phenomena overseas, where study of the human mind was moving away from the metaphysical speculation of the moral philosophers. In addition to the experiments being conducted by the followers of phrenology and mesmerism, in Germany physicists were attempting to discover the precise physiological mechanism by which the brain and nerve centres functioned.[27] By the 1850s, much of the argument underlying sexuality theory, that undue mental excitement was bad for children and young people, impeding physical growth and not even culminating in "intellectual efficiency", was supported by the notion that recent discoveries in physiology proved an intimate link between body and brain.[28] Already doctors were becoming accepted as authorities in the field of diagnosing and treating behaviour seen as abnormal or deviant, and this role was strengthened during the 1860s and 70s by the Lunacy Acts (Victoria 1867, New South Wales 1878) which gave considerable discretionary power to doctors to decide who was retarded or insane. In 1881, Dr. Jamieson declared that insanity was a disease of the brain and therefore only those with medical training were in a position to treat and cure it; by the late 1880s, doctors were broadening the range of social behaviour which might be classified as mental disease and defining a new branch of medical science, "Psychiatry", as an area in which members of the profession might specialize. Also during the 1880s, doctors' calls for the medicalization of institutions where the insane were incarcerated were, like their concurrent campaigns for measures to improve insanitary urban conditions, a means by which the profession were appearing as altruistically committed to community welfare and therefore deserving of a reciprocal position of autonomy, honour and trust. In Victoria in 1884, a Royal Commission called to investigate overcrowded conditions in the State Asylums for the insane, included in its recommendations that doctors be trained in the diagnosis and treatment of "mental disease", and in 1893 a course in clinical psychiatry for medical students was introduced at the mental "hospital" at Kew, which by then housed over 2000 "patients".[29]

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27. E.G. Boring A History of Experimental Psychology (New York 1950) p.275-308, 337-86; R.I. Watson The Great Psychologists (New York 1963) p.223-47.
28. Herbert Spencer Education, Intellectual, Moral and Physical p.182-3.
29. Stephen Garton "Policing the Dangerous Lunatic: Nineteenth Century NSW" AHA Conference Papers UNSW Aug. 1982; Dr J Jamieson "What is Insanity?" Victorian Review Vol.4 1881 p.338-9; "Psychology and the Scientific or Exact Treatment and Study of Psychiatry" Science of Man Vol.1 No.1 1898 p.43; R.J. Inall "State Health Services in Victoria" Occasional Monograph No.4 Dept. of Govt. and Public Administration University of Sydney 1971.

The Impact of Darwinian Theory:

Another body of information becoming available from overseas' studies of the mind was based on borrowings from evolutionary theory. Though applied to a broad range of social issues,[30] Darwinian ideas made a strong impact on medical conceptions of the mind of the child, providing new biological embellishments which served further to legitimize medical expertise on "mental health" of children.

Fundamental to the new ingredients which evolutionary science brought to medical theory, was the idea of the child as an evolving organism, undergoing distinct stages of mental and physical growth, each one of which had to be successfully completed in order that a healthy maturity might be attained. This was an idea which had been present at least since the end of the eighteenth century when evidence from palaeontology, natural science and human history had been used to present the concept of the whole of Nature, of which man was a part, advancing slowly and relentlessly towards some higher goal. It had for instance, been present in the ideas of Pestalozzi, who argued that the education of the innocent child should follow the same slow, progressive steps by which Nature had raised the race, and Froebel, who believed that every child must pass through "all preceding phases of human development and culture," the educator ensuring that the child completed each stage of development before embarking on the next.[31] It was an idea, however, which was largely lost in the Dickensian perception of the child, which envisaged childhood as a transitory state from which all growth was towards corruption and decay. Meanwhile however, it had found support among physicians applying the principles of evolutionary embryology to the study of the mind. As early as the 1820s, Karl Ernest von Baer (1792-1876) had argued that since species which were very different in maturity were very similar as embryos, then every embryo must pass through stages similar to those from which their ancestors had evolved. For instance, the young mammal as an embryo passed through the fish, amphibian and reptilian stages of its species' evolution. In 1872, this theory was supported by Darwin himself in the sixth edition of Origin and the theory was further developed by Ernst Haeckel in The History of Creation in 1873.[32]

The application of evolutionary theory to the study of the mind seemed to demand medical focus on the young. It was assumed that, since the child's body must pass through stages of growth, so too its mind was in a constant

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30. See further Richard Hofstadter Social Darwinism in American Thought (Boston 1955).

31. J.H. Pestalozzi How Gertrude Teaches Her Children (New York 1898) p.235, 237; F. Froebel Op.Cit. p.18, 28-30.

32. J.F. Cleverley and D.C. Phillips From Locke to Spock (Melbourne 1976) p.34-5.

process of development, and from this, it followed that it must be understood from the earliest stage. Besides, since the process of its growth recapitulated the history of the species, the child must have access to ancestral reminiscences lost to adults. Understanding of the child's mental growth would reveal much of the process of evolution itself.

Study of the stages of growth was also seen as important because of the wide variations to be seen in mental and physical attributes after growth had terminated. According to Darwin's cousin, Francis Galton, these variations were now open to "scientific" measurement. From the 1880s, in his Anthropological Laboratory in London, Galton was measuring mental attributes such as colour sense, reaction times, as well as bodily characteristics such as height and weight, in adult volunteers. He aimed to establish and define norms of mental and physical development, exploring the relationship between the two and the role of environmental and hereditary factors in determining them. In the United States and Britain, the Associations for the Advancement of Science established special Anthropometric Committees, to further similar work, in 1896 and 1902 respectively.[33]

By the 1890s, evolutionary ideas were replacing the concepts from experimental phrenology, which was based on the Lockeian notion of locating the specific faculties of the brain, though in 1895, Cesare Lombroso still argued that the criminal could be identified by the shape of the head. Evolutionary theories were also becoming much more popular than the less spectacular physiological study of the brain.

These trends were especially apparent in the United States, where students of medicine established a Herbart Club in 1892; psychology was separated from moral philosophy and University Chairs and experimental laboratories set up. Here, enthusiasts of evolutionary psychology, such as James Baldwin, William James and G. Stanley Hall, believed that the new "embryology of the mind" would uncover astonishing possibilities by which mental sciences might perfect mankind.[34]

At Clark University, of which Hall was first President in 1888, a laboratory was established to foster research on childhood. In 1891, he founded a journal, Pedagogical Seminary, to publish results and encourage further studies. Devices were invented to measure and record children's physical characteristics and questionnaires developed to find out the contents of their minds. In 1894, a Child Study Department was formed in the National Education Association, and individual states also formed their own groups, their members

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33. E.G. Boring Op.Cit. p.472-87; R.I. Watson Op.Cit. p.281-90.

34. J.F. Cleverley and D.C. Phillips Op.Cit. p.42; E.G. Boring Op.Cit. p.505-22; R.I. Watson Op.Cit. p.345-53.

being mostly upper-class women.[35]

Medical dominance of child study was assured because of the emphasis in it on measurement of physical characteristics. This was based on the fact that these were visible and quantifiable, whereas moral and, as yet, mental, characteristics were not. In France, Alfred Binet (1857-1911) was working on non-medical ways of testing children with a view to identifying "feeble-mindedness" in the young by 1887, and in 1902, he would publish a new theory claiming that mental ability might be measured and quantified. However, also in France, medical study of the mind, its abnormalities and potentialities, had been going ahead under Jean Charcot, Professor of Pathological Anatomy at the University of Paris.[36] In Sydney, founder of the Australasian Anthropological Society and of a local child study movement (1898), Dr. Allan Carroll, had been a student of Charcot, and colonial medical interest in child measurement continued to focus on the measurement of physical characteristics as the key to assessing mental ones.

In NSW, a state-subsidized Anthropometric Committee founded in 1894, had by 1902 measured 2000 children of "various social grades", classifying skin type, size of the head, nose, ears and eyes. Account had also been taken of "mental ability" as "stated by the teacher." Spokesman for the committee, Government Statistician, T.A. Coghlan, believed that it was the duty of the social scientist "to heal and develop the stunted and deformed bodies, ill-balanced brains and defective senses" at present found in the young of the race. [37]

In 1903, scientific measurement of the young was also one of the aims of the Child Study Association formed by Dr. Carroll, in which the medical profession was strongly represented. In addition to Carroll himself, Dr. Clubbe was Vice-President, and Sir[38] Arthur and Lady Renwick were Vice-Patrons. Dr. J.S.C. Elkington, Public Officer of Health in Hobart, and Drs. Marden, Mary Booth, Flashman and Brennand also were active members.

By 1902, Christian Bjelke-Petersen, recently appointed to train Tasmanian teachers in "physical culture" based on "physiological principles", declared that his studies showed that "the average dull child" was "shorter and lighter than the average bright child." "Superior physical qualities" were

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35. Susan Tiffin "Charity's Children : The Welfare of Dependent and Neglected Children in the United States 1890-1930" Ph.D. Thesis UNSW 1978 p.27-8.

36. R.I. Watson Op.Cit. p.301-12.

37. T.A. Coghlan "Child Measurement" AAAS Report Vol.9 1902 p.542-69.

38. Dr. Renwick was knighted in 1894.

associated with superior mental ability."[39]

This view was supported by the Sydney Child Study Association. In 1907, one of its members, Dr. Marden, declared that anthropometrics had now laid down the "normalities" of the child at various ages. Unless the child reached the "mean of its normalities" at each stage of growth, its brain growth would be more or less retarded." These conclusions were based on "the cephalic index", a quantifiable combination of height, weight, lung capacity, chest girth and physical energy (as tested by the "ergograph"). It had now been conclusively proved by anthropologists that those children whose cephalic index was between 80 and 85 and who were classified as "broad-headed" were the cleverest.[40]

Ideas borrowed from application of biological theory to society were present in medical advice to mothers by the late 1880s, where they both made child-rearing theory more complex, and functioned so as to erode the mother's confidence in non-professional sources of advice. For example, the new notion of the child as a developing organism stressed the existing idea that childhood required its own special food and clothing, for the child was a unique, evolving being, not a dwarfed adult. Further, the importance of care with diet received new emphasis, since it was argued that healthy growth depended on foundations laid in the period of most rapid development. It followed that food supply must be both "liberal and proper" else the physique of the child would be stunted and impaired.[41]

Also, from the idea in evolutionary science, of the child passing through necessary stages of growth, came a new emphasis on regular weighing to check "progress". As early as 1871 Dr. Jamieson had advised mothers to expect a rapid weight gain of three quarters of an ounce per day during the first three to four months, and if this was not sustained, to seek medical advice. By 1889, Dr. Muskett listed ideal heights and weights of children at various ages. In his Guide (1909), suggested ages for motor development were also given.[42]

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39. Christian Bjelke-Petersen "Growth and Development of Hobart School Boys" AAAS Report Vol.9 1902 p.828. Petersen went on to establish physical training institutes in Sydney (1906) and Melbourne (1909) and from 1911-14 was director of a Commonwealth Scheme for physical training under the Dept. of Defence. In the U.S.A. child measurers hoped to ally gymnastics to biometric work, linking it with Anthropometry and even establishing a Chair. (G. Stanley Hall Adolescence, New York 1911, Vol.1 p.200-1).

40. Dr. Marden's Presidential Address Aust. Journal of Education 15 Aug. 1907 p.6-7.

41. Dr. P.E. Muskett Op.Cit. p.8.

42. Dr. J. Jamieson How to Feed Infants p.48; Dr. P.E. Muskett Op.Cit. p.100, The Illustrated Australian Medical Guide Vol.1 p.485.

For babies, regular weighing would become part of the newer, more scientific approach to child care, demanding trained personnel. Thus, by 1913, pamphlets published by the NSW Department of Public Health recommended a four ounce weight gain weekly, as desirable. Weighing of babies would become standard practice at institutions connected with the infant welfare movement. This emphasis on the need for a healthy baby to be big was explained in Dr. Carroll's theories that infancy corresponded to that far-away epoch in the history of the race when the vicissitudes of life were greater than to-day, and special reserves of fat were needed. Dr. Carroll believed that the Child Study Association should function also as an advisory clinic for mothers and it was on these grounds that he severed his connection with it and founded a new one in 1904. Though it retained its old name, its purpose was to provide weight checks and advise mothers on feeding.[43]

While continuing to retract the skills formerly seen as unique to motherhood, the application of biological ideas to child-rearing gave the expertise of doctors a new patriotic dimension. As Dr. Carroll explained in 1898, the nation was itself an organism, the health of which depended upon that of its component parts. Of these, the child was a most important element, for it too, was undergoing a process of growth and development. It followed that the quality of child-raising had a significance which transcended the fortunes of the individual family. Since the nation must be "decadent" if the children were "degenerating from any cause," then the young must be measured by "anthropometric and psychological procedures" to find out any physical and mental defects, and correct these during childhood when they were most easily amended.[44]

In books of child care by the 1890s, doctors were reminding mothers that attending to the medical formula was a task of national significance. Especially since the "Australian race" was itself in "its childhood", therefore its future physical and mental vigour depended on the quality of child-rearing practice now.[45]

Indeed, the desire to prove that colonial conditions would produce a superior distinctive Australian national type, growing since the 1870s[46] now became another way in which the assumptions and theories of the medical study of the child attracted support. For instance, by 1902, Christian Bjelke-Petersen assured the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science, that a major objective of "the science of Anthropometrics" was to test how the evolution of the Australian racial stock compared with that of other countries. He was

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43. NSW Department of Public Health How to Take Care of Babies During the Summer Months (Sydney 1913) p.6, see also NSW Department of Public Instruction Op.Cit. p.10-11; D. Izett Op.Cit. p.194-5.

44. Science of Man Vol.1 No.11 1898 p.337-8.

45. Dr. P.E. Muskett Preface to The Health and Diet of Children n.p.

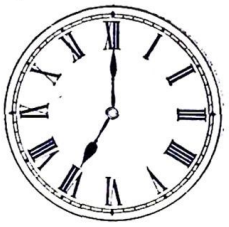
46. Richard White Inventing Australia (Sydney 1982) p.73.

HOW TO FEED BABY.

Do not give baby a bottle every time baby cries, **but feed by the clock,** according to the following time-table. The amount of each feeding is given in case your doctor has not told you what to give.



Where's my breakfast?



Feed baby by the clock.

TIME-TABLE SHOWING HOURS FOR FEEDING.

First Week.	One to Six Weeks.	Six Weeks to Four Months.	Four to Six Months.	Six to Ten Months.
7 a.m.	7 a.m.	7 a.m.	7 a.m.	7 a.m.
9 a.m.	9·30 a.m.	10 a.m.	10 a.m.	10·30 a.m.
11 a.m.	12 noon	1 p.m.	1 p.m.	2 p.m.
1 p.m.	2·30 p.m.	4 p.m.	4 p.m.	6 p.m.
3 p.m.	5 p.m.	7 p.m.	7 p.m.	10 p.m.
5 p.m.	7·30 p.m.	10 p.m.	10 p.m.	.....
7 p.m.	10 p.m.	3 a.m.	.....	.....
9 p.m.	3 a.m.	.....	.....	.....
12 midnight	.....	.....	.....	.....
4 a.m.	.....	.....	.....	.....

THE MEDICAL IDEAL OF INFANCY

Regularly Fed, Underclothed and Fat

29. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction The Care and Feeding of Babies (Sydney 1914).

already confident that his measurement of the annual increase in height of 500 school boys compared favourably with similar quantitative information available on boys in America, England, Germany and Belgium.[47]

Thus by the 1890s, the medical profession had access to a considerable body of knowledge, by which it stood to legitimize its claims to expertise in formulating rules for the physical care and moral and mental training of children. Ultimate acceptance of medical authority on child-raising however, was made possible not only by the active efforts of the profession to increase the demand for its services, nor by its growing scientific and quasi-scientific expertise. It was also due to the way in which the main tenets of its message were transmitted by other groups in colonial society, each for its own reason, to the point where knowledge of, and possibly compliance with that message, became inescapable.

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47. Christian Bjelke-Petersen Op.Cit. p.823.

CHAPTER FIVE

PROVIDENT PARENTHOOD

The Transmission and Impact of Scientific Advice

By the 1890s, the ideals of the doctors and anthropometrists with respect to child-rearing were being transmitted not only in specialist books but by a broad range of colonial publications. In this way, the bio-medical construction of children's nature and needs was becoming more widely known and difficult to resist, especially for families who could afford to translate it into practice.

This was in spite of the fact that, in many cases, the authority of the doctor or social scientist on child care was not the issue with which the lay writers were primarily concerned. Their reasons for endorsing bio-medical ideals lay elsewhere, as their various and sometimes conflicting interpretations of medical theory clearly showed.

One source of early and general support for the the claims of the medical profession, both to expertise in child care and to improved status commensurate with that expertise, was provided by the secularist press. Though theological radicals were also sympathetic to the idea of the equality of the woman's sphere with that of man,[1] they had no quarrel with the idea that the doctor should replace the allegedly archaic, superstitious priest in the formulation of rules for social behaviour and as an authority on ethical matters affecting life and death. The Spiritualist programme for a more perfect human society specifically included "sanitary reforms" based on the medical "laws of health",[2] while in Melbourne, the founder of the breakaway Australian Church, Rev. Charles Strong, was a member of the Australian Health Society and a vocal critic of the urban slum as an "unwholesome physical and moral environment" in which to rear children. Strong shared the perception of the doctors that conformity to the "laws of health" would achieve not only physical but moral improvement. Instead of the "pokey holes of houses" there should be:

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1. "A Plea for the Higher Education of Women" Harbinger of Light Jul. 1874 p.655, "Woman and Her Work" Ibid. Dec. 1874 p.736-7; Farley Kelly "Mrs Smyth and the Body Politic" Women and Labour Conference Papers 1980 p.161; R.B. Walker "Catherine Helen Spence Unitarian Utopian" Australian Literary Studies Vol.5 No.1 1971 p.37-40.

2. "The Missions of Spiritualism" Harbinger of Light Jun. 1874 p.648.

> ... well-drained streets, where no typhoid devil lurks. Honestly-built, well-ventilated houses with bathrooms and a plot of ground where flowers can grow and children play. Good food and proper cookery. Knowledge of the simple laws of health...[3]

Direct support for medical ideas was also provided by those of more orthodox religious persuasion. In particular, the temperance press had long tended to endorse the role of the doctor as an authority on the moral training of children, for many aspects of the medical "gospel" of health overlapped with temperance ideals. Medical emphasis on avoiding passion-stimulating food and drink brought scientific authority to long-held notions that alcohol was the cause of most of the social problems of the time, from poverty and prostitution to child abandonment and infanticide.

Thus, the Australian Home Companion and Band of Hope Journal in 1860 featured an editorial condemning the fatal miasmatic effects of impure city air on child life, along with "household filth, gin, want of culinary skill, bad drainage and adulterated foods." In 1861, Harriet Martineau was quoted on the relation between the infant death rate in England and the use of improper substitutes for breast-feeding.[4]

Social purity and temperance organizations, growing during the 80s and 90s, continued to disseminate the message, including its more recent, quasi-scientific elements. As publications becoming available from similar organizations overseas illustrated, in the process, those aspects of the medical ideal which verified their own concerns were not merely repeated, but further heightened and developed. Thus J.H. Kellogg's Social Purity, reiterating the warnings on "precocity", added that mothers should not neglect to enquire into the lives of their children, and keep a close watch over their playmates. Parents would be astonished at the revelations of "infant depravity" known to experienced experts, and even a child of seven or eight could implant the "venom of vice" in others. The mother should keep her own children as much as possible under her own roof, fully occupied in approved pursuits and away from contaminating contact with less innocent children on the street. "One vicious lad" in a community was worse than "cholera, small pox or even the plague."[5]

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3. Cited in C.R. Badger The Rev. Charles Strong and the Australian Church (Melbourne 1971) p.33, 111-12, 114.

4. Australian Home Companion and Band of Hope Journal Vol.5 1860 p.58, 60, Vol.6 1861 p.44.

5. J.H. Kellogg Social Purity (Melbourne n.d.) p.10, 23, 34, 62-8. John Harvey Kellogg (1852-1943), hydrotherapist, was medical superintendent and surgeon at the Battle Creek Sanitarium, Michigan. A member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Social Science Association, he was also a supporter of the White Cross Army and Young Men's Christian Association. His ideas were known in the colonies by 1889 (The Dawn Vol.2 No.3 1889 p.8).

Colonial social purity organizations were active in ensuring that the medical warnings on the dangers of precocious sexuality reached both parents and child. In Sydney, the White Cross League, modelled on a similar organization formed in England in 1883, distributed tracts and gave talks on sex education. With Vice-Regal patronage, plus the support of Lord and Lady Plunkett (zealous workers for child health and welfare in New Zealand), the President of this organization, Dr. Richard Arthur, also secured the co-operation of the headmasters of prominent boys' schools in both States, who invited the League's visiting lecturer to address their pupils.[6]

Indirect endorsement of the medical message on sexuality was also provided by one-man social purity campaigners. Thus, in Melbourne, Henry Varley both gave public addresses and published low-priced tracts warning of the dangers of masturbation. These repeated the view that boys ought to be told that self-abuse made them pale, flabby, dull-eyed and effeminate. In addition to banning alcohol from the house and insisting on cold water bathing, simple food and athletic exercise, Varley recommended that parents scrutinize their children's companions and cross-examine their sons on "words spoken and secret acts committed at school." "Let every parent insist upon knowing the facts."[7]

By the turn of the century, the medical notion of a need to warn children of the alleged consequences of sexuality had been taken up by churchmen themselves. An address to members of the Mothers' Union in St. Andrew's Cathedral Sydney in 1903 included the notion that they should provide "careful training of the child from the earliest age in the physiological facts of its own nature," especially in "this climate and under our conditions of life." This speaker saw fit to remind his listeners that mere "mother's love" alone would not guarantee an effective moral training. Qualities such as "respect and obedience" did not come "by nature" for they were counteracted by "self-will" in the child. This however, was less a restatement of original sin, than of its modern medical version that the blame for any faults in the child lay with the mother, who had failed in the task of civilizing the little savage.[8]

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6. Australasian White Cross League Some Opinions of Leading Men in Australasia Regarding the Necessity of Purity Instruction to the Young (Sydney n.d.) p.3, 8-10. Established in England by Ellice Hopkins, this organization was named the White Cross League after 1891 when it amalgamated with the "Church of England Purity Society" (F.K. Prochaska Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century England Oxford 1980 p.215).

7. Henry Varley Private Address to Boys and Youth on an Important Subject (Melbourne 1893) p.4-8, 14 (1st edn. 1884); Lecture to Men on a Vitally Important Subject, Containing Invaluable Information for Young Men and Those Who are Married (Melbourne 1894) p.9.

8. An Address to Mothers (London 1908) p.8, 9-12. The Mothers' Union, an Anglican organization formed in England in 1876, was introduced to Tasmania in 1892, with branches in most colonies by 1900.

For Catholic churchmen, the Confessional provided a special means by which the importance of chastity might be impressed on children:

> Have you said immodest words? Have you laughed at indecent sayings, or made others say them? Have you loved to talk of wicked and impure things? Have you looked at indecent things, or pictures, or books? Have you done impure actions with others, or let them be done to you? Have you gone into company where you know you would be tempted to such sin? Have you been careless of modesty in dressing, undressing, or in your bed? .... How often each sin? [9]

Despite its implicit denial of the skills of women by insistence that they be guided in child-raising by medical expertise, the scientific formula was also being transmitted by publications written by or directed to women. Thus, in Melbourne, the popular column of "An Old Housekeeper" in the Argus provided a detailed endorsement of the medical rules, despite a pseudonym which pretended to look back to traditional motherhood as a craft rather than a science. Children were to be "regularly and carefully fed" from the day of their birth, on plain food, chiefly oatmeal, served at tables separate from adults. This food made children "good-tempered, bright-eyed and strong-boned," and besides "if they get into the habit of seeing elder people have their meals, they naturally crave for what they see, and lose their taste for the simple food fit for them." Similarly bedtimes were to be early and regular. This made children better tempered, and also meant that they arose early and could be fed and sent to school before husband and wife sat down to breakfast. Further by "this system of management," "they will have their tea at 4 o'clock and be off to bed by the time your evening dinner is ready." [10]

This writer also spelt out the value of this doctrine not only to the health of the children, but also to the comfort of the father. "Divide your house into separate kingdoms," she advised, "in one of which he is free from all their exactions." The mother ought to produce the children for his perusal only as she did her tablecloths, "spotlessly clean, perfectly smooth, well aired, and - when wanted."[11]

By the end of the 1880s, also pointing to, and assisting in, the acceptance of the medical formula was its transmission by new feminist publications. The increasing importance assigned to women as mothers in Dickensian ideology had been a catalyst for the emergence of political consciousness in women's organizations, seeking to enlarge the "woman's sphere."

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9. Rev.Fr.J.Woods A Guide to Confession and First Communion with Methods of Assisting at Mass for Communicants (Sydney 1884) (1st edn. 1875) p.8. According to Herbert Moran, the Catholic clergy were more anxious about "purity" than other sins (Viewless Winds London 1939 p.15).

10. "An Old Housekeeper" Men and How to Manage Them (Melbourne 1885) p.37, The Australian Housewife's Manual (Melbourne 1883) p.109.

11. Men and How to Manage Them p.35, 37.

Securing the vote was seen as an essential starting-point by which the unique abilities of the "feminine" woman might be given a more effective dimension both within and without the home. Male legislators must be induced to pass measures seen as necessary for the further protection of women and children, the improvement of the status of the family and motherhood, and of woman's autonomy within marriage.[12]

On the other hand, though the vision of the social importance of motherhood and celebration of joys and satisfactions in Dickensian literature was continuing, as was, for the moment, the strong role played by middle-class women in initiating and directing philanthropy, medical ideas were beginning to qualify both of these areas of woman's work. Whether stated explicitly or merely implied, the pronouncements of the doctors suggested that since the mother was the natural and first educator of the child, she must, if well-to-do, withdraw from society, or if poor, be extracted from field or factory, to be enshrined and confined in the home, where, guided by the experts in child-care, the professional mothering necessary for the preservation of human virtue might begin. Women were coming to participate less in the construction of childhood ideology than its transmission and entrenchment:

> Your sphere is domestic, and to you is entrusted the welfare of the children.... In your hands is the health of your homes.... Begin with your babies and your children, with your houses and their surroundings, and from these as a centre work at the reform of our city life, until there shall be no more need of lectures on how to manage babies, or disquisitions on the unhealthy homes we live in. [13]

Under the terms of the medical notion of the importance of their unique sphere, which was equal, but different from that of men, women were allowed some important concessions. Issues such as the right to limit pregnancies, the reform of the divorce law, custody of children, and the vote itself, could now be placed in the context of the argument that providing a healthy child's physical and moral environment could not be achieved without attention to the status of women in the family. Accordingly, feminist organizations became a vocal source of transmission of the increasingly complex, "scientific" and essentially male medical formula for child care, on the one hand accepting the fact that it eroded their "natural" abilities in this respect, but on the other, using it to elevate but not enlarge the woman's sphere.

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12. The Dawn Vol.2 No.9 1890 p.11; Vol.2 No.10 1890 p.10; Vol.2 No.12 1890 p.9-11; C.H. Spence "Political Responsibilities" ANJ Nov. 1906 p.360-3. See further Judith Allen "Breaking Into the Public Sphere" in J. Mackinolty and H. Radi (eds.) In Pursuit of Justice (Sydney 1979) p.107-17, Anthea Hyslop "Agents and Objects Women and Social Reform in Melbourne 1890 to 1914" Women and Labour Conference Papers 1980 p.746-59.

13. Dr. Allan Campbell How to Manage a Baby (Adelaide 1878) p.16. See further Judith Godden "Lady: Woman: Female: Philanthropy and the Woman's Sphere, Sydney 1870-1900" Women and Labour Conference Papers 1982 p.322, 327-8.

In 1889, The Dawn not only carried advertisements for Dr. Muskett's publications, but also published articles exploring and clarifying other major elements of the medical formula for child care. Mothers were advised against rocking the baby for "an inordinate length of time," allowing tea to those under ten, meat three times a day and food between meals. "Irritating and passion-stimulating foods" such as mince-pies, spiced pickles, ginger snaps and pepper sauce, when given to children, produced "waywardness", culminating perhaps in "the saloon and the brothel." Infants were to be fed at times announced by the clock, their bowels kept open, the room at 70 degrees, their bodies clothed comfortably and be walked in the open air daily in a perambulator. For advice on infant feeding, mothers must always consult "a well-educated physician", not "some old, over-wise woman of their acquaintance." Older children were to have a bed to themselves, or, if rooms were to be shared, arrangements for privacy were to be made by means of screens or curtains.[14]

Mothers were at all costs to avoid entrusting their infants to the hired nurse girl, who might damage its spine by carrying it carelessly, or leave it in the cold while gossiping with friends. Ignorant and indolent, such girls had no knowledge of hygiene required by the bottle-fed, nor the use of the thermometer to test the heat of the milk or the temperature of the bath.[15]

The medical message as interpreted by the women's magazines also recommended that mothers pay special attention to the newly designated stages of growth. Detailed descriptions of the height and weight gains achieved by the average child were provided, and mothers warned to watch carefully for any departure from the norm. Since the development of the convolutions of the brain were not completed till the seventh year, early study was dangerous. The period after ten was also a time needing "particular attention" for it was then that mothers should watch that "perilous" tobacco, alcohol and opiates were not used during this "susceptible" period.[16]

At the turn of the century, similar ideas were being transmitted by the "Ladies' Columns" in the denominational press. Here mothers were warned against rocking the cradle, of the need to instil "regular" and "proper" habits and to avoid feeding on demand. The habit of biting the finger nails, said to arise from allowing finger-sucking, could be cured by rubbing something bitter on the

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14. "The Improvement of the Sex" The Dawn Vol.3 No.9 1891 p.9-10; "Health and Morals" Ibid. Vol.3 No.2 1890 p.10-11; "Helps for the Fretful Baby" Ibid. Vol.3 No.7 1890 p.9-10; "The Care of Baby's Skin" Ibid. Vol.3 No.9 1891 p.13-14; "A Good Bed" Ibid. Vol.2 No.7 1889 p.11 and "Beds and Bedding" Ibid. Vol.5 No.7 1892 p.16.

15. "About Babies" Ibid. Vol.3 No.10 1891 p.13-14; "A Dear Experience" Ibid. Vol.2 No.1 1889 p.18-24 (a short story, continued in Vol.2 No.4 1889 and Vol.2 No.5 1889).

16. "Growth of the Body" Ibid. Vol.5 No.2 1892 p.21; "The Growing Age" Ibid. Vol.4 No.12 1892 p.13.

nails.[17]

In particular, these columns focussed on aspects of the medical message which were compatible with and reinforced religious doctrine. Thus mothers were advised that a walk on Sunday afternoons did not violate Sabbath observance and gave children strength and vigour. In 1907, an editorial in The Messenger pointed to a supposed link between the failure of lactation and alcohol consumption, arguing that more mothers should apply themselves to "the beauty and sacredness and indescribable joy of rearing a child in nature's way." According to this source, "the glory, and we had almost said, the divinity of motherhood" was not being sufficiently impressed upon the young people of Australia. [18]

In 1904, the Australasian Independent reviewed Dr. Muskett's Feeding and Management of Australian Infants in Health and Disease, favourably commenting that it was "one of the handiest of the handbooks on the subject" and "should be in every young mother's hands." Earlier, in 1903, this journal had transmitted the notion that the slovenly housewife was the cause of criminality and vice, for even the poor home should be clean, tidy, ordered, and cheerful, and if it was not, the children sought the bar-room or tramped the streets.[19] By 1908, the Australian Christian World was pointing out that Christianity promoted health because it advocated "moderation" and "plain living."[20]

The transmission of medical ideals by and to women was intensified because of their direct participation in temperance and social purity organizations. Here, in addition to the activities which had become traditional, such as the formation of children's Bands of Hope, prison visiting, and lectures on total abstinence,[21] women also dispensed information on "healthy" child-rearing and in particular, the need for providing sex education.

Feminist interest in sex education had been growing since the 1880s as part of their opposition to the Contagious Diseases Acts. Passed in England in 1866 and 1869, in Queensland in 1869 and Tasmania in 1878, these Acts had been designed to protect men who had intercourse with prostitutes, from venereal disease. Since the requirement to periodic inspection fell only on the women, the Acts were strongly opposed by feminist organizations, who promoted the idea that ignorance and secrecy about the causes and effects of the disease, were the real sources of the problem, and enlightenment on sexual matters the best

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17. The Messenger 26 Aug. 1904 p.24; 11 Nov. 1904 p.200.

18. Ibid. 19 Aug. 1904 p.8; 30 Aug. 1907 p.553.

19. Australasian Independent 16 Feb. 1903 p.7; 4 May 1904 p.11.

20. Australian Christian World 7 Aug. 1908 p.15.

21. Anthea Hyslop "Christian Temperance and Social Reform The Woman's Christian Temperance of Victoria 1887-1912" in S. Willis (ed.) Women, Faith and Fetes (Melbourne 1977) p.44-5.

solution.[22] In this area, feminist writers took the opportunity to heighten those aspects of the medical message which pointed to the social importance of motherhood. Thus Helen M. Ritchie's "Second Message to the Young Women of Australia" took up and developed the notion that chastity was best achieved by teaching reverence for motherhood. Falls from grace and fornication could be avoided if girls were taught to see motherhood as their sacred mission in life, refusing to sacrifice its glorious crown for temporary gratification.[23]

The women's version of the medical message on sex education was further developed by Ina L. Austen whose booklets of advice to mothers on this subject pointed out that one of the differences which medical theory was distinguishing between the sexes was the moral superiority of women. As in the medical prototype, so in this interpretation of it, for the child, "Alyce", the amount of information on sexual matters was meagre. However, the emphasis on the special importance of womanhood was immense. Alyce learned that pregnancy taught women "self-control and patient endurance," and that menstruation demonstrated how different she was from men. She must be more careful of her health, and remember that, though a certain amount of suffering had been allotted her "through the disobedience of the first woman," this developed in her a superior, character-building power, which would be much needed when the taxing trials of child-rearing began.[24]

Particularly stressed in women's magazines transmitting the new, complex and scientific medical message, was the duty of the mother to ensure not only a perfect environment for the child, but also an unimpaired heredity. Like the idea of the child as an evolving organism, this was an idea prompted by the application of Darwinian ideas to society. Current biological research suggested that in the evolution of species, changes occurred because various habits and skills, acquired by a species during its life-time, were transmitted to offspring. In human society, it followed that a child's chances of success in "the battle of life" largely depended on the qualities passed on to it by its parents. Their moral and physical characteristics, even their state of mind at the moment of conception, became of unprecedented importance. Children conceived in the heat of intemperance and criminal passion were likely to acquire these fatal tendencies.[25]

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22. J.R. Walkowitz and J. Daniel "'We are not Beasts of the Field': Prostitution and the Poor in Plymouth and Southampton Under the Contagious Diseases Acts" in M. Hartman and L. Banner (eds.) Clio's Consciousness Raised (New York 1974) p.193ff.

23. Australasian White Cross League Purity Series No. 7 (Sydney [1909]) p.9.

24. Ina L. Austen What Alyce Learned at Nine (Sydney n.d.) p.27; Alyce on the Threshold (Sydney n.d.) p.18, 21-4; Alyce in the Country of Teens (Sydney n.d.) p.10.

25. Helen M. Ritchie Op.Cit. p.9,15; Mrs Harrison Lee One of Australia's Daughters (London and Melbourne 1909) p.118-19 (restating arguments first published in 1888).

In fact, the theory on which these ideas rested had not been proved. The transfer of Darwinian and Hegelian ideas to human society had gone ahead rapidly during this period leaving the central problem of explaining precisely how mutations occurred in the evolutionary process still unsolved. By the 1890s, improvement in the microscope enabled Weismann to develop an alternative theory of the genetic origin of mutations, but preference continued to be given to the pre-Darwinian theory of Lamarck, that habits and skills acquired by a species during its lifetime were transmitted to its offspring. This had received solid support from Herbert Spencer, who argued that any attributes acquired in the ancestral struggle for existence might be passed on to progeny.[26]

During the 1880s and 90s, this was a notion which received special attention in women's publications, largely preceding the interest of doctors in this field. In 1898, an article on "Psychology" in Dr. Carroll's Science of Man argued that the thoughts of the woman during pregnancy affected the mind and body of the unborn child. Cited as evidence was the case of a woman who, after seeing a deformed hawker, allowed her thoughts to dwell on this subject so that in due course she produced a child who bore the same deformity.[27] However, it was largely after the death rate from post-natal infectious disease had fallen considerably that doctors began to awaken to the possibilities which this theory offered for the monitoring of pregnancy as well as of birth and of infant care. Thus in 1914, the New South Wales Department of Health issued a booklet warning that the pregnant woman should keep a happy frame of mind, avoid alcohol, spicy food and "excitement" and to consult a doctor as soon as she knew she was pregnant, as well as for the birth itself.[28] In 1914, Dr. Charles Mackellar argued that one of the aims of his Infant Protection Act, which provided for payment of maintenance to the unmarried mother by the putative father of the child before the baby was born, was to protect the child from the "heritage of mental and physical ills" arising from the privations and anxieties suffered by unmarried mothers. However, he had made no mention of this aim when introducing the measure in 1902-1903.[29]

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26. E.G. Boring A History of Experimental Psychology (New York 1950) p.470-1.

27. Science of Man Vol. 1 No.2 1898 p. 45-6.

28. Before Baby is Born (Sydney 1914) p.3, 8, 10-11. See also AMG 20 Jun. 1914 p.548-9.

29. Dr. Charles Mackellar "Infancy and Health" Report of the Proceedings of the Imperial Health Conference (London 1914) p.175, NSW PD Second Series Vol. 9 1902, Vol.11 1903 (Debate on the Infants' Protection Bill). (The financial benefits to the unmarried mother were in practice limited by the provision that she provide corroborative evidence of paternity). By 1929, according to Janet Campbell's Report on Maternal and Child Welfare in Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, Dept. of Health), medical interest in pre-natal factors was still in the "early stages of development" (p.10).

Meanwhile, for women, theories of the importance of heredity and pre-natal influences had great potential for verifying issues of importance to their cause. For instance, in 1889, an article in The Dawn used the new biological arguments of the hereditary transmission of acquired characteristics to argue for women's education and also to suggest that moral qualities in offspring were more important than sheer number:

> The quality of the children has to be considered as well as the quantity. The child of an educated mother is likely to be more intelligent than the child of an ignorant mother.[30]

Biological theory that parents should pay more attention not only to their fitness to reproduce but even to conditions prevailing during pregnancy and at the moment of conception itself, could also function as a justification for the wife's right to choose the time and circumstances of intercourse. As Melbourne feminist, author and retailer of contraceptives, Mrs. Brettina Smyth made clear in 1894, the correct pre-natal environment included restraint from intercourse during pregnancy, lest the thoughts of the parents were communicated to the unborn child.[31]

Arguments that children begotten in lust "caught the taint and bore the mark upon their inmost life," and that "steady, sober parentage" was needed to raise the race were similarly espoused by feminist publications. Women who were careful to ensure that their children were not the result of mere "animal instinct", purified the springs of heredity and sent "a blessing on through the dim vista of the future ages."[32]

Though heredity theory added a scientific edge to some issues of importance to women, like so much else in the medicalization of childhood ideology, it also added to the burden of responsibility being attributed to them, in this case playing upon the anxieties which mothers felt for the welfare of their unborn young. Rosa Praed believed that the deafness of her first child (born 1874) was caused by her failure to maintain a happy state of mind during pregnancy.[33] The training for motherhood for Ina L.Austen's eighteen-year-old Alyce was to include the warning that every wrong act or foolish thought affected the personality of children to come.[34] In 1893, social purity prophet, A.E. Newton, stressed that the mother-to-be must protect herself from

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30. The Dawn Vol.2 No.1 1889 p.9; see also Vol.4 No.9 1892 p.11-12.

31. Mrs. Brettina Smyth The Social Evil and its Cure quoted in Farley Kelly Op.Cit. p.167.

32. "The Hereditary Influences of Alcohol" The Dawn Vol.2 No.4 1889 p.21-3; V. Cooper Mathieson The Woman's White Cross Moral Reform Crusade No. 2 "Fallen Stars from Moral Heights" (Sydney 1904) p.15, 17; "Woman's Work" by Frances G. Holden The Dawn Vol.2 No.4 1889 p.11.

33. Rosa Praed Zero (1884) quoted in Colin Roderick In Mortal Bondage The Strange Life of Rosa Praed (Sydney 1948) p.94.

34. Ina L. Austen Alyce on the Threshold p.22; In the Country of Teens p.12.

all profane sights and sounds, a state of affairs which he believed could only be achieved by providing her with a comfortable and elegant home.[35] Also in 1893, the anonymous Healthy Mothers and Sturdy Children advised the pregnant woman that during gestation, the health and character of the child would be endangered if she indulged in any vigorous physical work, and also that she should spend her time reading acceptable novels, Scott, Dickens and Eliot being considered especially appropriate for influencing the mind of the unborn child. This book also included an anonymous article reprinted from an American magazine which put the arguments for control of hereditary factors in terms of the "rights" of the child, an argument which later became habitual among eugenicists. It argued that the child had the right to expect not only the Rousseauistic, happy, ordered home environment, described as "a romance-land, a fairy land", but also the right to be "well born" that is, free of defects passed on by parents physically defective or tainted with insanity, incurable disease, or moral weaknesses.[36]

In 1902, E.W. Cole's edition of Mrs. Everett Elliss's The Australian Baby, stressed that the pregnant woman must be "serene, trustful and placid" else her child would have "tendencies and capabilities which will spoil life for him." A busy social life, of balls, bicycle rides and picnics would result in a frail misshapen child, with chronic indigestion, and, if female, "a complexion like mud." Reading, gardening and sewing baby clothes at home were approved occupations, likely to produce wanted attributes in the coming child.[37]

Though the extent to which parents applied medical ideas defies generalization, there are indications that the doctor's theories, and thus their authority to formulate rules for the moral training of children were making an impact in many colonial families.

From the late 1880s, the medical notion that the scientific guidance of mental growth should be based on organic principles such as originally outlined by Froebel and presently provided in the Kindergarten,[38] was reflected in the growth of private institutions offering education for the pre-school child along precisely these lines. As early as 1880, Edward Combes gave a long and enthusiastic account of Froebelian methods and declared his intention of

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35. A.E. Newton The Better Way (Sydney 1894) p.7-12, 17-18, 27, 33.

36. Healthy Mothers and Sturdy Children (Melbourne 1893) p.6-11, 160; see also Frances E. Newton "The Mother's Greatest Needs" Australian Kindergarten Magazine Vol.1 No.4 Apr.1911 p.8.

37. Mrs Everett Elliss The Australian Baby (Melbourne 1902) p.4, 10-11, 12-17.

38. Dr. A. Carroll "The Necessity for an Alteration in Teaching Children and for a Psychological and Anthropometrical Laboratory" Science of Man Vol.1 No.11 1898 p.239.

educating his own children on these principles,[39] and the necessity for a professional pre-school education continued to be stressed by spokesmen for education. In 1901, Arthur Giles told a meeting of the Mothers' Union that educationists were now unanimous as to the value of a professional education before the age of eight and urged mothers to institute Kindergartens for this purpose. However, they were on no account to teach the children themselves. They must secure the services of a trained expert in the field and give that person "a free hand."[40]

During the 1880s and 90s, private, commercial Kindergartens which opened in Sydney included those at Maybanke College, The College for Girls (later Redlands), and Wesleyan Ladies' College Burwood. Similar Kindergartens catering for the children of the well-to-do on a commercial basis opened in Melbourne during the 1880s and 90s.[41]

Inside the private Kindergarten, great care was taken not to repeat the errors which, doctors alleged, were made by those mothers who either neglected or over-stimulated their children. No attempt was made to introduce skills formerly taught at mother's knee, such as literacy, numeracy or musical notation. Instead, as for adolescence, the emphasis was on forms of "Play" said to develop the mind without fatiguing it and especially on gymnastic exercise to develop the body.[42] It was said that "muscular exercise" was needed to develop the brain and form the will, and "work with the hands" to repress what Froebel had called those "poisons of childhood," "ennui, idleness, ignorance and brooding."[43]

While offering a new source of employment outside the home for some women, the application of these ideas amounted to further deskilling of the mother, who now lost that aura of expertise which she had formerly enjoyed with respect to the pre-school child. By 1908, mental over-stimulation resulting in precocious maturity was said to involve an inclination to "premature decay" and even insanity. The bright, precocious child was likely, when puberty arrived, to have its "high-strung nervous condition thrown out of gear" and soon suffer from "'dementia praecox'". A quiet child-like demeanour would be replaced by a self-possessed arrogant attitude, this being the start of a "process of

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39. Edwards Combes Report on the Lighting, Heating and Ventilation of School Buildings ... (Sydney 1880) p.105, 110.

40. Arthur Giles A Few Hints to Australian Mothers on the Education of their Boys (Sydney 1901) p.3, 5.

41. M. Walker "The Development of Kindergartens in Australia" M.Ed. Thesis SU 1964 p.171-6, 341.

42. Edward Combes Op.Cit.

43. Dr. Carroll Op.Cit.; F. Froebel The Education of Man (New York 1902) p.282.

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30. Scientifically-approved activities for the Kindergarten child included new methods of occupying the hands.

Mrs. Everett Elliss The Australian Baby (Melbourne 1902).

devolution" which would eventually culminate in "a state of imbecility."[44]

Similarly for the adolescent, whether or not colonial parents were aware of these theories, by the turn of the century, there existed a growing range of organizations catering specially for the alleged needs of this age-group. Branches of the Christian Endeavour movement, an interdenominational religious fellowship founded in the United States in 1881, began to be attached to Wesleyan Sunday Schools from the early 1890s, and grew in number after the visit of the founder, Rev. Dr. Clark, in 1890. From the 1890s, the introduction of a special "Decision Day" in Protestant Sunday Schools, where young people would be urged to pledge themselves to play "on the Lord's side" reflected clerical awareness of the idea that the physical and emotional derangement said to be experienced around puberty made this a likely time to seek a religious conversion.[45]

In the fellowships, the inculcation of military ideals was important, and was closely associated with the medical notions of the importance of chastity and temperance. The old theme that leading a good Christian life depended on arming oneself for conflict with Satan,[46] had been expanded by 1911 to include the idea that such a battle was necessary not only for the individual but the nation, that the foe included not only the Devil, but other nations, and that success depended on physical, mental and moral fitness to survive.[47] Fellowship members were encouraged to remain "controlled and cleanly night and day" so that they might "bring when need arose, no maimed or worthless sacrifice."[48]

Similarly, though the marshalling of Sunday School children in massive displays, dating from the 1880s, was partly intended as demonstration of Protestant strength,[49] it also served to make the point that the churches claimed a role in preserving the physical and mental health of adolescence as an

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44. Dr. Andrew Davidson "Mental Diseases from a Sociological Point of View" Journal of the Sydney University Medical Society Nov. 1908 p.47. Davidson was Medical Superintendent of the Hospital for the Insane, Callan Park Sydney, where he claimed, of 365 admissions in 1907, 27 were adolescents suffering from this disease. (p.50).

45. Laws and Regulations of the Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Church (Melbourne 1895) p.20; G.H. Archibald Child Study (Sydney 1912) p.59-74; C.C. Jones An Australian Sunday School at Work (Sydney 1915) p.22; The Methodist 14 Sep. 1906 p.4. See further J.R. Gillis Op.Cit. p.81; Joseph Kett Rites of Passage (New York 1977) p.64-6.

46. Perhaps its most famous statement, "Onward Christian Soldiers" (S. Baring-Gould) was written in 1834.

47. Methodist School Hymnal (1911), Section "National Life".

48. R. Kipling "Land of our birth..." Ibid. No.614.

49. W.W. Phillips "Christianity and its Defence in New South Wales Circa 1880 to 1890" Ph.D. Thesis ANU 1969 p.412-13, 428.

North Shore, and in 1896, Barker College, originally situated in the Blue Mountains, moved to Hornsby where it was well supported. In 1894, the Anglican Armidale School opened. In 1879, the Jesuits opened St. Aloysius at Woolloomooloo, and St. Ignatius' Riverview, the following year. The Marist Brothers' St. Joseph's opened at Hunter's Hill in 1881. In Melbourne, the Jesuits had founded Xavier College in 1878.

At the same time, secondary schools for girls were also being provided. Charles Pearson's Presbyterian Ladies' College Melbourne (1874) was followed by Methodist Ladies' College Burwood (1885), Presbyterian Ladies' College Croyden (1888). The Anglican New England Ladies' College opened in 1887 and the Sydney Church of England Girls School in 1895.

The expansion of boys' schools was a reflection of the growth of the urban professional classes, intensely aware of the importance of a secondary or tertiary education to provide their sons with access to white collar careers.[55] Where opportunities for the self-made man were shrinking, careers which depended on prolonging education into late adolescence were expanding. These included not so much the older professions, army, church and law, but the newer areas of the State Public Service, and after 1901, the Commonwealth one, together with the new professions like engineering, medicine and education. Moreover, since access to these new areas depended on success in quantifiable, competitive examination, parents with these aspirations for their children were especially receptive to theories of how best to conserve and develop mental and moral powers so as to equip their offspring for success. In NSW, in addition to the national schools' examinations which prepared students who had reached the fifth class for the Junior and Senior Public Exams, and the educational departments' pupil-teacher and Teachers' College examinations, in 1895, open, competitive examinations were introduced for recruitment into the public service. This was followed by similar examinations set by the Institute of Bankers and Insurance Companies (1896) and soon after, the Chamber of Commerce also made placement conditional upon success in examinations.[56]

Professional opportunities available from tertiary education were also expanding. The Ballarat School of Mines was opened in 1870; in 1882, the University of Sydney had opened its Faculty of Science, while the Faculty of Medicine admitted students in 1883. Also in 1883, a Technical Education Act in NSW resulted in institutions offering access to skilled careers in industry at

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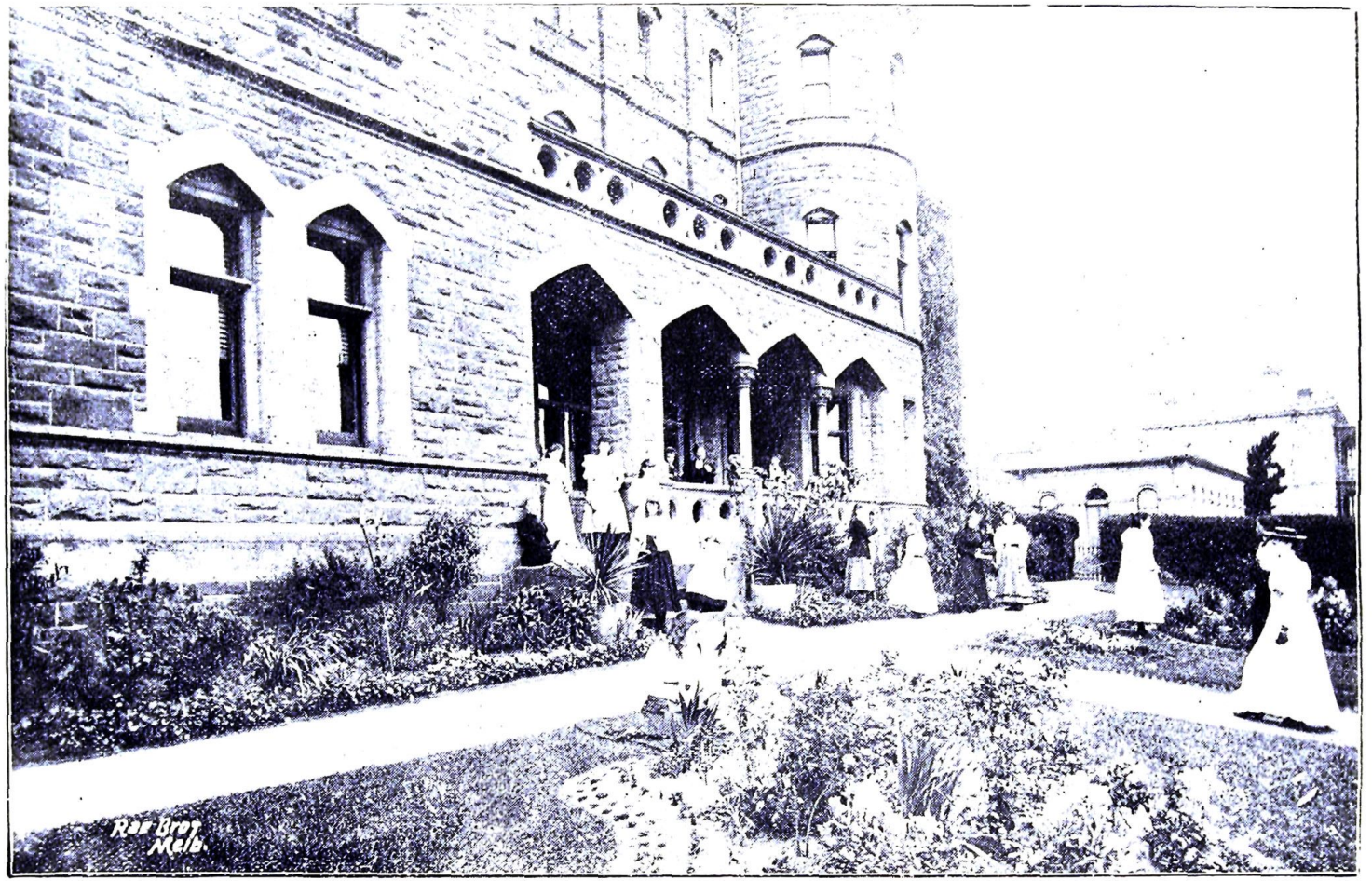
55. More than half the fathers of boys entering Shore, 1889-1914 were in professional or managerial positions. See Geoff Sherington "'The Making of a School' The First Quarter Century of Sydney Church of England Grammar School" (Unpublished paper from forthcoming history of this school) p.11-12.

56. A. Barcan A Short History of Education (Sydney 1965) p.191.



31. Prolongation of education for girls - Presbyterian Ladies' College, Melbourne.

Advertisement in J. Lake (ed.) Childhood in Bud and Blossom A Souvenir Book of the Children's Hospital Bazaar (Melbourne 1900).

Bathurst, Goulburn and Newcastle.[57] Dookie Agricultural College opened in 1886, Longeranong in 1889 and Hawkesbury in 1891.

The growth of the secondary schools fostered and popularized professional theories of youth and its needs. In the denominational boys' schools, most of the methods evolved by the Arnoldian theorists, and believed to constitute an ideal mental and moral training for this stage of growth, were gradually introduced. The prefect system, school colours and uniform, along with physical drill, gymnastics and Cadet Corps became the rule. Team sports and athletics, believed to display the physical prowess and fiery energy of youth, while preventing preference for indoor pursuits which were signs of effeminacy, were adopted with special fervour. In 1891, an article in the school magazine of North Sydney Church of England Boys' Grammar School declared that football was "a permanent correction to all foppery". Healthy, strong and courageous, team members were a marked contrast to "the fellows you see loafing about the ground, their hands deep in their pockets...". According to John Hetherington, recalling All Saints' Church of England Grammar School, Melbourne in the early 1900s, any parents who requested that their boys not play football were scorned by the headmaster. Where he considered football "'manly'", learning to play the violin was decidedly not, and the head suggested that boys wishing to do so would be better off in a girls' school. [58]

In 1892, the formation of the Great Public Schools Athletics Association further encouraged the absorption of the child in the sporting achievements not merely of his "House" but of the School. Whether a member of a team or a spectator, pupils were expected to surrender spare, unsupervised time.[59]

The enthusiasm with which some teachers and even parents adopted the sports and games cult may have had a sectarian basis. According to Brian Lewis, "quite sensible families" sent their boys back to school for an unnecessary year just so they could get into a team, or more important, into the crew. There was a large adult following of the annual boat races, for whom a win for their sons' school constituted a score for their sect.[60]

Reflecting medical theory, the new girls' private secondary schools had a different function. Here the potential conflict with the theory that female adolescent minds must not be excited or fatigued during this critical stage of

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57. L.A. Mandelson "Normal Selfe and the Beginnings of Technical Education" in C. Turney (ed.) Pioneers of Australian Education Vol.2 (Sydney 1972) p.105 ff.

58. The Torchbearer Vol.1 No.2 1891 p.3; John Hetherington The Morning Was Shining (London 1971) p.209; see also Geoff Sherington Op.Cit. p.5.

59. Brian Lewis Sunday at Kooyong Road (Melbourne 1976) p.92.

60. Ibid. p.89-91.



32. Displaying the desired anthropometric characteristics - Sydney Grammar School Crew, 1902.

The Sydneian No.168 Sep. 1902.

growth, was overcome by the counter claim that the higher culture of women would improve the racial stock. Educated wives would be needed for the expanding professional class and, while awaiting marriage and motherhood, to function as trained auxiliaries to the male professionals, especially those working in the field of child care. That is, though girls could now compete with their brothers in the study of mathematics and the classics, the uses to which they would put this knowledge were strictly limited. Moreover, in the girls' schools, much emphasis was placed on religious training and on the physical exercise and gymnastics which were scrupulously provided.[61]

By the 1890s, there was an increase in organized amusements specifically catering for younger children accompanied by parents. In Sydney and Melbourne, "Zoological Gardens" combined entertainment value with the notion that learning about plants and animals was especially appropriate to the mind and morals of the child.[62] The annual agricultural show in both city and country towns was also an opportunity for children to prepare and display approved skills, while in Sydney in 1901, entries in a Young People's Industrial Exhibition suggested that, for girls, the making of doll's clothes and other garments, and for boys, the keeping of pets, poultry and natural science collections, occupied a good deal of their spare time.[63] Annual family holidays were another way in which parents or near relatives controlled the leisure and play[64] of their children, especially younger ones.

For the younger child, an increasing range of sex-differentiated toys achieved a similar end. In the colonies, as overseas, the growing number of toys available partly reflected the increasing emphasis placed on Christmas and birthdays as significant festivals of childhood. However, it also pointed to an awareness of the commercial viability of the expanding market for sex and age-graded toys. By 1900, male children of the well-to-do might expect to receive gifts of toy trains and clockwork boats. Military toys, especially toy soldiers, though no novelty, became increasingly popular with the advent of the Boer War. Reflecting current medical theory, miniature carpenter sets were available to employ the hands. Mechanical toys were already being criticized by the experts, and occupations which were said to stimulate manual skills, such as

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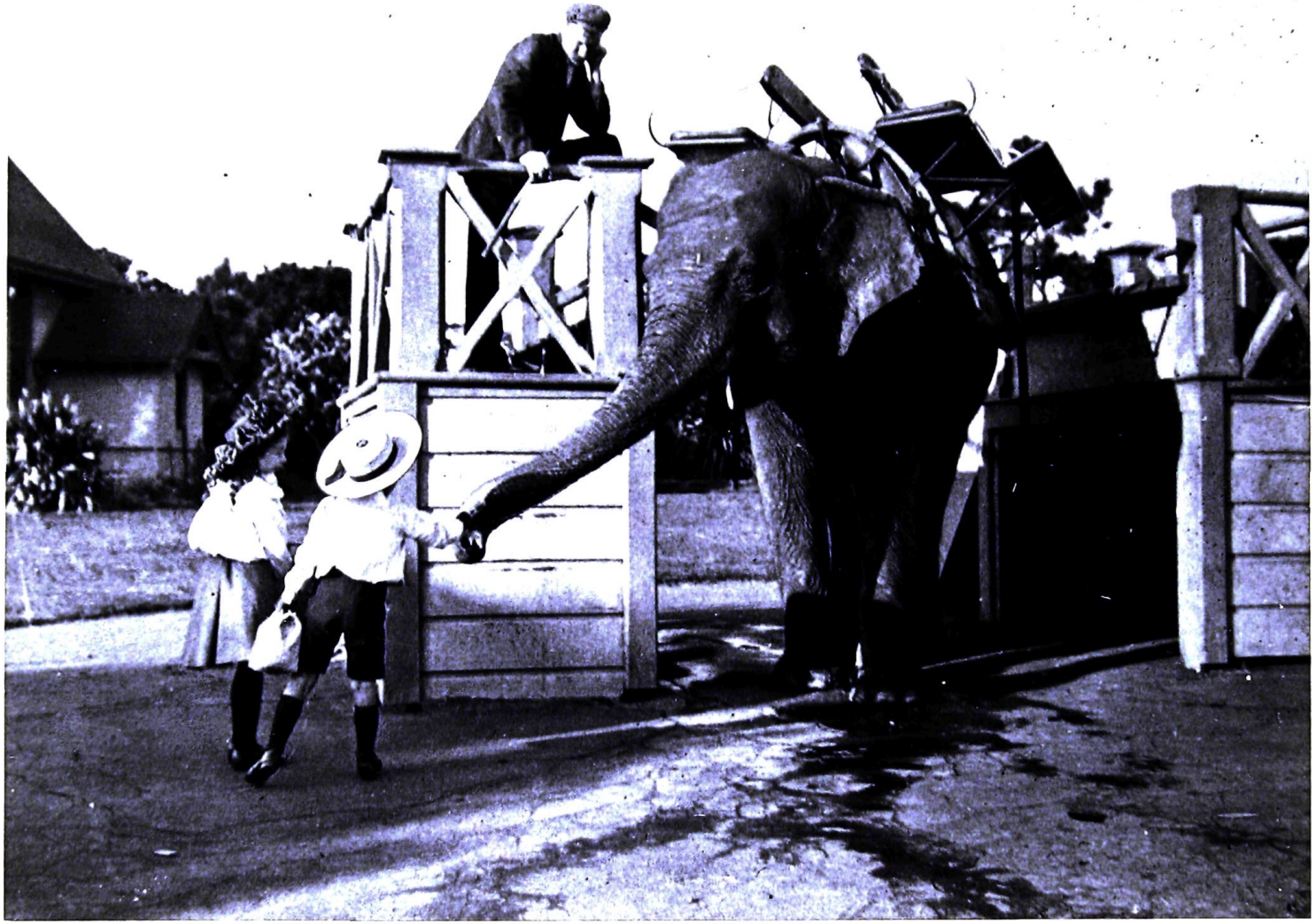
61. Henry Handel Richardson Myself When Young (London 1964) p.66-7, 69; Ena Harper "'Let There be Light' The Early History of the Methodist Ladies' College, Burwood, 1886-1889" M.A. Thesis SU 1981 p.20, 48.

62. Eugenie McNeil A Bunyip Close Behind Me (Melbourne 1972) p.78; John Hetherington Op.Cit. p.51.

63. Young People's Industrial Exhibition (Sydney 1901). (Catalogued with Girls' Realm Guild, 1890-1976, ML MSS 3125.)

64. Letter to The Dawn from Belle Coleman of Wagga (aged 7½) Vol.5 No.2 1892 p.30-31; similar letters from other children were published 1892-94.



33. At the Zoological Gardens - a recommended outing for the young.
A.W. Allen Family Album ML PXD569 No.4091 (5 May 1900).



34. Outing to South Head, Sydney. Family holidays and excursions helped to ensure that children's leisure time was spent in approved ways.
A.W. Allen Family Album ML PXD570 No.12 (15 Dec. 1900).



35. Imitation of buying and selling was an approved game for children. These children are using make-believe, but by the turn of the century, miniature equipment for shop-keeping games was available.

Cole's Funny Picture Book No.2 [1905].

plasticine, were recommended.[65]

For girls, dolls were enjoying an unprecedented popularity. Though dolls had long played a variety of roles in human societies they had ceased to be of great relevance to adults in European society and during the nineteenth century had come to be considered as especially appropriate to the moral and mental development of girls. Also, though a variety of dolls representing the human form in miniature was available, it was now that the baby doll came into its own. There were toy babies which could be dressed in tiny clothes of the girl's own making, wheeled in a toy perambulator and which shut their eyes obediently when put to sleep in miniature cots. Domestic and maternal interests were also encouraged by toy cutlery and china sets which could be washed up and stored in tiny cupboards. Doll's houses encouraged healthy home-making skills and diminutive but workable sewing machines also fostered imitation of the approved maternal role.[66]

As Dr. Fullerton had recommended, "Good prints and pictures of different animals" accompanied by "a short description of their countries and habits" were available, as were the "marbles, nine-pins, humming tops, wooden houses, Chinese puzzles, swings, rocking-horses and skipping ropes" said to provide healthy amusement and exercise.[67]

Money boxes were important by the 1890s, parents being advised to pay interest on savings.[68] "Pocket money" was ceasing to mean that which an apprentice or child labourer was allowed to keep for himself out of his earnings,[69] but rather a small amount paid by the parent to the child for performing small chores deemed suitable to its age and sex.[70] In 1907, Uncle Will of The Messenger's Children's Page especially recommended the novel money box he had recently seen used by children. It was in the form of "a smiling negro" with an outstretched hand. In a unique demonstration of the charitable responsibilities of white children to lesser races, any offerings placed in the palm were lifted into the mouth and "disappeared into the cavern below."[71]

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65. See advertisements Australian Kindergarten Magazine 1910-1912; Maisie Stapleton and Jennifer Stackhouse Childsplay (Catalogue for exhibition of toys, Elizabeth Bay House, Sydney, Jun. 1980.)

66. Maisie Stapleton and Jennifer Stackhouse Op.Cit. n.p.

67. Dr. G. Fullerton Op.Cit. p.511.

68. The Dawn Vol.4 No. 9 1892 p.10.

69. Select Committee on the Employment of Children 1875-6 (NSW LA V&P Vol.6 1875-6 p.893, 921.

70. H.A. McCorkell (ed.) The Diaries of Sarah Midgley and Richard Skilbeck (Melbourne 1967) p.200 ("Sale of eggs", 7d.; "two weeks cleaning boots at 6d. per week" 1/-.)

71. The Messenger 3 May 1907 p. 284.



36. Christmas Gifts, 1899. Children in well-to-do families were provided with ample quantities of approved toys to occupy spare time.

A.W. Allen Family Album ML PXD569 No.549.



37. A holiday in the bush was seen as an informing experience for children, but was not permitted to encroach too far upon the protected world of the younger child.

A.W. Allen Family Album ML PXD566 No.3721 ("A Holiday at Mount Waldemar" 15 Jan.1899).

Supervised children's parties and parlour games also helped to control the leisure of the younger child. Recommended in a variety of non-medical sources, they functioned so as to keep children's activities as much as possible in the home under the watchful eye of an adult.[72]

Perhaps the most telling indicator that medical ideals of child-rearing were winning considerable acceptance among mothers was a visible decline in family size. Where women born in Australia during the late 1830s and 1840s, and completing their families during the 1870s and early 1880s had an average of 7.02 to 7.03 children, those five years younger and completing their families at the end of the 1880s averaged 6.75.[73]

This was a trend much accelerated during the depression of the 1890s, when women born in 1845-51 and then completing their families, would have only 6.44 children and those born in 1856-61, only 5.92. However, this tendency towards family limitation began during the boom years and among those literate, better off and socially ambitious groups which constituted the existing market for medical services.[74]

The fact that this change in attitudes to family size correlates in time with increasing transmission of the medical definition of the needs of the child is the more significant, when it is considered that the earlier Dickensian cult of childhood had had no such effect. Reflecting the assumption that child-bearing should be allowed to occur either as God or Nature dictated, over the whole of the married woman's fertile years, mid-Victorian families had been large. As Rousseau had spelt out, the romanticized, spiritualized mother was expected to meet the increasing responsibilities for the moral, physical and mental demands of her offspring, without reducing family size.[75]

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72. Australian Etiquette (Sydney and Melbourne 1885) p.567, 574; Henry Handel Richardson Op.Cit. p.40, 42, "Ultima Thule"(Penguin 1976) p.30-31; P. Poole (ed.) The Diaries of Ethel Turner (Sydney 1979) p.196 (7 Feb.1900); The Messenger 11 Jan. 1907 p.24.

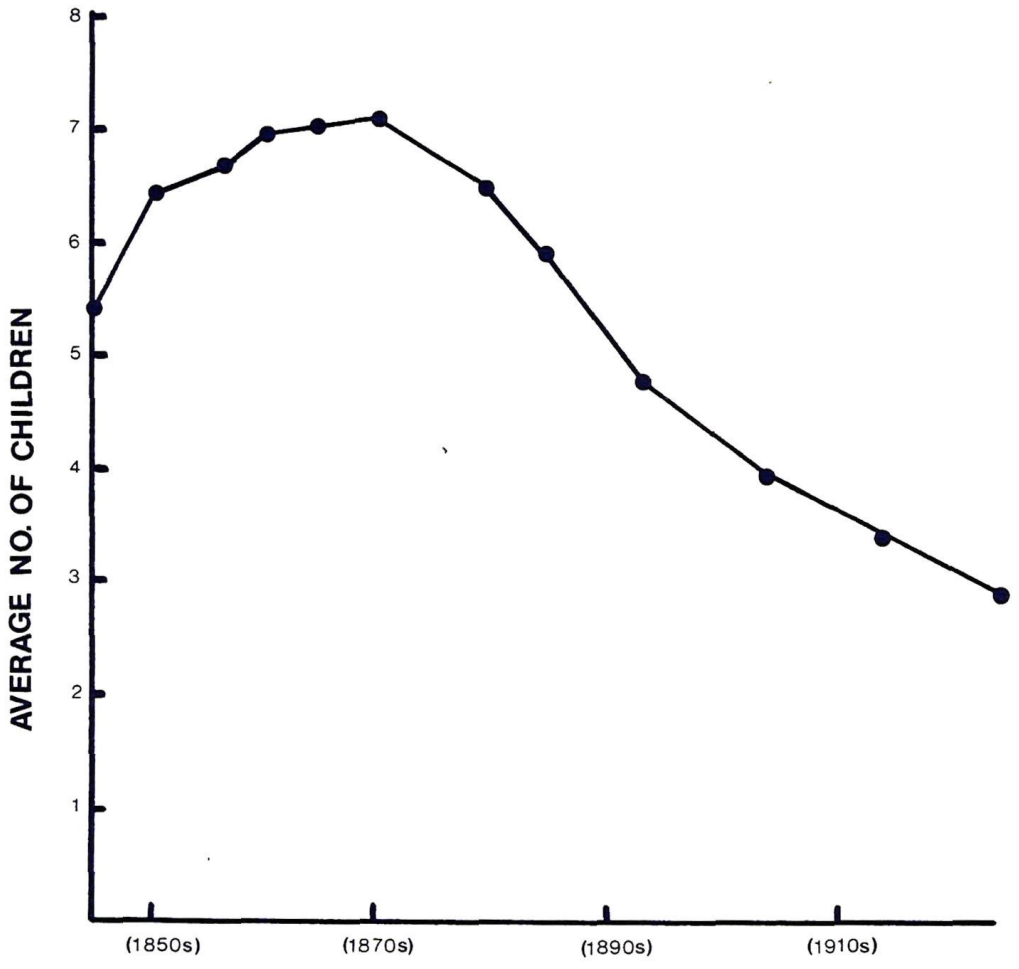
73. L.T. Ruzicka and J.C. Caldwell The End of Demographic Transition in Australia (Canberra 1977) p.153.

74. Ibid. p.95-7, 139, 150, 153, 174; E.F. Jones "Fertility Decline in Australia and New Zealand 1861 to 1936" Population Index Vol.37 No.4 1971 p.317; N. Hicks "Demographic Transition in the Antipodes: "Australian Population Structure and Growth 1891-1911" AEHR Vol.14 No.2 Sep.1974 p.137; "Theories of Differential Fertility and the Australian Experience 1892 - 1911" Historical Studies Vol.16 No.65 Oct. 1975 p.582.

75. L.T. Ruzicka and J.C. Caldwell Op.Cit. p.139, 150; J.J. Rousseau Emile (London 1976) p.12, 177, 325. It is believed that the trend towards family limitation began among the middle classes in France in the second half of the eighteenth century (Peter Fryer The Birth Controllers London 1965 p.33-8).

AVERAGE COMPLETED FAMILY SIZE,

AUSTRALIA 1850s–1910s



Arrived at by taking average no. of children ever born to women "at the peak of child-bearing" in age cohorts given in E.F.Jones "Fertility Decline in Australia and New Zealand, 1861–1936"
Population Index Vol. 37 No.4 1971 p. 312–13.

Fig. 5

As historians of the birth control movement have pointed out, no single factor adequately explains the change to smaller families, which occurred not only in the colonies but in Britain, many European countries and in the United States at about this time. For instance though there was an increase in the number of contraceptive techniques available during the nineteenth century, this alone cannot explain why middle-class parents should then have sought and used such methods, some of which had long been available but previously not widely practised.[76]

Nor can the organized campaigns to disseminate contraceptive information by the English birth-controllers, and their local followers during the 70s and 80s, be considered a single causative factor, though it was believed by contemporaries to have been so.[77] These campaigns were directed chiefly at teaching the poor how to avoid the poverty, misery, prostitution and infanticide which, according to Malthusian logic, were caused by over-production of offspring. Such arguments had no relevance to the reproductive habits of the better off, nor any appeal to the poor, as Chartist opposition to the first Neo-malthusian campaign in England during the 1830s had shown.[78]

Nor can the new compulsory education legislation be seen as a cause of the decline in family size during the 1880s, since this did not enforce full-time attendance at school. Besides, these Acts did not involve any new departures on the part of the child-centred middle classes, who had long believed in the importance of providing a prolonged formal education, but who only now began to limit family size.

What is of more significance is that pre-school and secondary educational facilities expanded during this decade. This reflected the increasing number of parents in touch with professional ideas of how best to ensure that their children might pass the tests of physical, intellectual and moral worth, and be prevented from slipping down to the level of the teeming labourers.[79]

Thus, though the causes of the changing attitude to family size cannot be isolated, one can point to the increasing medicalization of child-rearing ideology during the 70s and 80s. This not only demanded the prolongation of education, and at both ends of the age spectrum, but also put increasing

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76. N.E. Himes Medical History of Contraception (Baltimore 1936) p.211, 392-3, 422; J.A. Banks Prosperity and Parenthood (London 1954) p.6-9; L.T. Ruzicka and J.C. Caldwell Op.Cit. p.6-7.

77. See for instance the evidence of George Ardill Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth Rate in NSW 1904 Vol.2 (Sydney 1904) p.87.

78. D.E.C. Eversley Social Theories of Fertility and the Malthusian Debate (Oxford 1959) p.54-60; Peter Fryer Op.Cit. p.82.

79. Cf. L.T. Ruzicka and J.C. Caldwell Op.Cit. p.18-24; J.A. Banks Op.Cit. p.174-92.

pressure on the mother to apply the demanding regimen of the medical formula in the home. At the same time, it offered her new scientific justifications for controlling fertility.

This relationship between the smaller family and the medicalization of childhood ideology, was as yet rarely put publicly by women or by doctors. Its chief advocates during the 70s and 80s were radical intellectual groups, especially secularist ones, for whom religious proscription on birth control was, like the concept of infant depravity, a useful weapon with which to attack the churches.[80] Thus Joseph Symes argued in 1885 that the child's need of ample and proper food, clothing, lodging, cleanliness, exercise, and a bed to itself in a large, well-ventilated bedroom, demanded control of family size. In addition, there were those biological factors to be considered which, he alleged, influenced mental, moral and physical characteristics. No child ought to be born unless such provision had been made for it, whereby it would grow strong, healthy and intelligent. He suggested that his ideal could more readily be achieved in a family of two than one of six to twelve, while couples suffering from any mental or bodily disability, should not conceive children at all.[81]

The importance of biological quality of offspring and its relationships to the smaller family, was also argued in the Spiritualist press:

> "Write these few words upon the front door of every house: 'FEWER AND BETTER CHILDREN!' Write these six words in the bridal chamber of every habitation: 'No more sin; no more insanity!'"[82]

These apparently scientific justifications for family limitation so added to its respectability that, by the 1880s, they were no longer confined to radical secularists. For instance, provided it was "natural" methods which were advocated, that is sexual continence or abstinence, and not the new artificial "checks" which were an encouragement to vice, the principles of birth control were being transmitted by temperance and social purity workers. Thus in Melbourne in 1888, temperance advocate Mrs. Harrison Lee, in her series of articles for the Melbourne Herald and Southern Cross, argued that since children should be the result of "holy desire to people the earth," not the unpleasant result of animal gratification, those who possessed this holy desire, and who could provide for and train ten or even twenty children, should do so, but those

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80. The relationship between secularism and family limitation also rested on the fact that advocates of artificial methods of birth control, both in the colonies and overseas, often relied on secularist publishers and book sellers to produce and market their works. (Peter Fryer Op.Cit. p.11; Peter Coleman Obscenity, Blasphemy and Sedition (Brisbane 1963) p.66-77).

81. "The Population Question and its Side Issues" The Liberator Vol.3 No.8 Jul. 1885 p.950-1 (a paper read to the secularist Mutual Improvement Class).

82. Harbinger of Light Feb. 1875 p.769, quoting A.J. Davis The Genesis and Ethics of Conjugal Love.

who had children only because they couldn't help it, should have none at all.[83]

Though, as it stood, this was hardly an argument which would make the small family respectable, Mrs. Lee's definition of fitness for parenthood in terms of the avoidance of sexuality was admirably suited to do so. The argument could be developed in such a way as to make the large family evidence of improvidence and uncontrolled passion. Thus by 1893, social purity writer A.E. Newton, argued that continence within marriage not only ensured that children were wanted and improved their constitutions, but also improved that of the father, whose energy was not wasted and became available for "higher" uses. Besides, motherhood should be a shrine, unpolluted with lust, in order that the quality of human offspring undergo progressive improvement similar to that already achieved in animal culture. Alcohol, cigarettes and spicy food, which stimulated the passions, were to be avoided, not only in the diet of children, but also in that of prospective parents, for children begotten in lust were tainted with erotic impulses, a source of wickedness and crime.[84]

In 1892, Mrs. Brettina Smyth agreed. In her lecture advocating the "Limitation of Offspring" she argued that birth control avoided the moral problems said to be associated with late marriages, improved the health of both mother and child by allowing spaced pregnancies, and assured that every child born was a wanted one. Ensure "few but superior children," she declared, and no limit could be placed on "the future greatness and power of a people or a nation." However, she differed from the social purity advocates of birth control by recommending (and retailing) contraceptive devices.[85]

In this biological endorsement of the woman's "sphere", as vital to the mind and morals of the child and hence the survival of the national organism, the potential and actual gains offered to women remained closely confined to their roles as mothers. Women remained cautious of advocating any methods of birth control which might detract from their importance as child bearers and rearers. Care had to be taken not to destroy the gains which might be had from emphasis on female fertility. In particular, outright advocacy of artificial contraception was especially unwise, for this would constitute a dangerous divorcing of woman's sexuality from her reproductive potential, as well as a possible denial of the superior influence, which, by virtue of her spirituality, she presently might exercise in her special sphere.[86]

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83. Mrs. Harrison Lee Op.Cit. p.119.

84. A.E. Newton Op.Cit. p.32-45.

85. Mrs Brettina Smyth Limitation of Offspring (1893), Love Courtship and Marriage (1892) quoted in Farley Kelly Op.Cit. p.165-6, 168.

86. Linda Gordon "Voluntary Motherhood; The Beginnings of Feminist Birth-Control Ideas in the United States" in M. Hartman and L. Banner Clio's Consciousness Raised (New York 1974) p.54-68.

As Louisa Lawson made clear in Dawn in 1892, if any limitation was being tacitly advocated, then it was to be sexual abstinence in order that "the sacred functions of motherhood" were not defiled.[87] Explicit feminist support for the principle of birth control became more feasible after the 1904 Birth Control Commission in NSW, when public discussion, together with medical toleration or even advocacy of the smaller family, especially in terms of the "rights" of the child, allowed more widespread re-assessment of this issue.[88]

Similarly, other than those doctors who were secularists, few members of the medical profession provided outright support for the idea that the medical prescription for child care demanded family planning. In most of the professional and lay books of advice on child care over the period under study, reference to birth control was absent, and some doctors went so far as to warn against the belief that prolonging breast-feeding served a contraceptive purpose. This was said to be both injurious to the mother's health and morally wrong.[89]

Colonial doctors who did favour "family limitation" included Dr. Beaney, who argued that neither professional nor working man should produce more children than he could adequately support. The social sciences of the day were showing the ignorant of all classes that family limitation was the solution to the problems arising from enforced celibacy and indifferent child-rearing.[90] In 1890, Dr. Alexander Paterson was another who openly advocated birth control,[91] while Dr. J.W. Barrett's Presidential Address to the Medical Society of Victoria in 1901 asserted that the introduction of contraceptive techniques fifteen years earlier had been welcomed by doctors as offering women relief from the incessant round of pregnancies and lactation. "It seemed that on the average, by such measures, better children would be reared and there

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87. "Woman's Part in Evolution" The Dawn Vol.5 No.3 1892 p.11.

88. See for instance The Woman's Sphere Jun. 1903 (comments from readers in response to an invitation from the editor to discuss "The Population Question"); N. Hicks This Sin and Scandal (Canberra 1978) Chapter Six ("To the Editor... Popular Expressions of Opinion"). Growing approval of the small family as evidence of a responsible attitude towards child-raising (and disapproval of the large one), is discussed in Chapter Seven.

89. Dr. G. Fullerton The Family Medical Guide (Sydney 1875) p.497, 499; Dr. N. Sisca The Management of Children in Health and Disease (Melbourne 1892) p.75; Dr. T.P. Lucas Domestic Medicine (Brisbane 1906) p.324. The reticence of overseas doctors on the subject is noted by N.E. Himes Op.Cit. p.282, 286; and J.A. Banks Op.Cit. p.155-60.

90. Dr. J.G. Beaney The Generative System and Its Functions in Health and Disease (Melbourne 1875) p.185.

91. Dr. A. Paterson The Physical Health of Women (Sydney 1890) quoted in Farley Kelly Op.Cit. p.168 and N. Hicks Op.Cit. p.38.

would be fewer deaths."[92]

Wider medical advocacy of family limitation may have been due less to disapproval of family limitation than to medical reluctance to publish "trade" secrets. Limitation of the authors' knowledge on the subject may also have been a factor.[93] Those doctors, like Beaney and Paterson, who did publicly advocate birth control and attempt to provide information on it, gave an inaccurate description of ovulation, while Beaney also displayed a rather naive faith in cold water douching during the "dangerous" days.[94]

It would seem that, in so far as doctors played a direct role in the decline in family size occurring during the 1880s and early 1890s, it was less by offering contraceptive advice than by providing abortions. Indeed, given the errors in the information and limited effectiveness of methods of contraception available, abortion may have constituted the large role in the decline of the birth rate, despite the emphasis placed by contemporaries on the dissemination of information about contraceptives. Like contraceptives, abortifacients were freely advertised in the newspapers and pamphlets by the 1880s,[95] but following the development of curettage (France 1843), doctors had become serious competitors with the midwives in providing abortions.[96]

Churchmen were provided briefly with scope to reappear in the guise of guardians of the innocent child by issues raised at the NSW Birth-Rate Commission in 1903-4. With the exception of Methodist, Rev. W.W. Rutledge, representatives of the major Christian denominations who were called in evidence took the opportunity to condemn the smaller family and alleged rise in contraception and abortion practices, seeing these as evidence of parental failure to consider the needs not only of the nation, but of the child. Thus Cardinal Moran declared that there was more esprit de corps in the large family, children raised therein had more "vigour and earnestness". Thus the "decay of the population was a cancer that was eating into the vitality of the social order." The Cardinal also took the opportunity to launch a tirade against the greater immorality of State school children, who were not taught "Divine Law" regarding these matters, to claim that Catholic families were larger, and to

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92. Dr. J.W. Barrett "Presidential Address" MJA Vol.6 No.1 Jan. 1901, cited in N. Hicks Op.Cit p.41.

93. Contraception was not taught as part of current courses in obstetrics, gynaecology and paediatrics (N. Hicks Op.Cit. p.52-3).

94. Dr. J.G. Beaney Op.Cit. p.189, 191.

95. N. Hicks Op.Cit. p.94-5; Farley Kelly Op.Cit. p.168.

96. Judith Allen "The Policing of Criminal Abortion in New South Wales 1890 - 1939: Methodological Problems in Crime History" AHA Conference Papers UNSW Aug. 1982 p.3.

allege that the doctor himself had a lot to answer for. The medical profession was "responsible for a great deal" of the incidence of the present "abortion practices" and should disqualify any of its members known to perform this act.[97]

By 1904, however, the Church's views on family size were already out of step with scientific opinion. The Birth-Rate Commission marked the end of the silence of the medical profession on or opposition to the general principle of family limitation, and the beginning of increasing interest in eugenic solutions to social problems. Some doctors would continue to speak out against birth control, and combine this with advocacy of measures to improve the biological quality of the population.[98] However the former condemnation of family limitation by the Australasian Medical Gazette had changed to guarded approval by 1905 when an editorial pointed out that it was increasingly difficult to rear large families, and that though the use of artificial contraceptives was dangerous to health, it was "an open question whether it is not better for a married couple to have two or three children whom they feel they can feed well and maintain in good health than to have seven or eight whom they are quite unable to properly feed and clothe."[99]

Similarly, at the Royal Commission itself most of the doctors called to give evidence gave qualified approval to limitation of family size in the interests of improving the environment of children already born. For example, Dr. R. Scot Skirving, a physician at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and a surgeon at St.Vincent's, said that people were now saying, "Well, I can afford to educate and take care of two or three children, but I cannot give six a good education..."[1]

Dr. Worrall also argued that the child-centred family was likely to be small. A specialist gynaecologist and dietician, he said that very "nice", very "conscientious" women were telling him that "they cannot afford to rear and educate their children; and when they are reared and educated, there is no opening for them... and that therefore they think it is not right to bring them into the world."[2]

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97. Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth Rate in NSW Vol.2 p.209-13. Though the Catholic birth rate had declined at the same rate as the Protestant one, by 1911 Catholic families were slightly larger than those of the other three main denominations, averaging 4.12 children compared with 3.87. (E.F. Jones Op.Cit; Census of Commonwealth 1911 Vol.1 p.283). Anglican prohibitions on contraception were relaxed in 1930. See W.G. Coughlan "Developments in Anglican Thought on Family Planning 1867-1968" St. Mark's Review No.55 Feb.1969 p.8.

98. For example see Dr. Chisholm Ross "The Maternal Instinct" ANJ Nov. 1912 p.369.

99. N. Hicks Op.Cit. p.42.

1. Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth Rate in NSW Vol.2 p.98.

2. Ibid. p.89, 91.

One of the Commissioners, W.A. Holman quoted an American opinion, that "the intelligent" family in France and the United States limited the number of offspring because "it is held that every child has the right to premeditated existence, subsequent happiness and individuality". He asked Dr. Grace Russell of the Sydney Women's Hospital if she considered "anxiety for the well-being of those children who are born" was an influential motive, and she provided non-critical agreement that it was, "with a good many of the thinking women."[3]

For women, the overall adoption of medical ideology as the mainstay for their case, decreased possibilities for taking advantage of new avenues of employment which were opening up outside the home, by increasing the demands on them as full-time child bearers and rearers. The feminist concept of equality, won on the basis of the importance of the woman's sphere, was to be achieved at enormous cost in terms of assumptions about the woman's "natural" role and duty. Also the concept of full-time mothering, placed on women an unprecedented burden of responsibility for the ills of society. "The mother can never be too watchful over her own conduct, and when she sees a fault in her child she should scan her own life and see if it be not a duplicate of her own" and correct it first in herself. "It is you who are 'bad' not the baby," mothers were told.[4]

The more advanced the medical concept of the rights of the child, the fewer rights were left to women. "If baby's little hand" was "found circled around a rare bit of china," a loving, earnest mother would not risk destroying the child's trust in her by thwarting its will, but preferred to have "her most valuable treasures spoiled than that her child be injured in disposition or treated with anything but love." Nor should she lock things away from children, for this would create "false desires and appetites" and encourage deception and "kleptomania".[5] Boys especially must be trained with care, lest the mother should make them milksops or drive them away from home. Mothers should encourage them and their school friends to play in the home, even if this transgressed on her peace and quietness. If she found "collections of newts, tadpoles and water-spiders" in the drawer where her boy should keep clean linen only, or "some ill-smelling mess" in her best jug, she should not interfere, but buy him pins with which to impale his specimens, labels and boxes, to encourage her "juvenile entomologist." Like their fathers, boys were to be provided with "some place, however small, where they can do exactly as they please, and where

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3. Ibid. p.110.

4. "The Training of Children" The Dawn Vol.6 No.6 1893 p.16-17; "Only a Child" Ibid. Vol.4 No.12 1892 p.15.

5. "Our Nursery" Ibid. Vol.4 No.4 1891 p.21; "Trust the Children" Ibid. Vol.6 No.6 1893 p.8.

their property will remain entirely undisturbed."[6] Girls, on the other hand, had to be prepared for their future self-sacrificing submissive role as mothers, by taking more care with their dress and personal appearance than was required of boys, and especially by assisting in the domestic work.[7] They had to learn to repress any hostility engendered in them by encroachment on their time or possessions by husbands and babies and realize their responsibility for the higher refinements and spiritual qualities of life, increasingly considered to be embodied in the home. The identification of the physical with the moral, so conspicuous a part of the medical formula for child care, was particularly evident in the role that formula required of the mother. Women had to realize that "moral vice is but too often the analogue and outcome of material uncleanliness", a preventable disease for which women were primarily responsible.[8]

Thus, advancing biological endorsement of childhood ideology left women little choice but to support it and attempt to use it to gain improvements in their status on its own terms. As Dr. Chisholm Ross warned in 1912, only those species at the "apex of the animal kingdom," that is, the mammals, exhibited the prolonged maternal care and love of the young needed to fit them for "the battle of life." The maternal instinct was so deep and permanent that nothing but disease and degradation could alter it, and it was therefore rarely seen in mentally defective women. In the "normally constituted" woman, weakness and helplessness "appealed" with irresistible urgency for "protection and cherishing."[9]

For doctors, on the other hand, the inception of the trend towards smaller families fed back into the process by which they continued to expand their sphere of influence in colonial society. For one thing, along with improvement in water supplies and sewerage disposal, it is likely that the reduction in the number of children per family played a major part in the lowering of the incidence of infectious disease afflicting the young, thereby contributing to the decline in infant mortality from this time.[10]

Secondly, the smaller family also assisted in the raising of the status of the profession and to the eventual entrenchment of medical ideas, in that the survival of children became of more crucial importance. This applied not only

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6. "Old Housekeeper" Men and How to Manage Them p.109-11; for later development of this notion see Maybanke Anderson Mother Lore (Sydney 1919) p.79.

7. "Neatness in Girls" The Dawn Vol.2 No.6 1889 p.12; Australian Etiquette (Sydney and Melbourne 1885) p.243-6.

8. "Woman's Work" by Frances G. Holden The Dawn Vol.2 No.6 1889 p.9.

9. Dr. Chisholm Ross Op.Cit. p.364-70.

10. Bryan Gandevia Tears often Shed (Sydney 1978) p.132.

to the private family, but also by the end of the 90s, to the nation as a whole, for statistical evidence of a falling birth rate aroused fears of national "decline" and failure of the white race to survive in the international struggle for existence. These fears would authorize further action by doctors to exert their expertise across classes, intervening in new areas to save the lives of children already born.

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CHAPTER SIX

MONITORING MOTHERHOOD

8723/4

The Medical "Protection" of Infant Life

> ... we pay a professional visit and give directions to a mother about her child; we tell her to take care of its diet, and to give it no more than so and so; next day we call and find the unfortunate little brat, perhaps two years of age, with a huge piece of cucumber in its hand - the mother is grieved beyond expression if you tell her she is likely to kill her child by want of such prudence, but she is incapable of taking in the idea of the necessity of being strict and careful.[1]

Medical allegations of maternal incompetence in child-raising took on a special edge when applied, not to the educated reader of the books on child management or the "Ladies' Columns", but to the urban poor. The difference lay not only in the language employed, but in the implications of the message. The idea that most babies were killed by ignorance, carelessness or mistaken kindness, could be construed as meaning that poverty was not a factor in the "excessive mortality of infants."[2] Very few infants were actually starved.[3] Further, since the essence of the problem was alleged to lie in maternal ignorance, it could be argued that the altruistic, public-spirited efforts of doctors to prevent the adulteration of food or to improve urban sanitation and water supplies were useless without the education of mothers in hygienic methods according to principles laid down by the medical profession.

By the 1890s, receptiveness to medical judgements on the domestic habits of the poor was increasing. The fact that from the early 1850s, qualified doctors had been appointed as health officers to advise Municipal Governments on water supplies, drainage, waste disposal, and other matters thought to be associated with the spread of miasma, meant that medical opinion had been sought in numerous Royal Commissions called to investigate social problems which ranged far beyond merely curing physical disease. Thus at the New South Wales Select Committee on the Working Classes in 1859, Municipal Health Officers Drs. Henry Graham and Isaac Aarons, had been an important source not only of those medical concepts which were converting Dickensian sympathy for the hardship of the street children into fear of their hedonism and especially of the social consequences of premature sexuality, but also of the idea that preventative

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1. NSW Select Committee on the Working Classes 1859-60 NSW V&P Vol.4 1859-60 p.155 (evidence of Dr. A. Roberts).

2. Dr. Charles McCarthy On the Excessive Mortality of Infants and its Causes (Melbourne 1865).

3. Dr. Charles Hunter What Kills Our Babies Australian Health Society Sanitary Tracts (Melbourne 1878) p.3; NSW Select Committee on the Working Classes 1859-60 p.57 (Dr. Isaac Aarons).

measures must focus on monitoring motherhood.[4] "Every danger should be anxiously eradicated which threatens the mental power and bodily vigor of the race," the commission concluded, echoing the influence of medical ideas on it. "The members of the future nation can never be strong if the springs of life are suffered to be vitiated. Manly and contented citizens can never be expected to rise up from the arms of unhappy and unwomanly mothers."[5]

Though the sense of crisis which had produced this Commission and a hearing for these theories was soon lost in the halcyon days of the "long boom", there were sufficient areas of poverty to allow development and articulation of the theory that problems could be smoothed away by medical guidance of child-rearing by the working-class mother. Thus in 1875, Dr. Arthur Renwick, called to give evidence at a Select Committee on the Employment of Children in New South Wales, deplored the fact that girls were being employed in factories and workshops instead of in domestic service where they might be trained for future duties in their own home. He warned that it was "a well-known fact of physiology" that the "mixing of the sexes" in the factory was bad for young people, both physically and morally because it stunted growth and developed "precocity". In particular, the use of the sewing machine by girls produced "unhealthy excitement" and also caused "uterine" diseases. The working of the feet caused "a congestion in the organs at the lower part of the abdomen" which in some cases would render the girls incapable of having any offspring at all. In general, children and young people working for wages in the brickyard, or worse, the tobacco factory, attained maturity "much sooner than they should." They lived "too fast" and also died sooner. He recalled the case of a child who had died at nine, "a perfectly decrepit old man," his "faculties utterly worn out." However, what made this case so particularly sinister, was that it was not the child, who had been employed outside the home, but its parents. [6]

Such theories began to have a special impact during the economic crisis and political ferment which characterized the early 1890s. The solution to a range of social problems was seen to lie in extracting women from the workforce, where they were competing with male breadwinners for jobs, and learning nothing of the hygienic duties of motherhood, or worse, assigning existing children to foster care or the streets. Women must be returned to their rightful place in the home, either their own or as domestic servants in those of others, where, guided by professional expertise, they might begin to provide that form of physical care and moral training by which social conflict would ultimately be

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4. NSW Select Committee on the Working Classes 1859-60 p.55 (Dr. Isaac Aarons), p.153 (Dr. A. Roberts).

5. Ibid. p.12.

6. NSW Select Committee on the Employment of Children 1875-6 NSW LA V&P Vol.6 1875-6 p.916-18; See also Royal Commission on Employees in Shops Vic. LA V&P 1884 Vol.2 p.viii (Dr. Beaney).

smoothed away. As Dr. Sisca implied in 1892, "the ruinous strike of last year" might have been avoided if the strikers had been taught caution, temperance and frugality in their childhood and youth.[7]

Thus, the idea that law and order, if correctly and efficiently imposed in the home, would ensure law and order without, which had long been a feature of advice to middle-class parents, had a wider reference when seen as a solution to working-class family distress:

> The best safeguard for the moral tone and welfare of the community is the respect, which children have for their parents. A child who starts life without respect for his parents, cannot be expected to be a law-abiding citizen. It is the lack of parents' authority over their children that accounts for most of the lawlessness which afflicts the community.[8]

The fact that such doctrines evaded the relevance of financial considerations was already familiar to middle-class parents, who were in the process of reducing the size of their families so as better to be able to apply the formula for preventing physical or moral disaster from striking down their young. They were accepting the doctrine that if children failed to grow and blossom into "fragrant flowers of moral intellectual and physical beauty" and were "stunted and dwarfed" it was primarily because of parental improvidence.[9] For them it was but a short step to believe that not only criminality and vice but also political instability could be controlled by expert enforcement of the "gospel of health" in other families. Besides, they had no reason to dispute a theory that social improvement did not require any redistribution of wealth or power, but must begin with the individual, who was now to be guided and counselled by principles derived less from the Church, than from medical experts on the ideal environment in the home.

Guiding Infant Care - Private Arrangements for Boarding-Out:

As social distress began to grow in the late 1880s, there were calls for a more professional approach to charitable activities. In Melbourne, a Charity Organization Society, formed in 1887 to oversee existing philanthropic effort, was aimed to prevent duplication of charitable services and differentiate between the "deserving" poor and "imposter".[10] The State too was receptive to new approaches to dealing with the problem of poverty. Royal Commissions to enquire into increasing expenditure on state-subsidized charities reported in Melbourne in 1892 and Sydney in 1898.

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7. Dr. N. Sisca The Management of Children in Health and Disease (Melbourne 1892) p.33.

8. Ibid. p.30

9. Healthy Mothers and Sturdy Children (Melbourne 1893) p.175.

10. Anthea Hyslop "The Social Reform Movement in Melbourne 1890-1914" Ph.D. Thesis Latrobe 1980 p.35-6.

For doctors, this search for new solutions offered increasing opportunities for the profession, in its capacity as adviser to both charities and State, to expand its influence beyond the middle class. This became especially apparent with respect to renewed efforts to save the lives of unwanted infants.

As economic conditions deteriorated it began to be alleged that, in spite of the efforts of the philanthropic ladies to prevent infanticide and baby farming by providing foundling homes, the incidence of child murder and wilful abandonment was increasing. In 1873-1874 it had been said that, of the children admitted to the Sydney Benevolent Asylum, few were actual foundlings, most being children whose parents were living, but destitute. In 1889, however, the Secretary-Manager of the Asylum, Edward Maxted, said that 32 foundlings had been left with the society over the previous year.[11]

Meanwhile, private charitable concern to rescue the infants of the poor was taking new, more ambitious forms. In New South Wales in 1888, a Society was formed for the "Prevention of Cruelty to Children." Comprising clergymen, prominent members of the legal and business community, this had broad aims, covering "cruel treatment, wrongful neglect, or improper treatment of children; also all conduct by which life or health is wrongfully endangered or sacrificed, or by which morals are imperilled or depraved."[12] A similar organization was formed in Melbourne by Lady Brassey, wife of the Governor, in 1896.[13]

In New South Wales, the Society employed its own "Vigilance Officer" to report cases of cruelty, and advocated new legislation to secure convictions, similar to that which Dr. Curgeven's Infant Protection Society had achieved in England in 1872 and 1889. Though also concerned with the care of the older child, a major aim was to expand the role of the State into the area of protecting infant life, both in the child's own home and especially in the system of private commercial foster care which had grown up in working-class areas of the cities.

According to one of the founders of the Society, George Ardill, giving evidence at a NSW Select Committee called to consider protective legislation in 1891-2, the private commercial foster home was a source of cruelty and even death by "studied neglect". In contrast with the charitable infants' homes, such as he himself had founded ("Albermarle", Stanley St. Newtown), these homes were trading in child life. The working-class "baby-farmer" cared nothing for her charges, greedily accepting too many babies and keeping them in boxes for

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11. Second Report of the NSW Commission on Public Charities 1873-4 NSW LA V&P Vol.6 1873-4 (Benevolent Asylums) p.12; Brian Dickey "The Evolution of Care for Destitute Children in NSW 1875-1901" Journal of Australian Studies No.4 1979 p.54.

12. NSW Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Second Annual Report (Sydney 1890) n.p.

13. Anthea Hyslop Op.Cit. p.210.

beds, stowed in damp, unventilated cellars. Sometimes, he said, after being paid a lump sum for outright adoption of a child, these women would then pass the baby on to someone offering care on the basis of a weekly payment, and disappear without paying further instalments. Again, sometimes if paid, say, £5 for outright adoption, they would have the child re-adopted by someone asking only £3. Unqualified midwives were said to be closely involved in these clandestine proceedings. They would agree, if asked, to handle both the birth and the disposal of the infant, which they achieved either by leaving the child near the Benevolent Asylum or by means of a fixed agreement with a professional baby-boarder on weekly payment.[14]

It followed that, whereas in the 1870s, the term "baby-farming" had been still used of the government-sponsored schemes for boarding-out of destitute children, by the 1890s, it had become a pejorative epithet used to describe the system by which an "unscrupulous she-devil" earned "big dividends" by taking in the unwanted children and then disposing of them by violence or studied neglect.[15] Like abandonment or infanticide by the mother herself, this was a practice said to be increasing, and similarly pointing to the need to educate the working-class mother to responsible motherhood. In all of these areas, there must be action by the State on behalf of the innocent child.

This sense of moral crisis, focussing on the mother, usefully evaded the need to take account of deteriorating economic conditions. Of those articulating the increasing protest against infanticide at this time, few saw the problem as in any way related to the poverty of women.

At a meeting called in July 1892 in Sydney, where doctors, clergymen and reformers discussed methods for the "Promotion of Public Morality", Mr. E. Maxted, in addition to reiterating his case that infanticide was increasing, alleged that one child in every seven born in the city over the past three years was illegitimate. He believed that lying-in homes should function as a kind of gaol, with classification,"detention and employment of inmates", and special penalties for "old offenders".[16]

Thus, it was not the mother who was seen as a victim but the child. The pathetic image of its undeserved fate was used to evade not only the economic determinants of attitudes to childhood, but also the fact that the poor were the least likely to have knowledge of, or to be able to afford, the new methods of contraception, becoming available in these years.

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14. NSW Select Committee on the Children's and Infants' Protection Bills 1891-2 NSW LC Journal 1891-2 p.11-14.

15. The Spectator (Sydney) 22 May 1892 p.13.

16. SMH 22 Jul. 1892 p.6.

Proof that the incidence of infanticide was rising was entirely lacking. In these years of high incidence of infant death, when the life even of a wanted and well-to-do child was precarious, and certification of death and interment was not strictly controlled, whether children were deliberately or accidentally destroyed by "overlaying", unsuitable food, or overdosing with sedatives like "Mother's Friend" and "Godfrey's Cordial" could never be known. Nor did a backyard burial rather than a ceremonial interment and the erection of a monument in a cemetery necessarily imply that murder had been committed. Perhaps to some it seemed, in an age when funerals had become a means of conspicuous display of wealth, preferable to the ignominy and expense of a public burial, especially for the unmarried poor. For a woman who took in a baby to nurse, which subsequently died, and who was unable to contact the parent, finding the sum needed even for a simple burial could be a problem.[17]

Though many of these issues were recognized by feminists,[18] male reformers and especially doctors displayed a remarkable willingness to label child mortality among the poor as child murder. At the Victorian Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions in June 1890, Dr. R. Rowan went so far as to declare that even the deaths of children, whose mothers had previously brought them to a doctor for advice, was infanticide, for, he alleged, the fact that the babies died showed that neither the advice nor the medicine obtained was taken.[19] Women who boarded infants which wasted away from diarrhoeal complaints were especially liable to the charge of having deliberately starved them.[20]

Figures provided by NSW Inspector-General of Police, E. Fosbery at the NSW Birth Rate Commission in 1904, for the period 1893-1903, did not substantiate his belief that infanticide was widespread, nor of course, that many bodies were secretly disposed of by burying, burning or at sea and never discovered. Also, he admitted that police did not know what proportion of the bodies found had been deliberately killed. Indeed his figures showed a steady decline in cases of infanticide as reported in the NSW Police Gazette from

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17. Deputation of NSW Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children to Mr. Carruthers 13 Aug. 1891 Archives Office of NSW Dept. of Education Subject Files 20/12605.

18. See for instance Mary Gilmore "Judged" in"Poems" n.d. (Collected by A.E. Currie) Typescript M.L. (c. 1893-4).

19. Vic. Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions 1892-3 VPP Vol.4 1892-3 p.243.

20. Deputation of NSW Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children to Mr. Carruthers (13 Aug. 1891).

1893.[21] At Ashfield Infants' Home, the number of babies abandoned also decreased. Ten children were left on the doorstep or in the vicinity in the first year and fourteen in the second, but thereafter the number declined to average four per year by the mid 1880s and about two by the mid 90s.[22]

Nevertheless, the issue provided the background against which new legislation was passed authorizing State intervention to guard the life of the unwanted child. In Victoria in 1890, an Act for the Better Protection of Infant Life (54 Vict. No.1198 1890) introduced penalties for parental abuse of children and required that all persons taking in children under two for foster care on a private, commercial basis, be registered. Any deaths of children in such homes might be investigated by a doctor. In NSW in 1892, a "Children's Protection Act" (55 Vic. No.30) regulated commercial child-care for children under three, an initial proposal to include children under ten being swiftly reduced so as to exclude children of the well-to-do attending boarding-schools. Care was also taken to exclude the private philanthropic foundling home or State institutions, though children there also perished with great frequency.[23]

Though the charities had been influential in pressing for legislation to monitor the child-rearing practice of the poor, the nature of the measures passed meant that increasingly it would be not the philanthropist but the doctor who would move into the role of evolving policies to guard the life of the unwanted infant. Monitoring infant care in the foster home meant ensuring that the medical formula was applied, and so functioned to endorse the authority of the qualified medical practitioner in this area. In NSW, printed instructions on the feeding and care of children, prepared by the Board of Health, were issued to each foster mother and, if her standards and methods were found "not to be in accordance with instructions", then she could be said to be "incapable of caring for young children" and the child could be "immediately transferred."[24] In theory, this degree of surveillance was made possible by having the State Children's Relief Board administer the act, under Dr. Arthur

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21. Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth Rate in NSW 1903-04 Vol.2 (Sydney 1904) p.62, 284. Fosbery's information showed an overall decrease in the bodies found from 14 in 1893 to 5-6 in 1898-9; 12 bodies were found in 1902, but only 5 up to Sep. 1903. Cases of infanticide reported in the Police Gazette declined steadily from 13 in 1893 to 3 in 1903; and of children abandoned, from 34 in 1893 to 4 in 1903.

22. Ashfield Infants' Home Annual Reports 1875-1895.

23. NSW PD First Series Vol.52 1891-2 p.760, 777; 54 Vict. No.1198 of 1890 clause 14; 55 Vic. No.30 of 1892 clause 1, 8.

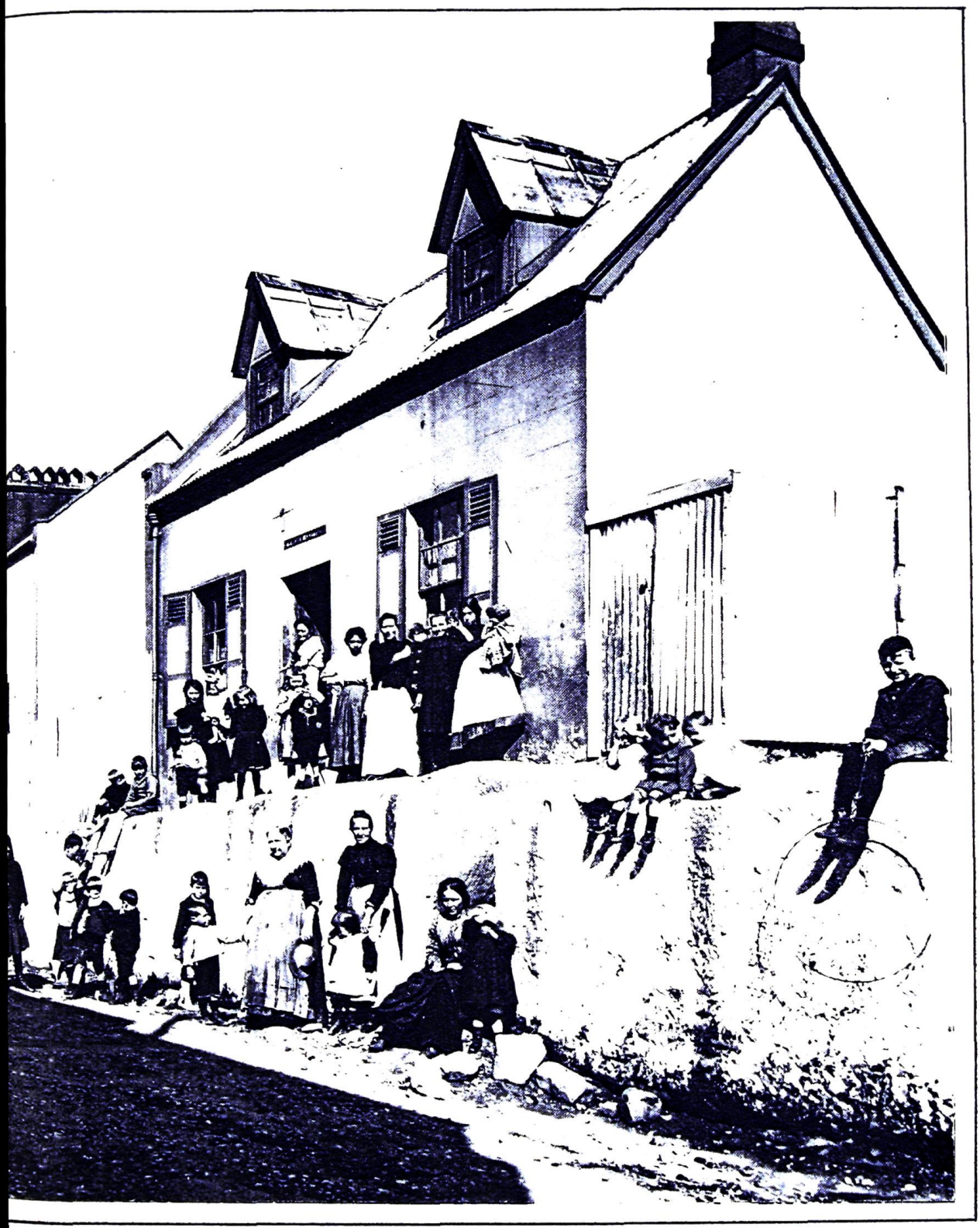
24. NSW PD Second Series Vol.9 1902 Debate on the Infants' Protection Bill p.5082 (Dr. Charles Mackellar).



A View of a Street in the Slums of Sydney

38. The idea that infant mortality was primarily due to maternal incompetence, combining with fears that infanticide was increasing, had important consequences for the inner city mother, producing new demands for State intervention to monitor infant care in her home.

Rev. S.D. Yarrington Darkest Sydney (Sydney 1914).



MOTHERS AND CHILDREN, CAMBRIDGE ST. THE ROCKS

39. According to reformers, such women were in need of professional instruction in the care of their young.

NSW Dept. of Public Works "Sydney Rocks Area - 124 Photographs" [1901].

Renwick and later, Dr. Charles Mackellar.[25]

Though the Acts for the protection of infant life were lightly policed and proved, in practice, to be largely unenforceable,[26] the fact that influential members of the medical profession had played a considerable role in securing them helped to improve the status of the doctor in child welfare. In Melbourne the Act of 1890 owed much to the testimony of medical men at the Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions in 1891, where Drs. Balls-Headley, Youl and Nield presented a picture of abandonment, infanticide and "baby-farming" similar to that of Ardill and Fosbery in NSW.[27] In Sydney in 1888, Dr. Creed had attempted to introduce legislation aiming to protect infant life from another direction, notably by enforcing registration of births and deaths. Though the Bill lapsed, he continued to press for penalties for unregistered burial, seeing this as necessary for any solution to the problem. As he explained in 1892, though all deaths had to be registered within 30 days, and in Sydney, cemetery authorities usually refuse to bury without a certificate, this was a private arrangement, outside the law.[28]

In both colonies, the protective legislation of 1890 and 1892 also furthered medical interests in that it assumed and underlined the expertise of the qualified practitioner in matters touching upon child life. For instance, in the NSW Act, cases where infants were put into the care of a wet-nurse on the recommendation of a doctor were excluded from registration and inspection.[29] Clauses permitting doctors to accompany police in their inspection of foster homes had a similar effect.[30]

State intervention to protect infant life from the allegedly incompetent working-class hands did not stop with the system of private commercial foster care. In NSW, lying-in homes were also to be subject to inspection by police, who could be accompanied by a medical man. The clauses requiring medical or

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25. Dr. Mackellar entered the Legislative Council in 1885; he held the position of President of the SCRB from the retirement of Dr. Arthur Renwick in Feb. 1902 until Dec. 1914.

26. Kathy Laster "The Forgotten Crime: Infanticide" Paper AHA Conference UNSW Aug. 1892 p.17.

27. Vic. Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions 1892-3 p.189, 209, 217, 310-13.

28. NSW PD First Series Vol.58 1892 Debate on the Infants' and Children's Protection Bill p.6575-6.

29. Ibid. Vol.52 1891 p.772; NSW Children's Protection Act No.30 of 1892 Clause 1, 8. In Victoria, the Infant Life Protection Act No.1198 of 1890 had a similar clause allocating the Chief Secretary discretionary power to exempt selected foster homes from registration under the Act (Clause 14).

30. NSW Children's Protection Act No.30 of 1892 clause 4, 17; Victorian Infant Life Protection Act No 1198 of 1890 clause 7.

police certification before the burial of babies born in lying-in homes also strengthened the legal recognition of the qualified practitioner as an authority on childbirth and the health of the new-born.[31] In Victoria, the requirements for lying-in homes under the 1890 Act were less stringent, but notification of all births therein had to be given within one week, as did the death of every illegitimate child in private foster care under the age of five.[32] Legislators debating this clause agreed that it was unjust to the unmarried poor, but that it was necessary to spare the life of the infant at the hands of the unscrupulous midwife.[33]

These provisions with respect to lying-in homes and illegitimate births served the needs of doctors by taking up the attack on the unqualified midwife which they had already begun. Especially in NSW, the qualified doctor now had access to private institutions catering for child-birth or, more particularly, those where the services of the qualified medical man were not employed.

For the poor, however, the new legislation, even though imperfectly enforced, made it more difficult to evade the increasing State and charitable network of services. For instance, the working-class woman providing private commercial foster-care was often a deserted or destitute wife or widow with children of her own to support. Thus she was unlikely to qualify for registration as a State baby-farmer, yet now ran the risk of being prosecuted as a private one, should a foster-child die under her care. Deprived of this income, she was likely to be forced to consign her own children to one of the approved sources of licensed foster care.

Her difficulties were illustrated by the sensationalized child murder cases of 1892 and 1893. In Sydney in November 1892 John and Sarah Makin and two daughters aged seventeen and fourteen were accused of having killed at least 15 babies left in their care and buried the bodies in the backyards of various houses which they had occupied. Of the bodies exhumed, the only one which was positively identified was known to have died of marasmus and diarrhoea, for John Makin had taken it to a doctor for advice shortly before it died. Nevertheless, medical testimony that the child wasted away while being fed on Nestles milk was taken as proof of deliberate intent to murder it. It was admitted that the Makins had been providing foster-care for infants for many years and that it was only recently that their dealings had become "irregular" but the various aliases and subterfuges which they had adopted to evade being seen as commercial child-minders were taken as certifying their guilt. The evidence of murder was entirely circumstantial; perhaps all that could be positively deduced from the facts was that Makin had been in the habit of

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31. NSW Children's Protection Act No.30 of 1892 clause 16.
32. Victoria Infant Life Protection Act of 1890 clause 18.
33. VPD Vol.65 1890 p.2717.

accepting money to arrange for the burial of babies and then disposing of them in the backyard. Nevertheless, the two parents were found guilty of manslaughter.[34]

In Melbourne, Frances Knorr, who was tried for child murder in December 1893 and hanged early in 1894, had been reduced to destitution when her husband was imprisoned soon after their marriage. Following the birth of her first child at the Women's Hospital, she took in a baby to nurse, boarding-out her own baby to another woman, and subsequently began to advertise for infants. Some of these she passed on to foster homes, but others died in her care and were buried in the backyard. Mr. Justice Holroyd, summing up the case, admitted there was no proof of murder, but the fact that Mrs. Knorr was "a needy woman", and "living on a very precarious system" was taken as a motive for infanticide. The fact that she knew the law relating to boarding-out of children and notification of their deaths, yet buried the bodies in the back yard, was also seen as evidence of guilt.[35]

These cases and others which followed, both further discredited private commercial foster-care and demonstrated the risks which now attended it. Subsequent legislation in NSW (Children's Protection Act (No.47 1902) Infants Protection Act (No.27 1904) and Victoria (Infant Life Protection Act No.2102 of 1907) further tightened the law relating to foster care and clinched the issue that the working-class was not to be trusted with the care of the vulnerable child.

"Mothering" Theory:

During the 1890s, the impact of medical participation in efforts by which the illegitimate baby might be saved from the hands of the unqualified midwife and "baby-farmer", was reflected in a new rationale for existing emphasis on breast-feeding in doctors' prescriptions for infant care. Breast-feeding was being assigned unprecedented importance as a practice which served both a physical and a moral function.

This became apparent in changing admission and discharge policies at the Ashfield Infants' Home, where infant care was closely monitored by qualified doctors both in the hospital and on the executive. By 1886, the mortality due to "diseases of the digestive system" in the babies deprived of "natural" food began to be a common comment in the medical reports.[36] In 1893, Professor Anderson Stuart, speaking at the Annual General Meeting, mentioned that it was now the Home's policy of preventing the separation of mothers from their children, and commended it as developing "instincts of maternity and love." In 1894 the new rules declared that the institution aimed to provide a temporary

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34. SMH 9-29 Nov. 1892. (Coroner's Inquest).

35. Argus 2 Dec. 1890 p.10.

36. Annual Report 1886 p.13; 1889 p.11.

"home" for "mother and child" and that only in emergencies would the child of an unmarried mother be admitted without her child. The following year the Annual Report added that these policies enabled the child to secure a greater "hold upon the mother's affections," thereby guaranteeing its future care.[37]

By 1902, the importance of breast-feeding was clearly related not only to the child but to the moral reform of the mother. By developing the ties of natural affection, it was said, breast-feeding ensured that the mother would not abandon the child for that she had "an incentive to do well in the future."[38] "Maternal love and pride" was the best "safeguard" for the unmarried mother for she learned to see the child not as an encumbrance "but a grand opportunity of redemption and expiation."[39]

By 1909, no mother might leave the home without the child,for it was said, "the physical rescue of the child and the moral rescue of the woman" were "effected by means of the other." As a member of the NSW Parliament put it in 1903, if the unmarried mother was allowed to get rid of her offspring, she would forget about the past and probably commit the same "offence" again. Keeping the child with the mother was essential to her moral reclamation.[40]

In this theory, the power of the bond between mother and child to effect her rescue depended not only on the idea of an emotional link established during the nursing process, but on permanent confinement in the domestic realm which it was hoped, this initial practice would entail. For instance at Ashfield, the now resident mother was to be taught the broader ideology of child-care. The initial goal of "saving many an infant from untimely death" now included ensuring that the captive mother learned "the need for regularity in nursing and extreme care in hand-feeding."[41] By 1890, it was pointed out that the mothers "did all the work of the Institution" and by 1898, that they were not only learning baby-feeding techniques endorsed by medical ideology, but "something of domestic service and the training needed to make them better members of society."[42]

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37. Ibid. 1893 p.4; 1894 p.24; 1899 p.4.

38. Ibid 1902 p.5.

39. Ibid. 1903 p.5; 1908 p.5.

40. Ibid. 1909 p.7; NSW PD Vol.12 1903 Debate on State Children's Bill p.2883 (Mr. Storey).

41. Annual Report 1874-5 p.8; 1886 p.13.

42. Ibid. 1890 p.11; 1898 p.6 (Professor Anderson Stuart).

In addition, it was largely expected that girls leaving Ashfield would go into domestic service, this being seen as a suitable area of employment, because demand was high, the presence of a baby could be compensated for in the low wage paid, and because the protective socialization of the child and the mother might be continued by the employer.[43] This had the further benefit that the mother was prevented from competing with male breadwinners in the lighter unskilled jobs becoming available in the industrial workforce, and thus protected from exposure to the moral dangers of the factory or worse, the brothel. That is, in the absence of her own private, domestic sanctuary, transfer to domestic service in a surrogate family was the best solution for the unmarried mother and her baby.

Thus, though ostensibly based on eliminating malpractices in existing working-class arrangements to cope with the problems of seduction, illegitimacy and family economic distress, the policy of encouraging breast-feeding, like that of the protective legislation itself, endorsed the notion that the real solution to the problem lay in educating women to be guided by medical expertise in all matters pertaining to their offspring.

In addition to the idea that the nursing mother was less likely to kill the baby by incorrect feeding, or give it over to the care of an unscrupulous baby-farmer in order to work outside the home, there was developing a new idea that full-time care of the natural mother was of psychic as well as dietary importance to the child. Dr. W.F. Litchfield said in evidence at the Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth Rate in NSW that the care by the child's mother was important for its health, even if her source of "natural nourishment" had failed. Babies left in foundling hospitals dwindled away not just because of "diarrhoea" but for want of maternal nursing and handling.[44] This opinion was shared by A.W. Green, Chief Officer administrating the Children's Protection Act: "We consider that the mothering of the child is the <u>main</u> business in the matter of mortality...".[45] William Eury, Senior Inspector of the State Children's Relief Board agreed, as did Mrs. Graham, Matron of the Benevolent Asylum since 1895. "No matter how kind the nurse might be," the child "without a mother's care" was more likely to die.[46]

By 1914, this idea was being used by doctors to attack the private charitable foundling home itself. Though in 1902, Dr. Mackellar's criticism of these institutions proved premature[47] by 1914 the <u>Australasian Medical Gazette</u>

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43. Vic. Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions 1892-3 p.1269-71 (Mrs. M. Armour of Maternity Aid Society).

44. Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth Rate in NSW 1903-4 Vol.2 p.68.

45. <u>Ibid</u>. p.55 (my italics).

46. <u>Ibid</u>. p.59, 150.

47. <u>NSW PD</u> Second Series Vol.9 1902 Debate on the Infants' Protection Bill p.5083-4, 5349-52.

came out strongly against philanthropic amateurs who failed to enforce the principle of keeping mother and child together. Dr. Ludwig Meyer of Germany had recently pointed out that in the hospitalization of infants, even complete cleanliness and asepsis did not prevent a high mortality. Infants died because of a "want of individual attention and all that is implied in the word mothering."[48]

This rising emphasis on the importance of "mothering" for baby health presented a problem because it could logically reverse the original proposition that no amount of loving care could save the bottle-fed baby,[49] by implying that non-dietary factors were equally or more important. However, like the original dietary argument for breast-feeding, that for "mothering" endorsed the concept of full-time, child-centred motherhood as a moral force. Indeed, arriving just at the time when knowledge of hygienic preparation of milk substitutes was penetrating medical circles, it usefully asserted that even if women were unable to breast-feed, or remained unconvinced of its importance to their own moral welfare, they must understand that there was no way they could escape their responsibility to meet the psychic needs of their baby.

Boarding-Out With Mother:

The notion of the importance of "mothering" to both woman and child could also function so as to authorize increasing State intrusion into the working-class home. This became apparent in modification of the boarding-out system in New South Wales, where in 1896, an amendment to the State Children's Relief Act made provision for a weekly payment to the child's own mother, instead of to an approved foster parent, selected to take in the child.

A similar principle was introduced in Victoria from the 1880s. Though at first applicable only to special cases which had to be approved by the Minister, by 1898, some 22% of children boarded-out with payment were with their mothers, rising to 61% by 1908.[50]

Hailed by its advocates as a humane measure, verifying that the mother was the "natural protector" of her child,[51] a mother did not qualify for this concession unless she was assessed as a "deserving" widow or deserted wife. This in turn meant that her financial and domestic affairs were subject to inspection. Agents of the State Children's Relief Board or members of the local police called at the homes of applicants to determine the "character" of the

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48. AMG Vol.35 1914 p.145; see also Dr. Helen Mayo "Some Observations on the Methods of the Preservation of Infant Life in Australia" AMG Vol.32 Nov.1912 p.503-5; The Liberal Woman 1 Mar. 1914 p.85-6.

49. Dr. J. Jamieson How to Feed Infants (Melbourne 1871) p.7.

50. Secretary for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools Report 1898 p.4, 1908 p.5.

51. NSW PD First Series Vol.83 1896 p.1103, 1268 (Dr. Renwick, Mr. E. Webb).

mother, the reason for the absence of the male breadwinner, and the amount earned by her and her children. Should the Inspector have any doubts that she was "a fit and proper person to have charge of her children," or that "local opinion" was "very contradictory" as to her character, the case could be "closely watched."[52]

Even in cases seen as unequivocally "deserving", the amount paid to the mother could be raised or lowered according to the Board's assessment of the merits and needs of the individual case. Thus the mother's moral values and domestic standards were constantly on trial.

For the State, the system represented a considerable saving on the cost of foster care, for payment to the "natural protector" was less than that made to the foster parent. As Dr. Renwick pointed out, a mother could be encouraged to maintain her children for a lesser sum than that which had to be paid to induce a stranger to take the child.[53] In 1898, it was claimed that "cash saving of over £2000 a year" had been effected.[54] Analysis of subsidies paid in 1898 - 1899 shows that most payments made were 2/- or 2/6 per week, that is, half what was considered necessary to pay foster-parents in order to persuade them to take a child.[55]

Underlying this legislative endorsement of "mothering" theory in the Act of 1896, was another, though unstated financial advantage to the State. This was the saving of the cost of institutionalizing some of the children whom it was difficult to board out in foster homes. For instance, in 1882, when boarding-out a child suffering from a physical impediment, the Board was prepared to pay 7/- a week, yet in 1909, a widow was allowed only 3/- for a child who was an "invalid owing to hip disease" and who required "the mother's constant attention" and "extra expenses."[56] Similarly, in 1895, women were paid 6/- to 10/- a week to wet-nurse an infant (the only cases in which extreme poverty did not disqualify the applicant); yet mothers with an infant at the breast were paid only 3/- in 1909.[57]

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52. NSW State Archives Dept. of Attorney-General and Justice Special Bundles 7/7211 Applications for assistance under Section 16, State Children's Relief Act, Case of Mrs. Nolan Redfern May 1909. I am indebted to Anne O'Brien for information from this source.

53. NSW PD First Series Vol.83 1896 p.1266.

54. SCRB Annual Report 1898 p.3.

55. John Cashman "The Situation of Deserted Wives in the Latter Half of the Nineteenth Century" BA Thesis SU 1981 p.83.

56. SCRB Annual Report 1882 p.14; NSW State Archives Dept. of Attorney-General and Justice, Case of Louisa Wells Hockings Summer Hill May 1909.

57. SCRB Annual Report 1895 p.9; NSW State Archives Dept. of Attorney-General and Justice, Cases of Gertrude Aitchison of Ultimo Rd, and Florence Lloyd of Balmain May 1909.



Starving and Without a Friend

40. Rev. S.D. Yarrington Darkest Sydney (Sydney 1914).

The Interdependence of Medical and Statistical Opinion on Infant Life:

At the end of the 1890s, though economic conditions were improving, the notion that the State, guided by medical expertise, should monitor infant care in the working-class home was fostered from a new direction. Colonial citizens were alerted to and alarmed by statistical revelations of the extent to which the birth rate had declined over the previous decade, so that efforts to save the lives of the unwanted baby acquired a new national and demographic dimension. "Protection" of infant life now became a vital means by which the consequences of depopulation might be offset.

As in the United States, where similar statistical disclosures were made at this time, depopulation was feared because it was assumed to be caused less by changing patterns of marriage affecting the number of women in the population of child-bearing age, than by an increasing inclination on the part of women to practice limitation of fertility. Accordingly, it was seen as constituting a threat to marriage and maternity, indeed to the family itself. Similarly, evidence of economic distress as a motive for postponement of marriage and child-bearing tended to be overlooked, while much reliance was placed on apparently objective statistical proof to draw attention away from the economic basis of social problems.[58]

In the colonies, depopulation generated the additional fear of foreign conquest from the more crowded countries to the North and a sense of geographical isolation from the protective might of the mother country. For businessmen and bankers, the spectre of a stationary population, coming after a severe economic depression, generated fears of a declining domestic market for that variety of goods needed to create and sustain the ideal environment for child-raising in the suburban home.

This highly charged atmosphere constituted an ideal medium in which various groups of professionals might further develop claims to be sole possessors of expertise in diverting disaster, especially by methods which concentrated on the protective socialization of the young. In spite of a potential conflict with theories that it was cheaper and more efficient to prevent the birth of unwanted children by limiting the offspring of the unfit, fear of depopulation gave a new impetus to existing initiatives for the saving of as many infant lives as possible.

The depopulation issue was especially useful to doctors, providing them with an opportunity to be seen to be building up the nation's demographic resources by opposing abortion and partaking in new efforts to spread the medical formula for preserving infant life to the unenlightened. It also

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58. H. Ware Fertility and Family Formation (Canberra 1973) p.2-3; Peter McDonald Marriage in Australia (Canberra 1975) p.98-113, 134 ff; N. Hicks This Sin and Scandal (Canberra 1978) p.xv-xvi.

provided them with further opportunities to reduce competition from the unqualified midwife. In this they were helped by the professional statistician.

The influence of the statistician, like that of the doctor, had been growing over the second half of the nineteenth century. Legislation to enforce registration of births, deaths and marriages had provided a wealth of new quantitative information for the study of areas such as illegitimacy, where evidence had previously been limited. Combining with research into mathematical analysis of mortality rates for the construction of life tables (encouraged by life insurance companies), this provided existing demographic discussion with an apparently objective scientific foundation. By the end of the nineteenth century, governments were placing increased reliance on experts specially appointed to interpret the mass of quantitative information being collected at the now mandatory decennial census.

To a considerable extent, the preoccupations of the statistician and the doctor overlapped. In England it was a doctor, William Farr, who, after being appointed to the new Registrar-General's office in 1838, made a significant contribution to statistical research on the causes of mortality, the construction of life tables and the collection of information by census, publishing many of his findings in The Lancet. In Sydney, Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy at the University from 1852-1877, M.B. Pell, an actuary for the Australian Mutual Provident Society, encouraged the statistical study of the causes of mortality, publishing some of his views in medical journals.[59]

Meanwhile, colonial doctors themselves displayed an interest in the collection and interpretation of demographic statistics. As early as 1864, Dr. C. McCarthy, who was familiar with the work of Quetelet, used quantitative information to support the notion that the colonial infant mortality was unduly high, and to illustrate the case that doctors ought to increase their moral and social influence by playing the role of the educators of mothers in child care.[60] Other doctors followed with interest statistical debate on whether or not the infant death rate exceeded that of European cities.[61]

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59. M.B. Pell "On the Rates of Mortality and Expectation of Life in NSW as Compared With Other Countries" Trans. Royal Society of NSW Vol.1 1867 p.66-76; "Marriage and Child-Bearing in NSW ..." Australian Practitioner Vol.1 No.2 Jan.1878 p.73-7; "Rates of Mortality and Increase of the Population of NSW" Ibid. Vol.1 No.3 Apr. 1878 p.145-75.

60. Dr. Charles McCarthy Op.Cit. p.6-9.

61. Dr. J. Jamieson Op.Cit. p.7-9; W.H. Archer "On the Mortality of Infants in Victoria" AMJ No.4 1859 p.139 cited in Bryan Gandevia Tears Often Shed (Sydney 1978) p.79.

By the 1880s, in addition to the efforts of medical practitioners, such as Dr. Creed, to tighten registration of births and deaths, colonial doctors and statisticians had a shared interest in anthropometrics and child study.[62] Also they were kept in touch with each other's work by common membership of organizations like the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science (founded in 1887).

Questions raised by doctors helped to shape statistical enquiry and analysis. Thus in NSW, where government statistician and child study exponent, Timothy Coghlan, during the 1880s had partly been concerned to provide reassuring evidence of the evolution of colonial "wealth and progress", he was also interested in correlating urbanization with changes in children's rate of growth and family size, an area of research stimulated by the current overseas debate on the decline of the population in France.[63] In 1895-6, Coghlan declared that a similar deliberate reduction in family size was occurring in New South Wales, and that coupled with the high infant death rate, this was a cause for alarm. The rate at which the innocent colonial child was "dropping into the grave," he warned, was a pathetic comment on our civilization.[64] By 1900-1901, he was relating the overall decline to the death rate of illegitimate children in particular, arguing that their chances of reaching the age of five were three times less than those of other children.[65] His strictures on the proportion of illegitimate births to total births dated from 1890-1, and were borrowed by Edward Maxted in 1892 to support his case for penalizing mothers

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62. In NSW, the measures sought in 1888 by Dr. Creed to monitor infant care were achieved in 1934 by legislation which was stimulated by the desire for better statistics. (Milton Lewis "Populate or Perish: Aspects of Infant and Maternal Health in Sydney 1870 to 1939" Ph.D. Thesis ANU 1976 p.110-11.) In England, the anthropometric measurements developed by Francis Galton culminated by 1911 in his Dept. of Applied Statistics at the University of London which would dominate British Statistics for two decades. In the colonies, the interest of the statistician in child study was continued by G.H. Knibbs. Lecturer in surveying at Sydney University (1890) and a member of Dr. Carroll's Child Study Association (1898) he became first Director of the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics in 1906.

63. T.A. Coghlan was NSW government statistician 1886-1905. His Wealth and Progress of NSW was published 1886-1900. For his study of children's rate of growth, see "Child Measurement" AAAS Report Vol.9 1902 p.568-9.

64. Wealth and Progress of NSW 1890-91 p.817.

65. Wealth and Progress of NSW 1900-01 p.992.

admitted to lying-in homes.[66] In 1898, in a paper read before the Royal Statistical Society in London, Coghlan attempted to quantify the losses in the reproductive potential of female population occasioned by deaths in childbirth.[67]

Thus, by the turn of the century, colonial demographic study was flourishing. Though some government statisticians, notably A.O. Powys and William McLean, disagreed with some of Coghlan's conclusions, the quantitative resources existed for the scientific study of society in general and for the declaration of demographic crisis in particular.[68]

Meanwhile, some doctors were using information becoming available from the professional statistician to contribute directly to the argument that infant mortality was more than a private domestic tragedy; it was a national calamity which demanded medical monitoring of the working-class mother in infant care. In 1892, Dr. P.E. Muskett, acknowledging the work both of Coghlan and Victorian government statistician H.H. Hayter, reiterated the image of "children of tender years" dropping into the grave at an alarming rate. In 1898, Dr. James Barrett, a surgeon at the Eye and Ear Hospital in Melbourne, and a lecturer in Physiology at Melbourne University, published a unique contribution to the medical and statistical focus on child care. Attempting a mathematical estimate of the financial importance of child health to the State, he concluded that "children cost £94,704 to rear, but they increase the wealth of the State to the extent of £112,596."[69]

In 1902, Dr. Charles Mackellar supported his Infant Protection Bill with a wealth of borrowed actuarial statistics to make the point raised by Coghlan in 1890-1, regarding the high mortality of illegitimate infants. Though unsuccessful on this occasion, Mackellar was able to suggest that infants born out of wedlock and assigned to foster care or foundling home had a poor chance of survival and that their deaths were a serious drain on the demographic resources of the nation. The Bill was

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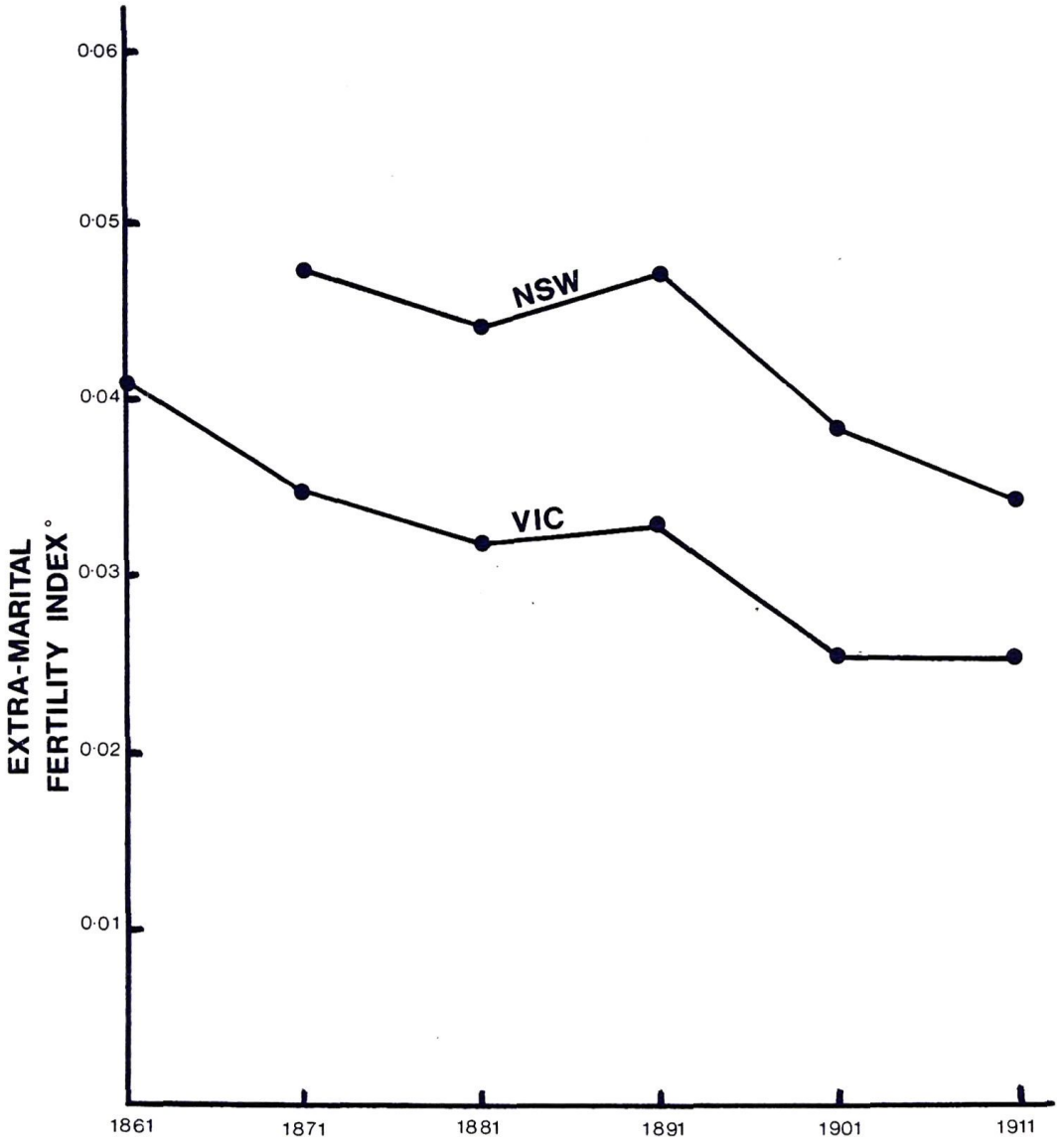
66. Wealth and Progress 1890-1 p.807-9. Coghlan's figures for illegitimacy in NSW showed a rise from 4.99% of total births in 1886-90 to 5.26% of total births for 1890. However, whether or not illegitimacy was increasing depended on the method of calculation, as Coghlan himself demonstrated in 1903. Thus, shown as a percentage of total births over the period 1891-1900 in NSW, reported illegitimate births rose from 5.36% to 7.01%. Calculated as a relationship to the number of single women of child-bearing age, illegitimacy declined from 18.11% per 1000 unmarried women in 1891 to 16.23% per 1000 in 1901. (NSW Statistical Register 1891 p.372, 1901 p.672; T.A. Coghlan Decline of the Birth Rate in NSW (Sydney 1903) p.11.)

67. Deaths in Childbirth in New South Wales (London 1898).

68. H. Ware Op.Cit. p.3; N. Hicks Op.Cit. p.133 ff.

69. Dr. P.E. Muskett An Australian Appeal (Sydney 1892) p.11; (H.H.Hayter was government statistician in Victoria, 1874-1895): Dr. James Barrett "The Value of a Victorian Infant" Intercolonial Medical Journal Vol.3 No.2 Feb.1898 p.95.

EXTRA-MARITAL FERTILITY
NSW AND VIC
1861 - 1911



SOURCE: E.F.JONES "FERTILITY DECLINE IN AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND 1861–1936"

POPULATION INDEX VOL.37 NO.4 1971 p.326.

° Relationship between no. of illegitimate births, Standard Fertility rate and the no. of unmarried women. This method of calculating illegitimacy shows an overall decline during the period.

Fig.6

enacted in 1904.[70] A new attempt to preserve the lives of illegitimate infants, in addition to providing for maintenance to be paid to unmarried mothers before the baby was born, it raised to seven years the age at which children boarded-out to private commercial foster care were subject to inspection.[71]

These themes were further developed by T.A. Coghlan in 1903, when his publication of The Decline of the Birth Rate in New South Wales, was a major contribution to local depopulation fears, influencing the decision to call a Royal Commission to enquire into the issue in August 1903. Coghlan along with prominent representatives of the Sydney business community was one of the Commissioners.[72]

Members of the medical profession not only contributed to the statistical disclosures which initiated the depopulation fears, but helped shape the conclusions of this influential enquiry when it reported in 1904. This was partly a reflection of the fact that of the twelve Commissioners, four were doctors, including the President, Charles Mackellar. In addition, there were the medical witnesses, by now the norm at government enquiries on social issues, who in this case took the opportunity to air publicly the twin themes of the dangerous ignorance of mothers and midwives and their role in the destruction of infant life.[73]

The doctors' allegations of female incompetence, together with supreme confidence in the superiority of their expertise, were reflected in the recommendations of this Commission. Thus of mothers it was said that the infant death rate was largely due to their selfishness and ineptitude, and it was suggested that this should be remedied by increasing the transmission to them of medical advice. This could be achieved by issuing cheap, printed pamphlets on infant feeding and domestic hygiene, and more importantly, by lessons on infant care which should be made compulsory for every school girl.

With respect to the untrained midwife, accusations of her lack of surgical cleanliness and her links with contraceptive advice and abortion practice, resulted in recommendations for tighter control of private foster-care, and of lying-in homes. Compulsory registration of still-births, registration of illegitimate birth and interment at authorized cemeteries only, were also recommended.[74]

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70. NSW PD Vol.9 1902 Debate on the Infants' Protection Bill p.5081.

71. Act No.27 of 1904, clause 27.

72. N. Hicks Op.Cit. p.7-9.

73. Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth Rate in NSW 1903-4 Vol.2 p.114 (Sir James Graham, Hon. Physician at the Benevolent Asylum and the Women's Hospital, Lecturer in Midwifery at SU.)

74. Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth Rate in NSW 1903-4 Report and Statistical Evidence (NSW LA V&P 1904 Vol.4).

Thus, though many of the attitudes to family size expressed at this Royal Commission were largely an anachronistic, unqualified endorsement of the large family being now largely out of step with the thrust of scientific opinion, its conclusions amounted to implicit acceptance of the smaller family, and hence the need to concentrate on saving the lives of babies, both born and unborn.[75] Though the prohibition of imported contraceptives was also recommended, the Commission's conclusions on the whole reflected the growing confidence of the medical profession in the future role which it might play in the prevention of mortality of children already born. It represented State sanctioning of the competence of the medical profession and the need for its message to be spread beyond the enlightened classes to reach mothers everywhere.

The Infant Welfare Movement:

As in France during the late 1890s, so in the colonies, disclosures of a falling birth rate authorized the setting up by doctors of facilities for the education of mothers in an attempt to arrest both the numerical and moral implications of this "decline". In France, mothers of new-born babies were encouraged to attend"schools" where breast-feeding was "taught", babies weighed and inspected and advice given on care and training. The French schools for mothers also provided a source of sterilized milk for cases when breast-feeding had failed. Similar systems had followed in England and America by 1900.[76]

In Sydney, Dr. Carroll's consultation clinic, established in 1904, was rather more ambitious. It was based on his conviction that not only physical, but also moral deficiencies might be cured by attention to nutrition in childhood. That is to him, it was not merely that the scheme of moral training and family organization implicit in the formula of protective physical care, prevented insanity, vice and crime. He believed that a "criminally defective" disposition could be restored to normal health by careful diet and thus his interest in infant care was concerned with the moral and physical "fitness" of the population, as much as its size.[77]

In New Zealand, the infant welfare movement, launched in 1907 by Truby King's Plunkett Society, also overtly saw adherence to the medical formula as ensuring both physical and mental health of the child, and by 1912, the local relationship between advice on baby-feeding practice to concern about "fitness" was receiving new impetus from this source. For example, an article in the Australasian Nurses' Journal in that year quoted the New Zealand Mental Hospital

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75. H. Ware Op.Cit. p.2-3.

76. Dr. W.G. Armstrong "The Infant Welfare Movement in Australia" MJA Oct. 1939 p.641-2.

77. "On Child Study" Science of Man Vol.13 No.6 Oct.1911 p.129; D. Izett Health and Longevity According to the Theories of the Late Dr. Alan Carroll (Sydney 1915) p.2-3, 12. The interest of the medical profession in demographic quality is discussed in Chapter 7.

Report of 1906 that breast-feeding, along with "rational education" and the rendering of mothers "more fit for maternity" would cut off supplies of inmates to asylums, hospitals, benevolent institutions, gaols and slums at their source. This was because,

> "The infections which arise in the first years of life, and especially in the inflammation of the stomach and bowels, the result of unsuitable feeding during lactation, are the more important factors in determining the majority of brain maladies, and in this way a crowd of idiots, imbeciles and epileptics is produced..."[78]

Dr. James Barrett also described the aims of the Plunkett Society as being to "prevent the production" of the "unfit" by teaching mothers breast-feeding, cleanliness and how to weigh the baby before and after feeding and plot its growth on graphs.[79]

In Sydney and Melbourne, those systems for the visitation and education of recently confined mothers which were to endure to become the basis of the baby health movement, were ostensibly more limited, concerned merely to offset demographic losses and the alleged decline of the family as a moral force. For instance, the progress of Dr. Armstrong's ideas on the importance of educating the mother in infant nutrition can be fairly closely correlated with rising public speculation on population decline. Armstrong had been deeply influenced by the French innovations, which he had personally inspected during a visit in 1895, before his appointment as city health officer and medical officer for health to the Metropolitan Combined District of Sydney on his return in 1898. However, his first Reports in this capacity were not especially concerned with the infant death rate except as an indicator of the "sanitary conditions of any community" and there were hardly any references to infant feeding and the importance of infant losses to the State. Rather, statements pointing to "the constant public water supply of excellent quality" and the "magnificent sewerage system now being extended" predominated in these years.[80] However, by 1903, he was pointing out that 40% of infant deaths were caused by diarrhoeal diseases due to improper feeding, overcrowding, poverty, parental ignorance and carelessness and was issuing his first leaflet on infant nutrition and the importance of breast-feeding.[81] The year 1904 saw the implementation of visits by health inspectors to the homes of the new-born, while in 1905, Dr. Armstrong addressed the Australasian Medical Congress on his campaign to reduce infant morality, which he now considered to be "the most important public health

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78. "The School for Mothers" by I.S.B. [Isla Blomfield] ANJ Jan. 1912 p.9. (quoting Professor Lugarno).

79. "Waste of Infant Life" ANJ Apr.1914 p.113-14.

80. Medical Officer of Health to Metropolitan Combined Sanitary Districts Annual Report 1898 p.2, 9.

81. Medical Officer of Health Annual Report 1903 p.15; "The Infant Welfare Movement" p.642.

movement in Australia."[82] Subsequent reports dwelt on the number of visits paid by the inspector, and the success of the system in increasing breast-feeding and saving infant life.

Similarly in Melbourne, the Lady Talbot Milk Institute was founded after a meeting to discuss infant mortality called by the Melbourne branch of the British Medical Association in May 1908. It also aimed at visitation to the homes of recently confined women in inner city areas, to educate them in principles of baby care.[83]

Nevertheless, the kind of information given to the mothers meant that, in practice, the system shared the medical preoccupation of Carroll and the Plunkett Society with moral and mental "cures". In setting up his infant welfare service in the inner suburbs of Sydney in 1904, Dr. Armstrong said he was "less impressed" by the idea of providing sterilized milk from depots than with encouraging breast-feeding "in every possible way" and not affording "facilities for the use of cow's milk or other artificial food."[84] As of old, this was justified by the need of the innocent child for protection from the ignorance of midwives who might advise mixing the milk with other foods, and of mothers, who might feed it to other children or contaminate it before it reached the infant. Indeed, the home was "the common site of infection":

> No one who has been accustomed to visit the homes of the poor in the crowded slums of great cities will need to be reminded of the innumerable chances of pollution of the food supply of the infant, once he has been permitted to receive nourishment other than from his mother's breast.[85]

The system's emphasis on breast-feeding was not unreasonable, given the undeniable difficulty of combatting germs in the houses of the urban poor, the limitation in medical knowledge of milk substitutes, and the fact that, as is now known, diarrhoeal diseases interact with malnutrition to increase the death rate of the infant poor.[86] However, in recommending this policy, that breast-feeding was of "much greater value than the issue of a dole of prepared milk to mothers,"[87] the infant welfare doctors were hoping to enforce a practice which was believed not only essential for saving infant life and so building up the nation's demographic resources, but also to achieve the range of benefits to themselves which, they believed, would emanate from the education of women in

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82. "The Infant Welfare Movement" p.643.

83. Dr. A. Jeffreys Wood "The Lady Talbot Milk Institute" Report of the Proceedings of the Imperial Health Conference (London 1914) p.391.

84. "The Infant Welfare Movement" p.642.

85. Dr. W.G. Armstrong "Some Lessons from the Statistics of Infantile Mortality" Trans. AMC 1905 p.393.

86. Milton Lewis Op.Cit. p.6.

87. "The Infant Welfare Movement" p.642.

"mothercraft". As Charles Mackellar describing the system in 1914 pointed out, its aim was to extend the emphasis already initiated by the policy of boarding-out of the child with its own mother, on monitored personal care by the mother. "Mothering", the "continual lavish exercises of maternal affection" was the "only effectual specific for the ills of babyhood."[88]

For the medical profession, the infant welfare movement offered considerable benefits, quickening the penetration of the old "gospel of health" to the inner recesses of the urban slum. In infant welfare as established in Sydney, an approved inspector was "to visit personally and instruct the mothers of all newly-born babies in the city who were not under direct medical care." A list of all births registered was obtained daily from the registrar, and within a few days the health visitor would call at the house, interview the mother, and talk to her "confidentially on the management of the child" and advise her "as to the methods she ought to follow."[89]

This approach gave great scope for the erosion of the confidence of the mother in herself and in non-professional advice while allowing the wider aspects of the approved formula to be taught. Though the principal points impressed on the mother were the great importance of breast-feeding, and its superiority to any other form of feeding, warnings were also given against "the long-tubed bottle" and the importance of keeping all parts of the house "as clean as possible." The conditions as to cleanliness and the general sanitary state of the dwelling were noted and reported to Dr. Armstrong who could then take the "necessary action" against the landlord or householder.[90]

A pamphlet on feeding and management left with each mother confirmed that the aim was to introduce the mental and moral as well as the physical "benefits" for mothers, child and race implicit in the medical message. For instance, feeding was to be regular; "You must not give baby a bottle every time baby cries, but feed by the clock... If the breast is given too often, it makes baby sick." Mothers were also told to "teach baby clean habits by holding him out after each drink. You cannot begin too early. This will save you trouble in the wash-house."[91]

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88. Dr. Charles Mackellar "Infancy and Health" Report of the Proceedings of the Imperial Health Conference (London 1914) p.180.

89. Dr. W.G. Armstrong "Some Lessons from the Statistics" p.393-4.

90. Dr. W.G. Armstrong "The Infant Welfare Movement" p.643. Appointed Medical Officer for Health of the Metropolitan Combined Sanitary Districts in 1898, Armstrong was also City Health Officer from 1900.

91. NSW Dept. of Public Health How to Take Care of Babies During the Summer Months (Sydney 1913). Based on "the publications of the Lady Talbot Milk Institute", this booklet was first published in 1909 and was used by Dr. Armstrong's visitors from 1910 (Medical Officer for Health Annual Report 1910 p.13).

Advice also included strong condemnation of the use of the "dummy" or comforter. This new contrivance for soothing the baby was an object of special medical concern by 1900, as were the older "sugar teats", for like finger-sucking, it was thought they encouraged infant sexuality. Though prohibition of the comforters were usually justified in terms of dirt and disease, Dr. Muskett added that dummies "ruined the digestion" and in 1919, Maybanke Anderson would argue that the dummy induced later habits of greed and drunkenness.[92]

In spite of the emphasis in the message, on personal care by the mother, baby's health was at all times to take priority over too intimate contact with her. Baby was to be put in the open air as early as possible in the morning, and not allowed to stay with mother in the hot kitchen and laundry.[93]

Dr. Armstrong's service grew. Even at the outset of the system, he claimed that his health visitors contacted 65% of all births registered in the city or 1,462 mothers in 1905. Two more health visitors were added to the staff after 1909 to carry out a similar inspection system in the "more populous of the industrial suburbs immediately surrounding the city." These were Redfern, Darlington, Glebe, Alexandria, North Botany, Annandale, Balmain and Leichhardt. In 1913, these two inspectors made a total of 3,174 visits in these suburbs.[94]

From 1908, Dr. Armstrong's system was supported by the Alice Rawson School for mothers, an institution instigated by the National Council of Women (and named after the daughter of the Governor of NSW) and located in Darlinghurst, where mothers were encouraged to bring their babies to be weighed and to "get practical advice about their feeding and treatment." Here the advice did not depart from the standard formula, concentrating on importance of breast-feeding, fresh air, cleanliness, ventilation, and the evils of excessive and irregular feeding and administration of soothing syrups.[95] From 1910, nurses from the Alice Rawson school would spend the mornings calling at homes listed by the two health visitors as requiring a second inspection. These were cases where the first inspector had found the mothers "unusually inexperienced or the domestic conditions unsatisfactory."[96]

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92. Dr. A. Jeffreys Wood Op.Cit. p.392; NSW Dept. of Public Instruction The Care and Feeding of Babies (Sydney 1914) p.13; Dr. P.E. Muskett The Feeding and Management of Australian Infants (Sydney 1903) p.xliii; Maybanke Anderson Mother Lore (Sydney 1919) p.24. See also The Dawn "The Improvement of the Sex" Vol.3 No.9 1891 p.9; E. Aitken The Australian Mother's Own Book (Sydney 1912) p.53.

93. NSW Dept. of Public Health How to Take Care of Babies During the Summer Months p.4.

94. Medical Officer of Health Annual Report 1905 p.15; 1913 p.29; "The Infant Welfare Movement" p.644.

95. ANJ Jan. 1912 p.7-10; "The Infant Welfare Movement" p.644.

96. Medical Officer of Health Annual Report 1909 p.13; 1911 p.12.



REAR OF 141 PRINCES ST. THE ROCKS

41. In the inner city home, efforts were made to achieve hygienic standards, despite the extreme difficulties. NSW Dept. of Public Works "Sydney Rocks Area - 124 Photographs" [1901].

In Victoria, the Lady Talbot Milk Institute, named after the wife of the Governor and supported by Dr. A. Woods, differed from the early infant welfare service in NSW by delivering low-cost milk in sealed bottles from approved herds and dairies to mothers. The mothers were also given the use of an ice-chest and received a daily block of ice. The price per pint of milk was adjusted according to capacity to pay, and sometimes supplied free.[97]

Nevertheless, the first principle of the Institute was still "the education of mothers in the care and feeding of infants" and "the necessity of breast-feeding wherever possible." Also, "skilled children's nurses" visited all the homes where the milk was used, to supervise the "general care of the infant" and the care of the milk. The nurses also weighed the babies weekly and distributed a similar booklet of instructions to be passed on to other mothers. Applications for this service had to be verified by a doctor, the town clerk or officer of the Neglected Children's Department, as "deserving of charity."[98]

Also of benefit to the medical profession was the fact that in both Sydney and Melbourne, the infant welfare services claimed great success in arresting both the numerical and the moral effects of population "decline". It was claimed that the visiting nurses were "welcomed and eagerly watched for" and that "mothers who were found to be feeding their infants unsuitably promised to desist and to follow the advice bestowed on them."[99] Further, both claimed to have had a marked impact on the infant death rate. The Lady Talbot Institute calculated a saving in infant lives worth £22,837 in return for government spending of only £500, during the first five years of its operation, though added that "of course, the institute does not claim to have saved all these lives" but only to have "played a very important part."[1] In Sydney, Dr. Armstrong was even more convinced of the efficacy of his system. As early as 1905, he had amassed statistics to prove that the greatest cause of infant death was diarrhoea, and that diarrhoea was chiefly due to improper "artificial" feeding, and that this in turn was due to the foolishness of mothers, who despite improvements in water, sewerage and milk supply, still contaminated the baby's food in the home and selfishly refused to breast-feed.[2] In 1906, he claimed that the proportion of children entirely breast-fed began to increase immediately after the implementation of the visiting system rising from 72% of babies visited in 1904 to 81.3% in 1908.[3]

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97. Dr. A. Jeffreys Wood Op.Cit. p.398.
98. Ibid. p.391-8.
99. Ibid. p.393; Medical Officer of Health Annual Report 1905 p.15.
1. Dr. A. Jeffreys Wood Op.Cit. p.402.
2. "Some Lessons from the Statistics on Infantile Mortality" p.386-8.
3. Medical Officer of Health Annual Report 1908 p.14. See also Armstrong's claims in "The Infant Welfare Movement" p.643, 647-8.

However, the claims made for the effect of the infant welfare system as a single factor causing a decline in infant mortality are open to question. A graph of the Sydney death-rate based on Armstrong's own figures of average infant death rates in five year periods, reveals that, whatever the inter-relationship of the causes, events in 1904 - 1914 had no noticeable impact on an overall downward trend present from 1880. Rather, the graph for the figures for the "Remainder of NSW" would more accurately support Armstrong's claims, but his campaign was confined to the inner Sydney area.[4]

Another reason to doubt the importance of the early infant welfare movement is that comparison of death rates in suburbs where Armstrong was not active does not necessarily prove that the declining death rate was due to his advisory service.[5] Rather, all that such figures show is that the fall in the death rate between 1901 and 1911 was generally greatest in those suburbs where it was initially the highest, though not in all cases, Darlington for example, increasing from 110 to 160 deaths per 1000 births over this period.[6]

Further, Armstrong, and supporters of his claim, were aware that much of the case for the scheme's success depended on proving the increased incidence of breast-feeding, and his figures to establish this have generally been accepted,[7] in spite of the fact that these figures were inflated by the increasingly early date of visitation. Thus, the figures for increased breast-feeding rise with the younger age at first visitation, from 77% in 1905, when the average age was under three months, to 82.8% in 1909, when they were usually aged 5½ weeks when visited.[8]

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4. See Fig.7 p.190a.

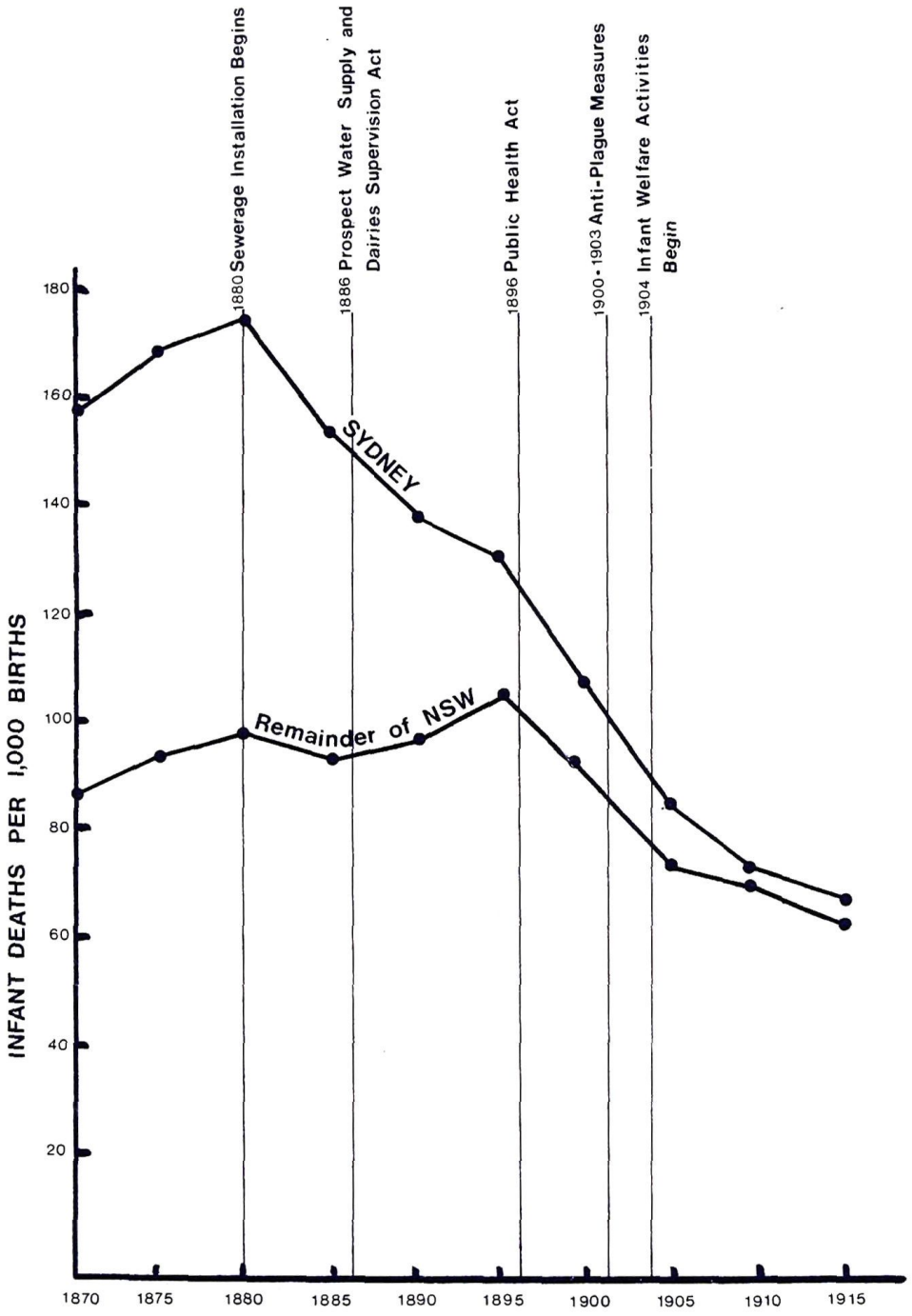
5. Cf. Milton Lewis Op.Cit. p.44.

6. In two of the suburbs selected by Lewis as non-working class, and where Armstrong's service was not active, the death rate actually doubled over this decade (Strathfield and Lane Cove). However, this could reflect other factors, for example, increasing urban density causing new waste disposal problems, as much as the implication that mothers resident here were refusing to breastfeed and flouting the hygienic rules of infant care. Indeed if these suburbs were occupied by literate middle-class women over this period, it is extremely unlikely that they would be disregarding the medical formula for infant health, which had been directed at them for at least two generations.

7. Milton Lewis Op.Cit. p.41-2; Bryan Gandevia Op.Cit. p.125.

8. Medical Officer of Health Annual Report 1905 p.15; 1909 p.13. The figures given for children entirely breast-fed referred to the situation as discovered by the nurse on her first visit. As very few second inspections were made, the inspectors had no way of checking or enforcing prolonged breast-feeding for the seven months recommended except by referring cases to the Alice Rawson School which, even in 1913, was dealing only with a small proportion of the mothers visited. (Ibid. 1910 p.13; 1913 p.29.)

DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER 12 MONTHS OF AGE
1871-5 – 1911-15



BASED ON FIGURES GIVEN IN W.G.ARMSTRONG "THE INFANT WELFARE MOVEMENT IN AUSTRALIA" M.J.A. 28 OCT. 1939 p.647.

Fig.7

This effect was compounded after the Commonwealth Maternity Allowance of 1912. This resulted in more rapid registration of births, so that the Bonus could be claimed, and visitation now took place at about three weeks, or even as early as ten days, not as previously, at under three months.[9] Armstrong's successors as Medical Officer for Health, J.S. Purdy and F.M. Suckling were careful to point this out.[10]

Armstrong's confidence that women who "were feeding their infants unsuitably" but promised "to desist"[11] would be able to do so, seems unrealistic, especially if by this he was referring to a resumption of breast-feeding. This reflected the assumption of the medical profession over the period that all that was required to establish breast-feeding in most cases was the willingness of the woman. Both the Lady Talbot Institute and the Alice Rawson School recommended the awkward process of supplementing failing breast milk with hygienically prepared formula at each feeding as a means of re-establishing full breast-feeding, assuming that the mothers had the time and the means to accomplish this time-consuming and often fruitless feat.[12] The enthusiasm of the infant welfare doctors for breast-feeding, like that of the earlier writers of books on baby care, showed delayed awareness of the health and diet of the nursing mother as a factor affecting her capacity to achieve this. The authors of the handbooks, though very concerned about the effect of the emotional and moral condition of the nursing mother on her milk and the dangers of prolonged lactation on her health, were reluctant to connect physical health and ability to breast-feed.[13] By 1911, Nurse Aitken was advising not only total abstinence from alcohol, but plain food and early hours for the nursing mother, but there was little medical support for "I.S.B.", who writing in the Australasian Nurses' Journal in 1912, mentioned that poor nutrition of mothers was one reason for the failure of breast-feeding, which could not be

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9. "Health Visiting Among Mothers of New Born Infants" Dept. of Public Health Report 1913 (Sydney 1915) p.47.

10. Medical Officer of Health Annual Report 1913 p.17; 1914 p.79.

11. Medical Officer of Health Annual Report 1905 p.15.

12. "The School for Mothers" ANJ Jan. 1912 p.8; Dr. A. Jeffreys Wood Op.Cit. p.393.

13. Dr. G. Fullerton The Family Medical Guide (Sydney 1975) p.471, 499; Dr. N. Sisca Op.Cit. p.63; "The School for Mothers" ANJ Jan. 1912 p.9.

accomplished by a woman living on a diet of bread and tea.[14] In the early infant welfare movement, no provision was made to improve the nutrition of the nursing mothers, whose numbers, according to Armstrong's figures, increased so dramatically after 1904.

Nor is there evidence to support the underlying assumption that breast-feeding was declining in the late nineteenth century. The observations of Twopeny, Ada Cambridge and Lewis Rodd indicate not only that were women breast-feeding, but also that the practice was so common that mothers were not self-conscious or secretive about it.[15] The only reason to suppose that the practice might have been declining would be the extremes of poverty experienced by some mothers in the 1890s, which may have reduced the numbers able to sustain breast-feeding over the crucial first months.[16]

Further, claims that women were selfishly not breast-feeding were still being made in 1912, when the death rate had undergone its "dramatic decline":

> The trouble is that 80% of mothers do not suckle their children. And the only way to rear a healthy, sturdy race of Australians is to feed them at the breast. But there is a terrible trinity - ignorance, carelessness and wilful neglect. What we want to do is educate the mother...[17]

Finally, though in his Reports, Dr. Armstrong always stressed that the visitors were gratefully welcomed and their advice adhered to, one female Sanitary Inspector of the Sydney City Council said that sometimes the mothers "listened indifferently to these new fangled ideas." On occasions, they answered all the questions at the back door and only granted permission to enter the house with the greatest reluctance.[18] Others did not welcome the Inspector because they feared that any report on insanitary conditions made by the inspector would result in council pressure on the landlord, this then in turn rebounding on the tenant in the form of higher rent.[19]

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14. E. Aitken Op.Cit. p.30; ANJ Jan. 1912 p.8. The author was probably Isla Blomfield. Trained at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, she worked at the Alice Rawson School before being appointed as a Sanitary Inspector to Sydney City Council in 1911. Her interest in maternal diet during both pregnancy and lactation was related to her belief that deficiencies here caused criminal tendencies and mental defectiveness in the child. She reiterated her point regarding maternal diet and the ability to sustain breast-feeding at the 1917 Conference on Child Welfare (Report of the Proceedings Sydney 1917 p.58).

15. R.E.N. Twopeny Town Life in Australia (Sydney 1973) p.83; Ada Cambridge Thirty Years in Australia (London 1903) p.106; Lewis Rodd A Gentle Shipwreck (Melbourne 1975) p.34-7. Cf. Milton Lewis Op.Cit. p.xiv.

16. See for instance NSW Royal Commission on Public Charities 1898-99 Report on the Benevolent Society of NSW p.97-8 (Case of "Mrs. B.")

17. Dr. Harrison in The Liberal Woman 1 Aug. 1912 Supplement p.39.

18. "A Modern Missionary" The Liberal Woman 1 Feb. 1912 p.18.

19. Medical Officer for Health Annual Report 1913 p.17.

Nevertheless, the fact that the movement's claim to have successfully reduced infant mortality went undisputed, gave further credence to the scientific authority of the cultural values implicit in the ideology it espoused. For doctors, it usefully served to expand the market for their service among the families of the urban poor, while the system of inspection and its advisory centres were carefully shaped so as not to encroach on private practice.[20]

Dr. Armstrong pointed out at the inception of his visiting system in 1904 that care was taken not to interfere with the instructions of a medical man if there had been one in attendance. Department of Public Health leaflets always stressed the importance of prompt calling of a doctor if the baby became ill. Mothers at the Alice Rawson School were urged to consult a medical practitioner concerning any physical ailments or other "deformities" discovered by visitor or nurse.[21]

Even so, in Victoria, despite leadership by doctors (A.J. Woods and Constance Ellis), the Baby Health Centres Association (founded in 1916-17) was strongly opposed by other members of the profession. Some doctors instructed mothers whom they attended in childbirth not to visit a centre, but to bring the baby back to the doctor for weight checks and advice on feeding.[22]

By 1914, the increasing status of the doctors with respect to the protection of infant life was reflected in the fact that, though still locked in the battle with the Friendly Societies, they had succeeded in discrediting the unqualified midwife and had gained the autonomy and power to control their numbers and remuneration which professionalism demanded. In NSW in 1908, the Private Hospitals Act had enabled the profession to shed any vestiges of the idea, suggested at the Birth Rate Commission by Cardinal Moran, that doctors were, like the unqualified midwife, associated with abortion practice. By requiring registration, the Act brought respectability to the growing number of private institutions in Sydney catering for the delivery of babies by doctors elsewhere than in the home or in the large public institutions, (where the doctors' services were unpaid). It also usefully limited the sphere and reduced the status of the unqualified midwife, for qualified nurses achieved legal recognition by registration under the Board of Health.[23] Whereas a decade earlier, their registration had been opposed by the medical profession as a

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20. Milton Lewis Op.Cit. p.8.

21. Medical Officer for Health Annual Report 1904 p.15; How to Take Care of Babies During the Summer Months p.8; The Care and Feeding of Babies p.13; "The School for Mothers" ANJ Jan. 1912 p.8.

22. Lyndsay Gardiner Royal Children's Hospital (Melbourne 1970) p.25.

23. Act No.14 of 1908 clauses 3-5. See further Judith Allen "The Policing of Criminal Abortion in NSW 1890-1939 Methodological Problems in Crime History" Paper AHA Conference UNSW Aug. 1982, p.17.

serious threat, qualified midwives trained at the public hospitals no longer constituted competition. Changes in their training had encouraged them to see their role as subsidiary to that of the doctor, and in any case, their contribution to delivering babies was declining by 1912, as the public hospitals expanded and indoor care by residents increased.[24]

In Victoria, the Medical Act of 1908 assigned to the qualified practitioners the legal status on a par with doctors in Britain which they had long sought. The doctors gained the right to expel a practitioner from their ranks for a felony or misdemeanour, which was vital to their professional image. At the same time, the raising of the period of local training had the effect of decreasing competition from foreign graduates, the supply of which declined from this time.[25] In New South Wales, the power of the profession to deregister a practitioner for "infamous conduct" had been achieved in 1900.[26]

Teaching "The Lost Art of Mothering":

While enlarging the status of the doctor, the effect of the infant welfare system was to diminish further the choices for women outside the spheres of motherhood and child care. At the same time, the notion that she should be guided by medical expertise in both these areas was further entrenched. This applied not only to the working-class mothers who were the direct object of the campaign, but to the middle-class charitable lady visitor. As an expert in the field of infant health, she was now supplanted by the "female inspector" and later the clinic sister, who had been "specially trained" to "instruct ignorant and careless mothers in the upbringing of their infants."[27] Just as in the establishment of the foundling hospitals, the ladies had been increasingly obliged to depend on male medical theorists and administrators, so in the education of mothers, although they were being given the opportunity to widen their field of action and increase the national and patriotic significance of their work, actual policy was formulated by male professionals and took a form which enhanced the authority less of women, than of doctors.

Members of the medical profession strongly endorsed the fitness of ladies as agents to convey the medical message to the unenlightened. As Dr. Ham Burnett told the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science in 1909, "the problem of infant mortality was "largely one for women to solve":

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24. P. Fitzsimons "Childbirth and the Professions in NSW 1890-1930" BA Thesis SU 1981 p.34, 44, 47. For a description of the trained nurse's now strictly auxiliary role in childbirth and the care of the new born, see ANJ 15 Jun 1910 p.189.

25. T.S. Pensabene The Rise of The Medical Practitioner in Victoria (Canberra 1980) p.129.

26. Act No.70, Clause 1.

27. Dr. Charles Mackellar Op.Cit. p.180.

> The house is her citadel. What does a man know about a house and its domestic management.... The woman can afford a guidance in those small matters of domestic economy and the affairs of babydom in a way no mere man can do. No, we must employ women to teach women the lost art of mothering.[28]

In 1910, Dr. J.B. McLean agreed. He told the Annual General Meeting of the National Council of Women that attempts to teach hygiene, infant feeding and "raise the tone of home life" were aimed at educating "the hand that rocked the cradle" and as such were "a woman's work."[29]

Seen as a means for further enlarging the importance of their "sphere", just as the medical message had been adopted with enthusiasm by the new women's organizations which were emerging in the late 1880s, so now also the medical offer to become bearers of the message to the unconverted could not be refused. For example, the moral and physical arguments for breast-feeding were useful for making motherhood more prestigious, mysterious and unique, totally separate from, but just as important as, the commonplace and public sphere which was the realm of males. Thus, the practice was endorsed as essential not only to baby health and hence to national and racial aspirations, but also to fulfilled womanhood. No mother should fail to deny the so-called pleasures of society or the sordid gain of the work-place, for nursery and home, that is, for what should be the "most sacred pleasures of a wife and mother's life."[30] "Yea! I have lived - ... Have felt my child's mouth pull upon my breast," wrote Mary Gilmore in Marri'd and Other Verses (1910).[31]

Consequently, by the early 1900s, the idea that the health of the child required close monitoring from the medical profession was being conveyed from a wide range of female sources. Apart from the semi-professional paid female inspectors of the nascent infant welfare services, organizations such as the Sydney Ladies' Sanitary Association were also actively spreading this message to the working-class mother. Though founded in 1887 to spread "the gospel of health," it is unlikely that the early lectures at the Association's room at the Town Hall by Sir Arthur Renwick and Professor Anderson Stuart were attended by working-class women. By 1900, however, lectures at the Free Kindergarten at Woolloomooloo, at some branches of the Mother's Union and at the Benevolent Society presumably reached audiences composed of women other than members. The ladies first listened to addresses by Dr. Armstrong on "Infectious Diseases" and "Infant Mortality and the Milk Supply" and Dr. Mary Booth "About Girls", with occasional contributions from G.H. Knibbs and Dr. Mackellar, after which they

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28. "The Prevention of Infantile Mortality" AAAS Report Vol.12 1909 p.701.
29. ANJ Sep. 1910 p.295-6.
30. "Child Culture" by "Inverell" The Liberal Woman 1 Sep. 1911 p.260.
31. Marri'd and Other Verses (Sydney 1910) p.113.

were to endeavour to "instil hygienic truths into the minds of those working women and girls" with whom they came in contact, lightening "the sanitary darkness" of such women, who "in the struggle of wage-earning and rearing children" were "too busy to give the care and attention to sanitary details such as we have been brought up to."[32]

This sense of conveying scientific messages on child care was very evident in a report of a lecture at the Free Kindergarten at Woolloomooloo in 1911 by Mrs. Bogue Luffman of the Womens' Liberal League, who wrote with that same humorous exaggeration which had characterized Dr. Muskett's similar advice to his middle-class readers in 1889. As described by Mrs. Bogue Luffman, the lecturer, a lady doctor, had "plunged into the mysteries of a baby's dress", and aimed a "Parthian dart" at the "ungodly mixtures of butter, honey and sugar which ignorant nurses thrust into the mouths of new-born babes...". The lecture included the usual rules on breast-feeding and by the clock ("A very young baby can be easily drilled into methodical habits") and the danger of rickets from feeding on condensed milk. Mrs. Luffman concluded,

> Many more words of practical wisdom fell from the lecturer's lips, the most notable being her strong condemnation of the "mother's comforter", which the poor deluded infant is seen to be placidly sucking in every tram or train. Some of the mothers showed fight on this subject, and a little discussion ensued.... It is hard to convince women who have arrived at years of discretion that some of their methods are the reverse of discreet.[33]

In 1909, the Sydney Ladies' Sanitary Society was incorporated into the Health Society of NSW, with Professor Anderson Stuart as President, and Dr. Mary Booth and Dr. Chisholm Ross included on the committee.

As the women's organizations became agents in the transmission of medical ideas across class, so their message itself hardened. Ideas of efficiency, racial improvement and the need to smooth away class conflict replaced simple and sentimental ideas of rescue. This was evident in statements and policy of the Sydney District Nursing Association. Founded in 1900 with the aim of providing a nursing service to the poor in their own homes, trained nurses were sent to cases where the mother was ill or could not pay for the care of "the string of little children whom she must leave behind if she goes to a maternity hospital" for her confinement. Instead a doctor or trained midwife would attend her at home, sparing her from "the calamity of the attendance of a Gamp."[34] Though the aim was still put in traditional philanthropic terms, the nurse being a "missionary in the cause of the gospel of health", the method was to be scientific. The nurse was "to preach and teach proper methods of feeding

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32. Sydney Ladies' Sanitary Association Twelfth Annual Report 1900-1901; Seventeenth Annual Report 1905-6 n.p.

33. The Liberal Woman 1 Jul. 1911 p.52.

34. Dr. Jackson "Notes on the Objects of a Trained Nurses' Association" ANJ Jan. 1905 p.140-6.

and hygiene" to those "ignorant, dirty, but well-intentioned" mothers who presently brought to the Children's Hospital "a puling, bottle-fed baby", "likely to die of diarrhoea from the dirty bottle and unsuitable food." She should have a "refining influence" on every house she visited, and as such, district nursing work would become an important factor in "the nation's welfare", an agency brought to bear for the improvement of the race. "Regeneration must take place in the masses, where ignorance, vice and disease play such havoc", and this could only by achieved through the family, for "everywhere, in the home as well as the palace, the mother is the chief influence. It is therefore, especially through the mother in her home that we must aim to promote the good of the family and thereby the good of society."[35]

A considerable contrast was apparent in the Melbourne District Nursing Society, which had been founded in 1885, and where the influence of prominent Catholic and Anglican clergymen was still combined with "many well-known ladies" and representatives of the medical and nursing professions. In this Society there was an uneasy alliance between older judgements in terms of male irresponsibility and intemperance, and the newer medical idea of female responsibility for social problems which had their origin in domestic mismanagement. For example, a visiting nurse was described as confronting "a fireless grate, an empty cupboard, children crying for food, the mother perhaps too ill to notice, lying on a bed of dirty rags, the father - where? In such a case as that you may be sure not at work."[36]

However, other descriptions by the same writer gave female indifference to the domestic ideal as a central cause. For example, it was said that there were cases where,

> The home that might be comfortable is dirty and ill-kept, the meals badly cooked, the children are ragged, and are growing up with as little idea of order and cleanliness as their parents.

In these cases, it was no wonder that the husband deserted or drank, and the only remedy was domestic education in hygienic principles for mothers and girls.[37]

Thus, members of these groups proved strong allies of the notion that it was the education of mothers, not financial or other assistance that was chiefly needed in the working-class home. For example, the Sister in charge of the District Nursing Home in Melbourne said of the Federal Maternity Allowance that it had made very little difference to the class of mothers its advocates had expected it to assist during confinement. Though a pamphlet on infant care was

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35. Dr. Jackson Op.Cit. p.145; "District Nursing" ANJ Oct. 1905 p.124-5; Editorial ANJ 15 Nov. 1905.

36. ANJ Nov. 1905 p.157.

37. ANJ Sep. 1906 p.293.

handed out with the bonus, what the women really needed was education in domestic affairs, because they did not know how to spend the money wisely":

> One woman had been desperately worried all through the last few weeks by the problem whether she should buy a sideboard or a suite of furniture with her £5. Another spent her allowance on a pair of elaborate curtains, quite unsuitable to her house and circumstances.[38]

Similarly, in 1911 a lady doctor told the Ladies' Sanitary Association in Sydney, that the health problems of inner city families were due not merely to insanitary dwellings, and eating and sleeping in the same room, but to the fact that they nailed up ventilators and windows, had no idea of the relative value of foodstuffs, and took no care and interest in preparing food. The women had no thrift or forethought, no careful plan of expenditure, and many had "so little self-respect" that underclothing was "regarded as a 'negligible quantity'". However, the women did now know about and use "Condy's Fluid" and "boracic acid" as disinfectants. This was to be regarded as a great advance and in fifty years time they might be fully alive to the advanced requirements of modern hygiene.[39]

Another way in which middle-class women were active in transmitting the ideology of the medical formula for child health was through the creche movement. Here, as in the case of the district nursing service, though actual assistance was offered to the working-class family, the emphasis was similarly on ensuring the conformity of the working-class family to the moral and social values implicit in the medical formula.

Creches were first established in 1887 by Charles Strong and his wife and members of their Social Improvement Friendly Help and Children's Aid Society, which rented a house in Collingwood to serve both as a day care centre for the children of working mothers and a kindergarten. The formation of the Melbourne Creche Society followed and day care centres were established in Prahran, Richmond, North Melbourne and Brunswick. By 1914, creches were also operating in South Melbourne, Fitzroy, Carlton.[40] In Sydney, the NSW Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children opened its first creche in 1889 in Macquarie St. South, while in August 1905, a Sydney Day Nursery Association was formed which undertook to increase the number of creches in "needy suburbs". This society opened its first creche in Woolloomooloo in December 1905. A second branch in the same suburb was opened in January 1908.

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38. Mrs. Stella Allan "The Commonwealth Maternity Allowance" Report of the Proceedings of the Imperial Health Conference (London 1914) p.424. For a similar indictment of the use of the bonus by working-class mothers in Sydney see NSW Dept of Public Health Report 1913 p.49.

39. The Liberal Woman 1 Jul. 1911 p.52.

40. C.R. Badger The Reverend Charles Strong (Melbourne 1971) p.107; Mrs. Stella Allan "The Creches of Melbourne" Report of the Proceedings of the Imperial Health Conference (London 1914) p.418.

In general, the creches were managed by Ladies' Committees aware of and committed to the latest professional theories of children's moral and physical needs, and under the direction of men prominent in charity and child welfare organizations. In Sydney, for example, the Day Nursery Association's founding committee included Dr. Mary Booth and Dr. Mackellar's daughter, Dorothea, while much of the fund-raising was done by female "circles of helpers" in the wealthier suburbs, such as Strathfield, Potts Point, Woollahra and Wahroonga. The creches, on the other hand, were located in those "congested" inner suburbs where "many poor working-women" were forced to "fill the places of both father and mother," by being "the breadwinners of the family."[41] For a small fee, (3d per day), women who worked either temporarily in factories, or permanently as charwomen and laundresses could leave children from the age of 15 days to 3 years, from 7.00 or 7.30 in the morning till 6 or 6.30 at night. Enrolments were as high as 40 children per creche, but attendances were generally less than this.[42]

The creches assumed that the physical and emotional needs of children had been scientifically identified by medical theorists and that the children of the poor must be gathered off the streets and reared according to these principles for their own sakes and that of society. Thus the daily routine was supervised by "qualified" staff who adhered closely to the current medical formula. Children brought in were "stripped and put into a bath, and then dressed in clean clothes belonging to the Creche" (though put back into their old clothes prior to collection). Bottle-fed babies were given a sterilized formula "at regular intervals" while mothers who were breast-feeding were encouraged to call in during the day to do so. Older children were given "plain, simple food, suitable to their age and needs", such as soup, bread and milk pudding. In Sydney, they were taught "to sing grace."[43]

The creches claimed great success in their physical rescue of the working-class child. However, the claimed improvements in health were inextricably mixed with and attributed to non-physical factors. For example, though some children were healthy when brought in, more often they were "frail little mites", the "victims of ignorant and improper feeding." They soon grew and improved in health under "the hygienic rules", the "cleanliness and comfort and wholesome living of the Nursery," as the "weekly weighing of the babies testified."[44]

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41. Sydney Day Nursery Association First Annual Report 1905-1906 p.5; Mrs. Stella Allan Op.Cit. p.418.

42. "The Creche or Day Nursery" ANJ Oct. 1910 p.334; Mrs. Stella Allan Op.Cit. p.419.

43. ANJ Oct. 1910 p.335; Sydney Day Nursery Op.Cit. p.9.

44. Sydney Day Nursery Op.Cit. p.5, 9.

Indeed the identification of the physical and the moral so evident in the medical formula, became more pronounced when applied across class. It was said that the mother's going to work precluded "either the possibility of home-making or the proper care of the children", for babies were too often left in the care of a child or neighbours or locked up in a room with food placed within reach. The mothers were said to appreciate greatly the "benefits" to the children:

> We have been thanked by parents for training their children in good habits, and in teaching them to be courteous, showing that our endeavour to devote attention to training as well as nurture has not been in vain.[45]

Not only were the children being morally and physically cured, but it was hoped that the creches would have an "indirect effect", and that the mothers would learn "useful hints and suggestions on hygienic child-raising from the matron." It was the policy of the staff to advise the mothers as to the "treatment" of their children at home.[46]

The creches were aware that, in aiding the working mothers, they were operating in defiance of the new concept of the importance of full-time "lavish" care of the natural mother, both to woman and child. They looked back to the time when in going to work, the mother would have been seen as displaying industry and self-help which ought not to be prevented.[47] Hence, much emphasis was placed on the fact that the creche's aim was principally to provide a temporary expedient to enable the mothers "to keep their home and family together." Though providing a useful service to the working mother, the underlying assumption was that her rightful place was in the home. Further, it was also emphasized that the creche supplied "the wholesome and loving care" of which the children would otherwise be "deprived", and "all of the watchful attention which the most devoted mother could desire." Also, the payment of the fees was believed to have a beneficial moral effect on the mothers, developing that "pride in what they do for their children" which ought to be encouraged.[48]

It was perhaps ironical that this increasing participation of middle-class women's organizations in the transmission of medical ideology in the homes of the poor, was made possible by their own reduction in family size. The fact that they were having fewer children freed both themselves and their older daughters for "women's work" outside their own homes. As Maybanke Anderson said of girls in 1914, now released from the demands of the ubiquitous new baby, what

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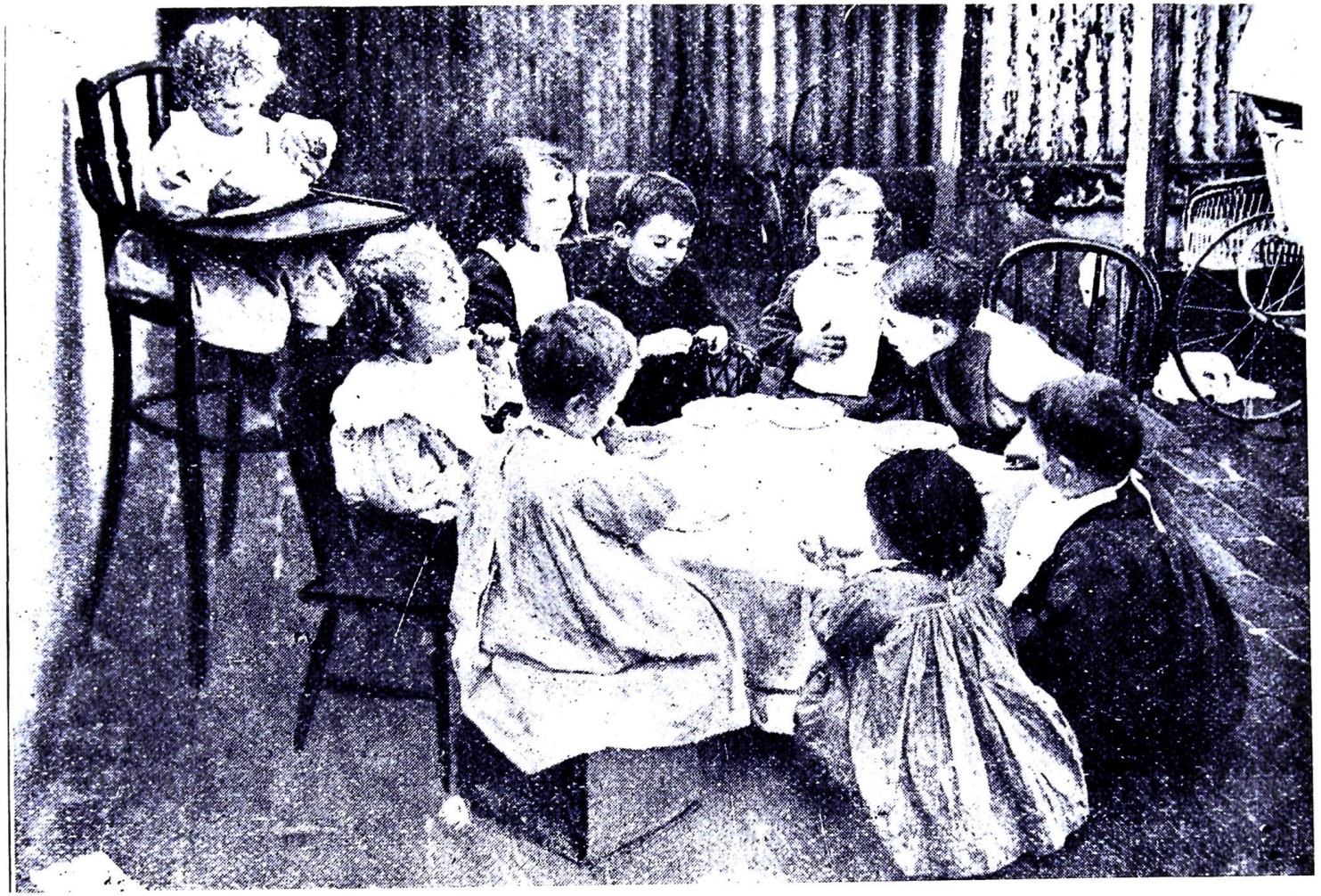
45. Ibid.
46. ANJ Oct. 1910 p.335; Dr. Charles Mackellar Op.Cit. p.183.
47. Mrs. Stella Allan Op.Cit. p.417, 419.
48. Sydney Day Nursery Op.Cit. p.2, 5; Mrs. Stella Allan Op.Cit. p.419.



CHILDREN AT A SYDNEY CRECHE

42. In contrast with the new schemes to educate the mother, the creches had been a practical response to the problems faced by the inner city parent.

Sydney Day Nursery Association Annual Report 1905-06.



MID-DAY LUNCH AT THE CRECHE

43. Though becoming influenced by medical opinion, the creche offered reliable care on a daily basis. Sydney Day Nursery Association Annual Report 1905-06.

were they to "do with their time?"[49]

Doctors condoned the transmission of medical ideas across classes by "ladies" because it augmented their status without challenging their dominance. Indeed, the allocation to women of a key role in the transmission of medical ideas obscured the extent to which the increasing status of the doctor was being won at the cost of the skills and expertise of mothers of all classes, rich or poor.

In addition, medical science in a sense required this role of women's organizations since, underlying the doctrine of the female's special responsibility for the health of the national organism, lay the idea of the culpability of Eve and the need of her descendants to atone for it by good works. As Dr. Lucas argued in 1910, Woman "brought the burden of guilt," nevertheless, she carried "the redemption of the race." She did this in her own marriage, by saving the male, who had "the onus of passion-bearing thrown on him," by legalizing his lust, and especially through motherhood. Bearing children and watching over them from her "vigilant position" she took her household "Paradise-ward" and so saved the morals of the race.[50]

Even the activities of the Lady Visitor were now conceptualized in these terms. Carrying the message of salvation to her less fortunate sisters, she was seen as enlarging the "motherhood of Australia" by extending her "superfluous motherliness" to the children of other women.[51] Her role in the preservation of the existing structure of society was unchanged, but she had been transformed from an influential "lady bountiful" to an auxiliary of powerful professional groups.

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49. Maybanke Anderson "The Free Kindergartens in Sydney" Kindergarten Union of NSW Commemorative Address (Sydney 1914) p.16.

50. Dr. George Lucas Shall Australasia Be a Nation? (Brisbane 1907) p.156-62.

51. Mrs. Curlewis (Ethel Turner) "A Larger Motherhood" Mothers in Australia Vol.1 No.1 Sep. 1917.

CHAPTER SEVEN

GETTING THEM OFF THE STREETS

Scientific Cures for Larrikinism

In 1905, founder of the Child Study movement in the United States, Dr. G. Stanley Hall, published his monumental study, Adolescence, in which replacement of moral ideas of the causes of misbehaviour in the young with bio-medical ones, climaxed in an influential summary. According to Hall, lack of attention to the scientifically defined needs of this stage of growth was the main reason why hoodlumism, juvenile crime and secret vice were increasing. He emphasized the special care which must be used to guide physical and mental development at this crucial epoch in the life of every individual, for scientific study of the child had shown that it was then that the later more civilized "acquisitions of the race" slowly became more "prepotent". This caused strain and turbulence in body and mind, as child measurement had revealed:

> Development is less gradual and more saltatory, suggestive of some ancient period of storm and stress when old moorings were broken and a higher level attained. The annual rate of growth in height, weight and strength is increased and often doubled ....[1]

Hall's work also illustrated the way in which increasing attention to the alleged misbehaviour of this age-group had grown out of increasing medical focus on premature sexuality as a disease. According to Hall, masturbation was "one of the penalties man pays for that inestimable tool of his development on the human plane - the hand." It not only impaired physical and intellectual growth, but adversely affected the number of children born, the female's power to breast-feed and the heredity of countless generations to come. That is, it arrested the normal development of adolescence, which was when

> Nature arms youth for conflict with all the resources at her command - speed, power of shoulder, biceps, back, leg,jaw ... makes man aggressive and prepares woman's frame for maternity.[2]

This interpretation of adolescence in turn verified the different preventative procedures recommended by doctors for delaying and controlling sexuality in the young. Hall advised inculcating military ideals and encouraging outdoor activities for boys, reverence for menstruation and motherhood in girls and, though a "a gentile of gentiles", he recommended circumcision to lessen excitability.[3]

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1. Adolescence Its Psychology and Its Relation to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education (New York 1911) Vol.1 p.xiii. For the transmission of Hall's ideas by 1910, see A.W. Rudd "The Scientific Study of the Child" AAAS Report Vol.12 1909 p.772.

2. G. Stanley Hall Op.Cit. p.xiii, 443.

3. Ibid p.443, 467, 512.

Philanthropic Rescue of the Older Child:

One effect of the development of the medical theories of the special needs of male and female adolescence was to increase the concern of reformers to guide and correct the behaviour of working-class youth. The fact that prolonged schooling and single-sex youth organizations were increasingly controlling contact between middle-class boys and girls, made the "precocity" of the street or factory child more conspicuous and alarming.

Up to the 1890s, first-hand accounts of their lives by young people who were engaged in street or factory work are rare. Accordingly, in most descriptions, their image, even if based on childhood reminiscence, tends to reflect the medical view that, if they were not already larrikins, then they were potentially so. They were pathologically different from, and a threat to, the normal child. According to Herbert Moran (born Sydney 1885), the street children were organized into "pushes" bent on molesting other boys and had "hard visages and foul tongues." William Chidley declared that the "larrikins of Richmond" whom he encountered in his youth, were "different in face and eye" from the ordinary school-boy. Chidley however, was prepared to concede to a class component in larrikin behaviour, adding that they were the "natural enemies" of the respectable, protected child, and "doubtless hated us for our 'superior airs'."[4]

To adult reformers, larrikinism was seen not only as a threat to person, property and order, but now also to the fitness of the national organism,[5] and from the 1880s, determined efforts were being made to deal with it. Early preventative measures focussed on the provision of single-sex youth organizations hoping to attract and guide the older working-class child. These included the Young Men's and Women's Christian Associations, founded in Melbourne in 1871 and 1882 respectively and the Try Society, established in Melbourne in 1883. By the turn of the century, the Girls' and Boys' Brigades and the Girls' Friendly Society typified the numerous groups offering a variety of "healthy" activities and moral guidance to the young.

Other groups responded to the apparent danger of undersupervised working-class youth by moving to secure additional protective legislation catering for the older child. Indeed, those seeking further measures for the protection and rescue of children aged from about eight upwards found they had no need to put back the age of the "lost" child or street urchin to emphasize

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4. Herbert Moran Viewless Winds (London 1939) p.17-18; William Chidley Confessions (St. Lucia 1977) p.24.

5. Dr. A. Carroll "The Dissolution of Nations Preventable" Sydney Quarterly Magazine Vol.5 No.1 1888 p.75-7; "Psychology and the Scientific or Exact Treatment and Study of Psychiatry" Science of Man Vol.1 No.1 1898 p.43-4.



44. Playing on the Streets of Sydney - to reformers, a source of corruption.
NSW Dept. of Public Works "Sydney Rocks Area - 124 Photographs" [1901].

its vulnerability. The prolongation of childhood to include adolescence meant that even children in their mid-teens could be assumed to be in need of prolonged, protective care, lest they become a source of criminality, vice, and racial degeneration.

Despite an emphasis on "protection", philanthropic attempts to enlarge the concept of rescue to include children in this age group, were strongly influenced by the hardening, medical attitude to the causes and effects of larrikinism. For instance, supporters of the notion that compulsory schooling might be enforced by laws to control the age at which children of "both sexes" were "put to work", argued that premature exposure to the work place, and in particular, the factory, ruined "the intellectual and moral faculties of the youth of this colony" and swelled "the ranks of larrikinism." It was "the immediate cause of the ruin and downfall of many of the weaker sex."[6]

In 1900, those seeking additional legislation to raise the age at which children might participate in street trades or perform in public for gain, argued that most girls roaming about the streets at night were potential prostitutes and that the keeping of late hours by street children stunted their bodies and corrupted their minds.[7]

In contrast with measures to "protect" infant life and in spite of the input of medical ideas, tacit recognition of the importance of juvenile labour to the economic survival of many families, limited charitable attempts to increase state intervention on behalf of the older child. Though in 1896, Factory Acts, passed in both colonies, tightened existing provisions relating to the employment of children under fourteen in urban industries, and regulated hours and conditions under which those aged fourteen to eighteen might work, exemptions to the age limit for employment could be obtained in special cases of family financial hardship. These provisions for exemption remained a source of concern to child-savers. Thus in New South Wales in 1912, it was reported that factory work was a cause of "uterine troubles" in girls. It was also unsuitable because "the mixing of the sexes" at this age was seen as a demoralizing factor in itself.[8]

Similarly, though condemnation of street trading was publicized by the NSW Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in 1890, and sought in the Children's Protection Act of 1892, even in the Amendment of this Act in 1900, the practice was still permitted under licence for children of specified

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6. Final Report of the Royal Commission on Employees in Shops Vic. LA V&P Vol.3 1884 p.161.

7. NSW PD First Series Vol.106 1900 Debate on the Children's Protection Amendment Bill p.3956 (Mr. Norton).

8. Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Hours and General Condition of Employment of Female and Juvenile Labour in Factories and Shops ... NSW PP 1911-12 Vol.2 p.xxxv. See also ANJ Nov. 1911 p.373.

age and sex.[9] Nor did successive legislation outlaw it,[10] though by 1914, when it was permitted only for boys of fourteen under licence, "strict enquiry" was made into home circumstances and periodic checks that the boys were not being "contaminated" by the street.[11]

Because of the more immediate confrontation with the economic realities of working-class life, even the direct participation of doctors themselves did not necessarily guarantee extension to the poor of medical views on the needs of adolescence. Thus in NSW from 1896 Dr. Andrew Ross four times failed to carry Bills aiming to prevent the young from smoking. This was in spite of arguments that in boys "on the threshold of manhood", the habit was a cause of physical disease, insanity and, in some instances, that "spirit of larrikinism" then prevailing. Ross' supporters agreed that juvenile smoking debilitated and "shrivelled up" the young and was a "symptom of dangerous habits which destroy the physique." The State must step in where parents were failing to control the young, and though children of the "respectable classes" also smoked, it was chiefly the "waifs and strays", and newspaper boys, who were to be found "with cigarettes in their mouths and cards in their hands." When Great Britain came to "her final death grapple with Russia", "where were the contingents to come from, if the rising generation was ruined by tobacco? "They will never be able to fight, or to raise a breed of fighter".[12]

In Victoria, overseas medical authorities were cited in arguments that juvenile smoking was not only injurious to physical health, but also induced undesirable moral, and especially criminal, tendencies. According to a physician at Kansas Reformatory for Boys, smoking had caused the downfall of more of its inmates than all other vicious habits combined.[13] However, it was not until after considerable delay and some disbelief that legislation to control the sale of tobacco to the young was passed in 1903 (New South Wales) and 1906 (Victoria).

In the eventual acceptance of the medical view of the relationship of larrikinism to the changes and dangers of adolescence, women's groups lent important support. Though as in the case of infant health, the reasons for

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9. NSW Children's Protection Amendment Act (No.52 of 1900) Section 11.

10. NSW Children's Protection Act (No.47 of 1902) Section 23; NSW Neglected Children and Juvenile Offenders Act No.16 1905 Section 47. In 1911, street trading and theatre licenses granted to children totalled 943 (NSW Statistical Register 1911 p.743).

11. SCRB Annual Report 1913 p.39-40.

12. NSW PD First Series Vol.88 1897 p.1687-8, Second Series Vol.2 1901 p.1204-6 (Dr. Ross); First Series Vol.104 1900 p.1619-20 (Mr. Norton), p.1623 (Mr. Holman).

13. VPD Vol.110 1905 p.877-8, Vol.113 1906 p.654-7.



The boy who apes the man by smoking will never be much good.

A strong and healthy boy has the ball at his feet.

THE EFFECTS OF JUVENILE SMOKING

45. Smoking was associated with most of the other vices thought likely to corrupt the young.

Robert S. Baden Powell Scouting for Boys (1908).

feminist participation were different from those of the medical profession, again the opportunity to use medical ideas to promote issues of concern to women, could not be ignored.

The interest of feminists in the medical idea of premature sexuality as a disease, culminating in dangerous tendencies manifested at adolescence, grew out of their successful opposition to the Contagious Diseases Acts. This had left them concerned to prove the efficacy of methods of preventing venereal disease other than by this kind of legislation. The methods favoured had included not only advocacy of sex education but also a new focus on protecting young people believed to be on the brink of dissipation. Thus feminists had played a prominent role in the founding of many of the organizations to provide moral guidance and leisure activities for working-class youth. They had also provided support for the expansion of legislation empowering police to arrest children seen as in imminent moral danger or engaged in street directed work.[14] "Is it not a painful sight to see the cripples and pale children ... behind hoardings or up dirty lanes 'heading them?'"asked The Dawn in 1890. "The pile of dailies" which was the ostensible reason such children were at large on the street, was soon forgotten. According to this source, their eyes shone with a dangerous "excitement" as they gambled away any earnings and puffed on cigarettes.[15]

Feminist support for moves to protect the older working-class child focussed especially on the age of consent. In NSW in 1896, doctors working to have this raised from fourteen to eighteen years, argued that no medical authority would consider a girl of fourteen fit for motherhood; indeed, her offspring would be sickly and unfit for the battle of life. She must be protected from joining the ranks of the prostitute instead of fulfilling her rightful destiny as wife and mother.[16]

These medical arguments were borrowed by women's groups working for the same cause. "No community can truly prosper in which large numbers of its young girls, the wives and mothers of the future are debauched at the beginning of their lives."[17] In Victoria, the age of consent had already been raised from twelve to sixteen years in 1893 largely at the instigation of the WCTU.[18]

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14. F.K. Prochaska Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century England (Oxford 1980) p.185-214.

15. "The Curse of Bad Example" The Dawn Vol.2 No.10 1890 p.7.

16. Dr. Richard Arthur The Needed Change in the Age of Consent (Sydney 1896) p.5, 10. See also NSW PD Vol.11 Second Series 1903 p.1150 (Dr. Mackellar); p.1248-50 (Dr. Nash).

17. A Petition from Tamworth to Raise the Age of Consent to Eighteen Years (NSW LA V&P Vol.5 1896 p.1607).

18. Anthea Hyslop "Christian Temperance and Social Reform The Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Victoria 1887-1912" in S. Willis (ed.) Women, Faith and Fetes (Melbourne 1977) p.56.



46. Urban Childhood, Sydney, 1901 - an absence of adult-constructed play.
NSW Dept. of Public Works "Sydney Rocks Area - 124 Photographs" [1901].

This was again an issue, which proved, however, unpopular in the NSW legislature. Though in England, the age of consent had been raised to sixteen years in 1885, and in the United States to eighteen years in 1895, in NSW it remained at fourteen years as late as 1910, when, after rejection in 1903, 1905 and 1907, the Crimes (Girls' Protection Act) was eventually passed.[19]

Expansion of Medical Influence - The New Reformatories:

Notwithstanding these impediments to the universalization of its authority on adolescence, in other areas medical influence in monitoring child life of the older working-class child continued to increase. This became especially apparent with respect to medical advice on the control of the increasing number of children incarcerated either in the State institutions or those charitable ones in receipt of government funding.

Though boarding-out had been hailed as the key to reducing the costs of full-time institutionalization and preventing the victimization of the child by the "Barracks", the scheme had not abolished the principle or the practice of incarceration. In addition to the numerous "orphans" who continued to be housed in charitable refuges and asylums, of children coming under the control of the State, many continued to be institutionalized. These included not only those too ill, too frail or too handicapped to be boarded-out, but also those who were returned by foster-parents as too wayward or badly behaved. Also continuing to be institutionalized were the children who had been already convicted of an offence.

During the 1880s, the medical view of the sources of these problems in children, and by implication, the potential role of the doctor in correcting them, had been strongly endorsed by the administrator of the State Children's Relief Board in NSW, Dr. Arthur Renwick. As early as his second report in 1883, Renwick was replacing the Dickensian sentiments of the charitable founding ladies, and their conviction that the home environment alone had the power to remould the character of the street waif, with the language and perceptions of medical science. Renwick observed that some of the children did not fit the rosy image of innocence of the scheme's founders, but were suffering from mental and moral "disease". They had "breathed in" the foul "atmosphere" of their early environment in the slums and thus were in need of preliminary treatment and "cure" lest their polluted minds started an epidemic in the wholesome foster home.[20]

Renwick diagnosed this moral disease as specifically sexual in nature. Quoting the 1882 Select Committee of the House of Lords, he said that, far from being innocent, very young children could be guilty of the "vile sexual practices", and "unnatural acts".[21]

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19. Judith Allen "Breaking Into the Public Sphere" in J. Mackinolty and H. Radi (eds) In Pursuit of Justice (Sydney 1979) p.111.

20. SCRB Annual Report 1883 p.11.

21. Ibid. p.11-12.

Children who had already been convicted of an offence were a special problem. As Dr. Carroll put it in 1898, now that it was known that the brain controlled thoughts and actions, it followed that criminality was a mental disease known as moral insanity. "Juvenile delinquents" were suffering from the first stages of this disease and must be subjected to early treatment if their unhealthy brains were to be cured and moral health restored.[22]

Medical treatment for children suffering from various stages of this disease required a proliferation of new State reformatories and greater control over charitable ones. As Renwick pointed out, though many children would be quickly "purified" and rendered fit for boarding-out or apprenticeship by a period of brief incarceration, there were others who would need longer and separate institutionalization till they were ready for release direct into the "respectable ranks of labour."[23] Meanwhile there must be careful classification of all State wards before consigning them to the various institutions needed for their care.

The Victorian authorities shared the fears of moral infection. A spokesman for the Ballarat Boys' Reformatory in 1887 declared that it was better to leave a "contaminated" boy in prison than risk infecting a whole school with his presence, for it was known that "one scabby sheep may infect a flock."[24] New legislation in 1887 introduced definitions for the classification and treatment of State children, with probationary schools to function as transitional stages between Reformatory and foster home.[25] Children under twelve were excluded from Reformatories, and attempts were made to isolate any child considered to have been leading a "grossly immoral and depraved" life immediately on arrival at the Royal Park Depot.[26]

However, the administrators of the new Department of Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools were not doctors and they did not display great interest in developments in mental science during the late 1880s and 90s. In contrast with Renwick and Mackellar, they continued to rely upon and delegate authority to charitable organizations and Lady Visitors. By 1888, almost half of the children who could not be boarded-out direct to foster homes were boarded-out to private Reformatories and Industrial Schools, such as the Catholic Industrial School for Girls at Abbotsford and their Reformatory at Oakleigh.[27] By 1898,

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22. "Psychology and the Scientific or Exact Treatment and Study of Psychiatry" p.43-4; "Criminology and How to Recognize Criminals" Science of Man Vol.1 No.7 Aug. 1898 p.161. See also Dr. James McCreery "The Psychology of Crime" Trans. AMC 1908 (Melbourne 1909) p.263-6.
23. SCRB Annual Report 1883 p.13.
24. Secretary for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools Report 1887 p.25.
25. 51 Vict. Nos. 941 and 951 of 1887.
26. 51 Vict. No. 951 Section 32.
27. Secretary for Neglected children and Reformatory Schools Report 1887 p.44.

it was established policy to place out most of the children who could not be consigned to foster homes in private institutions, of which there were then twelve taking in State wards, in addition to the new Salvation Army Training School for Girls, Albion House, which opened in August of that year.[28]

Ladies' Committees were permitted to extend their traditional role in visitation to include these institutions. They also inspected fortnightly the State Girls' Reformatory at Coburg and the Receiving Depots at Royal Park.[29] In addition to the small Ladies' Committees for Boarding-Out, which reported directly to the Department, an independent charity, the Lady Visitors' Association, continued its work in this field, which included the inspection of apprentices.

The Lady Visitors not only checked on the condition of the children; they also endeavoured to provide outings and treats. Thus in 1908, girls at the Albion Home were taken for a picnic at Sandringham and a Christmas treat in Melbourne; those at Mintaro Reformatory, Monnegatta, had a week's holiday by the sea.[30]

In NSW, however, the maintenance of direct State control over Industrial Schools and Reformatories, together with administration by members of the medical profession, made for rapid application of the findings of social science to the institutionalized child. With passing of the State Children's Relief Act in 1881, many of the older children in the State institutions were diagnosed as unsuited to boarding-out and were simply transferred to new State institutions. Thus the Girls' Industrial School did not vanish with implementation of boarding-out, but was moved in 1887 into the buildings vacated by the Catholic Orphan School when its inmates were sent to foster homes. Reflecting the notion of the need to quarantine the more serious offender, the Girls' Reformatory was moved to new premises at Watson's Bay in 1880. Under a new name, the Shaftesbury Reformatory, by 1898, it was used to house not only girls convicted of an offence, but those who were returned by foster-parents as "indolent, incorrigible", or of a wandering or thieving disposition, plus any other girls and younger boys who were believed to require "firm discipline and proper punishment."[31] For older boys, in addition to the long-delayed Reformatory, which opened at Brush Farm in 1894, a new vessel the "Sobraon" replaced the old "Vernon" in 1892 as the Industrial School for boys unsuited for boarding-out.

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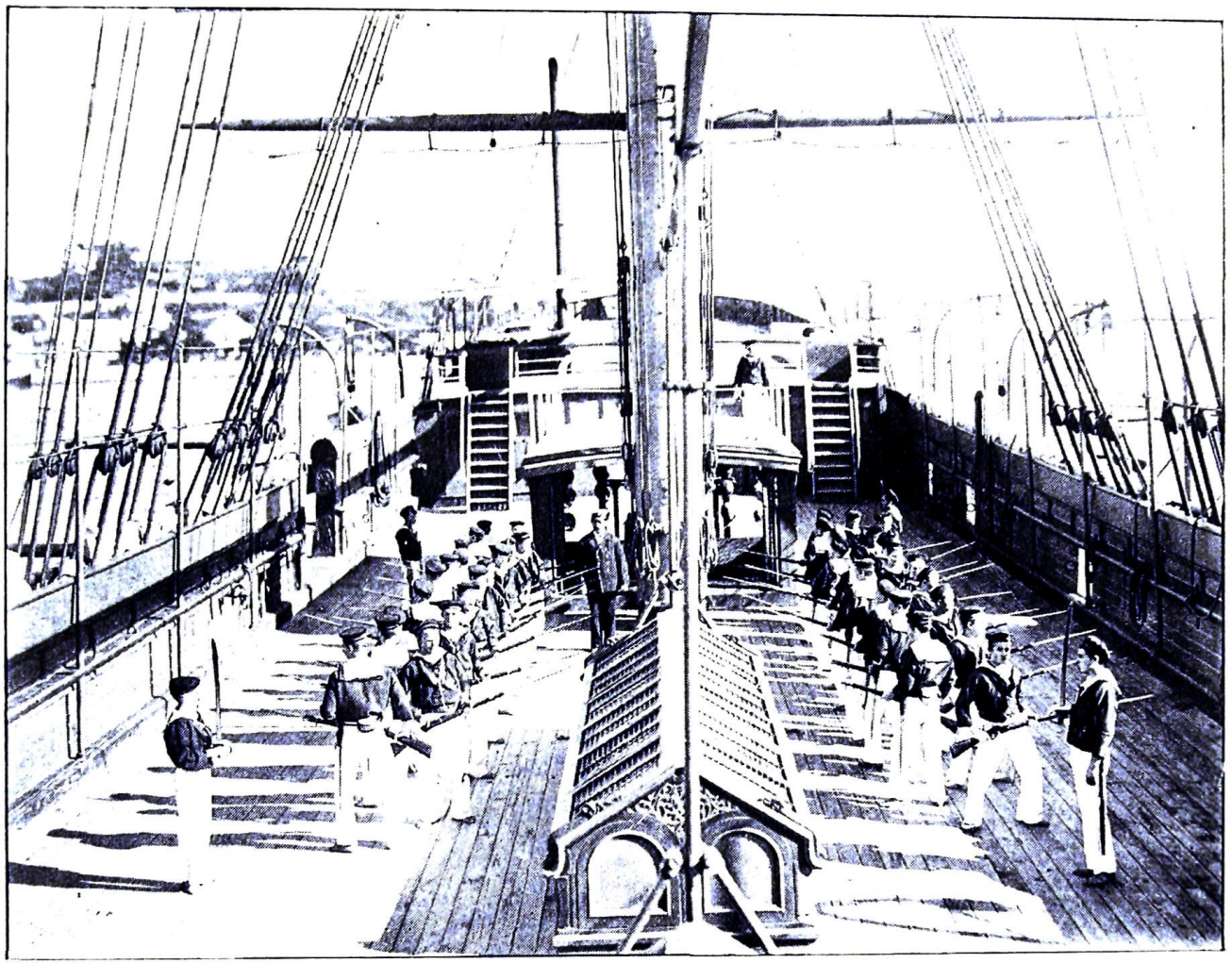
28. Ibid. 1898 p.6, 8.
29. Ibid. 1887 p.29.
30. Ibid. 1908 p.19-20.
31. SCRB Annual Report 1898 p.2, 9. The use of the Reformatory to discipline children returned as unsatisfactory, was admitted to be "irregular", unless the guardians had appeared against them in a court. So also was its use to discipline other children not charged with an offence. (Ibid. p.2)



N.S.S. " SOBRAON."—BAYONET DRILL.

47. Report of the Superintendent, Nautical School Ship "Sobraon" (NSW LA V&P 1898 Vol.1).

Doctors justified this expansion of the costly system of institutionalization by claiming that it constituted a new, more effective cure for those suffering from moral and mental disease. There being no new developments in medical study of the brain to support such a claim, it relied on older rhetoric of environmental cures. For instance much was made of the fact that some of the institutions constituted a new form of "family" care for those children said to have moral defects disqualifying them from the respectable foster home. As Dr. Renwick said of the Melbourne Orphan Asylum at Brighton in 1884, it was based on the "cottage plan" of separate houses consisting of separate "families" of children.[32] In 1887, he saw the removal of the Girls' Industrial School and Reformatory to Parramatta as the implementation of a similar policy, the buildings there being said to be large enough for the "cottage" principle to be implemented.[33] Where the barracks was like a gaol, only preventing the child from stealing by removing it from temptation, in the "cottage" system, where each "family" was presided over by a "motherly" matron, it was said that this influence would permanently repress the bad and educe the good, so that the child could be safely returned to society.[34]

Despite the new environment of the "cottage" system, victimization of the institutionalized child continued. In 1900, an enquiry into the dismissal of the sub-matron of Shaftesbury revealed that cruel punishments, both in the school room and in the "cottage" itself, continued to be features of institutional life. For instance, one girl had been punished for bed-wetting by being made to parade for two hours clad in the soiled sheet, a method which, according to the matron, very often prevented such children "from doing it again."[35]

Some former inmates of the Mittagong cottages were interviewed in 1916 by the Public Service Enquiry into the State Children's Relief Board. They recalled cruel punishments and an atmosphere of terror. According to Martha McKay, sent to Mittagong at the age of seven (probably in the late 1880s) she was beaten with a hair brush and made to take cold baths in front of the other girls. Though retrospective accounts of childhood must be treated with caution, in this case her story was verified by other inmates and even by the "mother-in-charge", Mrs. Cutliffe, who was also interviewed by the Commission. According to Mrs. Cutliffe, "The girl who got the brush" deserved it. She "turned out a very good girl afterwards and never gave any further trouble."[36]

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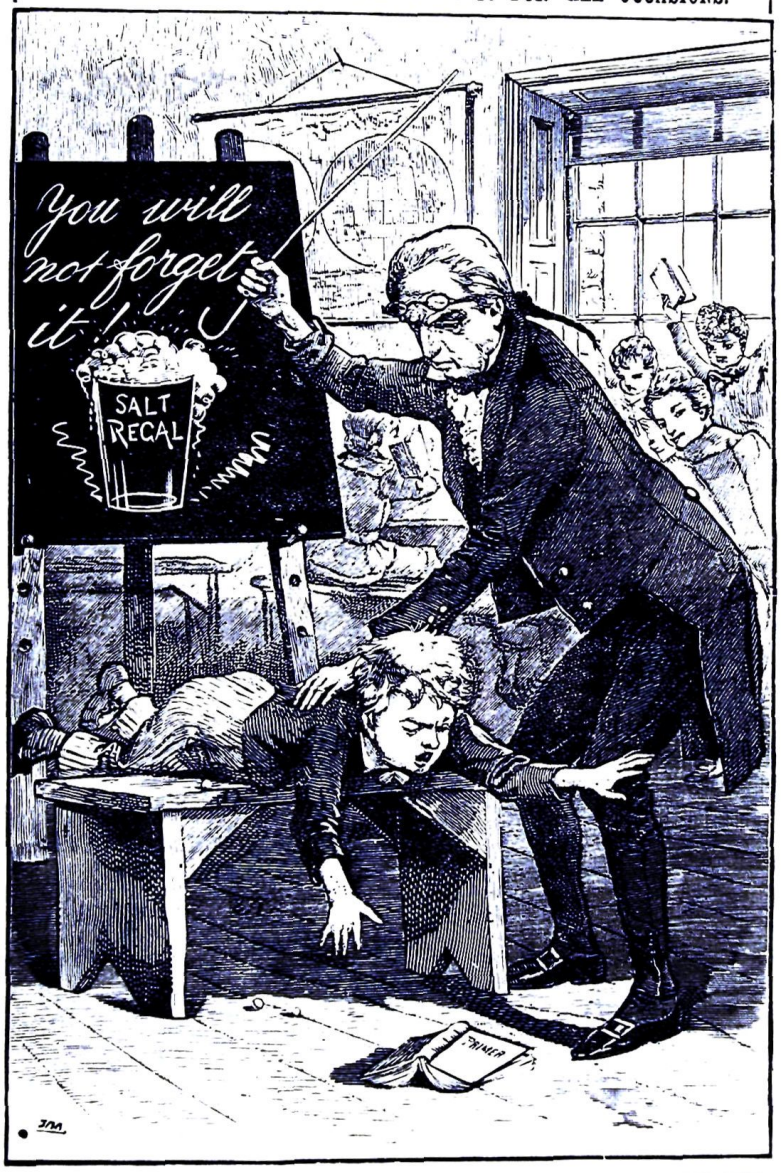
32. SCRB Annual Report 1884 p.6.
33. SCRB Annual Report 1887 p.6.
34. SCRB Annual Report 1884 p.9.
35. Select Committee on the Dismissal of Mrs. Abraham, Shaftesbury Girls' Asylum NSW LA V&P 1900 Vol.6 p.474.
36. Report of the Public Service Board into the Working of the State Children's Relief Branch (NSW V&P Vol.2 1918) p.28, 32, 43-50.

SALT REGAL.

AN APPETISING AND REFRESHING TONIC FOR ALL OCCASIONS.



Sold Everywhere.

FELDHEIM, GOTTHELF & CO.,
SOLE AGENTS, SYDNEY.

A True Pick-Me-Up

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT 1891

48. The choice of such a theme for an advertisement suggests considerable acceptance of the right of adults to punish children, and not only in Reformatories.

The Dawn Vol.3 No.11 Mar.1891.

Even by the late 1880s, however, outraged Dickensian protest was no longer forthcoming. Indeed, as a "Sketch at Shaftesbury" by a Herald journalist in 1889 showed, there was rising approval of medical ideas of the treatment and cure of the child who did not qualify for boarding-out:

> These little girls, scarcely one of whom had passed out of childhood, were working away with a willing vigour at their house duties; and seeing that all of the duties of the establishment had to be done by the inmates themselves, they had need to work. The result of all this is perfect cleanliness ... which can only be compared to that which prevails on board a British man-of-war..."[37]

The transformation of the Barracks into "Cottage Homes" also concealed the fact that these new, smaller institutions assumed the validity of and began to implement, those finer degrees of classification based on the medical concept of a sexual basis of moral and mental disease. By 1898, in the Cottage Homes established at Mittagong and Parramatta for "invalids" who could not be boarded-out, though some of the inmates were diagnosed as having health problems such as scrofula, opthalmia, diseases of the ear, ringworm, and one had syphilis, others were suffering from "diseases" of a more contentious nature. Of 147 inmates in April 1898, 39 were diagnosed as "deformed", 34 as of "weak intellect", 15 were suffering from "dirty habits" and 1 from "nymphomania".[38]

At the Parramatta Industrial School, the inmates were mostly girls who had committed a moral crime, such as being designated as uncontrollable, running away from home, vagrancy or sleeping with men. Few were consigned to a foster home. This could hardly be "expected", in view of the nature of the admissions and the "treatment" considered necessary.[39]

By 1908, classification of children was becoming even further refined. Children diagnosed as "feeble-minded" were separated from the physical invalids into a special home at Pennant Hills. Male truants and other selected juvenile offenders were sent to an Industrial Farm Home, opened at Mittagong in 1906. By 1910, Dr. Charles Mackellar believed that classification based on moral diagnosis should even replace age in deciding to which cottage a child should be consigned.[40]

In 1913, the number of cottage homes for various offenders had risen to ten at Mittagong and three at Pennant Hills, of which total, three were for children diagnosed as feeble-minded. In addition, the Board had opened two homes for "sexually depraved" boys at Dora Creek and Toronto.[41]

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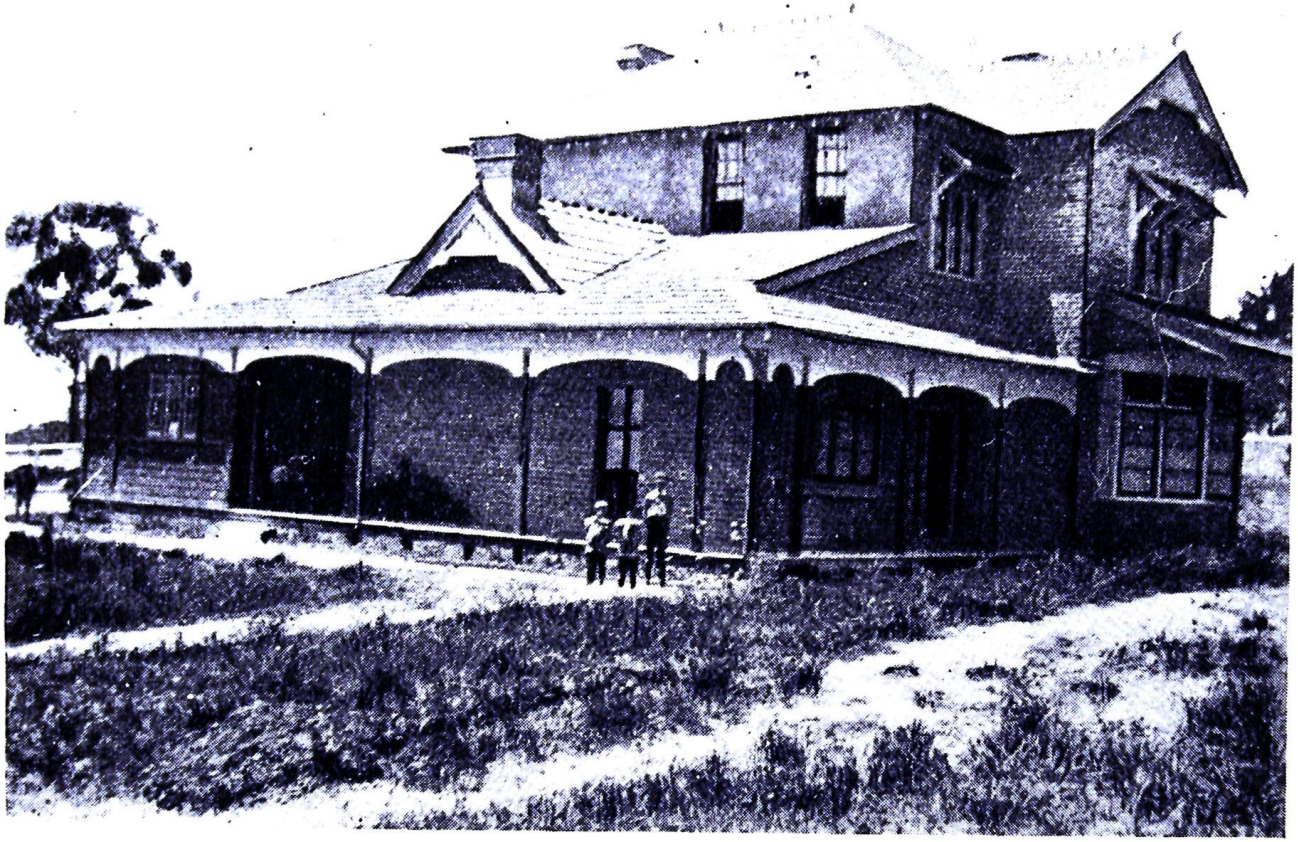
37. "Child Criminals A Sketch at Shaftesbury Girls' Asylum" SMH 14 Apr. 1889.
38. SCRB Annual Report 1898 p.10.
39. SCRB Annual Report 1910 p.16.
40. Ibid. p.20.
41. SCRB Annual Report 1913 p.18, 26.



HOME FOR FEEBLE-MINDED BOYS, MITTAGONG.

49. The cottage home bore little relationship to the Dickensian ideal on which it was based. C.K. Mackellar The Treatment of Neglected and Delinquent Children... (NSW LA PP 1913 Vol.4).



APPLE GRADING. FARM HOME, MITTAGONG

50. A rustic setting, but labour was an essential part of the "cure".
C.K. Mackellar The Treatment of Neglected and Delinquent Children... (NSW LA PP 1913 Vol.4).

Despite an increasingly medicalized terminology, the "treatment" for children incarcerated in the cottage homes and reformatories continued to consist largely of training in industrial skills. The institutions for boys at Dora Creek and Toronto were run by private farmers who were paid 10/- a week to house and train a boy in orcharding, bee-keeping, bootmaking and carpentry.[42] However, one of the aims of the "cottage system" was to ensure that children classified as able in body, though defective in mind, might help to meet the costs of those classified as defective in both areas. Thus, boys at the Industrial Farm Home at Mittagong, provided all of the milk and many of the other food-stuffs required by the other cottages nearby.[43] At Parramatta, the isolation from other cottages was no impediment, for work was brought in for the inmates to do. All girls attended the "Laundry Class daily", which in 1898 washed, "mangled", ironed and folded upwards of 196,000 pieces of clothing, including 31,000 articles from Hurlstone College. The estimated value of the work taken in was £1,200. Girls also made their own clothes and took in sewing and knitting to the value of £120.[44]

The Impact of Heredity Theory:

Though the doctors' case for expertise in monitoring the working-class home largely depended on the concept of the innocence of the child and the fault of the parent, from the late 1890s, much of the way in which larrikinism had become a problem for medicine to solve, rested on theories of hereditary defects alleged to be present in the child itself. For doctors, while logically, heredity theory undermined the case for environmental "cures", it increased the scope for medical classification of children, for the profession claimed to have the knowledge to decide which children of to-day were fit to become the parents of to-morrow.

As in the case for environmental "treatment", so for finding an answer to the problem of inherited defects, the key link in the legitimization of the doctors' authority lay in the medical construction of sexuality. The Dickensian idea of innocence, already heavily qualified, became anachronistic and irrelevant, while the idea of a sexual basis for moral and mental disease became double-edged. It was not merely that failure to control the passions had become a disease which might be transmitted from parent to child, nor that sexual "improvidence" tended to produce more children than parents could support adequately. Rather, sexual excess resulted in increasing numbers of children suffering from this propensity, which they would in turn pass on to their progeny, thereby increasing the costs to the State of dealing with the moral and social defective, and the size of the social sub-group which was undermining the stamina of the race.

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42. SCRB Annual Report 1913 p.26.
43. SCRB Annual Report 1910 p.19.
44. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Annual Report 1898 p.22.

Thus, the precocious sexuality of the neglected or working-class child came to be seen as the core of many of those other problems of concern to child savers. Even if larrikin behaviour culminated in early marriage, this still pointed to the production of another generation suffering not only from the environmental deprivation of the urban slum, but probably also from inherited defects.

Theories that the poor ought to restrict the size of their families were not new. Ever since Malthus' First Essay on Population (which, appearing in 1798, coincided with rising fear of the urban masses and a refutation of Utopian plans for structural reforms), a variety of social theories had been advanced in which prolongation and protection of the childhood environment of the "dangerous" classes by limitation of their family size, was seen as the key to solving social and economic problems at the domestic level.[45] During the 1840s and 50s, however Neo-Malthusianism had run a poor second to Dickensian theories of emigration as a peaceful solution to the British problems of over-crowding, vice and crime.[46]

During the 1870s and 1880s, however, Neo-Malthusian views had been reinforced by ideas borrowed from Darwinian science. It was now not merely claimed that the poor were so because they were too prolific, and that therefore the environment in which they provided left their numerous offspring especially prone to criminality and vice, but that it was the criminal and vicious who were prolific and that since these qualities were transmitted to their offspring by hereditary factors, they ought not to have any children at all.[47]

This particular linking of hereditary theory to the medical idea of sexuality was related to the fact that the "prudent" were beginning to restrict the size of their families. This both allowed the large families of the poor to be discredited as evidence of sexual excess, and generated a strong fear that "the moral type" would soon be outnumbered by the unfit. The new Neo-Malthusians argued that, since the "gradations" between the moral and the mental were so close as to be "indistinguishable", the too-prolific "unfit" included

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45. T.R. Malthus An Essay on the Principle of Population as it Affects the Future Improvement of Society, with Remarks on the Speculations of Mr. Godwin, M. Condorcet and Other Writers (London 1926) p.174-9, 204; D.V. Glass and D.E.C. Eversley (eds.) Population in History (London 1969) p.14-18; P. Fryer The Birth Controllers (London 1965) p.72ff.

46. Coral Lansbury Arcady in Australia (Melbourne 1970) p.31ff.

47. For the use of Malthusian and Darwinian ideas to support conservative socio-economic theories, see Richard Hofstadter Social Darwinism in American Thought (Boston 1955) esp. p.161-5; D.E.C. Eversley Social Theories of Fertility and the Malthusian Debate (Oxford 1959) passim; C.D.W. Goodwin Economic Enquiry in Australia (Durham N.C. 1966) p.325-37, 417ff. The ideological link between Malthus and this use of Darwinian ideas was a direct one, Darwin borrowing the concept of the "struggle for existence" from Malthus' Essay (T.R. Malthus Op.Cit. p.48).

not only the criminal but the insane. "Are we right to suffer them to crowd the world with their inferior type?" asked local pastoralist and exponent of both Neo-Malthusian and eugenic ideas, H.K. Rusden. According to Rusden, who claimed to have anticipated Maudsley's views on the identification of inherited mental and moral characteristics, it was the failure of the State to prevent the undesirable type from "perpetuating his variety" which had caused the present proliferation of charitable and other institutions. These in turn both offered a premium to the imprudent and helpless, at the expense of the industrious and prudent, who, obliged to support an increasing pauper class, were therefore deterred from perpetuating their superior qualities.[48]

The presence of these theories had suggested a further legitimate role for the medical profession in advising the State on how to cope with the parent who produced the unwanted child and juvenile offender. As early as 1874 Rusden explicitly pointed out that social problems, as defined by Darwinian theory, called for "a new moral science" with "physiology as its basis", citing as an example the fact that the "criminal type" was not amenable to environmental reform. Therefore traditional punishments practised by the State, such as flogging, apart from being barbaric, were no deterrent, nor could the influence of church or school either prevent or cure. The only solution was to ensure that the criminals were never released "to propagate their evil kind."[49]

Rusden's views were ahead of his time, and during the 70s and early 80s, discussion of the issue was largely confined to radical secularists. Thus, Joseph Symes' advocacy of birth control was based not only on the notion that it liberated the individual from the punitive, benighting restrictions of the Church, but also that it was the solution to the problem that "paupers, rogues, thieves and prostitutes" were presently multiplying their numbers at random in obedience to divine command.[50]

Correspondents in Symes' paper, The Liberator agreed. Though larrikin behaviour was partly caused by environmental circumstances, which included the failure to provide youth with sufficient physical games and recreations, together with warnings against "secret and sexual crimes", the laws of heredity presently being unfolded by the "young and rapidly growing giant, Social Science" must also be applied. In the eyes of one writer, Mary Carpenter's "perishing and dangerous classes" were now also "diseased". They must be gradually "weeded out" by ensuring that the "imbeciles, lunatics, loafers and

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48. H.K. Rusden Selection: Natural and Artificial (Beechworth 1874) p.14-16; The Treatment of Criminals in Relation to Science (Melbourne 1872) p.4.

49. Selection: Natural and Artificial p.13; The Treatment of Criminals p.8, 13-14.

50. The Liberator Nov. 1884 p.421-3.

larrikins" ceased to propagate their kind.[51]

By the mid 1880s, these sentiments were no longer confined to radical secularists, but were beginning to receive guarded support from administrators of the reformatories, foundling homes and asylums who began to notice that inmates were often themselves the offspring of destitute parents or paupers. This prompted the view that the failure of parents to provide a prolonged education and careful moral training for their children meant that the cycle of poverty was unbroken over generations. The unskilled and unschooled larrikin became the unskilled and too prolific parent tomorrow. This observation in turn encouraged the notion of a biological culture of poverty, ignorance, and sexuality transmitted from parent to child.

As Annual Reports of the Ashfield Infants' Home put it in 1887, those of its "poor weak-minded inmates" who were unfit either for motherhood or domestic service should be "placed under proper medical supervision" in a special "Home". Here, kept in a more or less permanent state of adolescence, they would be "shielded and guarded like innocent and grown-up children of the State."[52]

In 1889, this view was endorsed by respectable member of the legal profession, Mr. Justice Windeyer, in the influential case, "Ex Parte Collins". Collins, the owner of a Sydney bookshop, had been prosecuted for selling copies of Annie Besant's The Law of Population (1877) and Windeyer, one of the three judges appointed to decide whether or not the book was an obscene publication, was influential in the decision that the case be quashed. According to Windeyer, far from it being now a moral necessity to rear a family of ten or twelve, such a policy was "immoral extravagance". The dissemination of contraceptive information "to the masses likely to overbreed" was of "transcendent national importance", given the imminent threat of national "decay" and "disaster" caused by the "production of children who are a burden to society" and a "danger to the State." Contraceptive methods adopted to prevent the procreation of a number of children, diseased and rickety, and certain to inherit a taint of insanity, would be "natural and right". So too, would be contraception adopted in the case of a drunken husband, for his daughters would be destined to prostitution, and his sons would inherit the "taint of alcoholism" which "would soon drag them down with their sisters to herd with the seething mass of degenerate and animal humanity that constitute the dangerous classes of great cities."[53]

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51. Ibid. Mar. 1887 p.244 (letter from William H. McNamara referring to the "larrikin" attack on a girl at Mt. Rennie).

52. Thirteenth Annual Report 1887 p.7.

53. W.C. Windeyer Ex Parte Collins A Judgment (Sydney 1889) p.4, 13, 18.

The increasing institutionalization of the children of the poor furthered such views. As a letter to the State Children's Relief Board in NSW from a dissatisfied foster-parent, put it in 1883-4, frequently children whose outward appearance seemed "clean" were later found by their guardians to be addicted to "bad manners and filthy habits." If something was not done to prevent this degraded type of parent, Australia would not find room to store all her prisoners, lunatics, mendicants and "in about 200 years" would have "a race worse in every respect than the aborigines."[54]

In 1884, Renwick declared that the moral and mental "disease" from which so many children coming under the control of the Board, were said to be suffering,was not entirely caused by the unhealthy atmosphere of their environment. It was also contracted through the action of hereditary factors.[55] He quoted the findings of the New York Children's Aid Society, that the descendants of a mere five illegitimate girls now constituted a large sub-group of 709 paupers, prostitutes and people who were criminal, idiotic, licentious or insane.[56]

Meanwhile, the efforts of the earlier advocates of eugenic policies continued. Thus by 1894, H.K. Rusden, in addition to having distributed pamphlets to persuade the poor to control family size by artificial contraception, was advocating that all criminals and lunatics should be "narcotized" on first conviction.[57]

This growing interest in eugenic engineering called for an expanded role to be played by the doctor in monitoring the domestic life of the poor. Those administering the charitable as well as the state institutions were tending to see the whole problem of the unwanted child, infant or adolescent, as related to uncontrolled child-bearing on the part of the poor, which medical science might be able to arrest. What was needed was not more facilities for rescue and reformation, but careful classification of children therein to determine their moral educatability and ultimate fitness for parenthood.

Thus, by the 1890s, it was not merely the alleged environmental deprivation which made the larrikins a source of alarm. It was the fact that they were now seen as harbouring inherited mental and moral tendencies which were dangerous to society. Unfit for parenthood into which, however, they would

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54. SCRB Annual Report 1883-4 p.35.

55. SCRB Annual Report 1883 p.12.

56. SCRB Annual Report 1883-4 p.8. Tracing and quantifying the "diseased" descendants of the unfit became frequent among advocates of eugenic theory, the case most often cited being the infamous American "Jukes family". For the number of unfit progeny attributed to it by 1918, see Kindergarten Union of NSW Annual Report 1898 p.22; The Woman's Voice Nov. 1918 p.10-11.

57. "The Survival of the Unfittest" AAAS Report Vol.5 1893 p.523-4.

nevertheless rush, they were burdening society with a rising wave of criminal and vicious children who would in turn transmit their fatal flaws to their too numerous offspring.

By the late 1890s, doctors themselves were beginning to espouse eugenic solutions. Dr. Carroll in 1898 pointed out that the sentiment and misdirected activity of benevolent organizations had failed both to prevent and to advance understanding of the conditions they sought to alleviate. In spite of their efforts, there was more drunkenness, secret vice and criminality in modern civilized societies than in previous ones.[58] There was need of a more professional approach to the problem, in which an enlarged role must be played by the man of science. His services could be extended from merely classifying and treating the unfit in the institutions to which he had access, to actually engineering a more scientific approach to parentage and so reducing the numbers requiring this treatment.[59]

The authority of doctors on this subject at this time was strengthened by medical disclosures of the hereditary effects of venereal disease on the unborn child. The concern to find new measures to combat this disease which had accompanied feminist protest against the Contagious Diseases Acts, had in the first instance focussed on the protection of the older child rather than on the congenital effects on the unborn. Even in the moves to provide the young with education in sexual matters, the warnings given had continued to dwell as much on the dangers of precocious sexuality and masturbation as on the effects of congenital disease on the fitness of the individual or the race.[60]

By the turn of the century, however, doctors and social purity workers were seeing the dangers of venereal disease to the health of the unborn child as confirming their call for the State to monitor fitness for parenthood. "In my practice my heart is wrung by the sight of scores of innocent children whose diseased eyes and ulcerated throats and noses proclaim aloud the sins of the fathers," commented Dr. Richard Arthur in 1902.[61] By 1908, Dr. P.B. Bennie of the Melbourne Children's Hospital believed that about 10% of the total number of children in Melbourne were tainted with syphilis and that the infected child's

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58. "Sociology, the Degenerates and How to Detect and Ameliorate their Condition" Science of Man Vol.1 No.2 1898 p.45.

59. "On Crime, Criminality and the Prevention of Criminality" Science of Man Vol.1 No.6 1898 p.135-7.

60. The Liberal Woman 1 Feb. 1914 p.66-7, 1 Mar. 1914 p.83.

61. The Needs and Methods of Purity Teaching (Sydney 1915) p.10 (based on a paper read at the Conference of Young Men's Associations Hobart 1902). See also P.A. Morrow "A Plea for Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis" Australasian White Cross League (Sydney n.d.) p.5-7.

chances of dying were seven times greater than that of the healthy child.[62] Dr. W. Atkinson Wood added that studies of syphilitic outpatients at the Melbourne Children's Hospital revealed that the children of infected parents were often prematurely aborted or born with mental defects.[63] After 1909, comments on the death rates of children who were "unfitted for the battle of life" at birth and who "succumbed at an early age" became routine in the Annual Reports of Sydney Metropolitan and Combined Sanitary Districts Medical Officer, Dr. W.G. Armstrong. Similar observations were standard in medical comments on infant mortality by 1912, where they constituted a new argument for medical monitoring of pregnancy as well as childbirth and infant care.[64]

Such disclosures lent plausibility to the idea that physical, mental and moral characteristics were largely inherited conditions, closely related to the moral probity of parents. They also lent credence to the identification of the physical, mental and moral which was already present in medical theory and suggested that, in essence, the problem of fitness for parenthood was one which doctors might solve. Unrestrained sexuality was a pathological condition which, beginning in youth, led on to promiscuity, seduction, illegitimacy, prostitution mental and physical debility, alcoholism and crime, these tendencies being in turn passed on to future generations in increasing proportions, ruining the home life of the nation and undermining the evolution of a superior national type.

From the turn of the century, the authority of doctors to advise and direct forms of eugenic engineering was also facilitated by their predominance in Anthropometry and Child Study, the findings of which ostensibly offered expert classification and measurement of hidden mental and moral flaws. In Britain, Galton had envisaged his researches at his Anthropometric Laboratory as a preliminary to deciding which of the unfit should be prevented from propagating their kind[65] and interest in improving the mental and physical fitness of the race was increased by the incidence of debility revealed during recruitment for the Boer War. This was followed by publicity given to Arnold White's Efficiency and Empire in 1901, which related physical fitness to the survival of the national organism. Though technically, the biological study of childhood and adolescence had resulted in claims that all children were in danger from inherited destructive instincts, and all were likely to revert to

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62. "The Frequency and Intensity of Congenital Syphilitic Infection in Children" Trans. AMC 1908 Vol.3 p.9-15.

63. "Congenital Syphilis and its Prevention" Trans. AMC 1908 Vol.3 p.18.

64. "Infantile Mortality" AMG 13 Jul. 1912 p.26-7; Dr. Mary Booth Report on Infant Mortality (Melbourne 1913) p.5.

65. Hereditary Genius (1869), Inquiries into the Human Faculty and its Development (1883), Natural Inheritance (1889) cited in E.G. Boring History of Experimental Psychology (New York 1950) p.472-8.

nomadic, barbaric habits, it was clearly not the bourgeois family which doctors and child-measurers believed was threatening society by producing a huge concentration of stunted and diseased little savages. Even for those convinced of the prior importance of environment over heredity, the enthusiasm for child study was from the outset based on the idea of the benefits to the race of bringing its findings to bear on the families of the poor.[66] Measurement and quantification was much more than a mystification of professional technique. For many of its advocates, it was a pre-requisite for classifying and segregating the maimed, the criminal and the insane and, where these conditions were diagnosed as beyond cure, preventing them from transmitting their fatal flaws. As Dr. Marden said in 1907, "the moral qualities of the child" to a large extent depended upon "the physical normalities" and much of the moral character was determined by hereditary influences. "Blood does count for something with a vengeance!"[67]

Reflecting these preoccupations, the aims of Dr. Carroll's society included establishing a laboratory where children might be measured, tested and graded, and to found a school where those identified as defective might be sent.[68] At Society meetings, in addition to papers on "Child Study in Other Countries" by G.H. Knibbs and J.W. Turner, and "On the Teaching of Practical and Infant Hygiene" by Dr. Mary Booth, papers were read on "What are 'Defectives and Deficients'" by Dr. Brennand and "Our Unbalanced Folk" by Dr. Flashman.[69] As Dr. Carroll had pointed out in 1898, having discovered the "anthropological determinants of young delinquents," plus any other abnormal condition of their minds, child measurement was to be followed by the identification of youthful degenerates. They would then be sent either to colonies or special schools where if the inherited taint could not be removed and their unhealthy brains cured, at least they would be prevented from reproduction. Such action was especially necessary in the Australian colonies where want of strict discipline and absence of parental control had resulted in the infamous larrikin pushes, which were a training ground for burglars and criminals. The professional social scientist would do more to improve society than the "misdirected efforts of ignorant meddlers." It was the new Anthropology, Psychology and Sociology which would "ameliorate mankind."[70]

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66. T.A. Coghlan "Child Measurement" AAAS Report Vol.9 1902 p.545.

67. "Dr. Marden's Presidential Address" Aust. Journal of Education 15 Aug. 1907 p.8.

68. "Proceedings and Proposals of the Anthropological Society Since Last Report" and "Criminology" Science of Man Vol.1 No.3 1898 p.53, 60; D. Izett Health and Longevity According to the Theories of the Late Dr. Carroll (Sydney 1915) p.4.

69. D. Izett Op.Cit. p.6.

70. "The Development of Men and their Rising to Higher Types" Science of Man Vol.1 No.9 1898 p.195-6.

Thus it was that heredity theory enabled the medical profession to move strongly into the field of evolving effective and more drastic solutions for cutting off larrikinism at its biological source, in unfit parentage. In 1903, a New Zealand doctor, W.A. Chapple, whose works were also published in Melbourne, argued that the prudent and restrained members of society were being overwhelmed by the criminals, paupers and idiots, the drunkards, the deformed and the diseased. He recommended sterilization by tubal ligature of defective women and the wives of defective men. Thus, the sum of human happiness be increased and there would follow a greater improvement in the race in twenty years than had been achieved by all the environmental palliatives of the Victorian era.[71]

Medical interest in restricting the family size of the unfit rose after 1904, when in England a Royal Commission was appointed to enquire into the "Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded". Reporting in 1908, it defined certain categories of potential parents who were to be classified as suffering from inherited disabilities and who were not permitted to reproduce. These were the "Idiots" and "Imbeciles", unable to earn a living or protect themselves from physical danger, the "Feeble-Minded", not as defective as the first category, but unable to manage their affairs with ordinary prudence, the "Moral Imbeciles", who had criminal propensities, and the "Epileptics" and the "Inebriates".[72]

The influence of this Commission on the opinion of the colonial medical profession became evident from 1908, when prominent doctors developed schemes to apply these theories. Dr. Andrew Davidson, the Medical Superintendent of the Hospital for the Insane at Callan Park, claimed that insanity was rising in all states and that its causes were hereditary factors, such as alcoholism and syphilis. Alcohol for instance, was a cause of insanity, crime and poverty, and "drunken mothers" were known to be "very fertile". It followed that "chronic inebriates" ought to be exterminated.[73]

By the Australasian Medical Conference of 1911, the progress of research into hereditary defects was a predominant concern and four different papers suggested methods to prevent the "unfit" from procreating. For instance, Dr. Harvey Sutton warned that the families of the feeble-minded were large, and that from such families were recruited the criminal, prostitutes and the unemployable. He recommended the elimination of stocks definitely classified as undesirable.[74]

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71. W.A. Chapple The Fertility of the Unfit (Melbourne 1903) p.xiii. 79ff.

72. Dr. Eric Sinclair "Mental Defectives" AMG 12 Oct. 1912 p.373-4.

73. "Mental Diseases from a Sociological Point of View" Journal of Sydney University Medical Society Nov. 1908 p.42-58.

74. "The Feeble-minded - Their Classification and Importance" Trans. AMC 1911 (Sydney 1913) p.894-905. See also papers by J.W.Y. Fishbourne p.885, Dr. E.M. Steven p.891, Dr. R.S. Callander p.872.

Encroaching on the Teacher - The School Medical Service:

Dr. Sutton had based his remarks on preliminary work undertaken by the Victorian Education Department in detecting and classifying mentally defective school children, and the implementation of the School Medical Service in NSW in 1907 and Victoria in 1909 was a key means by which medical expertise on the measurement and classification of the child would be furthered. As part of the "service", children were to be "tested anthropometrically" in order to assess their "trainability", as a first step towards segregation in special day schools and colonies.[75]

Medical encroachment on the teacher's realm had been facilitated by the influence of the doctor in the reformatories and cottage homes. For instance, though for those children classified as suffering from moral imbecility, forms of physical labour continued to be seen as the best remedy, for those diagnosed as unsuited for boarding-out because of mental defectiveness, Kindergarten methods were employed. In 1898, Dr. Carroll pointed to the success of Itard and Sequin in this field, though he also believed that such training should include calisthenics and military drill to develop muscular co-ordination and "prompt subordination".[76]

By 1911, the application of Kindergarten methods as a remedy for mental defectiveness passed further into medical hands with the importation of ideas borrowed from Maria Montessori in Rome. A doctor with a special interest in the psychological and anthropometric study of the child, Montessori's appointment in 1907 as director of a newly established tenement project to provide day care for the children of working mothers in Rome, was seen by her as providing a laboratory in which to develop scientific methods to "direct the development of the intelligence, the character," in children aged from three to seven, otherwise left to "chance".[77] She believed that the medicalization of teaching methods could do much to prevent the "arrest of intellectual development" and "minimize its progressive symptoms" in the young. Further, since criminality itself was now known to stem from errors in child culture, use of the "Cephalic Index" and "Statistical Methodology" in the school could also help to detect the "future rebels and enemies of society." Both they and the "weaklings" were to be provided with "special protection" in "special schools".[78]

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75. Dr. Harvey Sutton Op.Cit. p.894, 904.

76. Science of Man Vol.1 No.9 1898 p.200-201.

77. Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook (London 1914) p.4.

78. Dr. Maria Montessori Pedagogical Anthropology (London 1913) p.6, 18, 37, 168.

In 1913, Kindergarten methods based on Montessori's theories were in use at the Lunacy Department's Hospital for the Insane Newcastle, the three State Children's Relief Board Homes in NSW and at the Bell Street Fitzroy school for the feeble-minded in Melbourne.[79]

Though educational theorists were themselves exploring the possibility of the Kindergarten as a means of increasing control over the younger children of the poor, they were also being professionally disadvantaged by current allegations that teaching methods and equipment were out of touch with the latest findings of bio-medical science. It was said that in addition to over-stimulating the mind at the expense of the body, faulty architecture and desks were ruining the physique of the young. Also there was insufficient playground space and attention to games.[80] Further, like the entry of the State into the field of caring for the neglected child and juvenile offender, the extension of education to all classes of children had drawn attention to the incidence of mental defectiveness, yet in contrast with the medical influence in the Reformatories, no attempts had been made to segregate such children into special schools where they could be medically treated for this condition.[81] More care should be taken not to place such children with younger ones of the same educational standard, merely to suit the convenience of teachers. A boy of fourteen should not associate with a boy of nine, for the older one "knew more" of things which the younger one should be ignorant.[82] Indeed, so far the school system had striven to exclude everything to do with the body and its needs, giving no instruction on the laws of health, insufficient attention to the segregation of the sexes and worse, no special training for girls in how to care for "that particularly helpless and easily damaged individual," the baby.[83] The education of girls themselves should be specially adjusted to prevent "physical and mental overpressure" during the critical, adolescent stage.[84] Having no knowledge of biology and sociology, teachers must be prepared to be guided by medical expertise. The school should be permeated with

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79. SCRB Annual Report 1913 p.19; Dr. Eric Sinclair "Clinical Demonstration of Kindergarten Methods as Carried Out in the Hospital for the Insane, Newcastle" Trans.AMC 1911 p.905.

80. Dr. J.S.C. Elkington "A Plea for the Australian Child Body" AAAS Report Vol.12 1909 p.775-7; Dr. S. Marden Op.Cit. p.7.

81. Dr. J.V. McCreery Op.Cit. p.263-6.

82. Dr. Reuter Roth "Backward and Feeble-Minded Children" AMG 12 Oct. 1912 p.380.

83. Dr. J.S.C. Elkington Op.Cit. p.775; Dr. P.E. Muskett The Art of Living in Australia (Sydney 1893) p.94-113.

84. Dr. Mary Booth Op.Cit. p.5.

"hygienic practices",[85] if young Australia was to be given every opportunity to "grow up a broad-chested, keen-sighted, hard-fisted race, respecting its body and better equipped mentally than was at present possible."[86]

From the end of the eighties, even the Utopian rhetoric of the earlier apostles of compulsory, secular education was coming under attack from doctors, who claimed that it had failed to achieve that diminution of crime which its advocates in the 1870s had so confidently predicted. In 1883, Dr. Renwick quoted the Inspector of Police, Mr. Fosbery, that "the more general diffusion of education does not appear to be having the moral effect that was hoped for...". Of 494 young people apprehended in 1894 for minor offences, only 24 were illiterate.[87]

New South Wales government statistician Timothy Coghlan was another who pointed to the fact that improved facilities for education and high literacy rates had not diminished crime.[88] In 1905, G. Stanley Hall's Adolescence also argued that intellectual training could not moralize, and a new "criminal psychology" was needed.[89]

These criticisms were compounded by the current attack by heredity theorists on the environmental determinants of behaviour. Though doctors were by no means agreed on the predominant influence of hereditary factors,[90] it was hereditary theory which was of greater assistance than environmentalism, to medical theories of social science, for it had more potential for the evasion of the economic basis of poverty. Since undesirable mental, moral and physical manifestations , such as not only syphilis but alcoholism, criminality and mental deficiency, could now be said to be largely inherited, the poverty of the environment became of even less significance. Moral, mental and physical defects became logically the causes, not the results of economic issues. As Dr. Carroll explained in the journal of the Royal Australasian Anthropological Society in 1898, the present belief held by authorities in Criminal Anthropology was that whatever the environment, if there was no criminal taint, there would be no crime. But if there was a taint, and it was increased by the absence of training and discipline, it was certain that crime would occur.[91]

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85. Dr. Mary Booth "The Development of a Public Health Conscience" Trans. AMC 1908 p.149.

86. Dr. J.S.C. Elkington Op.Cit. p.776.

87. SCRB Annual Report 1883-4 p.8-9.

88. Wealth and Progress of NSW 1888-9 p.522-3. This comment was reiterated in subsequent editions, for instance 1890-91 p.279-80; 1900-01 p.221.

89. G. Stanley Hall Op.Cit. Vol.1 p.410.

90. See for instance Dr. J. Jamieson Hereditary Disease (Melbourne 1895), an account of how mental disease might be prevented by obedience to the old "laws of health".

91. "Criminology" Science of Man Vol.1 No.5 1898 p.110.

For doctors, whether convinced of the primacy of environmental or hereditary influences on the mind of the child, the implementation of medical inspection of children attending the national schools offered distinct professional advantages. By broadening access to the institutionalized child beyond the Reformatories, it constituted a means by which the doctor might both advise the teacher on child care and training and lay the groundwork for medical guidance of future eugenic policies.

Thus when initiated in NSW in 1907, at selected inner-city schools in Sydney and Newcastle, school doctors Reuter Roth and May Harris checked classroom lighting, ventilation, desks and drainage and examined such children who "appeared to be physically or mentally defective."[92] However, careful anthropometric identification and study of all defective children was also to be the twin function of the medical inspection of school children. The presence of feeble-minded and criminally-inclined children in the school was a handicap to the normal child, being "so much grit in the hub of the educational machine",[93] a "drag on the teacher" and a menace to the healthy children." Soon "out of control", their sexual instincts were highly and precociously developed and remained "of an animal type". Some may have already committed an offence; all would be inclined towards the production of illegitimate children.[94] Thus it was mandatory that they be identified and removed to an expanded network of special schools which the State must develop outside the national system, for doctors believed, the numbers which would be found to require institutionalization would not be small.[95] The expansion of the special schools would also offer valuable opportunity to doctors for "psychological research".[96]

In New South Wales, other aims of the Anthropometric Survey were to keep a check on the evolutionary progress of the national organism by comparing the growth rate of Australian children with those of other countries. In this case,

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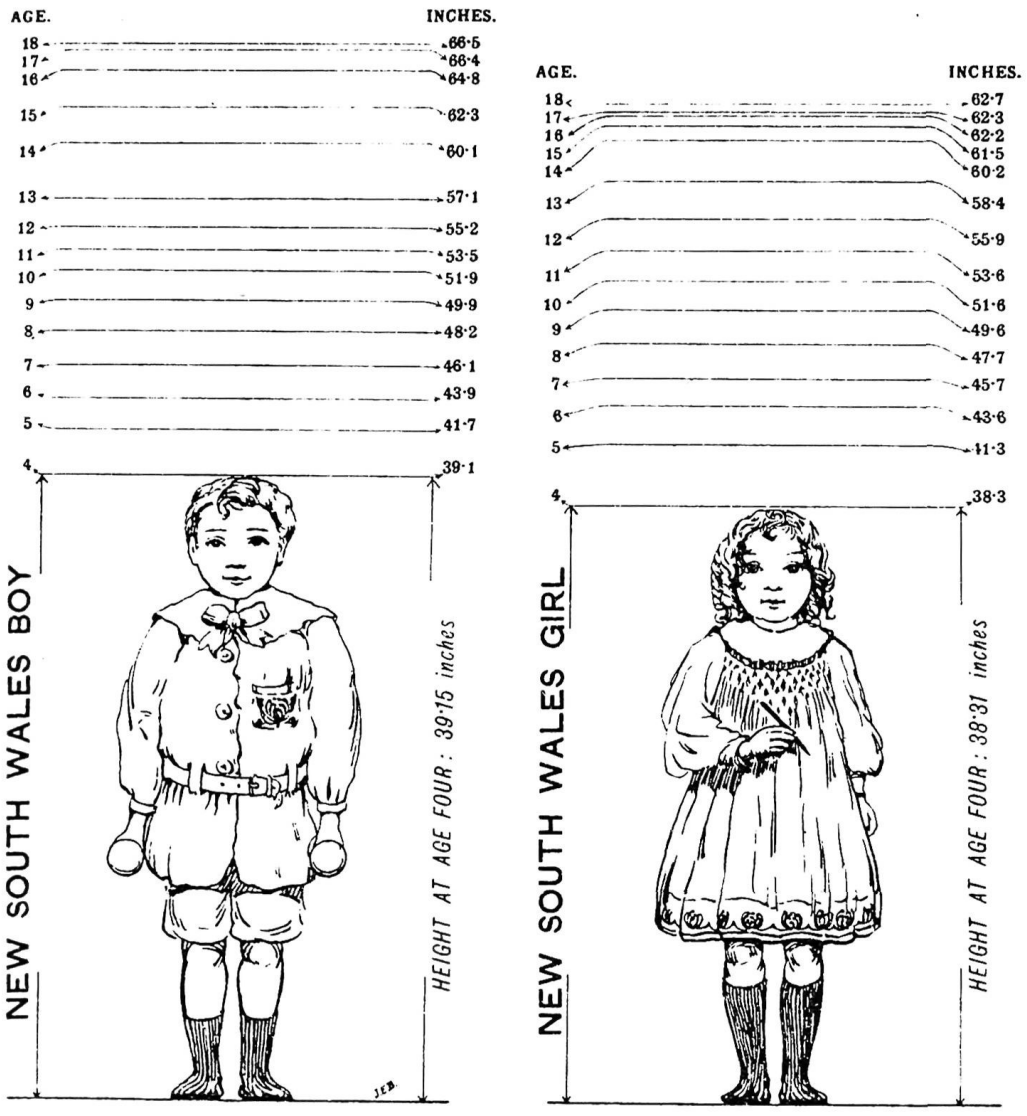
92. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Annual Report 1907 p.17.

93. Dr. Harvey Sutton Op.Cit. p.905.

94. Dr. Andrew Davidson "Mental Defectives" AMG 12 Oct. 1912 p.375-7.

95. Ibid.; Dr. Harvey Sutton Op.Cit. p.904. Dr. Sutton believed that children should be sent to special schools on the advice of medical practitioners, the nomination of teachers or by direct application of parents. This would have vastly increased the pressure on the existing facilities for children classified as mentally defective, where numbers were still relatively small. In NSW in 1913, in addition to the three SCRB "cottages" for State wards classified as mentally defective, which housed 24 children, there were 38 children under the age of 15 admitted to the State Institute for Imbeciles at Newcastle that year. (Report of the Inspector-General for the Insane 1913 p.17; SCRB Annual Report 1913 p.19-20). There were 60 children at the Bell St. Fitzroy School by 1912-13 (Report of Minister of Public Instruction (Vic.) 1912-13 p.28).

96. Dr. Harvey Sutton Op.Cit. p.904.



Showing Height of Average Boy and Girl of New South Wales at successive School Ages.

TESTING THE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RACE

School Medical Service NSW

51. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Report Upon the Physical Condition of Children Attending Public Schools (Sydney 1908).

the emphasis was still on physical rather than mental conditions and the role of environmental factors in determining them.[97] Consequently the results neatly tended to confirm the assumptions of older medical ideology. Children from uncrowded suburbs were taller than those from industrial ones and the height and weight of country children surpassed that of the city ones.[98]

These findings resulted in some limited acceptance of a correlation between physical growth and degree of poverty, though this was qualified by allegations that poverty was in turn caused by intemperance, and that "malnutrition, though in some cases traceable to want of money, is in very many instances, the result of unsuitable feeding."[99]

The survey also aimed to consider how physical development in general correlated with mental progress and concluded that the two were closely related. "The general rule is established that at any given age, the higher the child's mental development, the better the physique."[1]

This thrust in the School Medical Service was intensified after the appointment of Dr. Mary Booth to assist Dr. Sutton in Victoria in 1910. Formerly a statistician working for the New South Wales Government (1900), Dr. Booth had been employed from 1904-1909 with the Department of Public Instruction to give lectures on health subjects to senior girls. According to Dr. Booth, the hygienist in education had a dual function. On the one hand, he or she should work to arrest infant mortality by spreading the medical message on child care, and stressing that the rise of manufacturing industries must not be allowed to take the adolescent girl to occupations outside the home. In addition,the newer eugenic elements of that message must also be taught. Her lectures included topics such as "Personal Hygiene" and the need for an "efficient" birth rate.[2]

Predictably, Dr. Booth believed that the School Medical Service should concentrate on both the environmental and hereditary factors which affected the mental, moral and physical powers. The aim should also be to watch the trend of national physique by periodic anthropometric survey, and in particular, to

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97. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Report Upon the Physical Condition of Children Attending Public Schools (Sydney 1908) p.vi. Valuable assistance on the School Medical Service was lent by Barbara Dale.

98. Ibid. p.13, 18.

99. Ibid. p.24, 27.

1. Ibid. p.vi, 20.

2. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Report on the Physical Condition of Children (Sydney 1910) p.25. In NSW, where the Service was reorganized and expanded in 1913, the lectures to senior girls were continued by a staff of five trained nurses, who also distributed booklets on temperance, the laws of health, and infant care. See NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Annual Report 1913 p.71; AMG 14 Feb. 1914 p.132; Dr. C.S. Willis A Brief Description of the School Medical Worker in NSW (Sydney 1914) p.7-8.

detect and classify the mentally deficient and educate the public to the importance of their special care and control.[3]

Upon the recommendation of the Australasian Medical Congress of 1911, the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science appointed an Anthropometric Committee, with Dr. Booth as honorary secretary, to concentrate on collecting statistics on the unfit. Not only school children but cadets attending compulsory military training under the Defence Act (1911) were to be an integral part of this enquiry. As Dr. Booth explained in 1911, "the primary object of medical inspection is finding out the pathological states ... but only a short sighted policy will confine it to such narrow limits." The exact measurement of the height, weight, eye and hair colour, vision, hearing and mental attributes and rigid statistical analysis of such data would reveal the influence of parental alcoholism, parental occupation, and home conditions on school children, and more generally, lead to the determining of "the laws of human evolution." For instance, a recent study of the Eugenics Laboratory in London had shown that "given uniformity of race, an inferior environment may be the centre to which the mentally and physically inferior parent naturally gravitates." "We must use every method science puts into our hands, and guide the national destiny by counsels based on our investigations."[4]

Though other members of the Australasian Association's Committee included Professor Mackie (foundation Professor of Education at Sydney University), G.H. Knibbs, Professor Edgeworth David and Professor Ramsay Smith, members of the medical profession remained important. Along with Dr. Booth, it was represented on the Committee by Dr. Norris and Dr. Elkington, who had introduced the school medical service to Tasmania in 1906. This committee reported in 1914, finding that 4% of all children tested were definitely feeble-minded, and 12% mentally dull, requiring special, separate training.[5]

Conservative women's organizations lent firm support not only to the concept of the School Medical Service,[6] but also to the doctor's eugenic ideals. For instance, whereas in February 1908, members of the Women's Liberal League were discussing methods of achieving a better environment in which

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3. "The Scope and Organization of a School Medical Service" Trans. AMC 1911 p.650-5.

4. Dr. Mary Booth "School Anthropometrics" AAAS Report Vol.13. 1911 p.689, 695-6.

5. Trans. AMC 1914 p.701-20. For further information on the interest of the medical profession in the segregation of the "unfit" see "The Prophylaxis of Insanity" AMG 6 Jul. 1912 p.6,7; Dr. Eric Sinclair Op.Cit. p.373-4; AMG 28 Dec. 1912 p.654 (Report on Dr. Richard Arthur's role in the formation of the Eugenics Society of NSW); Dr. Prince A. Morrow Op.Cit. p.15; Dr. Wallace A. Weihen "Eugenics or Race Culture" AKM Vol.3 No.6 Jul.1913 p.3-4.

6. J. Jones "The Child's Right to Health" The Liberal Woman 1 May 1914 p.129-31.

working-class women might rear healthy children, and in June, the "All Topics Circle" debated "which has the greater influence on character, heredity or environment?" [7], in April 1910, they were discussing the work of Galton and C.W. Saleeby. They concluded that the child's right to be well-born demanded that mental defectives, whose condition was hereditary, and who were the most dangerous members of the community, should be rendered incapable of reproducing their breed.[8] "The vulgar aim of reckless racial fertility no longer commends itself as worthy," members were told (though to produce no children at all, or only one, was also denounced as "studied vice and selfishness.")[9]

For doctors, other than increasing their influence as authorities on the mental condition of the young, the School Medical Service had other, practical advantages. The school doctors did not offer honorary treatment of ailments found, but instead sent the parents a note on the condition, advising consultation with "the family doctor."[10] In 1907-1908, 10% of pupils inspected were found to be suffering from ailments, 66% of which were diagnosed as poor sight, a potentially lucrative field for the doctor during these years when the BMA was declaring the optician a mere tradesman, unqualified to treat diseases of the eye.[11]

By 1910, the use of the service to enlarge the market for the doctor in the private family was growing. Though fewer children were found to have defective vision, 49% of those examined were found to be suffering from growths in the throat and nose, a condition said to require surgical intervention which doctors could now provide (although Dr.Roth considered that these conditions might have been prevented if mothers heeded the doctor's advice and avoided giving their infants the dummy comforter).[12]

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7. C.L. Montefiore "Our Justification" The Monthly Record 29 Feb. 1908 p.14-15; 25 Jun. 1908 p.6.

8. F. Montefiore "Eugenics" Monthly Record 1 Apr. 1910 p.299-300.

9. J. Jones Op.Cit. p.131 (quotation attributed to Havelock Ellis). The growing disapproval of the large family, which was the concomitant of eugenic policies, was reflected in the advent of the term "rabbit-catcher" to describe the unqualified midwife, who was similarly becoming associated with poverty and ignorance. See Barbara Baynton "Bush Church" in Bush Studies (Sydney 1965) p.118 (first published 1902).

10. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Report Upon the Physical Condition of Children ... (1908) p.vi.

11. Ibid. p.1; Report of Minister of Public Instruction (Vic.) 1912-13 p.111-12; T.S. Pensabene The Rise of the Medical Practitioner in Victoria (Canberra 1980) p.139-45. The opticians did not gain legal status as a profession until 1930 in NSW and 1935 in Vic.

12. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Report Upon the Physical Condition of Children ... (1910) p.2, 18. For growing medical interest in removing tonsils and adenoids, see AMG 31 Jan. 1914, p.79-80; 14 Feb. 1914 p.133.

The school medical inspectors also addressed parents, who were said to attend "in fair numbers".[13] According to Dr. Grace Boelke, a new appointee in 1910, the lectures helped allay "suspicion and irritation at the supposed interference with parental authority." Dr. May Harris added that where adults were "set in their hygienic habits" and hard to change, the young could be made more easily to absorb the medical message and so "take and maintain a place among the mentally and physically fit."[14]

In cases where the doctor had recommended medical treatment, the school nurse might call personally at the homes to speak to the parents. As an article in the Australasian Nurses' Journal put it in 1912, the school nurse had "great opportunities" to help the mother, who would not question her right to come into her home to advise her that "Johnny needs his tonsils taken out" or that he "must not be given a penny every time he goes to school." Indeed, ideally the school nurse was "the medical social worker in the homes."[15]

Dr. Mary Booth agreed. The "potent environment of the home" must not escape the scrutiny of medical expertise and modification "where necessary". In this the school nurse had a vital role to play, and as such it was she who forged "the link between the home, the school and the State."[16]

Though legislation on the lines of the British Mental Deficiency Act (1913) (passed in South Australia in 1913 and Tasmania in 1920) was not achieved in New South Wales and Victoria, for the medical profession, the espousal of eugenic theories had permitted progress towards legitimization of their expertise on the mental training of the child. Medical authority with respect to the young was no longer a "gospel" so much as a modern psychic science by which various kinds of mental and moral deviance could be prevented or cured and the stamina of the racial stock be geared for survival in the international struggle for existence.

Prophetically, by 1914, medical advocates of the new scientific theories for dealing with inherited propensities towards larrikinism had won an important convert in Charles Mackellar. A strong pro-natalist, Mackellar had remained personally unconvinced of the relevance of hereditary factors in juvenile delinquency. In The Child, the Law and the State (1907), he stressed that vice and crime were not hereditary. Similarly in 1909, his Instructions to Probation Officers still emphasized that children apprehended were to be

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13. Report Upon the Physical Condition of Children (1910) p.22 (Dr. Roth); Report of Minister of Public Instruction (Vic.) 1912-13 p.109.

14. Report Upon the Physical Condition of Children (1910) p.22-3.

15. "The School Nurse" ANJ Nov. 1912 p.391.

16. "The Scope and Organization of the School Medical Service" Trans. AMC 1911 Vol.1 p.653.

regarded as "the victims of an unfortunate environment."[17]

However, during a visit to Europe in 1912, Mackellar became interested in the debate on whether juvenile delinquency was due to evil environment and parental mismanagement, or to mental deficiency which was inherited, and by 1913, was convinced of the need to identify and segregate the feeble-minded and criminally inclined.[18] In 1913, the Board's cottages for the feeble-minded were made available for "visitation" by Drs. Mary Booth, Sybil Bevan and Andrew Davidson. Mackellar himself was attempting to correlate the incidence of juvenile destitution and crime with "unfit" parentage. Using Children's Court records since October 1911, he compared the proportion of offenders who were illegitimate with the proportion who were believed to be mental defectives.[19]

Further, doctors now had access to a new method for identifying hidden defects in the mind and morals of the child whose outward physical appearance seemed normal, the Binet Intelligence Test. Believed able to quantify accurately a child's mental ability, irrespective of chronological age or social background, the test had been developed for the purpose of identifying feeble-minded children in Paris schools by Alfred Binet in 1905. Revised in 1908 by Binet in collaboration with Theodore Simon, a collator of anthropometric measurements,[20] the test was strongly recommended in 1911 by Dr. Harvey Sutton who had been interested in it since its inception,[21] and in 1914 by Dr. Mackellar, in his report on the treatment of neglected and delinquent children overseas.[22]

In 1913, Dr. Andrew Davidson tested children at Mittagong Cottage Homes using the new method. Of 94 children committed from the Children's Courts for various offences but not previously suspected of mental deficiency, Davidson found 70% were mentally "subnormal". Also in 1913, he examined 221 boys at the Metropolitan Shelter and, in addition to abnormalities of the eyes, throat and "sexual organs", found 87 "backward, dull or feeble-minded."[23]

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17. The Child, the Law and the State (Sydney 1907) p.13; Neglected Children and Juvenile Offenders Act 1905 Instructions to Honorary Probation Officers (Sydney 1909) p.1.

18. Report on the Treatment of Neglected and Delinquent Children in Great Britain, Europe and America with Recommendations as to Amendment of the Administration and Law in NSW (NSW LA PP Vol.4 1913 p.88-96).

19. Ibid. p.89; SCRB Annual Report 1913 p.19; Charles Mackellar and D.A. Welsh Mental Deficiency A Medico-Biological Study of Feeble-Mindedness (Sydney 1917) p.27-8. See also Dr. Andrew Davidson "Mental Defectives" AMG 12 Oct. 1912 p.376.

20. Robert I. Watson The Great Psychologists (New York 1963) p.311-12.

21. Dr. Harvey Sutton Op.Cit. p.895.

22. Report on the Treatment of Neglected and Delinquent Children 1913 p.71, 78ff.

23. Ibid. p.13, 72-3.

Nine Years.

35. (*a*) "What day is to-day?" (*b*) "*What month?*" (*c*) "What day of the month?" (*d*) "What year?"—For question (*c*) answer within three days of correct date passes.

36. "Name in order the days of the week."—Allow ten seconds.

37. Play store, using real money. Child is storekeeper. Buy from him stamps that cost 9 cents. Child must actually give 16 cents change as well as say it.

38. "What is a house?" "A fork?" "A table?" "A chair?" "A horse?" Accept only definition *better* than by use.

39. "Tell me what you have read."—Six memories pass.

40. Use pill-boxes weighing 6, 8, 12, 15 and 18 grams. Place the five boxes on the table in front of child, and explain that they do not all weigh alike, and that he is to lift them one at a time, and put them in order from the lightest to the heaviest.

Record exact number in which child has placed boxes. Three trials allowed, two of these must be absolutely correct. Allow three minutes.

Ten years.

41. "Name the months of the year."—To be done in fifteen seconds. Allow one omission or transposition.

42. "What is this?"—Use cent, nickel, dime, quarter, half-dollar, dollar, two dollars, five dollars, ten dollars. Pieces should be on table in a row, but not in regular order of value. Have child point with finger and name as he points.

43. "Make a sentence using the words, 'Philadelphia, money, river.'"—There are three forms of answer; (1) three separate sentences; (2) two ideas united by a conjunction; (3) a single idea involving the three words. Only the last two pass. Allow one minute.

44. "What ought a person to do:—

(*a*) "When he has missed the train?"
(*b*) "When he has been struck by a companion who did not do it purposely?"
(*c*) "When he has broken something that does not belong to him?"
(*d*) "When he is detained so that he will be late for school?"
(*e*) "Before taking part in an important affair?"
(*f*) "When asked his opinion of someone whom he knows only a little?"
(*g*) "Why does a person excuse more easily a wrong act committed in anger than a wrong act committed without anger?"
(*h*) "Why should a person judge another more by his acts than by his words?"

Allow twenty seconds to each question. Five correct answers pass.

Eleven Years.

45. "I am going to give you some sentences in which there is nonsense. Listen carefully and see if you can tell me where the nonsense is."—Read the sentences slowly. Allow two minutes for the entire test. Three good answers pass.

46. "Use in one sentence the words 'Philadelphia, money, river.'"—Only last form of answer passes.

47. "Say as many words as you can in three minutes, as table, run, board, carriage, big Some children have named two hundred words."—Record words as named. Sixty words pass. Duplications not to be counted.

48. "What is charity?" "Justice?" "Goodness?"—Two good definitions pass. They must contain the essential idea, even though poorly expressed.

49. "Make a sentence out of these words."—Place the printed words before the child. Have him give the sentence orally. Allow one minute for each sentence. Two given correctly pass.

Twelve Years.

50. "Say after me, '2-9-4-6-3-7-5,' '1-6-9-5-8-4-7,' '9-2-8-5-1-6-4.'"—Tell the child there will be seven figures. Allow three trials. One correct answer passes.

51. "Give as many words as you can think of that will rhyme with *day, spring, mill.*"—Explain and illustrate what is meant by a rhyme. Allow one minute. Three rhymes for any one of the words passes.

52. "Say after me, 'Ernest is praised very often for his good conduct.' 'I bought a beautiful doll for my good little sister.' 'Children, it is necessary for us to work very hard for a living.' 'You must go to your school every morning.'"—One of these combinations of sentences to be repeated without error.

53. "I shall read you a story containing a question. Listen carefully, and give me the answer when I finish."—Both questions to be answered correctly.

MEASURING MENTAL ABILITY

52. The Binet Test was not orientated towards the experience of the children of the poor, but attempted to inculcate desired values in them. (C.K. Mackellar The Treatment of Neglected and Delinquent Children ..., NSW LA PP 1913 Vol.4).









Inmates of Cottage Homes for Feeble-minded Girls, Parramatta, N.S.W.

FOUR WHO FAILED THE BINET TEST

53. C.K. Mackellar The Treatment of Neglected and Delinquent Children... (NSW LA PP 1913 Vol.4).

The fact that a high proportion of State children performed poorly in the Binet test was held to be accurate confirmation that such children had a pre-disposition towards feeble-mindedness and therefore to crime. From 1913, all children admitted to the Shelter in Sydney underwent intensive testing by the new method.[24]

Thus, by 1914, medical authority on the mind and morals of the child seemed to demand acceptance, a fact which in turn broadened the scope for a profession claiming to be able to smooth away social problems by forms of social engineering focussing on family life. Especially with respect to the street child, as the Dickensian idea of the innocent waif had been replaced by the conception first of a sinful and then as an unfit little savage, likely to revert completely to barbarism at adolescence, so sensibility and sentiment was to be replaced by science in the management of social issues.

At the same time, however, the preoccupation with heredity theory was isolating medical opinion from important changes occurring elsewhere in the construction of child nature and needs. Theories based on sexuality as a disease were undergoing further qualification as other groups took up and developed ideas emerging from the scientific study of the child.

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24. SCRB Annual Report 1914 p.17; 1920 p.2, 47.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE LARRIKIN IN EVERY MALE

A New Environmental Theory

Though the medical profession had been a major influence in introducing theories emerging overseas from "social science", it did not have a monopoly over this knowledge, nor over the ways in which it might be applied to Australian conditions. From the early 1890s, the seeds of a different interpretation of the findings of the scientific study of the child were being put forward by members of other professions.

The Contribution of the Professional Writer:

Chief among the makers of an alternative ideology were the creative writers and journalists. As overseas, authors of reading material both for adults and for children were shedding their former commitment to the Dickensian conception of child nature and replacing it with a literary version of the scientifically defined male and female needs at each stage of growth.

In literature both for and about children, this took the form of rejecting the idea of the child as a toddling innocent, younger than its years, and suggesting that children, or more particularly, boys, were ideally capable, robust, resourceful and independent. From the 1880s in England, Richard Jefferies' Bevis, Wood Magic and The Open Air had expressed approval of these qualities and suggested the importance of vigorous, outdoor play as important for achieving them, especially in boys.

At first, this new construction of child nature by writers matched the growing emphasis placed by doctors on the importance of avoiding an urban "hot-house" environment for raising children and of providing medically-guided action to preserve manly vigour and prevent effeminacy. In their rejection of the Dickensian image, both writers and doctors looked back to ideas derived from the eighteenth-century ideal of the Noble Savage, the "education from Nature" and especially Rousseau's notion of childhood as a form of innocent primitivism which must not be ripened before its time. As re-stated by G. Stanley Hall, the temptations of modern city life artificially stimulated growth away from childhood, thereby exposing the young to unprecedented dangers.[1] The child must be put in touch with the purer and more simple values of societies at a less advanced stage in the great momentum of evolution.

For authors, adjustment to the scientific ideal had proved an economically viable proposition, generating a need for a special, separate literature for boys and girls at various stages of growth. Thus, in addition to

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1. G. Stanley Hall Adolescence (New York 1911) Vol.1 p.xi, xvii, 321, 325.

the tales of adventure and action, which continued to characterize the Boy's Own Paper, school stories in which boys who did not play the game or march in step were looked upon as misfits[2] had become profitable fields of literary enterprise. In these stories, the medical suspicion of cleverness and its emphasis on physical prowess as the means to achieving manliness and purity had been present by the mid-1850s. The role which the school might play in cultivating these qualities was spelt out in Frederick W. Farrar's Eric , or Little By Little (1858), and especially in Tom Brown's Schooldays (1856), which went through some 50 editions by the time Kipling's Stalky and Co. (1899) provided an up-dated version of the genre. Similarly, heroic tales of male self-sufficiency in distant realms took on a specifically chauvinistic tinge from the 1880s, becoming tales of piracy and plunder and often seen as furthering the cause of science, technology or Empire.[3] Settings in Australia itself became fashionable, showing the participation of the young male in the triumph of British values over lesser races on the frontiers of civilization.[4]

For adolescent girls, Louisa M. Alcott's Little Women and its sequel Good Wives (1868-9) spelt out the corresponding message deemed suitable for their sex. With the development of secondary education for girls, stories dwelling on the minor problems and conflicts encountered in the closed world of the school also found favour, while tales of romanticized marriage and heroic motherhood remained important in new serials and papers specifically aimed at the older girl, such as the Girl's Own Annual (1877) and the Girl's Own Paper (1888).

For younger children, the supernatural story was now officially sanctioned by science. Along with legend and myth, tales from fairy folklore dating from the race's more primitive past were held to be especially appropriate for ensuring healthy development of the minds of children at an earlier stage of growth.[5]

In England in 1906, the enormous commercial success of J.M. Barrie's Peter Pan was based on the fact that it combined the main ingredients of the latest construction of the needs both of the younger child and male and female

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2. J.R. Gillis Youth and History (New York 1974) p.11.

3. R.L. Stevenson Treasure Island (1882); H. Rider Haggard King Solomon's Mines (1885).

4. Gordon Stables From Squire to Squatter (1888); E.B. Kennedy Blacks and Bushrangers Adventures in Queensland (1889); Andrew Robertson The Kidnapped Squatter and Other Australian Tales (1891); George Fenn The Dingo Boys or The Squatters of Wallaby Range (1892); W.H. Temperley Bush Luck (1892).

5. Z. Benjamin "The Function of the Story in Kindergarten Work" AKM Vol.2 No.5 May 1912 p.8-9; L. De Lissa "Childhood and Religion" AKM Vol.2 No.2 Nov. 1911 p.2.

youth in a single formula. Young readers and audiences were asked to affirm their belief in fairies, while older boys learned of the delights of prolonging youth, (Peter Pan having decided never to grow up to earn his "own living" and never "have any fun"). The pirates in the remote "Never Never Land", and especially the boys living a neanderthal existence in a cave and on friendly terms with a local tribe of "red skins", reflected current bio-medical views. For girls, Wendy's role of "the little mother" to the six "lost" boys whose neglectful, hired nurses "had dropped them out of their perambulators and never claimed them since," pointed to the accepted moral for their sex.[6]

From the 1890s, the influence of the writer in articulating the reaction against the a-sexual, helpless Dickensian child was especially pronounced in the colonies. Not only did both young and old read the imported literary products,[7] but also burgeoning numbers of local writers produced their own version of the themes and values which were proving influential and marketable overseas. A nationalist school of authors was beginning to emerge and to assert that the local circumstances had been especially congenial for the development of the qualities in the young now being professionally approved. The number of people describing their occupation as author or literary person was rising, and writers therefore had a special need to convince the market, both at home and overseas, that they had a product different from and superior to that being provided by English writers. Further, many of the new writers were moving towards the more fundamental pre-requisite for professionalism, the making of their "calling" into a full-time occupation, sparing them the need to find alternative sources of income. This increased their need to demonstrate their expertise in realistic interpretation of Australian life and in singling out features for emphasis declared to be distinctive about the young nation.[8]

In books aimed at the younger reader, this welding of the ideas approved by medical science with nationalistic themes proved difficult, resulting in awkward attempts to transplant the traditional fairy figures of the European nursery to the Australian bush. Much use was made of local flora, fauna, and even the aboriginal bunyip for the purpose,[9] for child study had authorized not only fairies but the folklore of "primitive" races as appropriate to the

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6. Annie R. Rentoul and Ida S. Rentoul Booklet for J.C. Williamson's presentation of Peter Pan (Sydney [1908]) p.3-4.

7. L.C. Rodd A Gentle Shipwreck (Melbourne 1975) p.93; John Hetherington The Morning was Shining (London 1971) p.230.

8. Richard White Inventing Australia (Sydney 1981) esp. p.88-90.

9. Mary Anne Fitzgerald King Bungaree's Pyalla and Other Stories Illustrative of Manners and Customs that Prevailed Among Australian Aborigines (Sydney 1892); Kate Langloh Parker Australian Legendary Tales (Melbourne 1896); Mrs Aeneas Gunn The Little Black Princess (1905).

earlier stages of growth.[10]

For the older child, the search for a local literary formula which might combine nationalistic postures with the professionally approved image of the child was more easily accomplished. As for the "social scientist" so for the writer, many of the features thought to be distinctive about the national organism were seen as embodied in the nation's youth and the Dickensian idea of the lost, dying or vulnerable child was simply replaced by a celebration of rugged manliness said to be nourished in the child raised on the frontier in the Australian bush. This was perhaps best illustrated in Henry Lawson's story of "The Drover's Wife" in which the eleven year-old Tommy was shown as the antithesis of the Dickensian childishness and vulnerability. Manly and independent, he was said to think nothing of grabbing "a stick bigger than himself" to despatch a snake threatening the family during the father's protracted absence as a drover.[11] In the stories of A.H. Davis, ("Steele Rudd"), the bush children were shown as lively and indestructible, surviving not only the hazards of snake bite and of going barefoot in the bush, but also their father's occasional wrath.[12]

Given the numbers and influence of the nationalist school of writers, claims that the colonial child exhibited the approved qualities tended to be taken to extreme lengths. Though not yet seen as having any relevance to the urban child, it was suggested that pioneering life in the bush had resulted in the development of a unique social type, superior to any which the Old World, with its out-worn and unrealistic perception of innocence and vulnerability could produce. According to successful novelist Rolf Boldrewood, the bush-bred boy possessed all the special qualities demanded by the child studiers and theorists. Of the effect of bush life on a fourteen year-old immigrant boy, Boldrewood wrote in 1900:

> Guy, indeed, had grown into a stalwart youngster, taller and broader than his elder brother; so much had the pure air, the healthful bush life, the regular exercise and occasional labour demanded by the station exigencies done for his development. He was apt at all the minor rural accomplishments - could ride the unbroken colts,

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10. J.M. Whitfeld The Spirit of the Bushfire and Other Australian Fairy Tales (1898); Ethel Pedley Dot and the Kangaroo (1899); Olga Ernst Fairy Tales From the Land of the Wattle (1904); Annie R. Rentoul Mollie's Bunyip (1904); Constance Tisdall Australian Nature Stories for Children (1903); Amy Mack A Bush Calendar (1909), Bush Days (1911).

11. Henry Lawson While the Billy Boils (Sydney 1896) p.128.

12. On Our Selection (Sydney 1899). As both Lawson and Rudd were admirers of Dickens, both found the rejection of the image of the vulnerable, victimized child difficult to sustain. See the death of the virtuous child, Isley, in Lawson's "His Father's Mate" (1896) and Rudd's "Death of Little Jens" in On Emu Creek (written 1917).

> ...and was well acquainted with the ways and wanderings of outlying cattle ... He could plait a hide-rope, make bullock-yokes, noose and throw the unbranded cattle, drive a team, split and put up "fencing stuff", and in many ways do a man's work, when needed.[13]

In 1914, Frank Fox, a former Bulletin writer and first editor of the Lone Hand, asserted that the colonial boy was not only taller and more resourceful, but hardier than boys brought up elsewhere, having admirable qualities of independence, ingenuity and resilience. These were exhibited especially in the rural child, who grew up "hardy and stoical", able to "endure great hardship and pain."[14]

According to Mrs. Aeneas Gunn, even the bush-bred toddler now exhibited these qualities. Describing a bush family making a journey to Darwin in 1908, though all the children were "strangely self-possessed", the stoicism of the youngest was especially impressive:

> Early in the morning they left us, and as they rode away the fair toddling baby was sitting on its mother's pommel-knee, smiling out on the world from the deep recesses of a sunbonnet. Already it had ridden a couple of hundred miles, with its baby hands playing with the reins, and before it reached home again another five hundred would be added to the two hundred. Seven hundred miles on horseback, in a few weeks, at one year old....[15]

Indeed, from the 1890s, the more the approved virtues of manly independence were discerned in the young, if bush-bred, the better, and Australian writers simply added that the fact that the Australian child exhibited these qualities illustrated the evolution of a superior national type. In 1910, C.E.W. Bean, an advocate of Arnoldian schooling and later organizer of the Parks and Playgrounds Movement of NSW, declared that an Australian boy was capable of catching a horse, harnessing it to a buggy and driving to town, all of which he would accomplish before seeking relief from personal discomfort. Bean added with pride that this indicated that the "Australian bush boy was a man before his years."[16]

Given the emphasis in bio-medical theory on the need to differentiate between the sexes, these characteristics could have no relevance to girls. Even if she displayed these characteristics, a girl could not represent the "national type". In Seven Little Australians (1894), Ethel Turner, began with a classic statement of the superiority of colonial conditions for cultivating the desired qualities in the young:

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13. Babes in the Bush (London 1901) p.282-3.

14. Australia (London 1914) p.82. Fox had been living in England since 1909 and would become a war correspondent in the Balkans. His contributions appeared under the pseudonym "Frank Renar".

15. We of the Never Never (London 1908) p.199-200.

16. On the Wool Track (London 1910) p.149-50. Like Fox, Bean became a chronicler of soldiering. Appointed Australian Official War Correspondent in 1914-19, he was editor and main author of Official History of Australia in the War (1921-36).

> It may be that the miasmas of naughtiness develop best in the sunny brilliancy of our atmosphere. It may be that the land and the people are young-hearted together, and the children's spirits not crushed and saddened by the shadow of long years' sorrowful history.
>
> There is a lurking sparkle of joyousness and rebellion and mischief in nature here, and therefore in children.[17]

This author then went on to suggest that her heroine, fourteen year-old Judy, displayed the courage and spirited resourcefulness of the national adolescent.

However, this departure was contradicted by events in the story. These cut across the ideals outlined at the beginning and suggested another set of values entirely. Judy's masculine initiative and defiance were punished by death, and, as earlier in the image of the lost child, the agent of destruction was the local environment itself. In a chain of causation stemming directly from her initial act of inciting her brothers and sisters to filial disobedience, Judy was crushed by a falling tree while heroically saving her baby brother, annihilated by "nature", the indigenous qualities of which were supposed to have nourished her.

Furthermore, the sub-plot, revolving around Meg, pointed a heavy moral for girls. They must avoid vanity at the expense of health and remember their role as guardians of morality. Indeed, Judy's death was seen to have been of value to Meg, turning her from a precocious flirt into a virtuous and chaste adolescent.[18]

Similar difficulties attended the attempt of Mrs. Praed in Australian Life Black and White (1885) to create a bush-bred heroine, Robina, exhibiting the resourcefulness of the unique Australian youth. However, Robina like Judy, became a victim of the bush environment itself, in this case killed by being thrown against a tree by a runaway horse.[19]

In Joseph Furphy's Such is Life (1903), again an image of a bush girl as vital and capable was not sustained. Furphy's "child of the wilderness" Mary, was made to suffer the old fate of the lost child, death in the bush which earlier she had been said to know so well.[20]

Mary Grant Bruce's successful "Billabong Books" found a compromise which resolved these difficulties. In A Little Bush Maid (1910) and succeeding stories, her adolescent girl, Norah, though technically assigned the special qualities of independence and self-reliance by virtue of her isolated life in the bush, was a pale version of Judy and Robina. Respect for and protection afforded by male figures of authority was celebrated rather than questioned and, though the allegedly unconventional relaxation of restrictions in her upbringing was stressed, it was never suggested that this had allowed her to become

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17. Ethel Turner Seven Little Australians (London 1894) p.2.
18. Ibid. p.243.
19. Australian Life Black and White (London 1885) p.178, 181, 210.
20. Such is Life (Sydney 1903) p.73, 187-93.



A PONY RIDE.

54. Girls could not easily fit into the idealization of bush childhood and its role in developing the national type - they were expected to remain lady-like.

Australian Christian World 31 Jul. 1908.

unladylike. Her brother checked any undesirable exaggerated deviance towards a male role and Norah had prepared herself for rational motherhood by learning how to cook and sew. Accordingly she was not made to share the fate of Robina or Judy, but was permitted to survive and play a subsidiary and often nurturing role in the boys' subsequent adventures.[21]

While serving to reinforce the scientific construction of the older child, the literary image of national youth also contained ideas which, when further developed, were at variance with the medical interpretation of that ideal in a number of important respects. In particular, potential conflict was possible with the notion that vices and criminal tendencies in children were manifestations of disease, often hereditary in nature, which must be combatted and contained in the young irrespective of age or sex.

The essence of a departure from this view was present as early as 1876 in America where in Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer, the young male was not only shown to be more sturdy and resilient, but also to be less innocent than the Dickensian stereotype. Though sometimes expressed in rebellion, it appeared that male shrewdness, passion and belligerence were necessary pre-requisites for the development of energy and initiative in young boys and therefore should be allowed a reasonable scope for expression. Girls on the other hand, were more stable and virtuous, to the extent that they frequently intervened to spoil the natural, spontaneous mischief of the boys.

During the 1890s, suggestions by writers that failure to permit a certain amount of devilry in boyhood was to repress the manly qualities of chauvinistic energy in the growing male, were becoming commonplace. In England Marie Corelli's The Mighty Atom (1896) and Boy (1900), and especially Kipling's Kim (1901) were making a cult of these qualities in boyhood, while in the colonies, according to Steele Rudd, the sons of the "Pioneers of Australia"who by their deeds of fortitude and daring"gave our country birth", were seen as having developed the special qualities of hardy resilience because their natural animalism and curiosity was not repressed:

> There had been a long stretch of dry weather, and we were cleaning out the waterhole. Dad was down the hole shovelling up the dirt; Joe squatted on the brink catching flies and letting them go again without their wings - a favourite amusement of his; ... Dad was feeling dry, and told Joe to fetch him a drink.
> Joe said: "See first if this cove can fly with only one wing."[22]

Like the idea of the sturdy resourcefulness of the national youth, the idea of permitting a degree of juvenile misbehaviour could only be successfully developed when the hero was a male. Thus Ethel Turner's Little Larrikin (1896) popularized the new notion that cruelty to animals, greediness and even a dirty

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21. A Little Bush Maid (London 1910) p.12, 14.

22. A.H. Davis On Our Selection (Sydney 1899) Dedication n.p.; p.23.

and untidy appearance, were natural to this stage of growth in boys. There was a certain relish in descriptions of the primitive little savage gobbling down cream cakes, squashing spiders into the carpet, drinking tea from a saucer and spilling it on the exquisite cushions in a cluttered and "feminine" parlour.

In this story, the manly qualities of leadership said to have been fostered by the absence of repressive discipline and vigilance, were depicted as truly remarkable. In sharp contrast with the doctors' use of the term, Turner's six year-old larrikin was said to have thought nothing of facing a fist-fight with a working-class boy, twice his age, and to have fought "like a little tiger." According to Turner, "in his breast were all the demons of fight which close quarters rouse in the born soldier" and "any other six year-old would have been killed on the spot." Indeed, all five of the boys in this family were "more of the larrikin type than the angel."[23]

At the turn of the century, these new ideas of the nature and needs of the growing male were sanctioned by child study itself, where their potential conflict with the older medical ideas was apparently unrecognized by their most articulate exponent outside the literary world, G. Stanley Hall. According to Hall, by allowing the "tribal, predatory, hunting, fishing, fighting, roving, idle, playing proclivities" of the young male to be indulged "in their proper season," these tendencies would not be suppressed to crop up later in a more menacing form.[24]

The influence of the growing idea of the need to provide selected activities which took the boy outside the home and avoided repression became evident in a new single-sex organization for the sons of the middle class formed in New South Wales in 1908 and in Victoria the following year, the Boy Scouts. Founder of the organization in England, Lord Baden-Powell, himself emphasized that it was in permitting boys to escape into the backwoods, trapping and cooking animals away from the eyes of "prying masters" that the special manly qualities in the boy could best be developed.[25]

Aiming to "reach" and "hold" boys aged eleven to eighteen, Scouting activities provided a cross-section of nineteenth-century ideas for catering for the alleged needs of male youth. The use of the pledge, the emphasis on thrift, temperance and knightly deeds reflected the ideals of the early temperance and social purity organizations catering for this age group, while other activities showed a debt to more recent medical theory. For instance, it was considered appropriate to inculcate a chauvinistic patriotism. As Chief Scoutmaster in New South Wales, R.C. Packer, put it in 1907, the Scout's staff was to fill "the

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23. The Little Larrikin (London 1896) p.62-3, 67, 145.

24. G. Stanley Hall Op.Cit. p.x.

25. Cited in Boy's Own Paper 1926; repr. in Boy Scouts' Association Souvenir Programme 1931 (Perth 1931) n.p.



55. Scouting for Boys - a new way to improve the fitness of the nation's youth (and occupy their hands).

Lone Hand 2 Aug. 1909.

emptiness in the hand that may be caused by the absence of a rifle." The scout was "soldier in the making, a willing student in the art of war," practising for the "greater game in the near future."[26]

On the other hand, there was an anxiety about methods of disciplining male youth which was new. Military drill was carefully avoided as likely to "do harm",[27] while preference was given for hunting and tracking games and camping out. Here boys were believed to display the abilities of native tribes at a more primitive stage of growth.[28] Terminology would later be borrowed from aboriginal culture ("Corroborree","Jamboree") while for the Wolf Cubs, a separate organization for boys aged from nine to eleven, ideas for training were based on the celebration of boyhood as a kind of savagery in Kipling's Jungle Book.[29]

In the hands of the Australian writer the new theory of the special care which must be taken not to repress the devilry in the growing male could be, and often was, taken a step further. It was interpreted as meaning that the predatory, hunting, fishing, roving, idle and playing proclivities were natural to maleness itself, irrespective of age, and therefore should not be repressed at any stage of growth.

This was a view which found special favour with Bohemian groups of male writers many of whom found their life-style, their endeavours to live off their meagre literary earnings, their creativity itself, stifled by the demands of family life. Denial of the traditional prescriptions for repression of the child's will became analogous to their own claims to artistic and moral license, their mission to reveal to Australians what was real and unique about their land and culture.

In Melbourne in the 1890s, Lionel and Norman Lindsay, working briefly on a radical journal, The Tocsin, formed the nucleus of one such group. In the early 1900s, Louis Esson was also inclined to Bohemian views, and was joined by ex-school-teacher turned full-time writer, Vance Palmer, in the belief that the professional writer had an important role to play in interpreting Australian life for Australians and demonstrating the rugged manliness of the new land.[30] In Sydney, during the 1890s, the Bulletin became the focal point

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26. R.C. Packer "The Boy Scouts" Lone Hand 2 Aug. 1909 p.381-2, 388.
27. Ibid. p.390.
28. Ibid. p.388.
29. Boys Scouts Association NSW Section Second Annual Report Jul. 1915 p.12. Baden Powell himself believed war cries were a useful technique for directing behaviour both for Scouts and Wolf Cubs, recommending a Zulu war chant for the purpose. (L.E. Slaughter Baden Powell: Boy Scouts Centenary Jubilee (Brisbane 1957) p.4.
30. David Walker Dream and Disillusion (Canberra 1976) p.5-6.

of another such group, bringing together writers such as Henry Lawson, Roderic Quinn, Victor Daley and J.F. Archibald, together with political theorists sympathetic to the new Labor movement.[31] Other writers and artists acquainted with this group included Edward Dyson, Randolph Bedford, and E.J. Brady, together with Hugh McCrae and Norman Lindsay, who had moved to Sydney in 1901 at Archibald's invitation to be part of the Bulletin coterie.[32]

To these writers, the notion of the right of the male to free expression of his passions, instincts and wanderlust, was inextricably linked to the creative process itself. Thus Norman Lindsay, who later developed a chauvinistic theory of art as a form of dynamic energy, intimately related to the evolutionary progress, declared that his happy artistic (and sexual) career was inhibited when he was trapped into marriage with a philistine:

> Katie could not conceive any existence apart from her home; from my small-boy days, escape from home was the driving impetus of my being.... Though I have been forced to set up homes in houses, I have never lived in them. To this day I sleep in my studio.[33]

Others considered it safest to choose a wife from a member's family. Thus Lionel Lindsay married Jean Dyson, and Bill Dyson, brother of Jean and writer, Edward, married Ruby Lindsay. The entry of women to the Bohemian world of art and literature was very restricted. Members of the Dawn and Dusk Club in Sydney - such as Daley, Brady, Lawson and Bedford - were not inclined to admit women writers to their circle.[34]

In the hands of these writers, any remnants of the Dickensian construction of woman and child were attacked with special vehemence. On the one hand, this was seen as a tendency to depict working-class girls as robust temptresses rather than the innocent and vulnerable victims in need of chivalrous protection. Hence Edward Dyson described girls working in jam, pickle and biscuit factories as "raffish hoydens" in "unstable garments", "termagants at sixteen".[35] According to Norman Lindsay, "we had no use for the class we were derived from, because it was hedged about with taboos in relation to conduct and morals, and all its girls were kept under ruthless surveillance. In the class we frequented, derived from shopkeepers and miners mainly, the girls had a fair amount of freedom and there was good fun to be had in their homes."[36]

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31. J.T. Lang I Remember (Sydney 1956) p.7-9.
32. Richard White Op.Cit. p.86-7, 93-4.
33. My Mask (Sydney 1970) p.172, 244. Katie was Catherine Parkinson, daughter of P. Parkinson, formerly of Allahabad, India, described by Lindsay as an Anglo-Indian civil servant whose family was left in poverty after his death (p.151). They married in 1900.
34. Richard White Op.Cit. p.96.
35. Fact'ry 'Ands (Sydney 1912) p.viii.
36. Norman Lindsay Op.Cit. p.52.

On the other hand, this criticism took the form of pronounced hostility to those women's and social purity organizations seeking to rationalize the double sexual standard.[37] For instance, feminist attempts to get legislative support for the concept of the importance of protective nurture by mother in the home were seen as an attack upon the right of the male to freedom and independence.[38] Illustrations in the Bulletin during the 90s noticeably portrayed women as shrewish guardians of morality, destroying the spontaneous, natural fellowship of men. Though Henry Lawson wrote early poems celebrating the feminist views of his mother, on the way in which giving to mothers and children the protection and support due to them would revolutionalize the world[39] by 1913, when his wife could take him to court for maintenance, he had turned to vituperative verse denigrating women in general, "but political women" in particular.[40]

There was another factor which prompted Bohemian writers to see women and family in these terms. The development of the new "realism" in the novel and of sensationalism in journalism had been met from the 1880s by legislation to impose censorship. Often supported by social purity and feminist organizations, this constituted a threat not only to the writers' artistic license but to their need to find a market in the increasingly literate lower classes.[41] The censorship and seizure of books sharpened the writers' anti-feminist stance.

Opposition to censorship, together with personal dislike of the demands of domesticity, not only inclined the writers towards the view that women stifled the creative impulses in the male of the species. Feminine "repression" was also seen to inhibit the potential of the young nation itself, denying the values which had been engendered in the nation's psyche by the pioneering anti-authoritarian past.

For instance, as projected by the Bulletin writers, the separation of men from their wives, the legendary nomad tribe of bush workers, was caused less by economic conditions, than by the psychic need of the male for conquest in foreign fields, his right to pursue his personal quest for autonomy and self-knowledge, "to find the answer to the question childhood disposes of for most

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37. "Sex in Morals" The Dawn Vol.2 No.10 1890 p.10.

38. Norman Lindsay and J.F. Archibald were particularly outraged that in rape cases any "blackmailing bitch of a slavey could go into a witness box and swear away a man's reputation on the strength of her unsupported statement" (N. Lindsay Op.Cit. p.63).

39. "The Helpless Mothers" The Dawn Vol.4 No.7 Nov. 1891 p.22. Henry Lawson was married in 1896 to Bertha Bredt, the step-daughter of the proprietor of one of the bookshops where Bohemians mingled in the early 1890s.

40. "Another Song of General Sickness and Tiredness" (1913).

41. Peter Coleman Obscenity, Blasphemy, Sedition (Brisbane 1963) p.3-4.



"THE SHRIEKING SISTERHOOD."

56. The Bulletin 23 Jun. 1894.

men, "Who am I? Whence came I? Whither do I go?"[42] This individual process of enquiry was projected as a personal, and for writers, professional necessity, taking precedence over philistine preoccupations, such as becoming a "citizen" or close involvement with one's children.

Randolph Bedford also saw marriage a hindrance not merely to that mateship and male conviviality which was projected as an essential, natural part of Australian life, but consequently to his artistic integrity, his need to experience and interpret this life for his readers. According to Bedford this attitude was part of the national folk culture, passed on tribally by males, from father to son:

> "There's only one thing that will tie you down, and that's responsibility. A wife and children will put the hobbles on you. You'll look over the fence at the horses that are going somewhere; but you'll have to stay in the paddock."[43]

Will Ogilvie(Fair Girls and Gray Horses,1906) took this suspicion of marriage and the home a step further by suggesting that the nomadic bushman had no need of women, since he had the "brown Bush for a bride."[44] Though his title praised "fair girls", his poetry dwelt on the fact that the bushman's needs could be satisfactorily fulfilled by the bush herself, who was a more intimate, protective and constant lover.[45] Other poems celebrated the heroic, ascetic, exclusively masculine relationship which the roving, droving man formed with his "mate" "in the forefront of the battle where the men who fight are men":

> We've fought the long dry weather,
> We've faced the blinding wet;
> And we were mates together
> And I shall not forget.[46]

In contrast, marriage meant anti-climactic suburban life, where friendship proved false, and women a crippling impediment to the innocent bushman.[47]

The Bulletin set popularized aspects of the growing concept of male adolescence as a set of values appropriate for themselves. For instance, entry into the prosaic world of responsible bread-winning was to be delayed for as long as possible. As Bedford remarked of his daughters, (born in 1888 and 1892):

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42. Randolph Bedford Naught to Thirty-Three (Melbourne 1976) p.216.
43. Ibid. p.17 (Bedford's account of his father's advice on the subject).
44. "A Spin of the Coin" in Fair Girls and Gray Horses (Sydney 1906) p.232-3.
45. "The Bush My Lover" Ibid. p.231.
46. "To the Overlanders" Ibid. p.267.
47. "The City of Gray Griefs" Ibid. p.249.

> I have been sorry ever since that I did not give more time to the study of these little lives as they opened. I was too full of the joy of life, too amazed at the miracles of it, to have the proper angle on children. I was a child myself, tremendously interested, not only in life but in finding out all about life....[48]

It was sometimes implied that children ideally should change roles with their father, allowing him to play the child while they, acting as his "mates" looked after him. This theme was often present in the stories of Henry Lawson, and was put fairly explicitly in "An Old Mate of your Father's". Here Lawson, speaking in the first person for the children, had them speculating whether their father's mates were not "kinder" to each other "than we of the rising generation are to our fathers; and the doubt is painfully on the wrong side."[49] That is, mateship between the bushman and his children meant less extending to them any empathic egalitarianism, than the idea that they should attend to his special needs.

Indeed the image of the boy as miniature bushman was becoming less important in the literature of the period, than the image of the bushman as a boy. The bushman became child-like for the duration of his nomadic experience, which was seen both as a right and a psychic necessity. It was he who was entitled to free existence in the state of nature, not his children. Women and children were expected to find their personal fulfillment in the home.

As in Ethel Turner's Little Larrikin, this endorsement of the need to prevent the repression of the young male of the species reached out to include that formerly maligned figure. Writers who had aspirations to making writing a full-time occupation were well aware of the need to find themes believed to be closer to the perceptions of the working man in order to attract a wider readership, an aspiration which was not unrealistic when literacy rates were approaching 100%.[50] This in turn generated awareness of the potential of appropriating and marketing what might be seen as a national culture embodied in the experience of the worker. A.B. Paterson's collection of "Old Bush Songs" was a particularly overt example of this (1905), while Edward Dyson claimed in his Foreword To Fact'ry 'Ands (1906) "the people here presented are a choice selection from a large circle of acquaintances..., they are true types of a pronounced Australian class not previously exploited for the purposes of the maker of popular fiction."[51]

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48. Randolph Bedford Op.Cit. p.150.

49. Henry Lawson Op.Cit. p.6.

50. Literacy rates were carefully recorded by the statisticians, figures for NSW in 1891 being 87.2% of the population aged 5 years and over able to read and write, rising to 95.6% in 1911. (NSW Statistical Register 1911 p.441.)

51. E. Dyson Op.Cit. p.vii.



THE PEACEMAKER.

TOMMY SMALLFATHER : "Say, Bill, does your father ever kick your mother about?"

BILL BIGSIRE : "No; does yours?"

TOMMY S. : "No; but mother thumps dad a lot, and as you and me is good pals, I thort I'd ask yer to lend us your ole man to whack mother."

57. The image of the domestic tyrant has been reversed - now the mother is the brute, the father the innocent victim.

The Bulletin 27 Jan. 1894.

For this purpose, the figure of the larrikin was ideal. It not only met the requirement of being an aspect of working-class experience,[52] but also could be seen as the source of a unique national dialect.[53] Besides, larrikinism could be used to prove the point that devilry and fraternity gangs were natural to the male. As early as 1886 in the Bulletin, the image of unprotected urban youth as a sexually corrupted sub-group in society, as portrayed in the reports of the Boxing Day revels in 1881 and 1882, had been replaced by cartoons and accompanying verse in which the larrikin, becoming increasingly grown-up, was viewed with humorous sympathy. By 1892, when the Bulletin published Lawson's "Captain of the Push", a pattern had been established in which the journalists and creative writers of this circle were beginning to alter the image of larrikinism by humorously defusing its threatening elements and eventually bestowing on it a nationalistic stature equalled only by the bushman. In 1892 a Bulletin staff writer argued that the Australian larrikin was harmlessly apathetic compared with its English counterpart .[54] In 1906, in Dyson's Fact'ry 'Ands, the precocity of youths employed in a paper factory was seen as a subject for amusement ("The Packer's 'Little Silly'") while a twenty-four year-old larrikin who had "done time because a bush-bred policeman had no more respect for his head than to leave it in the way when the 'push' was throwing bricks about" was shown as easily tamed by romantic courtship and marriage.[55]

By 1900, Ambrose Pratt's King of the Rocks almost elevated the larrikin to heroic status. His grown-up larrikins were no longer depicted as stunted or dwarfed, but as broad-shouldered,and in the character Julian Savage, even as tall and handsome. Indeed, Julian, in spite of a childhood spent as a street "arab" and on the "Vernon", had turned out to be chaste, a lover of music, a fearless horseman and a dreamer of Australian nationhood.[56] Even in the more

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52. Like their pretensions to knowledge of the bush (Richard White Op.Cit. p.98-9), Bohemian claims to be close to the Push were self-consciously created. See Lindsay's own account of an encounter with larrikins on the streets of Melbourne (My Mask p.83).

53. The recording of peasant patois was an important aspect of late nineteenth-century attempts by intellectuals to interpret national identities. In Ireland J.M. Synge had completed his study of local dialects and was ready to write his plays and poems on the Irish character in 1904; he met and influenced Louis Esson in 1905 (David Walker Op.Cit. p.12). E.E. Morris, Professor of Modern Language and Literature at Melbourne University, and one of the founders of Melbourne's Charity Organization Society, published his Austral English A Dictionary of Australasian Words Phrases and Usages in 1898.

54. E. Waters "The Emergence of the Larrikin as a Figure in Popular Culture" Unpublished paper ANU Institute of Advanced Studies 1961 p.3.

55. Edward Dyson Op.Cit. p.133 ("The Packer's Little Silly"), 101 ("The Wooing of Minnie".)

56. King of the Rocks (London 1900) p.36, 105, 137, 111, 208.

ambivalent Great Push Experiment (1902), the larrikins were said to be neither cowardly nor intemperate and, though they were said to have inherited the anti-authoritarian attitudes of bush-ranger and convict, they were said to be becoming better educated and to be increasingly turning to politics to redress their grievances.[57] In an article for Blackwood's Magazine in 1901, Pratt even suggested that it was inept and unnecessarily severe police reprisals which had stimulated larrikinism and cemented push solidarity.[58]

The elevation of the larrikin as a literary folk hero verified the commercial viability to the writer of appealing to a broader local readership. Admittedly, Pratt appeared to find that to defuse larrikinism to this extent, though useful for the writer of comedy, offered little to the author of action and mystery, and accordingly he constantly qualified his new image of the larrikin with the earlier version of inherited violence and animality. In The Great Push Experiment, in spite of their new virtues, the larrikins were illogically shown to be criminally inclined and naturally malevolent, delighting in brutal punishments and the perversion of justice. Similarly in King of the Rocks, even Julian Savage became less a Noble one as the plot demanded his regression to villainy.[59]

By 1908, however, Louis Esson was less equivocal. Writing in the Lone Hand, he argued that the slum, far from being a centre of contagion, where human nature was corrupted at its source, was an exciting and stimulating milieu, especially for the creative artist. "Though bounded by the pub, the gambling den, the 'jug' and the morgue," he wrote, there was "such spice of adventure in the life, such hazardous contrasts, such anarchic freedom, that few hardened habitues would exchange it for the humdrum paths of respectability." [60] In 1912, Louis Esson's book of collected verse included two poems on larrikins which presented proletarian street life as quaintly harmless ("Back of Little Lon" and "Jugger") while in 1913, C.J. Dennis' "Sentimental Bloke" (Backblock Ballads and Other Verses) advanced the image of the larrikin firmly towards widespread acceptance as a humorous illustration of the urban equivalent of the bushman, epitomizing all that was unique and exciting about Australian life. Thus romanticized, the larrikin image proved a successful commercial proposition, Dennis' enlarged version of the "Bloke" in 1915 selling 66,000 copies in eighteen months.[61]

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57. The Great Push Experiment (London 1902) p.35.
58. "Push Larrikinism in Australia" Blackwood's Magazine Jul. 1901 p.29-30.
59. Great Push Experiment p.19, 23ff; King of the Rocks p.278, 253.
60. Quoted in David Walker Op.Cit. p.25.
61. The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke (Sydney 1915); E. Morris Miller and F.T. Macartney Australian Literature (Sydney 1956) p.148.

In their refashioning of the larrikin into a national hero, the Australian writers did not depend only on humorously defusing his dangerous elements. They also pointed out that the presence of larrikin tendencies in the male was verified by science. As put by an article in the Bulletin in 1892, larrikins were cruel, but,

> Cruelty is innate in youth. The youth of man corresponds with the youth of the world. There was a time when every man was an Ishmaelite, fighting for his own hand, hardly by constant warfare keeping at bay the forces of armed Nature around him. When we are young the memory of that time still lingers with us. [62]

While seeking to further the author's quest for professionalism, the elevation of the larrikin to folk status both popularized the idea of a certain degree of mischief intrinsic in every male and cemented it into the national ethos which these writers were helping to create. The devilry of the male was what made the nation more youthful and energetic than other nations, vital and unique.

By 1914, the degree to which the national writers had enlarged upon the professionally-approved concept of male adolescence, to include all males, logically began to involve some conflict with some aspects of medical ideology itself. In particular, it began to run counter to the medical view of the causes and cures of larrikinism.

This challenge to the medical view was nowhere better illustrated than in the contrast between Dyson's or Dennis's images of slum life and that of a writer not of the Bohemian school, school teacher Louis Stone. In his novel Jonah (1911) the larrikins were still seen as physically maimed, cowardly and vicious, "the scum of the streets"; and not because they had been repressed, but because they had been denied a supervised and structured childhood. Accordingly, only the very young children, (though they were depicted as the product of the too-prolific improvident parent and "swarming like rabbits" on the streets) were still normal and healthy. The parents were unequivocally condemned as unfit for the task of rearing children:

> Across the street comes a burst of coarse laughter and a string of foul, obscene words on the heels of a jest. And again the childish trebles rings on the tainted air:
>
> Green gravel, green gravel,
> Your true love is dead;
> I send you a message
> To turn round your head.

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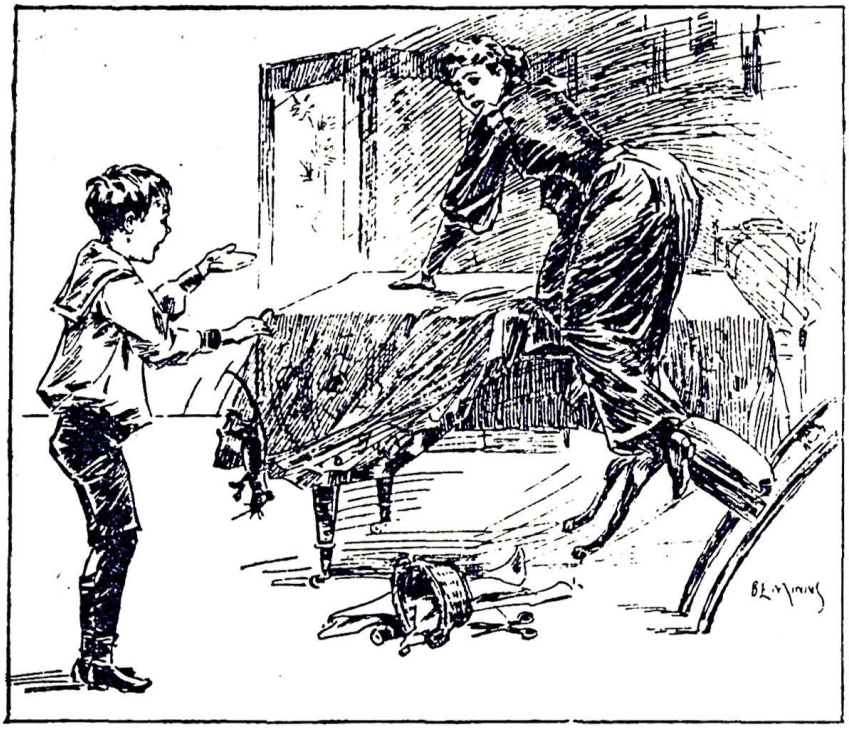
62. Bulletin 9 Jun. 1894 p.6.



Naughty Boys Fighting.

58. E.W. Cole's condemnation of belligerence was out-of-date by 1900. Life was a "battle" and fighting a healthy manifestation of masculinity.

Cole's Funny Picture Book No.1 (Melbourne 1879).



ROBBERY UNDER ARMS.

MOTHER (*in a panic*): "A-ah! you little wretch, take it out!"
HER ELDEST: "All right, mum; give us a shillin' then."

59. A degree of mischief was now to be tolerated in the growing boy, especially in Australia, where it was seen as a legacy of anti-authoritarianism in the nation's past.

Bulletin 16 Jun. 1894.

> They are ragged and dirty, true children of the gutter, but Romance, with the cloudy hair and starry eyes, holds them captive for a few merciful years. Their parents loll against the walls, or squat on the kerbstone, devouring with infinite relish petty scandals about their neighbours, or shaking with laughter at some spicy yarn.
>
> About 10 o'clock the children are driven indoors with threats and blows, and put to bed.[63]

For a writer hoping to find a working-class readership, this view of the sources of larrikinism was not only anachronistic but suicidal. Besides, such a view was now outrightly "unaustralian".

The impact of the writers' elevation of the larrikin was reflected in resistance to the schemes of eugenicists to deal with larrikinism at its biological source. In 1913, an attempt by poet William Baylebridge, to develop the old, scientific idea of a nationalism based on cleansing society of its degenerates found little public support or recognition, and was published privately.[64] It seemed that for the Australian writer and reader, though popular ideals of racial purity could find active expression in terms of restrictive immigration policies, their application to the white man was unacceptable.

In 1914, when the Anthropometric Committee of the Australasian Medical Congress submitted its census of the nation's degenerate children together with recommendations for their control, it was apparent that even the medical experts on these matters were on the defensive. It was admitted that only the questionnaires sent out to teachers, who had been required to fill them in by the education departments, had been readily forthcoming. Though all private schools and all doctors had been invited to co-operate in this stock-taking of the nation's fitness to survive, most had not even replied. The poor response from private schools and general practitioners was thought to indicate not merely indifference to eugenic ideals, but outright opposition. The report believed it was necessary to make it clearer that it was merely control of the sexual proclivities of the feeble-minded which was sought, not sterilization.[65]

However, in the writers' attack on the sources of "repression" in society, the doctors had largely escaped criticism, their part in the construction of the despised pedantry and restrictions in society being largely overlooked. The writers tended on the whole to be sympathetic to the other

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63. Louis Stone Jonah (London 1911) p.24-5.

64. William Baylebridge National Notes (Sydney 1936) (1st edn. 1913) p.20 ff. Even for the middle-class reader, Baylebridge's demand that the fit produce larger families, (p.35) was unlikely to be popular by 1913.

65. Report of the Committee Appointed by Section of Neurology and Psychiatry Trans. AMC 1914 p.706, 719; Dr. J. Sandison Yule "The Census of the Feeble-Minded in Victoria 1912" Ibid. p.723-4.

professionals in Australian society. Thus in solicitor Ambrose Pratt's Great Push Experiment, Lucas, the child raised in the slums and given a university education by the local "push", later severed his connection with it to become a surgeon and to marry a qualified nurse.[66] In 1904, Louis Esson's call for a new political party was to include "university and professional men, scholars, artists, reformers, radicals and socialists and Bohemian poets."[67]

Some members of Bohemian groups continued to combine writing with a career in another profession; some professionals had been acquainted with Bohemianism in their youth. Thus, one of the foremosts advocates of child study, Dr. J.S.C. Elkington could also hover on the fringes of the Bulletin set. Attracted to the Lindsay circle during his student days in Melbourne in 1896, he married the sister of Norman Lindsay's "Katie".[68]

Though sometimes inclined towards expression of anti-Capitalist and even Socialistic views[69] overall the focus of these groups was less on political change than on a revolution in moral and social (especially sexual) mores involving a stronger role for the secular professions. Even their political views were an endorsement of their belief in the psychic needs of the male of the species. The part played by the Unions of bush workers in the strikes of 1891-2 made for an easy alliance of political and social progressivism and the idea of nationalistic and male culture nourished in the bush, first by ex-convict workers, bush-rangers and diggers before flowering again in 1891. Thus, W.G. Spence, in his account of the strikes, Australia's Awakening (1909), said that the Australian bush worker, never a "wage slave", embraced unionism as a form of male camaraderie. "It had in it that feeling of mateship which he understood already." Quoting William Lane, he depicted members of the bush unions as "camping out under the starry sky" like so many Scouts, "gathering in on horseback to the great bush meetings, free-handed and free-hearted, open as children and true as steel."[70]

In so far as the writers' call for the end of repressive restrictions on the male did focus on the professions, it was the Church which was singled out for criticism. The medicalization of the concept of original sin was

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66. Great Push Experiment p.333.

67. Letter to the Bulletin 1904, quoted in David Walker Op.Cit. p.15.

68. Mary Cassandra Parkinson.

69. Bernard O'Dowd and Louis Esson were founding members of the Victorian Socialist Party. Henry Lawson occasionally wrote verses which seemed calculated to stir revolutionary sentiments in a working-class reader ("Faces in the Street" Bulletin Jul. 1888), yet later denied such views (Autobiographical and Other Writings ed. C. Roderick (Sydney 1972) p.72, 76). For Norman Lindsay's retrospective condemnation of that "frowsy little red rag", The Tocsin, see My Mask p.105.

70. W.G. Spence Australia's Awakening (Sydney 1909) p.78, 156-7.



TIME: SUNDAY MORNING.

TOMMY: "Say, Bill, come up ter Jock Winterses, an' we'll rob his garden —he's laid up."

BILL: "Can't. Gotter go ter Sunday-school, but I'll come this afternoon."

60. The attempts of the churches to repress the alleged spirit of mischief in the Australian boy were seen as largely futile and therefore not especially to be feared.

The Bulletin 20 Jan. 1894.

overlooked, and the Bulletin seldom missed an opportunity to ridicule the pretensions of the religious profession, developing the image of the "wowser" for this purpose.

In the writers' attack on the repression of manhood, however, it was chiefly the woman who bore the brunt. It was not merely that she was disqualified from the medical concept of male adolescence and from the literary construction of the national ethos. Her role as a protective vigilante of the vulnerable young was now judged as a puritanical repression of both man and child.

This was a view present in Furphy's Such is Life, where Mary's mother was depicted as inhibiting the child with a "large sunbonnet" and other vestiges of bourgeois respectability. She was also said to disapprove of raising the child without corporal punishment and to fail to demonstrate maternal affection. She loved the child only "in her own hard, puritanical way." Children in general were described as "creatures of instinct" whose happy efforts to learn by discovering things for themselves were like those of the innocent bushman, thwarted by ignorant and repressive women. For example, when a child was found innocently amusing itself in an ash-heap, the misguided mother "denudes him, washes him, rubs soap into his eyes, spanks him, re-arrays him and sets him in a clean place, giving him a teaspoon to play with..."[71]

In 1896, an article in the Bulletin on the Free Kindergarten movement was scathingly critical of its founding philanthropic ladies, labelling them as "fashionable faddists" and the teachers employed by them as "broken-down governesses". According to the Bulletin, the Kindergarten was of no value unless its method was "rooted firmly in psychological laws".[72]

Thus, in the ideas which the writers were engraving into the national ethos, the image of the female was further debased. Not only was she unable to display the national qualities, she was projected as contributing to their destruction, and so must be despised.

The Children's Court and Probation System:

By 1911, not only was the idea of the larrikin as a degenerate commercially non-viable, it was also out of step with a new departure in scientific theory itself. In heightening the idea of the devilry in the male, as vital to the fitness of the national organism, the Bulletin writers had anticipated a movement growing out of child-study, away from the emphasis in medical theory on passions and self-will as a disease, often hereditary in nature, and laying the foundations for a new environmentalism.

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71. Joseph Furphy Op.Cit. 74-5, 208.

72. Bulletin 8 Aug. 1896 p.7.

This swing towards preference for environmental determinants of behaviour was already evident in new theories of the causes of juvenile delinquency. Even some medical experts in the field were suggesting that this was best dealt with, not by separation of the child from its parent, but by guiding the rearing of the child in its own home.

This constituted a challenge to the location of delinquency as a disease, biologically inherited from the too prolific parent or "caught" by a tainted environment. Waywardness, idleness, mischief, even expressions of sexuality were not intrinsic faults which must be "treated" early in the young lest they culminate in delinquency, nor checked at their biological source, in unfit parentage. Rather the causes of delinquency could be seen to lie in the failure of the parent, especially the mother, to provide the right balance between discipline and adventurous truancy in the home. As Charles Mackellar put it in 1907, when he was still firmly an advocate of environmental determinants of behaviour, much juvenile misbehaviour was "the result simply of mischief - a misdirection of energy or want of parental control."[73]

Even after his conversion to the idea of criminal propensities as a disease, Mackellar was still prepared to argue that in "the evolution of humanitarianism" in the treatment of juvenile offenders, the Reformatories had been but a first, imperfect step. Though the dull, mentally defective or abnormally cunning boy might be kept there for years without harm, the "bright" boy who was difficult to board-out, would be made incorrigible. His personal initiative repressed, it was likely that it would later find release in a "war against society." Reformatories were only suitable for the minority of juvenile offenders, those 10% who were criminally inclined, and the 2% who were "sexually degenerate" or "vicious". Of girls, largely excluded from these theories of the dangers of repression, Mackellar had little to say. Certainly those classified as "sexually degenerate" were to be housed in Reformatories, and for them, Mackellar had little hope of cure.[74]

The impact of the newer theory became apparent in arguments for a Children's Court and Probation System. By the turn of the century, some kind of alternative was needed to arrest the proliferation of costly Reformatories and cottage homes. Though a system of suspension of sentence in some cases of juvenile conviction had been introduced in Victoria in 1887,[75] this measure became essential following the implementation of new legislation relating to the

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73. The Child, the Law and the State (Sydney 1907) p.16.

74. The Treatment of Neglected and Delinquent Children in Great Britain, Europe and America With Recommendations as to Amendment of Administration and Law in NSW (NSW LA PP Vol.4 1913 p.30-41); The Evolution of Humanitarianism in the Treatment of Juvenile Delinquency (Sydney 1915) p.14, 19.

75. Juvenile Offenders Amendment Act 51 Vict. No.951 of 1887 Section 43-7.

neglected and juvenile offender in 1905 (NSW) and 1906 (Victoria).[76] This greatly increased the range of cases in which the State might intervene between parent and child. For instance in NSW, children and young people up to the age of sixteen were defined as "neglected" if both parents were habitual drunkards, or if one was a habitual drunkard and the other was dead, insane, unknown, in gaol or absent from the State. Children living under conditions which suggested that they might "lapse into a career of vice and crime" were also liable for arrest.[77]

The concurrent provision of special Children's Courts, long sought by feminists and philanthropists as a humane measure to spare the child from victimization in a legal system designed for adults, also had the effect of increasing the number of children coming under the scrutiny of the law. Children were now arrested and convicted of trivial offences such as climbing in the park, bathing in view, travelling without fare, swearing, stealing fruit, trespassing and breaching traffic regulations.[78] Of 1734 cases before the Court in NSW in 1913, 349 had been convictions for offences like stone-throwing, "horseplay in the street," "causing annoyance to passers by," and "ringing door bells."[79]

The increase in the number of young offenders created the need for new theories to explain and solve the increasing incidence of juvenile misbehaviour, while also making mandatory the implementation of a scheme to avoid the costs of incarceration. For this purpose, the new notion that mischievous pranks were natural to this stage of growth in boys proved ideal. Though technically at odds with legislation which gave greater control over misbehaviour, it helped to make the principle of probation seem progressive and just, expertly geared to the needs both of child and society. Police could intervene to stop incidents of misbehaviour and could apprehend miscreants; the child could then be examined, tested, admonished and warned; but in most cases costly incarceration or fostering was avoided. By 1915, 85.19% of cases before the Children's Court in New South Wales were dealt with other than by institutionalization, and the proportion of cases released on probation was 57.69%.[80]

The impact of the new theory was apparent in other aspects of the Probation System. As in the infant welfare movement, the system assumed that the alleged errors made in child-rearing could be corrected by monitoring of child-rearing in the working-class home. In a new version of the old Dickensian arguments for the importance of "home discipline", it was argued that the family

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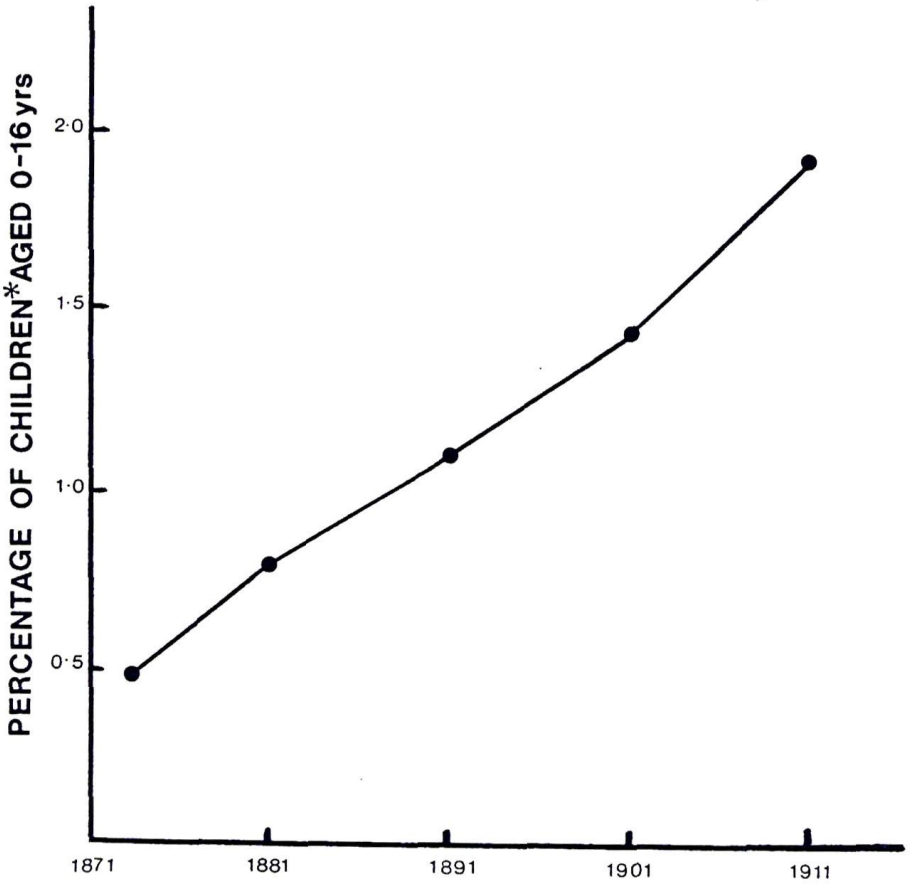
76. Act No.16 of 1905 (NSW); 6 Edw.VII No.2058 (Vic.).
77. Act No.16 1905 Section 5 (g) and (j).
78. Dr. Charles Mackellar The Child, The Law and the State p.17.
79. SCRB Annual Report 1913 p.35.
80. Ibid. p.37.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN COMMITTED TO CONTROL OF DEPT. OF NEGLECTED CHILDREN AND REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.°

1871–1911 VICTORIA



*EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL CHILDREN AGED SIXTEEN YEARS AND UNDER.

° PRIOR TO 1887, DEPT. OF INDUSTRIAL AND REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

SOURCE: ANNUAL REPORTS.

Fig. 8

was the best institution for reforming the average boy.[81] However, it was no longer necessary to transfer the child from its own family to an approved one to effect this reform. Rather the parents themselves were to be helped in the complex task of rearing the older child by the Probation Officer.[82]

The result was that the onus of fault was turned away from the child as a dangerous larrikin and back onto the parents. Even they were now less likely to be seen as "unfit" than as ignorant or misinformed of the special needs of the older child. Aided by the Probation Officer, they could help to divert the misdirected energy of the wilful child into proper channels, where instead of delinquency, it might find expression in noble deeds and heroism.[83]

Whatever parents might have made of this theory, in practice the system functioned so as to make co-operation preferable to resistance. As Mackellar told his Probation Officers, the neglectful parent ceased to be so when faced with removal of the child.[84]

For the parent, as in the case of qualifying to have one's children boarded-out in their own home, in meeting the requirements of the Probation Officer, much depended on the mother's conformity to childhood ideology. A desirable home environment was held to be one where the mother did not exhibit "self-interest" or "indifference to the moral rules," but where she concentrated her spiritual influence on the welfare and education of her young. Ideally she should have herself been educated specially "with a view to that end." A home where a mother worked in industry would not be considered an ideal environment for a child on probation. As Mackellar put it, if a mother worked outside the domestic realm, the home-life and proper care of the children was sacrificed; indeed, the moral tone of the mother herself was gradually lowered.[85]

Not only under the Probation System, but in the hearing of the case, under the new Acts, it was essentially the parent who was on trial. While the child was detained at the shelter or court, "so far as it is possible the home surroundings of the delinquent are enquired into," Charles Mackellar wrote in 1907,[86] and a report based on this investigation was then expected to influence and guide the decision of the magistrate. During the trial, the quality of parental training was measured by asking the child questions like "How many Commandments are there?" or "Do you know who God is?" A child accused of stealing who answered this with "Yes, Money", was said to be suffering from

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81. SCRB Annual Report 1910 p.36.

82. Dr. Charles Mackellar The Treatment of Neglected and Delinquent Children p.33-4.

83. The Liberal Woman Supplement 1 Jun. 1913 p.30-1.

84. SCRB Annual Report 1910 p.36.

85. The Child, the Law and the State p.34.

86. Ibid. p.11.

want of proper discipline by the parents and to reveal their need for guidance by the Probation Officer in the rearing of their children.[87]

While establishing the guilt of the parent, the new legal system proceeded towards refashioning the idea of the innocence of the child. Though it was emphasized that a "proper" home environment was one where parental authority was asserted, it was also stressed that the Probation Officer was to be the child's friend, helping it to achieve desired values and offering protection in cases of emergency.[88] As child study had shown, the "stupid", "lazy" or belligerent child might simply be suffering from "defective sense development", "perhaps even lack of love and sympathy". In most cases, juvenile offenders were not to blame for their offence. The fault lay "in their environment."[89]

The scope of the probation scheme was immense. In NSW in 1910, some 77,035 "visits" were paid to families where a child was on probation, reforming, as Charles Mackellar said, hundreds of homes without cost to the State.[90]

The economy of the scheme depended not only on the fact that it avoided institutionalization but also on the fact that many of the Probation Officers were unpaid. In New South Wales in 1913, there were some 300 honorary "visitors", many of whom were female, and only 33 salaried Inspectors, most of whom were male.[91]

This new field of action for the Lady Visitor as the "friend" of the working-class child did not mean that her influence in this area was enhanced and that of the doctor reduced. Rather, under the Probation System, the Lady Visitor moved further away from her old role as an autonomous agent dispensing private charity. Though her services were frequently made available by liaison with charities such as St. Vincent de Paul, the Salvation Army and by women's organizations such as the Christian Temperance Union,[92] the Probation Officer was firmly under professional direction, with her authority to intervene in the working-class home on behalf of the child now authorized by the State.

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87. SCRB Annual Report 1910 p.35.

88. Ibid. p.36.

89. Margaret Wells Arnold "Influence of Child Study on Educational Method" Aust. Journal of Education 15 Oct. 1906 p.6. Even Truancy was now firmly the fault of the parent, who was seen as offering it as an excuse to evade responsibility for moral training. (Ibid. 16 Jul. 1906 p.3). See also Dr. Charles Mackellar Treatment of Neglected and Delinquent Children p.31.

90. SCRB Annual Report 1910 p.13; 1920 p.12.

91. SCRB Annual Report 1913 p.37.

92. Anthea Hyslop "Christian Temperance and Social Reform: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Victoria 1887-1912" in S. Willis (ed.) Women, Faith and Fetes (Melbourne 1977) p.57.

Nor did the potential conflict with aspects of older medical ideology mean that medical influence at the Children's Court was reduced. As always in the conflict between the idea of original innocence and of original sin, the introduction of a new explanation for juvenile misbehaviour did not automatically mean the exclusion of the old. As Mackellar's conversion to heredity theory in New South Wales made clear, theoretical sympathy with the male juvenile offender as mismanaged and misunderstood did not interfere with the belief that medical detection of inherited predisposition in the child could be "cured" if caught in the earliest stages, preferably before adolescence, when it would otherwise "spread".[93] Nor did it prevent his participation in campaigns to eradicate larrikinism at its biological source in unfit parentage. Children coming into the Shelter continued to be given not only a mental test, but an examination for venereal disease, and institutionalization was mandatory if symptoms of the disease were found. Further, since there was no bail, the child could be remanded in custody for up to two weeks and sometimes longer. Legal representation was not permitted.[94]

Sigmund Freud:

In 1911, the emphasis on repression as an environmental determinant of misbehaviour in the young, which the Australian writers had so successfully publicized, found a new ally among child studiers. At the Australasian Medical Congress that year, following a request by the section of Neurology and Psychiatry, a paper was sent by former student of Charcot at Saltpetrere, Dr. Sigmund Freud. Entitled "On Psycho-Analysis", it provided local doctors with a brief resume of Freud's theories as published in Studies of Hysteria (1895) and more recently, in his Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality, which, though published in 1905, had appeared in English only in the previous year. In addition, a paper was sent by Havelock Ellis explaining "The Doctrines of the Freud School." Ellis added that the "genius" of Freud had already caused a great demand for his works overseas, and he had been invited to the United States to receive an Honorary Degree at Clark University.[95]

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93. SCRB Annual Report 1920 p.2, 47. (Mackellar was succeeded as President of the Board in 1915 by A.W. Green).

94. Dr. Charles Mackellar Treatment of Neglected and Delinquent Children p.66-70, 93; Linda Forbes "'Children of the State' State Wards and Juvenile Offenders NSW 1905-1939" BA Thesis SU 1981 p.49, 51.

95. Trans. AMC 1911 p.843-6. Hall's invitation was a significant breakthrough for Freud, marking the beginning of interest in his ideas by some of the older "experts" in the study of the mind. (R.E. Watson The Great Psychologists New York 1963 p.436).

Much of Freudian theory as it stood in 1911 endorsed both the literary and the medical construction of male needs. For instance, it confirmed that "an 'infantile sexuality' really does exist" and that though the cultural development of mankind demanded that restrictions be placed upon the sexual impulse, sexual activity could be diverted from its direct goals and led towards higher ones, thereby contributing to the social and artistic achievements of humanity. Even the warning that the child's sexual life was highly complex, involving not only thumb-sucking, friction of the genital and anal openings and other erogenous zones, but also special interest in excreta, may not have come as a surprise to local doctors, and they had no reason to quarrel with the view that normally, shame and moral sense drove these infantile sexual impulses out of the conscious field, though fragments of them might reappear, especially around puberty.[96] Though the perception of a spiritual a-sexuality in childhood would now undergo further qualification, the new Freudian construction had been anticipated in the biological view of the child as a little savage which revealed its passions without shame.

With respect to women, Freudian theory provided new verification of the doctors' and the writers' construction of female adolescence and motherhood. It placed unprecedented emphasis on the sexual division of labour in the family and on the importance of establishing strongly defined sex roles in childhood. Further, the deliberate backward-looking search for the causes of adult mental problems in childhood had great potential for reinforcing the notion of parental, specially maternal guilt. Wordsworth's dictum that the child was father of the man, and that childhood was the seedtime of the soul was now proved with a vengeance. Indeed, when the theory of the Oedipus Complex was added to the theory of sexuality, Freud hardly needed to develop his construction of female nature, (in which aspirations towards a masculine role of action and initiative would be construed as an embittered quest for maleness not fulfilled by the birth of a son).[97] The increasing complexity of guiding the child successfully through the long and troubled stages of sexual growth in order to attain a mentally-sound maturity would itself complete the destruction of woman's confidence within her own sphere, and increase her susceptibility to accusations that much of the blame for the imperfections of society lay with her.

For doctors however, Freudian theory introduced some problems which were new. Though the primitive sexual impulses in the child were said to be innate, the notion that the successful sublimation of these instincts was

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96. Trans. AMC 1911 p.839-42.

97. "Some Character Types Met With in Psycho-Analysis Work" (1915); "Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes" (1925).

determined by individual experience inferred that mental health depended not only on heredity but on environment. Further, the implication that sexual expression was normal in the young undermined much of the doctors' case for a link between the mental and the moral in human behaviour.

Thus, though Freudian theory opened up new scope for the role of the professional helper in monitoring child-raising, it clearly contradicted the idea that criminality or lunacy were forms of mental disease for which doctors had a cure. Rather, criminality or lunacy became a failure occurring in childhood to convert the primitive sexual energies towards higher uses. These problems could be traced back to improper decisions made by parents rather than to biological unfitness or disease. Psycho-analysis would be an ideology of parenting, not of "mental hygiene".

Whereas during the 1890s, Dr. Carroll had assumed that the emergence of "psychology" as a separate discipline would be an area in which doctors might specialize[98] it was now apparent that this new development in the nascent science might be taken out of the hands of doctors altogether. Though doctors might retain their influence of "Psychiatry", it would be the psycho-analyst, not the doctor, who would advise the parent on the mental health of offspring.

Not suprisingly, Freudian ideas attracted little medical attention by 1914, their threat being met largely by silence.[99] As overseas, they would remain for some time outside the realms of both the medical profession and the academic psychologists. Prominent supporters of Freud's ideas, such as Havelock Ellis and G. Stanley Hall, could remain convinced concurrently both of the importance of psycho-analysis and of the eugenic control of parentage,[1] while arguments for the segregation of the unfit would be refurbished when economic conditions began to deteriorate again in the late 1920s.

In the meantime, however, the doctors' authority on mental training of the child was being challenged from another direction. Led by theorists in the Universities and Teacher Training Colleges, teachers were moving to appropriate some of the status and professionalism which could be derived from claiming expert knowledge of new environmental techniques arising from the scientific study of the child.

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98. "Psychology - Studies of the Brains of Animals and Men" Science of Man Vol.1 No.5 1898 p.107.

99. Explanations of Freudian "treatment" at the Australasian Medical Congress in 1914 were provided by English and New Zeland doctors (Trans. AMC 1914 p.754 ff).

1. G. Stanley Hall Op.Cit. Vol.1 p.344, Vol.2 p.138-9, 607; Havelock Ellis Studies in the Psychology of Sex (1897-1928), The Task of Social Hygiene (1912).

CHAPTER NINE

FORMATION NOT REFORMATION

The "New" Education

In 1913, L.A. Adamson, Headmaster of Wesley College, Melbourne, addressing the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, said that in the "evolution" of every profession, as for instance in medicine, engineering and dentistry, "real advance" had been possible only because of factors such as access to knowledge of scientific principles, together with "corporate organization". He warned that education could not yet claim the status of "a fully developed science". For instance, "it was still "groping for an objective standard" to determine which children were "defective" and which "merely dull". In the meantime, this decision was "left to the doctors instead of the teachers" because they had an objective standard while education had not.[1]

During the preceding decade, however, colonial teachers had moved strongly towards the achievement of both of Adamson's pre-requisites for professionalism. Leaders of the profession, supported by influential intellectuals, had launched a trenchant attack on the existing State system, joining the doctors in the claïm that it was ill-equipped to develop a superior national type. In Victoria, Frank Tate's criticisms in the Australasian Schoolmaster from 1892,[1a] were followed in 1898 by further allegations of inefficiency and bureaucracy by Alfred Deakin. Publicized in the Age, these disclosures alerted public concern and culminated in a Royal Commission on Technical Education under Deakin's friend and fellow member of Melbourne's intellectual and Bohemian circles, Theodore Fink. Its Second Progress Report, issued in 1899, constituted a comprehensive attack on the whole State system. By 1901 its main points were taken up in NSW by Attorney-General, B.R. Wise and Francis Anderson, (Professor of Moral and Mental Philosophy at Sydney University from 1890 to 1921) in an address at the Annual Conference of Public School Teachers of NSW in June 1901. This resulted in a NSW Royal Commission under G.H. Knibbs and J.W. Turner in 1902-1903.

These enquiries were followed by a flurry of changes to the State system during the ensuring decade. Legislation was passed to tighten up compulsory attendance in the elementary schools, fees were abolished and attempts, many of which had already begun during the 90s, were made to align the curriculum with the findings of the new moral and mental science. State facilities for

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1. "Mental Science and Education" AAAS Report Vol.14 1913 p.623-4.

1a. "Teaching; The Noblest of Professions, But the Sorriest of Trades" Australasian Schoolmaster Nov.1892 p.75-6 (cont. Dec.1892 p.92-3, Jan.1893 p.101-3); see also Ibid. Jun.1895 p.220-2, and May 1897 p.222-4.

secondary education were expanded, and High, Technical and "Continuation" schools were extended or introduced. The old pupil-teacher system of training was replaced by the principle of full-time study in educational science culminating in professional qualifications to teach delineated stages of growth, and the old principles of payment or promotion by results were abolished. Though teachers would not be able to claim a status, remuneration or professional autonomy commensurate with that of the doctors, these changes did expand the market for their services and enable them to remove features in their relationship with their employer which had been distasteful to them.

The fact that from the turn of the century, teachers were able to achieve gains where previous efforts to do so had failed,[2] owed much to access to that aura of expertise which only the new, biologically-based, social sciences could now provide. Influential spokesmen for the profession, claimed knowledge of mental phenomena becoming available from the scientific study of the child. Thus they were able to sustain the conscious campaign which they had instigated to reconstitute the school as a major environmental determinant of the physical, mental and moral fitness of the child and the race.

Members of Dr. Carroll's Association who were supporters of the claim of the teacher to a share in the new knowledge included G.H. Knibbs, (lecturer in surveying at Sydney University at the time of the Royal Commission in NSW), and fellow commissioner, J.W. Turner, headmaster of Fort Street School. Peter Board, Inspector of Schools for the Newcastle district, appointed Director of Education in NSW in 1905 was also a member, as was S.H. Smith, Inspector of Schools and editor of the Commonwealth School Paper from 1908.

In 1907, in a paper given at a meeting of school inspectors in Sydney, S.H. Smith spelt out the importance of child study to the teachers' quest for professional status:

> For so long as our educational practices are empirical, so long will the teacher be a mere tradesman ... but when his work is based upon science, then, and only then will it become a recognized profession. By encouraging child study then we shall hasten the coming of full professional recognition.[3]

Sydney school teacher and member of the Society for Child Study, E.A. Riley, agreed. Psychology was slowly but surely "driving educational quackery into outer darkness." Riley believed the school itself was a "fitting ground for experiment," while in 1906, teachers in Sydney Smith's district kept records

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2. Bruce Mitchell "Improving Teachers" Journal of Australian Studies No.11 Nov. 1982 p.62-8.

3. S.H. Smith "Child Study Our Opportunity" Public Instruction Gazette 26 Feb. 1907 p.321-2; see also Aust. Journal of Education Pictorial Supplement 15 Nov. 1905 p.ii.

of children's progress to ascertain what was "a reasonable average standard."[4]

Spokesmen for the implementation of a "New" education strove to publicize the fact that State education was increasingly being regarded "as a matter for the expert," and as such was capable of wielding an "immense influence in moulding the character of the pupils for good." Aided by child study, educationists now looked deeply into the mechanism of "the wondrous mind of the child" and understood the complex adjustments needed to enable it to complete successfully each stage of growth.[5] It was stressed that "all undesirable inheritances" could be counteracted by skilful teaching, and that the teacher "took account of" inherited nervous tendencies which set the bounds of the rate of mental growth.[6] It was argued that the child learned by healthy "activity" and great care was taken not to "stifle" initiative and "turn the mind into a machine." It was agreed that muscular and outdoor exercises were essential to prevent physical debility and promote the conversion of savage or nomadic habits to higher civilized forms. The aim of the teacher was to educate the "whole" child, certainly not the brain at the expense of the body.[7]

Like the social scientists and creative writers, the educational theorists relied not only on the medicalization of child-rearing ideas, but also looked back to theories based on Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Freobel. Some even reconstituted the Dickensian concept of "Gradgrindery" to support their case for "reform". It was declared that the "Old" system had been based on "short and easy mechanical" methods, which harmfully and ineffectively attempted to engrave moral precepts and facts on the memory by rote learning.[8]

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4. E.A. Riley "The Child Factor in Education" Lecture to Society for Child Study Mar.1906 repr. in Public Instruction Gazette 28 Apr. 1906 p.68, 72; S.H. Smith "Child Study Our Opportunity" p.323.

5. Peter Board Report Upon Observations and Inquiries Made With Regard to Primary Education in Other Countries (Sydney 1903) p.1, Aust. Journal of Education 15 Jul. 1905 p.8; John Smyth "The New Attitude to Education" Aust. Journal of Education 1 Aug. 1903 p.8.

6. W.J. Colville The Value of Froebel's Philosophy and the Kindergarten System of Education (Adelaide 1900) p.8 (lecture delivered Sydney 29 Sep. 1900); Peter Board "The Society for Child Study" Aust. Journal of Education 15 Dec. 1907 p.6.

7. Francis Anderson On Teaching to Think : An Address to Teachers (Sydney 1903) p.4; Frank Tate "Ideals in Modern Education" in C.R. Long (ed.) The Aims and Work of the Education Department (Melbourne 1906) p.9. Tate, formerly Principal of the Teacher Training College (1899) became Director of Education in Victoria in 1902.

8. Francis Anderson The Public School System of NSW (Sydney 1901) p.10; P.R. Cole "Some Historical Antecedents of Froebel" AKM Vol.1 No.5 1911 p.3-5; Public Instruction Gazette 31 Jan 1908 p.200-202.

New subjects on the curriculum such as Nature Study, were said to be liberating the child from unhealthy incarceration in the classroom and to have a mysterious, quasi-medical power to affect the character. The introduction of Arbor Day was also part of the new faith in inculcating benefits in the child, not by rote learning, but by focussing the child's attention on the natural world.[9]

Similarly the expansion of State educational facilities to cater for the older child could be justified in terms of the need for greater direction and guidance for the newly understood period of adolescence. Educationists joined the writers in celebrating the "period of youth", "with all its enthusiasms, its extravagant dreaming, its boundless hopes and desires." However, they added, this crucial epoch began just when compulsion to attend school ceased. No boy of thirteen could be considered an adult, yet at this age home discipline was often relaxed and spare time spent in unprofitable ways. Though in terms of what schooling could achieve, the first five years were important, for the child was then "plastic in the hands of circumstance," no less an authority than G. Stanley Hall had shown that the period from fourteen to nineteen was even more vital. It was experiences in this age-span which did most to determine the future physical and psychic powers. There was need to "catch" the wayward youth in the Continuation School, and prevent him from "drifting". Thus were his energies to be conserved and diverted into building up the "capacities of the Nation."[10]

The prolongation of State education could be justified not only in terms of the moral qualities it was said to bestow, but also in terms of the "Old" rhetoric that education ensured political stability. Like the doctors, teachers could declare that the militant class-consciousness of the depression years, followed by alarm at a falling birth rate, demanded greater institutional control over this age group. Thus Peter Board argued that now that it had been seen that the establishment of free primary education had helped secure "social stability", it was necessary to go further and say that "freedom, public safety and social order" could scarcely exist without an extension of high and secondary education. The older child must be educated both for an honest

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9. Peter Board Report Upon ... Primary Education p.5; S.H. Smith "The Aims and Method of Teaching Nature Knowledge" Aust. Journal of Education Pictorial Supplement 15 Nov. 1905 p.vi; "Nature Study" Report of an address by J.C. Champion, Spring Hill P.S. Public Instruction Gazette 25 Oct. 1907 p.87-9; NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Annual Report 1890 p.28-32.

10. John Smyth Op.Cit. p.8; Peter Board Report Upon ... Primary Education p.11, "Higher, Primary and Secondary Education" Aust. Journal of Education 15 Aug. 1907 p.9, Report on Continuation Schools (Sydney 1912) p.6-9.



Arbor Day at a Country School.



A School Garden.

61. School gardening and tree-planting was believed to have an elevating effect on the moral character. It was not intended to arrest the destruction of the local environment.

C.R. Long (ed.) Education Dept. of Victoria Souvenir Book The Aims and Work of the Education Dept. (Melbourne 1906).

vocation and for responsible citizenship.[11]

For teachers, the claim to have knowledge of environmental determinants of behaviour, affecting the destiny of the child and the nation, was facilitated by the fact that the key changes by which the State schools system was to be put in touch with the new child-rearing science, could be justified not only by threats to the existing political and moral order but also by the idea of the increasing importance of technical expertise. Overseas, technological achievements and engineering feats were causing rising emphasis on the importance of scientific education so that the nation would not be left behind in the march of modern progress, or worse, overwhelmed by others more technically advanced. Inventions like the internal combustion engine and electric light provided visible demonstration of the importance of encouraging scientific imagination and expertise in the children of the classes said to have the necessary mental resources, while technical efficiency was also seen as a vital factor in the nation's workforce. As Peter Board put it in 1909, "the demands of the evolving social organism" had rendered education of new importance to the State. "Not the mere rudiments of citizenship, but the preparation of the youth of the nation for the most efficient participation in productive industry is now being recognized as determining the range of the State's responsibility. In several States of America and Germany, this has already led to the extension of the compulsory age from fourteen to sixteen years." An education which terminated at fourteen neither equipped youth to deal with the moral dangers of industrial urban society, nor the nation to survive under the changing forces of commercial competition.[12]

The shock of British military losses in the Boer War and rising consciousness of a threat to British trading hegemony posed by German territorial expansion, added fuel to these fears, while the defeat of Russia by Japan added a sense of isolation and heightened awareness of dependence on the economic and military strength of Britain. Education had to be made to constitute not only a moral but a technical force, by which British trade, racial stock and political institutions might be preserved. As Francis Anderson remarked in 1914,

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11. Peter Board "Higher Primary and Secondary Education" p.9. The NSW Day and Evening Continuation Schools were, like the old Superior Schools, designed for children able to prolong their education past Primary School but not for the full four years offered in the High School. Their counterpart in Vic. was the Junior Technical School. See Francis Anderson "Educational Policy and Development" in G.H. Knibbs (ed) Federal Handbook (Melbourne 1914) p.527-8; Bob Bessant "The Emergence of State Secondary Education" in J. Lawry and J. Cleverley (eds.) Australian Education in the Twentieth Century (Melbourne 1972) p.127-8.

12. Presidential Address AAAS 1909 repr. in Public Instruction Gazette 27 Feb. 1909 p.31; Report on Continuation Schools p.7.

> It was probably the economic motive more than any other which induced the Legislatures to give a sympathetic hearing to the demand for educational reform. Individual and national "efficiency" was declared, in Australia as in England, to be the thing needful.[13]

Efforts to make education more technically efficient were not new, but had been increasing in momentum from the late 1880s. However, it was from the turn of the century that the coincidence of these efforts with medical prescription for mental and moral training enabled teachers to demonstrate the scientific expertise so essential to the professional recognition they sought.

The State Kindergarten:

The way in which the new ideas from child study coincided with the increasing emphasis on providing a more technically efficient workforce was especially apparent in State commitment to providing special Kindergarten classes. These aimed to care for the very young children who had always been present in the State system in considerable numbers. C.H. Pearson had recommended lectures on Kindergarten methods to trainee teachers as early as 1887, and by the end of the 1890s, Kindergarten handwork and occupations had been introduced into many of the State schools.

In NSW, the Combes Report of 1880 had envisaged the Kindergarten as a new field in which State school teachers might specialize, and the first departmental Kindergarten was established at Crown Street in 1882, with a second at Riley Street soon after. By 1887, the Department of Public Instruction was committed to introducing a Kindergarten system into the elementary schools. Formal training of teachers to specialize in State school Kindergartens in Victoria began in 1900.[14]

Activities in the government Kindergartens illustrated the compatibility of emphasis on the importance of occupying idle fingers in constructive activities and the perception of the need to develop a more technically oriented workforce. It was believed that the "gifts" and games selected constituted a form of "preliminary technical work",[15] though as in the creches and ragged schools, a moral influence was also sought. According to John Smyth, it was "the higher mission" of the state school kindergartens to train the children in "habits of industry, of neatness, of order and helpfulness."[16]

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13. "Educational Policy and Development" p.520. See further B. Bessant Op.Cit. p.124 ff.

14. M. Walker "The Development of Kindergartens in Australia" M. Ed. Thesis SU 1964 p.337.

15. Peter Board "Higher Primary and Secondary Education" p.7; NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Annual Report 1890 p.55; Royal Commission on Technical Education Second Progress Report on Primary Instruction Vic. LA V&P 1899-1900 Vol.4 p.3-5, 12-14, 25-7.

16. "Infant Room Teaching" in C.R. Long Op.Cit. p.60-2. See also Public Instruction Gazette 28 Mar. 1906 p.57.



62. A Class of Clay-Modelling.

C.R. Long (ed.) Education Dept. of Victoria Souvenir Book The Aims and Work of the Education Dept. (Melbourne 1906).

Inside the State Kindergarten, in addition to time spent on teaching hygiene, the problem of finding non-scholastic activities and specially constructed play was solved by the new notion of Aboriginal folklore as of relevance to the primitive stage of growth of the younger child. The children were considered fruitfully occupied when listening to aboriginal stories or building imitation gunyahs or sand-tray representations of aboriginal life.[17]

By 1912, teachers were joining doctors in claiming that Kindergarten activities had a mental as well as a moral function for the children of the poor. Methods based on Montessori's ideas were introduced at the Practice School at Blackfriars in that year, and by 1914, the principal, Miss M.M. Simpson, followed Montessori in claiming amazing success for them in offsetting the environmental disadvantages of the poor. Children "broke into writing" of their own accord; the "phonic elements" were mastered and applied by "most children" in two weeks. One child "taught himself to read in one day."[18]

Manual Training in the Elementary School:

The teachers' claims of enormous and esoteric powers for manual dexterity in developing moral, mental and technical attributes, found expression not only in the provision of State Kindergartens, but also in manual training for older boys. For this purpose, the new "Sloyd" system was said to be particularly effective.[19] According to Francis Anderson, Sloyd methods improved on existing forms of manual training taught in schools because they not only prepared the child for a trade, but utilized the connection between "motor centres" and "mental power". Muscular training, especially of the hand, was conducive to breadth of mind, and it was therefore important to develop the hand faculty in order to exercise the mental faculties.[20]

Such mystification of manual training usefully contributed to the career opportunities available in education to the trained teacher, for it was said that the children must learn it, not from a mere tradesmen, but from a qualified instructor. By 1906, in Victoria there were 4000 children under instruction in Sloyd techniques at several centres were scattered through the State. The course included the making of drawings, and the building of timber models based on them. This subject was considered most suitable for boys aged eleven to fifteen years, but younger children made paper and cardboard models from

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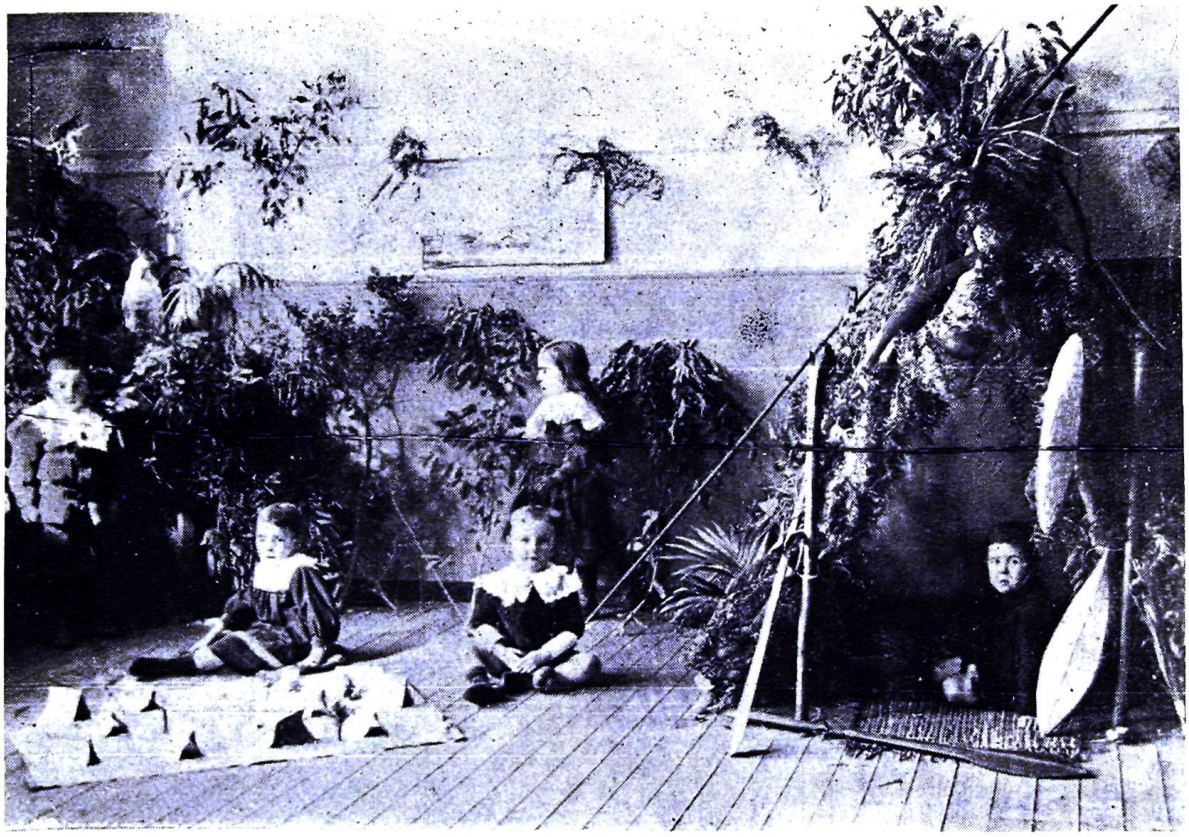
17. M.M. Simpson "Work in the Kindergarten" Records of the Education Society No. 2 (Sydney 1909) n.p. Miss Simpson was appointed to the NSW Dept. of Public Instruction's Kindergarten at Blackfriars in 1906.

18. M.M. Simpson Report on Montessori Methods of Education (Sydney 1914) p.26. In spite of these claims, the entry age of six years was more and more rigidly enforced in government schools (M. Walker Op.Cit. p.247).

19. R.J.W. Selleck The New Education (Melbourne 1968) p.112-9.

20. The Public School System of NSW p.17-18.



The Gunyah, Riley-street.

63. In the State Kindergarten, the survival of the lace collars for boys made an odd contrast with the scientific idea of aboriginal folklore as a suitable medium for educating this primitive stage of growth.

M.M. Simpson "Work in the Kindergarten" Records of the Education Society No.2 1909.

drawings.[21] By 1914, Francis Anderson was pleased to be able to report that the old plan of employing an amateur mechanic to teach the boys the use of tools had been replaced by the introduction of Sloyd methods under competent, qualified and, of course, trained instructors.[22]

For the education of the older child, the emphasis on manual skills and technical efficiency could be usefully made to match medical prescription for greater segregation of the sexes in the school. Subjects such as needlework for girls and gardening and agriculture for boys, brought the curriculum of the elementary school closer to the idea of the importance of teaching a vocational occupation appropriate to each sex. Reflecting the fact that fewer working-class children were now able to evade the educational net, it was implied that one of the problems with the "Old" education was that it had been too inefficient (and egalitarian). It had attempted to train all children as if they were to enter commercial or professional life, whereas by far the greatest number would become "members of the army of industry - hewers of wood and drawers of water." This had caused a disdain for manual labour, and had led to the notion that education was the means to escape it, for example by becoming a clerk. "But there must be workers.... What can the school do to overcome the distaste for manual toil...?" In Victoria, John Byatt, Organizing Inspector of Manual Training agreed that a consequence of universal education was over-crowding in sedentary, city-based clerical occupations, with too "many round pegs fitted into square holes."[23]

School inspectors looked for and approved of teachers' initiative in introducing sex-differentiated, non-scholastic (and for boys, strenuous) activities, which took the child out of the class-room and occupied the hands. Many of these looked back to the cult of pre-industrial rusticity currently being revived in the English craft movement and had little relationship to the factories and workshops to which so many working-class children were now destined.[24] Thus an inspector at Nabiac (NSW) Public School in 1906 was

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21. John Byatt "Sloyd Woodwork, Paperwork and Cardboard Modelling" in C.R. Long Op.Cit. p.42-3.

22. "Educational Policy and Development" p.526. For the difficulties encountered by an experienced immigrant mechanic, builder and pattern-maker (who lacked formal qualifications) in applying for a position in the NSW Dept. of Public Instruction's Technical Education Branch, see Thomas Dobeson "Narrative 1887-90" (ML MS 2980) p.105.

23. "The Social Conception of Education" (address by J. Dawson, Chief Inspector of Schools to Public School Teachers Association of NSW) Public Instruction Gazette 26 Aug. 1907 p.32; John Byatt Op.Cit. p.41; Royal Commission on Technical Education Second Progress Report on Primary Instruction p.28-37.

24. Spokesmen for education frequently referred to Thomas Carlyle and William Morris to invoke a reverence due to the "toil-worn craftsman", or to suggest that labour had "a dignity and sacredness of its own" (J. Dawson Op.Cit. p.32).

pleased to report that the boys were being taught how to use "axes, hammers, saws, spades etc.", that is the implements that would "assist them to gain a livelihood later on." He also approved of the introduction of a fowlyard at the school.[25]

Vocational Education for Girls:

For girls, adjustment of the curriculum to their vocational needs meant increasing emphasis on training for motherhood. This was a trend already building up under the "Old" regime, when, in spite of the allegations of doctors, the education of boys and girls had not been identical. For instance, girls had studied needlework, under the directions of the teacher's wife, where necessary, while cookery was introduced from the late 1880s.[26] Reading material provided in William Wilkins' Australian Reading Books (1876) had offered separate material for the two sexes by the Fifth Book. Where boys learned about Water in a State of Vapour, and Curiosities of Physical Geography, girls learned from Harriet Martineau, the need for humbleness, benevolence and a sense of duty. For girls, there were also lessons on the preparation of food and poultices, the habits of the Clothes Moth and how to stamp it out. An article on "The Sick" gave instructions on physical care of the infirm and suggested a role outside of the home, in visiting the afflicted; but "Solid Improvement - the True End of Female Education" by Sydney Smith made it quite clear to the reader that her education was designed principally to effect the improvement of her children. Similarly "Requisites for a Nursemaid" was about how to be one, not how to employ one.[27]

At the turn of the century however, both the criticisms of doctors and the new emphasis on "efficiency" demanded increased attention to sex differentiation in education. To educate girls to maintain themselves was every bit as unhealthy and wasteful as to prepare all boys for a clerical career or higher education. In both cases, the aim should be to prepare the child for what was depicted as the real world outside the school.[28]

To some extent, this demand was met by new reading material such as that selected for the Commonwealth School Paper, introduced in 1904. Here, though the content was similar to that directed at girls in the older Readers, it was introduced at an earlier age and took more subtle forms. Readers of the Paper for Years 2 to 3 encountered stories like "A Brave Sister" in which an 11-year-

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25. Public Instruction Gazette 28 Jul. 1906 p.144.

26. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Annual Report 1890 p.36-7. For the inception of cookery in Victorian Schools, Vic. Report of Minister for Public Instruction 1898-9 p.78.

27. Australian Reading Books Fifth Book p.212-14, 323-6, 333-41.

28. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Course of Instruction for Domestic Science in Superior (Day Continuation) Schools (Sydney 1912) p.3.

old girl, one of a pair of orphaned children, died to save her brother. "His sister had saved his life at the price of her own. She had been to him, from first to last, a second mother."[29] Other material on the accepted female role looked back to the Dickensian genre, though there was a tendency to emphasize the martyrdom as much as the glories of motherhood:

> Mother with untiring hands
> At the post of duty stands -
> Patient, seeking not her own,
> Anxious to the good alone
> Of her children ...[30]

As formerly in children's literature produced for use in the private family, the god-like innocence of babies and the pleasure they brought to the home, was also featured. A Poem "Baby" by George MacDonald, presented not only a glorified image of babies, but the idea of their heavenly origin provided a neatly evasive answer to the awkward question of where they really came from.[31]

Girls were also given a stern warning of the evils which befell those who were ambitious rather than submissive, or worse still, chose the alternative female role available in society, that of prostitution. In an anonymous short story, "Adventures of a Clothes Peg" young readers learned of the harrowing, male-inflicted punishments which could be expected to befall the painted face.[32]

The curriculum changes of the "New" education, also brought increased emphasis to the medically-defined training said to be needed for girls. For instance, needlework should become less of an "accomplishment" or even a "craft", than a specific preparation of the girl for domestic efficiency. The course of instruction aimed to ensure that, as a future wife, she might stretch the income provided by a single breadwinner, or as an unmarried woman, be equipped earn an honest and respectable living as a seamstress.[33]

In 1908, Senior Inspector Thomas of Armidale District (N.S.W.) reported that "The tendency to subordinate plain sewing to fancy work has quite disappeared. A very appreciable advance has been made in the matter of plain sewing, useful home mending and (with the senior girls) cutting out and making garments." School girls in the Campbelltown district in 1908, in addition to

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29. Commonwealth School Paper for Classes 2-3 Vol.5 No.1 Jul.1908 p.5. This story was repeated in Jul.1909.

30. Ibid. Vol.2 No.3 Sep. 1905 p.41 ("Where's Mother?" repr. Vol.11 No.5 Nov. 1914); Vol.1 No.1 Jul. 1904 p.15 ("Somebody's Mother").

31. Ibid. Vol.4 No.4 Oct. 1907 p.63.

32. Ibid. Vol.3 No.7 Feb. 1906 p.104-12.

33. Public Instruction Gazette 30 Apr. 1908 p.303 (Inspector Henderson, Grafton District).

learning how to make "useful garments", also participated in a "sox day" when they brought articles from home to school and mended them there. "I give every encouragement to practical work of this character," the Inspector reported.[34]

Similar assumptions underlay the changes made in cookery as it became a regular part of the curriculum under the "New" education. The courses were designed to teach efficiency and economy in the home. Thus even in smaller schools in NSW by 1908, girls aged from eight or nine were taught frugal practices such as jam-making and pickling vegetables, though it was also considered appropriate that they learn points of etiquette such as how to make the dining room attractive and how to set the table.[35] In Victoria by 1914, there were more than 60 schools equipped with gas stoves and cupboards where girls from the age of seven or eight, wearing cap and apron, were taught to prepare a meal which they served to the staff daily for lunch. All these experiences, including waiting on the table and washing up, gave the girls "a good idea of housewifery" and established "in their minds a love of order, system and cleanliness". Girls over fourteen in Victorian schools might take up "more advanced work" including dressmaking and laundering. In this case, pupils learned to wash and iron clothes brought from the home. It was hoped that this "special branch of knowledge would be extended to "every home in Victoria" for, without it, no home could be conducted "on economic or hygienic lines."[36]

Education for motherhood in the State school also included learning the rules for infant care. Here the cult of efficiency meant following to the letter the doctors' rules for routine, regularity and hygiene. The curriculum indicated that, however much care was needed to avoid repressing the spirit of the male adolescent, for the mother and the infant, passions, inclinations and even comfort were never to be put before strict obedience to the rigid medical formula for avoiding "indiscriminate feeding", "soothing mixtures" and the "dummy comforter."[37]

For girls aged thirteen or over, and attending a Superior or Day Continuation School in NSW, a "domestic science" course introduced in 1912 indicated that "efficiency" meant learning not only practical and money-saving skills and the formal prescription for infant care, but also the broader economic and political assumptions on which childhood ideology had always

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34. Ibid. p.282, 293; see also Fanny M. Hamberton (of Glenferrie State School) "Needlework" in C.R. Long Op.Cit. p.46.

35. Public Instruction Gazette 30 Apr. 1908 p.303; The Liberal Woman 1 Feb. 1911 p.132.

36. Mrs. Lovell Mountain "Domestic Economy Teaching in Victoria" Report of the Proceedings of the Imperial Health Conference (London 1914) p.302, 304.

37. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction The Care and Feeding of Babies (Sydney 1914); Course of Instruction for Domestic Science in Superior (Day Continuation) Schools p.21.

depended. They were taught how to choose their own home, and "allocate rooms" to members of the family, how to arrange flowers and to choose "worthy pictures". In addition the course covered "what is meant by the family tie," and "how to be a patriot...". A detailed version of the values and skills needed to enable survival on a meagre income earned by a single breadwinner was also provided. Alcohol and cigarettes were prohibited, as was gambling, while the potential housewife learned the importance of "loyalty and obedience to the law," how to keep household accounts, the proportion that rent should bear to income, the advantages of cash payments, "provision for a 'Rainy Day', banking and insurance."[38]

Thus it was that personal qualities, such as foresight, diligence, frugality, and self-reliance, would ensure successful home-making, just as for the breadwinner they would ensure a just income. In case the domestic science student failed to make this comparison, the curriculum included some instruction on "Capital and Labour . - Their mutual duties - justice on both sides; duty of employer to worker; worker's reciprocal duties - faithfulness in discharge of duty, promptitude, pride in thorough work ..."[39]

In effect, the domestic science course equipped girls with specialized "skills" which left them unprepared to perform roles other than domestic service. It also inculcated approved habits and values by which it was hoped that the girls would become agents of social and political conformity in their own homes.

For the middle-class girl, able to prolong her education, domestic science did offer a possible career as a specialist domestic science teacher herself. Thus in Victoria, the Education Department offered a three-year course at the College of Domestic Economy. Here, girls who were aged seventeen and who had passed the Junior Public Exam, took an advanced course in cookery and the care and management of children. They also attended lectures at Melbourne University on biology, anatomy, bacteriology and physiology, the learning of which presumably helped to foster the illusion that the domestic course, and the moral and sexist values inherent in it, was indeed a "science".[40]

As with other schemes for the education of mothers, domestic science courses were strongly supported by women's organizations, for they elevated housework and child care to a kind of quasi-professional status in itself, the training for which must not be left to "self-taught amateurs." Some women's organizations were now seeking to have a Chair of Domestic Science inaugurated at the Universities.[41]

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38. Ibid. p.8, 27; The Liberal Woman 1 Jul. 1912 p.179.

39. Course of Instruction for Domestic Science in Superior (Day Continuation) Schools p.27.

40. Mrs. Lovell Mountain Op.Cit.

41. Monthly Record (Women's Liberal League) 12 Aug. 1909 p.174; 1 Sep. 1910 p.58-63; 1 Feb. 1911 p.144. In England, King's College had offered courses in Home Science by 1911.



Every detail of housework is taught at the Domestic Superior and Evening Continuation Schools.

64. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Three Years of Education (Sydney 1914).



"Mothers' Day" at a Domestic Superior School.

At many schools Mothers' Visiting Day is an institution. The illustrations show the mothers of the girls attending Dulwich Hill Superior Domestic School watching demonstration lessons in gardening, millinery, and cooking.

THE MOTHER USURPED

65. Minister of Public Instruction (NSW) Annual Report 1913 (NSW LA PP 1914 Vol.1).

In this, they were grudgingly supported by prominent educationists. For example, in 1913, L.A. Adamson, told the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science that, if in future they were not all to live in flats, then they must elevate household service into an honourable position. "If giving it a University status can help this desirable end, by all means let us give it that."[42]

Physical Culture:

The teachers' formula for demonstrating their expertise in educational science needed to focus not only on the separation of the sexes, but on the medical demand for vigorous bodily exercise needed to exhaust latent sexuality in the young, or at least to explain their health. As early as 1890, Education Reports were taking up the cry that confined playgrounds were injurious to health and also that children, therefore "compelled to seek their amusement in the streets and thoroughfares," were induced into "habits of larrikinism".[43]

The introduction of organized, single-sex sport and team games in the State schools however, was delayed by the cost of the facilities involved. Efforts to acquire playing fields, for instance, were successful only in sparsely settled areas, where the former "paddock of pupil's horses" might be converted to a football and cricket ground.[44] In the cities, the playgrounds remained small. Consequently, according to Francis Anderson in 1914, in spite of the emphasis on increased participation in sports, "the 'weedy' type" was becoming common.[45]

Meanwhile in the State schools, physical education largely took the form of marching and drill, which was less costly to expand or implement and which also had the seal of approval of the medical experts. As a Manual of School Drill and Physical Training, issued for the use of teachers in State schools in NSW in 1904 stated, systematic physical drill could offset the unhealthy conditions which were present in many homes and schools, such as bad clothing and food, faulty desks and insufficient playground space.[46]

Though the introduction of team sports and also a school uniform, as yet proved too costly to implement on a large scale, the attempt was being made to develop that quasi-military "esprit de corps" (long considered essential to youth in the denominational schools) by the expansion of the Cadet movement. Like physical education and drill, this was found less expensive to implement than activities which required playing-fields, swimming-pools and gymnasiums,

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42. L.A. Adamson Op.Cit. p.628.
43. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Annual Report 1890 p.5.
44. Public Instruction Gazette 28 Jul. 1906 p.145. (Nabiac P.S.)
45. "Educational Policy and Development" p.536.
46. Lieut.-Col. Paul and Dr. Reuter E. Roth A Manual of School Drill and Physical Training (Sydney 1904) p.3-6.

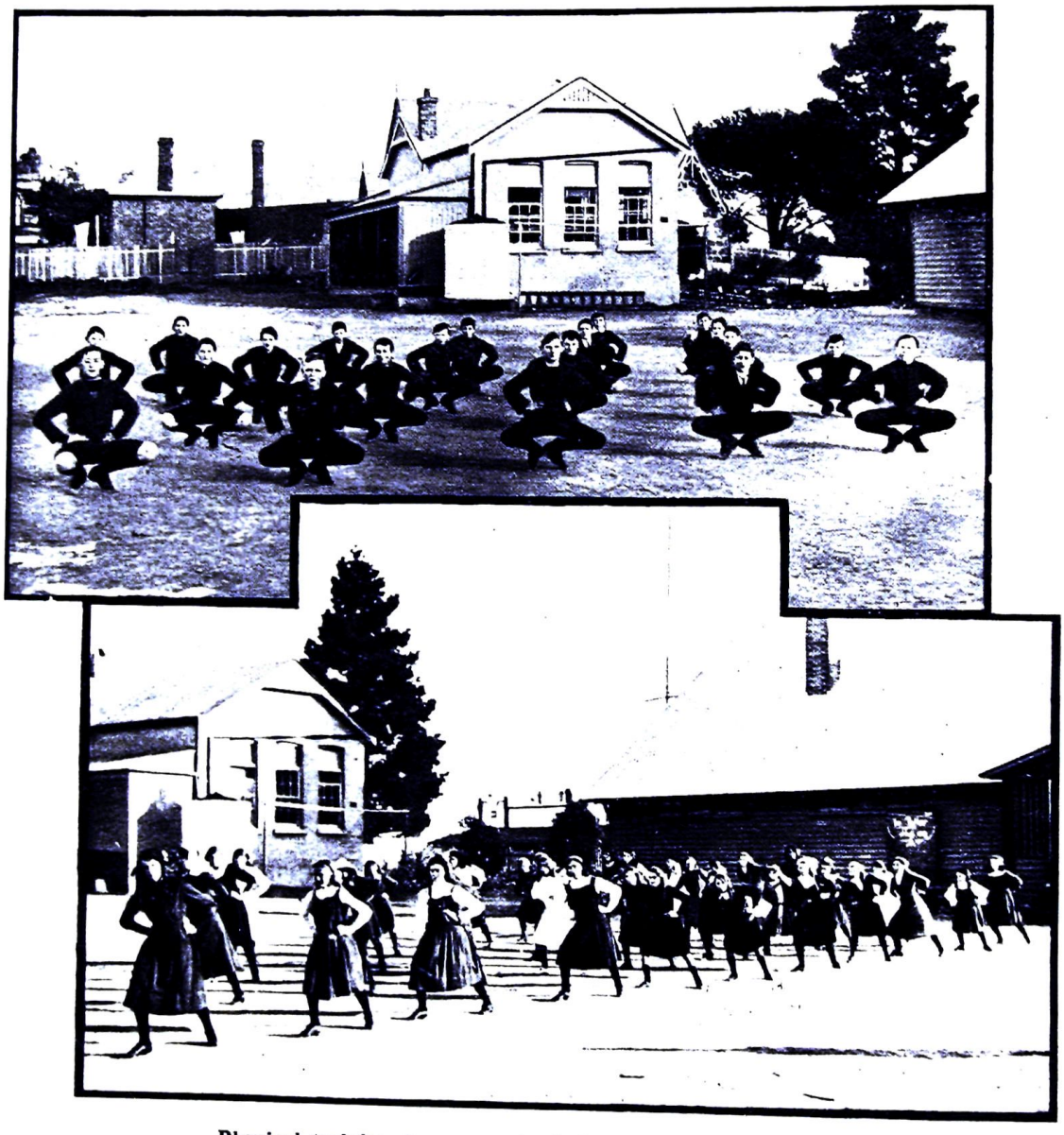


Photograph kindly lent by the proprietors of "The Leader."

A Gippsland School.

66. Schools such as these were considered quaintly old-fashioned by 1906. The "New" Education required greater classification according to age and mental ability, enclosed playgrounds and single-sex team games and drill.

C.R. Long (ed.) Education Dept. of Victoria Souvenir Book The Aims and Work of the Education Dept. (Melbourne 1906).



Physical training is now part of the daily school routine.

The illustration shows the boys and girls at Millthorpe Public School taking ordinary exercises.

67. Minister of Public Instruction (NSW) Annual Report 1913 (NSW LA PP 1914 Vol.1).

and again, the ground-work had already been laid. For instance, in Victoria, the Minister for Defence, Sir Frederick Sargood, had established a volunteer cadet force in State schools as early as 1884, and with the encouragement of the military authorities and the Education Department and school principals, the movement had grown rapidly.

By 1886, the Victorian Cadet Force was a "properly constituted military organization", comprising 2000 boys under the command of Major Snee. In 1906, Victoria had 4000 "young soldiers" ready to do their duty to King and country" at state and private schools.[47]

Similarly in NSW, school cadet corps claimed a membership of over 5000 by 1891, with a permanent staff of 10. In 1908, Lieut.-Col. Paul, Superintendent of Drill and Officer in command of cadets in NSW, reported that he had visited 271 schools in or near Sydney. He recommended 30 to 45 minutes weekly to be devoted to squad drill and rifle exercises for boys. He also liked to see all pupils marching every time school "falls in". Inspector Thomas of Armidale District reported that "a highly efficient Cadet Corps" existed there. During the year, it was exercised and inspected by various Commonwealth Officers, including the Inspector General of the Forces. "The school is fortunate in having a most complete miniature Rifle Range, and a very well-appointed gymnasium for the boys, with swings, swinging boats and see-saws for the girls...".[48]

By the 1900s the Cadet Corps, like the Scout movement, not only reflected medical notions of the value of military ideals and patriotism, but also was seen as a practical preparation of every boy for defence of the Empire. It was said to be a means of training "the whole male population to arms, so as to lay the foundation for the largest possible defence force of reserves at the minimum cost to the State and to the individual."[49] That is, it not only helped to develop national physique but aimed to ensure that "every boy during adolescence" learned "how to handle a rifle ... and shoot straight with it" so that when the time came, he could assist his country. "We inhabit a continent with one half of its coastline bearing a fringe of population, and a merely voluntary element in defence is not sufficient...".[50]

Following the Defence Act of 1910, membership of a junior cadet corps became compulsory for boys at school aged twelve to fourteen years. Conscientious objection was not permitted, and only the maimed, deaf,dumb and

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47. Major F.C. Eddy "The Junior Cadet System" in C.R. Long Op.Cit. p.51-2. Major Eddy was Inspector and Commanding Officer of Cadets.

48. NSW Statistical Register 1891 p.393; Public Instruction Gazette 30 Jul. 1908 p.409-10; Ibid. 30 May 1908 p.342.

49. Major F.C. Eddy Op.Cit. p.53-4.

50. Peter Board "Higher Primary and Secondary Education" p.9.

blind were excused. The prescribed course was physical training for 15 minutes each school day, together with "elementary marching drill" plus subjects such as swimming, first aid, miniature rifle shooting, and running exercises. By 1914, there were some 18,000 to 20,000 junior cadets undergoing this training.[51]

School Text Books:

In the new curriculum of the elementary school, even the teaching of traditional scholastic subjects was altered so as to bring them more in to accordance with the moral benefits said to ensue from the new educational science. This was especially apparent with respect to the selection of children's reading material. Approved English literature was said to be essential both to meet the child's deep cravings for the ancestral reminiscences of the race and to prevent exposure to dangerous cultural alternatives. Teachers were informed that "by fostering in the children a love and appreciation of good poetry", they promoted "the growth of a sense of moral beauty which will serve as a protection against the noxious influence of the mean and common and base in thought and language."[52] W.J. Liggins of the Macquarie Street South School in Sydney warned a meeting of metropolitan teachers in 1906 that it was foolish to believe that because "in our glorious English language we have so many priceless gems of cultured thought and elegant style", the Australian child would automatically seek them out. Rather, "careful and earnest teaching of the subject" was needed to "foster a love of the beautiful" and to ensure that the acquisition of liking for "good authors" was not "left to chance".[53]

"Good authors" selected for the Commonwealth School Paper and the children's Readers, tended to be those whose work matched the stated aim of the Paper and the "New" Education in general, of teaching "moral lessons".[54] For this purpose, the notion of the lost child was still found of great relevance, especially for the younger reader. Stories were plentiful which alerted children to the dangers which awaited those who strayed from protective guidance. Thus in an anonymous story, "Billy's Adventure", a motherless boy became lost in the bush of Northern Australia and endured adventures with crocodiles, buffaloes and blackfellows before being rescued by his father. In future, the readers were told, Billy was afraid "to venture very far away from

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51. Dr. Harvey Sutton "Relation of the School Child to the Defence Act" in Report of the Proceedings of the Imperial Health Conference (London 1914) p.435-6.

52. Public Instruction Gazette 25 Mar. 1907 p.351.

53. Public Instruction Gazette 27 Nov. 1906 p.251.

54. Commonwealth School Paper for Classes 2-3 Vol.11 No.1 Jul. 1914 n.p; Peter Board Presidential Address AAAS 1909 Op.Cit. p.33.

the men who were able to protect him from danger."[55]

Other themes similarly illustrated the way in which the formula of approved reading as previously evolved by the literary experts for the middle-class child, was now brought within reach of every child attending the elementary school. For instance, the simple moral tale and fable, written or rewritten specially for children, was used to convey values such as the desirability of chivalry to girls ("A Little Knight").[56] As formerly in Cole's Funny Picture Book, there were stories and poems which stressed contentment with one's lot, and that material rewards did not matter, ("Death's Final Conquest", by James Shirley),[57] while others stressed that effort and industry would bring worldly promotion. For example, the anonymous short story which told the three boys named Can't, Won't and Try concluded:

> All three are grown men now. Can't is servant to a master named Must; Won't is a soldier under Captain Shall, and Try is a partner in the great firm of Success and Co.

Similarly, an anonymous poem advised that "courage, faith and patience" were rewarded by material success.

> Keep your eyes on the goal, lad,
> Never despair or drop,
> Be sure your path leads upward;
> There's always room at the top.[58]

Sometimes the old-fashioned moral tale was given a specifically modern, political relevance. Thus, in one poem, that classic figure from the traditional nursery story, the giant, had become an anthropometrically desirable specimen of Australian masculinity, who asked "for no favour, he wants but a show, where labour is honest and wages are fair." His opposite, the dwarf, representing, by implication, the striking worker or pacifist, was a selfish and lazy sluggard, shirking work and duty. In addition, it was suggested his physical impediment was due to sexual excess. He was "pale", "puny" and half blind. Finally, he was also a traitor and a coward, refusing to join his comrades in answering "the call of a cause that is just."[59]

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55. Commonwealth School Paper for Classes 2-3 Vol. 4 No.3 1907 p.38. See also "Inquisitive Roley" a short story by Amy E. Mack Vol.3 No.5 1906 p.71-6.

56. Ibid. Vol.1 No.8 Feb. 1905 p.119-20. See also "The Greedy Shags" Vol.2 No.1 Jul. 1905, "The Vain Thornbills" Vol.1 No.9 Mar. 1905.

57. New Australian School Series Fifth Reader (Sydney n.d.) p.64. The New Series Readers were introduced from 1899.

58. Commonwealth School Paper for Classes 2-3 Vol.1 No.9 Mar. 1905 p.137; Vol.1 No.2 Aug. 1904 p.31.

59. Ibid. Vol.1 No.9 Mar. 1905 p.132.

For the younger reader, child study's recent affirmation of the fairy story for primitive young minds ensured that tales of superstition, long discarded by the adult world, now made their appearance in reading matter selected for the state schools. For example, Hans Christian Andersen was represented in the Commonwealth School Paper, though occasionally some editorial licence was taken to make his stories fit the approved code of ethics. Thus, "The Brave Tin Soldier" was included, but given a happy ending. Instead of dying for the love of a ballet-dancing doll, the battered tin soldier was repatriated. Though having lost a leg he still steadfastly held his musket, and in return was cared for by the loyal children who owned him. Also Andersen's own childhood was recounted, but presented as a version of the success story, in this case "that of the poor shoemaker's son, who came to be welcomed as a friend in princes' palaces."[60]

For children of all ages, a chauvinistic patriotism now became a ubiquitous theme. In the Commonwealth School Paper, the superiority of British constitutional, colonizing and literary achievements was continually stated in fiction, stories from history and in verse. Pride in heroic defence of these ideals, even to the death, was made a patriotic duty.[61] "I cannot remember that we ever sang a song which was not jingoist," Lewis Rodd recalled of Crown Street Boys' School about 1914.[62]

For the younger child, the idea of conveying Australia's relationship to Britain as analogous to that of a child to its parent was assumed to be an effective technique for inculcating loyalty. As earlier in the children's pages of the denominational press, anecdotes of the childhood of the British Royal Family were used as examples of ideal behaviour.[63]

For older children, patriotism was taught not only through reading matter but also by means of history and geography. As Professor Edgeworth David explained in 1903, geographical knowledge was not only an asset in war, but was vital also in peace time, for it was the foundation of commerce and essential to schemes of imperial expansion.[64]

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60. Ibid. Vol.7 No.2 Aug. 1909 p.20, 23.

61. See further S.G. Firth "Social Values in the NSW Primary School 1880-1914: An Analysis of School Texts" Melbourne Studies in Education (Melbourne 1970) p.123-59.

62. Lewis Rodd A Gentle Shipwreck (Melbourne 1975) p.134.

63. "A Song of Empire" Commonwealth School Paper Vol.2 No.10 May 1906 p.152; Vol.6 No.8 Mar. 1910 p.127.

64. S.G. Firth Op.Cit. p.129-32; T.W.E. Edgeworth David "The Teaching of Geography" Aust. Journal of Education 1 Aug. 1903 p.17-22.

In NSW, the prevalence of the theme of patriotism owed much to S.H. Smith, editor of the Commonwealth School Paper after 1908, and its publisher William Brooks, who together monopolized the new geography and history texts. For example, Brooks' Commercial Geography of the World and Geography of the British Empire for Fifth Class featured the map of the world with the British Empire shown in red which would be a familiar feature of Australian classrooms for the next half century. Further, the history of the development of trade was portrayed as a progressive evolutionary process leading to ever higher stages of civilization culminating in the present, when commerce or trade "has become one of the chief cares of modern nations. The British is now the greatest trading nation in the world."[65]

There were other, less coloured geography texts available. However, this volume ran through nine editions between 1899 and 1911, before it was adopted by the Department of Public Instruction for use in Superior (Day Continuation) schools in November 1912, so it has to be assumed that it was widely used. A tenth edition appeared in February 1914.

The idea of inculcating patriotism in the school was also exemplified after 1905 by the elevation of Queen Victoria's birthday, previously a school holiday, into "Empire Day". This became a special school occasion when children sang rousing songs, flags were raised and the Cadet Corps demonstrated its adolescent strength and fervour.[66]

The Liberation of the Teacher:

In making their case for special skills in child socialization teachers claimed to be implementing a revolution in teaching techniques, introducing new methods which avoided not only corporal punishment, but boredom and unhealthy confinement in the classroom. However, as statements of "New" educational theory, and even sometimes of method, made plain, the underlying aims of the educators were not dissimilar from those of the dark days of the "Old" education. Though the teacher must strive to interest the child,

> ... all school work cannot always be mere pleasure to the pupil. It is a weak will that has not learnt to undertake a duty that is disagreeable, and such duties must be faced. The child has to learn that there are some things that he must do, because they are part of his duty, and strength and energy of character are developed by the exercise of will power in work which does not lie in the line of the pupil's natural interest.[67]

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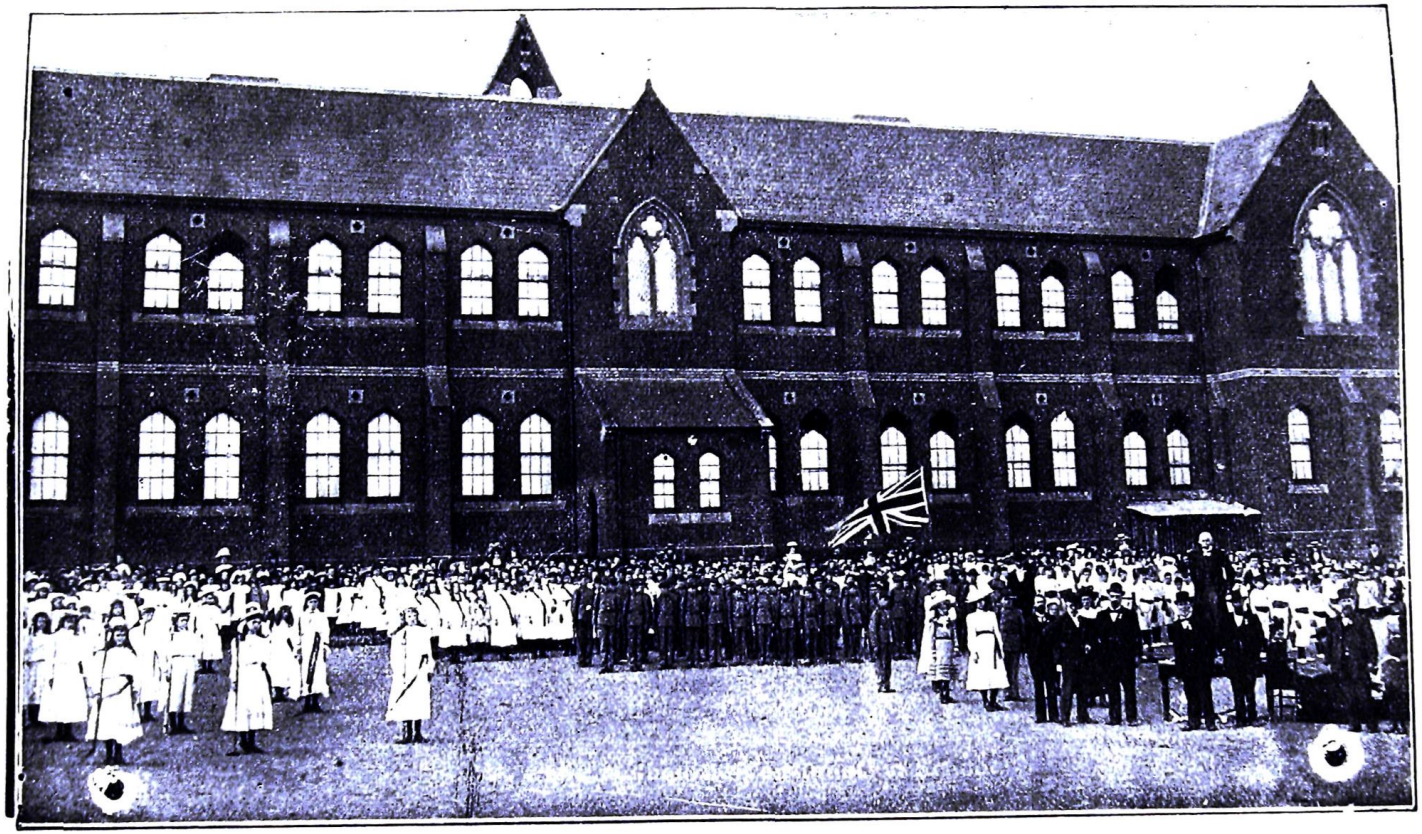
65. S.H. Smith A First Geography for Young Australians (Sydney n.d.) p.5-6.

66. Peter Board "Empire Day Celebrations" Public Instruction Gazette 28 Apr. 1906 p.78; see further Maurice French "The Ambiguity of Empire Day in NSW 1901-21: Imperial Consensus or National Division" Australian Journal of Politics and History Vol.24 No.1 Apr. 1978 p.61-74.

67. Peter Board Aust. Journal of Education 15 Jul. 1905 p.7. Cf. F.J. Gladman School Work (London[1885])p.547.



A Town School. Empire Day: Saluting the Flag.

68. C.R. Long (ed.) Education Dept. of Victoria Souvenir Book The Aims and Work of the Education Dept. (Melbourne 1906).

Physical culture and drill were said to "deal with" those children who would "shirk both mental and physical work" and to develop "alert attentiveness to their teacher and prompt obedience to words of command."[68] Actual exercises recommended for use in schools reflected not only the new medical aim of inculcating healthy bodily and mental habits, but the older, quasi-military, unquestioning response to given orders, now much increased by the collaboration of army men in the authorship of texts for the use of teachers. For example, "Assembly" provided opportunities to teach the children how to march in and out of school "rapidly, correctly and silently" and to carry out a personal inspection of the children. Apart from "Attention" and "Stand-at-Ease" teachers were to call for a putting out of the hands so that finger-nails could be checked for uncleanliness. Other exercises at "Assembly" appeared to be included merely for the sake of discipline. For example, to smarten up the boys, teachers were to call for "HATS OFF ... Pupils seize the rim of the hat or cap with right hand. Hats will be raised off the head and rested on the right shoulder. HATS - ON. Pupils will replace hats." In the class room, teachers were warned that "Lounging, leaning on desks and fidgeting are evidences of bad Discipline."[69]

Even in departmental Kindergartens, much emphasis was placed on forms of marching and drill. Thus in NSW, children learned a form of hand drill, consisting of clasping and unclasping the hand to given orders. Their school day started and ended with marching:

> The little people marched to their tables and stood behind their chairs until a chord from the piano told them to take up chairs. When all had obeyed the order, they marched, holding their chairs in front of them, round the circle, and placed chairs carefully upon it.... [70]

For older children, in addition to the intricacies of marching, and how to salute the teacher before addressing him in the playground, children learned "Dumb-bell and Wand Exercises" and "Physical Drill with Arms." "Singlestick exercises", similar to fencing except that sticks were used, were said to be "excellent for Boys. Whilst making them smart on their feet, it has the effect of physically developing them, makes them thinks and act quickly; it brings out determination and pluck, curbs the temper more, perhaps, than anything known." Companion volumes of improving exercises for girls and of maypole dances were also available.[71]

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68. Lieut.-Col. Paul and Dr. R. Roth Op.Cit. p.5-6.

69. Ibid. p.11-14.

70. Ibid.; M.M. Simpson "Work in the Kindergarten" p.82.

71. An Easy System of Singlestick Exercises for Boys for the Use of Schools and Private Families (Sydney 1902) Preface n.p. Maypole dancing was specially recommended for girls in early puberty (G. Stanley Hall Adolescence (New York 1911) Vol.1 p.228).



Dumb-bel Exercises, Exhibition Oval



Maypole Dances, Exhibition Oval

69. Large exhibitions became customary, displaying the teachers' knowledge of, and adherence to, the new educational science.

C.R. Long (ed.) Education Dept. of Victoria Souvenir Book The Aims and Work of the Education Dept. (Melbourne 1906).



A Demonstration of Physical Culture Exercises—Wand Drill.

70 Activities such as these were designed as much to enforce a militaristic obedience to command as to improve physique.

C.R. Long (ed.) Record and Review of the State Schools Exhibition... Melbourne 1906 (Melbourne 1906).

Though recollections of school life, like those of the family, are likely to be coloured by prevailing ideologies, nevertheless, accounts of rote learning dominate memories of schooling even under the "New" regime:

> Inside, a class of eight-year old boys and girls were chanting the multiplication tables. Their united voices droned out into the morning, reciting the cabalistic figures in wave after monotonous wave..."[72]

According to childhood reminiscence, nor did the new science of "mental development" mean the abolition of corporal punishment:

> He was not a sadist, there was no malignancy in his canings, merely the sharp, stinging pain. He sat at his table caning with a detached, almost weary disinterestedness, strokes for misspelt words, errors in tables, wrong answers in arithmetic, a false note in singing, a blot, talking, failing to march in step while coming into the class-room.[73]

Indeed, much of the call for "freedom and independence" in the schools under the new regime[74] referred not to the child as a victim of the old system, but to the teacher. Thus, Francis Anderson's call for educational change in 1901 centred on the difficulties which understaffing presented to the teacher, on the need of the individual headmaster for autonomy, and of all teachers to be liberated from "the grip of the system". No longer was the teacher to be at the "mercy of the bureaucratic machine," or the victim of the onerous pupil-teacher system.[75]

Though these difficulties in the educational system had undoubtedly rebounded on the children, it was the effect of them on the teachers that was repeatedly stressed - the pressures exerted on <u>them</u> by the examination system, inspection, and public indifference, and in Victoria, payment by results, which was a feature of the system there from 1863 till 1905.[76] Thus, when another spokesman for teachers' liberation, G.H. Knibbs, commended the new freer atmosphere in the classroom in July 1905, he was referring to freedom not of the pupils, but of the teachers, who were now spared"the great dogma of <u>departmental educational infallibility</u>."[77]

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72. John Hetherington <u>The Morning Was Shining</u> (London 1971) p.102 (of Sandringham State School, 1914).

73. Lewis Rodd <u>Op.Cit</u>. p.92 (of Crown St. Boys' School in the early 1900s).

74. Peter Board <u>Report Upon ... Primary Education</u> p.1.

75. <u>Public School System of NSW</u> p.10-13, 21.

76. Francis Anderson "Educational Policy and Development" p.519-20; A.G. Austin <u>Australian Education</u> 1788-1900 (Melbourne 1961) p.237.

77. "Educational Liberty: An Address by G.H. Knibbs" <u>Aust. Journal of Education</u> 15 Jul. 1905 p.9-10.

The teachers' claim for professional autonomy, improvements in training and a higher status in the community depended on establishing their expertise in controlling, not liberating the child. As the Australian Journal of Education put it in July 1903, because the teacher was "moulding" the people, "building up its physique, developing its intellect", he more than anyone else was "handling that plastic material" which, when developed, would make the "name of Australia either honoured or despised...".[78] In this editorial, there was no mention of the child.

Thus, what was essentially novel about the "New" education was the determination of teachers to modernize and enlarge their profession by bringing a wider variety of moral and social values to bear upon increasing numbers of children by the use of the latest bio-medical techniques. The school was becoming a total environment aiming to inculcate a more ambitious range of moral and social values, and by the use of more subtle, and possibly more effective, means. As W.J. Colville explained in 1900, the "New" education was designed to make the child work co-operatively with the educator, not resist. The aim was to direct mental ability early and at its source, not later and from without. Thus could rebellion against the moral order be prevented rather than cured.[79]

Knowledge of how to achieve more effective and total moralization of the child had also been claimed by the earlier generation of secular educators, but the emphasis now placed on moulding the child to the "requirements of the social unit" was more pronounced. In NSW, S.H. Smith in an address to teachers on "Modern Educational Ideals" in 1905 pointed out that "The truest education was that which produced the type of citizen that their country most needed...". J. Dawson, Chief Inspector of Schools in NSW, addressing the Public School Teachers' Association in 1907, said society had called the schools into existence for its own purposes. Social reformers in despair of the adult generation had turned to the schools in the hope that here was the means by which a better society might be born.[80]

Thus, the aim of the "New" education was to "elevate the position of the teacher and place him on a higher stand in the eyes of the community than he has yet occupied." Or, as Francis Anderson put it during his campaign for the establishment of the Teachers' College in 1909-10, the community must be made to "train the teacher, trust the teacher and pay the teacher."[81]

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78. "The National Significance of Education" Aust. Journal of Education 1 Jul. 1903 p.3.

79. W.J. Colville Op.Cit. p.7.

80. Peter Board Presidential Address AAAS 1909 Op.Cit. p.30; Aust. Journal of Education Pictorial Supplement 15 Nov. 1905 p.ii; Public Instruction Gazette 24 Aug. 1907 p.31.

81. J.H. Smyth "The New Attitude to Education" p.10; "Francis Anderson" (by W.M. O'Neil) in Australian Dictionary of Biography Vol.7 p.54.

In order to strengthen their case for improved status and remuneration, the expanding teaching profession also made it clear that such power as it wielded over the development of the young rendered teachers indispensable agents of political authority. According to S.H. Smith, "It was the duty of every profession not merely to act, but to think, for the nation; to tell what ought to be its aims, and what were the necessary means of carrying them out."[82]

Spokesmen for the profession were careful to point out that they would use such power to mould the minds and character of the rising generation responsibly, always provided there was a reciprocal arrangement between educators as shapers of the young and the State as promoter of the profession. This was evident in 1908 in the address by G.H. Reid at the annual opening ceremony of the Teachers' Training College. On the one hand he pointed out:

> The profession of teaching is surely one of the noblest. Yet it has never been honoured as it deserves. In public esteem, I fear, it comes a long way after other learned professions. It should really stand higher than any other learned profession in the world. (Applause).

On the other hand, Reid then called for scientific study of "the phenomena of the mind" - so that the teacher might impart "lessons of goodness and chivalry and reverence and patriotism."[83]

The Catholic School:

The claims of the secular teaching profession to status concomitant with their skill in guiding the moral and technical education of the masses, was qualified by the fact that they did not have sole access even to the elementary education of every child. Catholic refusal to relinquish control by the religious profession in the class room had resulted in an integrated system of alternative schools, and the proportion of children educated therein was increasing. Thus in New South Wales in the 1870s, where nearly 60% of Catholic school children were attending non-Catholic schools, this proportion had been reduced to 43% in 1902, and to 40% by 1911.[84]

Moreover, the social composition of colonial Catholic society suggested that, in these schools, a very different set of moral values might be taught. Catholics being under-represented in socially superior occupations, such as those related to property and finance, their schools were less likely to offer a complacent view of the relations between capital and labour. Also the Irish tradition of opposition to British authority was a potential source of conflict with the patriotic values being conveyed in the secular schools.

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82. S.H. Smith Op.Cit. p.ii.

83. Public Instruction Gazette 30 Apr. 1908 p.311-12.

84. NSW Statistical Register 1911 p.445.

Catholic educationists were inclined to scepticism towards the claims of the secular theorists to new, scientific expertise. At the Catholic Educational Conference in 1911, notions of "leading" the child to knowledge by "self-activity" and "play" were condemned as a passing "fad". Father Donohoe said that whereas the prime purpose of a Catholic elementary education was still to teach the four Rs, plus grammar and geography, at the State schools nowadays,

> part of the day was set aside for catching beetles, another part for capturing butterflies, while another day was devoted to nailing them up in the school-room (Laughter).... There was no such thing as rules of grammar; it must be learnt by inspiration.[85]

However, just as in Catholic organizations for children and young people the social values taught and methods used were not dissimilar from Protestant ones, so in the elementary school Catholic teachers were not concerned to challenge the idea that children ought to be taught values such as self-help, temperance, diligence and strongly defined sex roles. Rather the focus continued to be on increasing the number of adherents to the Catholic faith, for which inculcating doctrine and forming habits of worship during the impressionable years of childhood and adolescence was held to be essential. As a contributor to the Australasian Catholic Record put it in 1909,

> It is an axiom of Catholic policy that the child shall be surrounded by the best and most benignant influences at the impressionable period, when the mind is expanding. Is this not the secret of the Catholic education system? The seeds sown there can never be eradicated.[86]

In NSW, Cardinal Moran warned that though "many of the so-called improvements in teaching" would prove ephemeral, the Church must be prepared to welcome whatever "the sciences" might contribute to rendering teaching "more efficient",[87] and the curriculum and methods of elementary schools revealed an increasing concern to compete successfully with the State schools and on the terms evolved by the secular teaching profession. Indeed, given the increasing importance of the public examination system for entry to the professions and the public service, it would have been impossible for the Catholic system to remain aloof from developments in secular curriculum and techniques.

Like the Protestant, the Catholic child was encouraged to be thrifty and industrious. School savings banks were recommended, and it was hoped that all boys would join juvenile branches of the Catholic Benefit Societies as soon as they left school, and so develop both "habits of religious regularity and

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85. Catholic Education Conference of NSW Statement, Resolution, Proceedings (Sydney 1911) p.32.

86. J.D. Fitzgerald "The Citizen and the Slum" Australasian Catholic Record Vol.15 1909 p.32.

87. Catholic Educational Conference 1911 p.15. Catholics were represented on the Teachers' Association of NSW in 1907 by Monsignor O'Brien and Rev. Father Byrne, who succeeded Dr. Marden as President.

thrifty saving."[88] Catholic publications expressed constant concern regarding the need to censor children's reading, so as to protect the child not only from books and leaflets which were "gross perversions of Catholic belief and practice" and created "a bitter and blind hostility to the Catholic Church" but also from "the poisonous productions of the modern novel."[89] Following a paper given by the Archbishop of Melbourne on this subject at the Catholic Congress of 1900, the Catholic Truth Society was set up to publish approved reading material. This belief that "good and useful reading is as important a matter in a Christian home as clean, nutritious food, pure water and wholesome air"[90] meant that a Catholic upbringing continued to be, in theory at least, as "puritanical" as a Protestant one.

A Catholic childhood even generally lacked access to the Bible, since in the school, though Old and New Testament history was taught, there was little direct use made of the Scriptures. Instead, approved stories were extracted and Biblical quotations were used as proof of various doctrines.[91]

Like their Protestant counterparts, Catholic children were urged to avoid vanity and frivolity. "Rings and pretentious ornaments" were not permitted to be worn to school. Catholic parents were asked to teach personal cleanliness and neatness of dress. It was hoped they would supervise the companions of their children to and from school, and especially on "the idle days", since these were "often the occasions when the seeds of sin" were sown in "hitherto innocent hearts."[92]

This similarity between moral and social values was especially apparent in the Catholic Readers, authorized by Cardinal Moran in 1908. Admittedly, like the Wilkins Readers of the 1870s, the new Catholic series still preferred a frank, unequivocable moralizing technique, but the values taught were essentially the same as those espoused by the New educators. For instance, much use was made of the fables of La Fontaine and short anonymous maxims like "He would live from sickness free, Must eat the bread of industry" and, "If you would relish food, labour for it. If you would feel at ease in your clothes, pay for them before you wear them." Younger children learned that "A docile

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88. Almanac and Family Home Annual for the Diocese of Maitland 1901 p.40; "How to Teach Thrift in Schools" Australasian Catholic Record Vol.2 1896 p.147. (Public schools savings banks had been in operation in NSW since 1887).

89. Australasian Catholic Record Vol.6 1900 p.606; Almanac for the Diocese of Maitland 1901 p.45.

90. Almanac for the Diocese of Maitland 1906 p.33.

91. Standards of Proficiency for Catholic Primary Schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney 1905; G. Rummery "The Development of the Concept of Religious Education in Catholic Schools 1872-1972" JRH Vol.9 No.3 Jun. 1977 p.305.

92. Almanac of the Diocese of Maitland 1905 p.48.

child its parents' will, Is ever ready to fulfil."[93]

Reflecting the fact that in NSW, the Catholic texts had the same publisher as the New Australian Series and the Commonwealth School Paper, William Brooks, some of the material was identical. Some articles on Nature and Science such as "The Stems of Plants" and "Marvels of Ancient Life" were the same in content and illustration. Also the Catholic Readers provided very similar information from Dr. Philip Muskett on the laws of health and diet.[94]

Further, as in the public school texts, children were expected to display a dual patriotism. Homage to the British Empire was simply replaced in the Catholic Readers by patriotic support of Ireland.[95] However, in comparison with the kind of loyalty and service which the public school child was expected to display and render to Britain, the Irish patriotism inculcated in the Catholic child was less chauvinistic and less total. It was never suggested that Catholics should give up their lives for the cause of Ireland, as was implied in the British patriotic message.[96] It was a sentimental adherence and sympathy for the sorrows of Ireland that was being inculcated, not the notion that Australians should be politically or militarily involved.

On the other hand, considerable personal sacrifice was expected on behalf of the Faith. The Readers included much material on the persecution of Catholicism, with stories of the lives, or more particularly, the deaths of martyrs, often children, reported in sensuous detail, especially when the victim was a girl. For instance, in the Story of St. Dorothea, the children read that "When the executioner came with hooks and red-hot pincers to tear her flesh, she only smiled with joy to think that she was counted worthy to suffer for her Divine Spouse."[97]

If anything, the young Catholics were subjected to heavier moral and social lessons than were Protestants, and the pressure on them to conform to the wishes of their elders and to submit to their lot in life was more pronounced. So many stories of the joys of martyrdom, together with material on the

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93. Approved Readers for the Catholic Schools of Australasia Second Reader p.29; Fifth Reader p.26; First Reader p.42.

94. First Reader p.68-72; Sixth Reader p.36-40; Third Reader p.111.

95. Material celebrating Irish historical and cultural achievements began in the Second Reader with "The Dear Little Shamrock" p.9-11.

96. "Catholics and Irishmen" Address by Cardinal Moran to Hibernian Society Sydney 1886 repr. in Sixth Reader p.123.

97. Fourth Reader p.134; for other tales of torment see "The Catacombs" (Fourth Reader p.36-40); "The Story of Father Damien", "The Death of Mary Queen of Scots", "The Young Acolyte", "The Story of St. Agnes" (Fifth Reader p.18, 68, 147, 172). The Catholic child was also encouraged to identify with the martyrdom of the Faith in the hymns. See "I am a faithful Catholic" and "Faith of our Fathers! living still / In spite of dungeon, fire and sword ..." St. Patrick's Vesperal and Hymn Book (Melbourne 1891) p.120-1.

oppression of Ireland and accounts of the persecution of the Catholic faith in Australia[98] combined to suggest to the Catholic child the historical inevitability of injustice, and the consequent need for resignation to fate. The sheer quantity of emotionally charged but defeatist material was not balanced by occasional mention of Catholic progress and initiative.[99] In short, Cardinal Moran need hardly to have warned that the enemies of Ireland were not to be combatted with "violence and constraint",[1] for socialization of Catholic children had virtually ensured that fatalistic acceptance of their destiny and yielding to the authority of the Church would be the pattern followed.

Further, this pressure on Catholic children to adopt the virtues of industry, thrift, sobriety, purity and respect for authority endorsed the assumption that the Catholic population might be elevated without changing the fundamental social and economic system.[2] In the Fifth Reader, the children learned from a description of the Australian shearing-shed that, though there were still to be found some shearers who were "bent on giving trouble" to the overseer and his boss, most shearers were now "hard and tireless workers who put their money to good use, often improving their own small holdings by means of their earnings during shearing time."[3]

An article in the Sixth Reader argued that,

> There is no privileged class or caste in these colonies. The only aristocracy that exists amongst us is the aristocracy of character and ability, and the poorest lad in Australia, provided he be upright, industrious, and capable, will find nothing to debar him from aspiring to the highest position of trust and power amongst his fellow citizens.[4]

Nor were Catholics unwilling to contribute to that spiritualization of the family and glorification of the mother role which had accompanied the secularization of childhood ideology. Though worship of the mother of God and her divinity dated from the Middle Ages, Pius IX's promulgation of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception in 1854 had stimulated uniquely Catholic mystification of mother and home, and the way in which social rehabilitation was

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98. "Four Periods of Australian Church History" by Cardinal Moran Fifth Reader p.57.

99. For example, references to Bishop Goold's "activity and shrewdness"by which the Church had secured the "premier position" in "almost every Victorian town" (Fifth Reader p.92); "What Catholics Have Done for Science" (Sixth Reader p.160-7).

1. Sixth Reader p.123.

2. Australasian Catholic Record Vol.2 1896 p.147; see also Catholic Press 7 Nov. 1896 p.13.

3. Fifth Reader p.49.

4. Sixth Reader p.200-01.

to be effected by the "second Eve".[5] An article on "The Family Church", written for the Maitland Almanac, in 1906 used new scientific analogies from chemistry to prove that "the actual working unit of Sociology is the family.... The family is the cradle of the race, and the pivotal point on which all theories for the betterment of humanity must hinge."[6]

Accordingly, the idea that a girl's education should consist of domestic skills and preparation for motherhood was strongly endorsed.[7] Girls reading the Catholic texts encountered similar moral values to girls in state schools.[8]

Catholic girls were impressed with the same image of their moral superiority to men and the importance of their natural destiny as mothers of the race. Cardinal Moran, addressing the annual concert at Santa Sabina, Strathfield in 1896, told the girls there that he did not know if any were advocates of "Women's Rights", of which they heard so much in the newspapers, but he thought they were safe in the Convent preparing themselves "for the true dignity of womanhood - to preside in the home with queenly majesty and fairest virtue."[9]

Catholic theologians supported not only the education of women for motherhood, but also women's suffrage, on the grounds that national mothering and home life would be thereby improved.[10] As Cardinal Moran wrote in his Pastoral Letter of 1905,

> The home is the child's first school; the mother is its first teacher; and first impressions last the longest.... How much of the sin and misery of the world is due to unfortunate domestic circumstances, and how much to virtue and happiness from well-ordered homes, we can hardly realize.[11]

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5. "Mary's Place in the Eternal Counsel" Australasian Catholic Record Vol.10 1904 p.459; "The Church Our Mother" Ibid. Vol.5 1899 p.188; "The Aim of the Catholic Church in Australia" Ibid. Vol.11 1904 p.474.

6. Almanac of the Diocese of Maitland 1906 p.58-60.

7. Australasian Catholic Record Vol.11 1905 p.522; Catholic Educational Conference 1911 p.35.

8. See "Who sat and watched my infant head..." and "Somebody's Mother" (under a new title, "A Noble Boy") in Third Reader p.55, 107; "The Story of the Bower Bird" Second Reader p.70.

9. Catholic Press 19 Dec. 1896 p.10; see also Rev. Dr. Lanigan, annual prize-giving at St. Patrick's Convent of Mercy, Goulburn. (Ibid.)

10. "Education and the Future of Religion" Australasian Catholic Record Vol.7 1901 p.28-56; "Woman's Suffrage From the Catholic Standpoint" Ibid. Vol.9 1903 p.380-93.

11. Australasian Catholic Record Vol.11 1905 p.572.

The Demise of "Feminine" Expertise in Early Childhood Education:

At the turn of the century, ideas from the new, scientific education were not only influencing Catholic schools, but were reaching out to professionalize teaching areas formerly occupied by the charitable lady, such as the Protestant Sunday School. Here separate infants' departments were being introduced, with further internal classification according to age. Secular innovations to occupy the hands without fatiguing the brain included sand-modelling, games with blocks, and later, plasticine. Marching was introduced, with much use of the piano to discipline the children and organize activities. "At a chord from the piano all sat...".[12]

Adaptation of ideas from child study to methods in the Sunday School was strongly encouraged by key spokesmen for the "New" education. In 1907, the Inaugural Conference of the Presbyterian Sunday School Union was addressed by Alexander Mackie, friend of Francis Anderson and fellow graduate of Glasgow University, who had arrived as head of the new Teachers' College in 1906. Later in 1907, a course of lectures arranged by the union for Sunday School teachers included some by Dr. Marden.[13]

Protestant receptiveness to the application of psychological methods to the Sunday School was increased at this time by fears that attendances were declining. Though this decline varied with geographical location and denominational affiliation,[14] the sense of crisis it produced stimulated the movement to increase "efficiency" and to introduce "science" into the teaching of religion.

By 1906, articles appeared in the denominational press calling for the application of the findings of the child-study movement in the Sunday School.[15] In these, much use was made of the new bio-medical construction of innocence as a new form of primitivism. According to G.H. Archibald, Lecturer for the English Sunday School Union who visited in 1912, the presence of vices in children, such as cruelty, were now to be seen as vestiges of barbarism inherited from savage ancestors in the past. This was the new "psychology of sin."[16] Archibald also stressed the importance of the fairy story for

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12. C.C. Jones An Australian Sunday School at Work (Sydney 1915) p.24, 29; see also G.H. Archibald Child Study The Archibald Red Book (Sydney 1912) p.112-13.

13. The Messenger 29 Mar. 1907 p.199; 27 Sep. 1907 p.619.

14. See Fig.1 p.42a; W.W. Phillips "Christianity and its Defence in NSW circa 1880 to 1890" Ph.D. Thesis ANU 1969 p.448; R.L. Broome "Protestantism in NSW Society 1900-1914" Ph.D. Thesis SU 1974 p.49, 170-3, 568.

15. The Methodist 27 Jan. - 2 Jun. 1906 ("Psychology and Sunday School Teachers" by W.A. Morris); Australian Christian World 12 Jun.- 28 Aug. 1908 (Varying titles, author, Ernest Stacey).

16. G.H. Archibald Op.Cit. p.18-19, 31; see also Mothers in Australia Vol.4 No.2 Dec. 1920 p.9.

introducing the child to supernatural concepts, a notion which was shared by other professional theorists. Since fairy stories and myths were seen as a remnant from mankind's superstitious stage of growth, the expert way to cultivate the religious spirit was through mysticism. "Creeds, etc. came late in the world development and so must come later with the child."[17]

Teachers were also warned against "forced activity" in the Sunday School which might alienate the child. The aim was not to engrave the Bible or Catechism on the memory but to develop "Christian character", to win over the minds of the young to "that living organism", the Christian Church. They were assured that these new principles were based "on scientific study of the child mind" and had been proved effective.[18]

Meanwhile, calls for more efficient and effective teaching of religion in the home dated from the 1880s, when Rev. H.L. Jackson proposed that "however beautiful the sight of the little one, kneeling by its mother's side to say its simple prayer", more care should be taken to ensure that religious education was an organic process carefully geared to the stage of growth. Ignorant attempts to teach even simple hymns or Bible story before the age of eight were both fruitless and damaging.[19]

The Kindergarten Union:

At the turn of the century, the penetration of professional theory into areas where middle-class women had previously been assumed to have a "natural" expertise was especially evident in the Free Kindergarten movement. Founded in NSW in 1895 and Victoria in 1907, the Kindergarten Unions from their inception reflected and endorsed both the social values and the mystified techniques of the "New" education. By claiming to be laying the foundations for an efficient education to follow in the elementary school, they sought and (notwithstanding the opinion of the Bulletin) achieved, a more "scientific" status than other philanthropic organizations.

In contrast with the simple concept of religious and moral "rescue" which had characterized the earlier Ragged Schools movement, Kindergarten spokeswomen dwelt on the way in which the specialized skills of the expert,

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17. G.H. Archibald Op.Cit. p.44; L. De Lissa "Childhood and Religion" AKM Vol.2 Nov. 1911 p.2-3.

18. Ernest Stacey Australian Christian World 12 Jun. 1908 p.2; Rev. A.R. Osborn Method in Teaching A Text-Book for Sunday School Teachers (Melbourne 1913) p.19. In spite of commitment to these theories, rote learning of religious material remained a feature of the Protestant Sunday School and was demanded by the Sunday School examinations. See The Methodist 10 Aug. 1906 p.3; The Messenger 27 Sep. 1907 p.627; Wesleyan Rules for the Management of Sunday Schools 1911 p.12. The number of candidates taking Sunday School examinations was increasing during the early 1900s (Methodist Papers Item 609 M.L.)

19. Parents and Children Extracts from Sermons Preached at St. James (Sydney 1888) p.11, 13.

specially trained to teach this age group, would prevent the children of the urban poor from becoming "centres of infection" in the State schools, transforming them into a moral and technical "asset" for the nation. Instead of "graduating in vice and turning to larrikinism, the children were being taught to love cleanliness and order, observe accurately, express themselves with precision, and by manual training, develop deft fingers and the desire for useful work. It was claimed that though heredity was "a most potent force", the Kindergarten could also do much to counteract any inborn taint.[20]

Demonstration and reports of Free Kindergarten work showed a close affinity with ideals being applied in the secular elementary schools. It was claimed that expert techniques removed the need to "drag" or "carry" the child. Instead it was led on "unconsciously" in the desired moral and vocational direction.[21]

The fact that these private philanthropic organizations both shared and transmitted professional educational ideals reflected their close links with leading figures in the State system. In Melbourne, the methods and aims of the Free Kindergarten had been anticipated as early as 1887 by Dr. Charles Strong, who had introduced Kindergarten activities at the Collingwood creche. His links with the advocates of professionalism in education looked back to the 1870s when he had been acquainted with the earlier generation of secularist intellectuals, such as Pearson, Higinbotham and Deakin. Former Scottish pupil-teacher, Francis Anderson had arrived as Strong's assistant at the Australian Church in 1886.

In NSW, one of the Union's founders was Maybanke Wolstoneholme, who had been educated initially as a teacher, and who had run a private college for children of the well-to-do from 1884 until her marriage to Francis Anderson in 1899. He became a member of the Council of the Kindergarten Union, while by 1900, its Council included the other chief spokesmen for educational reform in NSW - Arthur Giles, G.H. Knibbs, J.W. Turner and Peter Board.

During 1897-8, the Union was closely linked with "New" educational ideals through the interest of one of the first teachers, Miss R.L. Buckey, in the formation of the Child Study Association under the Presidency of Dr. Carroll. Trained in Chicago, where she had been much influenced by the ideas of F.W. Parker, under Carroll's direction, Miss Buckey arranged for anthropometric measurements to be taken at the Kindergarten, and also for the children's "senses" to be tested.[22]

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20. Maybanke Anderson "The Poor Man's Child Are We Training Him for Citizenship?" Pastoralists' Review 15 Feb. 1907 p.1084; Kindergarten Union of NSW Formation Not Reformation (Sydney n.d.) [c.1910]; Kindergarten Union of NSW Annual Report 1897-8 p.20-2 (Miss R.L. Buckey).

21. Mrs. Bogue Luffman "The Children's Christmas" The Liberal Woman Supplement 1 Dec. 1911 p.9-10.

22. M.L. Walker Op.Cit. p.199-204; Kindergarten Union of NSW Annual Report 1898-9 p.27.

In Victoria, the Free Kindergarten movement was similarly characterized by the participation of middle-class women, some of whom had links with prominent advocates of the "New" education in the University and the State education department. First President of the Kindergarten Union in Melbourne was Mrs. Alfred Deakin, and keen supporters included Dr. J. Smyth. Author of A Guide to the Modern Infants Room, he had opened a demonstration Kindergarten at Central Brunswick School in 1905-1906.

Inside the Union Kindergartens, much stress was placed on the way organized games could be made to replace "undisciplined recess". Though children were too young for team sports, they could play at being "carpenters , drapers, seamstresses, tailors, bakers, postmen, etc.". In this way they learnt "that good, honest work is necessary to success and happiness." Local street games, invented by children themselves and based on imitation of their own experience, were not permitted. For example, Maybanke Anderson expressed disapproval of a game she witnessed where street children were pretending to be drunk while others took them to the "lock-up". In contrast, Kindergarten games taught "that law and order must prevail."[23]

Story-telling was considered important, and especially approved were tales selected from the cultural legacy of the race and as remote as possible from the actual experience of the children of the inner suburbs where the Kindergartens were without exception located.[24] By way of contrast a desirable "literary atmosphere", was not provided by "comic papers". "They are not only unutterably common in style, but most harmful because they present so much in wrong moral perspective." For example, they not only confronted the child with ugliness, deformity and weakness, but also made fun of "mothers-in-law and marriage." "What literary or artistic taste" could "such stuff foster?"[25]

In the protected world of the Kindergarten, any of the sexuality of the world's barbaric past was carefully excluded. In 1911, the Australian Kindergarten Magazine condemned "the present premature consciousness of sex, which is found in all grades of society" and which was the source of much of "the social evil of the day". Girls, especially, were growing up not knowing that men were "what they make them."

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23. Kindergarten Training College [Leaflets] 1910-1916 "Programme of Demonstration of Free Kindergarten Work" Town Hall Sydney 19 Oct. 1912 p.4; Maybanke Anderson The Free Kindergartens in Sydney (Sydney 1914) p.6; Kindergarten Union of NSW Annual Report 1897-8 p.12.

24. Kindergarten Training College [Leaflets] 1912 p.4. The curriculum for trainees at the College in 1910 included study of J.M. Barrie, Grimm, Aesop, the Odyssey, and Mrs. Aeneas Gunn. Kipling was strongly recommended (Just So Stories and Jungle Books).

25. "Literature and the Child" AKM Vol.1 No.6 Jul. 1911 p.2; see also AKM Vol.2 No.6 Jul. 1912 p.8-10.

> Let us therefore begin in the nursery, with the little children, by banishing all talk of sweethearts, and also those games which introduce something of the same elements, as "Kiss in the Ring", "Postman's Knock", and "The Cushion Dance" - all of which, especially with older children, are likely to encourage familiarity and abominable horse play."[26]

As in the elementary school, gardening was an activity by which, it was believed, desirable moral values might be inculcated in the child, while for girls "washing and caring for doll's clothes" was taught from the age of three. The end of the day was seen as a moment to lay the foundations of patriotism:

> Children will sing Kipling's Children's Song and "God Save the King", then will salute the Flag and make their oath of allegiance - "I give my head, my heart, and my hands to my country". March out.[27]

As in the creche, the desire to influence the parents was one aspect of traditional philanthropic work which was not considered irrelevant to the new educational science. Indeed, some Union spokeswomen were inclined to stress this missionary aspect of the organization, over and above the aim of providing a preliminary form of hand and eye training for the industrial workforce of the future. It was hoped that the children would carry the social values they were being taught, into their homes, where adults attempting to introduce a similar gospel "would not be allowed to enter."[28] As an article in the Australian Kindergarten Magazine in 1912 by Susie O'Reilly, pointed out, the good work of the Kindergarten was negated unless the working class home was also influenced:

> It is of little use for Tommy for a few hours in the twenty-four to live in well-ventilated rooms, to sit and stand correctly, and have his body and his brains perflated at regular intervals by change of occupation, and all the systems of his little body most carefully watched and tended by a conscientious school teacher, and then for the few remaining hours go home to a window-shut house, to sprawl as he likes, or as he can, to get enough light on his book, or perhaps to mind a heavy baby.

It followed that "the education of the mother of Tommy" was also necessary.[29] The poor, uneducated mother," who had been, before her marriage, and sometimes even up to the birth of her child, a factory girl or shop hand", often saw her baby as a burden, though she loved it, "as every creature loves its young", mere animal affection was not enough. By taking care of the child for her, the

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26. "The Development of Sex Consciousness in Children" AKM Vol.1 No.3 Jan. 1911 p.1-3.

27. Kindergarten Training College [Leaflets] 1912 p.4.

28. Kindergarten Union of NSW Formation Not Reformation n.p.; Kindergarten Union of NSW Annual Report 1897-8 p.22; see also Mrs. Bogue Luffman Op.Cit. p.10; L. Morice AKM Vol.2 No.1 Sep. 1911 p.6. For the clash between the traditional philanthropic and newer scientific and educative functions of the Kindergarten, see P. Spearritt "The Kindergarten Movement: Tradition and Change" in D.E. Edgar (ed.) Social Change in Australia: Readings in Sociology (Melbourne 1974) p.583.

29. "The Teacher in Relation to Home Hygiene" AKM Vol.2 No.6 Jul. 1912 p.7-8.

Kindergarten teacher taught the working-class mother how "to love it wisely and treat it better."[30]

In the Free Kindergarten, efforts were made to involve and influence the working-class mother directly. At Newtown in 1898, mothers' meetings were instituted with the aim of getting the mothers "to co-operate in the right training of their children." Mothers' meetings were also held at Woolloomooloo in 1899.[31]

Though Susie O'Reilly suspected that some mothers actively opposed the moral principles which were being taught at the Kindergarten, the Kindergarten Union claimed some success in securing working class co-operation and approval. In 1899, the Newtown Free Kindergarten reported that two of the fathers had come and thanked the Kindergarten for the benefits their children had derived from it. One mother was reported as having said she had allowed her child to become "the authority at home on questions of right and wrong," and the family was "continuously being corrected and shown the better way to speak or act."[32]

The aims and methods of the Victorian Kindergarten Union were similar. The organization saw its purpose as compensating for the failure of parents who were said to lack "the time, discretion, trained intelligence or necessary knowledge to train their children in right physical, mental and moral habits." "Habits of thrift are developed in the parents, knowledge of hygiene inculcated, their interests are widened, and a right attitude towards their responsibilities in the upbringing of their children engendered."[33]

The Playgrounds Movement:

The Free Kindergarten was not the only way in which the charitable lady transmitted the values of the "New" educationists. By 1906, a new organization, the playgrounds movement, similarly aimed to replace the casual street games of children with adult-directed play in touch with the latest educational ideas for correcting physical, mental and moral deficiencies. A Playgrounds Association, formed in Melbourne at the instigation of Charles Strong, and supported by the National Council for Women and the WCTU, secured the co-operation of municipal authorities and opened supervised playgrounds at Richmond and Footscray over the next few years.[34]

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30. Maybanke Anderson The Free Kindergartens of Sydney p.4, 6.

31. Kindergarten Union of NSW Annual Report 1897-98 p.15.

32. Kindergarten Union of NSW Annual Report of the Newtown Free Kindergarten 1899 p.23.

33. Mrs. L.J. Wrigley "Free Kindergarten Work in Victoria" Report of the Proceedings of the Imperial Health Conference (London 1914) p.188-9.

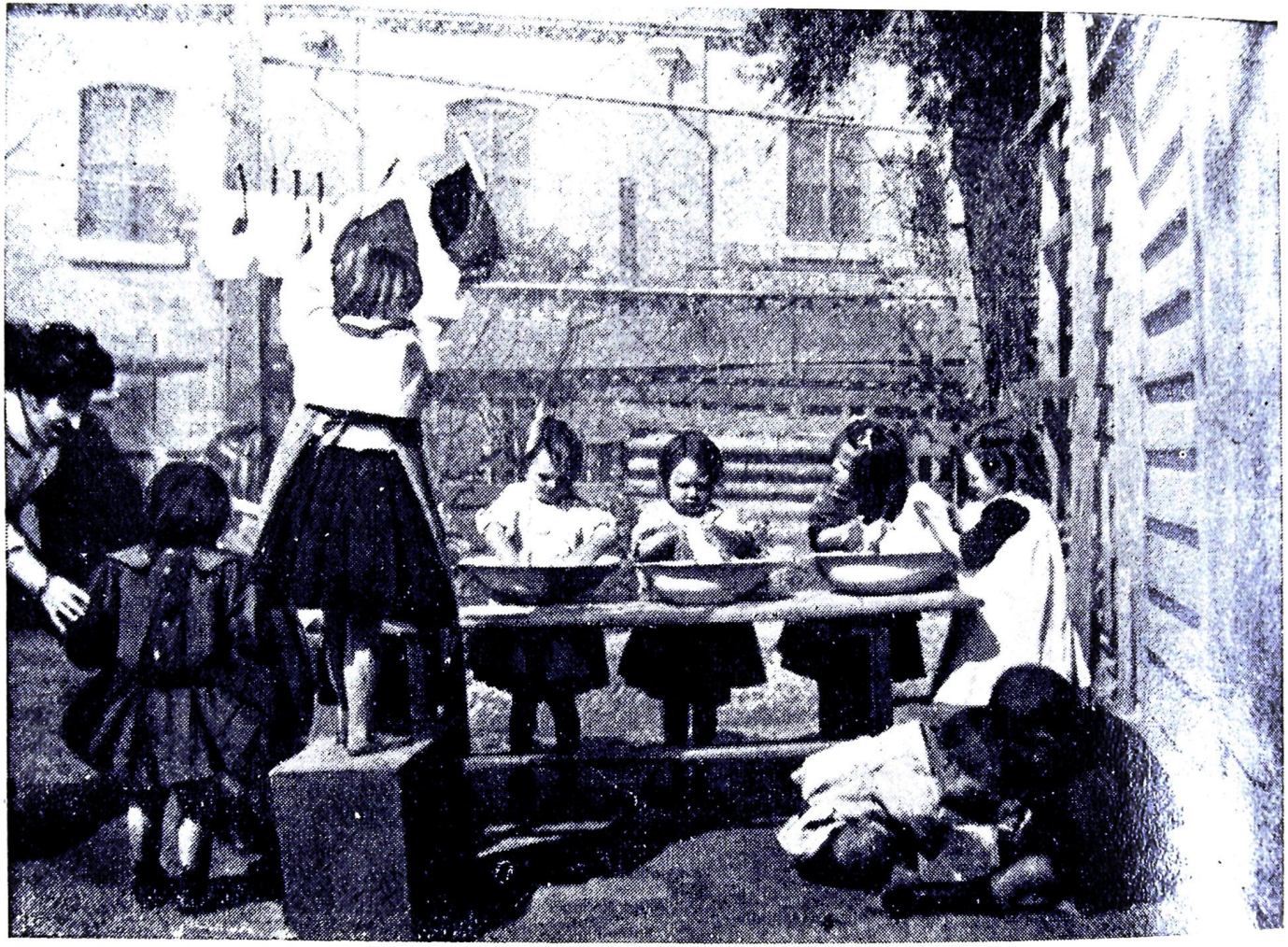
34. Anthea Hyslop "The Social Reform Movement in Melbourne 1890-1914" Ph.D. Thesis Latrobe 1980 p.250.



GOLDEN FLEECE FREE KINDERGARTEN.
Out of doors after the eleven o'clock lunch. One group is washing up, another is busy at carpenter work, while that in the background is playing in the sand-box.

71. Inside the Union Kindergarten - the teachers focussing their attention on the boys while one little girl washes up and the others wait their turn.

Kindergarten Union of NSW AnnualReport 1909-10.



A GROUP WASHING THE DOLLIES' CLOTHES.

72. Kindergarten Union of NSW Annual Report 1907-08.



SALUTING THE FLAG.

73. Kindergarten Union of NSW Annual Report 1905-06.

According to the Australasian Medical Gazette in 1912, all crowded areas should have open spaces "sacred" to games and play for children. Existing parks should have "rustic houses" with wide verandahs plus gymnastic apparatus, including swings and see-saws small enough for the use of infants.[35]

These views were supported by John Smyth, who added that such parks should be in the hands of trained educators and be supervised. For example, Melbourne's Flagstaff Gardens were a suitable location, but presently children could not play there unless accompanied by some responsible person. Like the Kindergarteners, advocates of the children's playground shared the vision of constructing an isolated, scaled-down and strictly censored version of the adult world for the child, a world in which only the qualified expert in children's needs had a place. They were acutely aware of the need to protect the children from the "tramps" who presently "disfigured the City Parks with their presence and their doings."[36]

In 1914, supervised playgrounds had been opened at Carlton, South Melbourne and Collingwood North with "trained play-leaders" in charge. These were paid by the local councils plus the Guild of Play, a new organization founded in 1913 (later known as the Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria). According to Dr. J.W. Barrett, the playgrounds replaced "the call of the streets" with the "call of the playground" in the primitive mind of the child.[37]

The NSW Parks and Playgrounds Association had opened supervised playgrounds at Miller's Point and Victoria Park adjoining the University by 1914. In this organization, the teaching profession was strongly represented, with Alexander Mackie as President and Maybanke Anderson as Secretary, and management in charge of the Kindergarten Union. Other playgrounds followed in Wentworth Park, Glebe and Moore Park by 1917.[38]

As with so many of the efforts on behalf of the protection of the child at the turn of the century, the acceptance of professional education in early childhood as a norm, involved the creation of a new paid profession in which the daughters of the middle class could exercise their "mothering" instincts while awaiting marriage. As a spokeswoman for the Victorian movement, citing G. Stanley Hall, put it, "Few occupations in which women engage unfit less for family life, or involve less change of spirit and ideals, if marriage comes. Few are better calculated to keep alive and develop more of the potentialities

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35. "Physical Training of School Children" AMG 30 Nov. 1912 p.558.

36. John Smyth cited in AMG 28 Dec. 1912 p.654; Kinderland No.2 Apr. 1904 p.10.

37. Argus 20 Jun. 1914 cited in Anthea Hyslop Op.Cit. p.251.

38. M.L. Walker Op.Cit. p.267; NSW Dept. of Public instruction Annual Report 1913 p.14.

of motherhood." A prospectus for the Sydney Kindergarten Training college in 1908 added that "For a woman to have reached the age of thirty and have no definite objects in life is conducive to all sorts of bodily and mental ills, as any physician well knows." Besides, the "pay" was good and there was "plenty of room for more teachers."[39]

Advocates of the playgrounds movement expected that this too would "open up yet another activity for girls", who would need to be trained as "playground superintendents."[40] Meanwhile, a similar career being created for the daughters of the middle class was that of the semi-professional nurse-girl, who now stood to dislodge the allegedly ignorant, apathetic and usually Irish girls traditionally said to monopolize this position. Girls graduating from a course offered by the Sydney Kindergarten Union Training College or the Norland Institute, were declared to be experts on physical care, plus the right way to mend clothes, tell stories, provide art, handwork, nature study, games and walks.[41] Girls taking this course could live in at Ashfield Infants' Home for a two to three months' practical course[42] after which they could expect to find employment in a "genteel" or vice-regal household and earn £40 a year.[43]

Like the position of general, district, or school nurse, qualified midwife, baby health sister or domestic science teacher, the position of Kindergartener or trained nurse-girl was not open to girls of the working-class. The fees, educational and other, personal qualifications prevented applications from other sources,[44] and the working-class girl was expected to find her professional "calling" in lesser-paid domestic service.

Thus, the "New" education effectively expanded careers for middle-class girls which involved the socialization of children, while also improving the status and opportunities of the teaching profession in general. Though children

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39. Mrs. L.J. Wrigley Op.Cit. p.191; Sydney Kindergarten Training College [Prospectus] 1908 p.8; Monthly Record (Women's Liberal League) 30 May 1908 p.5. By 1914, the College also held classes for interested mothers, who were addressed by Miss Zoe Benjamin on "Children's Punishments" and "Children's Literature", by Miss Newman on "Froebel's Ideas on Teaching Religion" and by Dr. Margaret Harper on "The Hygiene and Teaching of Sex" (The Liberal Woman 1 Jun. 1914 p.139.)

40. AKM Vol.2 No.7 Jul. 1912 p.6.

41. Sydney Kindergarten Training College [Leaflets] 1910-16 "Nursery Training Course".

42. Ashfield Infants' Home Annual Report 1899 p.5. A Kindergarten class had been started for the 24 children in this institution aged from 18 months to four years in 1897. See also its Annual Report 1903 p.6, 8.

43. ANJ May 1908 p.157-62; Monthly Record 21 Dec. 1909 p.232-6.

44. Peter Spearritt Op.Cit. p.586-7.

now participated in activities which took them outside the classroom, the main beneficiaries of the reforms were undoubtedly teachers themselves.

Psychology and the Teacher:

By 1914, the teachers' moves to appropriate a share in some of the professionalism associated with the scientific study of the mind of the child were strengthened by their access to knowledge of Psychology, increasingly provided as part of their training. As early as 1889, Francis Anderson had arranged for "promising" trainee teachers at Fort Street and Hurlstone to attend lectures in Moral and Mental Philosophy at Sydney University. Following the establishment of the Kindergarten Union of NSW, he arranged for its trainees to take courses through the University Extension board until the establishment of its own teaching centre, where from 1904, he gave the lectures on Psychology. Upon the appointment of his friend and fellow graduate of Glasgow University, Alexander Mackie, to direct the new Teacher Training College in 1906, an undergraduate course in Education was established at the university, culminating in the Chair in 1910.[45]

From 1910, Francis Anderson's own Department of Logic and Mental Philosophy was offering courses in Psychology under H. Tasman Lovell, a young graduate who had conducted his doctoral studies on Spencer's educational thought at Jena and who was also well read on the theories of James and Hall. After Lovell became lecturer in Philosophy in 1913, further courses on Psychology were offered, and enthusiasm for the subject resulted in the Chair to which Lovell was appointed in 1928. An assistant in these courses, G.E. Phillips of Sydney Teachers' College, was appointed in 1921.

Melbourne University followed Oxford in delaying acceptance of the new science, the foundation Chair dating only from 1946. However, earlier, Psychology was taught in philosophy and education courses and at Melbourne Teachers' College, where John Smyth had been appointed Principal in 1903.[46]

Meanwhile, teachers were becoming familiar with the Binet intelligence test, which had begun to replace anthropometric measurement of the body and the rough "teacher's estimate of mental ability" in the schools. In 1912, the Australasian Medical Gazette warned that no figures based on examination for mental defectiveness could possibly be of value unless made by medical men, who had access to accurate tests, such as that of Binet.[47] However, even before Binet's revision of the scale in 1908, R.G. Cameron of Sydney Teachers' College was using it to test children. By 1912, the head of the College, Alexander Mackie, was working on adjusting the test for Australian conditions, while

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45. A.P. Elkin "The Emergence of Psychology, Anthropology Education" in One Hundred Years of the Faculty of Arts (Sydney 1952) p.5, 23.

46. Ibid. p.24, 6.

47. AMG 19 Oct. 1912 p.405-6.

R.A. Tarrant was using it at Balmain Superior School in 1913. By 1913 Binet tests were also being used experimentally in some government Kindergartens in Sydney.[48]

Similarly in Melbourne, the mental test was being developed by John Smyth, who later occupied the Chair of Education, established at Melbourne University in 1917. Meanwhile S.D. Porteous of the special school for mentally defective children in Bell St. Fitzroy, was also developing and using the test. The opening of this school had followed a State enquiry into the education of sub-normal children in 1911, and further expansion of facilities for the education of the mentally defective child by teachers followed the Victorian Education Act of 1915.[49]

In 1914, both Peter Board and Francis Anderson were arguing that, though medical inspection had pointed to the need for "special treatment of defective and backward children" who were "serious hindrances" in the general instruction of others, this was "a new field" in which teachers might specialize. Already the causes of retardation were being "systematically studied" in the Teachers' Colleges, and those trained in "the new psychology" would educate children classified as defective after their segregation into separate classes or schools.[50]

In Sydney, key figures at the University, such as H.T. Lovell and A.H. Martin (lecturer in psychology at Sydney University, appointed 1921) became strong advocates of the use of the test by teachers for the purpose both of investigating and segregating the feeble-minded child and for "vocational guidance", an important aspect of the test advocated much earlier by Dr. Carroll.[51]

By 1923, Alexander Mackie was arguing that in addition to the "exact" information now available to the teacher on how to classify children according to mental ability, Psychoanalysis was contributing to the new status of education as a science. Though this branch of Psychology had so far not caused

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48. R.G. Cameron "The Measurement of Intelligence (The Binet Tests Applied to Australian Children)"; R.A. Tarrant "The Testing of Intelligence Through School Work"; Elizabeth Skillen "The Measurement of Intelligence (The Application of Some of Binet's Tests at Blackfriars)" in Records of the Education Society No.14-16 (Sydney 1913).

49. J. Lawry "Understanding Australian Education" in J. Lawry and J. Cleverley Op.Cit. p.18.

50. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Annual Report 1913 p.76; Peter Board "School Medical Inspection in NSW" Report of the Proceedings of the Imperial Health Conference (London 1914) p.297.

51. H.T. Lovell "The Tasmanian Mental Deficiency Act" Aust. Journal of Psychology and Philosophy Vol.1 1923 p.285; A.H. Martin "What is the IQ?" Ibid. p.174-6; Francis Anderson "Educational Policy and Development" p.536-7.

great change in the school, for it largely confirmed "aspirations of which we had already and independently become aware", from psychoanalysis teachers were gaining extra knowledge of the "unconscious motives" which influenced children's behaviour. They were also aware of the importance of avoiding undue "repression" which would manifest itself in "morbid" mental behaviour at a later stage of growth.[52]

Thus, though Dr. Harvey Sutton continued to speak of the weighing machine as of equal importance with the Binet test in eliminating defects in the physical and mental health of the national organism,[53] it was clear that the doctor had conceded much of his expertise in mental health to the professional psychologist and his agent in the school, the trained teacher. The school had been reconstituted as the key area where the State might intervene between parent and child to ensure that desirable values were reproduced.

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52. Alexander Mackie "Psycho-Analysis and Education" Aust. Journal of Psychology and Philosophy Vol.1 1923 p.105, 108.

53. Dr. Harvey Sutton "Recent Progress in Child Hygiene" MJA Vol.1 No.10 Mar. 1923 p.257 (also published in AAAS Report 1923 p.644-65).

CHAPTER TEN

CONCLUSION

> The Church hammers away at the adult with little effect. The State has all it can do to keep him straight. Why not try to do more with the child and the youth? He is plastic and mouldable and responsible to the best influences if we can only bring them to bear at the right time and in the right way.[1]

By 1914, professional opinion on how best to mould the plastic young to the requirements of the social unit was the most child-centred to date. Vestiges of Puritan perceptions of the need for strong forms of discipline to prevent spoiling, still present in medical theory of infant care, were confronting demands for greater empathy not only in the school but also in the home. Especially among educational theorists and exponents of the new science of Psychology, the thrust of child-raising advice to mothers was moving further away from the idea of breaking the will to the idea of guiding it towards socially acceptable norms at a subconscious level, by techniques brought to bear on the child's environment over a prolonged period from infancy to adolescence. It was said that where the old ideas of moral sanctions imposed upon the child by ecclesiastical authority from without were punitive and ineffective, greater empathy and care not to alienate or "force" the child would achieve a "true morality" which was "natural", automatic and "unconscious of compulsion" either from without or within.[2]

Though now given a scientific aura by Freud and his ideological predecessors, these concepts looked back to ideas present in liberal interpretations of Rousseau and Froebel, ideas which had been further developed in Dickensian advice. By the 1880s, pleas on behalf of empathy were almost as common as those for the imposition of discipline to prevent spoiling. Advice that in instilling good habits it was not enough to paint virtue, vice must be revealed "in its true hideousness, pictured without the mask", were juxtaposed with calls for making childhood a happy epoch, memories of which would refresh and sustain the individual during the trials of adulthood.[3] Even the medical formula for infant care, based on the idea that mothers must teach self-denial and self-control in order to guarantee the health of the child, confronted advice that it was no longer good enough merely to avoid the use of corporal punishment in child-raising. Even "to demand unquestioned obedience" was likely to be harmful, checking the development of a "self-reliant spirit", and making

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1. A.W. Rudd "The Scientific Study of the Child" AAAS Report Vol.12 1909 p.774.

2. Lilie A. Wright "The Psychological Basis of Ethical Training AAAS Report Vol.12 1909 p.756.

3. Healthy Mothers and Sturdy Children (Melbourne 1893) p.169, 172-3, 176.

the child the prey of stronger wills when away from parental care.[4]

Some writers even went so far as to question the medical insistence on cleanliness and regularity in child-rearing, arguing that dirty children were more healthy and any mother who repressed their natural instincts merely because of her wish to keep them clean, dainty and immaculate, robbed them of their birthright - a happy childhood.[5] This was especially true of the male child, for whom, all were agreed, a certain amount of adventurous truancy must be allowed, otherwise the self-reliant spirit would be lost forever.

In the first decade of the new century, these ideas were apparently confirmed by scientific study of the child. It now became mandatory to extract boys from the protective care of their mothers by early puberty, getting them out of their own backyard and into the fraternity gangs which were natural to this stage of growth, lest they become weak and effeminate. At the same time, the emphasis on maternal error and ignorance of scientific method increased. Experts in the social sciences now verified Froebel's dictum that "'Children are never naughty, they are merely mismanaged or misunderstood'".[6] Mistakes made by the mother caused not merely a weakened will but pathological mental abnormalities which made their appearance in adolescence or soon afterwards.

The increasing complexity of child-rearing theory, together with its growing emphasis on maternal fault, had distinct advantages for its advocates. Since the notion of achieving discipline by allowing more independence was so much more subtle and obscure than old ideas of repression to prevent spoiling, more reliance was likely to be placed on outside professional help. The results promised seemed more efficient and effective, while the penalties for not complying with the formula, more disastrous and irrevocable. The more impossible the task of achieving the correct balance between discipline and repression, the more scope was created for professional intervention on behalf of the vulnerable child.

For teachers and non-medical exponents of psychology, the idea of more subtle forms of discipline was also potentially useful because it could be associated not only with moral training but with developing mental ability, a notion likely to be valued in a society where a boy's chances of maintaining or improving on his parent's share of worldly wealth was increasingly dependent upon access to a career via competitive examination. As Maybanke Anderson told readers of her book on child-raising techniques, Mother Lore in 1919, if mothers left their children's mental development in the hands of God or even delegated

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4. "The Training of Children" The Dawn Vol.6 No.6 1893 p.17; cf. "Mistaken Mother's Love" Vol.3 No.12 1891 p.5-6.

5. "Dirty Children Are Healthy" The Dawn Vol.2 No.11 1890 p.11; see also Vol.3 No.3 1890 p.14; Vol.3 No. 9 1891 p.20.

6. Mothers in Australia Vol.1 No.1 Sep. 1917 p.12.

it to the teacher, and failed to heed the theories of experts, their children would grow up "with only half their possibilities developed - not idiots, but not nearly as intelligent as they might have been." This was a loss not only to the child but to the nation. When an ignorant mother taught her child to "sit still and smother his instincts", society "lost an inventor and gained a draper's assistant."[7]

Even for mothers who did not seek the advice of experts or read their opinions in the burgeoning literature on the subject, it was becoming much more difficult to choose to ignore professional advice. For the poor, direct compulsion to comply with theory could occur at a number of levels. As childhood ideology had been translated into social action, the mother had found herself compelled to send her children to school, or account to a teacher or truant officer for her failure to do so. Similarly, she discovered that any constable was authorized to arrest her child without a warrant, if he considered its "right" to moral or physical health endangered.

More subtly, the health-visitor, the Kindergarten teacher, the nurse at the creche, the teacher in the elementary school, and the doctor at the hospital, all stressed that the destiny of the child lay with parental willingness to obey the rules for giving the child its chance in life. Economic circumstances were of no relevance, for with proper thrift, providence, attention to the simple rules of nutrition, and devotion to making the environment "home-like", every child could have an equal chance.

Even at a higher socio-economic level, the mother had to realize just how much her child's capacity to avoid moral pitfalls and to succeed in the mental ability stakes depended on her compliance with professional theory. Indeed, she had an additional duty, that of spreading the professional gospel to less enlightened women, thereby fulfilling her "wider motherhood."

Children too, were being taught that dependence was a right. Though the counsellors were as yet absent to help them locate any failures in the home, rather than the economic system, the groundwork for searching for such failures in parental error was already laid.

The Intrusive State:

Though these developments were not unique to Australia there is evidence that here they were especially intense. Australia by 1914 had a reputation as the social laboratory of the world, a notion largely based on the idea that the State had intervened to a remarkable degree, both in domestic affairs and social relationships, to offset some of the more glaring injustices of laissez-faire Capitalism. This in turn had helped to create the large number of children institutionalized outside the family, together with powerful professional groups advising the State on their education and care. The special advisory nexus

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7. Mother Lore (Sydney 1919) p.10, 18.

between these groups and the State meant that they were able in turn to extract concessions from it, concessions which enabled them further to strengthen their professional position, and to transmit their ideas.

Of the various groups claiming expertise on child nature and needs, the medical profession was the most successful in acquiring control over its numbers, its training and its remuneration, and in removing competition from other practitioners in its particular field. By 1911 it had achieved a status and power higher than its counterpart in Britain, enabling it to prevent attempts to introduce a compulsory national health insurance scheme, then being discussed there.[8]

Educational theorists, administrators and academics also achieved a position of considerable eminence and influence. The origin of the colony as a penal settlement prompted rejection of notions that faults in child nature were derived either from the religious concept of original sin or from the scientific version of this concept, that human vices were biologically inherited from ancestry. An intense faith was generated in the improvements which could be achieved both in individual and society by increasing the power of the liberal State to intervene on behalf of the young. If children, held to be at risk from an unfit environment, were removed and provided with a protective, expert education, they could be equipped for a contented and law-abiding life in a democratic society.

During the depression of the 1890s, these ideas were challenged by medical theories of dangerous passions and instincts in the child, affecting both body and mind. However, in general the notion that there were some degenerate types whom the local environment could not redeem, ran a poor second to a new and nationalistic environmentalism. Youth workers urged the introduction of the probation system in children's courts, said to avoid subjecting juvenile offenders to penal-like conditions. Educational theorists, teachers and social scientists declared that the new land was capable of producing a unique and superior social type, embodied in the adolescent male.

The trend towards placing professional prescription of children's needs in a nationalistic context was intensified by the contribution of the Australian creative writer. During the 1890s, the special conjuncture of the scientific professional's formula for more defined sex roles and less "repression" in child raising, coinciding with newly emergent professional creative writers who needed to establish their expertise in interpreting Australian life for Australians, resulted in the transposition of certain aspects of professional child-rearing theory as part of national culture and history.

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8. Amy McGrath "The History of Medical Organization in Australia" Ph.D. Thesis SU 1975 p.15-19.

The Influence of Professional Prescription Upon the Sources:

The role of the writer in identifying a national ethos had important consequences for Australian history in general, prompting a long-lasting acceptance of the values of that particular group in interpreting what has been distinctive about the nation's history. For the historian of childhood, their influence was especially important, for it grew out of and combined with professional child-rearing ideas, and thus affected a major area of source material. Later writers, drawn to leave an account of their childhood, continued to conceptualize it on the terms set for them by their predecessors in the Australian cultural milieu, together with "scientific" prescription of childhood current at the time they were writing.

Having identified both the "scientific" and the literary ideologies, it becomes possible more clearly to discern the effect of both on reminiscences of childhood written since the 1890s. Writers moved further towards denigration of the mother and endorsed the notion that she needed to be guided by professional expertise lest she spoil the development of the child and the race.

Even by the early 1920s, Henry Lawson and an early biographer, his sister Gertrude, had begun this process declaring that in their family it had been considered wicked to swear, tell lies and say "devil" and that these attitudes were conveyed essentially by their mother:

> Henry went very regularly to Sunday School. Mother's moral code was very strict. Cards were tabooed as the Devil's Playthings. Horse-racing and gambling were unpardonable offences. Our training was of almost a Puritan type.[9]

This perspective is the more evident in reminiscences written from the 1930s and 1940s, when the mother stands further condemned by wider knowledge of Freudian theory of the dangers of sexual repression. Thus Randolph Bedford in 1944, looking back to his childhood in Sydney in the 1870s, wrote that it was a period when mother love ruled with "a rod of iron". "I remember mostly her steadfastness. Really she had but one mood: always giving service and refusing thanks for it, ... disguising love and deprecating it by pretending that her service was due solely to a realized sense of duty." She "was of that hard, staunch old Puritan school," disapproving of facile demonstration of affection as "unnecessary frivolity." Consequently the house was "holy, hard, and clean, and most times desperately dull." Bedford added that he believed this attitude was accentuated by his mother's experience of immigrating from an English village which had "been refined to attenuation by losing its working classes," to what she saw as "lawless colonial life."[10]

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9. Henry Lawson "A Fragment of Autobiography" [c.1903] (M L MSS A1887-A1888); Gertrude O'Connor "Notes Upon The Personal Life of Henry Lawson" [1923] (ML MSS A1542).

10. Randolph Bedford Naught to Thirty Three (Melbourne 1976) p.6, 12-13.

By the 1950s, when Miles Franklin was writing her account of childhood, these trends were even more pronounced. The "Legend of the Nineties" was being reconstructed by Vance Palmer, (1954) while the importance of "mothering" was being emphasized by Bowlby and the dangers of repression by Spock. These developments were reflected in the kinds of experience selected by this writer as characteristic of her Childhood at Brindabella. The female figures of authority were denigrated for repressing the instincts and spoiling the joys of an innocent colonial child, by attempting to implant an outdated, snobbish and essentially unaustralian set of values. According to this writer, her grandmother "maintained the standing of the English better classes and insisted upon her daughters observing the conventions and niceties of well-brought-up young ladies. In the family of the Australian bush, the pattern was of the English squire."[11] Instincts and passions were firmly repressed. There were no demonstrations of affections for children, no profanity, gluttony, vulgarity, and no "tantrums". There was no rich food for children, and daily routine and regularity was insisted upon. Both mother and grandmother were said to have believed that corporal punishment, though controlled, was necessary to teach self-control, for the good of the child "and the safety of society."

> She believed in a sharp switch stripped of leaves and applied round the calves of the legs where it could sting without risk of injury. Boxing of ears or any hitting about the body of a child was not to be thought of, nor vulgar threats.[12]

Also pointing to the way in which her recollections of childhood were filtered through prevailing ideologies, was Miles' description of her father. Where the women were depicted as making no concessions to the weaknesses of the flesh, even outlawing fantasy and fairy tales because they were "not true", he was said to have more "imagination". Further, he conformed to the image of the "masculine": "I never saw my father or any Australian adult man weep."[13]

These images were reinforced by "Caddie", a "Sydney Barmaid" who was helped by Dymphna Cusack in the writing of her reminiscences, published in 1953. She said that her mother, who had been disowned by her own family after her marriage, nevertheless attempted to imbue her children with the "gentility" of her former class. "We weren't allowed to mix with the children we lived among and the ones Mum thought good enough for us looked down on us.... Other children might use swear words and slang, but not hers. Because of her attitude to things that were taken for granted by people we lived among, we never seemed to belong."[14]

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11. Childhood at Brindabella (Sydney 1963) p.24.
12. Ibid. p.7, 10, 25, 36-7.
13. Ibid. p.47, 82.
14. Caddie A Sydney Barmaid (Melbourne 1966) p.12-13.

By 1963, when Norman Lindsay's former model Rose Soady (who had replaced the hapless Katie in his affections for some fifty years), wrote her reminiscences of childhood during the romantic 90s, these ideas were further developed. On the one hand, the image of the Australian father as rejecting any interest in his children as effeminate was strongly restated. According to Rose, when he left the family for the gold rush in Western Australia in 1893, he transferred his adult bread-winning responsibilities to his children: "Take care of your mother while I am away," and the mother was seen as placidly accepting this attitude as the male right to wanderlust: "He did what he wanted to do." On the other hand, this being an account of a more genuinely working-class childhood, (the father was a stone-mason by trade), new themes from the "scientific" perspective of the national ethos were introduced. The father was seen also as a brutal drunk, and a new reason for the condemnation of the mother occurred. In contrast with the over-zealous middle-class mother, in this account she became indifferent and neglectful of her domestic responsibilities and therefore of the welfare of her nine children. Compared with the more protected, loving and the smaller families of their neighbours in suburban Lane Cove, the working-class children were depicted as heavily disadvantaged, and growing up with a legacy of bodily and possibly psychic ills.[15]

Norman Lindsay's own picture (published 1970) was of a middle-class childhood, and accordingly returned to the picture of the misinformed, fanatical mother. According to Lindsay, his mother, the daughter of a Wesleyan missionary, kept handy a "section of buggy whip" for purposes of punishment. Her idea was to have "grouped about her a family submissive to her concept of conduct and morals." This concept included no liquor in the house, no reading for entertainment value, and the exercising of a "constant espionage" over her daughters' private lives. According to Lindsay, these were the preoccupations of "all mothers in the genteel social stratum of that era." "I do not recall that she ever indulged sentiments of affection to us, or consorted with us in any sort of lightsome mood."

Lindsay's account also illustrates another characteristic of the post-Bulletin pattern of childhood reminiscence, the projection of mothers not only as wowsers but snobs. According to Norman Lindsay, his mother's circle of friends was confined to "doctors, bankers, lawyers, parsons and retired magnates of the mining world" though she was unsuccessful in ensuring that her son's social contacts were similar.[16]

In the autobiography of Lewis Rodd, it was again the mother who considered it her duty to watch over her children's moral and spiritual welfare. According to Rodd, though now reduced to poverty, she had had a genteel

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15. Ma and Pa (Sydney 1963) p.5, 31, 48, 52, 75-6.

16. My Mask (Sydney 1970) p.18, 35, 39, 44, 50.

upbringing in Adelaide society, and had been educated solely by governesses. She would have preferred denominational schooling for her boys if she could have afforded it and feared that the close proximity of the other tenants would cause them to have a pernicious influence over the religious and political views of her children. She spent her Sunday afternoons on her "throne of respectability", the rocking chair, moved onto the front veranda, where with Prayer Book in hand, she did such sewing as did not defy the Fourth Commandment. From here she could attempt to supervise her children's play, and in particular, prevent them from straying "down Albion Street", which she saw as not only a physical but a moral descent. "At the bottom of the street was the Children's Court into which she had visions of me dragged as a likely offender. Opposite was the brewery, the source of her enemy 'drink'."[17]

Similarly John Hetherington in his recollections wrote that, whereas his father, a grocer at Sandringham, Victoria in the early 1900s, was a "romantic" who had been to the West Australian gold rush in the 90s, mother was "a realist" whose "moral values were as firm, as fixed and inflexible as the Ten Commandments." She watched over the moral and physical habits of her two boys, worrying that they would learn to swear at State School and ensuring that as members of the Church Choir they attended the Anglican Church at Windsor weekly.[18]

Reflecting approval of larrikinism as especially Australian and natural to the growing male, accounts of organized fights loom large in accounts of childhood by male writers. For example, according to Lewis Rodd, battles were fought in Little Riley Street, Surry Hills, using gravel from the playgrounds and blue metal from the roads, while according to John Hetherington, combat between groups of boys was also routine in the suburbs where dwelt the better-off. These were "not separate fights so much as one long fight which went on for most of the school year," and were held on a grassy reserve "well-screened from the eyes of teachers or of other passing adults who might interfere and spoil the fun."[19]

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17. Lewis Rodd A Gentle Shipwreck (Melbourne 1975)p.27,38.In 1933, Rodd married Kylie Tennant, a successful writer who drew upon his recollections of childhood for her novel Foveaux (1939).

18. John Hetherington The Morning was Shining (London 1971) p.39, 45, 100, 207. Earlier contributions by this author to the stereotype of the Australian male included The Australian Soldier (1944), Australians (1960) and Norman Lindsay Embattled Olympian (1973).

19. Lewis Rodd Op.Cit. p.40; John Hetherington Op.Cit. p.104, 211. Accounts of organized fights between individual boys, said to be based on his own childhood, were also considered important by Norman Lindsay in his fiction (Saturdee 1933).

In fictional accounts of childhood, the total effect of the combined literary and scientific prescription of child-raising was exemplified in George Johnston's account in 1964 of the factors which shaped the archetypical Australian character of his brother, Jack. The brutal working-class father was present, as was the neglectful mother, though in this case she was of wealthy origins. A qualified nurse who passed her children into the care of the grandmother so that she could pursue a career, later she misguidedly relegated them to the sleep-out while she filled the main bedrooms with patients. Nevertheless, a robust male adolescence spent in truanting, fighting, sporting achievements and spontaneous sexual conquest, combining with anti-authoritarian attitudes on the male side of the family, was seen to have produced the ideal Australian male type, egalitarian, brave, a "sunburnt Icarus, a free man."[20]

Such accounts cannot be taken as a reliable source of what was distinctive about Australian childhood, and certainly not to test whether or not Australian conditions fostered a mysterious psychohistorical evolution towards more enlightened relations between parent and child. Rather they simply illustrate the extent to which the professional writers helped to reinforce aspects of "scientific" ideology of child nature and needs. Their testimony, taken in conjunction with the intrusive State, helps to chart the growing status of the professions in Australia, and the greater force of their prescription of child-rearing ideals.

Professionalization and the Class Structure:

Most of the influential representatives of the professions saw themselves as a radical, regenerative force in Australian society, helping to create a more just and healthy society. However, their quest for professional autonomy and for widespread acceptance of their ideas functioned so as to reinforce the existing structure of society, limiting upward social mobility with respect to all other groups except themselves.

Though much of the direction of the medical or the newer Freudian theory appeared to be primarily concerned with sexuality and its repression, this was a subsidiary function. Professionalization of child-raising theory was concerned to make child-raising a political force, to combat Socialism, improve national "progress" and "efficiency" and to marshal the human mental and physical resources needed for imperial war on a world-wide scale.

Paradoxically, this had to be achieved by depoliticizing childhood, making it everywhere the same "Romance-land", isolated from crass realities of the adult world, such as poverty, inequality or class. Professional rhetoric, whether medical, educational, or literary made no secret of this aim, arguing that this was the key to unifying society and defusing class tensions. Thus an organization like the Scouts repeated the goals of the advocates of national

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20. My Brother Jack (London 1967) p.279.

schooling in the 1870s, claiming to be "distinctly democratic" and non-sectarian. A Scout pledged himself to be "a brother to every other Scout, no matter to what social class that other belongs." The aim was to attract "rich and poor alike, from the Governor-General's son to the son of the lowliest tradesman in the land".[21]

Thus, the stated professional ideal was to do away with social distinctions based on sect or class. Francis Anderson was personally concerned lest the new science of Sociology, which was he said, committed to the concept of society as an organic whole, should be confused in the public mind with socialism, which he declared was propagandist and unscientific in spirit and committed to society's division.[22]

Although over the nineteenth century, the philanthropists had sought and played a similar role in smoothing away class conflict, professionalization changed the scale and the force of these activities. In part this was due to the greater degree of access which the various professions and their agents secured to the working-class child, access which was in many cases guaranteed by the State. "Never in the history of human progress had the child received so much attention and care as at the present time," John Smyth remarked in 1906. "Children's courts, playgrounds throughout our cities and Kindergartens are being advocated now, and not merely by philanthropists, but by members of our legislatures..."[23]

The greater impact of professional prescription for reducing class conflict was also due to the special relationship of those amenities to the production of the more skilled and technically efficient workforce needed by industrial Capitalism. Neither Church nor philanthropist had the resources and the knowledge to provide the new prolonged and technical education now demanded, whereas the secular professions, aided by the State, had both. Further, where many churchmen and moralists were still committed to proscription of birth control, most social scientists were already convinced of the prior importance of the smaller family, able to produce the more educated worker needed to meet the changing demands of commercial competition.

Receptiveness to the professional formula for defusing class conflict was also increased by the apparently scientific inevitability of the social hierarchy it condoned. Like the old "puritan" ethic, the new professional one explained social injustice in terms of personal fault, by focussing attention away from economic and political issues to areas where the expert could "help".

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21. Boy Scouts Association NSW Section Second Annual Report Jul.1915 p.5, 6; R.C. Packer "The Boy Scouts" Lone Hand 2 Aug. 1909 p.390.

22. Sociology in Australia A Plea For its Teaching (Sydney 1912) p.9-10.

23. "Infant Room Teaching" in C.R. Long The Aims and Work of the Education Department (Melbourne 1906) p.58.

Thus, where churchmen (and many doctors) in the 1890s had seen the causes of poverty and militant Unionism in the failure of parents to instil habits of thrift and self-denial in the young, social science by 1923 presented the view that the "frequency of strikes ... may be the effect of mental conflict produced by undue parental repression."[24] As an explanation of social inequality and class tensions, the new theory was especially effective. Not only did it exchange old moral factors for new scientifically defined mental ones; it also seemed to justify a new kind of class relationship based on indisputable scientific facts. Professionals were agreed that though any social stratification based on inherited power or crass commercial wealth was unjust, there were other "real inequalities" which prevented a homogeneous society. As Francis Anderson explained in 1914, these were based on differences of "merit and capacity", which could be objectively quantified. Low ability was derived from the failure of parents to make sufficient sacrifices so as to prolong education for their children, and to acquaint themselves with professional theory so that bodily and mental potential might be fulfilled. Even Socialists must recognize this, and abandon their futile attempts to equalize, which were not merely misguided, but which blocked the "more capable minority."[25]

Peter Board, exploring the relationship of the new professional prescription for child-training to the maintenance of social order and harmony, even argued that it was the keeping down of the talented individual in the lower ranks of society which was the major source of social disruption. If a stable society was sought, then social stratification and the distribution of material possessions must be made to correlate with "mental ability."[26]

Theorists such as Mackie, Anderson and Board, who represented "the more capable minority", had much to gain from acceptance of these doctrines. Moving into new academic and administrative positions, they now formed an identifiable social group, educated, at least moderately well-off, acquainted with the wealthy and the fashionable in the cultural milieu, their own children unlikely to fail the new tests of mental ability and the unwritten ones of moral worth, which they were fashioning.

Creative writers both participated in and gained status from the scientific policies to weld society into a unified organism. However radical the call of some writers of this period for a revolution in sexual mores,

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24. Dr. N. Sisca The Management of Children in Health and Disease (Melbourne 1892) p.33; Alexander Mackie "Psycho-Analysis and Education" Aust. Journal of Psychology and Philosophy Vol.1 1923 p.108.

25. Francis Anderson Tendencies in Modern Education (Sydney 1909) p.13-17.

26. Peter Board "Higher Primary and Secondary Education" Aust. Journal of Education 15. Aug. 1907 p.9-10.



The Minister for Education (Mr. Carmichael) explaining to the pupils of a little school in the Far West how they may reach the University.

74. NSW Dept. of Public Instruction Three Years of Education (Sydney 1914).

apparently clashing with the more "puritan" elements of the old medical formula, overall their ideas about the role of women, children and the family were largely at one with developing professional theory. Perhaps other than William Lane, who had been influenced by Edward Bellamy, most tended to rely on the limited and largely unworkable ideas of Henry George, himself an early social scientist whose vision of a more equal society displayed great faith in the "progress of science" and "the diffusion of knowledge" and by implication, the role of the professional in ensuring that the environment of the individual matched his "aptitude". He had nothing at all to say about a revaluation of the role of women and children, providing a classic version of the sociological affirmation of the family as the basis of society and the need of the child for a prolonged period of dependence and care.[27]

Though the religious profession continued to play an important role in the moral training of children, it had long ceased to contribute to the construction of the formula for that training. Rather, it was now in a position where it needed to adjust its traditional theory to the terms set by the secular professions.

Protestant churchmen, having close links with the professional experts, were already adapting (and therefore endorsing) aspects of the secular theory for the teaching of religion itself. In 1904, the testimony of Rev. W.W. Rutledge at the Birth Rate Commission in NSW, anticipated Protestant acceptance of another key element in secular childhood ideology, the principle of the smaller family.

Catholic churchmen remained intransigent on the issue of birth control, already in 1907 seeing the maintenance of the large Catholic family along with an uncompromising attitude to "mixed" marriage, as a key means of gradually and peacefully achieving their major professional objective, the "conversion of Australia".[28] However, overall, they endorsed rather than challenged the values of scientific ideology. In NSW, Cardinal Moran's disclaimers against Socialism preceded Leo XIII's in Rerum Novarum (1891)[29] and Catholic political and social policies focussed on ameliorative reforms seen as likely to prove

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27. Henry George Progress and Poverty (London 1882) p.415, 423, 457.

28. Local clarification of Catholic law on mixed marriage preceded Ne Temere (1907), the Papal decree on this subject. See "Mixed Marriages and their Results", "The Conversion of Australia, How Effected", and "Catholic Wives and the Work of Conversion" in Australasian Catholic Record, Vol.2 1896 p.196 ff; Vol.7 1901 p.534, and Vol.8 1902 p.222-8. For confidence that Catholic proscription of birth control would increase the number of adherents to the faith, "Is the Catholic Church Gaining Converts in Australia?" Ibid. Vol.7 1901 p.451-4.

29. W.W. Phillips "Christianity and its Defence in NSW" Ph.D. Thesis ANU 1969 p.258. See also Australasian Catholic Record Vol.11 1905 p.546-84.

that the Catholic child had the ability to rise in society on the terms set by the secular professionals - bursaries and scholarships, free transport to schools, and state funding for religious education. School medical inspection was also endorsed, while in 1911-14, Archbishop Carr gave strong support to the Anthropometric Committee's stocktaking of national feeblemindedness. Even slum clearance was supported on the grounds that the ignorance of the slum dweller was a "poisonous virus" which fostered crime, filled hospitals and gaols and destroyed the stamina of the race.[30]

The major pre-requisite for the professional amelioration of class conflict was the deflation of the skills of the mother. The extension of her dependence on professional advice had been vital to the establishment of the male experts in child care; it was equally so for the maintenance of the social system they espoused. Like those other groups in society whose lot it was to be governed by their superiors, the child could only be brought to accept its destiny compliantly and do its work efficiently if the "right" managerial skills were brought to bear upon it during the correct stages of growth. In particular, the home had to be made to function in tandem with the school, as a scientifically engineered total environment for the production of non-violent citizens who would slip smoothly into adult roles for which they had been expertly prepared.

Therefore the mother was to shed any vestiges of her class origin, and labour in the social and economic vacuum called the home. This was to be the common destiny of all women, its parameters determined by professional expertise. Special training for this destiny was crucial to exchanging the "artificial" division of society along horizontal class lines for vertical ones based on age and sex, said to be immovably rooted in the nature of things. As Mrs. Edgeworth David told the National Council of Women in 1906, girls of "all social grades" were to be taught nutrition, marketing accounts, cottage gardening, baby management and how to choose a home. When this was done, even well-educated and charming women would rush to fill vacancies for domestic labour. The lack of servants and their incompetence would be as much a joke as the "Sairey Gamp" style of nurse, in a land of happy homes and well-bred citizens.[31]

For girls, the amount of useful information provided on all of these subjects had to be minimal, while the ideological content was immense. The aim was to provide just sufficient knowledge to raise doubts in the mother's mind as to her own competence, and ensure that she would consult the expert fully trained in these complex matters. Meanwhile, the interventionist State, in

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30. Trans. AMC 1914 p.706; Australasian Catholic Record Vol.15 1909 p.27.
31. ANJ Dec. 1906 p.379ff.

ensuring that the basic wage for a male unskilled labourer was sufficient to maintain himself, a wife and three children, discouraged women from seeking work outside the home, for it failed to take similar action on behalf of the female labourer.[32]

While awaiting marriage and motherhood, some middle-class girls were permitted to work outside the domestic sphere in a semi-professional capacity as nurses, welfare officers, teachers and Kindergarteners. Here, in transmitting ideology across classes, their role was akin to that formerly played by the Lady Visitor, with the important exception that they were no longer encouraged to participate in the formulation of that ideology.

Similarly some women especially in the medical profession, were gaining the educational qualifications which theoretically permitted access to the inner sanctum of the real experts themselves. In the period up to 1914, however, they were still few in number and meeting with resistance. Nor were they permitted or prepared to challenge the basic assumptions on which professional theories of child-raising were based.[33]

The way in which childhood ideology functioned so as to preserve the class structure was not due to conscious conspiracy on the part of the professions. Rather it was due to the way in which new groups, each with its own need to be able to claim professional expertise, moved into a position where they were able to direct, to an unprecedented degree, the social creation of knowledge itself. Future improvements in scientific and medical fields, giving claims of expertise more substance, would consolidate the position of these groups, generating further acceptance of their self-styled role in guaranteeing the "rights of the child" and thereby building a nation younger, more virile and more classless then anywhere else. In the eyes of the prophets of the new social science in the early 1900s, given proper attention to the scientifically defined "needs" of childhood, there could be no caste or privilege, for all could reach the topmost ranks. Where the nineteenth century had been "The Century of the Woman" the next one would be "The Century of the Child".[34]

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32. P.G. McCarthy "Wages for Unskilled Work and the Margins for Skill in Australia 1901-21" AEHR Vol.12 No.2 Sep. 1972 p.42-60; Anne Summers Damned Whores and God's Police (Penguin 1981) p.337.

33. The role of the professional woman during the inter-war period is examined by Meredith Foley, Ph.D. Thesis, SU (forthcoming).

34. John Smyth Op.Cit. p.57. See further Ellen Key The Century of the Child (New York and London 1909) p.45; Havelock Ellis The Task of Social Hygiene (London 1912) p.100.

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