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LET THEM SEE HOW LIKE ENGLAND WE CAN BE

AN ACCOUNT OF THE SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION 1879

by

LINDA YOUNG

A thesis submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Arts

HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

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- + The "Posthumous Friends of the Garden Palace" - never a more hedonistic group of historians.

ABBREVIATIONS

<u>ADB</u>	<u>Australian Dictionary of Biography</u>
<u>AGNSW</u>	Art Gallery of New South Wales
<u>AT & CJ</u>	<u>Australian Town & Country Journal</u>
<u>DL</u>	Dixson Library: State Library of NSW
<u>DT</u>	<u>Daily Telegraph</u>
<u>FL</u>	Fisher Library: Sydney University
<u>GRL</u>	General Reference Library: State Library of NSW
<u>ILN</u>	<u>Illustrated London News</u>
<u>ISN</u>	<u>Illustrated Sydney News</u>
<u>JRAHS</u>	<u>Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society</u>
<u>MAAS</u>	Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney
<u>ML</u>	Mitchell Library: State Library of NSW
<u>NGV</u>	National Gallery of Victoria
<u>Notes</u>	<u>Notes on the Sydney International Exhibition</u>
<u>PP</u>	<u>Parliamentary Papers</u>
<u>PRL</u>	Power Research Library: Sydney University
<u>RA</u>	Royal Academy
<u>Record</u>	<u>Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition</u>
<u>SIE</u>	Sydney International Exhibition
<u>SIE Photo Album</u>	<u>Sydney International Exhibition Photographic Album</u>
<u>SM</u>	<u>Sydney Mail</u>
<u>SMH</u>	<u>Sydney Morning Herald</u>
<u>V & P</u>	<u>Votes and Proceedings: NSW Legislative Assembly</u>

INTRODUCTION

Nineteenth century chroniclers of the great exhibitions were fond of tracing their roots back to the great Shushan fair of Old Testament King Ahasuerus.¹ They developed the lineage through the markets of classical Greece and Rome, the medieval trade fairs of Champagne, the bazaars of the East and the frost fairs of the frozen Thames.²

But the specific notion of displaying industrial developments linked to the commerce of their products was initiated in 1761 by Britain's Royal Society of Arts, whose charter was to encourage the arts, manufacturing and commerce. In that year the Society decided to purchase the award-winning exhibits from its annual prize-giving and to put them on show in a London warehouse for a fortnight. The first display was so successful that it became a regular event.³

Meanwhile in France, a post-Revolution sale of goods from the great royal manufactories of Sèvres, Gobelins and Savonneries held in 1797 was so popular that exhibitions including the products of many more trades were proposed annually. Though actually held irregularly, they soon achieved the title Exposition National Francais, and were catalogued and reported on with careful detail. Most singular in this process of commentary was a new emphasis on commercial comparison, particularly vis a vis English products. By the time of the 1849 Exposition more than 4500 exhibitors participated in a show that ran for six months.⁴

¹Book of Esther, I/iii-v.

²e.g., Frank Leslie, Historical Register of the Centennial Exposition 1876, (facs.) NY 1974.

³Kenneth Luckhurst, The Story of Exhibitions, London 1951, ch.1.

⁴John Allwood, The Great Exhibitions, London 1977, p.10-12.

Fellows of the Royal Society of Arts Henry Cole and Digby Wyatt reported on this exhibition to the Society. They described its success and noted that there had been an abortive attempt to extend its competition internationally. When Cole discussed the report with the President of the Society, Prince Albert, he proposed that Britain's planned National Quinquennial Exhibition should follow the French model and that it should consider foreign participation. Albert was emphatic: "It must embrace foreign productions"; it would be "international, certainly."⁵

This was a bold decision. It created bitter controversy that persisted many months, to be lost at last only in the unarguable, fabulous success of the Exhibition.

The plan was presented to the public at a great meeting of men of arts, commerce and industry at the Lord Mayor's Mansion House on 17 October 1849. It became a reality less than three months later, when on 3 January 1850 Queen Victoria issued a Royal Commission, headed by her husband, to organize and produce the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations.

⁵Quoted from Royal Archives (29.6.1849) in Allwood, p.14, and by every other writer on the topic.

CHAPTER ONE

The infant Hercules:

New South Wales at the Great Exhibition and thereafter

News of proposals for the Great Exhibition reached Sydney - a journey under sail of thirteen or fourteen weeks - early in March 1850, well before it had become an officially instituted project in London. On 8 March a committee of gentlemen of the Australasian Botanical and Horticultural Society was formed to organise a colonial contribution. Their expectations were high: their chairman, Speaker of the Legislative Council Charles Nicholson, pointed hopefully to "the great great and unprecedented advantages that would accrue to this colony"¹ through the international display of its raw and manufactured products.

Participation in the Exhibition also had its messianic proponents. In the same month they Sydney Morning Herald editorialised on the subject of how the colony's display would be received in England.

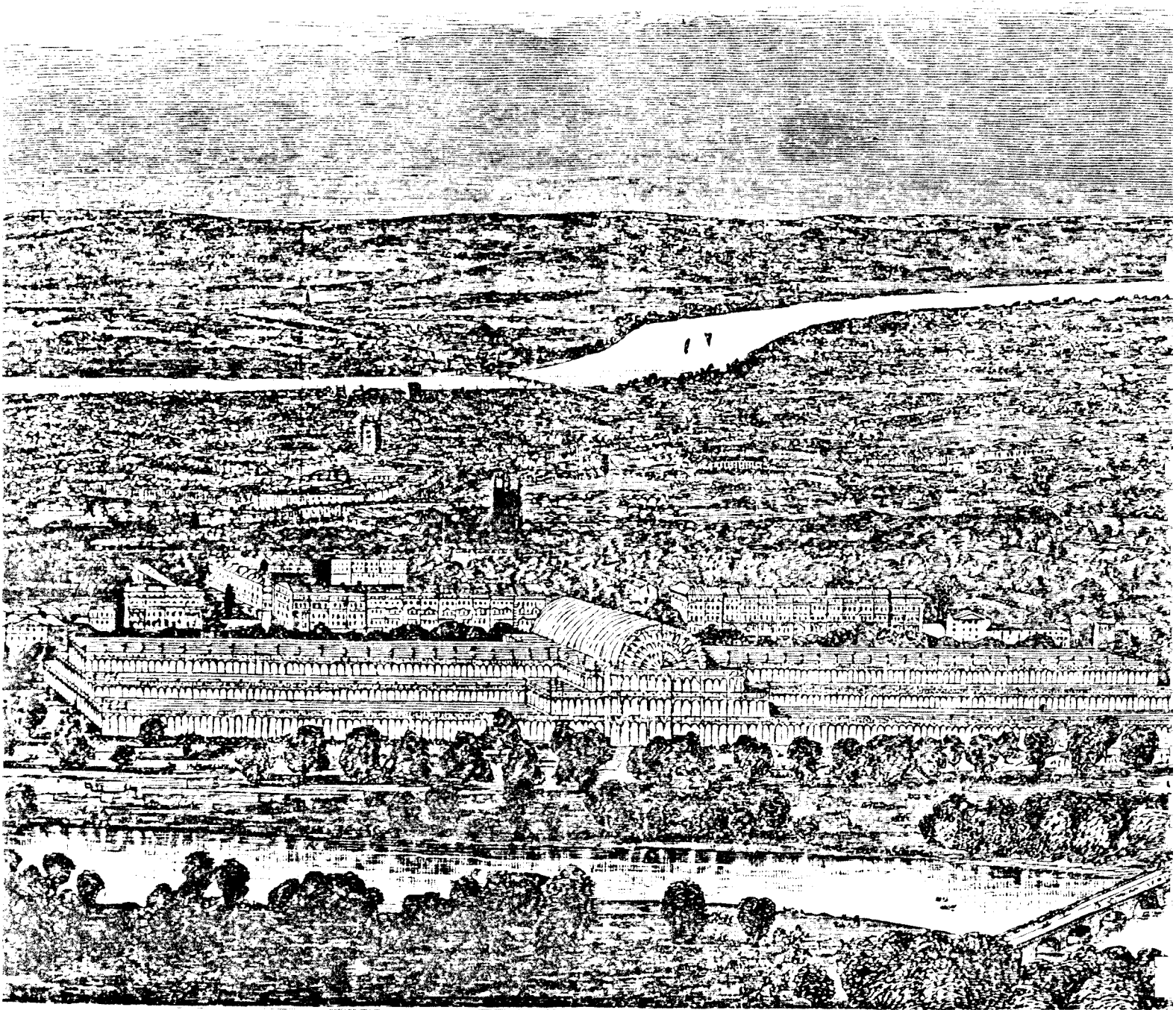
There can be no doubt that the Australian colonies are looked upon by reflecting men in Europe with intense interest, as countries destined to achieve greatness and power...when the Old World is sinking into decay. Is it presumptuous, then, to suppose that on an occasion like the present, curiosity will be on the alert to find out what symptoms of strength the infant HERCULES, while yet rocked in his cradle, has begun to put forth?²

But the committee's object seems to have been lost in the turbulence of colonial politics. Not until February 1851 - the latest date at which goods could leave Sydney to arrive in London by the May opening of the Crystal Palace - was public attention again directed to the Exhibition. It was then too late. As the Herald mourned:

¹SMH, 13.3.1850, p.2.

²SMH, 16.3.1850, p.2.

1.1 Crystal Palace, Great Exhibition, London, 1851; Leslie, Illustrated Register, p.1



The friends of the colony residing in England will be deeply mortified when they find out that no effort has been made in Sydney to send home to the great exhibition specimens of the productions and manufactures of New South Wales.³

And so it was a motley collection of items sent individually and uncoordinated that represented New South Wales. Twenty-five exhibitors showed goods: the greater part comprising samples of primary products, little of it much documented.

A mere four exhibitors showed wool, which had long been the colony's acknowledged wealth. The largest display, consisting of 132 samples, was from the Macarthur merino flock; it was awarded one of the two Exhibition medals given to New South Wales goods. Nonetheless, the Herald's Exhibition commentator (an anonymous colonist visiting Home) compared its method of presentation unfavourably with the American samples: "...certainly not so white or well-washed."⁴

Macarthur also sent samples, and at least one hogshead, of wines produced at Camden, though there was not an Exhibition category for alcoholic beverages and they were not put on display. Lengthy notes were included, however, in the Official Catalogue of the Exhibition, with details of the climate, soil and grape varieties of their manufacture. It was there noted that although of a characteristic dryness and bitterness, the wines "are very wholesome, and are extensively used by persons who have acquired a taste for them."⁵

³SMH, 11.2.1851, p.2.

⁴SMH, 11.9.1851, p.2.

⁵Official Catalogue of the Exhibition of 1851, London 1851, p. 990.

The best represented product of New South Wales was native woods, both known and unknown, in raw and worked examples. T. & W. Day, boat builders of Sussex Street showed a pair of paddles and a pair of oars, plus a collection of timber specimens. The Commissioner for Lands sent a log of "Briggalo" wood with no other comment than that it was "probably undescribed". A certain J. R. Burchett of London showed a desk and a chess board of polished Australian woods, but there is no indication whether he was their manufacturer, importer or proprietor.

The second Exhibition medal went to Benjamin & Moses of Sydney for their mutton tallow; they also showed a cask of bee wax. The Sydney Morning Herald correspondent noted the purity and clarity of the products but suggested drily "that in the warm weather they will become offensive to noses polite, and will require to be removed."⁶

Science was represented almost single-handed by Major Mitchell, the Surveyor-General. The biggest and most diverse exhibitor, he showed specimens of copper and lead ores with some geological description; a new map of New South Wales (engraved by a deaf and dumb man of the colony, taught the skill by Mitchell himself); and two of his own inventions - the "Bomarang" propellor and apparatus for testing the power and action of propellors.

Colonial ingenuity was also evidenced by the invention of Dr William Bland of Pitt Street - a device for extinguishing spontaneous combustion in ships laden with wool. Civil engineer of the Sydney

⁶SMH, 11.9.1851, p.2.

Railway Company, Francis Shields, sent models of works designed for the Sydney to Parramatta rail line - a lattice bridge of unsawn timber, a length of iron plate rail laid on ironbark sleepers, and a timber trestle frame for embankments.⁷

Colonial artistry was represented by a set of bagpipes created in Sydney by one George Sherar⁸ ("melodious looking", said the Herald's correspondent, apparently unable to put them to the test) and colonial sentiment by a pair of stockings knitted by Mrs Morrison of possum fur yarn for Prince Albert, acknowledged by the pundit as "a delicate little attention."⁹

Manufactures of the colony exhibited included a block of spermaceti; forty yards of doeskin cloth; cabbage-tree leaf hats made by prisoners in Darlinghurst Gaol (displayed as evidence of their "industry and discipline"); neats' foot oil; and tanned kangaroo skins. Of the latter the London correspondent of the Herald observed that kangaroo leather was suitable only for dry climates: "It gives like brown paper to the mud and slush ...encountered in London."¹⁰

In all, New South Wales did not make a notable display. Even the addition in September of the first samples of Australian gold could

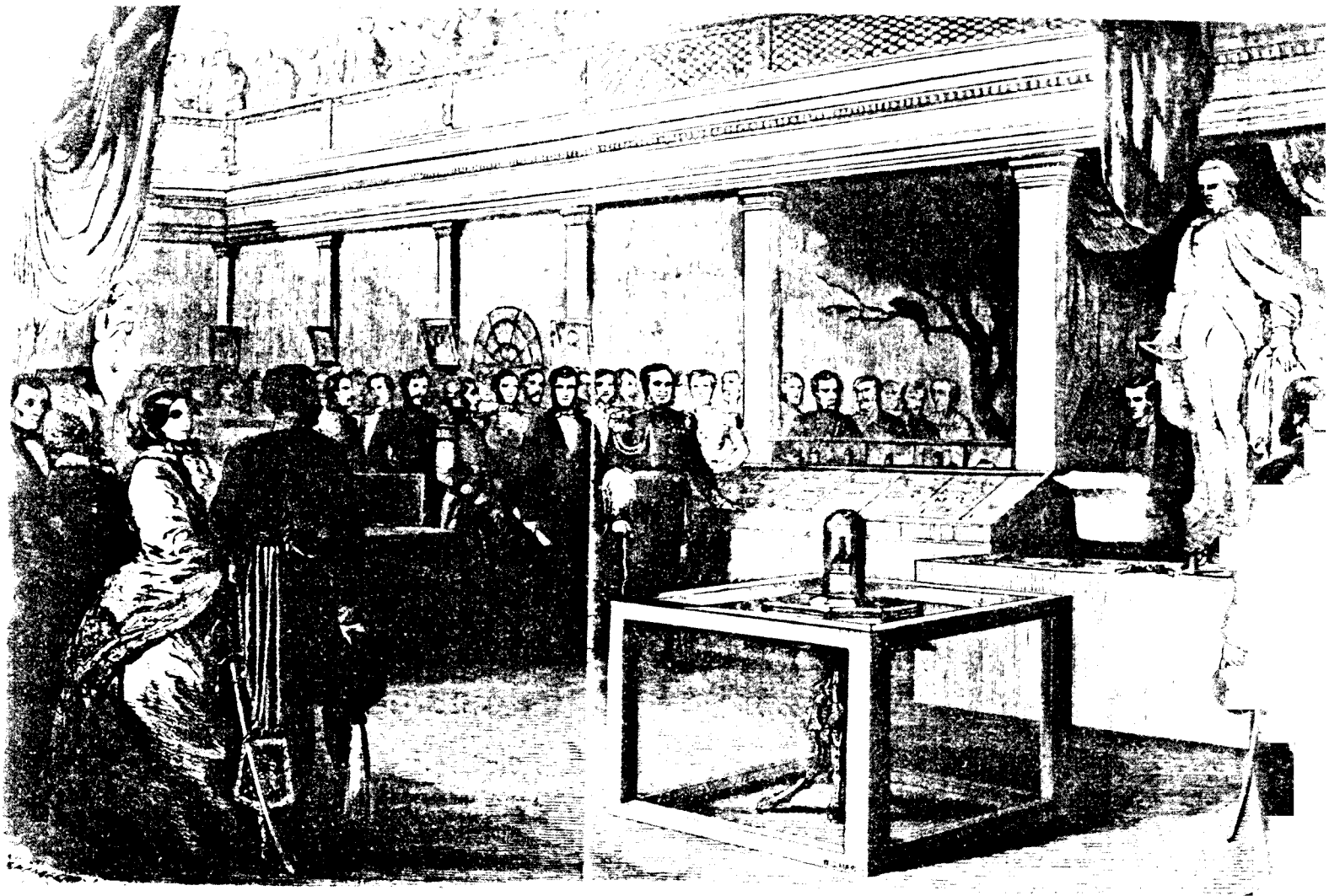
⁷The Sydney Railway Company had been formed in 1849 to construct the colony's first railways. Work on the initial project, the Sydney to Parramatta line, began in 1850 but the Company ran into difficulties in 1854 and the colonial government took over the enterprise. The Sydney-Parramatta line was inaugurated on 26 September 1855.

⁸These bagpipes survive in the collection of MAAS.

⁹SMH, 31.12.1851, p.2.

¹⁰SMH, 11.9.1851, p.2.

1.2 Exhibition at the Australian Museum, Sydney, 1854; ISN,
2.12.1854, p.409



not redeem it. It compared meagrely with the contributions of Van Diemen's Land and South Australia, and did not even use up its allocation of 40,000 square feet of exhibition space. From the British point of view the value of the colony was justly acknowledged - wool and tallow, the only prize exhibits, being far the most profitable colonial ventures. But the antipodean apotheosis foreseen by the Herald's editorialist in March 1850, was sadly unrealised.

An enormous amount of energy went into avoiding a repetition of this debacle at the next great international exhibition. Announced in 1853, the first Exposition Universelle was to be held in Paris, opening in May 1855. In New South Wales a Commission was established in January 1854 and funded with 3000 pounds to collect, mount and despatch exhibits from the colony.

Hoping to drum up public support the Chairman, Chief Justice Sir Alfred Stephen, proposed that the goods should be shown in a mini-exhibition in the brand new Museum before being shipped off to Paris, and that there they should compete for the colony's first local exhibition medals. The Commissioners set out with bold enthusiasm. Their circular of February 1854 trumpeted the message:

No meagre and ill-assorted collection, like that contributed by the colony to the exhibition of London, shall be presented to the French nation as an adequate illustration of the natural and industrial resources of this country.¹¹

Nonetheless, when the show opened in the Museum on 14 November 1854 the Herald noted that it had been "literally almost dragged

¹¹ Untitled flyer, ML pamphlet collection, "NSW Commissions".

together, on account of the apathy of private persons."¹²

It comprised more than three hundred exhibits in five categories: animal, vegetable, mineral, manufactured and artistic products. Such as the Exhibition is," said Sir Alfred Stephen, making the best of it at the opening, "it has the merit of being...what it was intended to be: one of colonial productions exclusively"¹³ and he was speaking of a remarkably diverse collection.

The centrepiece of the show was the first comprehensive and scientifically documented collection of native timbers. Collected north of Sydney by Dr Charles Moore of the Botanic Gardens, and south by William Macarthur of Camden, it consisted of specimen slabs and logs, descriptions, botanical classifications and some notes on the uses of the woods. It was published locally in the Catalogue of the natural and industrial products of New South Wales¹⁴ and for the Paris Exposition as Bois indigènes de différents districts de cette colonie.¹⁵

Animal products included a sheaf of black swan quills, kangaroo skin boots, articles of tortoise shell, pearls from Moreton Bay, two live native bee hives, and preserved meats from three factories

¹²SMH, 15.11.1854, p.4.

¹³NSW Commissioners, Catalogue of the natural and industrial products of NSW, exhibited in the Australian Museum by the Paris Commissioners, Sydney 1854, p.5.

¹⁴sydney 1854.

¹⁵paris 1855.

-Dangar from the Hunter, Buchan of Pymont, and Stevens of Brisbane. There was not a large display of wool, for the shearing was still under way, but a handsome and representative collection was taken to Paris.

Vegetable products came both raw and worked. There were samples of wheat, maize and cotton, and their milled products, flour and fibre. In the culinary line there were hibiscus jam, condensed native fig juice and "Australian Sauce" prepared from colonial products only. Half a dozen vigneron showed wines, among them, "Irrawang red" by James King, colonial champagne from the North Shore and riesling and muscat from Camden.

Mineral products were dominated by a collection of gold specimens assembled by the Commissioners with a special government grant of 5,000 pounds. It represented the richest strikes in New South Wales. The Rev. W. B. Clarke showed his collection of fossils and minerals and contributed several monographs on commercial mineral deposits in the colony. A new venture was represented by rich samples of iron ore from the Fitzroy mine at Mittagong.

Among the manufactures were furniture by Lenihan, Woolley, Murray and Hagen; earthenware and pottery by James King¹⁶ and Thomas Field; and bagpipes by George Sherar.¹⁷ Major Mitchell showed his "Bomarang"

¹⁶These must have been leftovers, for King's Irrawang Pottery closed in 1851.

¹⁷The same ones? MAAS holds two sets of bagpipes by George Sherar: one of lignum vitae made in 1840 and one of tulip wood made in 1850, both with airbags of tanned goatskin. The latter is the Exhibition set.

propellor, and there were models of dry docks on Cockatoo Island and at Darling Harbour. A working model of a boiling down works was noted as an advance in technology, but rather belated, given the new value since the gold rushes of animals as meat.

All branches of the arts were represented: sketches by Adelaide Ironside; daguerrotypes; the life-size model for a statue of Captain Cook by the English sculptor W. G. Nicholls; a statuette in gold of a miner by Hunter Street jeweller, Julius Hogarth; gold jewellery and presentation cups decorated with Australian motifs; and two polkas composed in Sydney by one George Strong. The native culture was acknowledged too, with a small collection of aboriginal implements and weavings. The Rev. Lancelot Threlkeld displayed his grammar of the language of the Awabakal people of Lake Macquarie.¹⁸

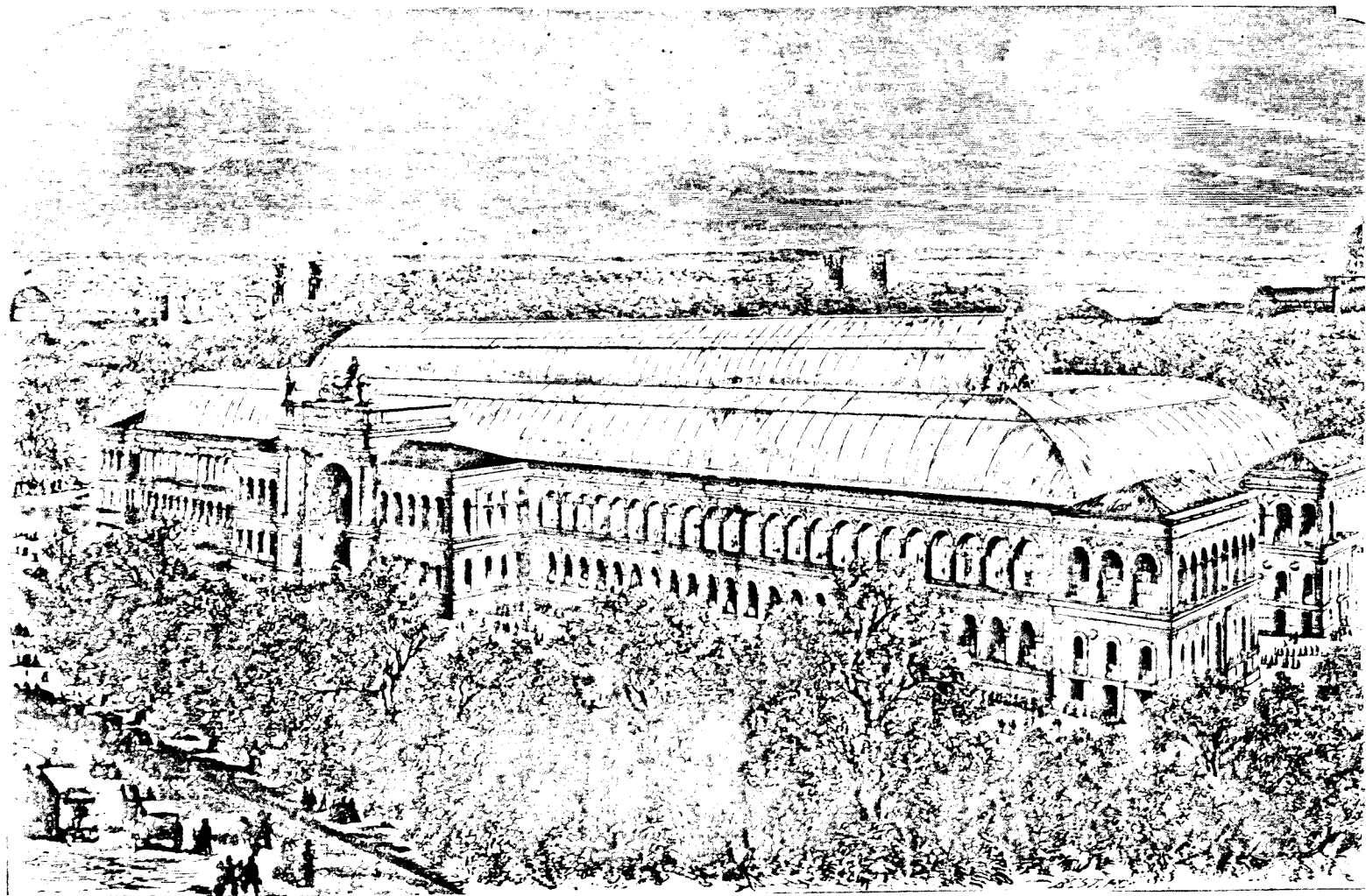
The most poignant exhibit was a piece of charred bark, with a partially obliterated inscription. Recently discovered, it was the headstone of Le Receveur, the naturalist who had accompanied La Perouse, but died at Botany Bay. It was to be returned "to the gallant nation to which the deceased belonged",¹⁹ to be displayed in the La Perouse Museum.

The display embarked for Paris in February 1855, accompanied by William Macarthur as Commissioner for New South Wales. He arrived in Paris to find the Exposition in a frenzy of unreadiness. The main

¹⁸Published in 1834.

¹⁹Sir Alfred Stephen's speech, in NSW Commissioners, Catalogue, p.4.

1.3 Palais de l'Industrie, Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1855;
Allwood, The Great Exhibitions, p.32



building, the Palais de l'Industrie, was barely completed; the second hall, the Annexe, was still under construction; and other exhibition halls were not even begun. The British colonies had been allocated to the Annexe, but the precise distribution of space was in the hands of the British Commissioners, and they neither knew nor cared where each colony should set itself up. "Oh, we understand none of your colonial distinctions here; we call it all South Australia",²⁰ explained an official in response to Macarthur's complaint that the three mainland colonies had been allotted to share a meagre corner in a dim gallery. The error was partially redeemed by a last minute transfer of the choicest colonial goods to a prominent and desirable position on a landing of the Palais de l'Industrie.

Here the New South Wales gold shone in display cabinets made in Paris of decorative woods extracted from the collection of native timbers. The wheat samples, though ravaged by weevils, were judged very fine, and the wools were acclaimed. The colonial wines were received more in astonishment than admiration, but were judged in quality as between those of Madeira and those of the Rhone country. They were commanded to the tables of the emperors of Austria and France, and it was predicted that Australia could become a great wine-making nation.

In November 1855 the Sydney Morning Herald summed up the New South Wales showing and found it satisfactory.

Our wine is equal to Madeira, and better than the ordinary wines of Europe; our wool surpasses the produce of Germany, and has realised the old Merino type; our wheat (including Tasmanian in the description) if not the first, is the second in quality. Of

²⁰SMH, 17.8.1855, p.2.

our gold nothing need be said.²¹

The editor concluded:

The colony has great reason to rejoice that this portion of the British dominions is universally admitted, and that so long as a ship shall run between the British Channel and Australia, the effect of this Exhibition shall never totally cease.²²

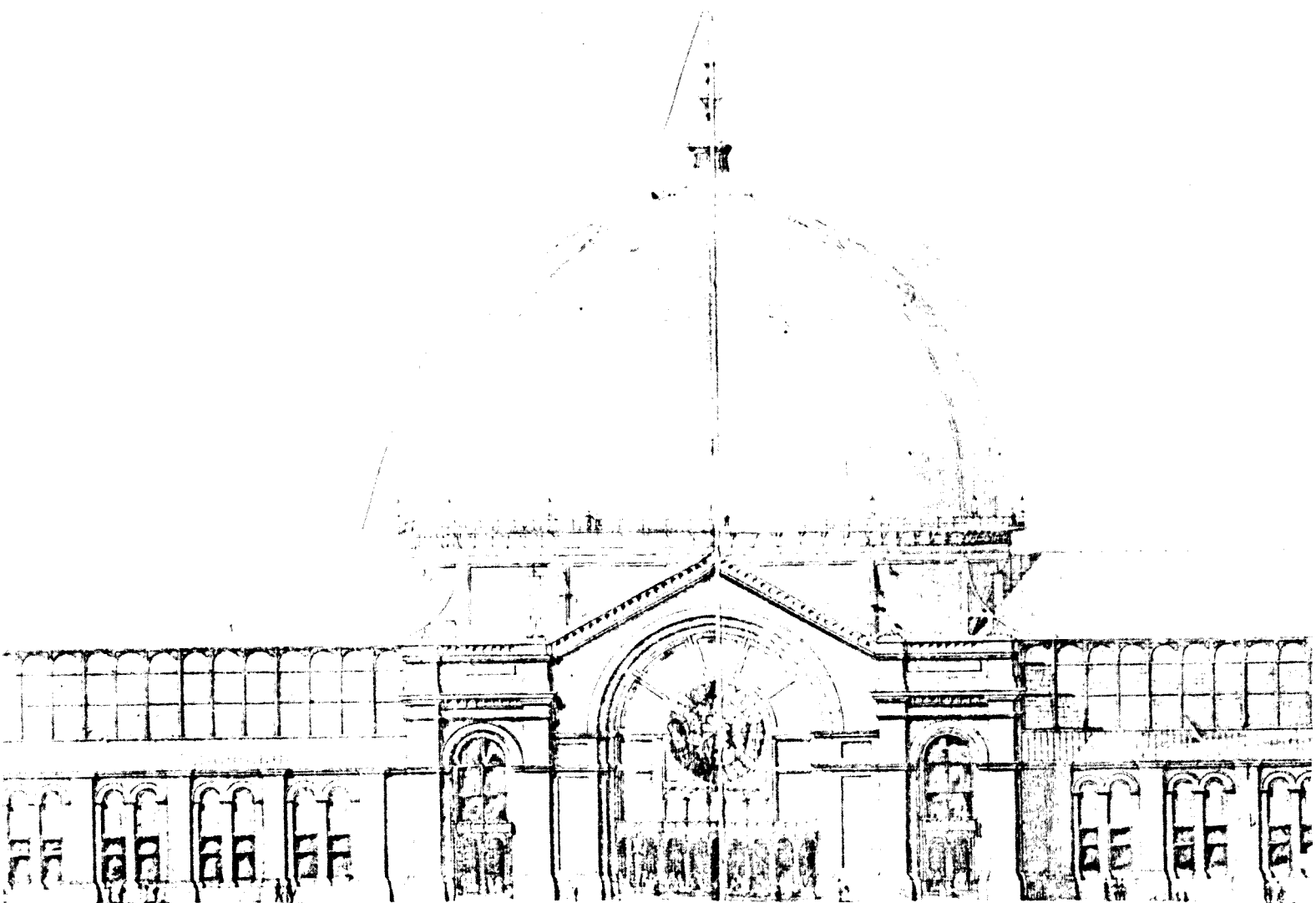
Planning began for Britain's second decennial international exhibition in 1860, but it did not open until May 1862. It lacked the stimulus of novelty, inspired design, even opposition, and was dampened first by the hostilities of the American Civil War, and second by the death of Prince Albert. Nonetheless, the international response was enthusiastic and the International Exhibition, London, 1862, promised fair to be the biggest, bravest show yet.

In Sydney there was by now a tacitly established procedure for organising colonial representation. Accordingly the good citizens of the Agricultural Society formed a committee, were officially confirmed as a Commission, received a government subsidy and called on the public for exhibits. Two Commissioners to represent New South Wales in London were appointed - Sir Daniel Cooper, part-time Agent-General of the colony and Edward Hamilton, a pastoralist patriarch retiring "Home". By great luck and the hard-working good offices of the former New South Wales secured a plum position in the Exhibition building, on the northern side of the east-end dome.

²¹SMH, 27.11.1855, p.4.

²²Ibid.

1.4 Exhibition Building, International Exhibition of 1862, London,
1862; Allwood, The Great Exhibitions, p.36



The display was prosperously promising. At the mouth of the New South Wales court was a small but elegant case of gold nuggets, the biggest of which, a handsome lump of 80 ounces, was occasionally allowed out of the glass to be fingered by delighted visitors. Behind the raw gold was a small show of the worked product, mainly presentation pieces such as a group of aborigines and a heraldic kangaroo and emu pair, both by Julius Hogarth, who was awarded an Exhibition medal and cited for "work creditable to the colony."²³ A scientific collection of samples from every gold-field in the colony stood behind. Prepared by the Mint in Sydney, it was accompanied by production statistics, maps and geological cross-sections and a full-scale replica of a typical gold-bearing stratum. There was also an intricate model of the Sofala field in action. (It was a glittering display, but it was rather overshadowed by the aggressive showmanship of the Victorian contribution, a 70 foot obelisk of gold-leafed canvas, representing that colony's gold exports in the last ten years.)

To the right of the entrance were the standard agricultural products - wheat, maize, sugar, tobacco and so forth. Newly prominent on account of the Civil War were five samples of cotton, one of which (grown by J. B. Nowlan on the Hunter River) was judged the finest in the entire Exhibition. Interest in it was intense, for the mills of Lancashire had been forced to a ruinous halt for lack of the raw material. Opposite the vegetable goods was a generous display of the New South Wales staple, fine merino wool, together with bolts and gar-

²³Reports of the juries, London 1863, Class 33.

ments made of it in Britain. It was accompanied by the first exhibited clip of a hopeful new textile industry - llama and alpaca wool.

A herd of these animals had been smuggled out of Peru and introduced by Charles Ledger in 1859, and by 1862 he reckoned them so successfully acclimatised that he envisaged a New South Wales llama-alpaca population of nine million within twenty years. To demonstrate his point seven animals had been extracted from the flock ("at the cost of actual tears from their enthusiastic protector, who has nursed them like his children", embroidered a supporter)²⁴ and stuffed and mounted in a large glass case at the back of the court. They actually comprised one llama, one alpaca, four crossbreds (previously thought biologically impossible) and an indeterminate lamb. Sheer exoticism made them famously popular, but their economic purpose was not forgotten. They were accompanied by a tub of alpaca tallow and a flask of llama pomade, and for these, the wool and the spirit of bold enterprises, Ledger received an Exhibition medal.²⁵

At the back of the court were wines, from the Macarthurs, Lindeman and five other vigneron; three collections of native wood specimens; and a functional display of saddlery and leather products. A pair of kangaroo hide boots was particularly noticed in a review of the New South Wales court in The Times: "...such excellent workmanship that one of the jurors - a London tradesman of great weight in such matters - said of them, 'I call these boots with brains in them!'"²⁶

²⁴In a letter quoted in the Empire, 18.8.1862.

²⁵Ledger's medals are now in the Mitchell Library.

²⁶The Times, 5.6.1862.

The court was hung with antipodean art - notably Adelaide Ironside's Marriage at Cana of Gallilee²⁷ and several watercolours by Conrad Martens - and collections of photographs.²⁸ Evidence of a belated anthropological interest in the indigenous people of the colony, one of these was a portfolio of Aboriginal portraits, by Edward Dalton. Examples of colonial cabinetwork were scattered throughout the court - a table sliced from a single cedar root; a cedar font carved by Edmund Blacket, a pair of fine cedar doors and several carved picture frames. All the senses of the colony were available to the visitor, even that of smell - a collection of essences of native flowers tweaked the hearts of expatriates and stirred those of Londoners.

Seventy seven medals were awarded to New South Wales exhibitors, and forty-six honorable mentions, the greatest number of all the British colonies bar India. It was New South Wales' most innovative display yet, but it was a show in which the brave new experiments, such as the cotton and the alpacas, were not backed up by commercial production. Australian enterprise was more concerted in the south; in 1865 Victoria invited contributors to its Intercolonial Exhibition to be held the next year in Melbourne.

New South Wales was ungraciously slow to respond, with the thin excuse that as a Commission had already been appointed to collect for

²⁷ painted in Rome in 1861; now hanging in St. Paul's College, University of Sydney.

²⁸ Jolly & Co; Freeman Bros; Blackwood & Goodes; Dalton; Plomely; Jenner (Parramatta); F.B. Gale (Queanbeyan).

1.5 Exhibition Building, Intercolonial Exhibition, Melbourne, 1866;
Illustrated Melbourne Post, 20.9.1866, p.341



the next Paris Exposition Universelle (to be held in 1867) Parliament would be reluctant to make a second exhibition grant. Indeed, on account of obstruction by "a few politically bilious individuals"²⁹ it seemed a month before the opening in October 1866 that the senior colony would not be represented at all. At the eleventh hour, however, the Commissioners for the Paris show were deputed to collect also for Melbourne. In consequence they despatched a selection of goods already assembled for Paris - and brusquely extracted them before the Intercolonial Exhibition closed to send them on to France.

The Exhibition was Melbourne's third, but it was the first to invite representation from all the Australian colonies and from the Pacific area - New Zealand, New Caledonia, the Dutch East Indies and Mauritius also took part. A new Exhibition Building was constructed on the corner of Swanston and Latrobe Streets to accommodate the goods from nearly three thousand exhibitors. It comprised a machinery shed, a large hall divided into colonial courts and a fancy "Rotunda" hall in which the most splendid exhibits, such as the huge Victorian gold trophy, were on show and where the elegant ladies and gentlemen of Melbourne took their afternoon promenade.

There were 272 New South Wales exhibitors, showing a fair repertoire of mineral, agricultural, mechanical and decorative products. But there was a notable absence of gold - not a grain nor a nugget found north of the Murray was on display. Victoria, on the other

²⁹Official Record of the Melbourne Intercolonial Exhibition, Melbourne 1867, p. xxxvi.

1.6 NSW court, Intercolonial Exhibition, Melbourne, 1866; ISN,
15.12.1866, p.85



hand, mounted an ostentatious exhibit of its wealth and glory in the form of a pyramid even bigger than the scene-stealer at London in 1862.

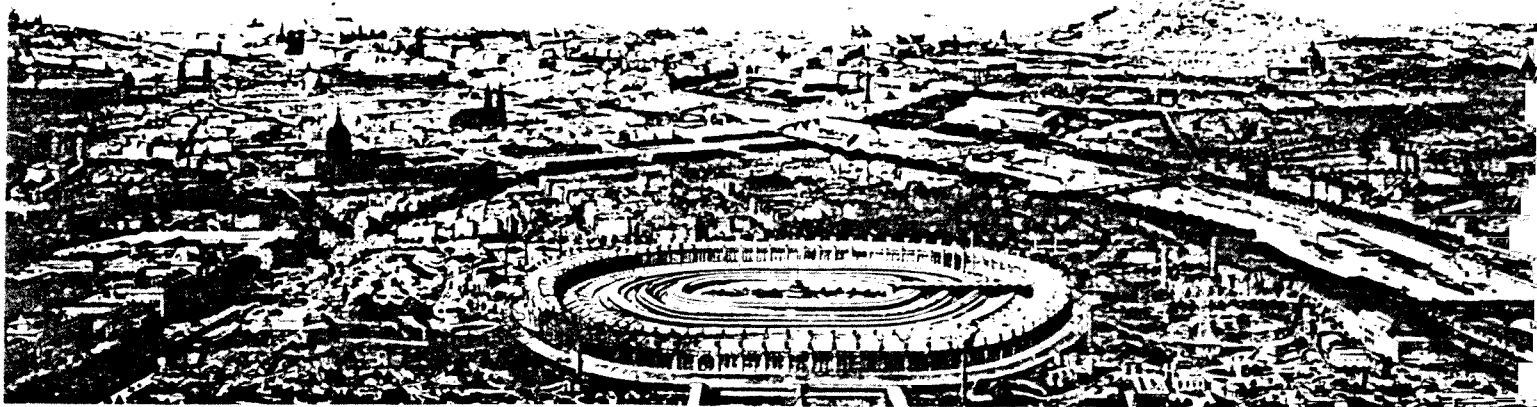
The bulk of the New South Wales display was agricultural and horticultural products. Besides the special Paris-bound trophies of wool and wheat collected by the New South Wales Commissioners there was a large volume of goods collected in country areas by local committees. One such came from the Clarence River district, energetically organised by T. Bawden, J.P., Mayor of Grafton, who himself was nearly the biggest single New South Wales exhibitor.

New South Wales industry came mainly from the cities. There was pottery from Field, Goodlet & Smith, and Welham of Newcastle; ironmongery including a large cast Royal coat-of-arms from Russell & Co.;³⁰ boots, belts, shoes and saddlery, among it a smart side-saddle to be presented to the Princess of Wales; and several silver-mounted emu eggs. Sir William Macarthur showed a bamboo walking stick grown by himself, and olives, capers and preserves from Camden. A Dr Berncastle displayed a tin box containing antidotes for snake bites, and a Mr O'Neil sent a cabinet of scented native woods full of perfumes extracted from native flowers - wattle, grass-tree, frangipanni - and the optimistic new "New South Wales and Victoria United" perfume.

At its conclusion in February 1867 the show was judged as "a fair

³⁰Now in the Engineering Library, University of Sydney

1.7 Palais de l'Industrie, Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1867;
Allwood, The Great Exhibitions, p.43



exponent of our ... intercolonial resources",³¹ with the interesting explanation of initial lethargy among potential exhibitors as due to the restricted competition among local enterprises.³² New South Wales was awarded eighty medals, but it was not a heartfelt or truly representative exhibit. Despite the oratory of "sisterly bonds" and "common purposes" among the participating colonies it is hard to avoid concluding that the elder colonial sister felt pipped to the post of Australian prestige by the enterprise of its recently-independent sibling.

New South Wales was determined to make an impressive show at the second Paris Exposition Universelle, and it did. One of the biggest British colonial exhibits, it comprised a well-balanced collection of agricultural staples, minerals and manufactures. The Palais de l'Exposition, on the right bank of the Seine near the Pont d'Iéna, was grandly planned to symbolise the world in the form of an oval hall of concentric aisles, divided by a huge equatorial passage. Geographically apt, the New South Wales court was on the outermost circle in an aisle of British colonies.

Here was shown the wealth of New South Wales. Twenty-seven exhibitors showed bales of wool from as far south, west and north as Goulburn, Mudgee and Gwydir. Coloured alpaca wools, possum fur, kangaroo and platypus skins and black swansdown further exemplified the animal textiles available to the colony. The seas yielded sponges

³¹Official Record, p.xxiv.

³²Ibid., p.ix.

from Nowra and whales' teeth from the Southern Ocean. Vegetable products included acacia tan-bark, ti-tree bark for paper-making, native apple tree juice used as a varnish and palm-leaf brooms, "more durable than the millet brooms of America, and their cheapness entitles them to consideration"³³ which virtues won them a bronze Exhibition medal. Thirty-six wine growers exhibited their products, five of them obtaining bronze medals, and one - a Wyndham red - a silver. The industrious ladies of Sydney showed bottled preserves in great number. The fruit of the colony thus evidenced were olives, peaches, mulberries, apricots, quinces, oranges and guavas. Maize, barley, wheat and cotton completed the tally of agricultural products on show.

The black coal of the Sydney basin formed the biggest component of the mineralogical section of the exhibit, followed by some 1200 ounces of gold. This comprised specimens from every major field in the country, assembled by the Commissioners; it was awarded New South Wales' only gold medal. There were also ores and a few ingots of copper, iron, tin, silver and lead.

The range of manufactures was extensive. There were yards of tweeds made in Sydney; dozens of pairs of boots for both sexes and all occasions; and intimate articles knitted of spun possum fur. The comfortable arts were supplied with a myall and silver flute, Hunter River tobacco and bush flowers modelled in wax. A parure of gold jewellery was prepared to the order of the Commissioners by Quist of

³³Catalogue of the natural and industrial products of NSW, Sydney 1867, p.16.

Hunter Street, with "representations emblematical of New South Wales";³⁴ it was rewarded with a bronze medal. The silversmith's art rehatched emu eggs in the forms of ink-wells, vases and a miniature clock tower, "ornamented with frosted silver-grapes and leaves, kangaroos and emus, opossums, flying squirrels, a laughing jackass and an Aboriginal surmounting a bouquet of wild bush flowers"³⁵ by Veyret and Delarue.

A wide range of colonial publications was on show, both as technical examples of printing and binding, and as evidence of antipodean culture. The centrepiece of the latter was The Poets and prose writers of NSW, compiled by George Barton at the request of the Commissioners. An anthology of fourteen writers (of whom only Henry Kendall remains read today), it also served the rather scurrilous purpose of rebutting an unfavourable review in the Sydney Morning Herald of Barton's earlier volume, Literature in NSW; he hoped "particularly (to) call the attention of foreign reviewers"³⁶ and he damned the Herald for never having possessed "the slightest reputation for literary ability", expatiating upon its popular title, Grannie, which, he pointed out "typifies mental weakness".³⁷

The most popular and exotic exhibit after the gold was a large collection of Aboriginal artefacts. Dictionaries of three languages,

³⁴Ibid., p.26.

³⁵Ibid., p.28.

³⁶G.B. Barton, The Poets and prose writers of NSW, Sydney 1866, p.viii.

³⁷Ibid., p.ix.

photographs and some anthropological notes accompanied it, but Parisian interest was tempted more by the thrilling barbarism thus evidenced than by scientific curiosity. "Real monsters, half-beasts, almost as hideous as the gorillas", gloated a report in L'Univers Illustré³⁸ which concluded with the pious story of Cathérine. She was an Aboriginal taken to France as an infant, where she learned French, German, English and the Catechism so fluently that she was jealously named by her companions 'Clever Monkey'. She died aged fourteen, saying, 'Goodbye. In heaven we shall all be white and beautiful - the Clever Monkey like the rest.'³⁹

In toto, NSW products were awarded one gold, one silver and twenty six bronze medals, though there was considerable (and international) bitterness over the distribution of prizes. Edward Montefiore, one of the three NSW Commissioners who went to Paris, noted that the wool and the leather goods received much praise but no official award; still, he concluded that the international publicity engendered by exposure at Paris was worthwhile in itself.⁴⁰

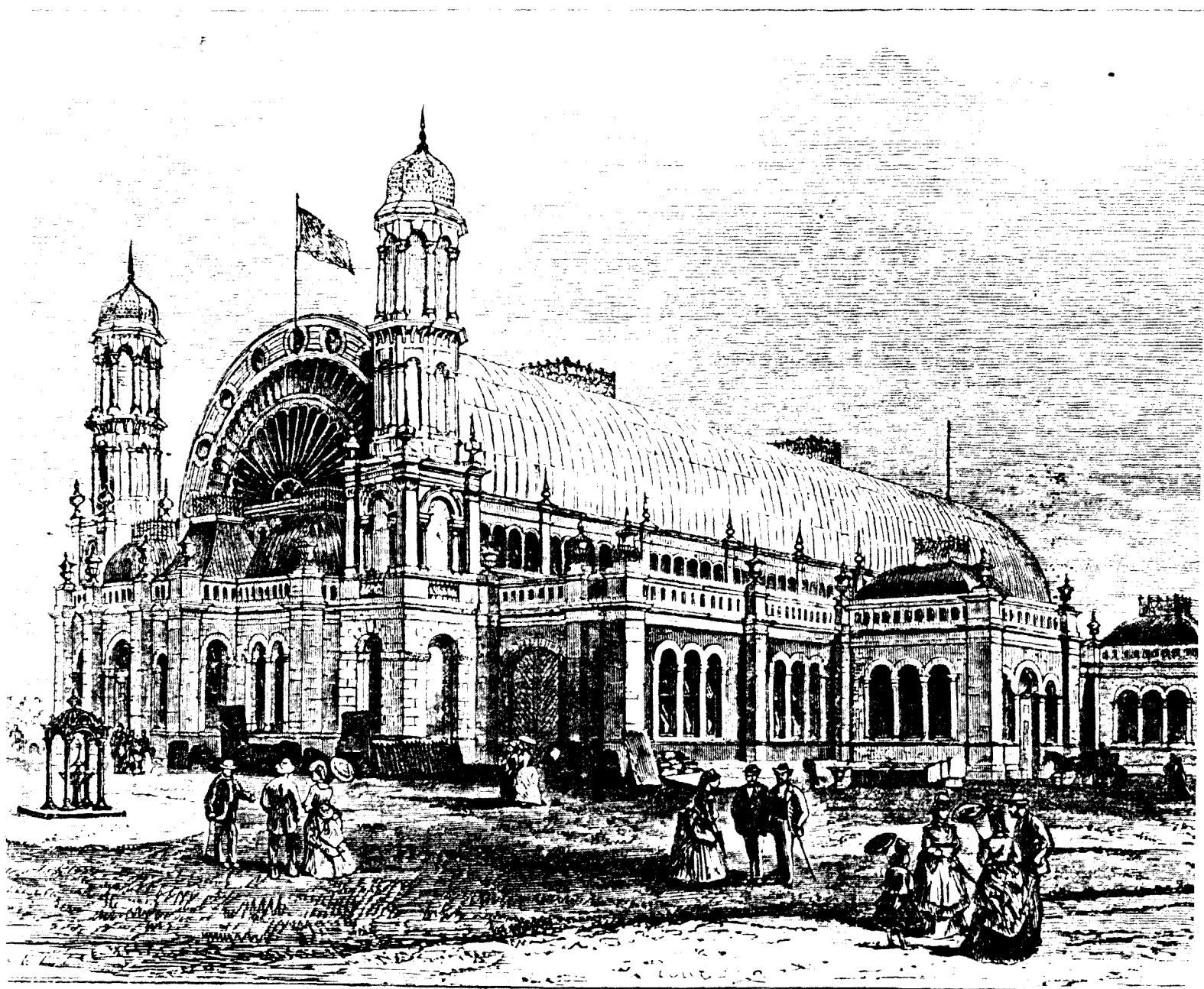
Meanwhile in Sydney the Agricultural Society was on the point of self-extinction when it was revived by its new secretary, Jules Joubert. An adventurer and entrepreneur of Angoumois origin, Joubert proposed a local exhibition to repair the Society's moribund standing. This took place in August 1867, with manufactures and arts in

³⁸Quoted in SMH, 15.8.1867, p.5.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid.

1.8 Prince Alfred Park Exhibition Building, Metropolitan
Intercolonial Exhibition, Sydney, 1870; ILN, 23.11.1872, p.484



Cleveland St school and livestock in specially constructed pens in Prince Alfred Park nearby; it lasted four days and was immensely successful. A second exhibition was held there in 1868 and a third in 1869, at which some other Australian and Pacific colonies appeared. In this year great plans were laid for 1870, the centenary of Cook's claiming the east coast of Australia for Britain.

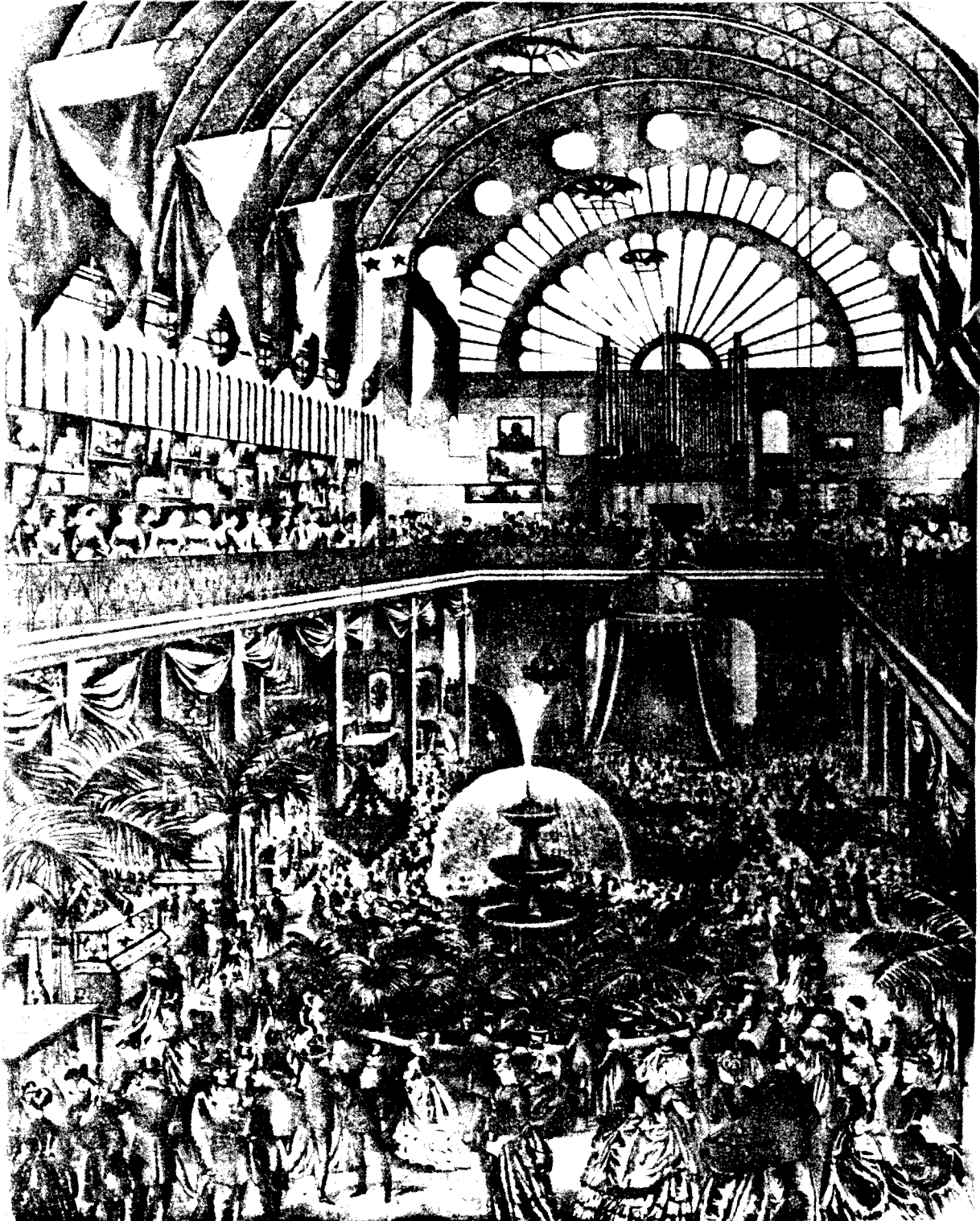
The colonial government granted the Agricultural Society 3000 pounds towards the "Metropolitan Intercolonial Exhibition in Commemoration of the First Landing of Captain Cook in Australia". Having no permanent exhibition facilities the Society negotiated with the Corporation of the City of Sydney for an exhibition hall to be built by the city and leased to the Society.

Designed by the City Engineer, Edward Bell, it was an impressive construction of wood, bricks, iron and glass, roofed by an immense corrugated iron barrel vault and lit at either end by vast semi-circular windows. The main portal at the south end was flanked by a pair of baroque octagonal towers crowned with Mughal cupolas, which prompted the comment that the building was "somewhat Saracenic in character."⁴¹

The foyer was hung with portraits of the governors of NSW. From here the eye gazed into the body of the exhibition hall across the central fountain in a bower of ferns to the opposite end where the official ~~dais~~ stood, a tented drapery of blue and brown damask drawn
dais

⁴¹The Industrial Progress of NSW, being a report of the Intercolonial Exhibition of 1870 at Sydney, Sydney 1871, p.9.

1.9 Prince Alfred Park Exhibition Building, Metropolitan Intercolonial Exhibition, Sydney, 1870; ISN, 9.9.1870



back with golden cords and tassels. A gallery fifteen feet wide encircled the hall at the height of the jets of the fountain. From below, the inside roof seemed an intricate tracery of cobwebby iron; this and the other iron elements of the building were painted red, drab, yellow and blue. Potted plants hung in baskets from the roof and above them depended seven vast circular gasoliers. The bare bones of the structure were garlanded with flags and scutcheons and set about with palms in tubs - "The tout ensemble of the interior is really magnificent", concluded the Herald.⁴²

Because construction had been dogged by unprecedented rain the Exhibition opened a fortnight later than planned, on 30 August 1870. But from that point on,

Heaven smiled on the event, and as the Imperial flag was unfurled from the Pavilion...and crowds of gay visitors thronged the stately terraces, and expressions of unqualified approbation were bestowed upon the labour of months, the labourers forgot their toil and weariness in the joy which pertaineth to accomplishments which have reached the final stage.⁴³

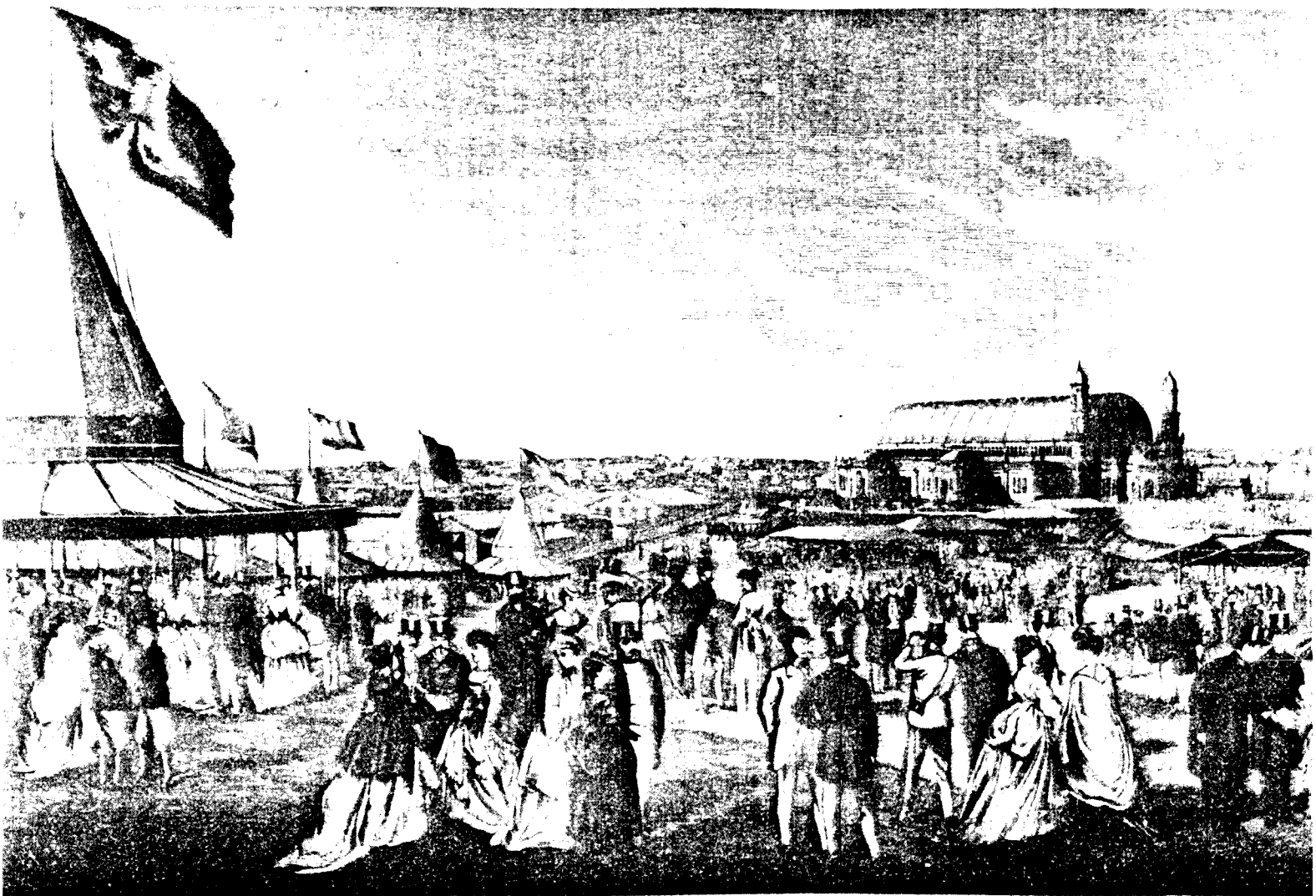
A public holiday was declared and crowds of Sydney-siders thronged to see the Governor, Lord Belmore, piped in to pronounce the Exhibition open.

The show ran for a month. The Prince of Wales, touring the world with the Royal Navy, visited and lent his baby elephant, Jung, to the festivities. An intrepid balloonist attempted an ascent, but his balloon was shredded by strong winds before it left the ground. On

⁴²SMH, 7.9.1870, p.5.

⁴³The Industrial Progress, p.11.

1.10 Exhibition Grounds, Metropolitan Intercolonial Exhibition, Sydney, 1870; ISN, 6.9.1870



terra firma, a steam-driven road engine⁴⁴ careered about the Park at six miles an hour, taking children for joyrides. It cost a shilling to get in on Saturdays, and a roast beef sandwich and a glass of ale cost fourpence.

Half the population of the colony visited the Exhibition. They saw intricate displays of the primary products of NSW; sheds and rings full of prize livestock; the biggest collection of fine art ever gathered in the antipodes;⁴⁵ and an impressive array of manufactures. Novelties among these included a pair of Sydney-built locomotives and three carriages;⁴⁶ a local sewing machine,⁴⁷ which at 9 pounds was competitively priced in relation to the large number of imported machines on show; and a range of fencing tools and materials. Local pottery, leatherwork, woollen cloth, tallow, soap, furniture, paper, oil, kerosene and galvanized iron were also on show.

⁴⁴This was the Patent Road Steamer made by R.W. Thompson of Scotland; it was owned and exhibited by G.E. Dalrymple of Brisbane.

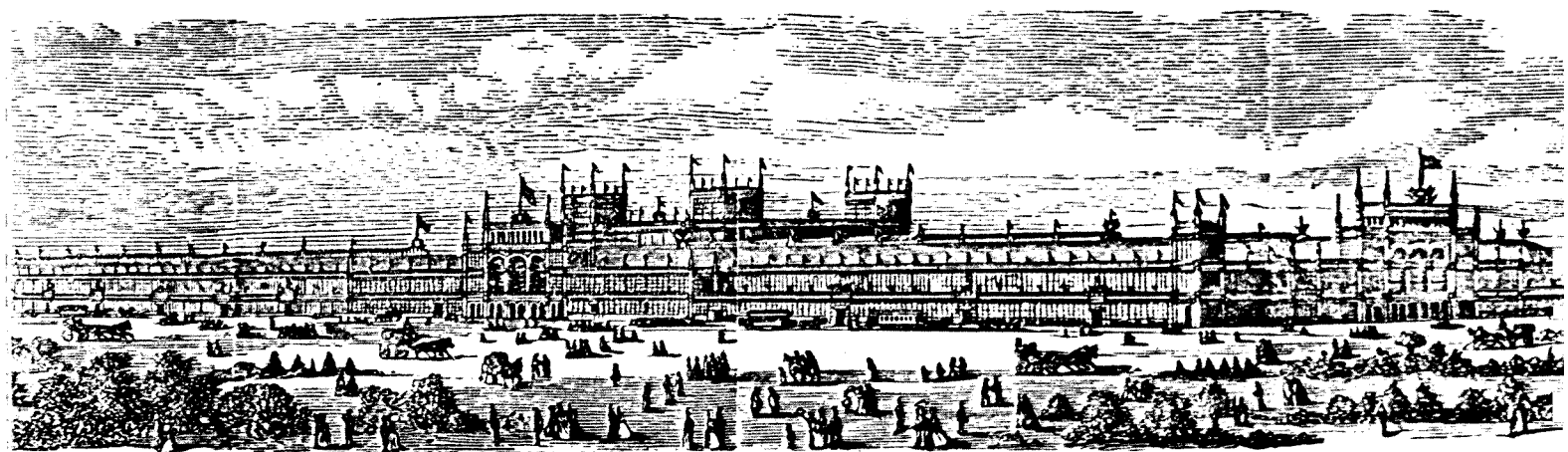
⁴⁵In the competitive division, Eugen von Guérard showed no less than eleven canvases; Gerard Krefft of the Australian Museum showed animal paintings; Eccleston du Faur showed a fruit piece; Louisa Meredith showed flower studies; and ladies of Sydney showed art-class copies of Martens and Terry originals.

In the non-competitive division the bourgeoisie of Sydney showed their Old Master Copies, in predictable taste: Leonardo, Raphael, Titian, Rembrandt, Correggio, Dolci, Guido (Reni), del Sarto, Murillo, etc.

⁴⁶Locomotive engines manufactured by the Government Railway Workshops and by Mort & Co's Works - respectively the first and second colonial-manufactured locos. They came into service in June and September, 1870. The carriages were a first class ("specially designed for night travelling, having a compartment for ladies as well as a general saloon and smoking room", The Industrial Progress, p.112) and two second class, one open and one enclosed; they were made by Russell & Co's Sydney Foundry. Russell's had been making rolling stock for the railways for over 15 years.

⁴⁷Made by Robert Miller of Crown Street.

1.11 Main Exhibition Building, Centennial International Exposition, Philadelphia, 1876; Leslie, Illustrated Register, p.27



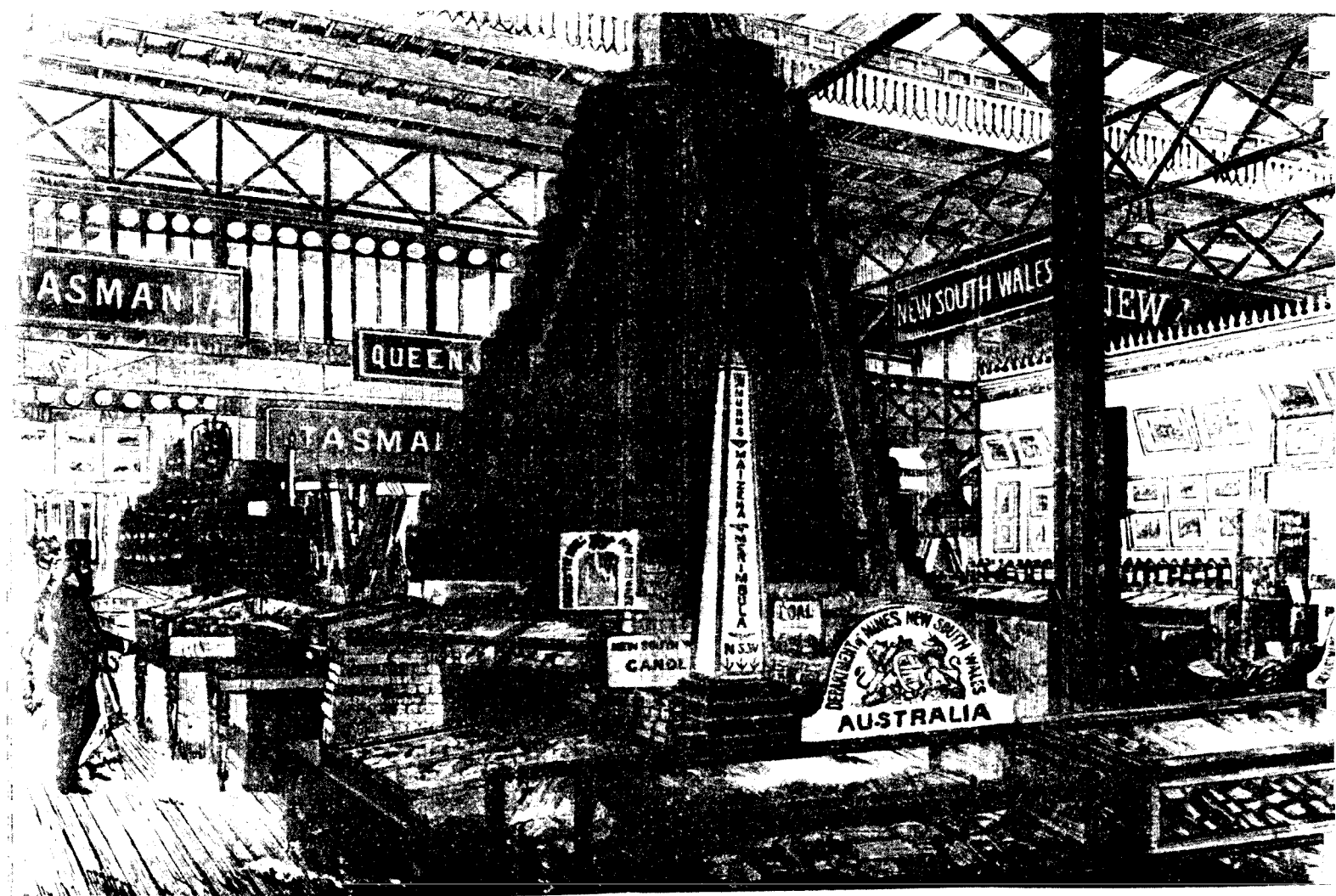
Nine tenths of the exhibits came from NSW and the bulk of the remainder from Victoria, despite a repeat of the graceless reluctance to cooperate that marked intercolonial relations. Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and New Caledonia were represented; New Zealand declined the invitation and Western Australia's response was too late to be included. Nonetheless, the contacts generated by the competition were judged to have stimulated business even before the show closed. "It has been to this colony what the Great Exhibition of 1851 was to England", proclaimed the Sydney Morning Herald.⁴⁸

Goods from the Intercolonial Exhibition went on to London to the Exhibition of Manufactures of 1871, but the new British scheme of annual thematic exhibitions lacked glamour and significance, and never attained the memorable status of its great predecessors. The next big international exhibition in which NSW participated was to be the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876.

Marking the centenary of American independence the Exposition was the biggest and most lavish international exhibition yet staged. It was held in Philadelphia - the site of the proclamation of the Declaration of Independence - in five immense halls. The Main Exhibition Building was more consciously than usual a repetition of the original Crystal Palace, though twice the size of the prototype. Britain occupied half the Main Building, and the Australian colonies took up a third of the area devoted to the Empire.

⁴⁸SMH, 7.10.1870, p.6.

1.12 NSW court, Centennial International Exposition, Philadelphia, 1876; ISN, 12.10.1876, p.12



As usual, the focus of the New South Wales display was a very large collection of mineral specimens, with a huge gilt cube representing the 30½ million pounds worth of gold extracted to that date as its centrepiece. There were ores of copper, tin, iron, lead, silver; nuggets of gold, auriferous quartz and washdirt; coal, coke and kerosene shale from various corners of NSW: and pigs, bars and ingots of locally processed metals. NSW manufacturing was shown to be various and vigorous by samples of chemicals, ceramics, skins, textiles, aerated soft drinks in patent bottles and so on. One J. Robertson, coach builder of Pitt Street thought it worthwhile to send a buggy, entirely manufactured of Australian woods and iron.

The agricultural products were motley. Though diverse, they were not as numerous as in previous exhibitions, and some samples were destroyed by weevils on the long voyage to America. The well-developed colonial art of preserving foodstuffs was manifested in a range of goods from meat to fruit to milk condensed and stored by a new process from Ulladulla. There were also notes from T.S. Mort on the Mort-Nicolle freezing process, though no examples were on show. Some sixty samples of merino wools were displayed and a descriptive commentary prepared to accompany them. It was hoped that a good show would interest American importers to the point of pressuring the US government to reduce the high tariffs that very effectively denied any wool trade from Australia. The notes concluded with a flourish of racial solidarity: "...scions of the same British stock, each, let us hope, destined to achieve a lofty position among the nations of the earth."⁴⁹

⁴⁹Official Catalogue of the natural and industrial products of NSW, Sydney 1876, p.101.

The colony's unique natural history was spectacularly displayed in a collection of stuffed birds and animals prepared by Gerard Krefft of the Australian Museum. It was supplemented by a small library of recent taxonomy and research published in Sydney. Platypuses, and articles made of platypus fur (exhibited by P.A. Jennings, of whom more anon), were noted as remarkable curiosities; interest was further aroused by a small treatise on the mysterious beast, in which the still contentious arguments over its manner of reproduction were set forth.

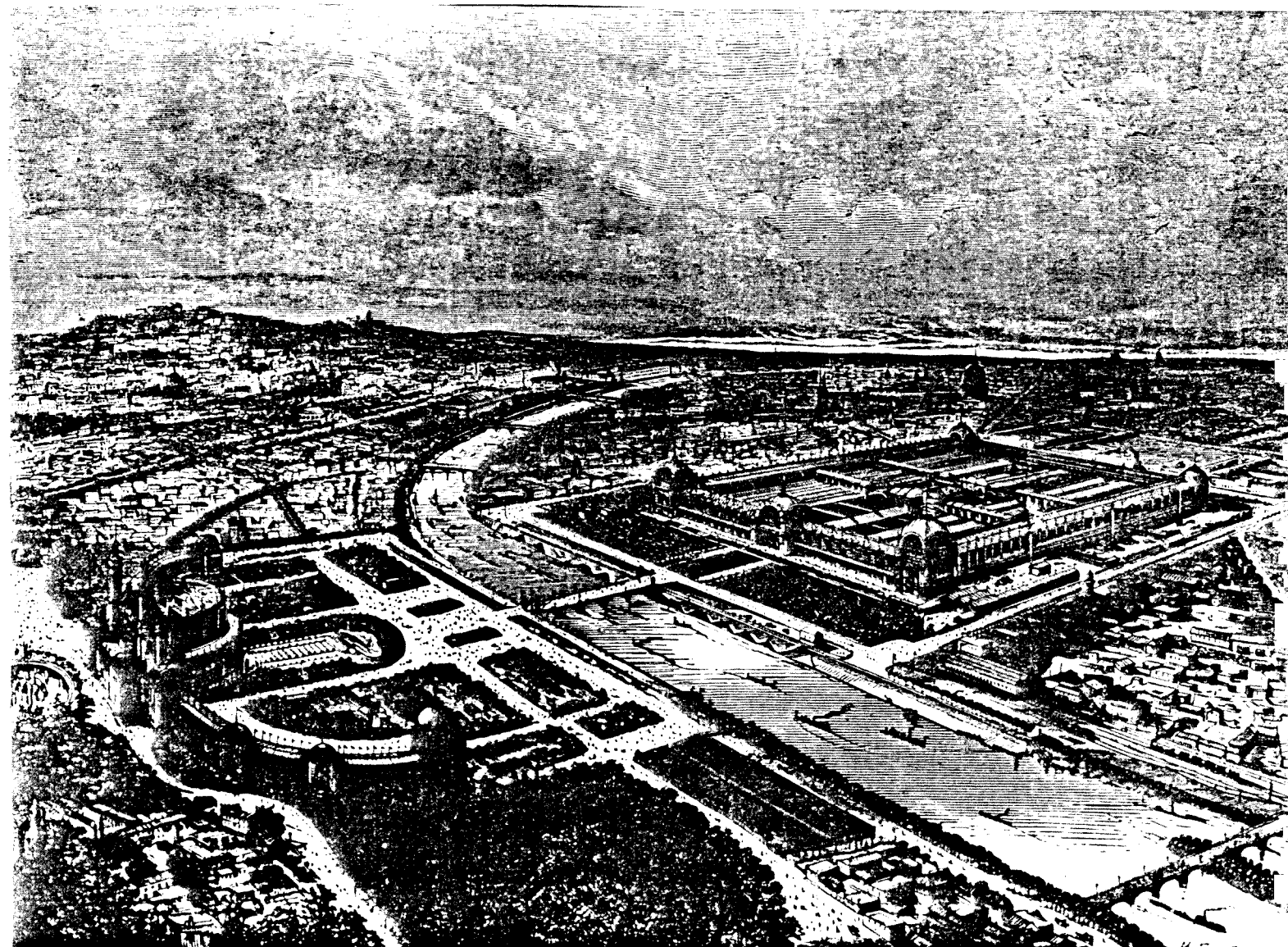
In the same spirit of modern scientific enquiry there were collections of Aboriginal implements and portfolios of photographs of native types. The contemporary social existence of the indigenous people was represented by coconut fibres and matting manufactured by Aborigines in H.M. Gaols.

Art in the colony was shown to be useful as well as beautiful in the form of a splendid stained glass window by interior decorators, Lyon & Cottier, depicting Captain Cook; it was awarded a bronze Exhibition medal.⁵⁰

There were several dozen photographic views of Sydney grouped around a massive 35 foot panorama by Holtermann, also recognized with a bronze medal. Fitzgerald's magnificent and monumental Australian Orchids was displayed for the first time.

⁵⁰It was purchased by James White and installed in his refurbished home 'Cranbrook', now part of Cranbrook School.

1.13 Palais de l'Exposition, Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1878;
Allwood, The Great Exhibitions, p.58



On the whole it was a creditable display of resources and ingenuity and the American public responded warmly, perhaps remembering their own colonial past. Such prominence had not been expected:

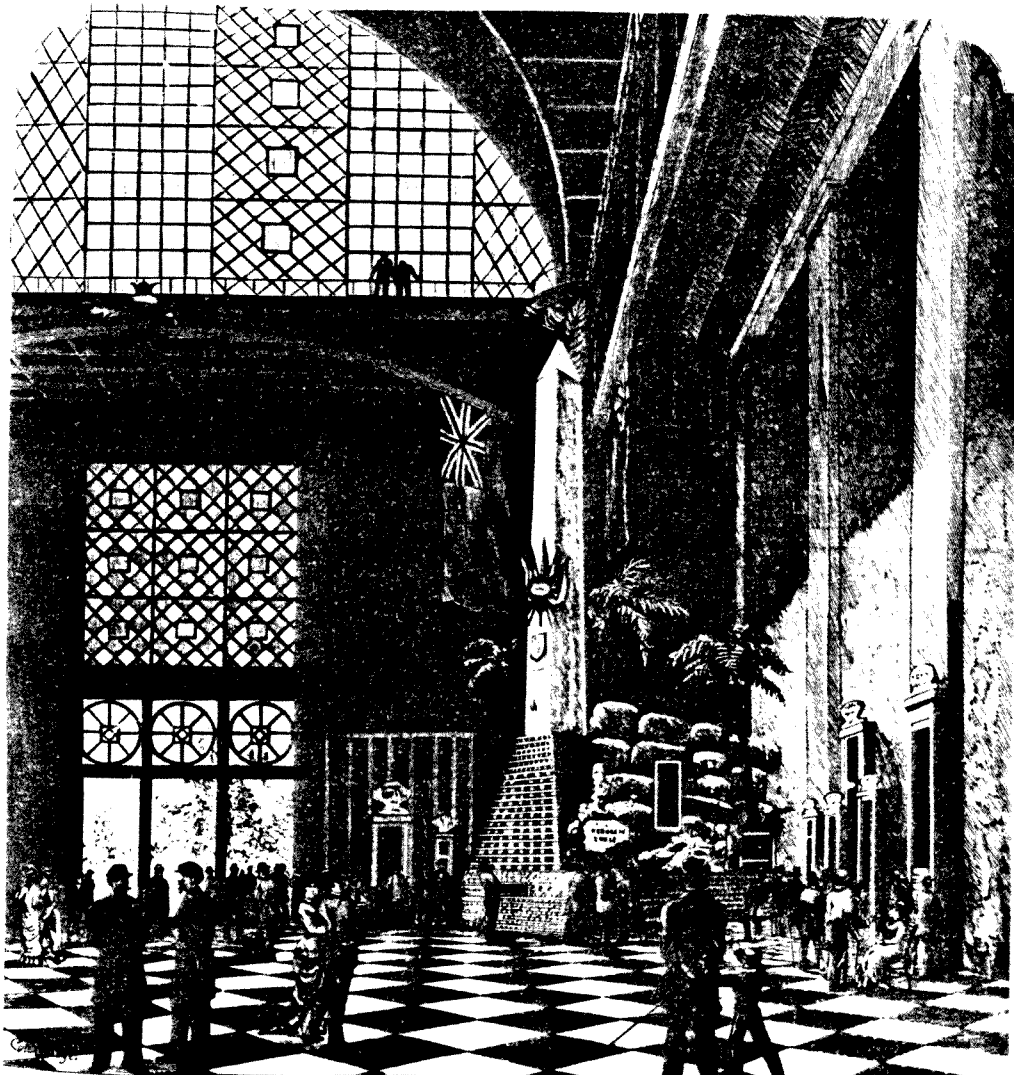
It was hardly to be anticipated that Australia would be the centre of so large a share of attention...and none has been more agreeably surprised at the conspicuous position she has attained... Already Australia has been designated by the Americans as the Greater Britain.⁵¹

With this gratifying experience in mind the Legislative Council eagerly voted 5000 pounds towards the colony's showing at the next great exhibition - the third Paris Exposition Universelle, due to open in May 1878.

NSW was to be represented at Paris by Edward Combes (for the government), Jules Joubert (representing the Agricultural Society) and Dr Charles Moore (for science). They were hardworking and enthusiastic Commissioners, but all of them suffered for the pains they took. Moore did not make it to Paris in time for the Exhibition. Enchanted by the botanical wonders of Ceylon which he encountered en route, he missed his passage on to Paris, and when he arrived at last felt it more honourable to resign his commission. Joubert fell victim to Agricultural Society machinations at home and was ordered to return to NSW in the middle of his negotiations on NSW's behalf. Combes insisted that he remain at his post, but was himself later arraigned before the Home Commission on charges amounting to embezzlement, which were later disproved.

⁵¹ISN, 19.8.1876, p.2.

1.14 NSW court, Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1878; ISN, 7.9.1878,
p.1



Combes and Joubert arrived in Paris to discover that the NSW allotment of space was, as usual, not big enough. The colony was to share with all the other British colonies a wide arc encircling the central British trophy in the Grand Vestibule of the central exhibition building, the Palais de l'Industrie. The space available was fortunately enlarged, and in it the entire exhibit was arranged to form one spectacular trophy, a combination of resources and manufactures. A pyramid of ingots of copper and tin formed the pedestal of the now inevitable obelisk representing NSW gold; it was flanked by cascading bales of fine wool and cotton and the whole was crowned with giant potted tree ferns. Mahogany show cases stood at the foot of the trophy containing minerals, taxidermy and wine. The tout ensemble was credited with "considerable presence".

The most impressive component of the exhibit was certainly the wool, a collection of champion fleeces from the 1877 Agricultural Society show. The sheep breeders and woollen manufacturers of the Continent made "numerous and protracted" calls to inspect the staple, and the Grand Prix of the Exposition was awarded to E.K. Cox for Mudgee wool.⁵² A further twelve wool growers took out gold medals.

Unfortunately, the grain samples despatched from Sydney were almost totally destroyed en route by insects; just enough of each was salvaged for judging. Nonetheless, Dalton Bros of Orange were awarded a gold medal for their wheat and flour. Another casualty of the long

⁵²Edward King Cox actually lived in "Fernhill", Mulgoa, but he also ran "Dabee" in the Cudgegong area.

voyage was a collection of hides and leathers which was damaged by steam heat. But the journey was also a sterling test of the techniques of Australian meat preservers. Some failed (the judges noted of one entry that the meat was overcooked and the cans defective), but the preserves and extracts of the Meat Preserving Company of Sydney were demonstrated sweet and sound enough to carry away a gold medal.

Twenty six NSW wine-makers showed their produce; four of them were judged worthy of gold medals and Commissioner Combes noted gleefully that several jurors opined in this field "NSW would prove the most dangerous rival to France."⁵³

The Australian Museum contributed its usual display of native fauna, accompanied by Curator Krefft's original and monumental works on Australian mammals and snakes. Professor Liversidge of Sydney University organised an exhaustive collection of minerals, systematically documented and illustrated with maps, statistics and monographs. The Department of Mines sent its unparalleled collection of gold specimens, which was duly awarded yet another gold medal.

Photographs, paintings and drawings illustrated life in the colony and its standards of cultural accomplishment. James Barnet, the Colonial Architect, sent drawings of the Lands Office, the new Post Office and Callan Park Asylum, and there were numerous photographs of the Sydney streetscape. Oils of prize cattle represented the pride and wealth of the rich rural class. A common man's pleasure was

⁵³NSW Legislative Council, Report of the NSW Executive Commissioner, Sydney 1880, p.71.

depicted in Edward Montefiore's lively drawing "A southeaster off Bondi", which took out a silver medal.

The NSW Commissioners took to Paris a large stock of free promotional literature about the colony, including special French editions of the Sydney Morning Herald and the Illustrated Sydney News and new maps and statistics. It was a public relations first in common Exhibition practice and it was enormously successful - the quantity could have been doubled, they reported, without exceeding demand. Described as NSW's "trump card" by the British press,⁵⁴ this exercise in colonial promotion made explicit for the first time the basis of the considerable efforts put into participation at the increasingly institutional international exhibitions. The Herald's Special Correspondent wrote with enthusiasm of its consequences: "This Exhibition has opened the eyes of the world on your unbounded wealth".⁵⁵ It seemed a propitious moment to launch a brave new colonial venture - the first International Exhibition to be held in the Antipodes.

⁵⁴Home News, quoted in SMH, 29.10.1878, p.5.

⁵⁵SMH, 29.10.1878, p.5.

CHAPTER TWO

If Sydney were to hold an Exhibition:

Planning the Sydney International Exhibition

The proposal for a Sydney International Exhibition was first discussed in the Hunter Street rooms of the Agricultural Society of NSW early in 1877. It came from Jacob Levi Montefiore, one of the most prominent businessmen of Sydney, who had moved to London the year before. He wrote in conjunction with a London entrepreneur Edmund Johnstone, who had that year organised the South African International Exhibition at Cape Town; the official receipts of this did not show a profit, though it seems to have been a worthwhile venture for him. Montefiore and Johnstone communicated through the former's Sydney company, Montefiore, Joseph and Co., which had been instructed to make the proposal to the colonial government, but instead approached the Agricultural Society as the body responsible for the annual exhibitions held in Sydney since 1867.

Jacob Montefiore was an ardent free trader and a well-versed political economist; he was also a gifted musician, a philanthropist and a progressive citizen. He had served as a NSW Commissioner for the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876 and was as convinced of the economic and social benefits of the great exhibitions as any capitalist of his age. His proposal for a Sydney International Exhibition stressed the potential of increased manufacturing and trade links between Britain, Europe and the colony and the value of colonial publicity in attracting immigrants with capital and enterprise. Accompanying the letter was a detailed scheme for carrying out the undertaking at minimal expense. There was a note of urgency in the proposal: if Sydney did not adopt it, it was to be passed on to the Victorian authorities as the plan for a Melbourne International Exhibition.

Promoted in this way there was instant support for the scheme in Sydney. Within the month the Society had resolved to obtain the sanction and cooperation of the colonial government and through it of the British government, and to publish schedules and programs in three languages to be distributed at the Paris Exposition Universelle the next year. Informal interviews were held with the Colonial Secretary as early as May, but government upheavals (resulting in three Colonial Secretaries in six months) intervened, and official acknowledgement and approval of the plan did not come until January 1878. It was gracious but firm:

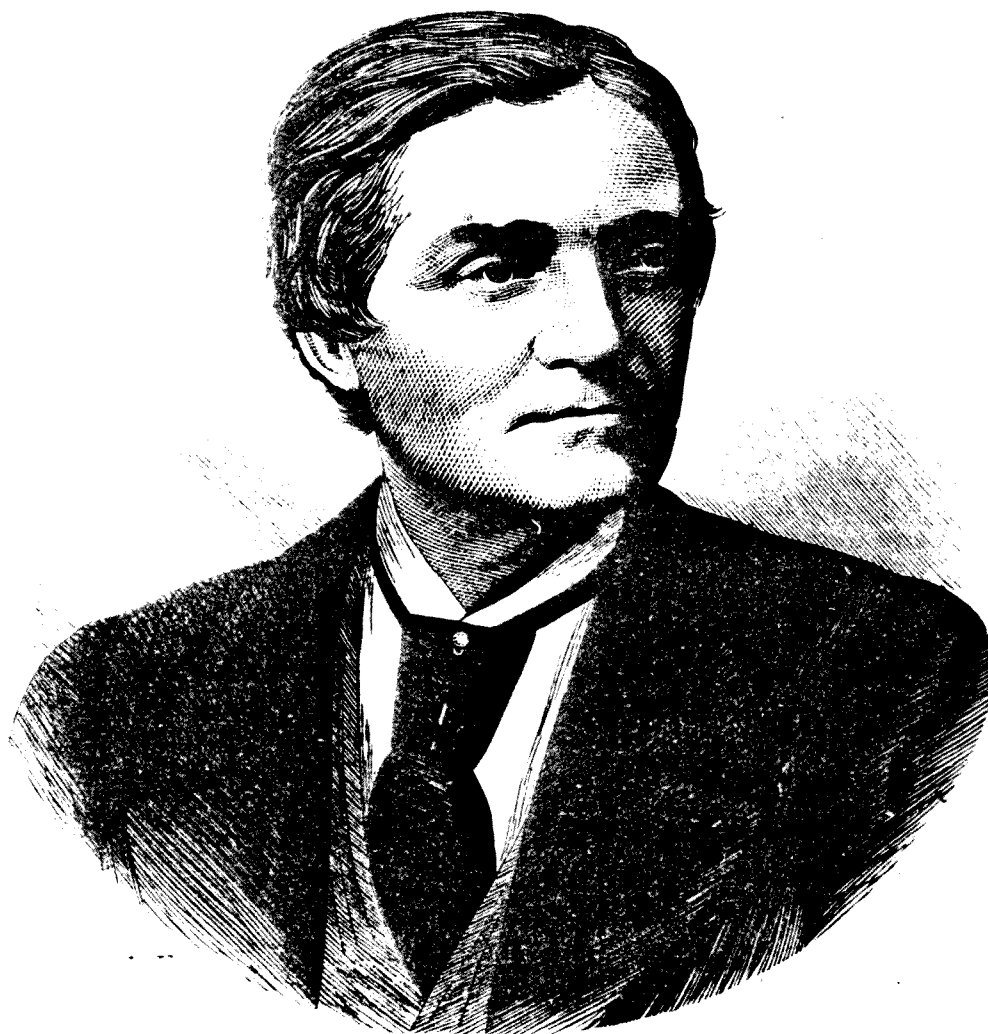
It must be distinctly understood that this Government, in tendering the Agricultural Society of NSW its countenance and support, does not incur any pecuniary liability.¹

On 7 February 1878 the Government Gazette carried twenty seven columns of formal notification of the Sydney International Exhibition, to be held in August 1879.

Official recognition opened the door to the patronage and contact of the Empire. The Governor of NSW, Sir Hercules Robinson (who as President of the Agricultural Society was already a keen supporter of the Exhibition scheme) now wrote to the Colonial Office in London to obtain Empire-wide publicity for the Sydney show. There was some delay in this, for tentative Victorian proposals for an International Exhibition in Melbourne had teetered between 1879 and 1880, and the issue had to be clarified before London would confirm the Sydney pro-

¹Journal of the Agricultural Society, vol.3, 1878, p.310.

2.1 Jules Joubert; AT&CJ, 17.4.1875, p.613



ject. By May 1878, it was known that Melbourne had postponed its Exhibition until 1880, and in July the Colonial Secretary telegraphed the Governor, "Programme Sydney Exhibition of 1879 distributed as requested".²

Thus notification of the Sydney International Exhibition went to all the British colonies and to every country in the world with which Britain maintained diplomatic or consular relations.

An early champion of the International Exhibition proposal was Jules Joubert, Secretary of the Agricultural Society. Himself the organiser and promoter of Sydney exhibitions since 1867 and the proponent of worthy colonial representation at the great foreign Exhibitions, he was to go to Paris in May as Secretary of the NSW Commission to the Exposition Universelle. He was therefore deputed by the Agricultural Society to represent it in Paris and publicise the arrangements for the Sydney Exhibition. One of his tasks would be to investigate the possibility that a selection of exhibits from the Paris Exposition might subsequently be imported to Sydney.

Joubert's activity on behalf of the Exhibition was astonishing. Although it was more than forty years since he had left France he arranged a large and splendid French contribution by sheer enterprise and a dint of the renewal of schooldays contacts. Almost as soon as he and Edward Combes, the Executive Commissioner, arrived in Paris news reached the capital of disastrous floods in the south; Joubert

²Sir Hercules Robinson, Speeches, Sydney 1879, p.196.

promptly telegraphed to Sydney with an appeal for aid to the victims and within the week he presented his old school friend, Léon Say, now Finance Minister, with a cheque for Fr30,000. For this he was presented with the buttonhole of the Legion of Honour and a portrait of the President of the Republic. But M. Say was unable to secure the budget for a French exhibit to go to Sydney. This had been blocked in the Chambre by the influential Léon Gambetta, for reasons of national economic restraint. But within days Joubert discovered that his knowledge of New Caledonia could be crucially useful to Gambetta, who gratefully agreed to discuss the state and potential of French trade with the Australian colonies and was shortly convinced that 10,000 pounds appropriation would be a sound investment in French commerce. The credit was passed instantly and as a consequence France was one of the first national exhibitors to respond to the invitation to the Sydney International Exhibition.

Meanwhile in Sydney, the Agricultural Society,

apparently for the first time, began to realise the magnitude of an undertaking into which it had plunged with so light a heart; and the important question of finance, which appears to have been overlooked in the sanguine anticipations of the original projectors, was now brought formally forward.³

The Society did not have an impressive record of financial management; indeed it was once described by one of its Vice Presidents as "a snivelling organism without money."⁴

³Record, px.

⁴SMH, 30.9.1870.

But the increasingly successful annual Intercolonial Exhibitions organised since that time had now provided the Society with a bank balance of 25,000 pounds and substantial assets in the form of the Alfred Park exhibition buildings. Yet it was clear even to the most enthusiastic supporters of the International Exhibition that this did not comprise an adequate financial basis for what they proposed.

The opposition put forward pragmatic arithmetic to demonstrate its case and fortified its argument with the rhetoric of virtuous thrift. The estimated cost of the Exhibition was reckoned at 25,000 pounds; the estimated receipts were put at 14,000 pounds. Evidently even a modest Exhibition was more than 10,000 pounds above what the Society could expect to raise through subscriptions, franchises and gate-takings. The propriety of spending the Society's accumulated assets on an enterprise not entirely contained within its charter was questioned; the greater merit of postponing the event until the more significant (and putatively more solvent) moment of the colony's centenary in 1888 was canvassed; and miserable comparisons with the new of the splendid intentions for the Melbourne International Exhibition, to be held in 1880, were bandied about as demonstration of the lackadaisical planning to date. A dispirited special general meeting of the Society was called early in July to consider whether or not to proceed.

But in spite of the anti-Exhibition lobby this meeting, chaired by Sir Hercules Robinson resolved to continue planning.

A number of cost-cutting proposals were made, among them the suggestion that the government could build a railway station to be

used as an exhibition building and subsequently converted into operation; the possibility of buying the prefabricated structures then in use at the Paris Exposition was also discussed. To cover the expected deficit a deputation to the government was appointed to negotiate a grant of 10,000 pounds from Parliament.

The deputation was rebuked and rebuffed. The Colonial Secretary, Michael Fitzpatrick, refused to bring the proposal before Parliament and recalled the government's early disavowal of financial responsibility for the Exhibition. If the resources of the Agricultural Society were inadequate, he made clear, the scheme must be abandoned. The executive of the Society had little option but to endorse the inevitable, and at the beginning of September⁵ they cancelled the Exhibition.

But by this time the elusive Exhibition had conjured up wide public feeling. The Agricultural Society itself was bitterly divided on the issue, council versus members. A fortnight later another special general meeting was convened, and here Sir Hercules Robinson rallied the disarray to the standard of colonial honour. He detailed the official steps he had taken, the communications with London, the commitment in the name of the colony:

...if we abandoned this proposal, (would) the Colony still hold its high position in the estimation of the outside world, as I am proud to think she now occupies?

He set up rhetorical excuses and demolished them with verve:

⁵On 4 September 1878.

...we could not urge as an excuse that our country has been involved in war, or that we have suffered from pestilence, or famine, or any other calamity, since we first embarked in this project... the prospects of the Colony are in every respect brighter than they were in February.

He put forward his own feelings, both as citizen and Governor:

Of course, if I have to write, and withdraw, I will make out as good a case as I can; but the real reason will be, and it will of course be generally known, that we entered into this project without sufficient consideration, and when we found that it was likely to be such a success as to cost a few thousand pounds more than we anticipated, we became frightened and ran away.⁶

Sir Hercules put forward a plan to rescue honour and the Exhibition. This consisted of a subscription to be raised among the 1200 members of the Agricultural Society, who as he said, comprised "in a considerable degree the wealth and intelligence of the country",⁷ of 5 pounds a head, giving 6,000 pounds; the government had undertaken to match this pound for pound, thus adding 12,000 pounds to the Exhibition's books. Combined with the estimated receipts this totalled 27,000 pounds, a sum considered adequate to mount a respectable, though hardly fancy, show. Won over by the combination of the appeal to colonial pride and a feasible financial solution even the renegades of the Society voted to establish a Sydney International Exhibition Committee to carry out the plan.

The Committee set instantly to work; a public subscription was opened; and every second citizen of Sydney wrote to the Herald, the

⁶Sir Hercules Robinson, Speeches, p.197.

⁷Ibid., p.199.

2.2 Inner Domain site; AT&CJ, 18.1.1879, p.121



Mail or the Evening News with his comment or suggestion as to the size, situation, cost or method of construction of the proposed new Exhibition hall. The inner Domain was generally agreed upon as the finest site, but the Committee's estimate for the construction of even a temporary hall, three times the area of the Alfred Park buildings, came to 18,000 pounds, an impossible two-thirds of the proposed Exhibition budget. The Committee-men, reluctantly but prudently, therefore decided that the existing halls would have to do, perhaps with extensions. This dampening conclusion seemed all the more puny when it was announced that the French exhibits alone were valued at 20,000 pounds; and worse, that the planners of the Melbourne Exhibition proposed to spend upward of 70,000 pounds.

Once more it became clear:

...that if Sydney were to hold an Exhibition and provide the necessary building, and have it equipped and furnished in such a way as would be commensurate with the importance of the colony, that the means hitherto proposed would be altogether inadequate, and that in order to make the Exhibition at all successful it must be taken up by the Government and the country as a national undertaking... (for) being morally committed to the project, it was most desirable, if an Exhibition were to be carried out at all, it should be on a large and liberal scale, and conducted in a manner that would show forth the wealth and resources of the colony in the eyes of the world.⁸

Roused by the tenor of public support for the Exhibition the government of NSW offered in late November⁹ to take over the Exhibition. The Exhibition Committee of the Agricultural Society

⁸Record, p.xvii.

⁹On 27 November 1878.

2.3 Executive Commissioner Patrick Jennings; Sydney Punch,
26.7.1879, p.17



PEOPLE WE KNOW—No. 45.

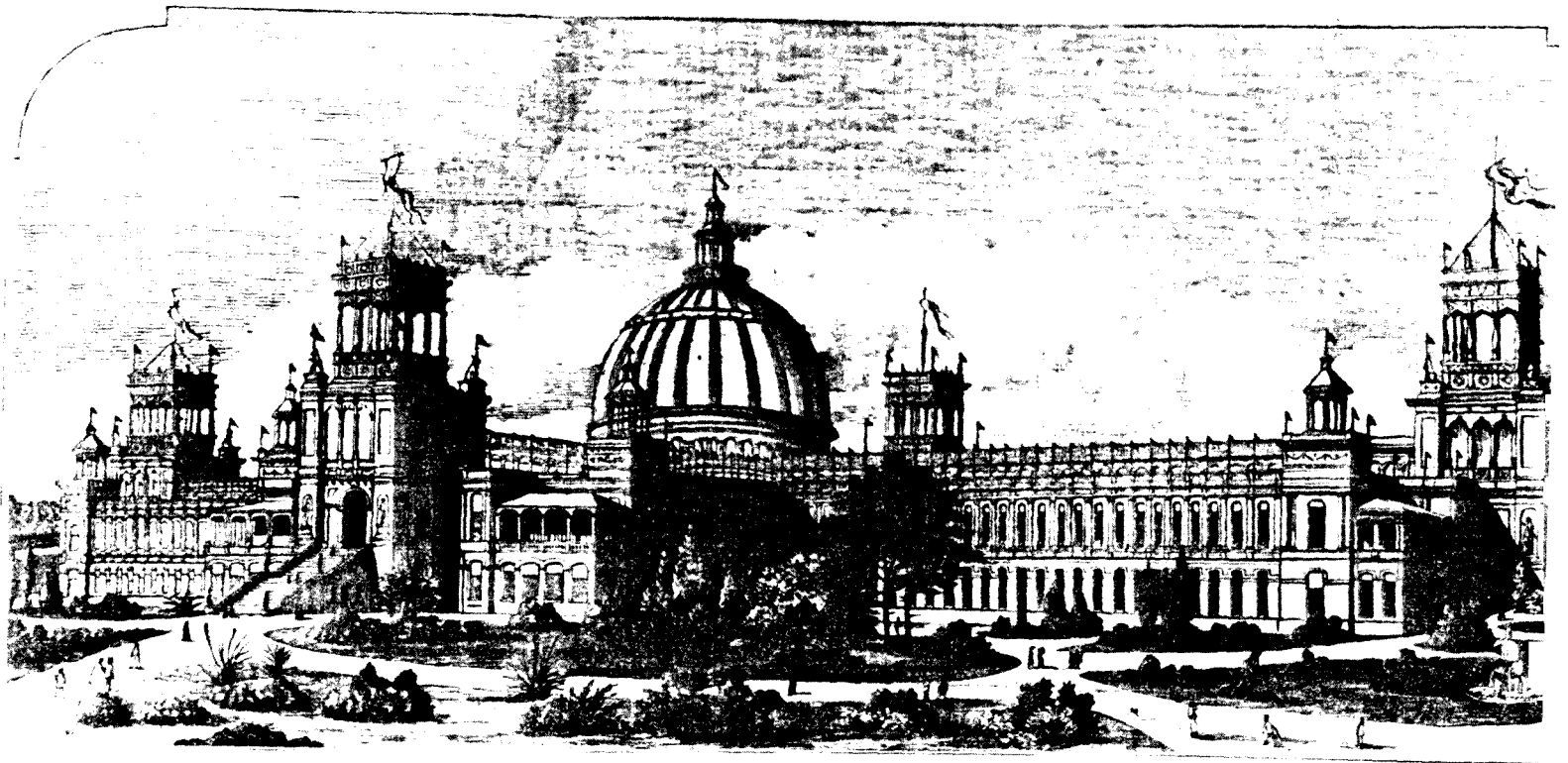
A MOST WORTHY COMMISSIONER.

The right man in the right place.

voted promptly to accept the offer, but its acceptance was coy. The Exhibition had outgrown their expectations, they said, and if they were not to publish to the world the meagre dimensions of exhibition space actually available, the government had better step in to maintain colonial honour with public money and official patronage.

50,000 pounds was promised, but it was not formally voted through the Legislature before Mr Farnell resigned over the Land Bill. Mr Parkes formed a new government and guaranteed in the interim that his administration would honour the pledge. The official imprimatur was received on 31 December when a Royal Commission was issued for the Sydney International Exhibition. The Governor assumed Presidency of the Commission, and named as Vice Presidents Sir James Martin, the Chief Justice; Sir Alfred Stephen, the Lieutenant-Governor; Sir John Hay, the President of the Legislative Council; and Sir George Allen, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Patrick Alfred Jennings was appointed Executive Commissioner, or managing director, of the Exhibition. Jennings was an Irishman, a squatter turned politician; he was a worldly and influential man, active in the Agricultural Society and a number of other such learned and friendly societies. He had represented NSW at the 1875 Victorian Exhibition, the 1876 Philadelphia Exposition and the 1878 Exposition Universelle. The Secretary of the Commission was Augustus Morris, another squatter-politician, who had acted as Executive Commissioner for NSW at Philadelphia, and also served on the Paris committee. Of the thirty other Commissioners twelve had represented NSW at previous exhibitions.

2.4 Projected exhibition building; AT&CJ, 18.1.1879, p.120



The Commission held its first meeting on 7 January 1879. Seventeen committees were set up to organise finance, building, cataloguing, ceremonies, judging and the seven broad classifications of the Exhibition. An official Programme was approved, containing the regulations, the system of classification and information to intending exhibitors; 13,000 copies were dispatched to Britain, Europe and America. Formal invitations to participate were confirmed to thirty five governments. Plans drawn up by the Colonial Architect, James Barnet, for an Exhibition building in the Domain were approved; they had been passed by the government at the end of December and the site actually pegged out at the beginning of January. Business was intense, for there were barely eight months between the inception of the Commission and the proposed opening of the Exhibition.

In February a Royal Commission for the Sydney International Exhibition was established in Britain, under the presidency of the Prince of Wales. At the same time the commercial agent for NSW in New York, Roderick Cameron, was nominated American agent of the Commission and Commissioner for the United States. In Sydney the Awards Committee announced a competition for the design of the Exhibition Diploma and Medal. The Diploma, the principal award of the Exhibition, was decorated with a medallion showing the slender figure of New South Wales standing by Britannia, holding her hand as an emblem of the affectionate connection between the two countries. The Medal was awarded as a top prize only, though it was also presented as an official souvenir. It showed the classical figure of New South Wales surrounded by instruments of the arts and sciences, surmounted by the Exhibition motto, Orta recens quam pura nites - "Newly arisen,

2.5 Laying the foundation stone; ISN, 22.2.1879, p.1



how brightly you shine". "This elegant motto was kindly composed for the occasion by Dr. Charles Badham, senior professor of the Sydney University".¹⁰

Work was progressing on the new Exhibition building and on 13 February Lady Robinson, wife of the Governor, laid the foundation stone for the dome; the Commissioners for the Melbourne Exhibition regretted they were so pressed they could not attend. Shortly afterwards they laid the foundations of the Melbourne Exhibition building, but none of the Sydney Commissioners could find the time to assist in the celebrations.

By March it was evident that the international response would be far greater than anticipated and it became necessary to plan a further three halls for machinery and agricultural products. There was some public outcry over these, for the Domain cricket pitch had to be sacrificed; however, to protect the turf a tramway was to be constructed to carry heavy machinery exhibits from the carriage drive to the halls. Parliament again discussed the chestnut of extending the railway from Redfern to the city in order to cope with the expected mass of exhibition-goers. But it was obvious that even if the plan were to be approved at last it could not possibly be constructed in the six months before the Exhibition was due to open. However, a Tramway Authorisation Bill was passed in March¹¹ and the first lines laid from Redfern to Hunter St in June. At the same time

¹⁰Record, p.iii. It was subsequently adopted as the state motto of NSW.

¹¹Journal of the Legislative Council, 1880-81, p.375.

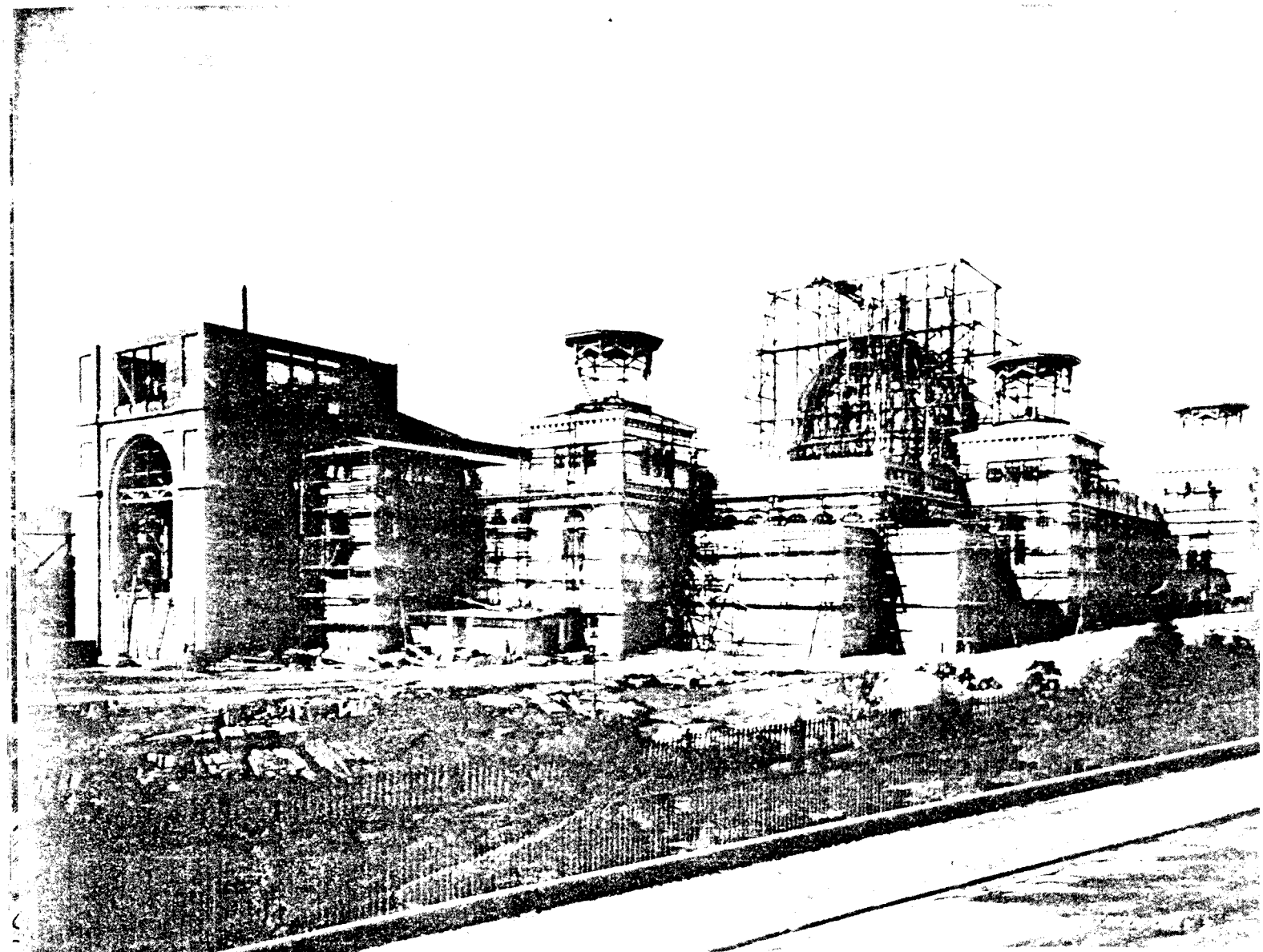
four steam tram motors and six double-decker cars were ordered from the Baldwin Locomotive works of Philadelphia.

Work proceeded on all fronts in April and May. The form of the Exhibition building began to emerge on the skyline of Sydney and was generally acclaimed, though a body of diehards maintained that the huge structure would cheapen and pollute the foreshores of the most delightful harbour in the world. On the administrative side several governments were tardy in notifying the Commission of their acceptance. Several more were so enthusiastic that their requests for exhibition space were embarrassingly impossible. Plans were made for a diverse program of musical events throughout the Exhibition: a musical director, Paolo Giorza,¹² was appointed; an organ¹³ was acquired from London for 600 pounds; monthly oratorios, weekly choral concerts and daily organ recitals were suggested; and the local brass bands were invited to play in the grounds of the domain. An Exhibition Cantata was commissioned from Signor Giorza and a competition launched for lyrics to accompany it.

Exhibits began to arrive in June. The wharfies voted to unload Exhibition goods free, and they were stored free by T.S. Mort until the basement of the Exhibition building was ready to receive them.

¹²Paolo Giorza (1832-1914) was a fashionable composer, notably of ballet music and popular songs, in Milan, Vienna and London between 1853-66. In 1867 he went to the USA to escape financial problems; he came to Sydney in 1878 and set up as a Professor of Music. He returned to the USA in 1883. Stanley Sadie (Ed), The New Grove dictionary of music and musicians, London, 1980, vol. 7, p. 398.

¹³see Ch.3, p.67.



Early in the month Sir Hercules Robinson departed from Sydney to become Governor of New Zealand, where he assumed presidency of the New Zealand Commission to the Sydney Exhibition; he was never able to visit the show in progress but he saw the Exhibition building in 1881, en route for another gubernatorial appointment in Cape Town. The gratifying news arrived from New York that the United States Congress had voted 20,000 pounds towards American representation in Sydney. Construction began in the outer Domain of the machinery and agricultural produce halls, animal houses and stock rings; tenders were called for restaurants, refreshment halls and retiring rooms for ladies. Local auxiliary Exhibition committees burgeoned throughout the colony, north, west and south. The colonial press rallied without exception to the Exhibition cause, the Sydney Morning Herald announcing a competition for a poem to celebrate the event, with a prize of one hundred guineas.

On 4 July Members of Parliament, Commissioners, municipal authorities and other worthies were invited to the Exhibition grounds to witness the final great ribs of the dome hoisted into place. The cocoon of scaffolding that had enclosed it was dismantled by the end of the month and the gilded finial twinkled over the continuing work. Another decisive impression on the physical fabric of Sydney came when the Exhibition grounds were fenced in with a sturdy wall of corrugated iron; more than one citizen thundered against the curtailment of "the people's rights and pleasures" to walks in the gardens.¹⁴

¹⁴Letter to the Editor from "Citizen", SMH, 16.7.1879, p.7.

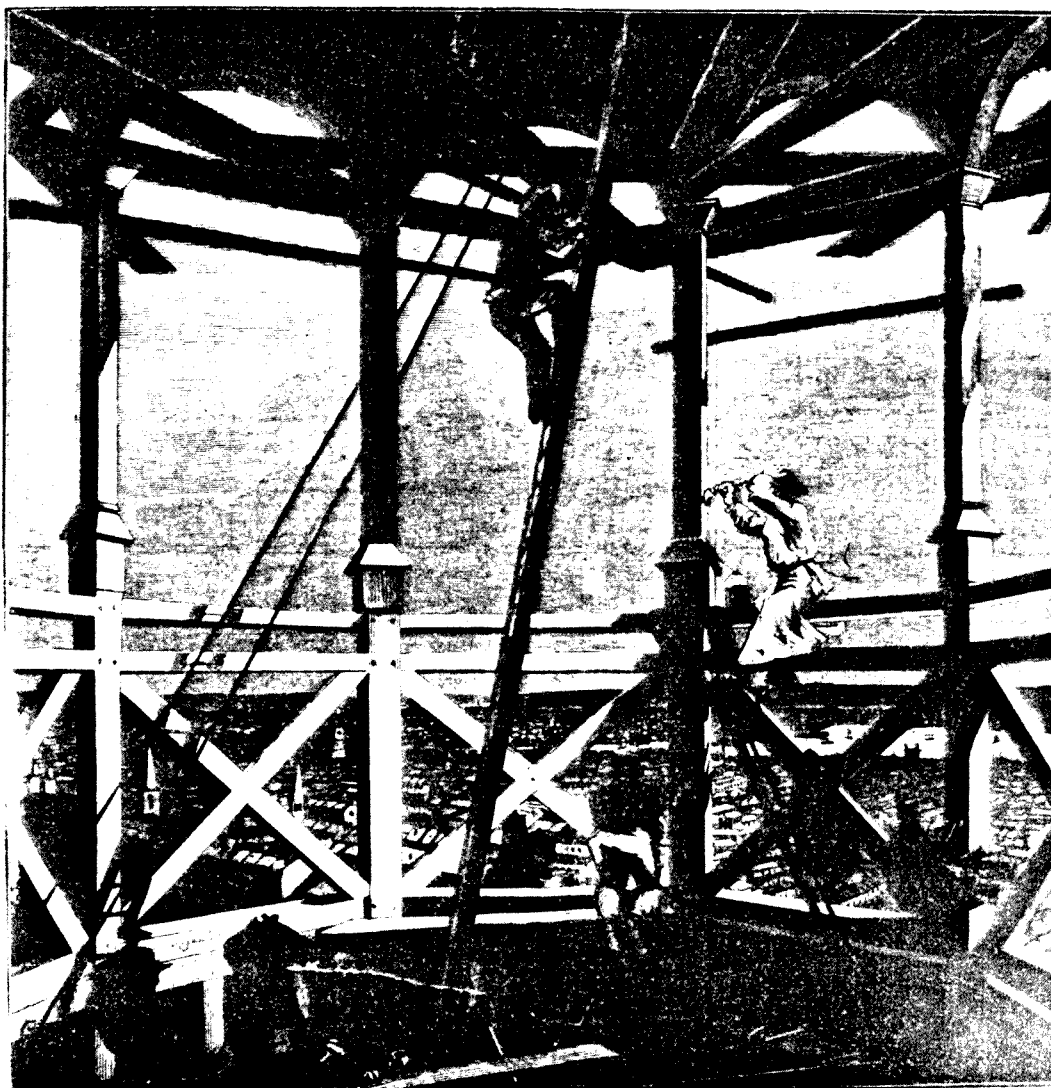
The first foreign Commissioner, M. Albert Van Schelle of Belgium, arrived in Sydney on 11 July, and a week later Jan De Groot of Holland and Haruo Sakata of Japan sailed into the Harbour. The organ ordered from London was delivered in thirty cases with no instructions for reassembling it; however, local ingenuity set to work and the instrument was successfully pieced together and voiced by a Sydney manufacturer of pianos, Charles Jackson. Admission prices to the Exhibition were at last announced by the Commission. The charge on Opening Day was to be five shillings; for the next nine weekdays two and sixpence; thereafter, but for Mondays and Thursdays which were to remain half-crown days, entry would be one shilling (sixpence for children). A season ticket in a leather case with the bearer's photograph attached would cost three guineas. The well known poet Mr Henry Kendall was announced to have won the competition for the libretto of the Exhibition Cantata; he agreed to curtail his entry somewhat in order to fit the music, but the suppressed sentiments flooded back in his Exhibition Celebration poem which next month won the Herald's prize.

...And so on this great auspicious day, the flowers
Of Labour glorify majestic hours.
The singing angel from the starry sphere
Of dazzling Science shows his wonders here.
And Art, the dreamland spirit, starts and brings
From Fairyland her strange sweet glittering things...¹⁵

On 1 August the Executive Commissioner, Mr. Jennings, returned from a foray into Victoria, having consulted with the Commission for

¹⁵"The selection of this poem, from the large number sent for competition, has been determined by two considerations - the first being the general quality of the poetic thought and expression in the poem itself, and the second, its appropriateness to the occasion which it was intended to mark." SMH, 17.9.1879, p.5.

2.8 Construction work; ISN, 9.8.1879, p.1



the Melbourne International Exhibition. He had inspected the progress of the Melbourne exhibition building and reported of it that it was "not as striking as ours"¹⁶, explaining that since it was intended to be a permanent structure it was more in the style of a museum. A few days later the new Governor of NSW, Lord Augustus Loftus, landed, and shortly afterwards the Commissioners for France, Captain Alphonse Mathieu and Germany, Professor Frederick Reuleaux. A rapturous essay appeared in the Herald¹⁷ on the unparalleled view from the towers of the new palace. By the middle of the month the body of the Exhibition building was handed over to the Commissioners, though work continued in the galleries and on the exterior. Now the national shares of internal floorspace were finalised and assigned and the local and foreign Commissioners began at last to set up their Courts. "The interior of the Exhibition building presented the appearance of a warehouse and workshop combined", wrote the Herald; "the air resounded with the noise of opening cases and the roll of packages from their place of rest."¹⁸

Work indoors pushed ahead but outside, late winter rains set in. The Exhibition grounds, cut up by construction work, were reduced to a mire and it became nearly impossible to deliver the surging volume of arriving exhibits, for drays simply sank in to their axles. The tramway from the Carriage Drive to the Machinery Halls and southern end of

¹⁶SMH, 2.8.1879, p.3.

¹⁷SMH, 4.8.1879, p.3.

¹⁸SMH, 28.8.1879, p.7.

the Exhibition building basement, intended to circumvent just this problem was, on account of the rain, unfinished. Likewise work on the exterior of the building and ornamental gardens was at a standstill.

An issue that had caused much comment and dissent was resolved in late August with the decision to build a separate art gallery near the entrance to the Botanic Gardens, on a site known as the cabbage patch.¹⁹ Edward Montefiore and Eccleston Du Faur, leading members of the Art Advisory Committee, had resigned from the Commission in July claiming that the area in the Exhibition building to be devoted to art was totally unsuitable for showing paintings because it was so badly lit. The extent of the art collections promised by the various national exhibitors, as well as the unexpected volume of other exhibits, soon added to this the objection that the space would be quite insufficient. The French and German Commissioners agreed and took an official protest to the Commission, where they were received with misgiving. For the Commission was unwilling to make extra arrangements, the cost of the Exhibition building having already jumped above the initial estimates; but after weeks of critical publicity the Executive Commissioner and the Premier (Henry Parkes was himself a notable patron and collector) announced that the budget could be coaxed into providing a new art gallery. Construction began almost immediately but it was not to open for another two months.

On 2 September the Exhibition building was officially named the Garden Palace. At the time it was an optimistic title, for the rain

¹⁹See Ch.3, p.65.

continued; indeed, continued unprecedentedly up to the very Opening Day and made the setting out of flower beds and smooth turves quite impossible. The grounds of the Garden Palace still resembled a construction site with heaps of scaffolding timber and builders' equipment scattered in the mud. The paths were ungravelled and therefore increasingly scored and rutted as loads of exhibits were dragged through the mire to the doors. Work on the finishing touches to the exterior was impossible and there was some seeping damage under the towers and in the galleries, but the Colonial Architect reported that the structure was sound and the injuries minor.

Inside the Garden Palace tumult reigned. Unpacking and arranging the exhibits proceeded at all hours, at night lit by electric light.²⁰ The Executive Commissioner, whose office was working fourteen hours a day, was confident that five-sixths of the exhibits would be ready for Opening Day.²¹ This had been fixed the previous month for 17 September and since that time a Ceremonial Committee had been meeting to organise the festivities. A public holiday was declared and a giant procession planned from Hyde Park to the main gates of the Garden Palace, where a guard of honour would be formed for the arrival of the Governor. The rain made this scheme so doubtful that the participation of the navy and militia detachments was cancelled the day before; when Opening Day dawned fine and clear after all the procession was composed chiefly of fire brigades and friendly societies.

²⁰See Ch.3, p.67.

²¹He was over-optimistic.

But that they marched to a (nearly) full-fledged Exhibition at all seems something of a motley miracle.

CHAPTER THREE

Lo, they come:

Building and opening the Garden Palace

As soon as the Sydney International Exhibition was officially commissioned, opinions, theories, dreams and plans emerged for the proposed exhibition building. There was a fairly specific conception of what it should be, for though it was less than thirty years since the original Great Exhibition, a well-developed genus of exhibition buildings had developed throughout the capitalist world. Eulogised as temples or palaces of industry, they were constructed of modern industrial materials, by modern industrial techniques, to designs that professed modern industrial functionalism but tended, after the genuine innovation of the Crystal Palace, to a classical monumentalism.¹ Like railway stations and department stores, exhibition buildings represented the new technology, the new mercantilism and the evangelistic faith of the age in the improvement of mankind through these means.

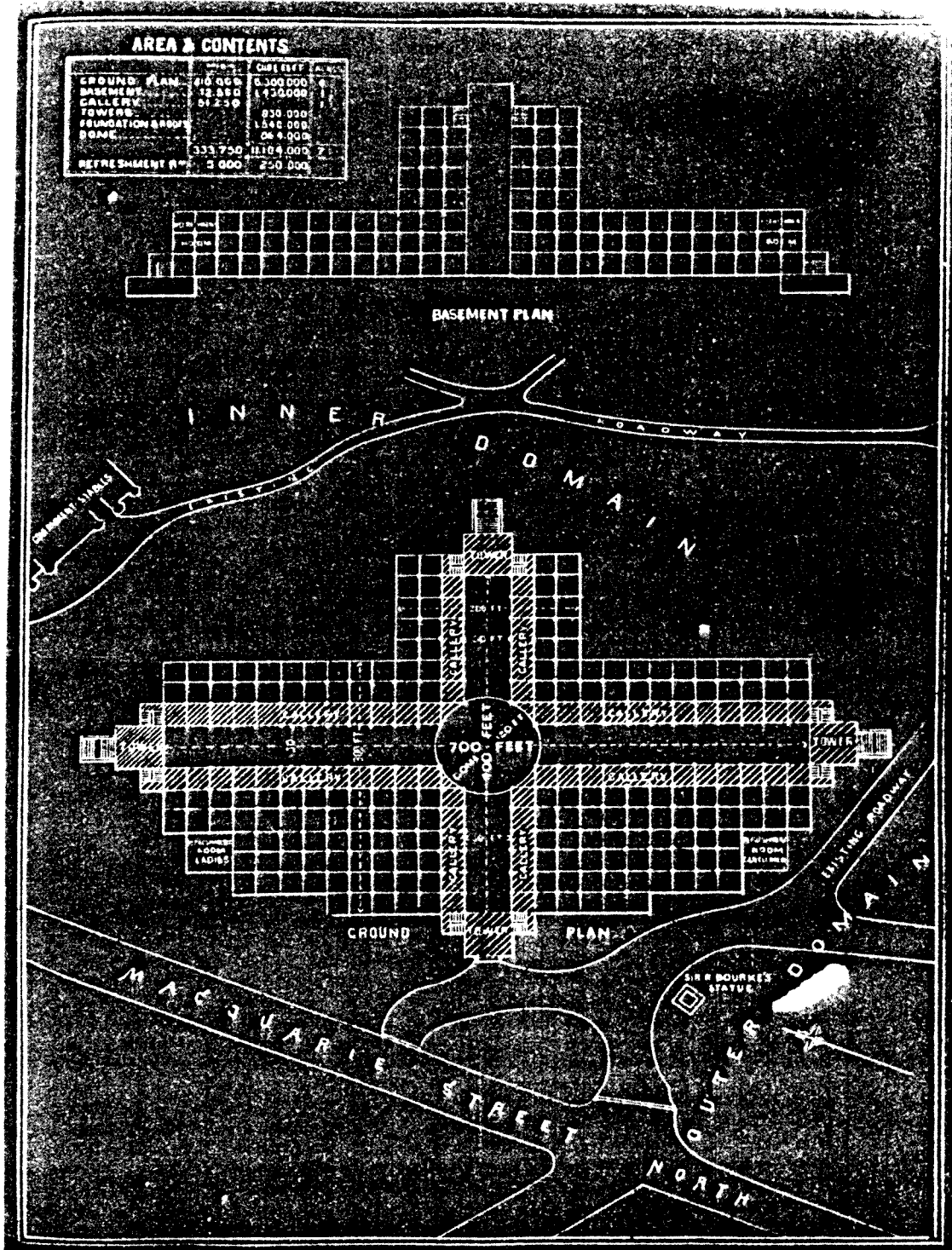
(Sydney already possessed one such edifice - the Prince Alfred Park Exhibition Building. It was a typical example.)²

For the Sydney International Exhibition building there was an early expectation of a Crystal Palace-like structure, a prefabricated iron frame carrying walls of glass.³ But the scarcity of time, facilities and materials made this impossible: no local glass-works

¹On exhibition buildings see especially John Allwood, The Great Exhibitions, London, 1977; Kenneth Luckhurst, The Story of Exhibitions, London, 1951; Nikolaus Pevsner, A History of building types, London, 1976.

²See Ch.1, p. 26

³SMH, 15.1.1879, p.7.

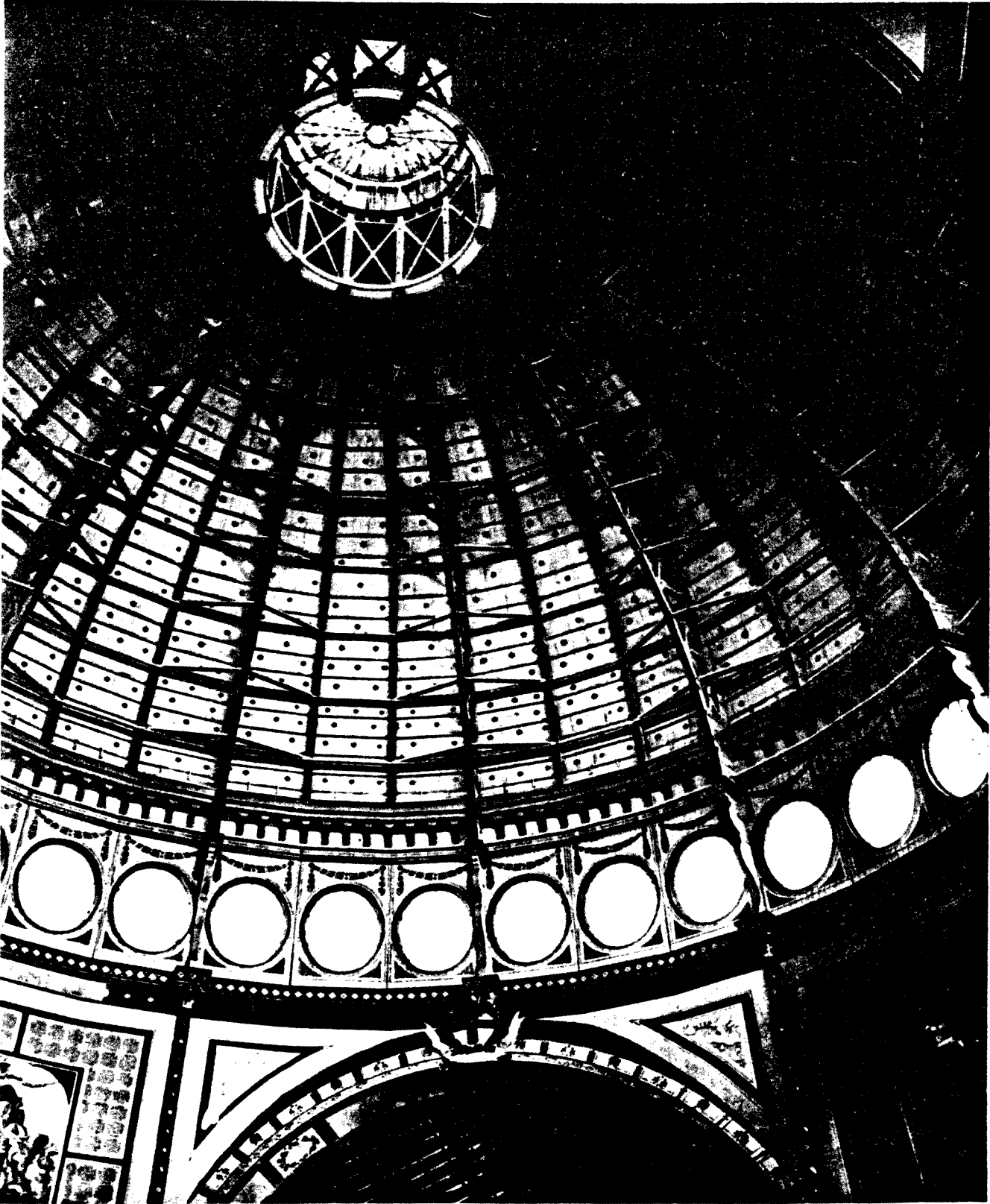


existed, and no local foundry was equipped to produce the necessary quality or quantity for such a project.⁴ The final design was based on the same modular concept of construction, but in timber. It was prepared by James Barnet, the Colonial Architect, from a brief specifying a temporary exhibition hall to cost fifty thousand pounds. It was approved by Cabinet on 23 December 1878.

The building was bulkily cruciform, on axes 500 feet by 800; it covered seven and a half acres of the Domain between Macquarie St and the Government Stables. The upper storey comprised wide aisles or galleries and a basement fitted into the downhill contour of the site, facing Farm Cove. Above the crossing of the nave and transept (the ecclesiastical terminology gives some sense of contemporary regard for exhibition buildings) rose a dome 100 feet in diameter and ninety feet high, then the biggest in Australia. At the ends of the nave and transept reared four great entrance towers of brick, effectively buttressing the rest of the structure between them; apart from the foundations they were the only brick elements in the entire building. They were surmounted by square timber turrets, flanked in early projections of the building by engaging kangaroo finials, sadly never realised.⁵ The remaining ten angles of the roof were capped by minor towers with octagonal lanterns. The roof over the body of the exhibition floor was of saw-tooth form, covered with corrugated galvanised iron and lit by louvre windows.

⁴Window and industrial glass was at this time entirely imported from the UK and, increasingly, Belgium. See also Ch.4, p.24.

⁵e.g., the view published in AT&CJ, 18.1.1879, p.120; ISN, 25.1.1879, p.12; and many others.



Externally the plans showed a faintly Renaissance aspect which was lost to a more pragmatic finish by the time the building was completed. The facade was rendered and sanded to simulate stone and the towers were incised with heavy pseudo-quoins. The four great entrances were formed by massive, arches, glazed, but usually hung with curtains and carpets, when the Exhibition opened. Each bay of the body of the building was demarcated by three small arches and a flagpole. Around the whole was a false-front balustrade masking the corrugated roof. Decorated with an interlocking circle motif based on one of the iron members of the Crystal Palace, it functioned as a broad cornice, the only strong horizontal line in the entire structure. The dome was sheathed in galvanised iron; above its wooden lantern rose a gilt finial. It was carried on a drum pierced by thirty six oval windows, and was the focus of the Garden Palace both in form and function.

Inside, the dome was painted blue and the field scattered with golden stars.⁶ It was lit by the clerestory in the drum and a skylight of stained glass under the lantern.⁷ Around the cornice of the drum was printed in golden letters, "The Earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the World, and they that dwell therein: Ps. XXIV, i", a verse that had been used at exhibitions since the Great Exhibition. Huge allegories of Europe, Asia, America and Africa were painted by

⁶A very conventional scheme, like the whole design.

⁷A coloured drawing of the lantern glass - the only such sketch known of Lyon & Cottier's designs for the Garden Palace - is in folder of Lyon & Cottier material in DL : DGD 30. See also footnote 15 below.



local artists⁸ on the piers which enclosed the staircases. Below them was a frieze of medallions depicting twelve trades with an Australian bias - miner, shearer, carpenter and so on. From the middle of each arch hung the heraldic badge of New South Wales surrounded by the Exhibition motto, Orta recens quam pura nites.

Under the dome stood the bronze statue of the Queen.⁹ It was a youthful portrait by the British sculptor Marshall Wood, and though it was in general loyally admired some fun was had at the expense of its antique pretension: "Fancy our Queen in classical costume", giggled Sydney Punch.¹⁰ The statue stood on a pedestal rising from the basement through a wide, balustraded opening. Fountains plunked at its foot into large basins, the feature of the refreshment chamber below. The cool breezes thus created were much appreciated in the steamy Sydney summer.

The body of the Garden Palace was supported on a forest of 372 hollow columns of pine, each branching at the top into arches. The

⁸Europe: Giulio Annivitti (1850-81), artist and teacher in Sydney 1874-81.

Asia: Eugene Montagu Scott (1835-1909), artist and cartoonist in Melbourne (1850s-66) and Sydney (1866-1909). Illustrated in ISN, 4.10.1879, p.16.

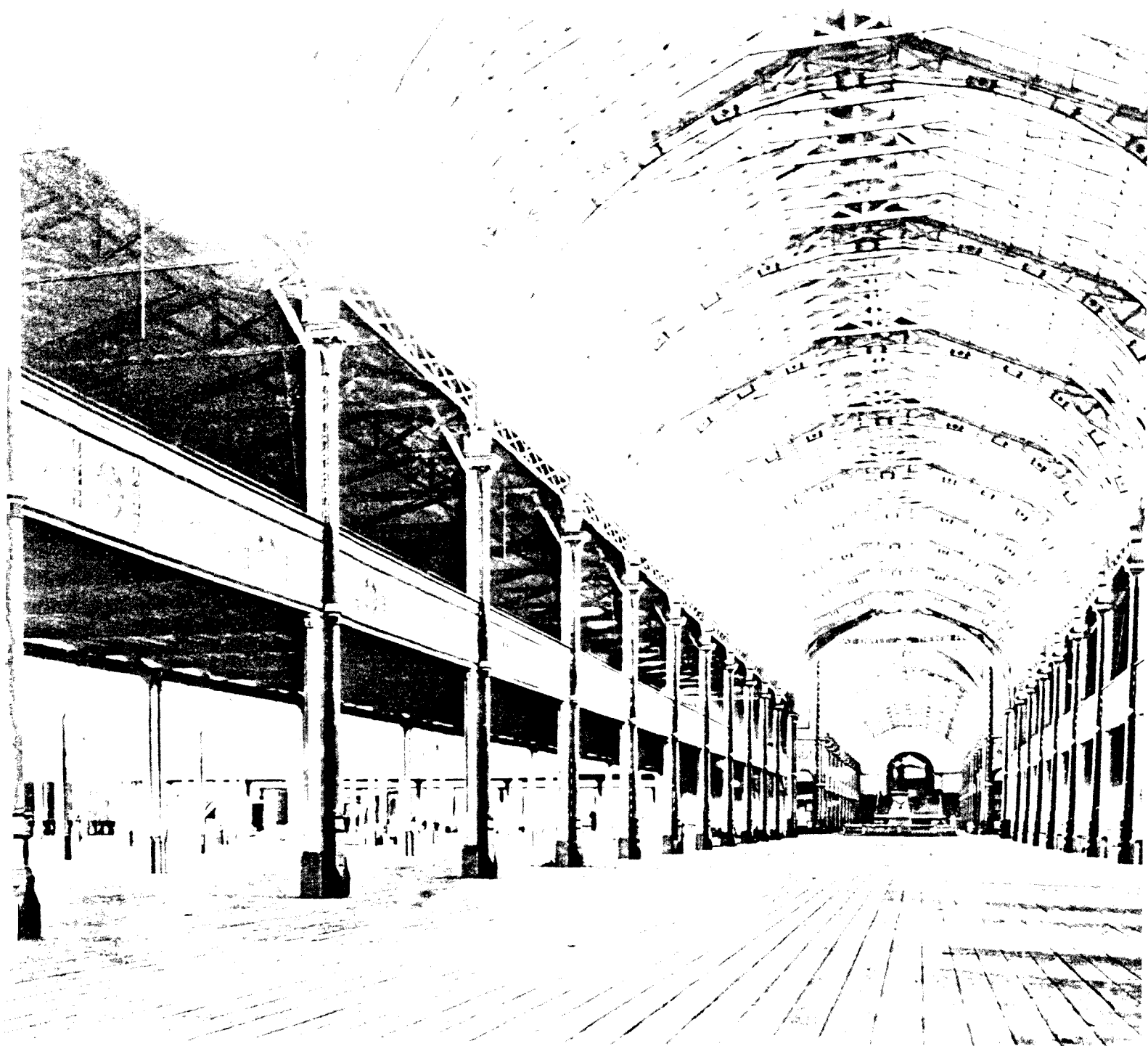
Africa: William Macleod (1850-1929), artist and cartoonist in Sydney.

America: possibly by Alexander Habbe (listed in Sands' Directories 1861-3) or Nicholas Habbe (1827-89), scenepainter.

⁹A nearly identical statue by Wood, this time in marble, still stands in the vestibule ("Queen's Hall") of Parliament House, Melbourne. It was acquired in 1880. A fragment of the Garden Palace Statue is held by MAAS; see the Catalogue of Relics.

¹⁰Sydney Punch, 4.10.1879, p.101.

3.4 Garden Palace nave; photo by Charles Bayliss; ML



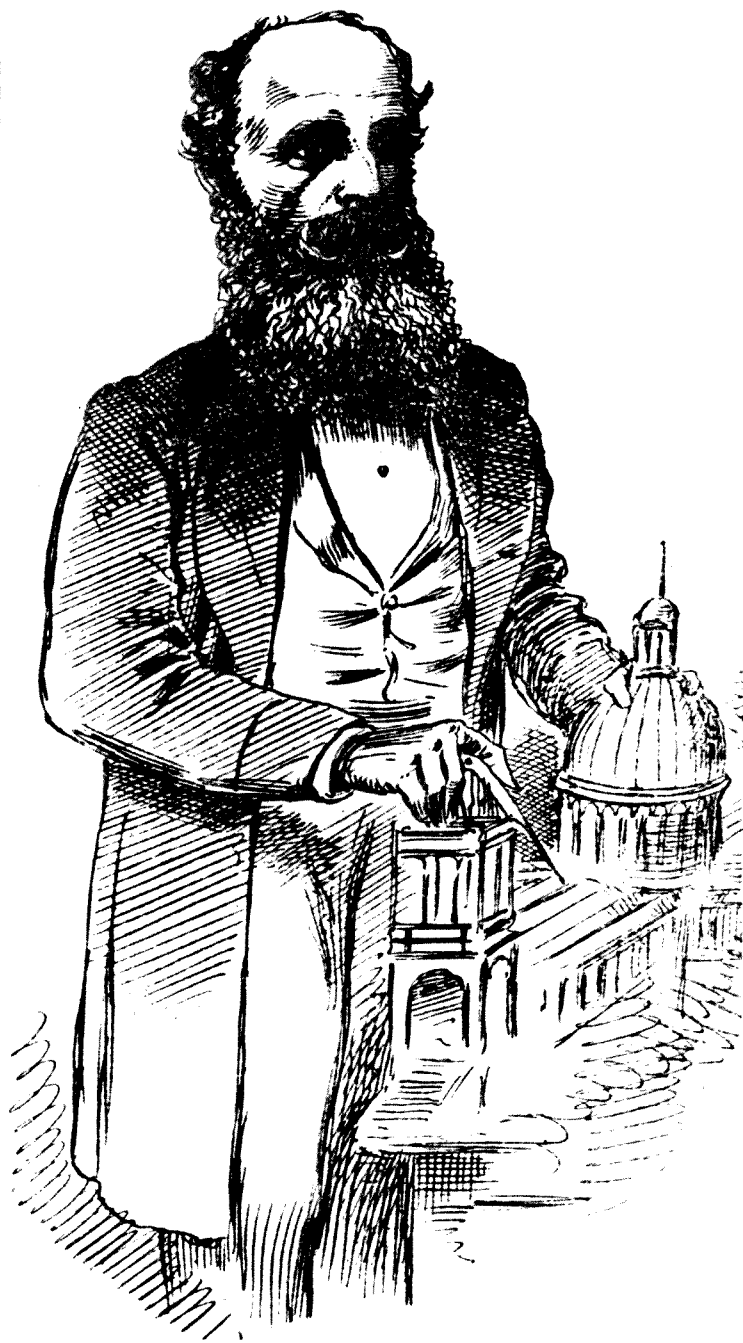
roof of the nave and transept was formed of an intricate network of similar arches, basically resembling the iron purlins of the Crystal Palace. Joinery throughout the building was painted buff and green; the chief structural elements were stencilled in terra cotta red and decorations were picked out in gold. Facing the balconies of the galleries were cloth panels painted with the names of the nations participating in the Exhibition and their principal cities, interspersed with national emblems such as the shamrock, waratah and lily. The Sydney Mail marvelled at the tout ensemble:

Not only does the grand expanse of the dome and its lofty arches command admiration and excite a novel interest, there are also details at the angle of its bases, the elegant columns, the arcaded opening to the stairs, and the panelled walls with symbolic pictures, all within the coup d'oeil and each striking attention, just as the whole view is rendered impressive by its great extent and the multitude of attractive objects.¹¹

This wonderful edifice had been built in just eight months of frantic effort. It was officially handed over by the contractor only days before the official opening of the Exhibition, and the gardens that were to justify its name were not complete until the end of the year.

The site of the Garden Palace was part of the Governor's private domain, attached to Government House. Lord Loftus relinquished it willingly, for though it was not officially nominated the site for the Exhibition until the end of December, popular opinion had made it so, de facto, by October 1878. When the Government at last adopted the

¹¹Sydney Mail, 20.9.1879, p.465.



PEOPLE WE KNOW.—No. 77.
OUR COLONIAL PAXTON,
OF GARDEN PALACE RENOWN.

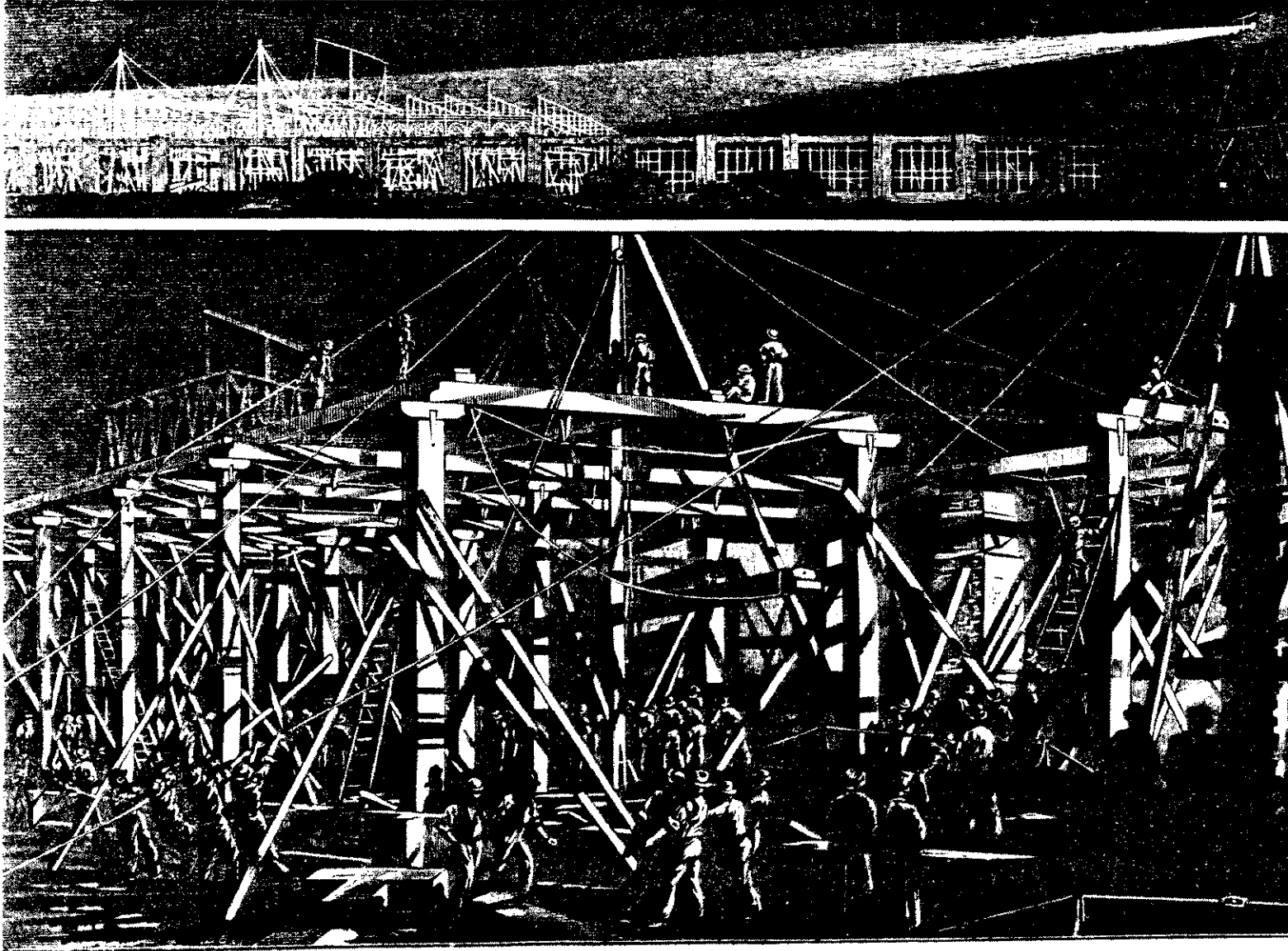
Exhibition as a national project it took the construction of the exhibition building upon itself, rather than delegating it to the Commission with the rest of the exhibition organization; thus it became the project of the Colonial Architect.

Barnet had certainly been preparing for the commission for some months, for he produced his plans for the Garden Palace within days of its becoming an official project. He would certainly have seen the Crystal Palace before he emigrated to NSW in 1854 and he would have been well aware of contemporary exhibition building designs, for plans, descriptions and views of all the major exhibition buildings had been obtainable locally in the Building News and the Builder.¹²

The contractor for the Garden Palace, John Young, was also familiar with exhibition building design. An architect who had discovered construction to be more profitable than design, he had worked for Joseph Paxton preparing drawings for the Crystal Palace before he came to the colonies in 1856. He won the contract for the Garden Palace on account of his extensive experience, but was required to work with rival tenderer Hudson Bros. who owned the most modern and efficient woodworking plant in the colony.

Excavations began on the site on 14 January 1879; a hundred men gathered outside the gates that morning hoping for work, but the

¹²Both magazines were, of course, published in the UK, but were available at the Australian Subscription Library and the Mechanics' Institute, and were widely subscribed to by individuals. Some of Blakett's copies of the Builder in Fisher are inscribed 'To Mr. Barnet' (formerly his clerk of works at Sydney University).



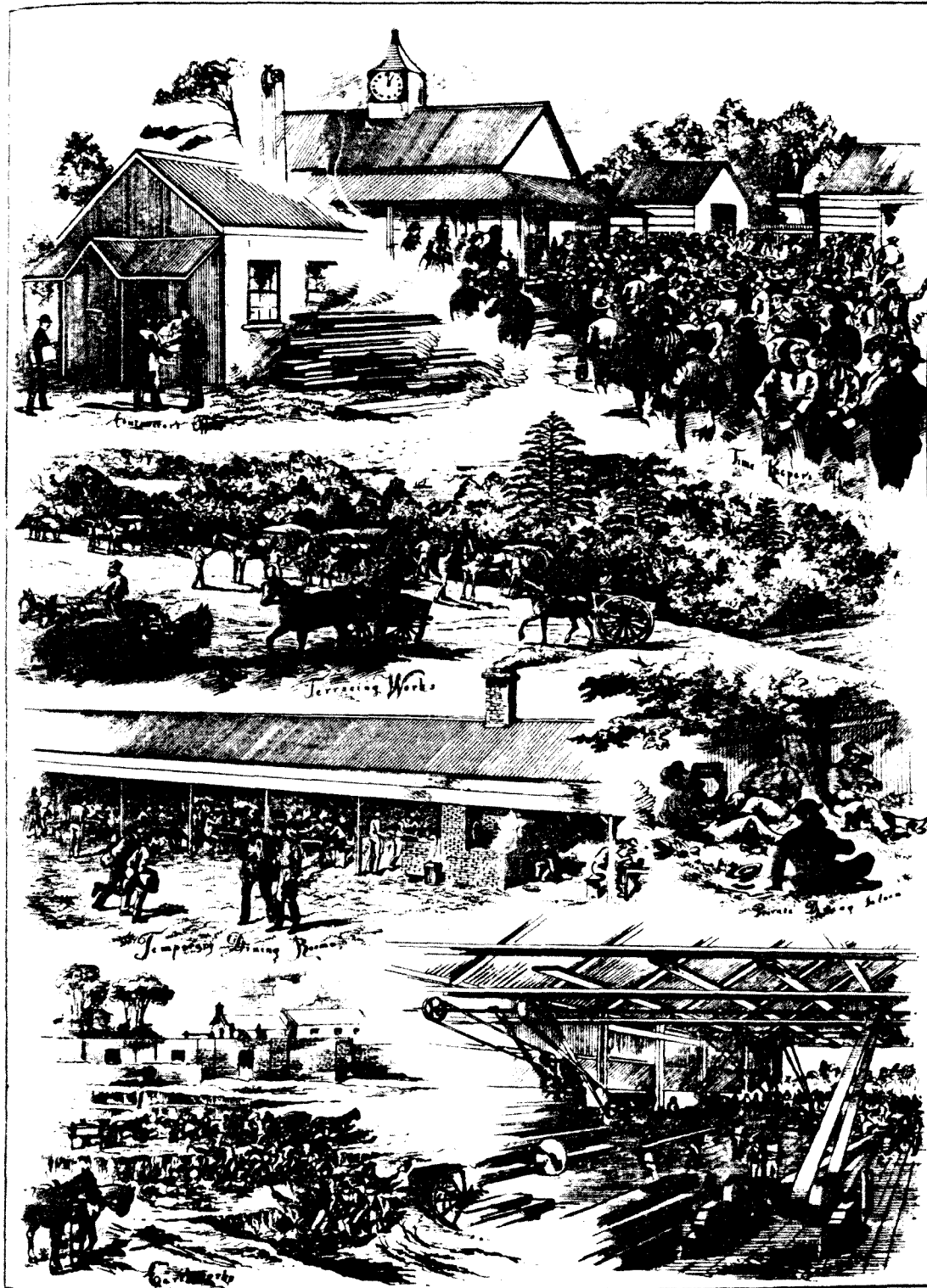
THE ELECTRIC LIGHT AT THE SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION BUILDING.

contractor had already engaged his complement of labourers. By the end of the month five hundred men were employed, digging the basement, laying the brick foundations and timbering the ground floor. Hudson Bros. established a sawmill and joinery workshop on the site, and a galvanized ironworks was set up in the lee of the embankment.

On 13 February Lady Robinson, the wife of the Governor, laid the foundation stone of the dome with a golden trowel and a myall mallet. Under the stone was sealed a large glass jar containing the Government Gazette, the Official Programme of the Exhibition and that day's editions of all the Sydney newspapers.¹³ To give some idea of the building-to-be, the framework of a portion of the superstructure was erected and the distinguished guests toasted its progress with champagne.

By mid-March over a thousand men were employed on the site. The timber framework of the nave and transept reared up on the huge foundation, construction moving from the south and west ends towards the central crossing. Trolleys ran on rails rigged along the roof scaffolding in order to lift the heavy principals and carry them into place. For maximum productivity enormous electric lanterns were imported from Britain, the first practical use of electric light in the colony. Powered each by a four horse-power engine they produced six thousand candlepower and lit the site so brilliantly that the contrasting darkness of shadows caused many slips and accidents. It

¹³It survived the fire that destroyed the Garden Palace and is today stored, still sealed, in the State Library of NSW.



was now possible to work three construction shifts, but within a month the lights were dismantled - though effective, they were too costly to run.¹⁴

The pace of work continued hectic until late April, when two thirds of the six hundred carpenters on the job struck for an extra threepence an hour danger money. While police patrolled the site guarding blackleg workers, the men met to petition the government. Henry Parkes was determined that they should not win; John Young swore it; and the Sydney press damned the strikers for unpatriotic selfishness. The strike endured two weeks, but withered, and construction resumed.

By the end of May half the building was roofed and contracts were let for interior decoration; it was taken on by Lyon & Cottier, Sydney's most prominent decorating firm.¹⁵ Gradually the framework of the dome crept upwards. At half its height it was as tall as the Colonial Secretary's building opposite in Macquarie St., and one commentator wrote that it was "already sufficiently high to make one tremble to see the workmen moving about on top of it."¹⁶ Over the next month the thirty-six great ribs were hauled into place. At the

¹⁴SMH, 5.4.1879, p.6.

¹⁵From the mid-1870s to the early 1920s the partnership of John Lyon and Daniel Cottier (from 1888, Lyon, Wells & Cottier) was among Sydney's most prominent interior decorating firms. The company undertook some of the most prestigious and public decorating assignments in Sydney and Melbourne, e.g. Government House, Sydney, 1879; the ANZ Bank, Collins St., Melbourne, 1887. See also Don Ellesmore, "The Decorators Lyon and Cottier", Historic Houses Journal, 1/1982, p.2-7.

¹⁶SMH, 9.5.1879, p.7.

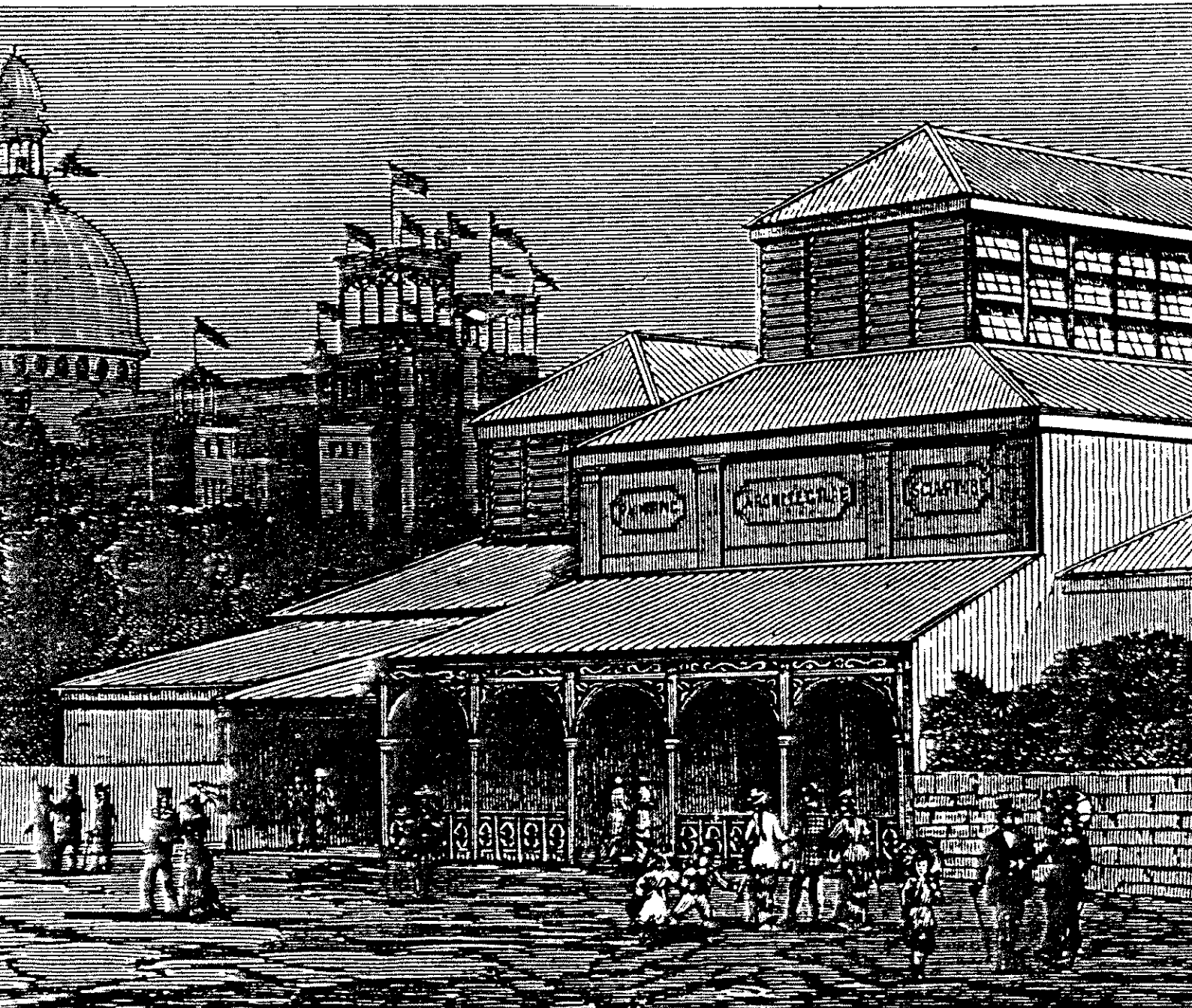
same time plans for the surrounding gardens began to take shape. Under the direction of Dr Charles Moore, Head of the Botanic Gardens, trees were felled to create new vistas through the Gardens to the harbour.

Early in July the last rib of the dome was hoisted into place and the grandees of the city were invited to watch. The operation was performed in so technically perfect a manner that fifty years later a young associate of John Young's recalled how the dome settled with but 2½ inches displacement.¹⁷ By the end of the month the dome was almost entirely clothed in galvanized iron, and it began to emerge upon the skyline of Sydney as a proud landmark of the city.¹⁸

The unexpected international demand for exhibition space led in June to the calling of tenders for the three extra halls to accommodate machinery in motion, agricultural machinery and agricultural produce. John Young took out the contract, agreeing to have them ready by September. Built to the south, between the Garden Palace and St Mary's, they were necessarily plain, functional structures of timber. But in their basic relation to that archetype of Australian

¹⁷H.C. Kent, "Reminiscences of building methods in the 70s under John Young", Architecture, Nov. 1924, p.12.

¹⁸The significance of the Garden Palace as a landmark cannot be underestimated. The great dome and the studding of turrets above its huge bulk made it a splendid example of horizon architecture, visible from most parts of the city as well as the harbourside and inner western suburbs. Countless photos, sketches and formal paintings were taken from the two most picturesque vantage points: the road to Mrs. Macquarie's Chair and the western point of Bradley's Head. Grand beside the water, it was the precursor of the Harbour Bridge as Sydney's international icon.



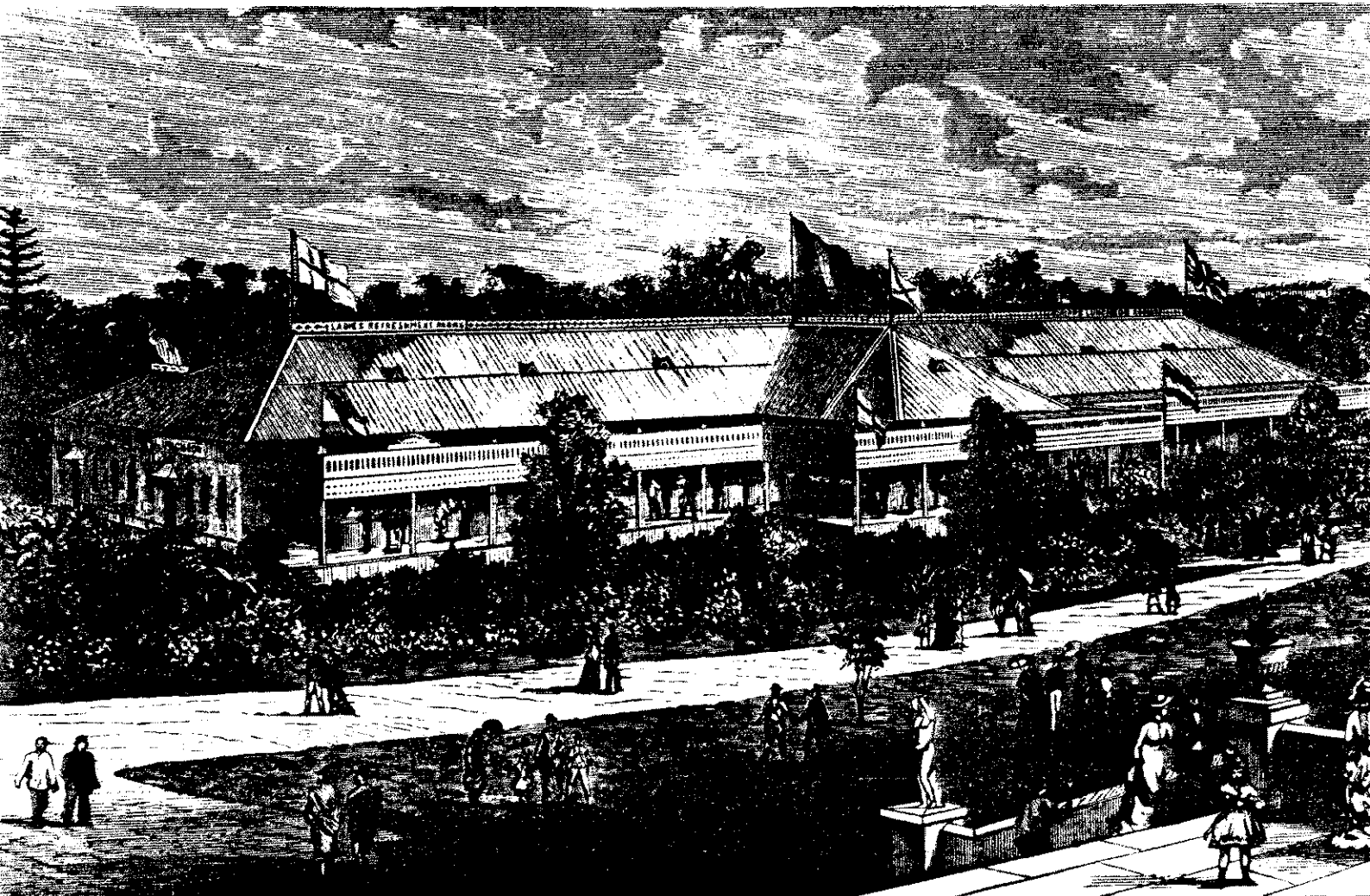
vernacular architecture, the woolshed, they comprised the only Exhibition reminder of the sheep culture that underpinned the colony's wealth.

Work began on the new Art Gallery at the beginning of September. It was designed by William Wardell of iron and wood, 156 feet x 80 feet, divided into three internal bays. Natural light was introduced through high clerestory windows, but in view of the structure's north-south orientation, visitors were advised to inspect one side of the gallery in the morning and the other in the afternoon. The corrugated iron roof was cooled by an ingenious irrigation system which could also serve as an emergency fire hydrant. Inside, the walls were panelled with tongue and groove boards, "coloured a dullish red - somewhat of a dark maroon"¹⁹ and the doors between the nine national galleries were hung with velvet draperies.

Throughout August carpenters continued to work on the turrets of the towers and the pinnacle of the dome. Far below them work was under way on a host of halls, pavilions and kiosks in the exhibition grounds. Pens and show rings were constructed close to the Agricultural Hall. A horseshoe of gates and ticket booths appeared at the main entrance in Macquarie St near Bent St. Behind them to the north workmens' sheds were converted to the temporary Garden Palace Police Station and Barracks and the Garden Palace Post Office. Strategically opposite the gates was rising the photographic studio of Roberts, Richards & Co., "By Special Appointment Sole Portrait and Landscape Photographers to the Sydney International Exhibition".

¹⁹Daily Telegraph, 11.11.1879.

3.9 Cripps' Refreshment Pavilion; ISN, 4.10.1879, p.17



Concessions had been let to two Sydney catering companies for large restaurants in the grounds: Compagnoni's to the south facing Macquarie St and Cripps' to the east overlooking Farm Cove. To the north, squeezed between the Garden Palace and the Government Stables, two spans of iron girder bridges were mounted on blocks; one American, one British, they were erected over NSW rivers after the Exhibition closed.²⁰ A monumental obelisk, 100 feet high, loomed by the eastern tower vestibule; it was designed by the NSW Department of Mines to represent the coal and gold of the colony - the base was actually veneered with coal from every major seam in the colony, and the obelisk itself was constructed of canvas applied with real gold leaf.

Meanwhile indoors decoration continued, the internal dome the last portion to be finished. The great fountain was installed at the end of August after the floor had been reinforced with a concrete slab, and the statue of the Queen set ceremoniously upon it. The pedestal and the balustrade surrounding it were later massed with potted ferns and chairs were placed round about among potted palms. Further to the comfort of visitors to the Exhibition the Garden Palace lavatories were contracted out to private enterprise; for the fee of threepence ladies and gentlemen could make use of the facilities, which it was promised would include soap, a towel and a comb. Some thought the charge excessive for the service,²¹ but they could stroll through the

²⁰The American bridge, by the Edgemoor Iron co., Wilmington, Delaware, spans the Shoalhaven at Nowra. The English bridge, by Appleby Bros, East Greenwich, to the design of W.C. Bennet, Engineer-in-Chief for Roads and Bridges, Sydney, spanned Iron Cove (Drummoyne). See also Ch.4, p.102.

²¹Letter to the Editor, SMH, 17.10.1879.



SIR D. COOPER AND HIS HURDY-GURDY.

A SUGGESTION TO THE COMMISSIONER FOR THE PROPER DISPLAY OF THE MAGNIFICENT (?) ORGAN AT THE GARDEN PALACE.

Gardens towards Farm Cove, where a public latrine was discreetly situated.

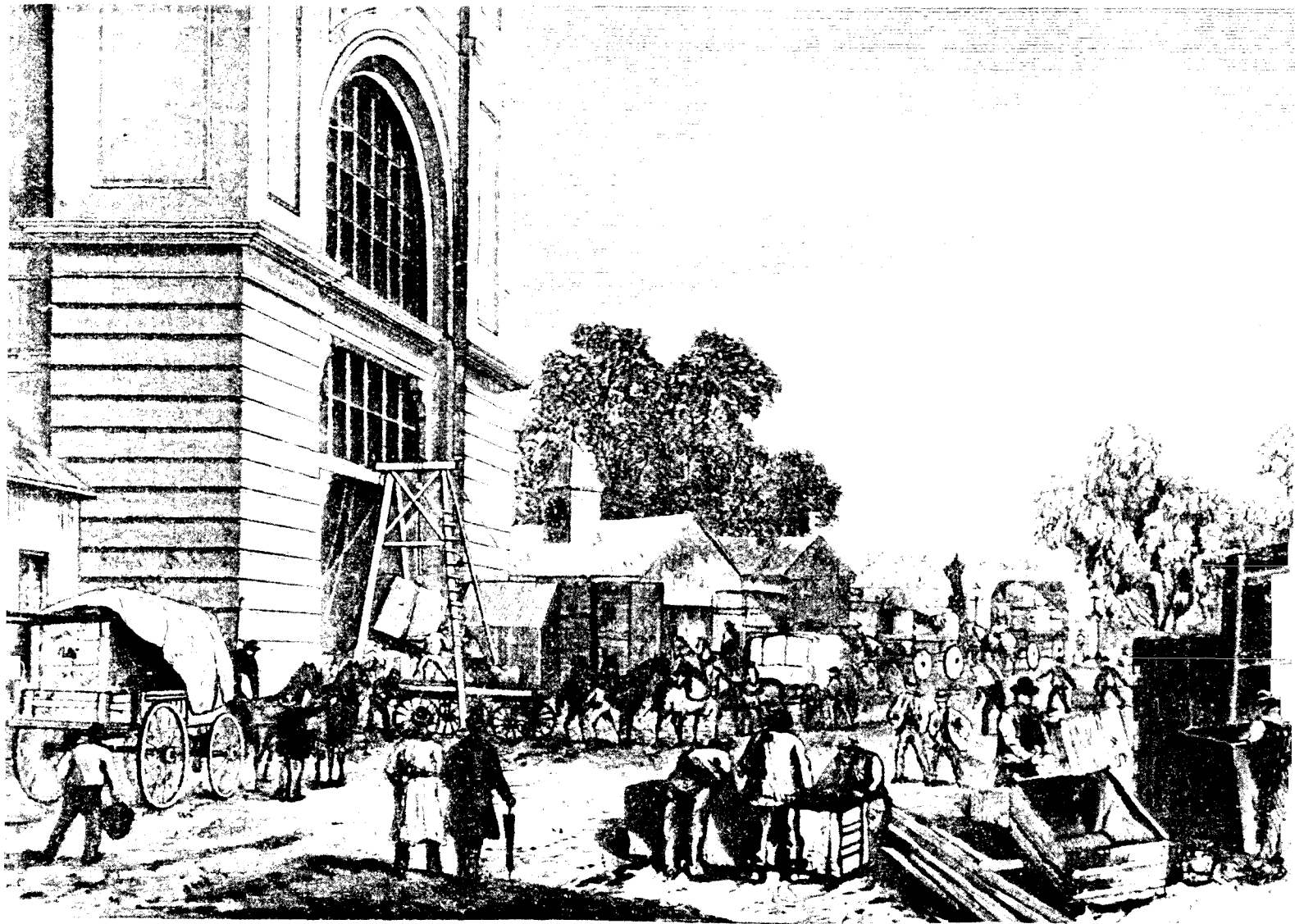
The newly-arrived organ was unravelled pipe by pipe and installed on the northern tower wall. The instrument had been made by Gray & Davison of London and was remodelled from its original GG range to CC in 1867; it was purchased for the Exhibition by Sir Daniel Cooper, NSW Agent General, for 600 pounds, but it was not a good buy. On its arrival in Sydney it was found to need extensive refitting before it could be assembled. The rain of the last week further damaged it -the swell and great organ boards required taking down and repairing. The tone of the instrument was not much appreciated, though perhaps Sydney Punch was exaggerating when it wrote:

Oh that horrid, horrid organ,
Cost us just eight hundred pounds;
Not a Packer or a Broadhurst,
Could draw from it music's sounds.²²

Allocation of exhibition space to foreign exhibitors was finalised by 2 September, and local exhibitors struggled for their shares thereafter. Participants from the Old World occupied the entire western half of the Garden Palace; the New World, including the Australian colonies, filled the eastern side.²³ With two weeks in hand before Opening Day there were still partitions, cases and trophies to be constructed; packages of exhibits to be opened, dusted

²²Sydney Punch, 4.10.1879. Punch exaggerated the price. Mr John Packer and Madame Florence Broadhurst were among the dozen or so regular artistes who gave recitals on pianos exhibited in the Garden Palace.

²³This division is an archetypal example of exhibition symbolism.



off, arranged and labelled; catalogues to be verified and printed. Fifteen hundred cases had by this time been delivered to the Garden Palace and a further three to four thousand yet remained to make the boggy journey from Mort's Woolloomooloo wool stores. By the last week the British court was well advanced in its arrangements; Japan and the USA were reported to be pushing on; the Australian colonies were expected to have completed their displays by the last day; but the large European courts were sadly remiss - "At the present rate of progress Christmas will hardly see the European exhibitors ready", berated the Herald.²⁴ Nonetheless the Executive Commissioner maintained a confident expectation that two-thirds, even five-sixths, of the exhibits would be in place for the Opening.

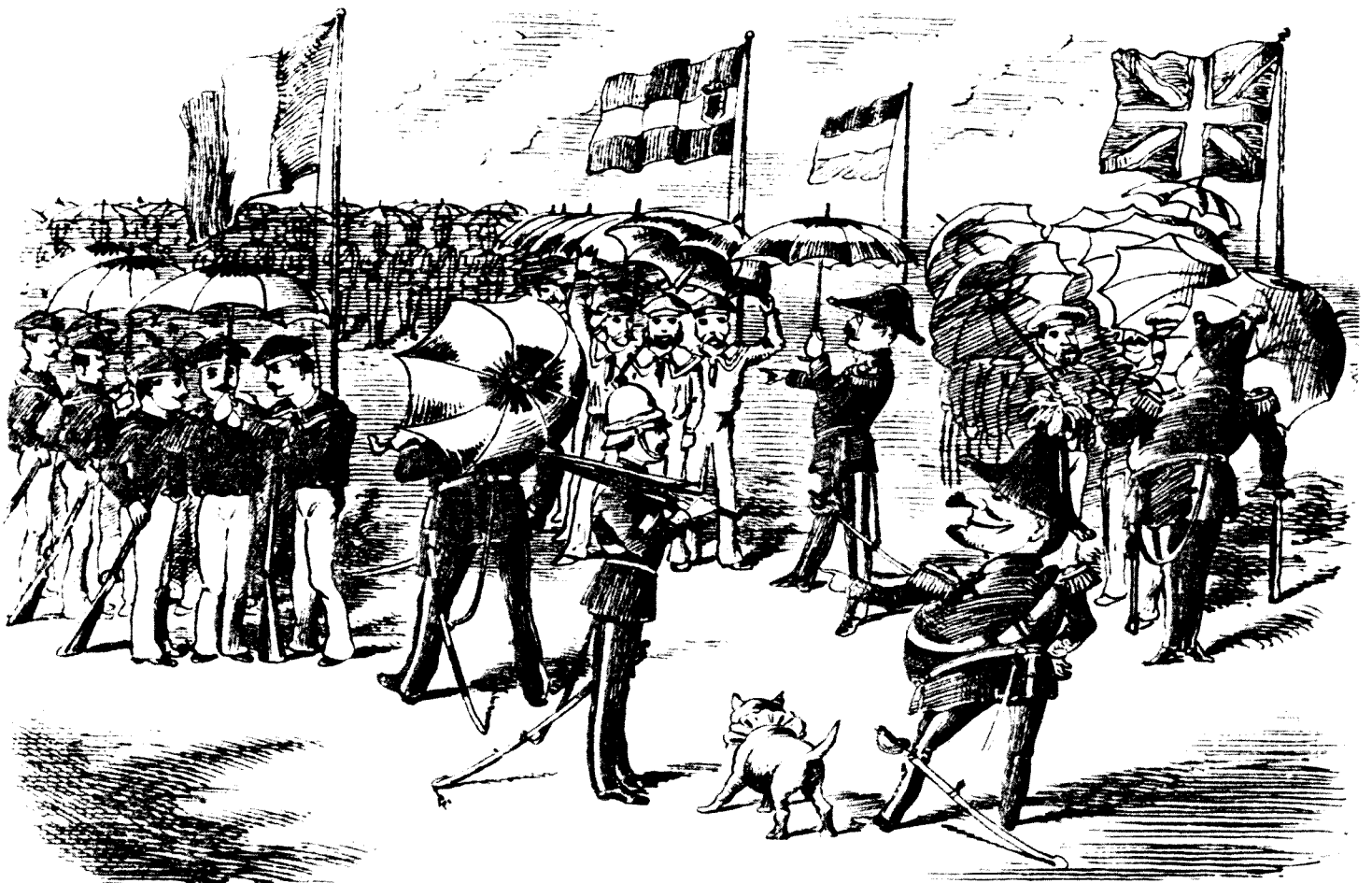
It had been planned to open the Exhibition at the beginning of September. The miserable weather and consequent delays in construction forced the date back a fortnight, to Wednesday the 17th. Even then, as the heavens continued to pour, opinion was divided as to the desirability, possibility or necessity of putting it off even further; eventually Lord Loftus, the Governor, judged gruffly "that the only way to open the Exhibition was to open it,"²⁵ and this sensible advice prevailed. The program of ceremonies was announced and invitations were despatched.

Lord Loftus was to declare the Exhibition open in the company of the four other colonial governors. They were to be preceded to the

²⁴SMH, 10.9.1879, p.7.

²⁵SMH, 13.9.1879, p.3.

3.12 Mr Punch's comment on the non-participation of the military at the Opening; Sydney Punch, 27.9.1879, p.92



PUNCH'S WET-ERANS; Or, a Hint for the carrying out of all Naval and Military Reviews in future.

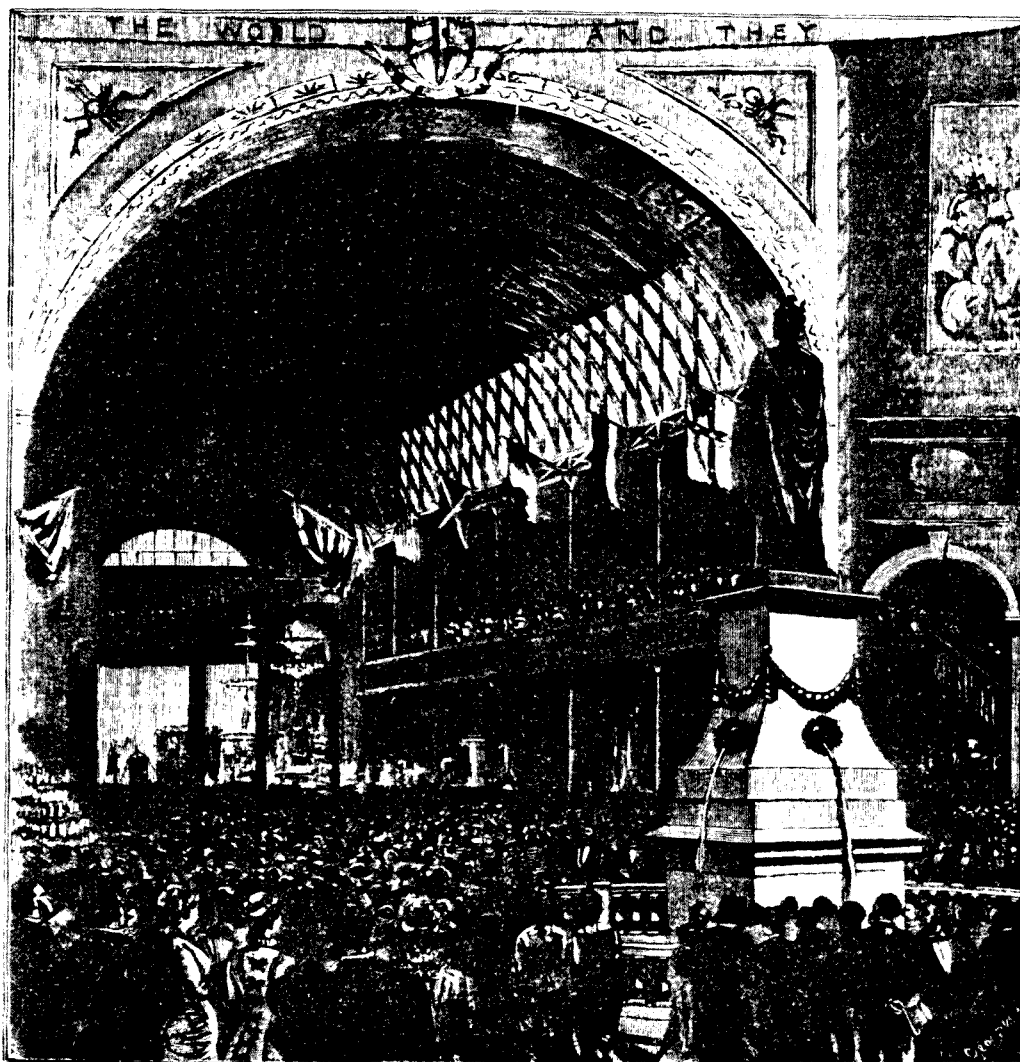
Garden Palace by a giant parade of the mounted and foot military, volunteer fire brigades, friendly societies and trades unions, and cheered from the footpaths by the people of Sydney, for the day was to be declared a public holiday. Inside the Garden Palace the statue of the Queen would be unveiled, the declaration made and the Commissioners presented to the vice-regal chair. The official guests would then tour the exhibits and after they had left the Exhibition would be open to the public.

By the beginning of opening week it had rained 10 inches in thirteen days. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon before the Opening the militia command withdrew the military and naval contingents from the next day's parade, bringing down the mockery of Punch:

Because it rained, it was proclaimed,
"Our Forces" wouldn't march out;
No doubt in fear that from their shirts
The rain would wash the starch out."²⁶

But late that evening the moon was observed emerging from the clouds, and Wednesday 17 September dawned clear and sunny. Crowds began to gather along the route of the procession and at the gates of the Garden Palace. Between the gates and the main entrance a footpath of planks was laid over the mud. Overhead, hundreds of flags fluttered from the roof. The police took up their places to hold back the multitude. At 10 o'clock the first contingent of the procession struck out along Macquarie St from Hyde Park, led by a squad of mounted police and set pace by a brass band. The insurance companies

²⁶Sydney Punch, 20.9.1879, p.82.



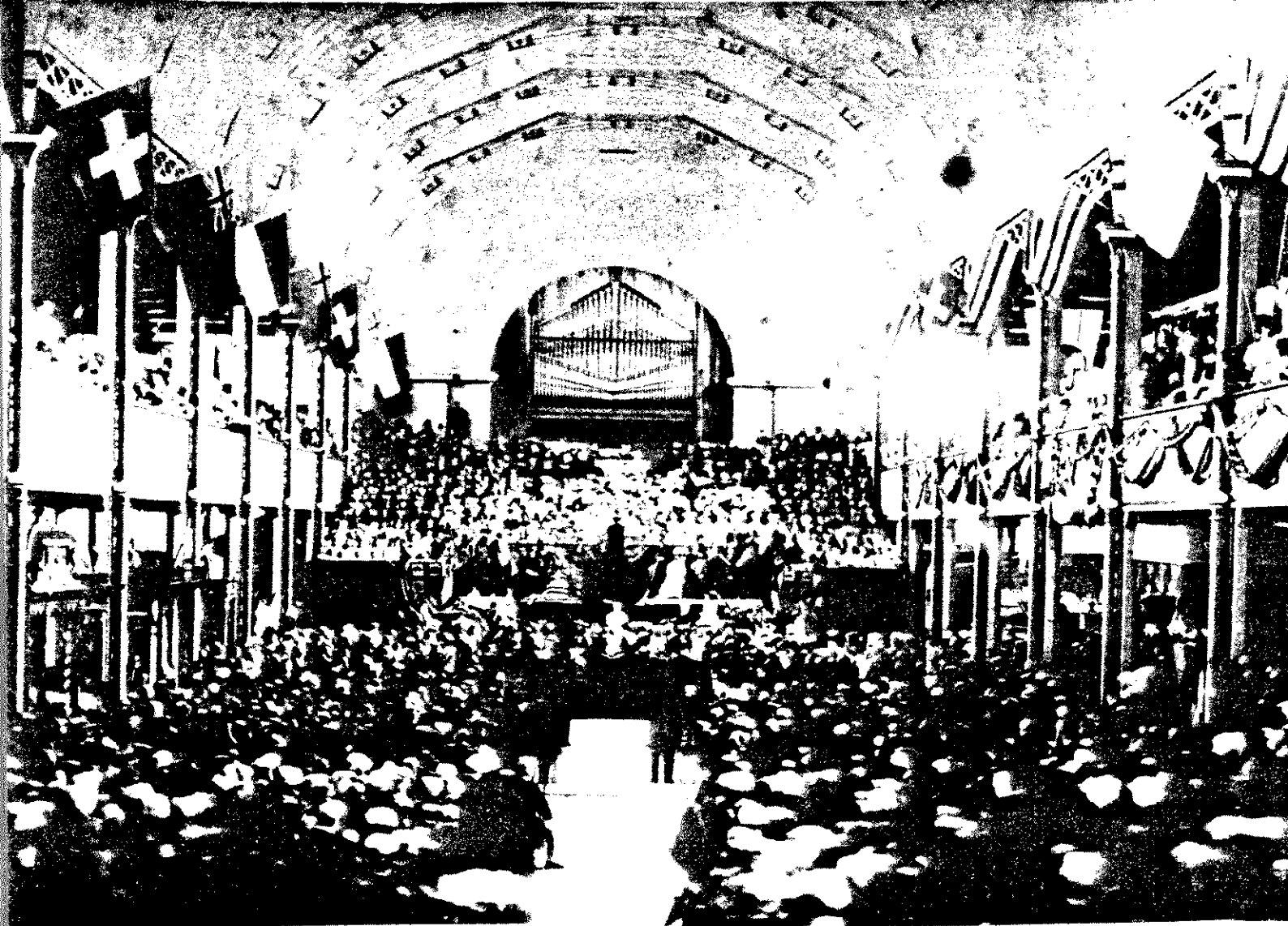
and volunteer fire brigades marched first with their fire engines, followed by members of friendly societies and guilds - Oddfellows, Druids, Legionnaires of Mary, the Seamen of NSW and the Journeymen Tailors. They marched to Government House, where Lord Loftus and his brother governors joined in, then doubled back through the centre of the city to make a second grand approach along Macquarie St. Thus flanked by citizens the vice-regal party entered the Garden Palace and was received by the Executive Commissioner.

Proceeding to the dome Lord Loftus shook the Union Jack from the statue of the Queen as the choir burst into the national anthem. The party then moved up the nave between the ranks of invited guests - Members of Parliament, senior public servants, municipal officers and visiting military - to the official dias. Here the members of the Exhibition Commission were seated among a handsome collection of potted palms and flags representing the participating nations and colonies. The governors were enthroned at the front (beside them, absent but not forgotten, stood a marble bust of Sir Hercules Robinson) and the ceremony began.

The choir rose to present the triumphal Exhibition Cantata. Seven hundred voices, men, women and children, they were accompanied by a fifty piece orchestra, eight pianos and the Exhibition organ.

Lo, they come - the lords unknown,
Sons of peace from every zone!
See above our waves unfurled
All the flags of all the world!
North and South and West and East
Gather in to grace our Feast.

3.14 The Opening: "Bad photo said to be result of floor shaking";
SIE Photo Album, vol.1, p.25



Shining nations! let them see
How like England we can be.²⁷

The Cantata was composed by Paolo Giorza, the Exhibition's Director of Music, to a libretto by Henry Kendall.

It was "a grand, expectant outburst" reported the Herald the next day; "cheer after cheer followed, and Signor Giorza had to bow his thanks over and over again".²⁸ The children's chorus received an encore and the audience settled back for the speeches.

The spectacle was splendid as Executive Commissioner Jennings rose to present the Exhibition to the Governor. Lord Loftus thanked Mr Jennings and welcomed the visitors in the name of NSW, "once despised and - may I not say? - now honoured".²⁹ He declared the Sydney International Exhibition open in the name of the Queen and the cheers resounding through the Garden Palace nearly drowned the report of the cannons of the harbour fortifications and the men-of-war at berth there. The choir thundered out the Hallelujah Chorus; a message was flashed off to Windsor on the electric telegraph; and the floors so trembled that photographs blurred in the camera. The choir led next into Giorza's Australian March and the ceremony closed with God Save the Queen and three hearty cheers. The gubernatorial party left the

²⁷The text was widely published in the press; it is also in the Record, p.lvii. After the Opening it was published by Giorza (printed by Troedel & Co.) in a piano score. A copy of this score is held by MAAS; see the Catalogue of Relics. The Cantata was performed again on 22 September 1982 to commemorate the centenary of the destruction of the Garden Palace.

²⁸SMH, 18.9.1879, p.6.

²⁹Record, p.lxii.

3.15 Mr Punch honours Executive Commissioner Jennings; Sydney Punch,
27.9.1879, p.93



"HONOUR TO WHOM HONOUR."

Mr. Executive Commissioner P. A. Jennings, C.M.G., is introduced into the presence of Her Majesty the Queen, by N.S. Wilson, for the purpose of presenting Her Majesty with a model of the "Garden Palace."

dais to make a short inspection of the Exhibition; in each national court they were presented to the visiting Commissioners. About 1 o'clock they departed to Government House, where an official dinner was held in the evening.

The doors of the Exhibition were now open to the people, albeit at the exclusive Opening Day price of five shillings, 24,000 visitors attended.

The Opening was universally agreed to have been a magnificent and historic Australian event.

For the first time an Australian colony has found itself in a position to invite the nations of the world to send exhibits of their productions to a great show to be held in her capital. The vast building, erected with marvellous celerity to house the Exhibition, will compare in style and architectural effect with the great structures erected from time to time since 1851 for the various world's fairs that have been held from Vienna in the East to Philadelphia in the West. The specialty in the case of the Sydney Show is that it is held in a city which has sprung up to its present stage of growth and civilization in a land which was only coasted along by its discoverers 100 years ago, and the very existence of which was possibly until recently unknown to many of the exhibitors. So that the visitors from distant countries will have much to observe besides the interesting products of art and industry submitted to their inspection. Far over-shadowing these in interest and importance is the spectacle of these communities of the Anglo-Saxon race striking their roots deep and carrying their growth and blossom high and luxuriant on the shores of a vast continent only reclaimed from desolation, solitude and barbarism within the memories of our fathers.³⁰

³⁰Australasian Sketcher, 27.9.1879, p.106.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Exhibition is so vast:

The exhibits

...the Exhibition is so vast, and the exhibits are so numerous and so well displayed, that the visitor is puzzled where to commence making his inspection.¹

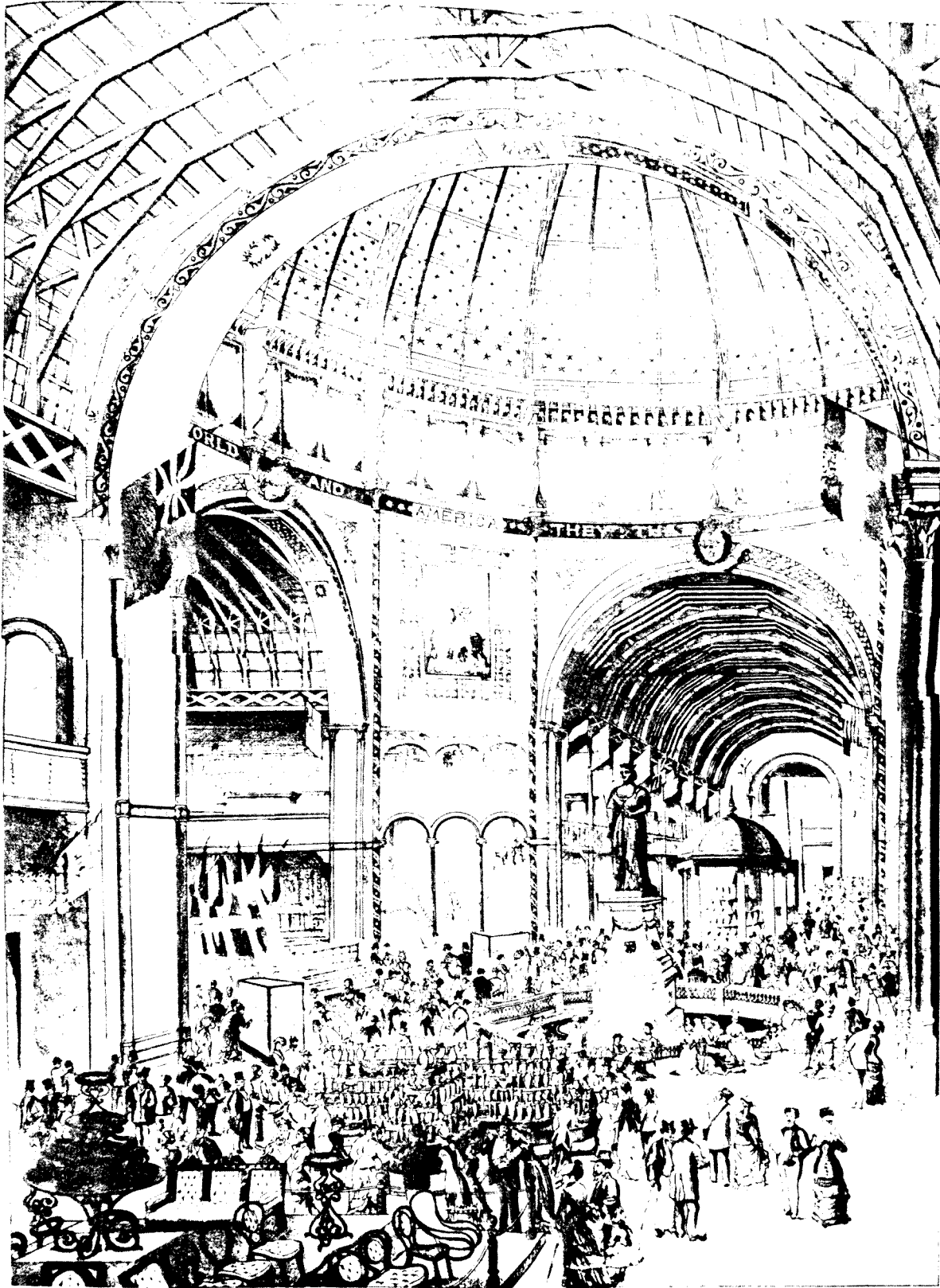
All the exhibits in the Sydney International Exhibition were displayed in national courts, with the exception of machinery, which was gathered together in the Machinery Hall, and agricultural and horticultural products, which were shown in the Agricultural Hall. Most participating nations sent a Commissioner and varying numbers of staff to tend the displays and answer the enquiries of visitors. Each nation also published an official (though rarely definitive) catalogue of goods exhibited in its court. These usually gave proud lists of international exhibition prizes already to the credit of products on show and often added the name of the Sydney agent from whom they could be obtained after the Exhibition.

Although physically distributed about the Garden Palace in national courts all groups of exhibits were linked in a great theoretical web of classification by material or function. Schemes of classification had enchanted and bedevilled the minds of exhibition planners since the early French national expositions, and they were devised, revised, altered and rewritten for nearly every successive exhibition.² The system used at the Sydney International Exhibition was adapted from that devised for the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876. It comprised seven basic functional divisions:

¹SMH, 20.9.1879, p.3.

²John Allwood, "International Exhibitions and the classification of their exhibits", JRSA, June 1980, p.450-5.

4.1 Inside the Garden Palace; ISN, supplement, 1.11.1879



1. Mining, metallurgy and their products
2. Manufactures
3. Education and science, including the Ethnological Court
4. Art, plus the Ladies' Court
5. Machinery
6. Agriculture
7. Horticulture

The departments were sub-divided into fifty five groups and these further reduced to four hundred and forty six classes, each with an encyclopedic description of its scope.³

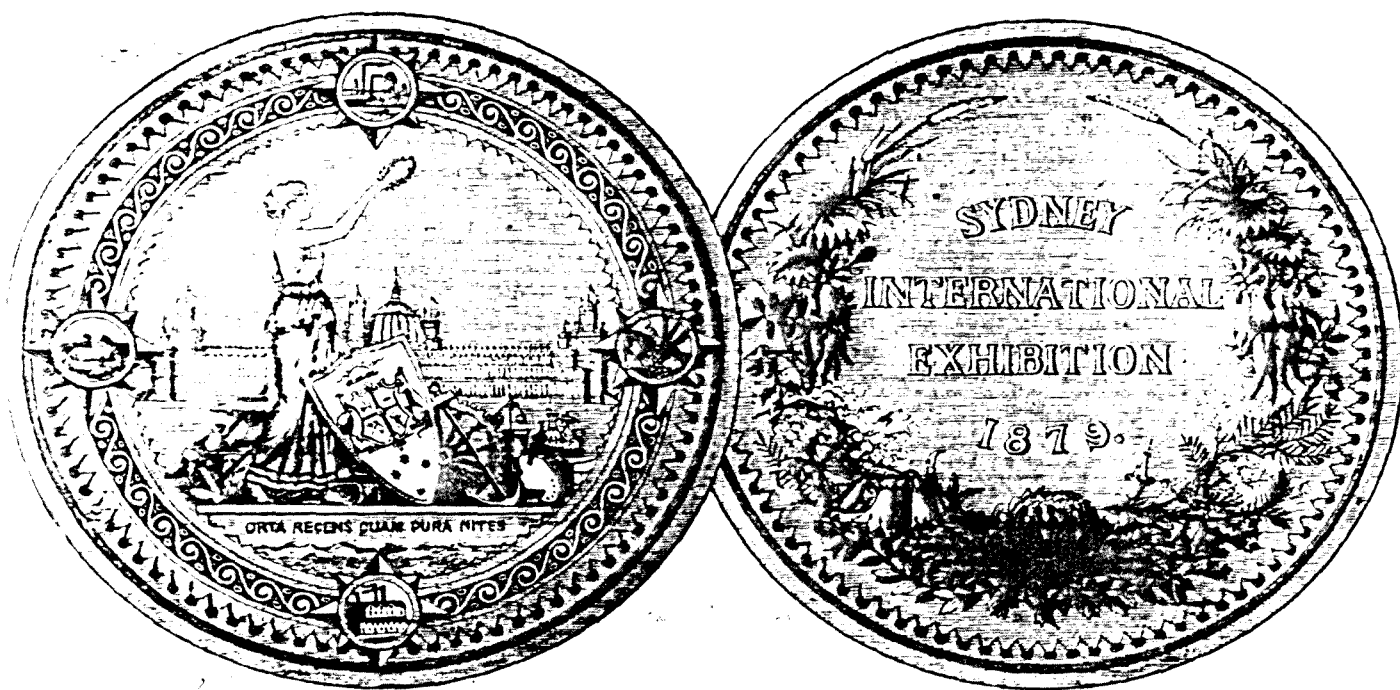
International exhibitions were not merely decorative displays; they were trade competitions, judged by juries appointed by the Commission. In Sydney this was a sensitive business, for it proved difficult to assemble a sufficient number of acceptably impartial experts. The official appointments were announced some months after the Opening and judging did not begin until January 1880. Still there were objections. "I can assure you that an exhibit of mine has been judged by gentlemen who did not know one end of it from the other," snarled "An Exhibitor" to the Editor of the Herald⁴; "How in the name of common sense have some of the judges been appointed to their high office, their qualifications being simply nil?...There must surely be some underground influence at work", insinuated "St John" in the same publication⁵.

³See Record, p.clxix-clxxxvi.

⁴Letter to the Editor, SMH, from "An Exhibitor", 11.3.1880, p.5.

⁵SMH, 17.3.1880, p.2.

4.2 Exhibition medal; AT&CJ, 5.4.1879, p.649



The Executive Commissioner noted the problem in his Report: "It is confessedly a matter of impossibility to please everybody, and experience has shown that however carefully and conscientiously the work of judging may be performed a small residuum of disappointment and dissatisfaction will be shown by a few".⁶ However, he observed that out of more than 7,500 awards only two hundred were appealed; this he felt was adequate evidence of the judges' probity.

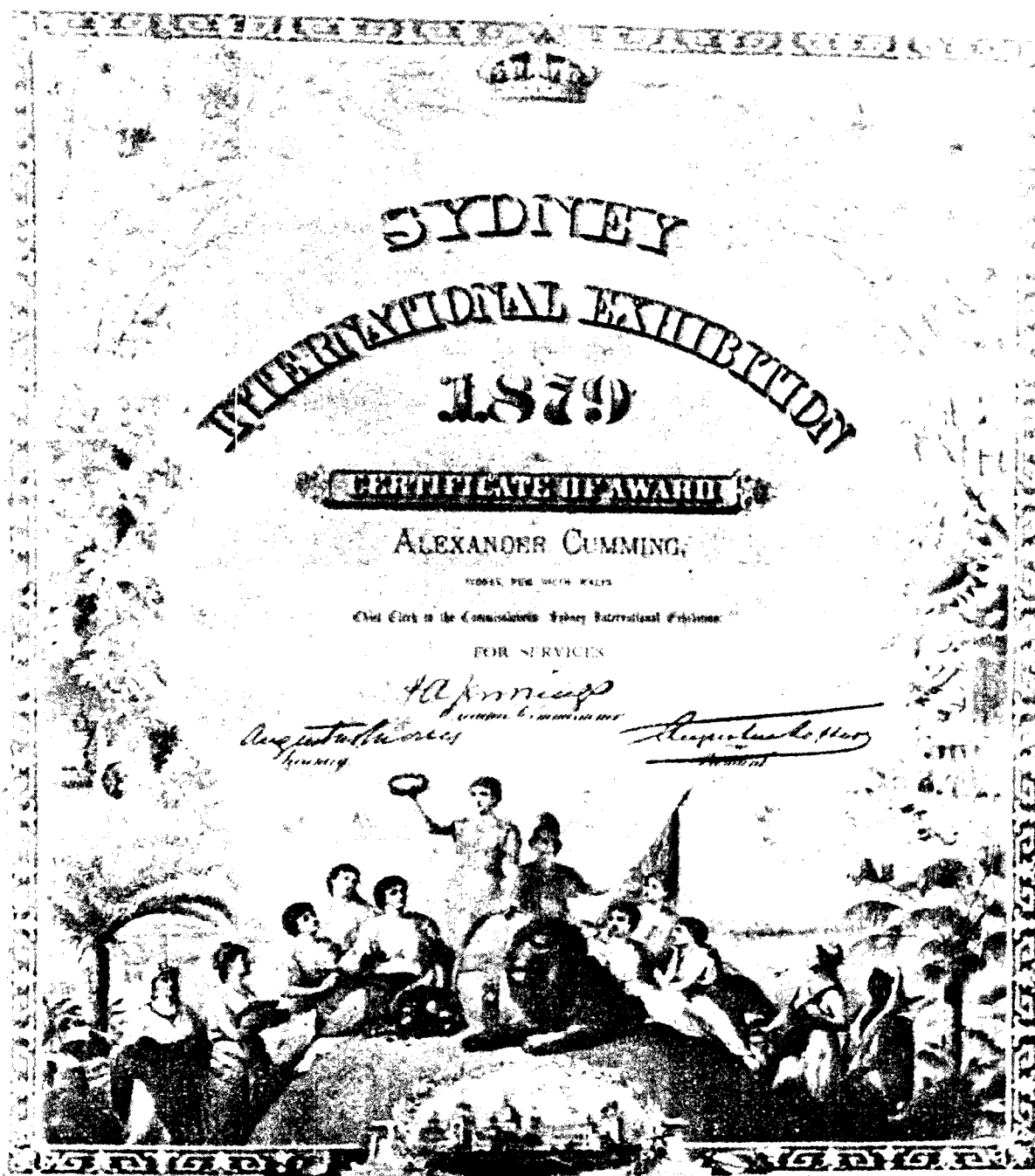
The prize awarded by the Sydney International Exhibition was a bronze medal and a diploma in five categories of merit: Honourable Mention; Commended; Highly Commended; First Degree of Merit; and First Degree of Merit Special. Since the Agricultural Society was to present its own gold medals in the agricultural and horticultural departments, the Commission decided to present a small number of precious exhibition medals to foreign displays that were particularly representative.

The medal was designed by Samuel Begg.⁷ It was firmly within the tradition of exhibition medals established by the Great Exhibition, being an elaborate allegory of the welcome of Art and Industry to New South Wales. On the reverse was an intricate wreath of Australian native flowers centering on a waratah; this would enclose the engraved name of the winner and the category of his exhibit. The dies were prepared by the London firm J.S. & A.B. Wyon. The medals were struck at the Sydney Mint (some were also struck in London).⁸

⁶Record, p.xcviii.

⁷Samuel Begg (1854-1919?), newspaper artist in Sydney 1879-80s.

⁸See also L. Carlisle, "Australia's first International Exhibition, Sydney, 1879", Report of the Australian Numismatic Society Yearbook, 1978, no.3, p.22.



The Diploma, also an elaborate allegory, was designed by H.C. Kent, the Sydney architect, somewhat modified by his daughter Annette Kent. It was engraved by the American Bank Note Company of New York, which employed "Six highly-skilled experts on it, who never lost an hour",⁹ and charged only cost price. The Diploma was officially regarded as the principal award of the Exhibition; an exhibitor received a Diploma for every prize he won, but was theoretically allowed only one medal. In fact, however, numerous multiple awards survive.

⁹Record, p.cxxvi.



Department 1: Mining, metallurgy and their products

The most spectacular and popular exhibits in the mining products department were the impressive mineral collections shown by nearly every country and colony. The highest prize went to the Rev. W. B. Clarke's famous collection recently acquired by the NSW Department of Mines, which comprised more than a thousand samples; the judges commented that it was "difficult to class it sufficiently high on account of its great superiority."¹⁰

Another notable collection was that formed by the Inspector of Mines for Cornwall illustrating the Cornish tin lodes and their encasing rocks. Tin having only recently been commercially recognised in NSW, it was remarked by the judges as "of much importance,... of suggestive value to the Australian prospector".¹¹

Overwhelmingly the best metallurgical exhibits were shown by the Societé Cockerill of Liège. Besides equipment such as one-piece cast cylinders and wheels ("unsurpassed of their kind"),¹² this company exhibited a virtuouso example of its skill in the form of a 200 foot length of steel rail coiled cold into a corkscrew 11 feet in diameter. Products of other Belgian ironworks were highly praised also, for the quality of the material, the skill of the forging or casting and their cheapness relative to German and British products.

¹⁰Record, p.38.

¹¹Record, p.134.

¹²Record, p.148.

Although in 1879 it was still cheaper to import iron, the Eskbank ironworks of Lithgow showed pigs and bars of local manufacture; "rather an ordinary quality" noted the judges¹³, but nonetheless highly commended for trying. The only other colonial iron came from Lal Lal near Ballarat;¹⁴ it was remarked as good, solid iron but not to be compared in quality or cost with the imported article.

¹³Record, p.158; James Rutherford produced iron at Eskbank between 1876-83.

¹⁴Joseph Rowley managed the Lal Lal ironworks form 1875-80. (The furnace that survives was built in 1880-81).

Department 2: Manufactures

Department 2 covered manufactures, divided into thirteen groups of products.

Group 1: Chemicals

Here the Belgian company Solvay showed bicarbonate of soda, recommended by the judges "on account of the great benefit to be derived in the future by the introduction of this article into the colonies".¹⁵ The scones of NSW would thenceforth rise high and light, free of the slight acidity of cream of tartar (the precursor of bicarbonate).

Another process gratefully received in the colonies was represented by candles and oil manufactured by the Glasgow firm Young's Paraffin Light and Mineral Oil Co. Paraffin had been first distilled from shale oil in 1850, by a process discovered by James Young; by the end of the 1860s paraffin lamps were widely used in Australia and only replaced by reticulated gas and electricity. In awarding Young's the top prize the judges acknowledged the importance of NSW's thriving shale oil industry: "There can be no doubt that we are much indebted to that gentleman, who originally pointed out the nature of the mineral which has since been found here in such large quantities".¹⁶

From New York came a new and remarkable substance, celluloid, invented by its exhibitors and manufacturers, Purdy & Huntingdon. A

¹⁵Record, p.178.

¹⁶Record, p.187.

composition of non-explosive gun-powder and camphor, the product was "wonderfully strong and light, has a beautiful surface, and is evidently capable of many useful and ornamental applications, especially where strength and lightness are important qualities",¹⁷ though specific uses were yet few.

Three NSW companies produced goods judged to be of outstanding excellence. Elliott Bros of Pitt St, the oldest drug and chemical manufacturer in NSW, showed an assortment of chemicals, most importantly sulphuric acid, an essential to many other industries.¹⁸ A special award was recommended to them, both for the quality of their products and for their development of industry in the colony.

For kerosene oil exhibits the Australian Kerosene Oil and Mineral Co. operating at Joadja and the NSW Shale Oil Co. operating at Hartley Vale, were judged equally first class. They were awarded special merit diplomas, firstly for using a natural product of NSW; secondly for producing a good commercial product; thirdly for employing large numbers of people and assisting other local industries; and fourthly for exporting their goods. It was a telling assessment of the local value of international exhibitions.

From Victoria came a uniquely Australian product - essential oils of eucalyptus. Joseph Bosisto of Richmond was already famous for his decoctions of eucalyptus, which he had been working on for twenty five

¹⁷Record, p.191.

¹⁸See Godfrey Linge, Industrial Awakening, Canberra 1979, p.479.

4.5 Condensed café au lait; British Catalogue, p.284



years. He recommended peppermint gum oil as a liniment for rheumatism, as a disinfectant and as a base for soaps and perfumes. Blue gum oil could be inhaled to relieve bronchitis and diphtheria; mallee scrub oil could be used as a base for varnish. He also showed oils from the ironbark, stringybark, apple gum, messmate and white gum, yet without specific applications.¹⁹ On account of their proven uses, their potential and the hard pioneering work put in by Bosisto the judges awarded him the highest degree of merit.

Products to ease and comfort the dreary pains of life won special prizes for Britain. A splendid collection of perfumes, toilet waters and scented soaps was shown by the Crown Perfumery Co. of New Bond St. The Edinburgh chemical firm T. H. Smith exhibited a collection of the drugs for which they were famous, mainly salts of morphia and other opium products; the company was the first to conduct scientific analyses of the opiates. The same firm showed flavouring essences, including their well-known product essence of coffee (first produced in 1840) and their brand new condensed café au lait. This early instant coffee was sold in substantial tins; the addition of boiling water guaranteed from it "the instantaneous production of a delicious cup of coffee".²⁰

¹⁹These samples were acquired by the progenitor of MAAS, and eucalyptus oil research thereafter became the Museum's famous specialty.

²⁰British Catalogue, p.284.



Group 2: Ceramics, pottery, porcelain, glass

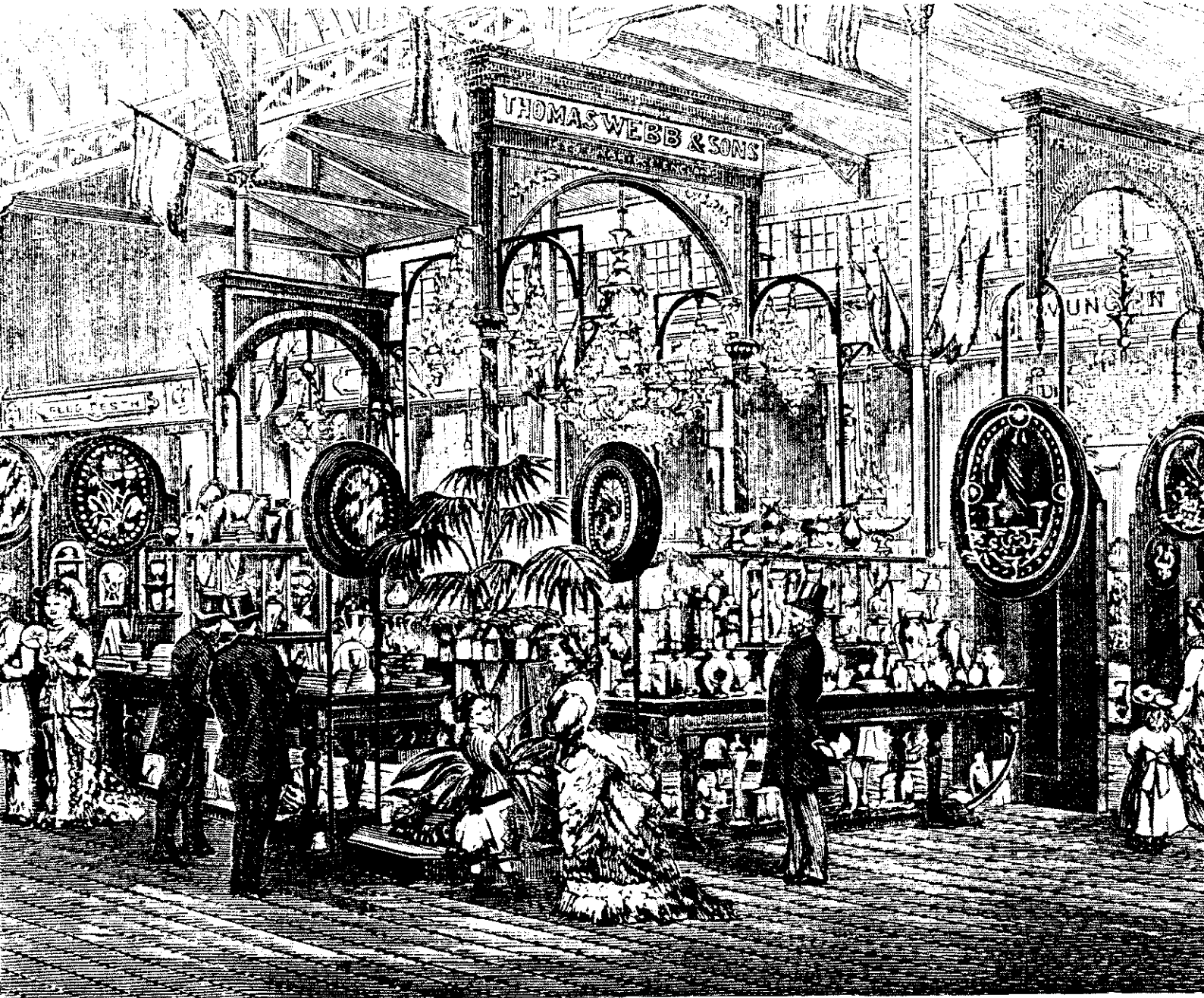
Group 2 spanned a range of products from earthenware drain pipes to porcelain dinner services and sheets of plate glass to crystal goblets. There were also small collections of "native pottery" from India and Fiji; "Considering the want of appliances, this production deserves mention", noted the jury.²¹

Fine glass was the specialty of the Austro-Hungarian court, where Bohemian crystal glittered in the ether of universal admiration. The magnificent display of coloured, gilded, enamelled, mounted and cut glass by Baron von Harrach's glasfabrik was applauded by all. The judges called it "the finest collection in the Garden Palace",²² making it difficult to describe the superb exhibit from the Müller factory, which included a splendid antique-style jug engraved on one side with the Three Graces and on the other side with the modern triad Trade, Industry and Shipping: "Unsurpassed in the Garden Palace", gasped the jury. A third Bohemian firm, Wagner, was also awarded the highest prize. They showed a glowing range of articles - black, green, blue, pink and red, decorated with pâte sur pâte and elaborately mounted in gilt bronze fittings.

The only decorative glass to compete with the Bohemian product was the patent "irridescent bronze" glass manufactured by the British firm Thomas Webb & Sons of Stourbridge. Its novelty, fine execution and

²¹Record, p.198.

²²Record, p.194.



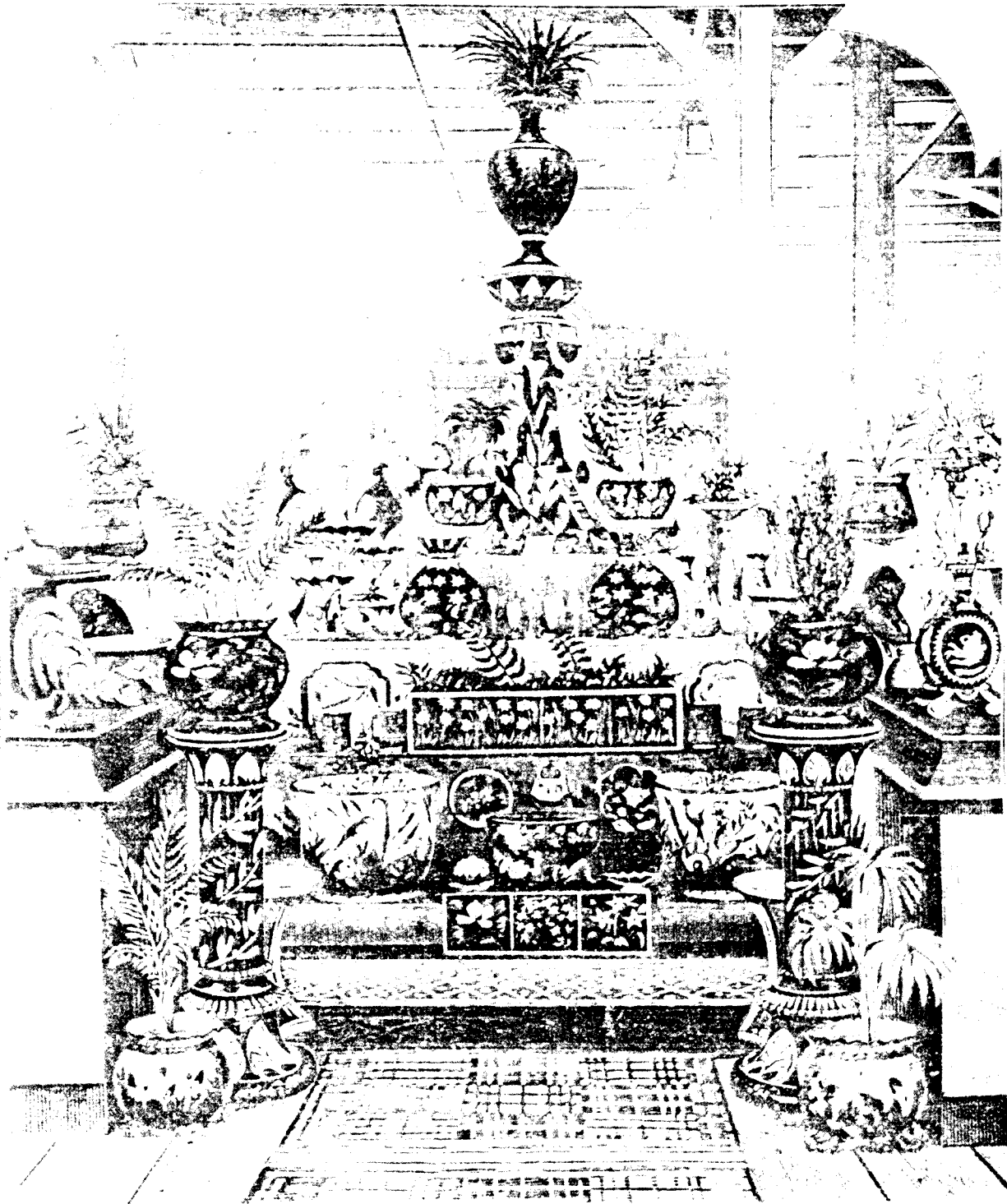
antique grace had it repeat its grand prix at the 1878 Paris Exposition, and it was acclaimed as "the finest display of the kind hitherto seen in Australia."²³

The industrial uses of glass were multitudinously exemplified. In a brave and vivid display of the quality of its product the Belgian court was fronted by two immense sheets of plate glass, each demonstrably so clear that no other exhibit in the court was obscured or distorted. Belgian glass had lately been making in-roads into the otherwise British-dominated window glass import business; it was cheaper and of lesser quality than the British product. Having something of a "cheap and nasty" reputation, the Exhibition display had quite a point to make.

A Yorkshire glassworks, Sykes, McVay & Co. was specially commended for its display of bottles - bottles for wine, mineral water, medicine, pickles, oil, jam and any other conceivable purpose. The company proudly showed its patent screw-mouthed bottle for aerated waters, the ancestor of modern screw-top bottles.

Prizes for pottery, from porcelain to earthenware, went chiefly to British firms. George Jones & Sons of Stoke-on-Trent exhibited porcelain, majolica and earthenware and was commended by the jury for

²³Record, p.168. The Webb exhibit was enlivened with engraving demonstrations by Frank Webb and John Rider, both of whom subsequently settled in Sydney. Some of their work (though none attributable to the Exhibition) survives in MAAS. See Annette Keenan, "Webb and Rider: Two Sydney glass engravers", Australiana Society Newsletter, January, 1981, p.14.



producing new styles in all three media.²⁴ The collection of "artistic porcelain" from Moore Bros, of Longton made a magnificent display, noted as being "of the highest artistic design and beautifully executed".²⁵ More pedestrian prize-winning china was shown by Powell, Bishop & Stonier of Hanley in the form of printed creamware and domestic items.²⁶ Fine workmanship and ingenious improvements secured a prize for the sanitary earthenware of George Jennings of London.

A Viennese company, Radler & Pilz, showed porcelain judged the finest collection in the Garden Palace. The pride of the display was a pair of imposing vases painted with triumphal scenes of Roman history; "Each of these paintings is a work of art", wrote the jury in its citation, "the colours brilliant, clear and harmonious; the attitudes easy, graceful and powerfully drawn; the gilding and decoration in enamel may be considered triumphs in art".²⁷ The grand European tradition of ceramics was also noted with a prize to the Florentine Ginori-Doccia factory, which exhibited Capodimonte-style ornaments and table porcelain. It was praised for its "beautiful designs, splendid ornamentation and creditable execution".²⁸

²⁴George Jones & Sons, Trent Pottery, Stoke-on-Trent; established 1861. "They make both useful and ornamental articles, most of which are of a high order of art...", Llewellyn Jewitt, The Ceramic Art of Great Britain, London 1878, vol 2, p. 218.

²⁵Record, p.204. Moore Bros, St Mary's Works, Mt Pleasant, Longton; established 1830, Moore Bros since 1870. "The productions have, from the first, been china of good marketable quality...", Jewitt, p.394.

²⁶powell, Bishop & Stonier, Stafford St Works, Hanley; established 1865. "At these works earthenware alone is produced, but this is of the finest quality and in every style of decoration," Jewitt, p. 328.

²⁷Record, p.195.

²⁸Record, p.206.



Twenty Japanese manufacturters exhibited porcelain and other china, which was very popularly received in NSW. Certain designs seemed very foreign to the juries and were noted as "odd and bizarre"²⁹ though nonetheless beautiful. One workshop, Koransha from Hizen, was awarded a special merit prize, mainly for its impressive collection of enormous vases.

Exhibitors from NSW and the other Australian colonies showed useful rather than artistic products - earthenware jars, kegs and bottles, terracotta chimney pots and drainpipes, bricks and firebricks - "in the production of which the colonies are fairly well advanced".³⁰ A small selection of plate and bottle glass was on show, but it was coarse and "not worthy of particular mention".³¹

Group 3: Furniture and objects of general use in dwellings

Group 3 covered furniture ranging from the plebian and functional to the voluptuous, ornate and very expensive: decorative articles; lamps and light fittings; tin, bronze, silver and EPNS ware; and equipment for the kitchen, laundry and lavatory.

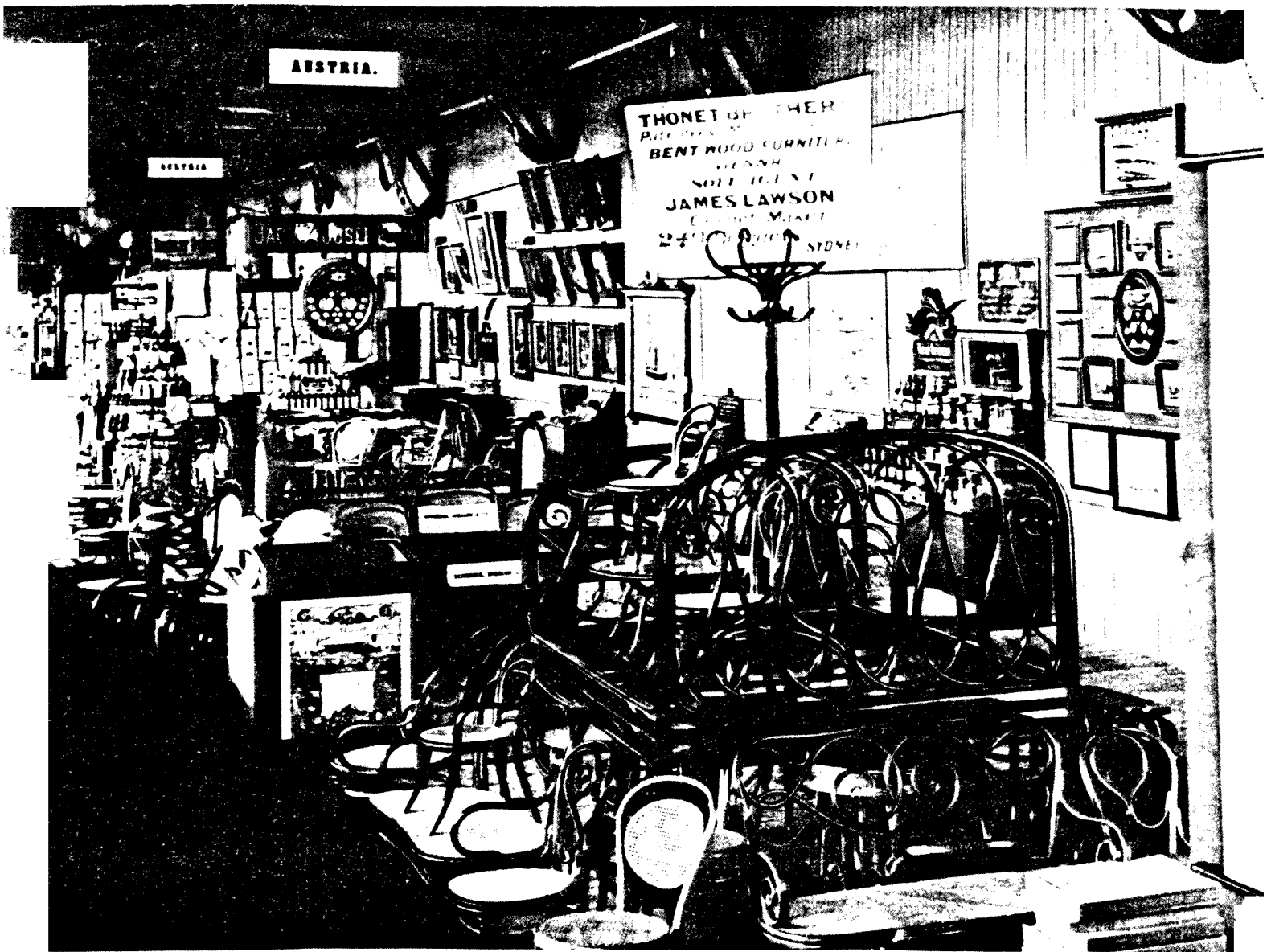
The top prize for "heavy furniture" was awarded to the London firm Walker & Sons for their "excellent taste, very best materials, first-class workmanship".³² The company arranged several suites of fur-

²⁹Record, p.207.

³⁰Record, p.168; 12 exhibitors from Sydney, 6 from the country.

³¹Ibid.; see also Marjorie Graham, Australian Glass, Sydney 1981, ch.4.

³²Record, p.222.



niture (in styles including Old English, Scottish Baronial, Queen Anne and Adam) in a spacious room at the top of the eastern tower of the Garden Palace, reached by the American hydraulic lift. Patrons who preferred the stairs were grateful to enjoy the well-padded comforts of Messrs Walker's display as they took in the superb view.

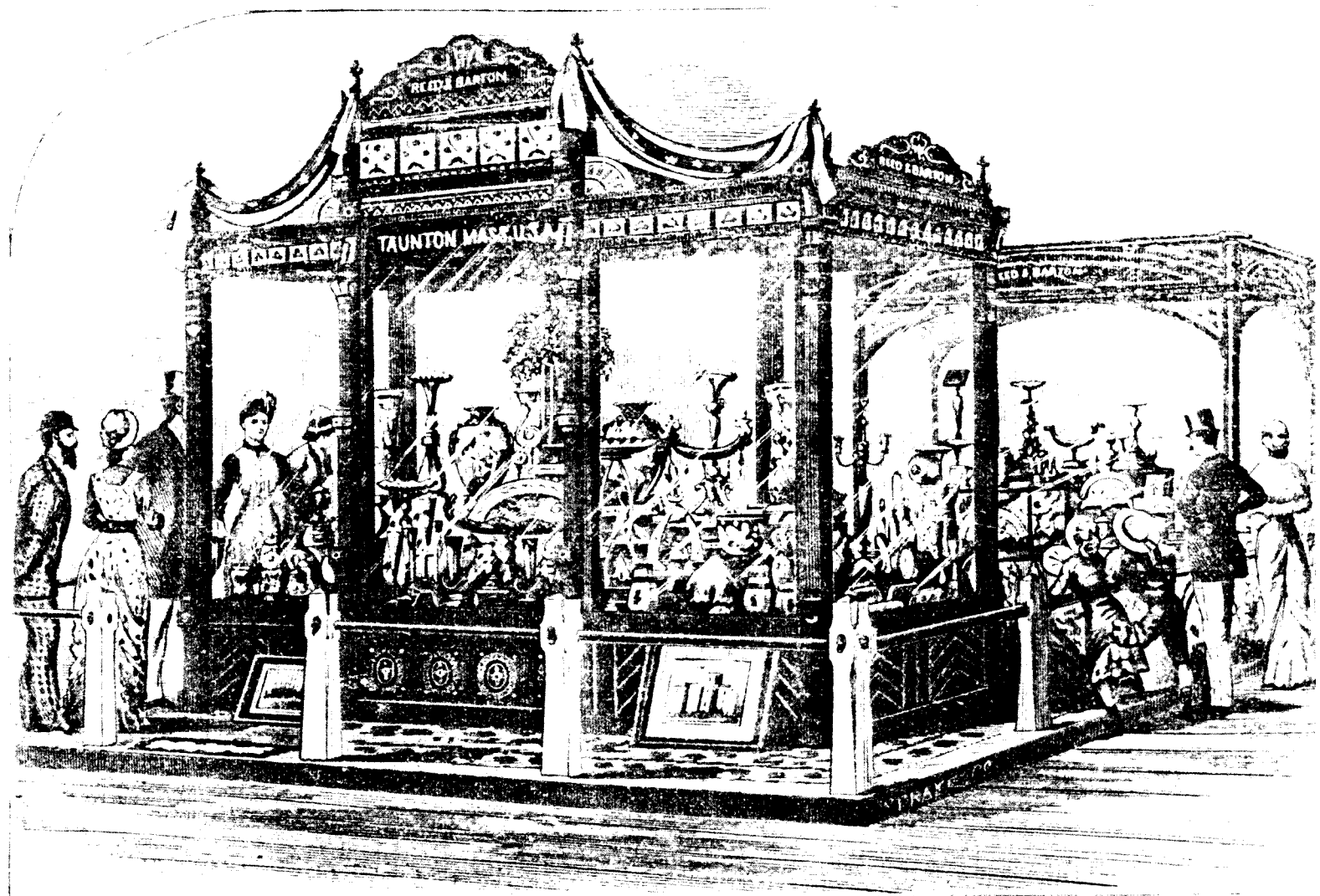
Other awards for furniture went to Exhibition virtuous pieces by various makers. One Egisto Gajani of Florence showed a huge, magnificently carved walnut bookcase, purchased after the Exhibition for the Chief Secretary, and still in his successor's office.³³ A massive oak billiard table by Burroughes & Watts of London and an elegant map-stand from Browne of Toronto also won first degrees of merit.

The speciality of Austrian exhibitors was bentwood furniture. Top prizes went to two of them - the Viennese Thonet brothers, inventors and refiners of bentwood technique and design, and the Moravian Kohn company. Cheap and portable, bentwood furniture had been popular in Australia since the 1860s.³⁴

Approximately half the cabinetmakers listed in metropolitan Sydney in 1879 showed work in the Exhibition, and the majority of them won prizes. A significant exception was Loom Cheong, the sole representative of the large number of Chinese cabinetmakers working in Sydney; his work was not noticed even with a commendation. James Lawson of George St was awarded a top prize for his collection: a gentleman's

³³See the Catalogue of Relics.

³⁴See Peter Cuffley and Kevin Carney, A Catalogue and history of cottage chairs in Australia, Melbourne 1974, ch.4.



bedroom suite and a drawing room suite in "NSW mahogany"; a bookcase in Reiva Rieva wood; a young lady's bedroom suite in "NSW beech"; and an invalid chair in "NSW ash".³⁵ Most of the other exhibitors also used colonial timbers, and though style is rarely specified there seems to have been a lingering taste for Early English.

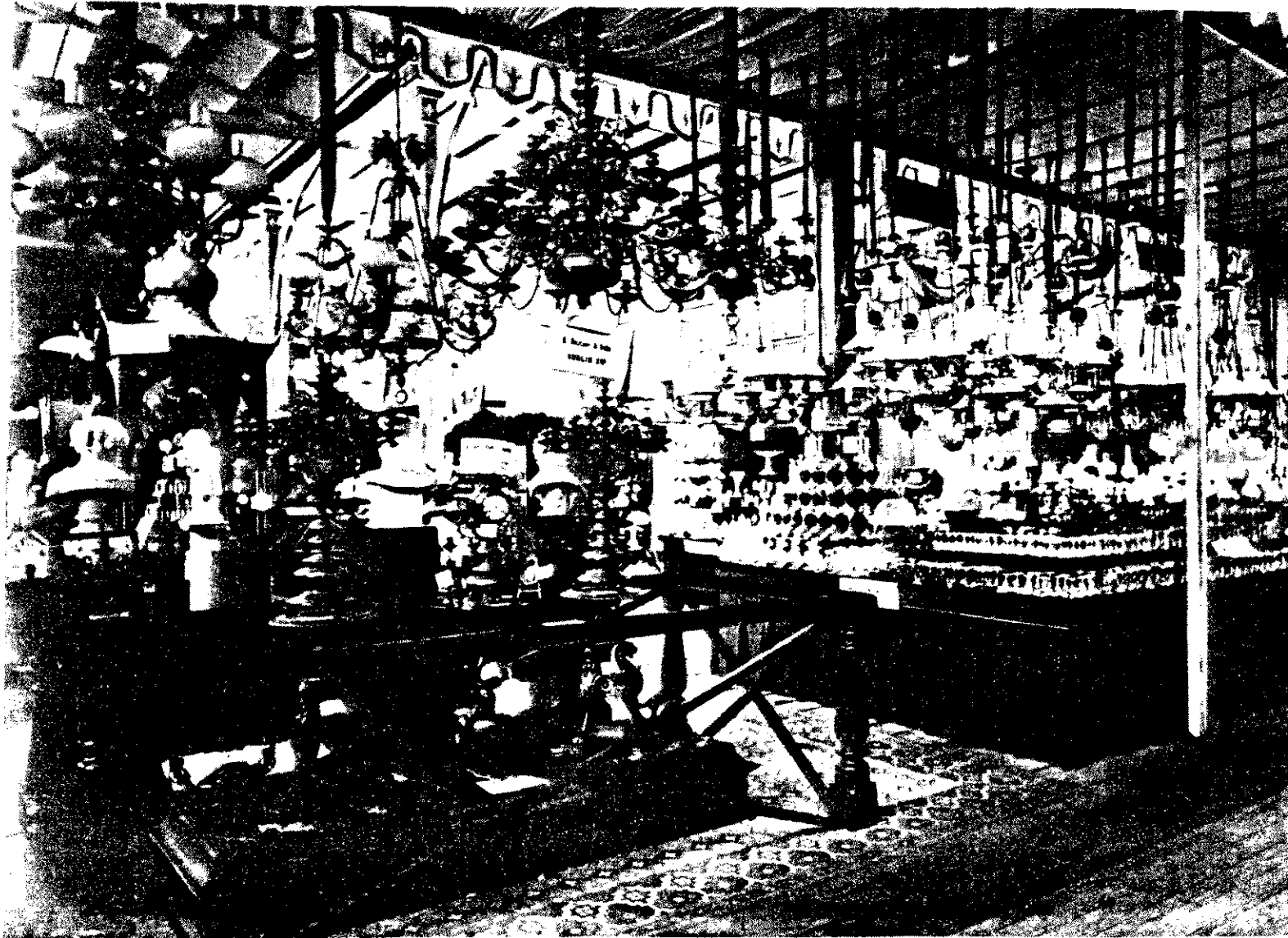
Queensland craftsmen sent a notable collection of furniture made of native Queensland timbers, many polished and inlaid to display their characteristic colours and grains. The ladies of Hobart despatched eighteen huon pine table tops painted with wild flowers; apparently they were judged merely "women's work", for not one received an official prize.

In the table silver category, electro-plated nickel silver predominated over the traditional sterling article. Even the grand and ancient Christofle of Paris exhibited only EPNS. Certainly the finest collection of silver was the splendid case from the Massachusetts company Reed & Barton; this won the highest prize and the most glowing praise.

Sydney and Adelaide silversmiths Jones, Kerr, Delarue, Steiner and Wendt exhibited flatware and emu egg decorations. William Kerr also showed a silver miniature of Thomas Woolner's Hyde Park statue of Captain Cook, presented to MP Roger Smith, the chairman of the citizens' committee that had raised the statue.³⁶

³⁵New South Wales Catalogue, p.23; described in SMH, 13.10.1879, p.3. "NSW mahogany" usually referred to cedar; the other names are not sufficiently consistent to identify, says Mike Darlow, woodworker.

³⁶See the Catalogue of Relics for a claret jug by Delarue, a cricket trophy and statuette of Captain Cook by Kerr. The Adelaide silversmiths are described in SMH, 29.9.1879, p.3.



The practical products of decorative metalwork were nowhere more obvious than in light fittings, and these were nowhere more numerous than in the German court. There, thirteen manufacturers showed candlesticks, chandeliers, gasoliers and table and hanging lamps for colza oil and paraffin.

Kitchen technology, represented by stoves, came from Germany, Britain, the USA and the colonies. The German Lauchhammer foundry was awarded the highest prize for its iron stoves, as was the Leamington firm, George Grove. Large iron ranges or kitcheners had replaced the open hearth for cooking by the turn of the 19th century, and smaller stoves fuelled by coal or charcoal became common after the Crimean War. In Australia the norm for many years had been the "colonial oven" (a partitioned iron box with a fire lit on top and underneath), for a selection of which W. Johnstone of Paddington won a first degree of merit. But large wood-fired ranges and new-fangled gas stoves were taking over - ten Sydney manufacturers exhibited their wares in this field and most were highly commended by the judges.³⁷ As well as stoves, one manufacturer also showed a gas hot water heater, described as "ingenious".

Washing machines were nearly as plentiful as stoves but not so successful as to win any major prizes. Essentially water-tight boxes rocked on cradle legs or swung on a pivoting beam, they still required considerable effort from a strong laundress. The clothes-wringing mangle remained the most providential modern convenience yet available.

³⁷See Anne Gollan, The Tradition of Australian Cooking, Canberra 1978.

4.13 Domestic utensils; British Catalogue, p.109

The Exhibitors are Patentees of Porcelain Enamel for Cast and Wrought Iron, warranted, like their Tinned Hollow-ware, Free from Lead or any other unwholesome ingredient.



Awarded Silver Medal at Paris, 1878; also Medals, London, 1861 and 1862; New York, 1853; Paris, 1855 and 1867. This Firm was established in 1795. They are largely engaged in the manufacture of Cast Door Hinges, Sash Pulleys, Hat and Coat Hooks, and Wrought Iron Pulley Blocks, and were the first to introduce Stop Handles to Hollow-ware, and to tin the Saucepan Covers after the handles were riveted, thereby making them doubly secure.

Kitchen utensils were exhibited by manufacturers from most countries, but the top prizes went to British firms: Hopkins of Birmingham, Kenrick of Bromwich and Clark of Wolverhampton ("the first to tin the saucepan covers after the handles were rivetted, thereby making them doubly secure").³⁸

Group 4: yarns and woven goods of vegetable and mineral materials

Group 5: yarns and felted goods of wool and mixtures of wool

Group 6: silk and silk fabrics

The fourth, fifth and sixth group of manufactures consisted of animal, vegetable and mineral fabrics and threads. Woollen fabrics, more or less generically referred to as tweeds if sturdy and shawls if fine, dominated the awards.

Britain and Germany led the field, showing endless varieties of fabrics: "The exhibitors are manufacturers of Spanish Stripes, Mediums, Victorias, Diagonals, Ventians, Sattaras, Prunelles, Meltons, Tablings, Cabinet, Billiard and Bagatelle Cloths; Superfine Broad Cloths; Coach Cloths; Hat Cloths; Stoved-white Cloth for Cricketing purposes &c".³⁹

Two NSW manufacturers showed tweeds - George French of Parramatta and Vicars & Co. of Sussex St; the latter was awarded a first degree of merit special for "very superior quality and style".⁴⁰

³⁸British Catalogue, p.109.

³⁹Exhibit of John Raistrick & Sons, Leeds, in the British Catalogue, p.137; illustrated.

⁴⁰Record, p.254. Vicars & Co. still manufacture textiles, now in Revesby.



Clothing cottons - prints and moleskins - from Manchester won top prizes for cotton fabrics. But for practical canvas and duck, as used in mattress tickings and window blinds, a Wurtemberg manufacturer took the honours.

Floor coverings were particularly prizeworthy. Belgian manufacturers showed their famous wool and cotton carpets, though French, German and British "Brussels carpets" won the major awards. Linoleum, no longer a novelty (the patents were nearly twenty years old in 1879), still competed with oil cloth for prizes and markets. However, both were challenged by new composition floor cloths such as "Boulinikon" - buffalo-hair fibre oil cloth - from Manchester and "Papoleum" - paper-coated oil cloth - from Philadelphia (neither of which was acknowledged by the judges).

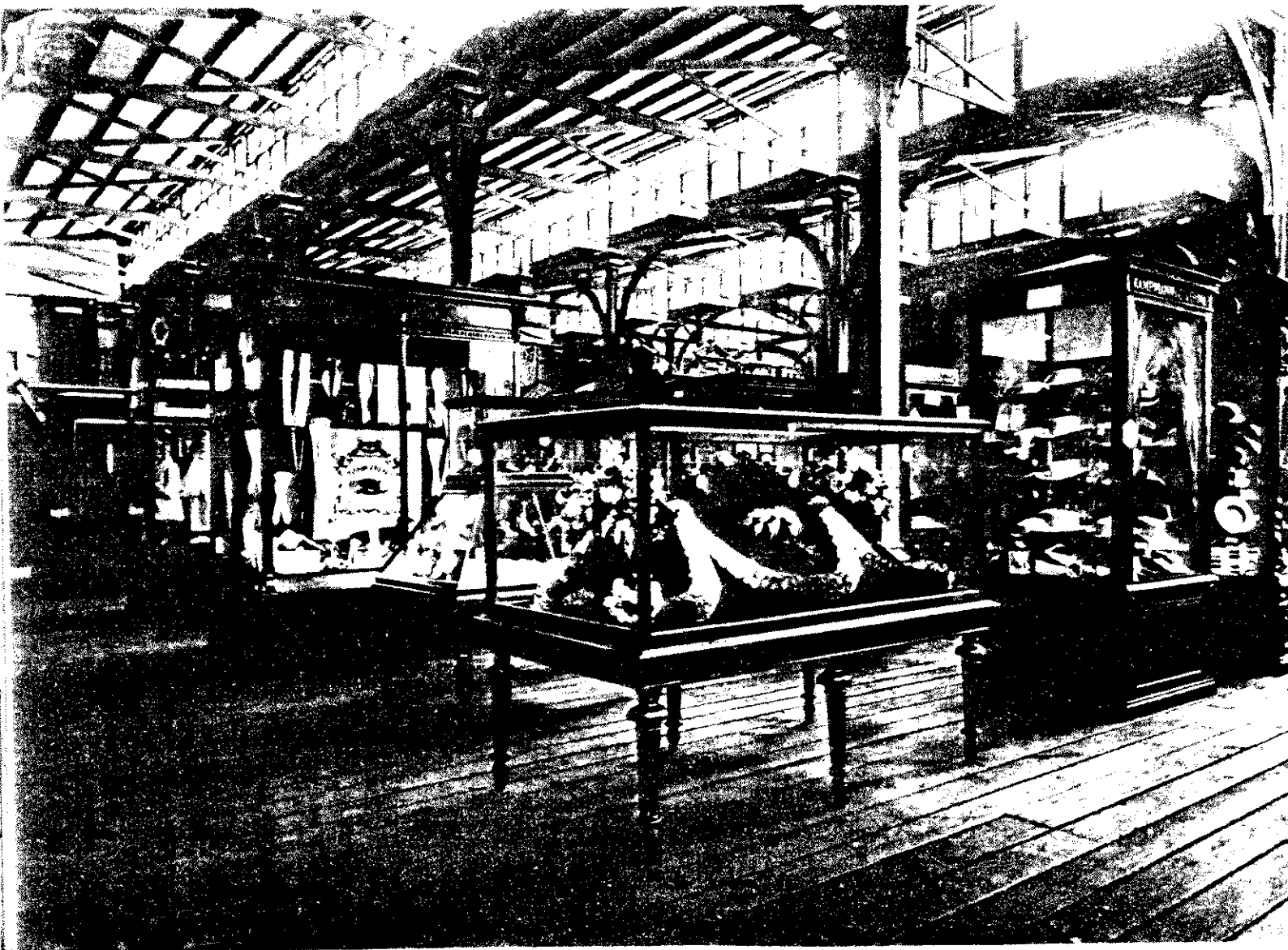
Waterproofed fabrics, which had been among the earliest applications of indiarubber, were much in evidence. The best came from Berlin, but Sydney's great emporium Lasseter's was praised for its "varied collection of extremely useful waterproof goods",⁴¹ probably imported from Britain.

Group 7: Clothing, jewellery, ornaments and travelling equipment

An immense range of goods was on show in the seventh category: a "magic" self-closing umbrella from Leicester; paper patterns for ladies' dresses from New York; meerschaum and amber pipes from Vienna; cricket bats and balls from Kent. Corsets, buttons, collars, artifi-

⁴¹Record, p.254.

4.15 French textile display; SIE Photo Album, vol.1, p.58



cial flowers, fans and ostrich feathers were shown with readymade clothes, boots and hats.

The best exhibit of clothes off the rack was judged that of Paulin Vessière of Paris - "elegant, cheap, well-adapted and of good quality", commented the jury.⁴²

The best jewellery prize went to Wilkens and Dangar of Bremen, whose gold and diamond works, besides being "original and skilfull" were also well-adapted and cheap.⁴³

Eleven Sydney tailoring businesses showed their wares, and ten local boot and shoemakers. The clothing and shoe-making industries were among the largest and most developed manufacturing enterprises in NSW in the late 1870 s.⁴⁴ Three furriers showed garments such as the platypus fur coat made by W. Warren of Twofold Bay. All the jewellers and silversmiths of Sydney showed emu eggs among their finer pieces; Delarue took first place among the colonial jewellers. Numerous ladies harvested possum fur and knitted gloves, mittens, socks and stockings from the soft yarn. Almost a regular cottage industry, such efforts were all highly commended.

⁴²Record, p.270.

⁴³Record, p.275.

⁴⁴Linge, Industrial Awakening, p.472-3.

Group 8: Paper and stationery

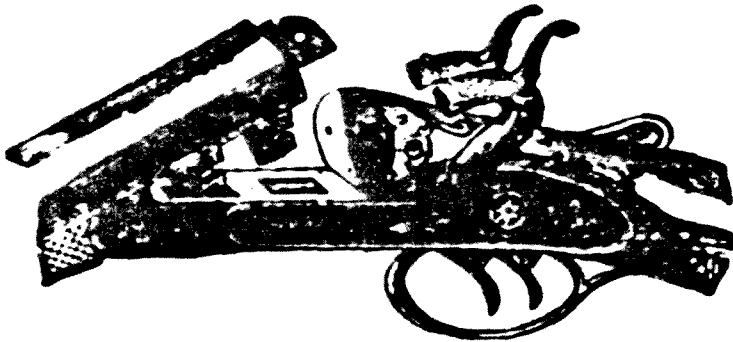
The eighth group of manufactures comprised every conceivable sort of paper - handmade, tinted, perfumed; tissue-paper; cardboard; paper for printing, writing, wrapping, blotting, hanging and rolling into cigarettes. There were books as specimens of printing and binding. There were newspapers; elaborately tabulated statistical brochures; menus; dance programs; valentines; Christmas cards and playing cards. There were pens, nibs, sealing wax, envelopes, telegraph tapes and railway tickets.

Britain and Germany showed the largest range of goods, but the native NSW products won the highest praise. Gibbs, Shallard & Co, John Sands, Fairfax & Co of the Sydney Morning Herald and Messrs Bennet of the Evening News were awarded high merit prizes for the quality of their respective publications. But "unsurpassed by anything in the Garden Palace" was the display mounted by the Government Printing Office of NSW. "It is a pioneer work that redounds to the credit of the Colony, since it is resulting in the acquisition of trained skill of the highest order," wrote the jury.⁴⁵

A number of ingenious articles were on show. A Paddington man, George Short, displayed examples of bookbinding with indiarubber spines, deemed specially useful for volumes of music or maps; "Should experience prove that the material will be unaffected by warm climates, an important improvement will have been introduced", commented the judges.⁴⁶

⁴⁵Record, p.292-3; see the Catalogue of Relics for the Queensland Government Printer's exhibit.

⁴⁶Record, p.311.



**G. B. MODINI,
Gun Maker and Cutler,**

Having received Two Special Prizes (the only Awards) at the International Exhibition, 1879-80, for

Colonial-made Firearms and Cutlery,

Desires to inform his patrons and the general public that he is in receipt of an extensive assortment of Firearms, by the most celebrated English, American, and Continental makers, of the latest patterns and improvements, in augmentation of his magnificent and varied stock, consisting of—

SINGLE and DOUBLE BARRELLED BREECH and MUZZLE LOADING GUNS and RIFLES, REVOLVERS, &c.,

Which he can dispose of to meet the times at fabulously low prices in defiance of all competition.

Undoubtedly the largest stock in Sydney.

Sole Agent in Australia for the Celebrated Makers, Charles Osborne, London, and A. Braccia, Italy.

ALL GOODS will be FAITHFULLY GUARANTEED

**at
802, GEORGE-STREET,**

Where inspection is specially invited.

A choice assorted stock of Table and Pocket Cutlery, from the very best manufacturers in Sheffield, just received by late arrivals. All work and repairs executed with expedition equal to any European workmanship.

Reservoir, or fountain, pens made novel appearances in the British and USA courts. A Birmingham company, Leonhardt, showed its "Neptune" pen which, dipped in water, dampened and let flow the ink in the handle. Thomas Edison exhibited his "Electric Pen", which though not new was still remarkable enough to win a top prize.

Group 9: Armaments, ordnance, firearms and hunting apparatus

Unusually, weapons from the various ethnological collections were considered by the jury in their study of the arms in the Exhibition, perhaps as counterpoint to the modern marvels also on show, "firearms capable of being fired at least thirty times per minute with accuracy".⁴⁷ Modern arms only, however, were tested at the rifle range at Long Bay.

The top awards went to Mauser pistols from Germany; Armstrong heavy ordnance, Eley cartridges, Grant rifles, Holland & Holland "kangaroo or rook" rifles from Britain; and Winchester repeating rifles from the USA.

Two NSW firms, C. Cowles and G.B. Modini, both in George St, exhibited collections of firearms. Though not manufactured in the colony, Modini's goods were finished in his own workshops, and on account of the quality of finishing and his moderate prices, he too was awarded a First Degree of Merit Special.

⁴⁷Record, p.314.

Group 10: Medicine, surgery and prosthesis

Here were products to see humanity from the cradle to the grave, and even before and after. An inventive Dr Diver of Surry Hills showed his (now inscrutable) "Tocophelia, or Obstetric Dress", highly commended as "ingenious, and calculated to be useful under certain circumstances to a lying-in woman".⁴⁸ With his specimen of a mummified dog demonstrating a new method of embalming, Charles Torchon, apothecary of Paris, won a high prize for his preparations of chloral.

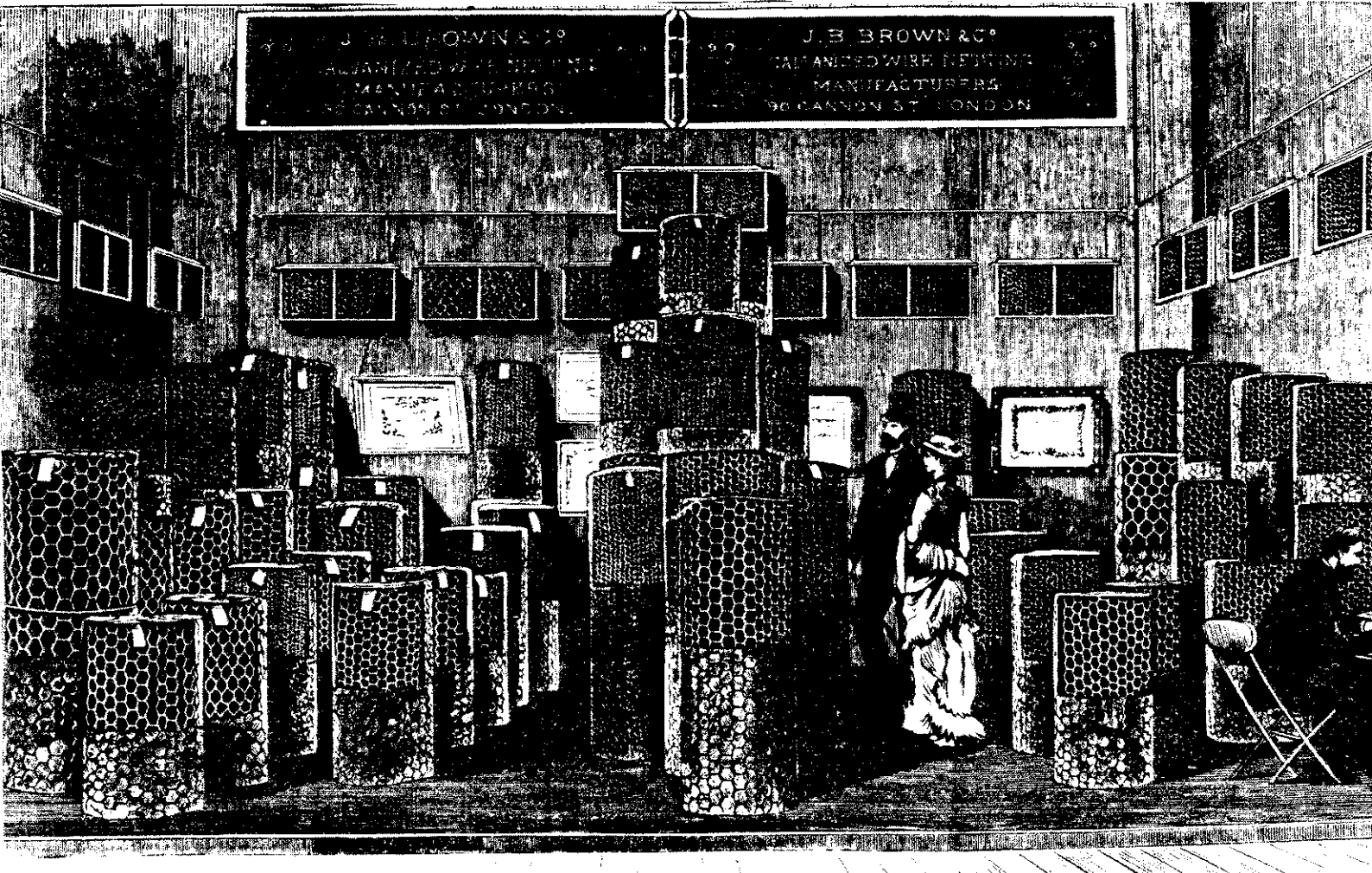
Several manufacturers showed capsules of gelatine, wafer batter and sugar to help bitter medicine go down. To make good the consequence of surgery or accident there were numerous exhibits of artificial eyes and limbs; Mayer & Meltzer of London, a special merit prize winner, was commended by the jury for "a very elegant exhibit" of artificial arms and legs.

The citizens of NSW siezed the opportunity of the Exhibition to demonstrate their patent medicines: ten - just one of them a publicly advertising chemist - showed an assortment of salves, balsams, ointments, liniments, lotions and potions.

The colony also showed itself mechanically adept. Sydney exhibitors displayed dental equipment, shoulder braces, surgical belts and chest expanders as well as more scientific surgical equipment. George Guyatt of George St was awarded a top prize for his locally manufactured surgical instruments.

⁴⁸Record, p.325.

4.17 British wire netting display; ISN, 1.11.1879, p.8



Group 11: Hardware, edge tools, cutlery and metallic products

Group 12: Fabrics of vegetable, animal or mineral materials

The eleventh and twelfth groups comprised useful articles, essentially tools. In a classical comment on the purpose of exhibitions the judges noted of these categories: "The value of the information obtainable from this Section of the Exhibition and the instruction it affords to the people of the Colony cannot be overestimated."⁴⁹

The USA here challenged Britain as a large exhibitor; at the same time an interesting national distinction can be drawn as to the content of each nation's exhibit. The American court showed a significant preponderance of trade and other tools - saws and axes of all types, mechanics' tools, carpenters' tools and plumbers' tools. The greater proportion of the British display comprised ironmongery such as nails, wire, tube and sheet iron and galvanized iron. Both exhibits were lavished with prizes, nearly every individual display receiving an award of one or another degree.

The entries from NSW indicate a bustling small manufacturing industry in Sydney. Top level prizes were awarded to Woolloomooloo blacksmith William Dadd for horseshoes; G.B. Modini for cutlery made locally; city brass-founders Marshall & Co. for the Marshall Patent Window Fastener; Gardiner & Cool of George St for rubber stamps; the Waterloo Forsyth & Co. for cordage; the Sydney Broom Manufacturing Co. for its eponymous product; and to Samuel Taylor, "Vice-Regal Brushmaker", for brushware.

⁴⁹Record, p.331.

Group 13: Carriages, vehicles and accessories

Group 13 comprised vehicles: carriages for travelling and for pleasure; coaches; stages; omnibuses; hearses; bath chairs; velocipedes; baby coaches; waggons; and trucks. For all this encyclopedic categorisation, commercial vehicles were notably unrepresented, there were few bicycles and fewer perambulators. Classes 291-294 consisted overwhelmingly of private carriages and these were predominantly buggies. In the accessory class, saddlery and harness were plentiful.

The largest vehicle exhibitor was, naturally, NSW. However, fewer than a third of the carriage and coach builders advertising in Sydney in 1879 sent examples of their work to the Exhibition. The USA was the next biggest exhibitor, showing almost exclusively the native buggy; Abbot, Downing & Co of New Hampshire, the most famous horse-drawn vehicle manufacturer in the country, was predictably awarded the top prizes.

The British carriage building industry produced more formal vehicles than the American or Australian - they required a driver, as in the landau, the phaeton and the victoria. Though not widely used in the colony, the few specimens on show in Sydney won the highest awards in the Exhibition - a judgement based perhaps more on loyalty than practicality, and already smacking of anachronism.

Department 3: Education and science

"Education and science" ranged from teaching material to scientific instruments to musical instruments to engineering and architectural projects to a group called "Physical and Moral Condition of Man," to all of which was appended the Ethnographic court as well. "Education and science" was the ideological or didactic segment of the Exhibition, as opposed to the commercial.

Group 1: Educational systems, methods and libraries

Syllabuses, texts, equipment and pupil work comprised the first group of exhibits. A notable product of the section, though not a competitive exhibit, was the report compiled on kindergarten education in Europe by Edward Combes, the Exhibition Commission's agent on the continent before the Opening. The German court bolstered the report with many examples of kindergarten equipment and the Official Record noted that "Nowadays, many of the toys prepared for the instruction as well as the delight of children, partake of the 'Kindergarten' character."⁵⁰

The London School Board and the Ontario Education Department both sent comprehensive descriptions and examples of their education systems - texts, teaching models, reports, even school furniture. After the Exhibition these materials were presented to the colony where the new free, compulsory and secular Department of Public Instruction was at that time being set up. Some five hundred and

⁵⁰Record, p.361.



fifty pupils and denominational schools throughout the colony sent examples of their drawing, calligraphy, needlework and maps to the Exhibition, where each piece was faithfully judged by the jury.

Collections of specimens and models of natural history for the purpose of teaching were numerous. One of the most exotic was that of a certain Robert Damon of Weymouth who showed twenty five crystal glass facsimiles of famous diamonds with short histories telling their immense worth and the number of lives lost on account of each; the Sydney jury was sufficiently fascinated to commend the collection highly. Queenslanders sent a large number of specimens of stuffed and otherwise preserved native fauna - insects, fish, mammals, birds (including a tableau of a carpet snake and a kookaburra entitled "No laughing matter") and even a dugong.

Group 2: Scientific and philosophical instruments and methods

This group comprised weights and balances; telescopes, microscopes and spectacles; watches and chromometers; telegraphic instruments; musical instruments and so on.

Weights and balances came principally from Britain and the USA. A curious distinction emerges between the two: British scales tended to small and fine measuring whereas the American machines were large scale - weighbridges and weighing machines for industry. Both nations won top prizes.

The speciality of the German court was optical instruments. Here Dr. Hugo Schroder of Hamburg exhibited a large astronomical telescope and miniature telescope fitted into a walnut shell. They received a

first degree of merit, but two other instruments of ingenious Germanic precision - an instrument for measuring clothes for the upper part of the body of gentlemen and ladies, and a self-acting egg boiler - went unrecognized.

Timekeeping instruments entered in the Exhibition were rigorously assessed not only for accuracy but also for originality, economy and seven other qualities. The products of the American Watch Co of Waltham, Massachusetts, triumphed so overwhelmingly in this process that the judges noted in their report that they found it "exceedingly difficult to make such a classification in degree as will give even-handed justice to all."⁵¹ They recommended the maximum possible of first degree awards for Waltham watches, ultimately, five.

Foreign electric telegraphy shown in the Exhibition was only as modern as the state of the art in NSW. The Electric Telegraph Department of NSW mounted a large, impressive display of telegraphic apparatus from the very earliest to that currently in use, together with vast maps showing the extent of the network in the colony. It was awarded a First Degree of Merit Special, but even as the Superintendent of the Department, Major E.C. Cracknell, accepted the prize, the Exhibition Commissioners were using the new-fangled telephone (a private line between the Commission offices in Macquarie Street and the Manager's office in the Garden Place) which Cracknell was resisting and would go on resisting until his death. Convinced that the telegraph would never be superceded, he ignored the telepho-

⁵¹Record, p.416.

4.19 German piano display; Sharkey Collection, NSW Government Printer



nes - admittedly still amateurishly experimental - exhibited in the show. These came from Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, Siemens & Halske of Berlin (Bell models) and two Australian experimenters - John Edwards of Melbourne and Frank Bladen of Pyrmont. Both the latter were awarded prizes.⁵²

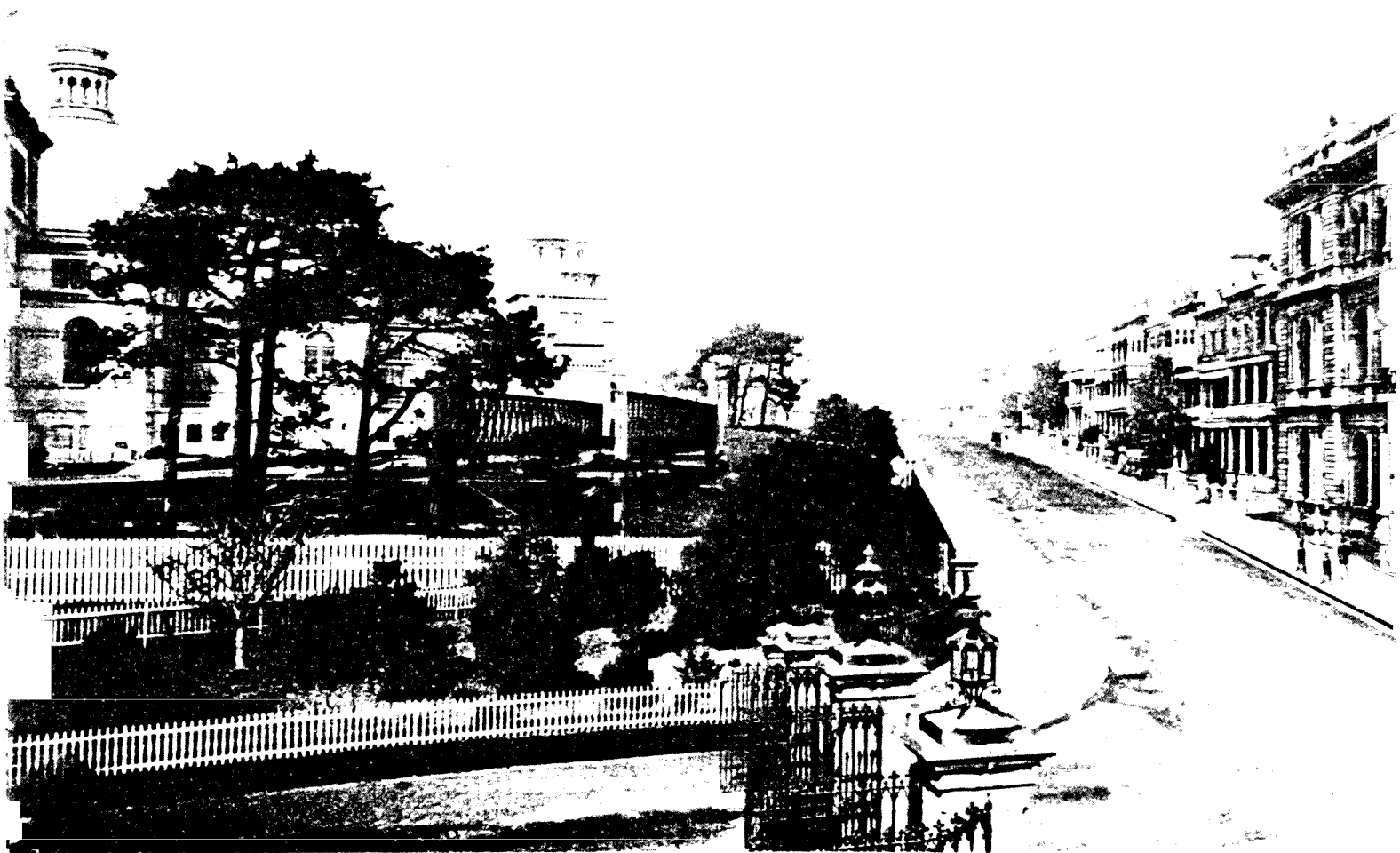
The musical instruments category was overwhelmingly stocked with pianos, German exhibitors alone showing more than seventy. There were grand pianos, cottage pianos, uprights, over-strung and cross-strung instruments, iron-framed and wood, pianinos and pianolas as well as harmoniums, organs and an "Orchestrion" - a "self-acting organ - may be used as an organ in church or as a music band for dancing."⁵³

The big British manufacturer Brinsmead and the local piano emporiums Nicholson & Ascherberg and Paling's employed "artistes" to give regular recitals on their instruments, often accompanied by Sydney singers. These concerts were among the most popular regular features of the Exhibition; they consisted of famous excerpts from the classical repertoire, fashionable airs from current operas and popular sentimental songs.

A small number of instruments manufactured in the colony of Australian materials was on show: a double bass, two sets of bagpipes and a single piano, the latter made and exhibited by "Piano Warehouse"

⁵²The electric telegraphy display is described in SMH, 25.10.1879, p.3. Experimental telephones were, at the time, something of a do-it-yourself hobby project for inventive people. MAAS owns two such Sydney-made telephones of the period.

⁵³German Catalogue, p.52.



- man William Ezold of Oxford St.⁵⁴ Many foreign exhibitors showed pianos especially designed for tropical or colonial conditions, usually meaning that the case was made of fumigated wood.

Perhaps the most curious of other instruments on show were three church bells from Stettin; "harmoniously tuned", claimed the bell-founder, "made out of French cannons."⁵⁵ They received a First Degree of Merit.

Group 3: Engineering, architecture, charts, maps and graphic representations

Civil engineering was strikingly on display in the Garden Palace grounds by the northern tower, where stood two entire spans of iron bridges, one American and one British. Representing different structural methods - respectively pin-truss and lattice - the jury compared the two and concluded in favour of the London Appleby Bros' specimen on the grounds that it was readily manufactured from materials available in the colony, was readily transportable, and required minimum staging or scaffolding to erect. Both manufacturers, nonetheless, were awarded Special First Degrees of Merit. After the Exhibition the

⁵⁴See the Catalogue of Relics for the bagpipes. The piano was quite erroneously claimed by the ISN to be the first made in Sydney. It was made of local pine and cedar and imported woods; its iron frame was also made locally, partly cast and partly forged. ISN, 20.12.1879, p.7; illustrated.

⁵⁵German Catalogue, p.54; illustrated in Sydney Mail, 11.10.1879. (The peal of bells in St. Stephen's, Camperdown, by Meares & Stainbank of London, dated 1872, is recorded in the church archives as having been exhibited in the Exhibition; however, it is nowhere mentioned in catalogues, the Record or newspaper reports. See Morton Herman, The Blackets, Sydney 1963, p.162.)

spans on show were incorporated into NSW bridges: the British lattice over Iron Cove between Balmain and Drummoyne, and the American pin-truss over the Shoalhaven at Nowra (where it is still standing and in use).

Many nations exhibited finely coloured and printed maps of their various geological structures, harbour formations and colonies. The most stunning was the immense (approx. 6' x 3') map of Africa, hand-drawn for King Leopold II of Belgium. On a scale of 1:3,000,000 it was the most modern and detailed map of the Dark Continent "in the world".⁵⁶ It hung in the Art Gallery.

Group 4: Physical and moral condition of man

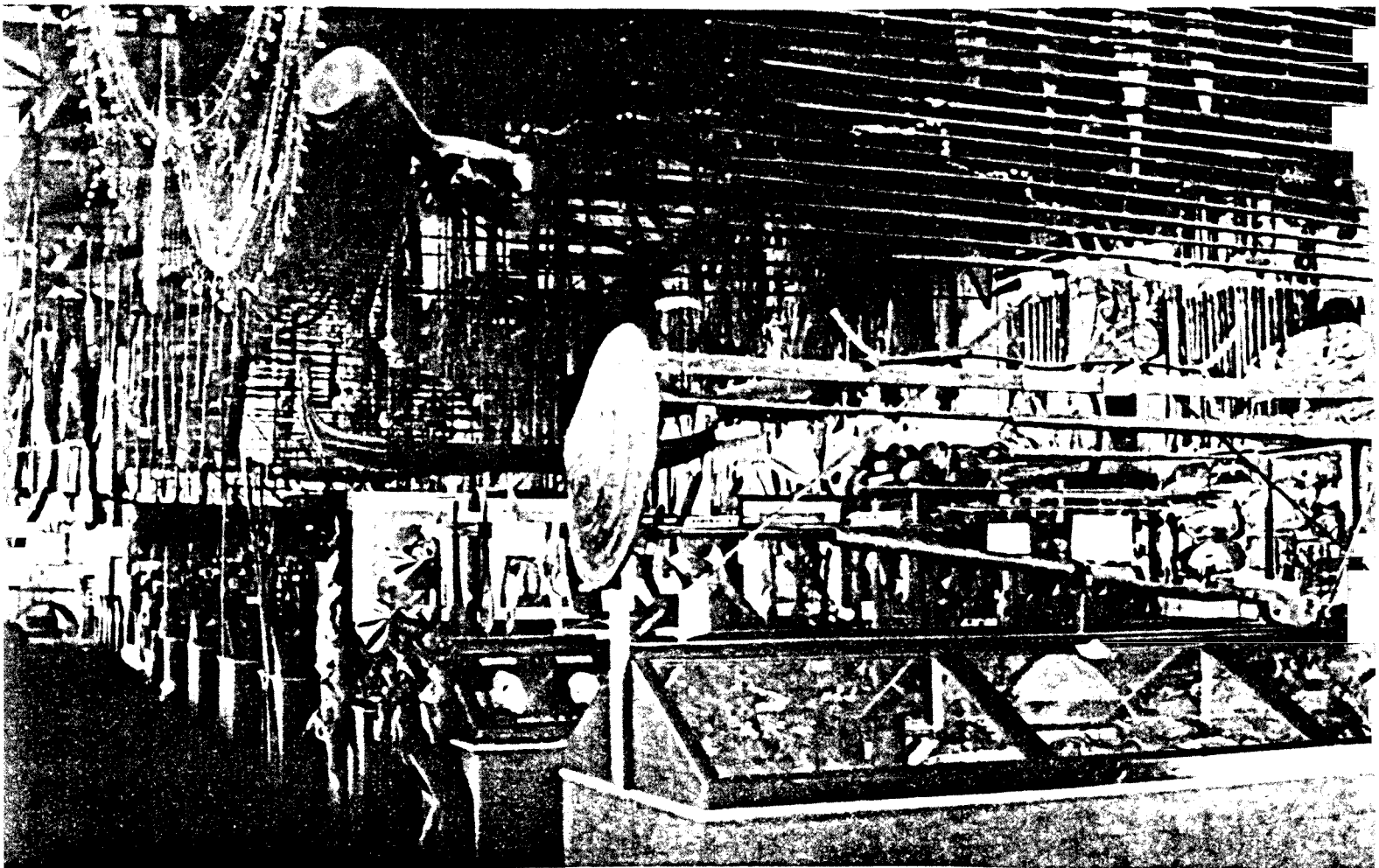
The ten classes in this group covered, in exquisite detail, the social existence of humankind. Although there were actually very few exhibits in any of them, some examination of the precise classifications suggests the ethical scope of the ideology of 19th century exhibitions:

GROUP--Physical and Moral Condition of Man.

- 320. Physical development and condition.
The Nursery and its accessories.
Gymnasiums, Games, Manly Sports, and Physical Training.
- 321. Alimentation.
Markets, Preparation and Distribution of Food.
- 322. The Dwelling.
Sanitary conditions, appliances and regulations.
Domestic Architecture.
Dwellings characterized by cheapness, combined with the conditions essential to health and comfort.
Fireproof Structures.
Hotels, Club-houses, &c.
Public Baths.

⁵⁶Unattributed; Record, p.431.

323. **Commercial Systems and Appliances.**
Mercantile Forms and Methods, Counting Houses and Offices.
Banks and Banking.
Savings and Trust Institutions.
Insurance, Fire, Marine, Life, &c.
Commercial Organizations, Boards of Trade, Produce and Stock Exchanges.
Corporations for Commercial and Manufacturing Purposes.
Railway and other Transportation Companies.
Building and Loan Associations.
324. **Money.**
Mints and Coining.
Collection of Current Coins.
Historical Collections.
Tokens, &c.
Bank Notes, and other paper circulating mediums.
Commercial Paper, Bills of Exchange, &c.
Securities for payment of money, Stocks, Bonds, Mortgages, Ground-rents, Quit-rents, &c.
Precautions against counterfeiting and misappropriation of money.
325. **Government and Law.**
Various Systems of Government Codes.
Municipal Government.
Protection of Property in Inventions.
Postal System and Appliances.
Punishment of Crime.
Prisons and Prison Management and Discipline; Police Stations; Houses of Correction; Reform Schools.
326. **Benevolence.**
General Hospitals.
Special Hospitals for the Eye and Ear, for Women, &c.
Hospitals for Contagious and Infectious Diseases.
Hospitals for the Insane—under State Control, and Private Asylums.
Quarantine Systems and Organizations.
Sanitary Regulations of Cities.
Dispensaries.
Inebriate Asylums.
Lying-in Asylums.
Magdalen Asylums.
Asylums for Infants and Children.
Foundling and Orphan Asylums—Children's Aid Societies.
Homes for the Aged and Infirm; Homes for Aged Men and Women; Homes for the Maimed and Deformed, Sailors' Homes.
Treatment of Paupers.
Alms-houses, Feeding the Poor, Lodging-houses.
Emigrant Aid Societies.
Treatment of Aborigines.
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.
327. **Co-operative Associations.**
Military Organizations and Orders.
Trade Unions and Associations.
Industrial Organizations.
328. **Religious Organizations and Systems, Statistical, Historical, and other Facts.**
Bible Societies, Tract Societies, Colportage.
Systems and Methods of Religious Instruction and Training for the Young.
Sunday Schools, Furniture, and Apparatus.
Associations for Religious or Moral Improvement.
Dispensing Charities, Church Guilds.
329. **Art and Industrial Exhibitions.**
Agricultural Fairs.
Juvenile Exhibitions.
National Exhibitions.



Ethnological Court

The Ethnological Court in the northern gallery of the east transept was one of the most remarkable (though ultimately, most enigmatic) in the entire Exhibition. It was put together by a committee of typically learned and dedicated gentlemen scientists: W.J. Stephens, appointed Professor of Natural History at Sydney University in 1882 and a Trustee of the Australian Museum; Dr. Alfred Roberts, surgeon at Sydney Hospital and also a Trustee; Dr. James Hector, Director of the New Zealand Museum and Executive Commissioner for New Zealand; Professor Frederick Reuleaux, the Imperial German Commissioner; and the indefatigable Professor Archibald Liversidge.

The display opened, a late addition to the program, on the Prince of Wales' Birthday holiday, 10 November 1879. Its inspiration is uncertain, but it seems likely that its promoters' common membership of the Board of Trustees of the Australian Museum could have suggested that the Sydney International Exhibition, a comparative collection of the arts and manufactures of the modern world, would be instructively enlarged by a show of the primitive technologies represented in the Museum's collection. The resulting display was large and extensive, including objects from all over Australia, Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia. Such a collection, noted the judges, "has, in every probability, never been got together before and ... would be scarcely possible to bring together again".⁵⁷ They were right.

⁵⁷Record, p.364. The S.A. Museum now holds Australia's largest Aboriginal collection.

The popular perception of the Ethnological Court was certainly as it was described in a commentary: "a large number of weapons and other curiosities nicely grouped."⁵⁸ Even the Australian Museum had, at this time, no coherent acquisitions policy with regard to anthropological material; its collectors were primarily seekers of natural history specimens, who incidentally acquired artifacts and "curiosities" from the natives they encountered en route. The Ethnological Sub-Committee, however, took its brief more seriously. The members realised that already,

An opportunity so well calculated to stimulate collection, and to exhibit the results under such specifically favourable circumstances will not probably occur again, and the period is rapidly approaching when all opportunity for obtaining the most valuable representative specimens of Ethnology, showing the habits and customs of the uncivilized people of these seas, will have ceased to exist.⁵⁹

Some 5200 specimens were on show, carefully arranged in local groups. The Sub-Committee had hoped to publish a comprehensive descriptive catalogue of the collection but this never eventuated. The only record of the court is a basic listing of exhibitors, national provenance (eg, "Queensland" or sometimes "Diamantina district"; "New Guinea"; "Solomon Islands" etc.) and very short description (eg, "small double-headed figure", "ceremonial staff", "dance masks" etc.). Such material had been collected by explorers and scientists since the earliest contact of Europeans with the people of Australia and the Pacific, but it was not a widely popular taste.

⁵⁸Notes, p.143.

⁵⁹Ethnological Gallery: Official Catalogue, Sydney 1880, p.iii.

Interestingly, the Sydney Exhibition appears to have been the first public display of aboriginal bark paintings⁶⁰ and some of them seem to have survived.⁶¹

A large proportion of exhibitors were associated with the Australian Museum, which itself contributed nearly 2000 items.⁶² Trustees Dr James Cox⁶³, Professor Liversidge, William Macleay; Collector F.H. Thorpe and Curator of Conchology James Brazier lent major collections from Australia and the Pacific.

Merchants and commercial agents - that is, people who had business dealings with distant shores and islands - were also notable contributors, among them Prosper Trebeck, agent of George St, with a Fijian collection, and James Dowling, manager of the E.S.&A. Bank, who showed a collection from Tonga.

The colonial governments of Tasmania, Queensland, South Australia and West Australia sent collections, the Western Australian contribu-

⁶⁰R.M. Berndt and E.S. Phillips, The Australian Aboriginal Heritage, Sydney 1973, p.201.

⁶¹Geoff O'Donnell, "Bark Paintings that died a dog's death", Conference of Museum Anthropologists Bulletin, no.5, 1980, p.24. O'Donnell suggests that ten bark paintings still in the Macleay Museum were more or less surreptitiously extracted ("borrowed") by Alexander Macleay from the Australian Museum's collection, and thus survived the Garden Palace fire.

⁶²Among them were several extraordinary curiosities such as a "Snuff box made from a coffin dug up on the site of Whitefriars Monastery, founded by Edward 1st, Hull", and a "Tally stick used to tick off the payment of 25,000 pounds by the Hon. East India company to the Imperial Exchequer on 20 January 1776, part of a loan of 1,000,000 pounds." Ethnological Catalogue, p.48.

⁶³Dr. Cox's exhibits appear to have been for sale: the Australian Museum's copy of the Ethnological Catalogue is densely inscribed in pencil with prices, p.7-12.

tions being the only formal representation of that colony in the Exhibition. The Commodore on the Australian Station, Captain Wilson of the Wolverene, and officers of the Danae, exhibited items they had lately acquired during their tours of the south seas.

The Sub-Committee had also hoped for large contributions from Christian missionaries in the field, where, it had been noted, "many martyrs - Protestant and Catholic - have fallen in philanthropic attempts to reclaim the natives from ... idolatry."⁶⁴ In the event the London Missionary Society's Secretary in Sydney, the Reverend J.P. Sutherland, was the only evangelical exhibitor: he sent 118 pieces from the Port Morseby area.

The most broadly representative collection was that of the Maori culture from the New Zealand Museum. Besides feather weaving, polished greenstone articles and wood carvings, this also included an entire carved ceremonial house, erected in the grounds of the Garden Palace and occasionally occupied by companies of dancers.⁶⁵ The Fijian house and "cannibal" dancers nearby were equally popular with the Sydney public, but they were more a sideshow than part of the ethnological display.

In scientific terms the Ethnological Court was the most comprehensive ever gathered in Australia. However, its quality and extent were not much appreciated. After the Exhibition the Australian Museum was

⁶⁴Notes, p.143.

⁶⁵See. Ch.4, p.203; the background of the house is explained in SMH, 3.11.1879, p.3.

keen to separate permanently its ethnological specimens from its natural history collections. They were left in the Garden Palace (to the alarm of Curator Ramsay, who formally requested the Trust to absolve him of responsibility for the safety of the collection now that it was beyond his control) pending their transfer to the new Technological Museum. They were totally destroyed in the Garden Palace fire.⁶⁶

⁶⁶Some ethnographic material collected before 1879 and therefore possibly exhibited in the Garden Place has survived, perhaps because it was on show elsewhere at the time of the fire. Tessa Corkhill of the Museum's Anthropology Department has compiled a ms list of this material: "Extant Articles collected before the Garden Palace fire 22 September 1882" (can be obtained from the Anthropology Dept, Australian Museum).

The fire did have the salutary effect of galvanising the Museum Trust into a formal collecting policy, complete with annual funds, for anthropology.

Department 4: Art

The Art Department comprised six groups: sculpture; painting; engraving and lithography; photography; industrial and architectural designs, models and decorations; and ceramic, vitreous, mosaic and inlaid work. The bulk of the exhibits was foreign, Britain (as usual) the largest contributor.

The Chairman of the Art Committee was Edward Combes, NSW Executive Commissioner to the 1878 Paris Exposition and able agent for the embryonic Sydney Exhibition. He was himself an artist "of considerable merit"⁶⁷ who had exhibited watercolours in several London galleries. By profession he was an engineer in the colonial civil service; he became an MLA and was a Trustee of the NSW Art Gallery.

Two other members of the Art Committee deserve special note: Edward Montefiore, a wealthy merchant, gallery owner and patron of the arts; and Eccleston du Faur, a geographer civil servant and patron of various scholarly and cultural activities. These three comprised the organising impetus of the large and prominent art display in the Exhibition.

Although the Great Exhibition of 1851 had specifically excluded fine art (except for sculpture, by virtue of its illustrating the quality and use of materials), after the Paris Exposition of 1855, in which such work had been introduced in a new category, contemporary art became one of the standard divisions of international exhibitions.

⁶⁷peter Mennell, Dictionary of Australian Biography, London, 1892, p.103; see also ADB, vol. 3, p.445-6.

The Sydney Exhibition received works from Austria, France, Belgium, Britain, Germany, Italy, Japan, Holland, Switzerland, the USA, New Zealand and the four east coast colonies of Australia. The Commission had originally hoped to arrange a large exhibition, "representative of the art of all nations."⁶⁸ However, the British and other European governments refused to participate in this scheme, "owing to the distance, risk (and) the time for which the pictures would be required."⁶⁹ Instead of the requested old masters they sent quantities of inferior works from their over-saturated art markets.

The unexpected volume of this response very soon made it apparent that the galleries of the Garden Palace theoretically to be devoted to the art displays would be quite inadequate. It was also noted that here "the light was not so good as to do full justice to the noble collection of paintings which were to grace the Exhibition."⁷⁰ The Art Committee members and some of the visiting foreign Commissioners began to agitate for a more suitable hanging space. The government was at last prevailed upon to finance the construction of a new Art Annexe.⁷¹

It opened after a hectic two months construction and a frantic weekend of hanging. The occasion was the Prince of Wales' birthday,

⁶⁸SMH, 15.11.1879, p.3.

⁶⁹"Report of the Royal Commission on the Australian International Exhibitions", British Parliamentary Papers, vol. 29, 1882, p.111.

⁷⁰Record, p.xlv.

⁷¹See Ch.2, p.52.

4.22 Visitors to the Art Gallery; engraving by George Collingridge;
ISN, 20.12.1879, p.8



celebrated in the colony on 10 November. Lord Augustus Loftus was conducted on a private viewing in the morning and at midday Executive Commissioner Jennings formally opened the gallery in the name of the President of the Exhibition, viz, the Prince of Wales. For the rest of the day it was "crammed to suffocation."⁷²

The Art Annexe was divided into nine national courts, a vestibule and a long corridor in which stained glass and terrocotta statues were displayed.⁷³ The five hundred-odd paintings hung densely, with notably few complaints of them being too high or too low. They were protected by a waist-high rail.

As a collection, the exhibits were both lauded and damned. The Art Committee bitterly attacked the general standard, declaring that "there could be no real comparison where the best works of the most distinguished are absent."⁷⁴

On the other hand, this was the biggest collection of art seen to that date in Australia and the first time an exhibition of foreign contemporary art had been organised in the colonies. Even the severest critics acknowledged that the show "had done good educational service to the masses of the people, propagating sound principles of taste and awakening a love for the beautiful."⁷⁵

⁷²Daily Telegraph, 12.11.1879.

⁷³It should be noted that many art works were displayed in their respective national courts in the Garden Palace, though officially entered in Department 4.

⁷⁴Record, p.442.

⁷⁵Record, p.cviii.

But as the Herald's art commentator noted, mixing a little acid with reality, "Painting is a matter of art, but it is also a matter of business, and it may be delicately hinted here that apparently the latter has been nearly as much considered as the former."⁷⁶ He went on to suggest that works of more than equal quality were already to be seen in the colony's nascent collection.

In the event, the Art Gallery of New South Wales was to be the only major purchaser from the Exhibition. It bought some thirty paintings, prints and statues and numerous examples of industrial art.⁷⁷ Most of the remaining exhibits were packed up and despatched on to Melbourne the next year.

To appease its conscience the British government sent a small number of commemorative works of the Royal collection. They were received with a loyal rapture distinctly unrelated to their perceived artistic merit:

The paintings themselves are not imaginative and the artists have had to content themselves with depicting actual scenes, and therefore the higher branch of art, that is to say, the imaginative or constructive, has not been called forth.⁷⁸

They were hung in the first British chamber of the Art Annexe. The most popular was a copy of Winterhalter's "The Royal Family in

⁷⁶SMH, 15.11.1879. p.3.

⁷⁷Those still in the Gallery's collection are itemised in the Catalogue of Relics and marked with an asterisk in the following discussion. In the great AGNSW sale of 1962 a large number of paintings shown at the Exhibition were sold; many went to the Hydro-Majestic Hotel, Medlow Bath, and to St. Joseph's College, Hunters Hill, where they remain.

⁷⁸SMH, 20.11.1879, p.7.



1857";⁷⁹ it was well-known from popular engravings. The others were state commemorative scenes: feats of portraiture, accompanied by voluminous labels identifying the hosts of august characters.

"The Marriage of the Prince of Wales" (1862) by William Powell Frith RA; "The Queen receiving the sacrament" (1838) by Charles Leslie RA; and "The Royal procession to St. Paul's" (1872) and "The Opening of the Vienna International Exhibition" (1873) both by Nicholas Chevalier, were all works of acknowledged masters.⁸⁰ Nonetheless, Edward Combes in his "General Report on the fine arts" was conspicuous in his lack of comment on them,⁸¹ and the Herald summed up the experience without reference to any aesthetic criteria as "another mark of the attachment this community has to the Crown."⁸²

For the rest of the exhibitors in the Art Department critics and commentators could find only half-hearted epithets: "a comparative exhibition of contemporary art... so far as it goes",⁸³ "a collection of pictures of various degrees of merit ... down to that degree which is represented by zero."⁸⁴

⁷⁹Copy by Belli; original at Osborne.

⁸⁰The reputations of Frith and Leslie were well known in Australia; occasional of their works had toured the colonies. Chevalier had had a famous local career between 1851 and 1868, when he joined the Prince of Wales' round the world trip as artist.

⁸¹Record, p.447-9.

⁸²SMH, 20.11.1879, p.7.

⁸³Record, p.441.

⁸⁴SMH, 15.11.1879, p.3.



Group 1: Sculpture

As was the problem with all valuable art objects, the risk and cost of sending first class sculpture to the Sydney Exhibition were prohibitive. Made harsh by this frustration, Edward Combes wrote in his "Report" that there were on show no others than "works of mediocrity".⁸⁵ He was right. There was an abundance of second-rate studio sculpture of predictable conformity such as "The Captive", "The runaway slave strangled by a dog", "A Vestal tempted by love" and so forth - all of them barely draped females in submissively alluring poses.

Three British sculptors were awarded top prizes; their works were also purchased by the Art Gallery of NSW. Thomas Woolner, well-known in the colonies from his twenty year career in Melbourne and Sydney, exhibited bronze busts of Dickens and Tennyson⁸⁶ and a marble Ophelia. Charles Bell Birch, who enjoyed a long popularity in Australia, showed a bronze, "Retaliation"*, cast from a model exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1878. It was alleged to have been created expressly for the Sydney International Exhibition, "a statement difficult to reconcile," noted the Herald critic, "with the next sentence (in the Catalogue) that 'whether sold or unsold, it is to be sent to the Melbourne Exhibition'".⁸⁷ The piece was described as "natural, grace-

⁸⁵Record, p.455.

⁸⁶Collections of MAAS and the Executive Council of New South Wales, respectively.

⁸⁷SMH, 24.12.1879, p.3; Official Catalogue of the Art Gallery, Sydney, 1879.

4.25 "You dirty boy!"; British Catalogue, p.80



ful and full of animation."⁸⁸ Two terracottas by Albert Bruce Joy completed the tally of purchased prizewinners: "The First Flight"⁸⁹ and "The Fairy Tale".⁹⁰

Among the most popular British sculpture were Giovanni Fontana's "La Sonnambula"* (one of the eight marbles he exhibited) and Focardi's "You Dirty Boy", owned and used for advertising by Pears soap. The Official Catalogue of the Art Gallery quoted George Augustus Sala on this work:

Groups of people from all parts of the world are roaring with laughter at this excruciatingly droll performance; it has set many hundreds of folks...screaming with merriment.⁹¹

It became a familiar sight throughout Australia, for Pears reproduced it in pressed metal to be used as a decorative shop fitting in businesses selling Pears products.

In the French court six sculptors were awarded First Degrees of Merit Special. Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi, famous for heroic themes and grandiose proportions, showed his bronze "Genius in the grip of misery". The Herald observed of it:

The intellectual face of Genius and the anguish expressed as the foul witch Misery draws it downwards, are admirably depicted. But why will French artists choose such horrible subjects?⁹²

⁸⁸Record, p.455.

⁸⁹Exhibited at the R.A., 1874; illustrated in the SIE Photo Album, vol.3, p.63.

⁹⁰Also called "Reading Girl", it was known to have survived the Garden Palace fire but has since disappeared. Graeme Sturgeon, The Development of Australian sculpture, London 1978, p.37.

⁹¹Official Catalogue of the Art Gallery, p.3.

⁹²SMH, 24.12.1879, p.3.

"Child on a Tortoise" by Eugène Delaplanche was called "remarkable" for its accurate proportions and good work.⁹³ Amedée-Donatien Doublemard, "already distinguished in France",⁹⁴ showed a bronze group, "The Education of Bacchus", "full of mirth, jollity and power".⁹⁵ The other French prizewinners were Hubert Louis-Noël ("The Muse of André Chenier"), which the Herald called "the gem" of the Exhibition;⁹⁶ Jean Désiré Ringel d'Ilzach ("The Flautist"); Félix Sanzel ("Soap Bubbles"); and Henri de Vauréal ("The Little gleaner"). No French sculpture was purchased for the colonial collection.

One German and three Belgian sculptors won top prizes. Ferdinand van Miller ("Carib Indian"); Karl Winer ("Mutual Love"); Jean-André Laumans ("Exercise"); and Polydore Comein (terracottas). Again, no representative pieces were purchased for New South Wales.

The only sculptors in the New South Wales court were very recent immigrants. Lucien Henry (arrived 1880) showed a bronze medallion, "The Empire of the South", which was honourably mentioned. Achille Simonetti, Sydney's foremost "Professor of Sculpture" since 1874, exhibited a plaster model of his "Venus of the South"⁹⁷ and five

⁹³Ibid, Delaplanche won the Prix de Rome in 1864.

⁹⁴Record, p.460; Prix de Rome 1855.

⁹⁵SMH, 24.12.1879, p.3.

⁹⁶Surely one of the most gruesome subjects in the Art Gallery, showing the Muse clutching the guillotined head of the poet; described in SMH, 24.12.1879, p.3.

⁹⁷Lost; described in SMH, 24.12.1879, p.3; illustrated (rear view) in SIE Photo Album, vol. 3, p.57. "Awful!!!", is the pencilled comment in ML's copy of the Official Catalogue of the Art Gallery.

plaster and marble busts; one of these, of Commander Goodenough* (which was exhibited at the Royal Academy three years before) received a first prize.

Group 2: Painting

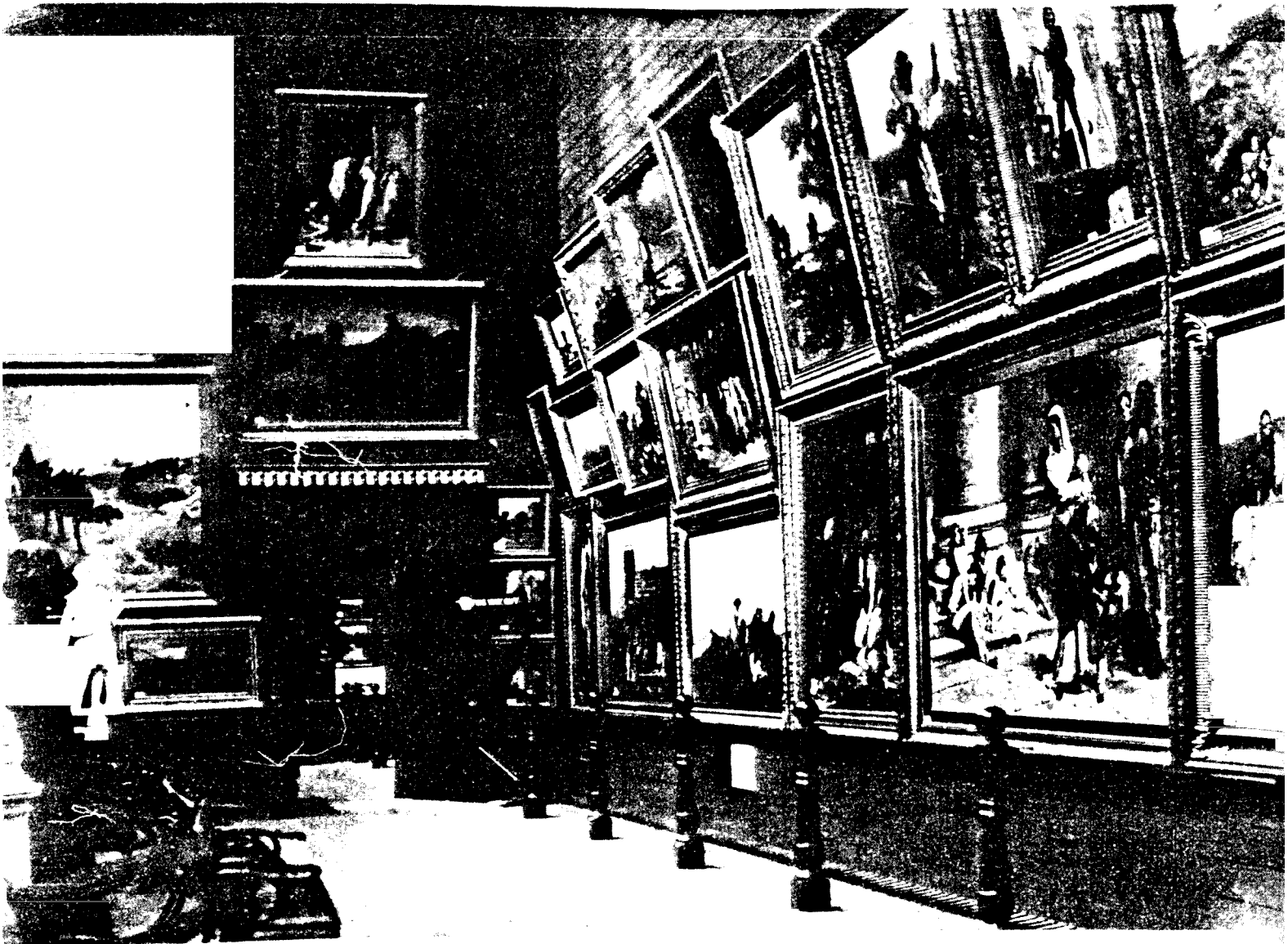
Comparatively few of the world's greatest artists were represented... From England we missed Millais, Long, Vicat-Cole, Fildes, Briton-Rivière, Macwhirter, S.J. Poynter, Bouverie, Goddard, Gow, G.H. Boughton, Marcus Stone, H.S. Marks, P. Graham, Miss Thompson... France sends us nothing of Meissonier, Bonnat, Cabanel, Bougèreau, Doré, Emile Binpils, Perrault, Leyraud, H. Dubois, Henner, Feyin-Perrin, Fleury, Louis Lenoir, and a host of others. We miss the great Makart from Austria-Hungary...⁹⁸

Thus mourned Edward Combes of the painters not represented in Sydney. They together with those who were present form a fair proportion of the European bourgeois realist school of the later 19th century, artists trained in the Beaux Arts tradition and exhibiting regularly at the national Academies.⁹⁹ The opulent detail and high finish of the style comprise a constant theme in Combes' appraisal of the works on show, though he was always aware of their general second-rate quality. Evidence that antipodean artistic starvation had not dulled the critical capacity of the judges, neither of the two greatest British names present - Lord Leighton and Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema - were honoured with awards in any degree at all.

The three British top prizewinners were an odd, though fairly representative, trio of lesser Anglo-Saxon artists. Richard Beavis

⁹⁸Record, p.422. All are noted in Bénézit, Dictionnaire Critique et documentaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs, Paris 1959-62; but few are still remembered.

⁹⁹See Aleksa Člebonović, Some Call it kitsch (originally published as Chefs d'Oeuvre du réalisme bourgeois), NY 1979.



RA, RWS, showed "Bedouin Caravan en route to Mount Sinai" and "Threshing Floor at Gilgal"; oriental landscapes were a large component of his output after a trip to the middle east in 1875 and Eccleston du Faur, writing in the Herald, noted his veracity: "it has that leaden tinge peculiar to the East in summer."¹⁰⁰ Edward Combes, however, felt that "Mr. Beavis does not act fairly either towards his genius or himself."¹⁰¹ John Brett ARA contributed a characteristic view of the rocky southern coast, "Mount's Bay, Cornwall". Keeley Halswelle showed "Non Angli, sed angeli"*¹⁰² of which the Herald observed:

Whether regarded as a matter of poetical idea, of happy composition, of good drawing, or of fine colouring it is most worth of admiration... If it is possible, it would be well that this picture should be secured for our own Art Gallery. There is a world of truth and nature in it.¹⁰³

"Non Angli" was purchased for the Gallery, and so were a further fourteen British works: oils by John Mallard Bromley; Thomas Sidney Cooper RA* - "vigorous painting...cattle excellent",¹⁰⁴ a characteristic assessment; Robert Dicksee - "he had painted the drapery remarkably well"¹⁰⁵ faintly damned the Herald; Mark Dockree, whose

¹⁰⁰SMH, 27.11.1879, p.7.

¹⁰¹Record, p.450. All the following British artists are entered in Christopher Wood, Dictionary of Victorian Painters, London, 1971.

¹⁰²Exhibited at the R.A., 1877.

¹⁰³SMH, 1.12.1879, p.3.

¹⁰⁴SMH, 1.12.1879, p.7.

¹⁰⁵ibid.

"Old Mill at Pembroke" did not receive a prize, but was admired by Combes, who as a Trustee of the Art Gallery was responsible for its acquisition; Alfred Elmore RA - "not in his best or highest manner";¹⁰⁶ W.C. Horsley; Charles James Lewis, another non-prizewinner; and John Mogford.* Watercolours were acquired from Sir Oswald Brierley RWS (Marine Painter to H.M. the Queen); George Fripp RWS*; Edward Hargitt*; Edward Hayes*; and H.G. Hine.

France sent 182 paintings and eight watercolours to the Exhibition. Combes acknowledged the power, execution and international influence of French painting but concluded that the works on view in Sydney "could not possibly represent the true position of art in France".¹⁰⁷

There was some wowsery scandal caused by the number of voluptuous, full-frontal nudes - but it was quenched by the confidence of real lovers of Art: "True French art is of a much purer character than is generally supposed, appealing less to the sensual than to the refined tastes of its votaries."¹⁰⁸

The major prizewinners were Henry-Arthur Bonnefoy, a Beaux Arts-trained painter who exhibited "Sultry Weather"; Jules-Joseph Lefèbvre,

¹⁰⁶SMH, 24.11.1879, p.3; for his literary sources see Official Catalogue of the British Section, p. 12.

¹⁰⁷Record, p.458.

¹⁰⁸SMH, 15.3.1880.



a noted portraitist and genre-painter,¹⁰⁹ who showed "Chloë",¹¹⁰ and Louis Pome, also a portraitist and genre-painter, who entered two works, "The Convalescent's Feast" and "Last Appeal".

None of these were acquired for the colony's Gallery, though six others were: "Ismene, nymph of Diana"* and "Coptic Woman selling oranges in Cairo" by genre-painter Charles Landelle; "Feeding the Fowls" by landscapist Alexandre Defaux, a pupil of Corot;¹¹¹ "The Connoisseurs", noted as having "an almost Meissner-like finish"¹¹² by Adolphe Lesrel; "A Bowling Alley in Alsace" by Alsatian Camille Pabst; and "View of St. Clair reservoir" by landscapist Paul-Emile Berton¹¹³ (the latter two were the only French purchases not awarded any prize).

From Germany came some seventy exhibits, of which only one was awarded a top prize, though ten were purchased for the Art Gallery. Edward Combes clearly admired the German school for its "vigour and animation";¹¹⁴ as usual he regretted that it was so inadequately represented.

¹⁰⁹Prix de Rome, 1861.

¹¹⁰"Chloë" was purchased by Sir Thomas Fitzgerald from the Melbourne International Exhibition the next year and lent for many years to the NGV; on Fitzgerald's death in 1908 it was acquired by Norman Young of Young & Jackson's Hotel, Swanston St, where it still hangs.

¹¹¹Also by Defaux, "Snow Scene".

¹¹²Record, p.459.

¹¹³Also by Berton, "Through the Woods".

¹¹⁴Record, p.461.

Wilhelm Benjamin Hermann Eschke was a well-travelled land- and seascape painter; he won the sole German First Degree of Merit Special for "Sunrise, Freshwater Bay, Isle of Wight", a painting variously received by the critics: "an excellent landscape, very rich in colour,"¹¹⁵ wrote Combes; the Herald on the other hand, returned, "We must confess that we are unable to discover the particular charms of "Sunrise"..."¹¹⁶

Paintings were purchased from Karl Bennewitz von Lofen¹¹⁷ - "In the woods", "a charming bit of landscape"¹¹⁸; Conrad Grob, a leading Swiss genre-painter - "The Puppet Show"; Julius Huth, a sailor who had become a student of Eschke and a noted marine painter - "Roadstead to Helsingor";^{*} Gustave Koken, one of a dynasty of Hanoverian landscapists - "Forest Scene in Autumn" and "Winter Landscape"; Valentin Ruths, land- and seascape painter - "Beech Forest", "trees among which one, never wearying, could wander"¹¹⁹; Baron Jacobus van Starckenborgh, a Dutch Academician - "Wood Scene in West Virginia"¹²⁰; G.M. Strecker's "Storm in Autumn", described by Combes as "too purple"¹²¹ and Franz

¹¹⁵Record, p.462. Another Isle of Wight landscape by Eschke was purchased by the NGV from the Melbourne International Exhibition.

¹¹⁶SMH, 27.12.1879, p.5.

¹¹⁷presumably the elder, who was a landscapist; his son of the same name was a portraitist and genre-painter; Benezit, vol. 1, p.557.

¹¹⁸Record, p.462.

¹¹⁹SMH, 27.12.1879, p.5; also by Ruths, "Spring Landscape".

¹²⁰There is no suggestion why a Swiss and a Dutch painter should have entered in the German court.

¹²¹Record, p.463.

Sturtzkopf, a Weimar genre-painter - "Kitchen Interior", "a fine character picture".¹²²

The commentators on the art exhibits at the Sydney International Exhibition were particularly anxious to note national differences among the exhibitors. They found the Belgian court very perplexing on this score. "It is naturally influenced by the grand French school," wrote Combes;¹²³ but it "might as well be ascribed to Germany and Austria," opined the Herald.¹²⁴

There were sixty four oils on show; one was awarded a First Degree of Merit Special and it and another were acquired for the national collection. Jean Baptiste Robie, the most eminent fruit and flower painter in Europe, received the top prize for "Flowers and Fruit", "a beautiful composition executed with the most consummate technical skill."¹²⁵ The other purchase was from Jean-Francois Portaels for "Fugitive Slave". Portaels was Director of the Académie de Bruxelles and, as befitted such a Director, a history painter. Nonetheless, the best that Combes could say for the work was "pleasing composition...very effective."¹²⁶

The Austrian court of the Art Annexe housed not only the Austro-Hungarian Empire but also the remaining examples of European

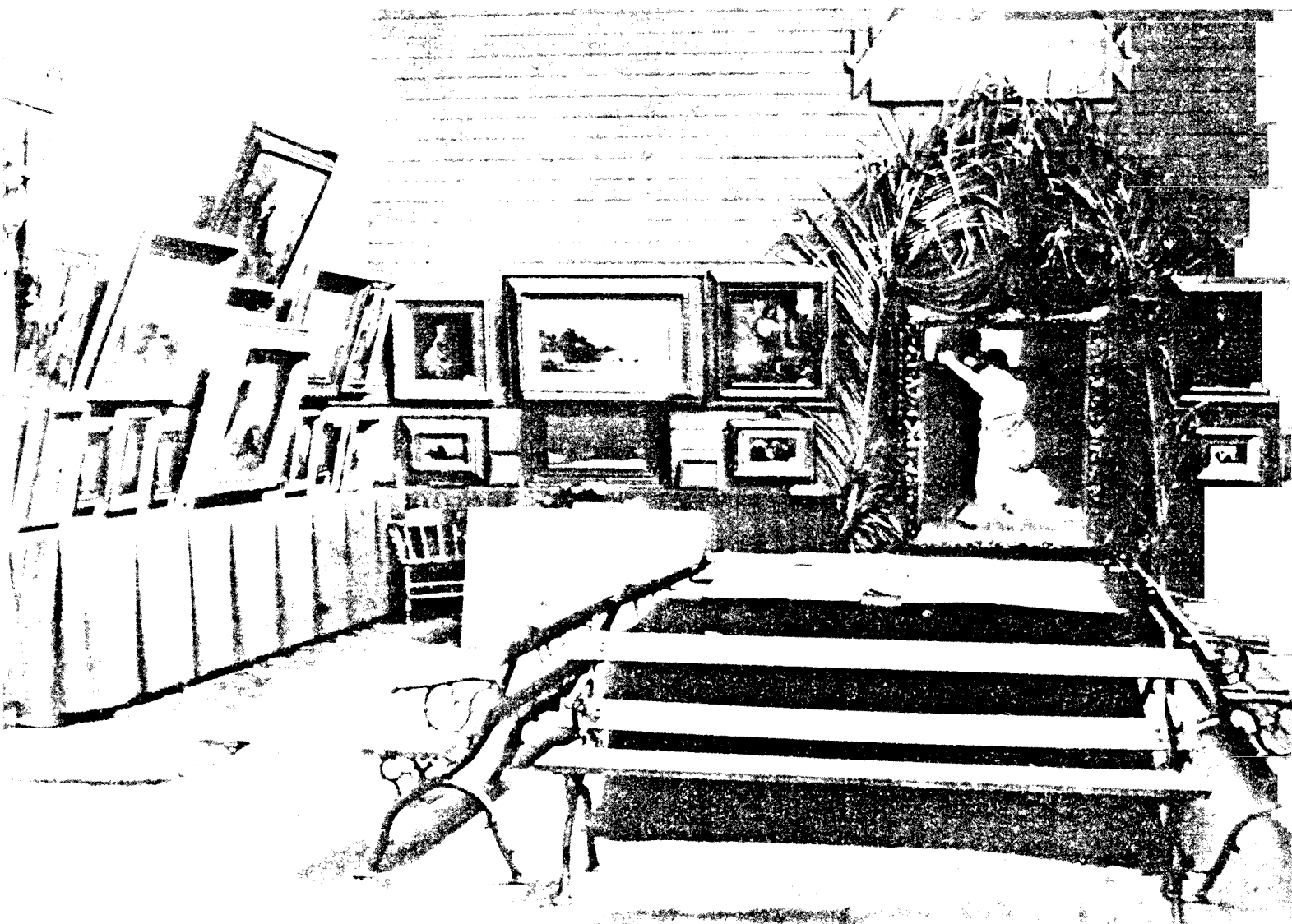
¹²²SMH, 27.12.1879, p.5.

¹²³Record, p.464.

¹²⁴SMH, 6.12.1879, p.7.

¹²⁵Record, p.465.

¹²⁶Ibid.



art. A proportion of these had been brought to Australia independently of the Exhibition and previously displayed for sale in the King St showroom of a Viennese entrepreneur, H.L. Neumann.¹²⁷ Among them was "St Cecilia" by the Czech history painter Gabriel Max. Its characteristic mystical religiosity made it one of the most popular paintings in the Exhibition:

There was great pathos and depth of feeling, which appealed directly and forcibly to the heart. None but a painter of rare talent and deep poetic feeling could possibly have executed so fine a work of art.¹²⁸

Also from Neumann's travelling show came "The Juggler: a village fair"* by Fritz Beinke, a German genre-painter; "a large, well-designed, and admirably executed picture,"¹²⁹ which was acquired for the New South Wales colonial collection. One of two portraits by Wilhelm Menzler,* a Bavarian genre-painter, was also purchased for the colony.

The only artist-exhibitor in the court to be honoured with a top prize was Norwegian Ludvig Munthe, the most important Scandinavian landscapist of his time, and already known and represented in private Australian collections.¹³⁰ "There is no living painter of landscape who has a deeper feeling of poetic sentiment or who is more dreamy and

¹²⁷Neumann was awarded a First Degree of Merit Special for his collection; a second Viennese dealer, Max Schödl, also receiving a top award, though none of his works was recognised individually.

¹²⁸Record, p.466; also by Max, "Christ in the Temple".

¹²⁹SMH, 13.12.1879, p.2; also by Beinke, "Children in a Meadow".

¹³⁰Ibid.

mysterious in imagery than this artist," rhapsodised Combes of Munthe's "Fishing Village on the North Sea."¹³¹

Of the colonial art offering Edward Combes wrote:

Australian art is still in its infancy. The number of its painters is very small, and these are more or less imitative. It is to be regretted that the patronage of art is so limited, but probably the demand for pictures will increase...there can be little doubt but that at no very distant period colonial painters will introduce into their pictures more feeling and individuality, characteristic of the fresh air and liberty incident to Australian out-of-door life.¹³²

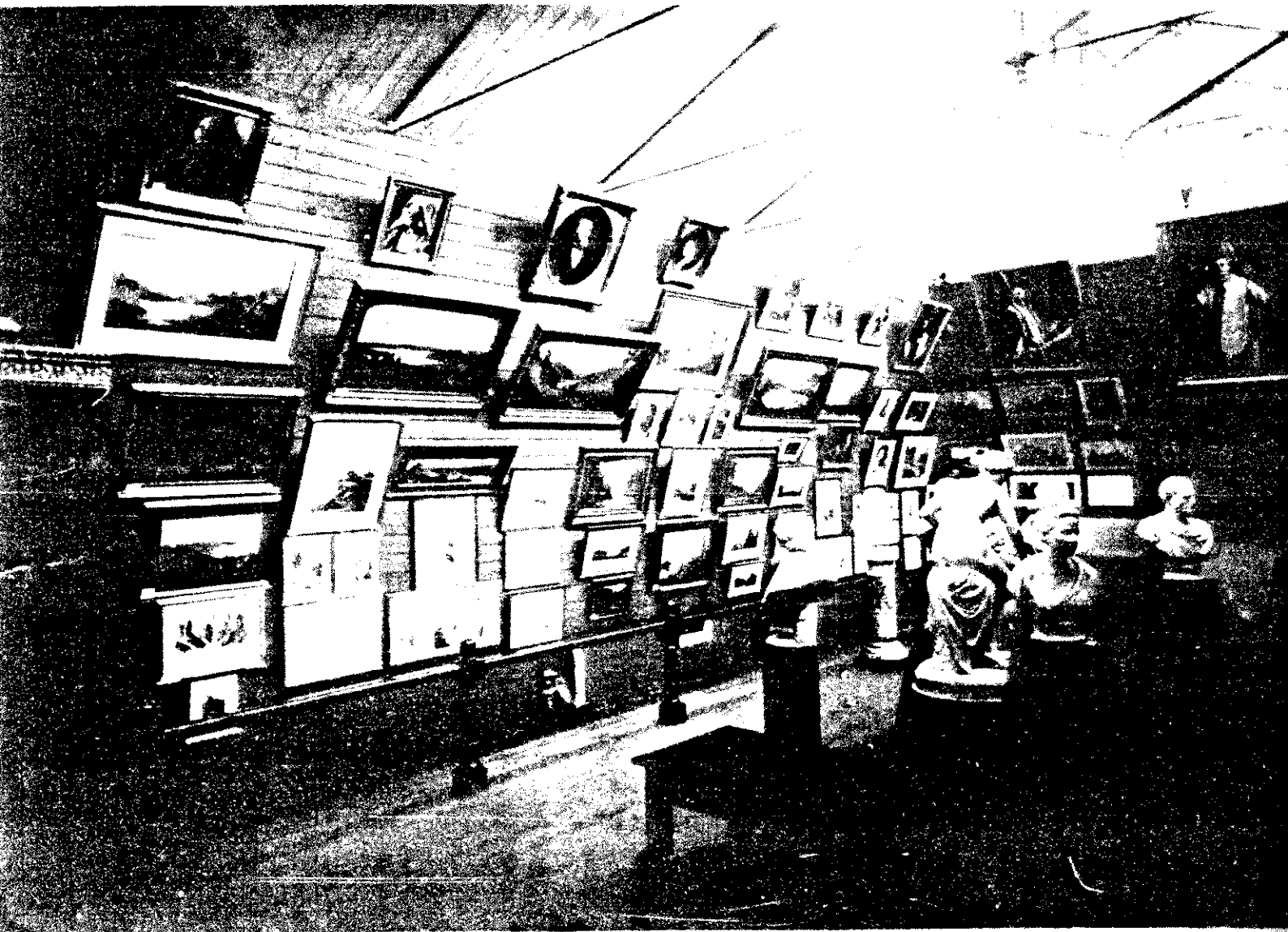
The decade of the 1870s saw the consolidation of institutional art in Australia,¹³³ or more precisely, in Melbourne and Sydney. The National Gallery of Victoria picture gallery had opened its doors to the public in 1864, and in 1870 the Victorian Academy of Arts and the National Gallery School had opened. In the same year Sydney saw its largest yet public showing of local and loan art at the Metropolitan Intercolonial Exhibition; and in 1872 the New South Wales Academy of Art commenced regular annual exhibitions.

Nonetheless, few artists could support themselves as fulltime professionals. Some taught in Mechanics' Institutes, Academies of Art or privately; many worked for the illustrated newspapers and magazines; some had come to Australia for other reasons, such as health or gold. The distinction between "artists" and "amateurs" was often hazy.

¹³¹Record, p.466; he also showed "Winter Scene on the North Sea".

¹³²Record, p.467.

¹³³See Daniel Thomas, Australian Art in the 1870s, AGNSW catalogue, 1976.



Among the colonial entries in the Sydney International Exhibition landscape was far the most popular mode, ranging from the vision grand through the scenic pictorial to the romantic. There were also a few fashionable scenes of oriental life, several views of old England and, from the good showing of ladies, numerous Australian flower studies. In addition, there was a small loan collection of Old Master copies.¹³⁴

The last of the nine painting galleries in the Art Annexe was labelled the New South Wales Court, though little more than a third of its wall space was hung with New South Welsh art (British architectural designs occupied the rest of the area). The other Australian colonies exhibited their art entries in their respective courts in the Garden Palace. Works were selected to hang in the Art Annexe by the Art Committee, which was predictably censured for its choices. Many of the *réfusés*, however, found hanging space elsewhere - here and there - in the Garden Palace.

The two top prizewinners from New South Wales exemplified the art scene of the time: immigrant amateurs who became increasingly professional in consequence of local successes. Conspicuously absent from the fine art component of the Exhibition were the professional artists of the illustrated newspapers: Samuel Begg, Montagu Scott, William Macleod and others, though the three named had contributed significantly to the practical side of the Exhibition, as designers of the medal and the mural panels under the dome.

¹³⁴Listed in the Official Catalogue of the Art Gallery, p.81.

The winners were Charles Hern of Woollahra, for a large water-colour, "Govett's Leap",* and Marian Ellis Rowan, very recently arrived in Sydney, for watercolours of native flowers.¹³⁵ Hern came to Sydney about 1873 and had left again within ten years; three of his five listed entries hark back to the scenic southern coast of Britain. The other two were views of his adopted landscape: "Bondi Bay from St Olave's" and "Careening Cove, Port Jackson".¹³⁶

Edward Baker Boulton, grazier of Bergen-op-Zoom, Walcha, proudly listed himself as an Associate of the Liverpool Society of Water Colour Artists; he showed four works: "Sunset at Aden", which was highly commended; "Dover Castle" and two views of the Nepean near Penrith.¹³⁷

William Raworth, by 1879 teaching privately in Sydney, exhibited "Te Anau Lake: a midsummer shower", presumably a product of his 1877 excursion to New Zealand, though doubtless worked up in his Sydney studio. The Sydney Morning Herald approved of this picture: "Regret may be expressed that he has not sent more..."¹³⁸ In fact, he had: scattered throughout the Garden Palace were at least six further paintings and drawings.¹³⁹ Rebecca Martens, the thoroughly derivative

¹³⁵Nature and number unknown. Rowan is not listed in the Official Catalogue of the Art Gallery; for that matter, nor is Hern. Both are named as prizewinners in the Record.

¹³⁶Now in ML: VI/HAR/CAR C/1.

¹³⁷A prolific and competent watercolourist; both ML and AGNSW hold a number of his works.

¹³⁸SMH, 3.1.1880, p.3.

¹³⁹SMH, 6.3.1880, p.3.

daughter of her father, exhibited two views: "Sawpit Gully near Rydal" and "Parramatta River"; she did not receive a prize. One last water-colour landscapist was Edward Combes, demiurge of the Art Department and pillar of the art establishment. Of his three entries, one, "Ice - a Langham sketch", described as "crisp, bright and effective",¹⁴⁰ was awarded a First Degree of Merit.

The workers in oil summed up the professional art world of Sydney.¹⁴¹ Professore Giulio Annivitti, maestro at the NSW Academy of Art, exhibited "L'arc-en-ciel", a decorative allegorical female floating on a rainbow, which received no award, though described by the Herald as "so poetical a work".¹⁴² The Collingridge brothers, George and Arthur, each showed a landscape. George, who arrived in New South Wales in 1879, displayed "View at Bas Meudon, Seine", possibly a souvenir of his Barbizon sketching days with Corot. Arthur, two years longer in the colony and well-established as a staff illustrator on the Illustrated Sydney News, showed "Ryde on the Parramatta River", for which he was awarded a First Degree of Merit. "Both require considerable distance to see them to advantage," noted the Herald: "for the colours are somewhat crude, and the skies very hard..."¹⁴³ James

¹⁴⁰Ibid.

¹⁴¹Interestingly, Miss Martens classified herself as an artist, not an amateur.

¹⁴²The only known works of Annivitti are portraits in the collection of Sydney University. "L'Arc-en-ciel" is pictured distantly in SIE Photo Album, vol.3, p.56 and described in SMH, 3.1.1880, p.3.

¹⁴³SMH, 3.1.1880, p.3; George had a further nine and Arthur another two works in various spots in the Garden Palace; SMH, 6.3.1880, p.3. See also O.H.K. Spate, "George Collingridge 1847-1931", JRAHS, vol.66, pt.4, 1981, p.258.

Howe Carse, a regular exhibitor and prize-winner in the NSW Academy of Art exhibitions, showed two landscapes in oils, "both treated in his well-known style. Mr. Carse copies faithfully, but he has too great a tendency to spoil his pictures by excess of bright greens..."¹⁴⁴ wrote the Herald, perhaps explaining why Carse did not win a prize.

A certain Pablo Petrovitz - "a name new to us"¹⁴⁵ showed three portraits: Archbishop Vaughan, Lloyd Ferris, and the artist's wife.

Five lady amateurs showed (as the Herald put it) "nothing more pretentious"¹⁴⁶ than studies of flowers, ferns and butterflies. Little is yet known of such ladies and their work, but one of the prize-winners, Miss Annie Walker of Concord, is survived by a substantial output still known.¹⁴⁷

If there was an art centre of Australia in 1879, it was certainly Melbourne. Here were collectors, patrons, dealers, a National Gallery and its associated school, and an artists' association, the Victorian Academy of Arts. The art community of Melbourne was active, receptive to overseas trends and sufficiently aware of art activities north of the Murray to exhibit more or less regularly at the New South Wales

¹⁴⁴SMH, 3.1.1880, p.3. One of these paintings, "The Jump-up: Entrance to the Burraborang valley" is now in AGNSW, acquired in 1976. See also Stephen Scheduling, "John Howe Carse", Art and Australia, Sept. 1979, p.71.

¹⁴⁵SMH, 3.1.1880, p.3. Nothing is known of Pablo Petrovitz; could it be a joke?

¹⁴⁶SMH, 3.1.1880, p.3.

¹⁴⁷There are seven volumes of sketches by Miss Anne Walker in ML PXD32-38⁻²; she also published Flowers of NSW, Sydney 1887.

Academy of Arts. It is very surprising, therefore, to note gaps in Victorian representation at the Sydney International Exhibition: Louis Buvelot, Oswald Campbell, Chester Earles, Frederick Woodhouse and more.¹⁴⁸ In any case, it seems that the hanging of such works as were sent did them little justice: "Pictures of high merit (are) half hidden behind showcases and piles of industrial exhibits," noted the Herald.¹⁴⁹

Grand old man of Melbourne art, Curator of the National Gallery of Victoria and Master of the Gallery School, Eugen von Guérard exhibited his majestic pair of New Zealand landscapes, "Milford Sound" and "Lake Wakatipu", for the former of which he was awarded a First Degree of Merit Special.¹⁵⁰ Isaac Whitehead, landscapist of the Fernshawe region and leading Melbourne picture-framer, also showed a view of Milford Sound, as well as a characteristic Fernshawe scene. Other pillars of the Victorian Academy of Arts exhibiting in Sydney were Henry Rielly (three landscapes); William Ford (six works); and Samuel Calvert (three watercolours, plus eight designs for a burlesque, "Alfred the Great", by Marcus Clarke). Julian Ashton, who had arrived to work on the Illustrated Australian News the year before, sent "A Chip off the old block", "The Boldest of the party" and "Beg Floss"; the first of these was highly commended.

¹⁴⁸See Daniel Thomas, Australian Art in the 1870s, p.10-12.

¹⁴⁹SMH, 6.3.1880, p.3.

¹⁵⁰The two had been exhibited at the Paris Exposition Universelle the year before; see Candice Bruce, Eugen von Guérard, Sydney, 1980, p.86-91. "Milford Sound" was acquired by AGNSW in 1970.



The Tasmanian court was decked with some thirty paintings, among which portraits of the extinct aboriginal people loomed hauntingly between romantic views of the landscape. Largest was Robert Dowling's "Aborigines of Tasmania", "valuable both as a fine artistic production and as an historical painting,"¹⁵¹ but in common with the other aboriginal subjects, it was not awarded a prize.

Landscapes won prizes. Finest of these were three entries from William Charles Piquenit, since 1875 an emigré from his native Tasmania, now living and working in Sydney. "South Esk River and Ben Lomond" received the Exhibition's highest award, and the other two, "Huon River - Picnic Hotel" and "Blue Mountains, NSW", won First Degrees of Merit.¹⁵²

The South Australian art entries came largely from the prolific brush of Melbourne photographer-artist Henry James Johnstone: mountain and gully scenes from both Victoria and South Australia and sentimental genre pieces.¹⁵³ Another painter-cum-photographer was Saul Solomon, who styled himself "Artist" and charged to match: "Royal Family", a photographically-detailed mass of royal faces and bodies, was priced at 110 pounds; portraits of politicians cost 15 pounds and of the Governor, 30 pounds.¹⁵⁴ The judges could not bring themselves

¹⁵¹SMH, 6.3.1880, p.3.; it is now in Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston.

¹⁵²It seems that Piquenit made the patriotic gesture of exhibiting in the Tasmanian rather than the New South Wales court.

¹⁵³See Jack Cato, The Story of the camera in Australia, Melbourne, 1955, p.105-6.

¹⁵⁴Illustrated in the SIE Photo Album, vol.2, p.53.

to acknowledge South Australian art; it remained ignominiously unprized.

So did Queensland art, though the Herald's commentator noted with appreciative anticipation,

In the course of the next six months we hope by the inspection of these pictures, to take several trips along the Queensland coast, get glimpses of her majestic rivers, looking in on the way at a farm on the Darling Downs, a diggings at Gympie, a sugar plantation on the Mackay, take a hand at sheep-shearing, a frolic at a picnic, or a seat by the campfire at a corroboree.¹⁵⁵

Little is known of the Queensland artists but for Sylvester Diggles, who exhibited a "Transfiguration:after Raphael" (Diggles is better known as an ornithologist and bird-painter) and Joseph Clarke, a drawing master who designed the cover of the Queensland Catalogue.¹⁵⁶

Meanwhile, across the Tasman,

"Judging from the high standard of excellence and taste which characterises (the New Zealand art) a stranger would be led to imagine that New Zealand was the Italy of Australia."¹⁵⁷

There were close artistic ties between New Zealand and Victoria, in particular. Inspired by the grand views imported by globe-trotting artists such as Earle and Chevalier, a sketching trip to New Zealand became something of a pilgrimage for Australian artists of the 1860s,

¹⁵⁵SMH, 29.9.1879, p.3.

¹⁵⁶Margaret Maynard and Julie Brown, Fine Art exhibitions in Brisbane 1886-1916, St. Lucia 1980, p.172.

¹⁵⁷SMH, 6.3.1880, p.3.



70s and thereafter. In evidence, splendid romantic views from both sides of the Tasman Sea formed a substantial section of Australian art at the Sydney Exhibition.

From the eastern side of the Tasman came works by John Gully of Nelson, "the patriarch painter of New Zealand".¹⁵⁸ Turner-esque water-colours, one of them - "Winter sunset, Lake Wakatipu" - received the Exhibition's top prize. John Gibb of Christchurch was of the same school, as were John Hoyte of Dunedin¹⁵⁹ and James Richmond of Wellington, all of whom were awarded prizes.

Groups 3-6: Engraving and lithography; photography; industrial and architectural designs, models and decorations; decorations with ceramic and vitreous materials and mosaic and inlaid work.

The largest display in these classes came, predictably, from Britain. The Royal Institute of British Architects was represented by plans and drawings from thirty one members, some of them with notable Australasian connections. T.G. Jackson had designed St. Barnabas' chapel on Norfolk Island in 1875; he exhibited plans for Oxford and Tipperary buildings. W.H. Lynn seized the opportunity to show once more his "original design for the proposed new Parliament House, Sydney"¹⁶⁰ which had won an international competition in 1861¹⁶¹ and

¹⁵⁸Gil Docking, Two Hundred years of New Zealand painting, Melbourne, 1971, p.54.

¹⁵⁹Shortly to move to Sydney.

¹⁶⁰Official Catalogue of the British Section, p.36.

¹⁶¹Eric Irvin, Sydney as it might have been, Sydney 1974, p.49-53.

had lately been revived. John Sulman, shortly to come to Australia, also showed designs.

Three English magazines sent examples of their engraving and lithography. The Graphic occupied a prominent little court of its own fronting onto the nave; it was lined with specimens of the magazine's famous illustrations and was actively promoted by its own imported agent, John Plummer. The Builder too showed fine illustrations from its pages; both these magazines circulated widely in Australia. Relatively unknown, however, was the Furniture Gazette.¹⁶²

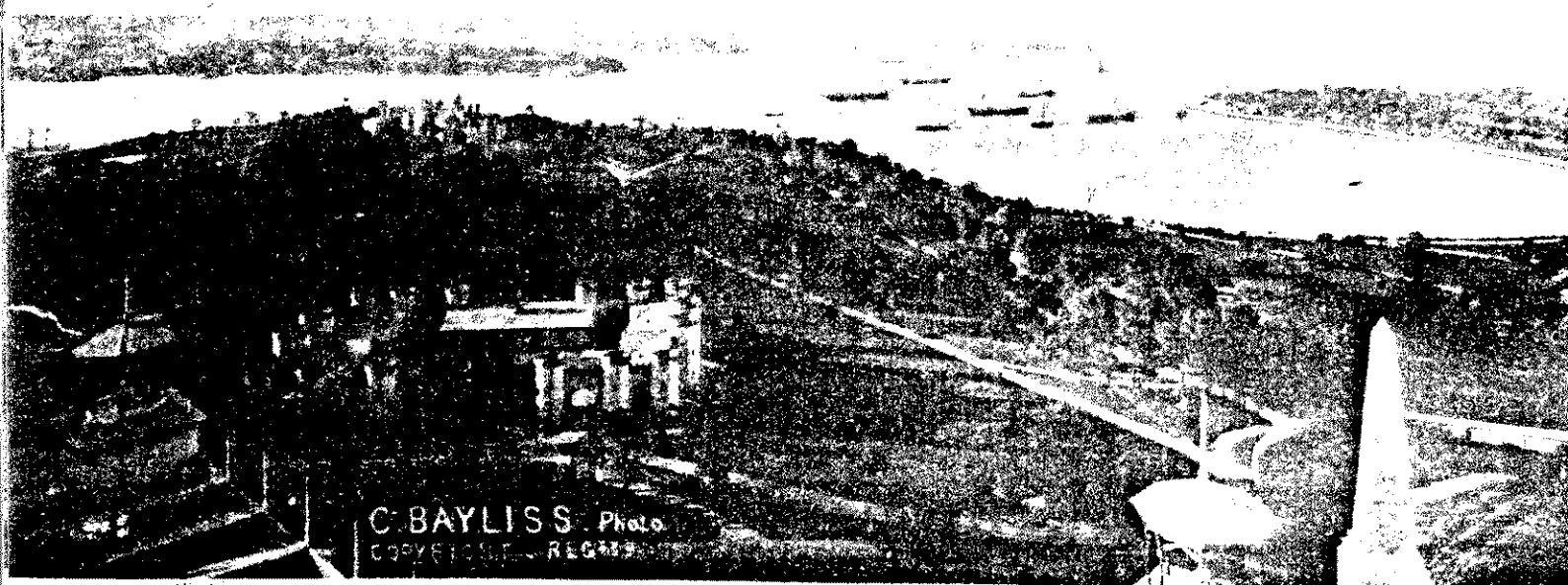
Art ceramics came from Brown-Westhead, Moore & Co. of Hanley; painted porcelain from Brownfield of Cobridge (winning a top prize) and Copeland of Stoke-on-Trent; painted tiles from Ironbridge's Craven-Dunnill factory, "showing excellent figures with good colouring, artistic conception and composition"¹⁶³ and taking out a First Degree of Merit Special; a range of products from Doulton's Lambeth works; and "Artistic paintings on porcelain" from Pinder, Bourne & Co. of Burslem. Thomas Webb & Sons, whose table glass glittered famously in the Garden Palace nave, also entered "highly artistic glass" in Class 424.

The applied art categories saw a strong colonial showing. Many splendid photographs, in particular, hung in the various courts and in

¹⁶²Not to be found in any Australian library today, though known to have been one of Horbury Hunt's many subscriptions; see his Cuttings in GRL.

¹⁶³Record, p.495.

4.32 View from the Garden Palace dome; photo by Charles Bayliss; in
J. Lane Mullins, Photographs of Sydney and NSW, 1881, ML



C. BAYLISS. Photo
COPYRIGHT REGD.

other spots throughout the Garden Palace. The most spectacular was certainly Charles Bayliss' massive panorama of Sydney taken from the lantern on top of the Garden Palace dome: twenty two inches wide by twenty feet long. It was acclaimed as "The best panorama of Sydney we have ever seen...It is almost faultless, the clearness and completeness is surprising...the cleverest work that has issued from a colonial gallery for a long time."¹⁶⁴ The jury, however, merely commended it, noting that it was "fairly executed".¹⁶⁵

Less than half the professional photographers of Sydney exhibited. Barcroft Capel Boake displayed a selection of his famous characteristic portrait miniatures and was highly commended for them. John Degotardi Senior of Balmain entered examples of the processes he employed in his art: photolithography, "nature printing", "galvanoplasty" and heliotypes.¹⁶⁶ His son John Degotardi Junior was certainly represented in the extensive display from the New South Wales Government Printer;¹⁶⁷ this comprised dozens of views of Sydney and specimens of twenty photographic processes, for which Thomas Richards, the Government Printer, was awarded a First Degree of Merit Special. Holtermann & Co. exhibited another vast panorama of the city, taken from Holtermann's home photographic tower.

¹⁶⁴Cato, The Story of the camera in Australia, p.55; here the quotation is attributed, impossibly, to the Australian Photo-Review.

¹⁶⁵Record, p.504; now in the La Trobe Library. A smaller version, nine feet long, is in ML: XVI/1878/1-3.

¹⁶⁶Degotardi's work is described in the text accompanying the facsimile reproduction of his The Art of printing, Sydney 1982.

¹⁶⁷Hundreds of his photos remain there.



The Queensland court was credited by the Sydney Morning Herald with "the charm of a picture gallery"¹⁶⁸ due to the bank of tinted photographs taken some ten years before by Government Geologist Richard Daintree; they were sent by his wife from London, Daintree having died in 1878.

The greatest Victorian photographers - with the peculiar exception of John W. Lindt - sent work to the Sydney Exhibition. Johnstone, O'Shaunessy & Co., the leading portraitists of Melbourne, received a First Degree of Merit. Charles Nettleton, for thirty years the photographic chronicler of Melbourne's streets, buildings, events and criminals, was highly commended for Views of Victoria. More of these came from Nicholas Caire, who had only recently opened his Melbourne studio.

Unlike the photographers only a fraction of colonial architects exhibited. Thomas Rowe, perhaps Sydney's leading practitioner, showed unspecified drawings; but neither Edmund Blacket, George Mansfield, J.F. Hilly, Horbury Hunt nor Colonial Architect James Barnett entered.¹⁶⁹ The two big interior decorating firms of the city were represented: Ashwin & Falconer, by stained glass "of excellent execution...harmonious, easy, expressive",¹⁷⁰ and Lyon, Cottier & Co.

¹⁶⁸SMH, 29.9.1879, p.3; see also G.C. Bolton, Richard Daintree: a photographic memoir, Brisbane 1965; Ian G. Sanker, Queensland in the 1860s: the photography of Richard Daintree, Brisbane 1977. Some of these prints survive in the collection of the Queensland Museum; see the Catalogue of Relics.

¹⁶⁹Nor did the Colonial Architect's Office enter drawings, though many officially designed buildings were illustrated in the Government Printing Office's entry of photographs.

¹⁷⁰Record, p.503.

by more stained glass, "creditable to the colony".¹⁷¹

Assessing the value of the art entries, Edward Combes reflected particularly on their relation to Australia. He saw the Exhibition marking the end of the primitive period of colonisation during which the necessities of survival over-ruled the cultivation of Art:

After a time, however, the aspect changes - the wilderness has become a smiling field; fortune or competence is won; the coveted leisure is obtained; articles of luxury and decorated furniture take the place of the rough and rude household stuff which served the purpose of the early colonists; a taste for the beautiful in Art is then awakened, and its culture becomes a natural consequence.¹⁷²

In order to seize this new opportunity Combes recommended the immediate establishment of a system of art education. "When this has been accomplished we may expect to see a love of art grow up with our children, a refinement of taste become general, and a proper reverence and admiration by the masses of the people for all that is pure and bright".¹⁷³

¹⁷¹Record, p.506.

¹⁷²Record, p.440.

¹⁷³Record, p.469.

Ladies' Court

"Everything that conduces to the moral and material well being of mankind...had its place in the Exhibition," wrote a Commissioner of yet another category of exhibits; "the handiwork of our women and children should have a place in its turn."¹⁷⁴ This it did, in the Ladies' Court, an appendage of the Art Department. However, it was not dignified with an official classification numeral and lady exhibitors had further sexist oversights to contend with:

Dear Mr. Editor, (wrote "A Lady Exhibitor" to the Herald) I should be sorry to take upon myself the championship of "women's rights"...still less should I like to accuse the Exhibition Commissioners of want of gallantry. Will you however...kindly try to explain to me why lady exhibitors should not be equally well treated with gentlemen in the matter of free passes?¹⁷⁵

The vestibule area under the eastern tower, "one of the pleasantest spots in the Garden Palace"¹⁷⁶, was the site of the Ladies' Court. Women's work, as the polite phrase described the functional handiwork and decorative accomplishments of middle class women, had been an Exhibition category since the Great Exhibition. It was regarded with an ambivalent mixture of benevolence and disdain. For on the one hand, the trivial nature of much of such "work" would seem to damn the practitioners; while on the other, it saved them from the accusation of unenterprising and unchristian idleness. The phenomenon of the Ladies' Court offers acute insights into 19th century concepts

¹⁷⁴Record, p.517.

¹⁷⁵SMH, 30.9.1879, p.6.

¹⁷⁶Record, p.517.

of womanliness.¹⁷⁷

Nonetheless, it is interesting to note that it was the nature of the exhibit rather than the sex of the exhibitor that determined its classification. Some 20% of New South Wales exhibitors were in fact male.¹⁷⁸

Far the largest proportion of exhibits demonstrated the popular parlour arts. There were lace collars, cuffs, cushion and parasol covers, tablecloths, curtains and counterpanes. There were applique mantlepiece borders, aprons and cushions. To the unanimous horror of the judges Berlin woolwork pictures in characteristic brash colours lined the walls with biblical, historical and sentimental images. Untypical of these was one still surviving, Rosina Starkey's "Scene from Henry VII" which was awarded a First Degree of Merit and was praised for its shades and colouring.¹⁷⁹

If the articles of fancywork shown at the Exhibition may be taken as representing contemporary fashions in the parlour, then shellwork was far the most popular pastime in Sydney. Shell mosaics, a shell cottage, numerous arrangements of shell flowers and several shell museums attested to industrious walks along the seashore.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷On attitudes to the genteel arts, see Anthea Callan, Angel in the studio, London 1979, ch.2 et al.

¹⁷⁸This figure allows some leeway for work by women entered in their husband's names; NSW Catalogue, p.93.

¹⁷⁹Now in Vaucluse House.

¹⁸⁰In 1879 shellwork was considerably past its heyday in Britain - around the 1830s to 40s - but the accessibility of the sea and shells probably accounts for its continued popularity in NSW. See also By the Seaside, catalogue, Elizabeth Bay House, 1981.

Wool- and waxworks were popular. English and native flowers were ingeniously worked in both media, and in others: a Mrs M. Alexander showed a large lily made of lobster shell, together with waxwork models of a blancmange and a wedding cake.¹⁸¹ "The mixture of articles is somewhat confusing," wrote the Herald commentator; "they are generally more ingenious than attractive, but they evidence great skill."¹⁸² The jury evidently thought so too. Mrs. Alexander was honourably commended for her more fashionable wool and leather work, but they could not find words to mention the waxwork.

Beadwork, featherwork, hairwork, fretwork, china painting, seaweed pictures and potichomanie (pictures glued inside glass vases and painted from the inside) - the gamut of Victorian fancywork was represented.

Several principals of Schools of Ladies' Arts exhibited cases of their own and their pupils' work. The top prize in the division went to one such, Mrs Anne Frances Campbell of Darlington. She showed not less than seven cases of artificial flowers, parian (wax) work, leatherwork, pillow lace, macrame lace and other fancywork, which was cited as "all of a superior class."¹⁸³

Another large and various exhibit from a teacher came from Mrs J.W.F. Lynch of Richmond Terrace by the Domain. It comprised a small

¹⁸¹Not as uniquely peculiar as it might seem. Cf Bea Howe, Antiques from the Victorian home, NY 1973, ch.9.

¹⁸²SMH, 19.3.1880, p.7.

¹⁸³Record, p.520.

oil painting; a "marine grotto" of coral; seaweed pictures; shellwork; a tabletop painted with ferns and flowers; an emu egg mounted with electroplated ferns and a group of aborigines in wax; a wax cross entwined with wax ivy; and posies of wax native flowers to sit under glass shades on parlour tables.¹⁸⁴

Some exhibitors were notably adventurous in their use of materials. Miss Ada Wilshire, a young person of Ashfield, showed smoking caps and other articles made of rockmelon seeds and silk cocoons; she also used sharks' teeth, coral, petrified snails, Queensland beans and quandongs in her handiwork, which was described in the Sydney Morning Herald as "A highly interesting and valuable exhibit".¹⁸⁵

All ages participated. A Mrs. Swift aged 70 entered knitted window curtains¹⁸⁶, noted to have been worked without the aid of spectacles. Mary, Martha and Wilhelmina Gore, "three little girls of new England"¹⁸⁷, showed four cows modelled in beeswax with natural hair inserted by hand, the technique used for expensive dolls' hair. "The untaught daughters of a shepherd",¹⁸⁸ they were highly commended.

Students at Fort St Public School entered en masse. They were praised by the Herald's columnist as demonstrating among the welter of

¹⁸⁴NSW Catalogue, p.101.

¹⁸⁵SMH, 15.3.1880, p.7.

¹⁸⁶On the art of knitted lace, see Hughla Davidson, Craft Australia, April 1977, p.33-43.

¹⁸⁷NSW Catalogue, p.94.

¹⁸⁸SMH, 19.3.1880, p.7.

fancywork that "some girls, at least, excel in plain sewing."¹⁸⁹ The girls showed miniature shirts, petticoats and the like. One of them, Blanche Lee, aged 11, entered two dolls dressed by herself; they prompted the observation on female learning that:

It is invariably a good sign when a girl takes kindly to dolls; in making their clothing she learns a good deal about her own, and in caring for the doll's comfort she learns to be thoughtful for the little sisters around. Our colonial girls too soon get wearied of such pleasures and sewing machines have made young people too generally careless of that important element in a woman's training, a thorough knowledge of making and repairing the under garments necessary for herself and the members of her family.¹⁹⁰

Examples of this necessary work were notably scarce in the Ladies' Court. Exhibitors clearly felt that special work was called for: in specifying her entry as "Under-clothing, for Exhibition"¹⁹¹, Mrs Parkes of Balmain indicated that this was not common or weekday under-wear.

Some of the articles in the Ladies' Court were for sale, the proceeds to charity; some appear to have been for sale for the maker's own profit. Lace was something of a cottage industry: Bedfordshire lace was available for 30/- a yard; Buckinghamshire for 21/- a yard; black torchon for 15/- and white for 12/- a yard.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹SMH, 15.3.1880, p.7.

¹⁹⁰Ibid.

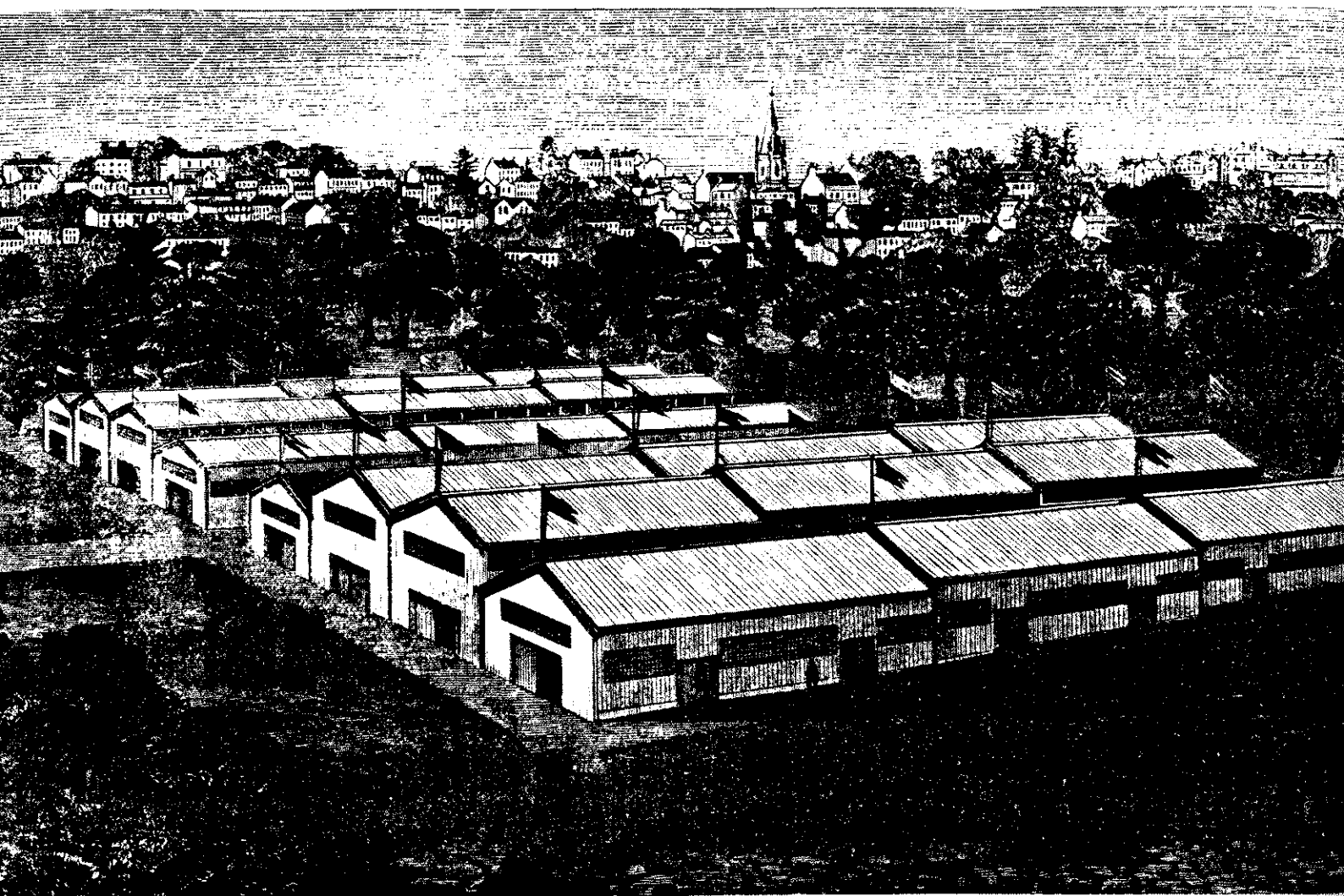
¹⁹¹NSW Catalogue, p.103.

¹⁹²SMH, 10.3.1880, p.2. Lace, of course, was one of the few means of respectable money-making available to gentlewomen; Callan, Op.Cit., gives interesting English details in ch.4.

The judges summed up the female contribution to the Exhibition rather patronisingly: "As a whole the Ladies' Court formed a very praiseworthy display and showed a very creditable standard."¹⁹³ In the light of their criticisms, which revolved around the tastelessness and fundamental uselessness of most "women's work", this comment reeks of the 19th century double standard of male views of female capacity.

¹⁹³Record, p.517.

4.34 Machinery Halls; ISN, 12.7.1879, p.4



Department 5 - Machinery

Machinery formed a large component of the Exhibition's offering. Although certain branches of engineering were thinly represented and little of recent or significant innovation made its way across the sea, yet it was claimed as "probably the most important section of our great fair."¹⁹⁴ Certainly the display was unparalleled in breadth and range in the history of the colony, or even of Australia. As Norman Selfe, the notable Sydney engineer, architect and judge in several Machinery groups, observed in his series of review articles in the Sydney Morning Herald: "In order to develop our acknowledged resources, machinery must be introduced to an extent compared with which our present appliances are insignificant."¹⁹⁵

The great bulk of exhibits came from Britain. The USA, Canada and Europe sent certain noteworthy contributions, but these were by no means representative of the extent of their engineering technology or production. Engines - though not many - came from all over the eastern colonies of Australia; however, Norman Selfe observed: "There is less machinery shown by local makers than it has been customary to see at our Intercolonial Exhibitions."¹⁹⁶

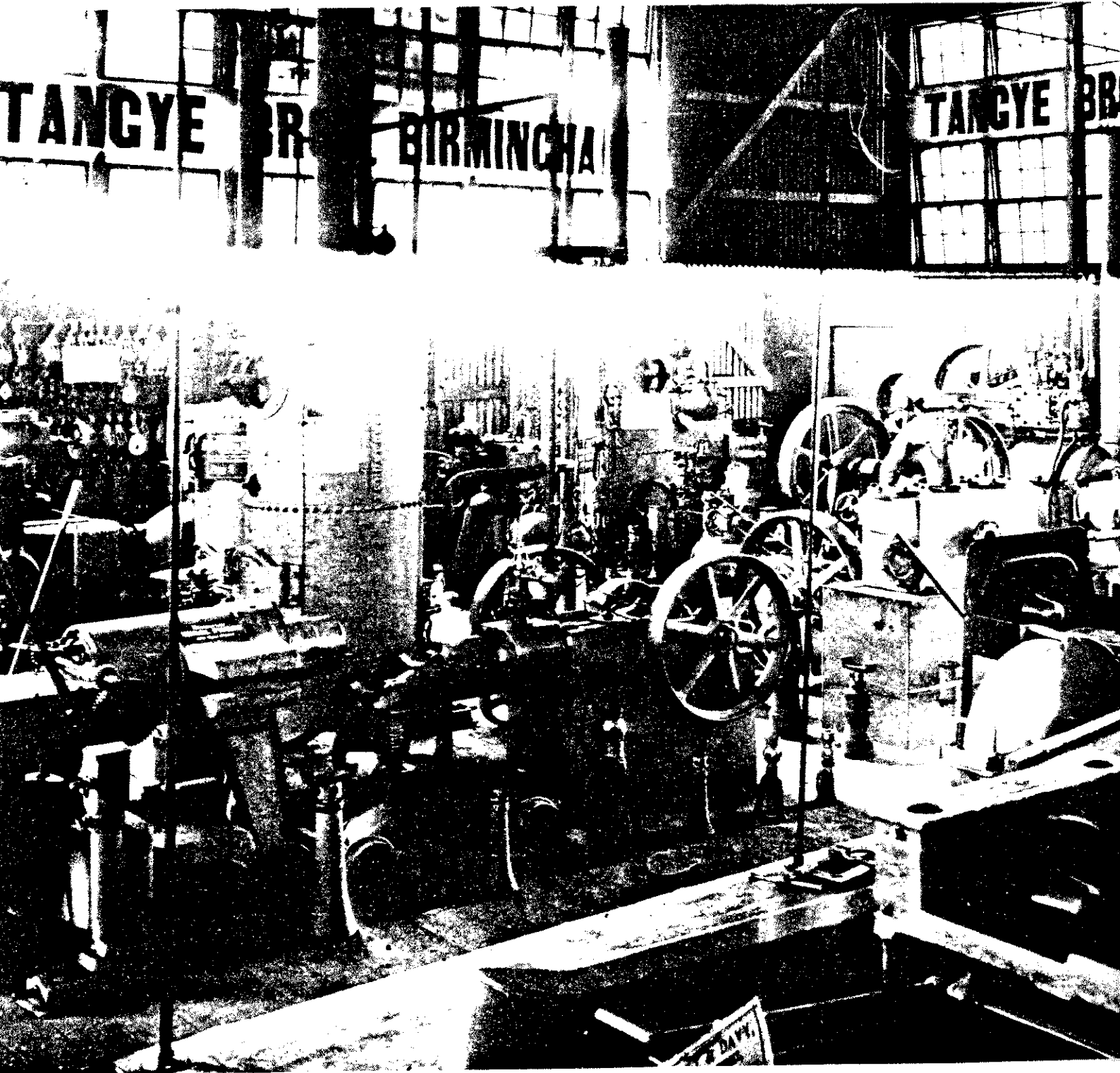
Machinery was displayed in a pair of separate Machinery Halls, in the pavilion erected by Sydney dealers Drysdale & Roberts, and in por-

¹⁹⁴Record, p.535.

¹⁹⁵SMH, 2.12.1879, p.3.

¹⁹⁶Ibid.

4.35 British court, Machinery Halls; Sharkey Collection, NSW
Government Printer



tions of the basement of the Garden Palace. Two sets of railway lines - one 4' 8½" and the other 2' gauge - ran between the Machinery Halls to the road behind Parliament House. A crane-locomotive made by the Glasgow Locomotive Works chugged up and down the larger gauge delivering heavy exhibits before the Exhibition opened. ("As these cranes are extensively used in the old country, there is no doubt they will be found desirable by the Railway Department here.")¹⁹⁷

Inside the western hall machinery could be watched in action, powered by shafting attached to a 20 h.p. semi-portable steam engine by the Lincoln firm Robey & Co. Engines in motion were also on show in Drysdale & Roberts' machinery pavilion.

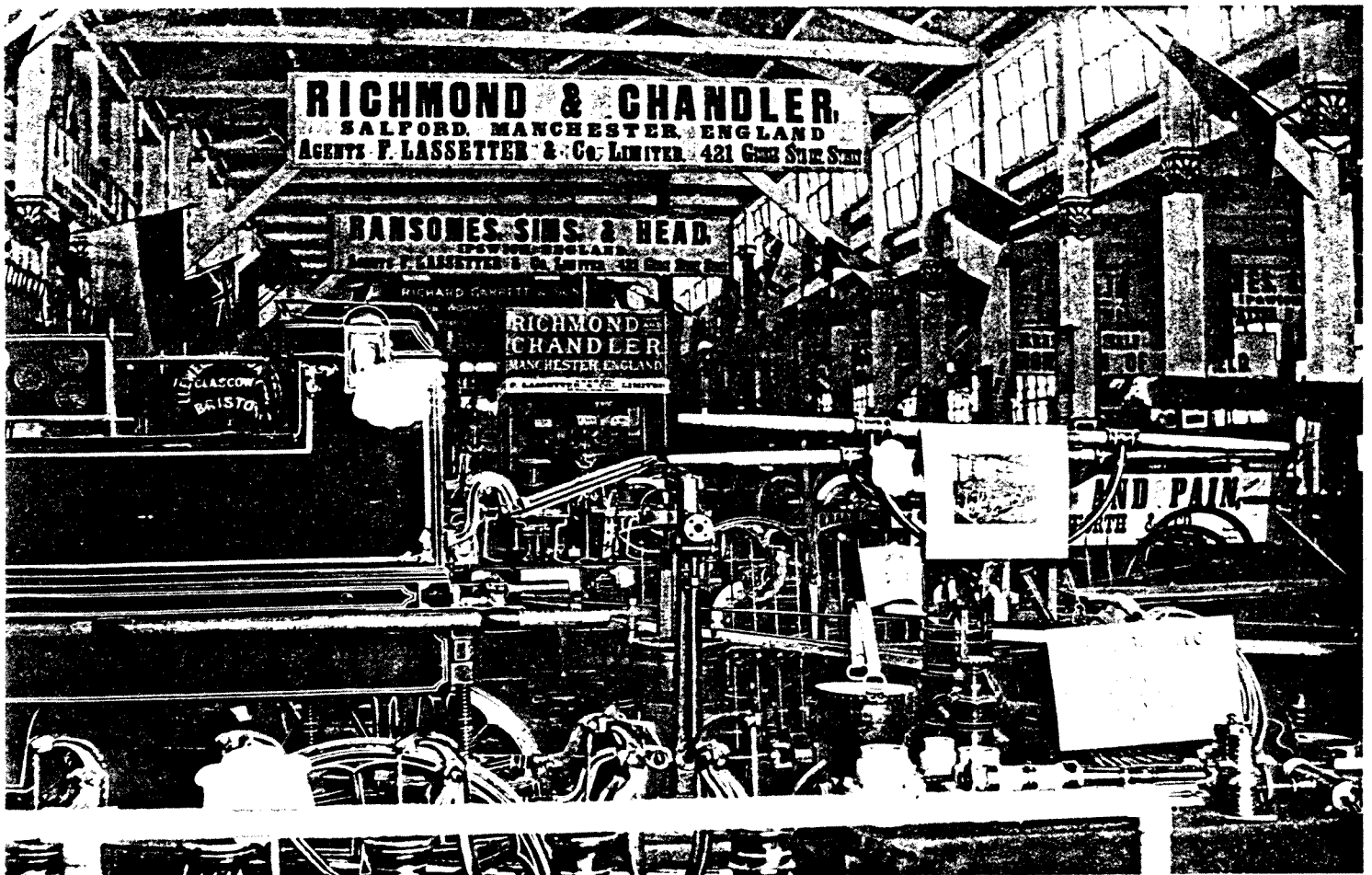
The Machinery department comprised eleven groups classified according to function; thus, Group 1: "Machines, Tools and Apparatus of Mining, Metallurgy, Chemistry and the extractive Arts"; Group 2: "Machines and Tools for working Metal, Wood and Stone"; and so forth to Group 11: "Machines and Apparatus especially adapted to the Requirements of the Exhibition".

Rather than following the official classifications, machinery is here discussed in groups of types defined by the one contemporary commentator, Norman Selfe.

Thus:

1. Stationary steam engines
2. Portable and semi-portable steam engines

¹⁹⁷SMH, 3.1.1880, p.6.



3. Traction and winding engines
4. Marine engines
5. Steam pumps and fire engines
6. Cranes and lifts
7. Machinery and tools for working wood, stone, iron, wool and leather
8. Machinery for milling, distilling, printing and refrigeration.

1. Stationary steam engines

Some thirty stationary engines or prime movers were on display, almost all of English or Scottish make. Of these, one company loomed above all others: "As engine-builders, Messrs Marshall, Sons & Co. of Gainsborough are by the merits of their exhibits placed in the first position in the Exhibition."¹⁹⁸

Marshall, Sons & Co. were awarded five top prizes for specific engines and a sixth for overall excellence. Norman Selfe called their 3 h.p. vertical engine and boiler "the gem of the collection"¹⁹⁹, but they also exhibited larger horizontal and condensing engines and specific agricultural machinery. Marshall engines were famous for their functional and elegant simplicity combined with quick production use of the most modern engineering refinements, e.g. a horizontal condensing engine with the only automatic variable expansion gear in the Exhibition.

¹⁹⁸Record, p.620.

¹⁹⁹Record, p.621.

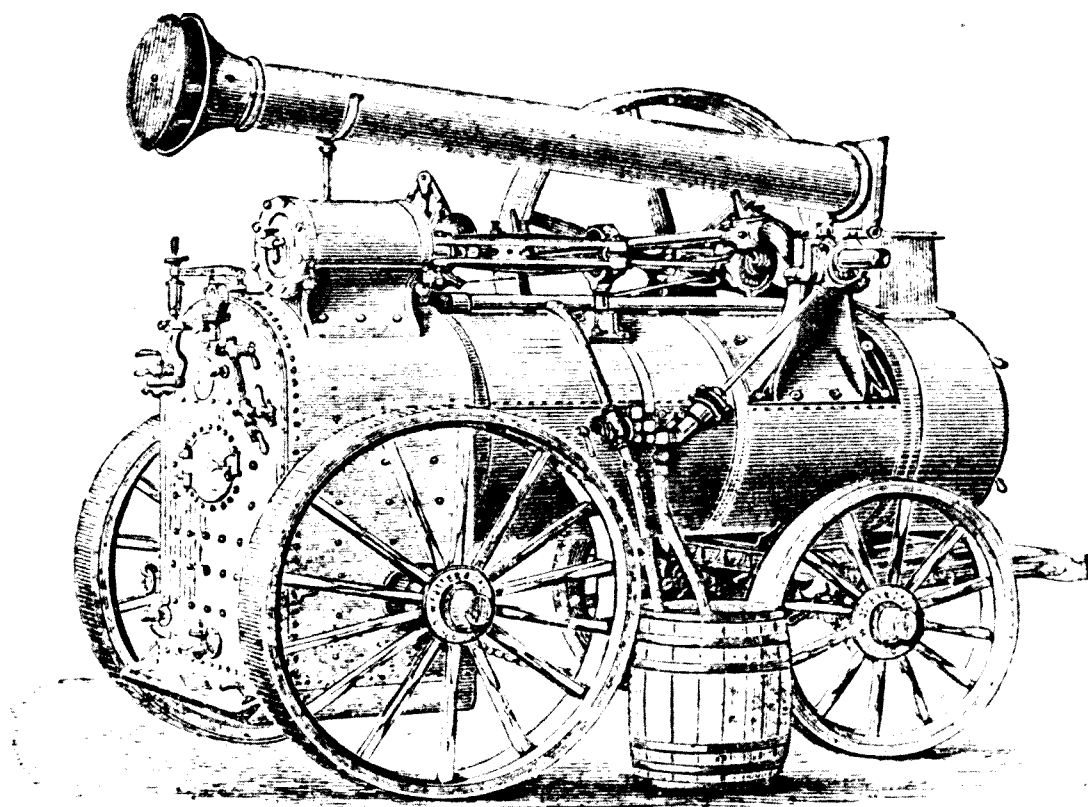
Other engine-building firms may best be represented in terms of a table summarising jury and observer comments:²⁰⁰

Maker	Comments
Haslam & Co. (Derby)	Fuel economical; good, substantial engineering.
Tangye Bros. (Birmingham)	Plain, solid workmanship; simple and accessible work parts.
Shanks & Son (Arbroath)	Cheap to buy; adaptable to many uses and situations.
Ransomes, Sims & Head (Ipswich)	Good and useful; strong, elegant designs.
Robey & Co. (Lincoln)	Substantial and well-constructed.
Waterous Co. (Ontario)	Simple design; cheap production costs; many novel features.
Durenne (Paris)	Useful; illustrative of differences between British and French design.

Three NSW-made engines were on show - a 9 h.p. horizontal and a 5 h.p. vertical, both by Stephen Forster & Sons, iron founders, engineers and brass bed manufacturers of Harrington St; and a vertical engine, powering a sugarmill, by the Atlas Engineering Works of Hay St. The horizontal engine appears to have attracted no attention; the (Forster) vertical example won a Highly Commended award from the judges, though accompanied by the deflating remark, "A colonial revival of an old invention - clumsy for the power."²⁰¹ Norman Selfe, however, described and analysed it carefully and concluded that it was

²⁰⁰Engines by all the English manufacturers mentioned here appear to have been imported and used in New South Wales before the Exhibition, though to what extent and for how long before 1879 is unknown; e.g., Marshall and Robey engines were shown by their owners at the 1870 Intercolonial Exhibition; see ch.1.

²⁰¹Record, p.669.



nonetheless a sound piece of engineering. Of the Atlas engine he wrote: "The Atlas Company have made rapid strides in the few years they have been in existence, and their engine sustains their reputation for good, substantial work."²⁰²

Only one other colonial-made prime mover was exhibited - a horizontal engine by Wright & Edmonds of Melbourne. This received a Commended diploma with the judicial observation, "An ordinary engine"; Norman Selfe judged it to be "a good, plain and substantial machine."²⁰³

2. Portable and semi-portable steam engines

In 1879 portable engines were only some forty years old, but their flexibility had endeared them to specialist markets where a prime mover could be required to perform many tasks, such as in agriculture, construction and small-scale mining. Portable engines had lately been made self-propelling, by which their usefulness in Australia was so much increased that Norman Selfe noted them as "probably the most important machines" in the Exhibition.²⁰⁴

Thirteen manufacturers showed portables or semi-portables, most of them English; indeed, portable engineering was observed to have been almost entirely an English development.

²⁰²SMH, 8.12.1879, p.6.

²⁰³SMH, 15.12.1879, p.7.

²⁰⁴SMH, 22.12.1879, p.3.

Marshall, Sons & Co.'s 6, 8 and 14 h.p. engines were opined to "fully sustain the high reputation" already attributed to the firm. Robey & Co. contributed three portable engines for competition; "These engines bear evidence of that skill and care which characterizes the work of their makers, and they have been long known in the colony", commented Norman Selfe.²⁰⁵ Robey semi-portables had been hired by the Exhibition Commission to drive other machinery on display; for the sterling job they did there, Robey & Co. were awarded a First Degree of Merit. Ransomes, Sims & Head showed a pair of portable engines which, though acknowledged as "no doubt, good working engines",²⁰⁶ were felt by the judges to be "very rough work - inferior to what would have been expected from the reputation the makers have."²⁰⁷

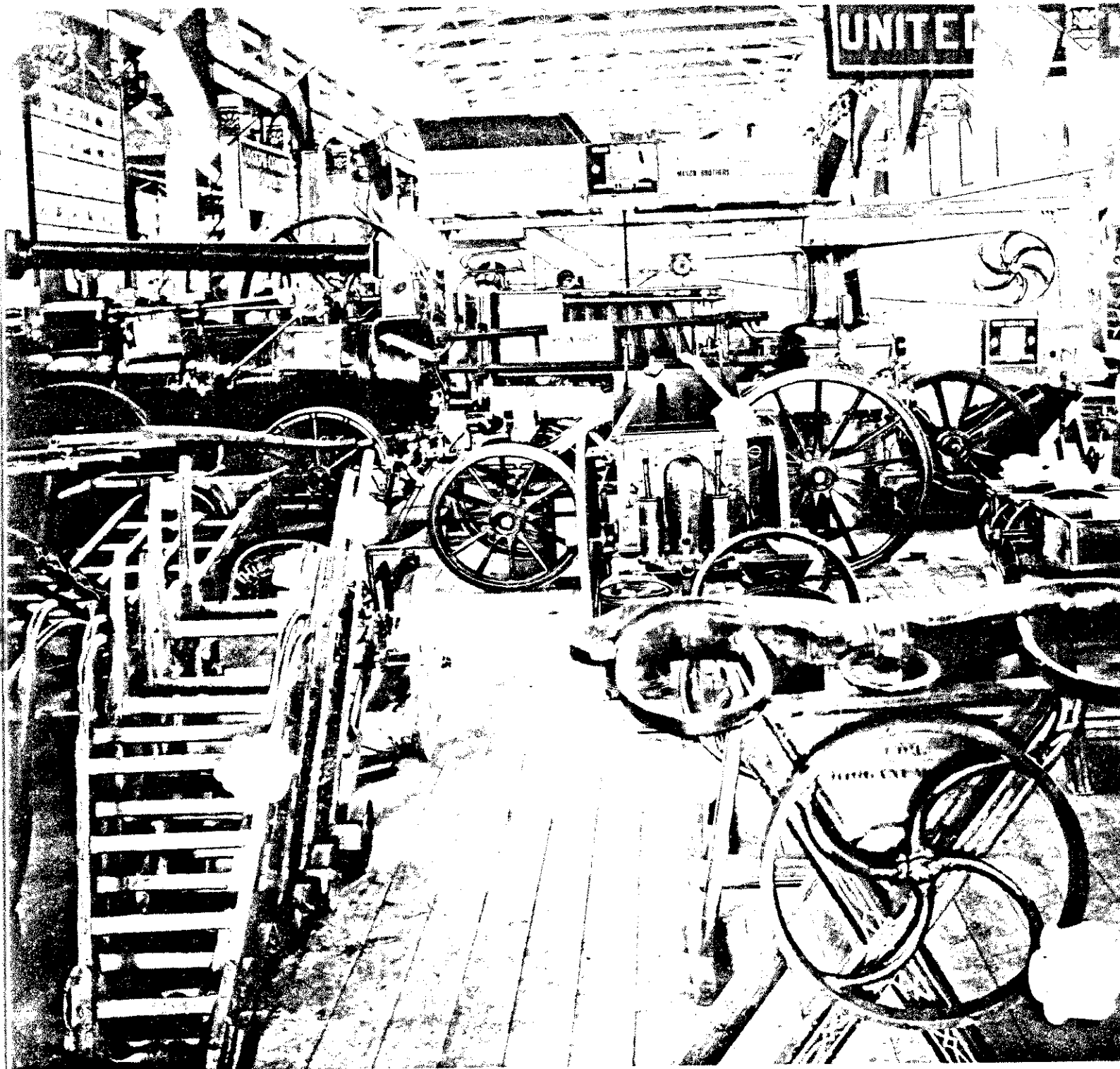
Fine workmanship and presentation was a feature of the engines shown by Garrett & Sons of Leiston, Suffolk; instead of the traditional mid-Bristol green, Garrett's engines were japanned black with gold linework. The firm carried away two First Degrees of Merit and one First Degree of Merit Special for portable engines.

The assessment of other engines may be tabulated:

²⁰⁵Record, p.559.

²⁰⁶SMH, 26.12.1879, p.5.

²⁰⁷Record, p.664.



<u>Maker</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Clayton & Shuttleworth (Lincoln)	Good, sturdy machinery, though nothing special.
Hornsby & Sons (Grantham)	Efficient; good workmanship.
Ruston, Proctor & Co. (Lincoln)	Well finished machines; low prices.
Davey & Paxman (Colchester)	Good workmanship; progressive details.
Foster (Lincoln)	"Good, plain, ordinary English portable." ²⁰⁸
Seekings & Ellery (Gloucester)	Useful but ordinary.
Reynolds (Southwark)	Good but old-fashioned.

Only two non-British portable engines were on display, one from the USA and one from Canada. The American machine, by McCormick of Chicago, was so badly designed and clumsily built that it received no award at all (a remarkable non-achievement at the Sydney International Exhibition); Norman Selfe condemned the specific example but defended Yankee technology in general.

The Canadian entry was from the Waterous Co. of Ontario, an 8 h.p. portable named "The Champion". It was a novel engine of most unusual design - vertical boiler teamed with horizontal engine - but acknowledged to be of solid quality, with special applications to farm use.

²⁰⁸Record, p.559.

3. Traction and winding engines

The most important traction engines in the Exhibition were a slip traction engine and two 16 h.p. traction engines made by John Fowler & Co. of Leeds. (In fact they were entered in the agricultural department of the Exhibition competition, where both types of engine were awarded top prizes.²⁰⁹)

Fowler's was the acknowledged doyen of such engineering in Britain, and Norman Selfe described the company's exhibit as "the finest specimens of their kind which have yet come to the colony."²¹⁰ Their technology was well-developed and up to date; the strength and solidity of the machines was unparalleled; and the details of design and workmanship were inspiring.

4. Marine engines

Only four manufacturers exhibited marine engines, all of them for screw propeller mechanisms. They comprised Tangye Bros, Chaplin & Co. of London, Postlethwaite Runnymede Engine Works in Surrey and Mort's Dock and Engineering Co. of Balmain.

The Tangye engines were as sound and functional as the manufacturer's reputation suggested, but machine design was wanting: "from their general style we should infer that steam launches were scarce in Birmingham, and that the experience of the makers in marine work was limited", commented Norman Selfe.²¹¹

²⁰⁹See Department 6: Agriculture, p. 179

²¹⁰SMH, 22.1.1879, p.3.

²¹¹SMH, 18.12.1879, p.6.

Chaplin & Co's engine was so inferior that it received no award at all; the kindest thing said of it was the suggestion that it was a second-hand, badly knocked around piece.²¹²

A. P. Postlethwaite showed two engines, both of novel - even extraordinary - design. One was a triple cylinder type; the other a smaller, vertical engine, compact and well suited to a launch.

The top prize for marine engines - First Degree of Merit Special - went to the local entrant. The Mort's Dock and Engineering Co. pair of high-pressure, compound launch engines were judged "carefully designed...first class in workmanship and finish."²¹³ Norman Selfe said of the display, "a steamboat man feels at home with it at once."²¹⁴

Mort's Dock and Engineering Co. carried away another top prize for "the finest single piece of engine-forging in the Exhibition",²¹⁵ a heavy intermediate crank, made entirely of scrap-iron for the Hunter River Steam Navigation Co.'s S.S. "Maitland".

²¹²Ibid.

²¹³Record, p.669.

²¹⁴SMH, 18.12.1879, p.6.

²¹⁵SMH, 29.12.1879, p.5. Presumably it lies with the rest of the "Maitland" in Broken Bay off Cape Three Points, where a rusting boiler can still be seen. Built in Glasgow in 1870, the iron paddle steamer was wrecked in May 1898.

5. Steam pumps and fire engines

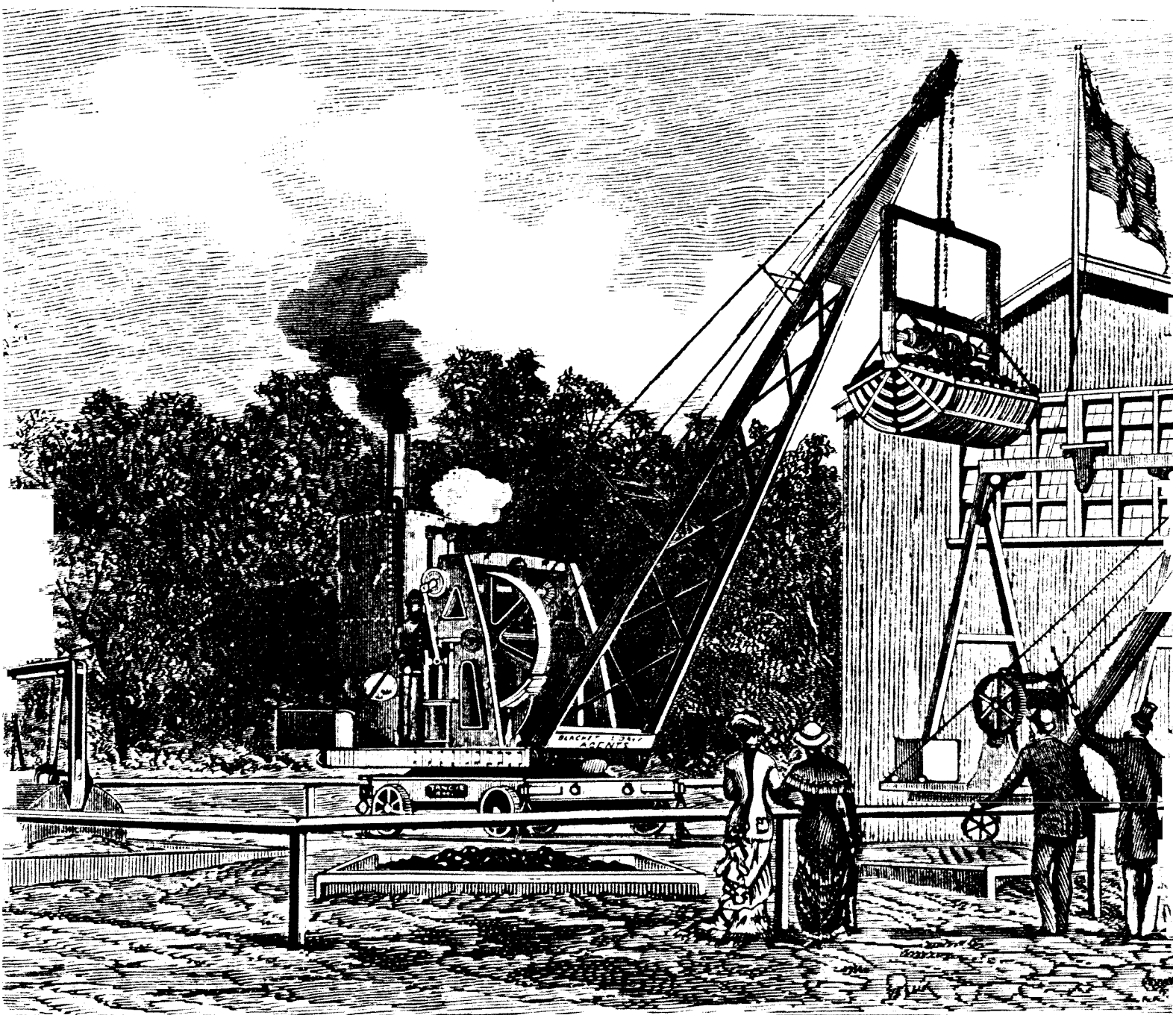
"The most important class of steam engines after the prime movers is probably the steam pumps," commented Norman Selfe.²¹⁶ In NSW in 1879 direct-acting steam pumps had superceded the original style of pumping engine - the beam engine - for about ten years; that is, beam engines continued to operate (they were famously long-lived engines) but were no longer imported into the colony.²¹⁷ The demand for cheap, compact pumps directed much energy and ingenuity to this area of steam technology, for it was particularly necessary to the needs of fire engines.

Although an American fire engine by the Amoskeag Co. had been imported to Sydney some years before, there were but two fire engines on show and both were London-made. Shand & Mason's vertical engine won a First Degree of Merit; Merryweather & Sons' more traditional horizontal model won a First Degree of Merit Special.

Twenty-two manufacturers from Britain, the U.S.A., Germany and the Australian colonies exhibited steam pumps pure and simple. Norman Selfe judged two of them outstanding, the Blake Manufacturing Co. of Boston and Tangye Bros. Both had world-wide markets to testify to their efficiency; both were awarded top prizes at the Sydney International Exhibition.

²¹⁶SMH, 9.1.1879, p.3.

²¹⁷SMH, 13.1.1880, p.3.



6. Cranes and lifts

The two most popular items of machinery in the Exhibition belonged to this group. "No single machine has probably had so much attention given to it...as the Priestman crane and dredger, and the American elevator is perhaps more largely visited than any other portion of the machinery", noted Norman Selfe.²¹⁸

The crane referred to was in fact a Tangye crane fitted with Priestman gear and lifting bucket. It stood outside the Machinery Hall and performed nearly every day, demonstrating its famous "clam shell" grab to the delight of Sydneysiders. The novelty of the Priestman gear was bolstered by the presence of Mr Priestman himself, out from London showing an ingenious working model of the crane. Both model and real crane received top prizes; more importantly, several orders were placed from Government departments, contractors and private companies.

The famous elevator was the product of the Whittier Machine Co. of Boston. It was erected in the north tower of the Garden Palace; for a small fee visitors could ascend to a chamber comfortably got up by Walker & Sons, London furniture makers, whence they could admire the magnificent view over the city and harbour. Though not the first lift, nor even the first passenger lift, in Sydney, it was nonetheless

²¹⁸SMH, 30.12.1879, p.3.

a huge novelty.²¹⁹ Norman Selfe, observing that the passenger lift was quite a recent development, pointed out that "at first being a luxury (it) has now come to be a necessity with the lofty public buildings, business places and hotels that are erected in large centres of population."²²⁰ But he added: "People need to be gradually educated up to an appreciation of the advantages which attend the use of lifts," and concluded therefore that "Messrs Whittier may be considered public benefactors for setting their elevator to work in Sydney."²²¹

The lift was powered by a steam engine just outside the northern tower. Its mechanism was carefully examined by the judges and its safety gear put to the test by cutting the cable, with the car cautiously but heavily laden with pig-iron. It duly stopped, safely, and was never tried by a real emergency. Whittiers received a First Degree of Merit Special and covered installation costs with the entrance fees.

²¹⁹The first hydraulic lift in New South Wales was an Armstrong goods lift at Pymont Sugar Works; it was installed in 1877. The next - the first passenger lift - was designed by Norman Selfe and made in the colony (by the Atlas Engineering Co?) for the Public Works Office in 1878. Norman Selfe, "The rise and progress of lift construction in New South Wales", Proceedings of the Engineering Association of New South Wales, vol.10, 1894-95, p.17-18.

²²⁰SMH, 3.1.1880, p.3.

²²¹ibid.

7. Machinery and tools for working wood, iron, stone, wool and leather.

Although the Sydney International Exhibition display of machine tools was larger and more various than on any previous occasion in the colonies, yet it was not so large that a whole spectrum of equipment was available for critical comparison. Norman Selfe identified the problems with examples:

The exhibits are selected and sent by their makers, who may or may not be representative men in their own countries, and a very superior machine for a particular kind of work might be shown by an exhibitor, say from Germany, while only a very cheap or inferior one of the same kind would be sent from America, and this would lead a great many people to the erroneous conclusions that American machines in that line were not good simply because a high-class one was not shown in the Exhibition.²²²

In the great Exhibitions at Philadelphia and in Europe, where the collection of machines was so much larger than here, there were better opportunities for classification. Here, many leading makers of machine tools were totally unrepresented.²²³

It was certainly the critical shortcoming of the Exhibition in all classes.

Wood

Between seventy and eighty wood-working machines were on show; nearly half of them exhibited in operation. They never failed to draw crowds of fascinated observers.²²⁴

²²²SMH, 16.1.1880, p.2.

²²³Ibid.

²²⁴An interesting contemporary comparison can be found in M. Powis Bale, Woodworking Machinery, London 1880; most of the big names here exhibited at Sydney.

The most comprehensive display came from the Ontario Waterous Engine Works; it comprised a portable steam saw-mill and two shingle-cutting and dressing machines. (One such mill had been at work up-country for some months and was reported to be coping well both with bush conditions and hard Australian timbers). The mill was judged to be of sound quality, adaptable portability and competitive price, and the Waterous Co. received another top prize.²²⁵

Equipment from Canada was not common in New South Wales, but since the regularisation some ten years before of contact with North America via the Pacific mail services, machinery from the USA had become well-known. American machinery had a particular virtue that made it very useful in New South Wales; intended for small-scale frontier or wilderness work, it was light, portable and cheap, where British equipment tended to be substantial and expensive.

The most notable American firm, in terms of presence already in New South Wales and now in the Exhibition, was Fay & Co. of Cincinnati, Ohio. Spectacular to look at (for they were painted green and vermillion with gold and bronze decorations) they were also intriguing to watch at work. The bandsaw, for instance, was daily at work cutting out intricate fretwork puzzles.²²⁶ A good part of the collection of machinery on show had in fact been ordered for Hudson Bros of Redfern, the biggest wood-working firm in the colony. "They

²²⁵Illustrated in Sydney Mail, 8.11.1879, p.800.

²²⁶A good example of such Exhibition-made fretwork is owned by MAAS - a nameplate for John Davies, Chairman of the Machinery Committee. See the Catalogue of Relics.

will make a valuable addition to the extensive plant of that enterprising firm," approved Norman Selfe.²²⁷ Fay and Co. were awarded a First Degree of Merit Special.

Metal

About twenty manufacturers of engineers' machines - mainly displaying lathes and planers - exhibited in the Machinery Hall. American machines again predominated in number and quality. Norman Selfe²²⁸ noted that ten years ago in Sydney such machines had been rare and had come almost exclusively from London. He contrasted that time with the current abundance and variety of locally-made tools, indicating the newly widespread use of engineering machines. However, he added, the highest quality tools were not often imported, the market preferring the less sturdy but cheaper (generally American) models.

The top prize for engineers' machines was awarded to Sellers & Co. of Pittsburgh, for a collection including a lathe, a planing machine and a screw-cutting and nut-capping machine. "The ingenuity and originality of design and the workmanship of these tools are excellent," wrote the judges in their citation.²²⁹

²²⁷SMH, 28.1.1880, p.2.

²²⁸SMH, 23.1.1880, p.6.

²²⁹Record, p.639.

Stone

The crucial problem of stone-working and dressing machinery was the need for a cheap, simple cutting edge that could be extracted and renewed without extreme difficulty or expense.²³⁰ Norman Selfe judged only one to fulfill this condition, "The Steam Mason", a duplex stone-moulding machine by D. & W. Robertson of Dundee.

During the course of the Exhibition it demonstrated its capabilities by working steps, sills, cornices and mouldings on several varieties of stone. "This is a valuable labour-saving machine and does its work well," said the jury, awarding it a First Degree of Merit.²³¹

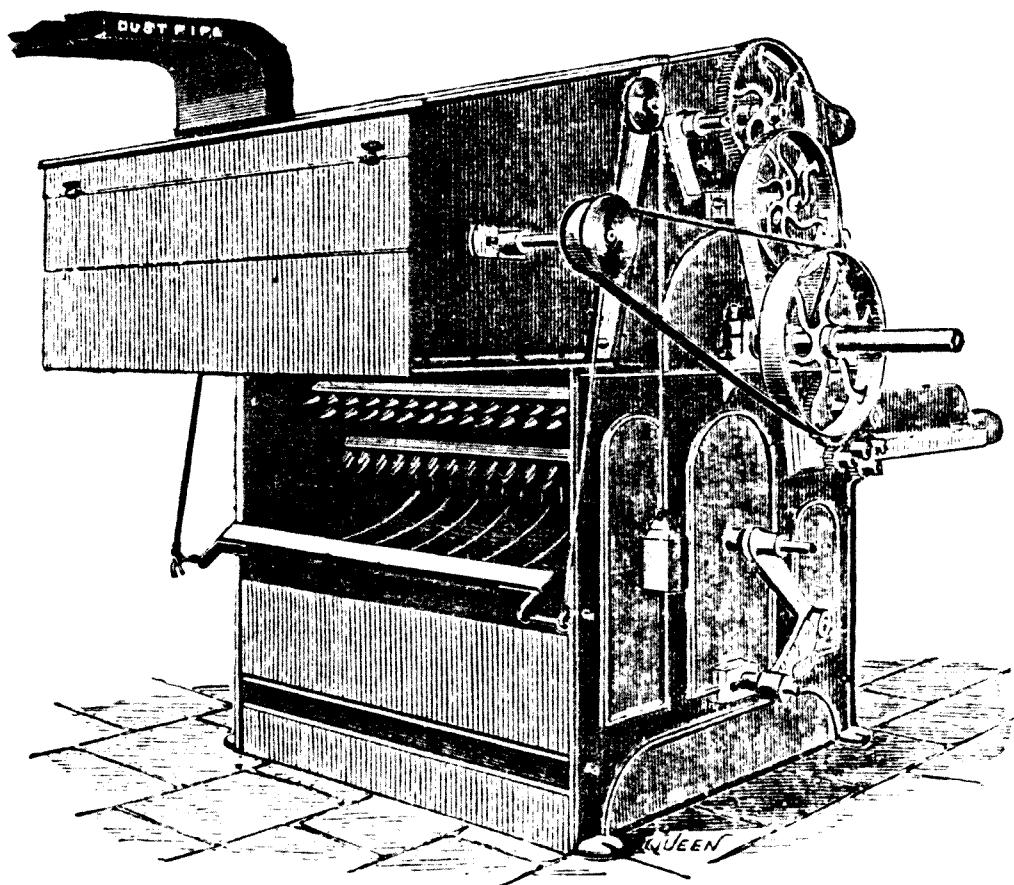
The matter of extracting stone (and other substances) from the earth was covered by a total of four rock drills from England, France, the USA and Victoria. They were all percussion drills driven either by steam or by compressed air, the latter used particularly in mining. All were tested both on sandstone and bluestone (basalt).

Only one was previously known in Sydney - the product of the Ingersoll Co. of New York, which had been used for some years past in the Pymont quarry. It was highly commended, but the top prize went to the Victorian example, the "Patent Rock-Boring Machine" invented and made by R. G. Ford of the Railway Department of Victoria. It was

²³⁰Compare George Andre, Rock Blasting: A practical treatise, London 1878, p.23-24.

²³¹Record, p.636.

4.40 Teazing machine by Sykes & Sons; British Catalogue, p.245



displayed in action, working either vertically or horizontally on blocks of bluestone, through which it was demonstrated to bore at the rate of six inches per minute. "The exhibit as a whole reflects great credit on its inventor, both for its simplicity and efficiency; and withall the rather rough construction of the compressor, must be considered one of the most important exhibits in the machinery line."²³²

Wool

Wool-working machinery was naturally of special interest in New South Wales, the more so since it was so little employed. In 1879 most woollen fabrics were imported, even though made of native Australian wool; however, that situation was poised to change. "There are now several manufactories having modern machinery, and the result of the Exhibition has already been attended with good results; for nearly the whole if not all of the valuable machines brought out to the Colony have found purchasers..."²³³

Foremost among manufacturers was Sykes & Sons of Huddersfield, who showed a self-acting teaser (for opening and cleaning wool fibres); a wool-burring machine (for extracting burrs and such); a waste-opening machine (for teasing out waste material in order to make it usable); and a twisting or doubling frame (for twisting numbers of threads together to form yarns of different diameters). All the machines were awarded top prizes, having been examined in action by the judges.

²³²Record, p.619.

²³³Record, p.609.

Four looms were exhibited at work. J. Vicars of the Sussex St tweed factory showed his firm's old Jacquard loom, and it was noted as seeming quite antiquated in comparison with the modern technology displayed by Schofield & Kirk of Huddersfield and Taylor & Sons of Marsden, Yorkshire.

Leather

Labour-saving devices were to the fore among the leather-working machinery. Molinier & Co. of London exhibited several machines for removing flesh or wool from hides and for shaving hides to even thickness. They were occasionally demonstrated in the Machinery Hall, but less messily and more efficiently in a local tannery. Here the jury watched a competition between manual workers and a machine; the latter produced three times as much dressed leather, of "highly superior" quality - and was therefore awarded a top prize.

8. Machinery for milling, distilling, printing and refrigeration

Milling

Flour-milling was the scene of one of the few innovatory displays at the Sydney International Exhibition. For the first time in New South Wales an alternative technology "to that described in Scripture"²³⁴ - viz. grinding the grain between two stones - was shown and demonstrated. The innovation was the use of rollers in place of grindstones, and it was displayed in two examples: the system of Ganz & Co. of Budapest and that of Gustav Daverio of Zurich.

²³⁴SMH, 6.3.1880, p.3.

Three Ganz machines were on show, two in the German Court and one in Drysdale & Roberts' pavilion. The system consisted of pairs of plain or fluted rollers of chilled iron, fitted with an anti-friction device to take pressure off the bearings and with angular gear that helped to reduce noise. The fluted rollers loosened and separated the husk of the grain (spelling the end of wholemeal flour for a hundred years). The Ganz system was awarded a First Degree of Merit Special, with the judges' recommendation that, "The design, proportions and workmanship of these...roller mills are first-class, and worth the attention of our colonial millers."²³⁵

The Exhibition certainly introduced roller mills to New South Wales, and perhaps even to Australia, though there are hints of roller mills at work in South Australia in 1879.²³⁶

Daverio's system was represented by "a beautiful little working model" in the Swiss Court, "where nobody would dream of finding such a thing."²³⁷ It was backed up with a large showcase of samples of milled grain at various stages of the process. Daverio's mill comprised three iron rollers arranged vertically so that the grain passing through was milled twice. There was also a catching and detaching device to break up the inevitable white cakes of flour that adhered to the rollers, thus maximising the quantity of the milling. The model won a First Degree of Merit, the judges adding, "This invention is

²³⁵Record, p.680.

²³⁶Linge, Industrial Awakening, p.329.

²³⁷SMH, 6.3.1880, p.3.

well worthy of notice by colonial millers, appearing to be an improvement on other roller mills."²³⁸

More ordinary mills were aplenty, mainly from England. The Waterous Co. of Ontario showed a characteristically novel portable flour mill, ingeniously compact (the stones were only 20" in diameter), requiring an 8 h.p. engine and producing seven or eight bushells an hour. "Altogether," noted Norman Selfe, "this Canadian principle seems well adapted for small private mills in remote districts, and the one exhibited has already been sold."²³⁹

Distilling

The biggest contribution of distilling equipment in the Exhibition came from Germany; F. Hallstrom of Nienburg won a top prize for excellence in workmanship, material and finish. (Distilling apparatus being made particularly of copper, the award was as much for the standard of copper-smithing as for mechanical and technical quality).

But the surprise and toast of the department was the continuous spirit still invented and manufactured by E.M. Meyer of Cumberland St, Sydney. Guaranteed to produce 64% o.p. in a single distillation, its performance was backed up by a collection of testimonials from satisfied local distillers. Important also as the principal local example of copperwork, Meyer's still took out a First Degree of Merit Special.

²³⁸Record, p.682.

²³⁹Record, p.607; sadly, there is no trace of it.

Printing

Although a very high proportion of machines in this group were awarded First Degrees of Merit, yet the judges (who included Thomas Richards, the Government Printer) noted that it was a sparse display. Indeed, they called it "...of so meagre a character that it fails to convey an appropriate idea of the progress made in late years,"²⁴⁰ and felt that "the importance of the Sydney Exhibition has not been fully realized by the inventors and manufacturers."²⁴¹

British machines dominated, exhibited on behalf of both owners and manufacturers.

Gibbs, Shallard & Co., printers and publishers of the Illustrated Sydney News, exhibited four presses in their court in the basement of the Garden Palace. Two of them were often shown in operation: the big "Express" lithographic machine by Furnival & Co. of Manchester (used to print the monthly illustrated supplements, several of them in colour); and a smaller "Model" press by Power & Sons of London.

John Sands exhibited his "Paragon" lithographic machine, also made by Furnival & Co. together with a collection of Christmas, Valentine and other fancy cards. Both the big lithographic presses were praised as first-class machines and won First Degrees of Merit.

The London illustrated newspaper the Graphic exhibited a "Bremner"

²⁴⁰Record, p.651.

²⁴¹Ibid.

press and a set of stereotyping plant by Harrild & Son, of London. These were situated in the Graphic's own court at the nave front of the British court; it also included a selection of woodblock illustrations engraved by the newspaper's artists. The Graphic had a keen audience in the colonies, always hungry for illustrated news of the world.²⁴²

Three US manufacturers showed printing presses; one of them, by Hoe & Co. of New York, was described as "a splendid machine...great economy of space...novel and decided improvement...many points of excellence,"²⁴³ and won a First Degree of Merit Special.

Two typewriters were on show, one from Fairbanks & Co. of Vermont and one from Gibbs, Shallard & Co. the Sydney publishers and printers. In 1879 typewriters were still regarded as "ingenious contrivances",²⁴⁴ admittedly clever, but more or less gadgets. It is probable that Gibbs, Shallard's machine was one of very few in use in New South Wales, and it is tantalising not to know what sort it was. Fairbanks & Co. were, since 1878, the latest in a tangled, nearly always bankrupt, line of patent-holders, selling the basic 1874 Sholes and Glidden typewriter manufactured by Remington & Sons.²⁴⁵ Not until

²⁴²The Graphic and the Illustrated London News were widely read in New South Wales, where they competed with the local Australian Town and Country Journal, the Illustrated Sydney News and the Sydney Mail. The former particularly had high quality illustrations. A good half dozen Sydney graphic artists can be claimed as more than merely competent, viz, George and Arthur Collingridge, Eugene Montagu Scott, William Macleod, Samuel Begg, Alfred Clint.

²⁴³Record, p.654.

²⁴⁴Ibid.

²⁴⁵Michael Adler, The Writing Machine: A history of the typewriter, London 1973, ch.8.

the 1880s did the typewriter begin to make a significant commercial impression.

Refrigeration

Refrigeration technology was particularly pertinent in New South Wales at the time of the Exhibition. In November 1879 a shipment of frozen meat departed Sydney aboard the "Strathleven" and in February 1880 it became the first cargo of fresh meat to arrive safely in London.

This venture had employed the chilled air technique developed by the Bell-Coleman Co. of London, which exhibited a model and working drawings of the "Strathleven" equipment. The jury recommended this for the highest level award on account of its proven and potential value to the colonial export economy.

Another notable entrepreneur, experimenter and advocate of new refrigeration techniques was the merchant Thomas Sutcliffe Mort. (From 1866 he financed research by engineer Eugene Nicolle, leading to the patenting of the Mort-Nicholle process, which was based on the vapourisation and condensation of ammonia. In 1873 he had opened a freezing works at Lithgow where animals were slaughtered, frozen and loaded aboard refrigerated trains for Sydney).

Mort was an early supporter of the Sydney International Exhibition, but he died in May 1878. However, his Fresh Food & Ice Co. exhibited the developments he had pioneered and promoted. The Company constructed a cold room, powered by Mort-Nicolle refrigeration machinery, which provided visitors with the unusual experience of a

sub-freezing atmosphere - for many Australians, for the first time in their lives. The Fresh Food & Ice Co. received a First Degree of Merit Special for "economy in the production of artificial cold."²⁴⁶

The other principal refrigeration technique was based on the vapourisation of ether and its chief exponent was the London firm Siebe & Gorman. There was already a number of Siebe & Gorman ice-making machines in the colony and the manufacturers clearly judged the NSW market to be expanding, for Mr Siebe himself accompanied the exhibit.

The machine on show produced half a ton of ice a day but was only occasionally shown in operation, so as not to compete with local ice-makers. It was said to produce the clearest ice in the Exhibition, owing to the agitating arms of the mechanism which expelled air bubbles from the setting water; thus it won a top award.

In summing up the machinery exhibits commentators were generally disappointed, though they made loyal and generous efforts to find extenuating explanations for the overall uninteresting quality of the displays. The "Report" of the Superintendent of the Machinery Department, J.N. Oxley, is typical:

"The quality, variety and quantity of the machinery exhibited within the two halls were on the whole satisfactory, but there were not many objects of recent invention, and in many instances British and foreign machinery of the most antiquated types was shown. This no doubt arose from ignorance of the extraordinary rapidity with which the Australian Colonies have developed during the last decade."²⁴⁷

²⁴⁶Record, p.669.

²⁴⁷Record, p.625.

Department 6: Agriculture

Agriculture was the department par excellence of the colonies. The raw wealth of the British empire and (less comprehensively) the French and Dutch empires was luxuriantly on show.

For obvious logistical reasons, New South Wales was far the largest exhibitor, closely followed by the other Australian colonies and New Zealand. However, none of the colonies' exhibits was truly representative of its agricultural capacity or variety. Perhaps the most notable aspect of rural organisation to be observed from the displays was the activity of occasional local exhibition societies or cooperatives. A few such despatched extensive displays of local agricultural products to Sydney, but they are so isolated as to give no useful total picture of Australian agriculture.

The agriculture classification covered both products and processes. Thus it was divided into groups: animal products used as food and as materials; forest products; fruit; agricultural products; vegetable products used as food and as materials; wines and spirits; animal and vegetable textiles (overlapping with groups 4, 5 and 6 in Class 2); land animals; agricultural machinery; and agricultural management.

Certain exhibits were on show in the specialist halls outside the Garden Palace but most items were mounted in their national courts. They formed some of the more remarkable, even startling, trophies.

Group 1: Animal products used as food

This was the domain of preserved foods. The most ancient and the most modern food technologies were on show: there was food dried, spiced, pickled, canned, bottled and frozen.

Delicacies included canned salmon from Japan (Highly Commended) and canned Maine lobster from the USA (First Degree of Merit). More pedestrian foods such as dried eggs and reduced potatoes (Frederick King & Sons of London boasted "five tons into one")²⁴⁸ did not win prizes.

The top award for preserved food went to a Dutch firm, P.V. Goulmy of Hertogenbosch; his canned anchovy, eel, herring, mushrooms, peas and soups²⁴⁹ were judged "the very best of the kind ever seen in the colony".²⁵⁰

New South Wales was revealed as a land of ham and cheese. Bega producers dominated the field with 14 exhibitors of hams and bacon and 23 of cheese. A mighty pyramid composed of three hundred cheeses was entered by J. Manning, but only four cheesemakers won any degree of prize, and he was not one.

The New South Wales Fresh Food and Ice Company showed fresh meat, poultry and fish chilled in its Exhibition cold room; inexplicably it received no prize.

²⁴⁸British Catalogue, p.283.

²⁴⁹Netherlands Catalogue, p.8.

²⁵⁰Record, p.702.

Queensland exhibitors showed tropical delicacies: six collections of beche de mer (smoked, just as the Timorese trepang fishers had prepared it for the previous two hundred years);²⁵¹ turtle soup, and dugong bacon. (The unfortunate dugong was thoroughly exploited by humankind: also on show were dugong leather and dugong lard, "a sovereign remedy by outward application and absorption for all forms of defective nutrition").²⁵²

Groups 2 and 3: Animal products used as materials

Skin and bones were the substance of animal materials - that is, leather (or fur or feather), tallow and glue. Production of these fundamental usefals formed some of the earliest colonial industries and the colonies were to the fore both in production and prizes.

"The colonial leather manufacturing industry has made considerable strides of late years, but it is not represented in any degree commensurate with its importance at the Garden Palace."²⁵³

About half the advertising tanners of Sydney entered samples of their leather.²⁵⁴ They were augmented by a handful of country exhibitors who are difficult to determine as either private or commercial, but were undeniably enterprising: one Kenrick Bennett of

²⁵¹Cameron Macknight, The Voyage to Marege, Melbourne 1966, pl.

²⁵²Queensland Catalogue, p.36.

²⁵³Sydney Mail, 14.2.1880, p.309.

²⁵⁴These statements are based on Sands' Directories of 1879-80.

4.41 Queensland court; Australasian Sketcher, 25.10.1879, p.120



Booligal was commended for an exhibit including Australian spider silk. Alderson & Sons, a long established firm in Waterloo, won the top prizes of the division.

Notably few New South Welshmen exhibited useful products derived from the local fauna. A Blue Mountains man won a degree of merit for tanned snake skins and there were a few rugs of koala fur.

Native furs was the special province of Tasmania. The wall panels of the Tasmanian court were decked with the furry hides of native beasts, the tails all dangling down-o. One exhibitor alone - Simon Arnot of Hobart - showed fifteen dozen furs: kangaroos, wallabies, wombats, four kinds of possum, Tasmanian tiger and devil, and native "cats" and "rats". Other Hobart merchants showed jackets, muffs and rugs of the same furs.

The Queensland court was a luxuriant Egypt of primary colours: pyramids of brilliant green sugar cane, billowing wool and gleaming pearl shells reared up at the front of the court. The pearl shell trophy, "of extraordinary size and brilliance",²⁵⁵ was mounted by Parbury, Lamb & Knox, merchants of Sydney and Brisbane. Pointing out that the NSW trade in exporting Queensland shell had grown from 70 pounds worth in 1869 to 58,000 pounds in 1879,²⁵⁶ the jury awarded the consortium a First Degree of Merit.

²⁵⁵Record, p.692.

²⁵⁶Ibid.

4.42 Fruit show, Agricultural Hall; AT&CJ, 25.10.1879, p.793



One of the most exotic animal products in the Exhibition came from Malacca - a stuffed ape. The same exhibitor, J.E. Westerhout, also showed a mushroom, "said to have grown from the Milk of a Tigress."²⁵⁷ Neither was recognized with a prize.

Group 4: Forest products

The four judges of the timber classes were quite the most conscientious in the Exhibition. Their field was a huge one, for nearly every participating state sent a collection of its native timbers, and they noted, tested and commented upon nearly every sample. Their report occupies 85 pages of the Official Record.

Certain New South Wales exhibitors showed a few manufactured wood products: sawn timber and shingles from a Bega mill; bent timber from Redfern coachbuilder James Munro; tool handles made from colonial timbers by a carpenter of Riley St, John Smith.

Group 5: Fruit

The descriptive classification "Pomology" sounds more succulent than it appears to have been in reality. "Class 621: Fruits of temperate regions: apples, pears, quinces, peaches, nectarines, oranges, apricots, plums, grapes, cherries, strawberries and melons. Class 622: Tropical fruits: oranges, bananas, plantains, lemons, pine-apples, pomegranates, figs, coconuts."²⁵⁸ For obvious

²⁵⁷Straits Settlements Catalogue, p.15.

²⁵⁸Record, pclxxxiii.

reasons exhibits were almost exclusively Australian and were not permanent, with the exception of home-preserved fruits, exhibited then as now by women. However, more than a hundred varieties of fresh fruit were shown at the various temporary exhibitions.

Groups 6 and 7: Agricultural products and Vegetable products used as food and as materials

This huge classification covered the greater proportion of Australian colonial exhibits. Nonetheless, the number of exhibitors in no way represented the scale of agricultural production on the continent, eg of cereals: 7 from South Australia; 11 from Victoria; 89 from NSW²⁵⁹ A small number of awards were recommended to certain governments for pre-eminence in production: Fiji for cotton; NSW for maize and rye; New Zealand for barley and oats; South Australia for wheat, and so on.

A few NSW products were notable for innovation or quality. The best tobacco in the show was exhibited by Cameron Bros, tobacconists of King Street; grown and cured in the colony, it was judged "of excellent flavour and aroma."²⁶⁰ Potatoes appear to have been another specialty: "Sultan's red-skinned flower-ball" from Bombala and "Breeze's prolific" from Armidale both won First Degrees of Merit Special and tasty judicial accolades.

²⁵⁹It did, however, indicate the inland move of the wheat-fields of New South Wales and South Australia in the late 1870s, correlating nicely with the extension of rail services to these areas; Linge, Industrial Awakening, p.527.

²⁶⁰Record, p.824.

4.43 "Our Exhibition wine judges at work"; Sydney Punch, 31.1.1880,
p.36



Group 8: Wines, spirituous, fermented and other drinks

The judges of wines and spirits moved quickly to justify their product in their report. Wines were useful and valuable, they affirmed in the first paragraph, for many reasons, among them the interesting contention that "a beverage containing a moderate percentage of alcohol has a moral influence of the people of the country wherein it is made and consumed."²⁶¹ They also observed that the British market absorbed an annual thirty million gallons of wine and that vine diseases were rampaging through the vineyards of Europe - leading to an optimistic forecast that the Australian colonies would soon be supplying the mother country with her tipple.²⁶²

Wines, spirits and beer were exhibited from France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Italy and all the Australian colonies. They were exhibited both by individual vigneron and by wine merchants; it is impossible to judge what proportions of each.

The majority of the 24 French exhibitors sent Bordeaux and Burgundy wines. Many of them obtained prizes but many more - especially whites - were not judged because they had arrived in Australia in such poor condition. One of the highest awards went to a Marseilles concoction "Eucalypsinthe", a eucalyptus liqueur.

²⁶¹Record, p.863.

²⁶²The great Phylloxera epidemic of 1875-87 destroyed one third of French vineyards and had similiar consequences in the rest of Europe. It appeared in New South Wales about 1884, though it had been noted in South Australia as early as 1875.

Beer was the largest component of the German offering. It was generally judged the best beer in the Exhibition, noted for its fine amber colour, well-hopped flavour and cheerful sparkle. However, certain other exhibits sound dubious: e.g., a "malt-extract sanitive beer" from Berlin, and even worse, "soap prepared from the residues of this extract."²⁶³

Yet others were distinctly frivolous - a Speyer manufacturer produced beer in champagne bottles, which heresy earned him ostracism by the jury.

The greater part of the Austro-Hungarian exhibit comprised Hungarian tokays and Slavic liqueurs. These, plus the standard wine types and beers, were available for the public to form personal opinions on in the Austro-Hungarian Wine and Beer Testing Hall in the Exhibition grounds. Here, the most popular product was Dreher's beer, brewed near Vienna.

A small number of Italian wines were sent to Sydney. Nonetheless, they represented both north and south: Marsala from Palermo, Chianti from Tuscany, reds from Verona, and aperitifs from Piedmont. Marsala and Fernet Branca won the only prizes to Italy.

Britain was represented by beer and whiskey. Guinness stout and a highland malt won First Degrees of Merit Special. Paradoxically (but appropriately) the temperance movement was represented largely in this class with a contingent of ginger ales, soda waters, lime cordials and other aerated waters.

²⁶³German Catalogue, p.82.

4.44 Dutch gin display; SIE Photo Album, vol.2, p.23; (cartoon) John Davies MLA condemns the gin exhibit; Sydney Punch, 4.10.1879, p. 102



The temperance cause provoked a crisis in the tiny Dutch court. Chiefly comprising gin and liqueurs, the display was damned as "a vile Gin Trophy ...flaunting itself opposite the statue of Her Majesty."²⁶⁴

The matter caused a furore in the Commission, which nearly ordered all exhibits of gin removed from the Exhibition, but the tumult gradually faded and the display remained. One sample of gin was eventually awarded a top prize.

Australian colonial wines were found amply satisfactory. The jury waxed enthusiastic, ascribing notable improvements to the consequences of "wholesome emulation" in local and intercolonial exhibitions. "This has brought their wines to their present condition," wrote Jules Joubert, Secretary to the jury, "in many instances bordering almost on perfection."²⁶⁵ Nonetheless, local interest in the home product languished. Joubert enlarged on this theme in a letter to the Mail: "Prejudice has hitherto been very strong against colonial wine...when Australians see Australian wine is purchased freely and sought after in Europe, the prejudice will soon vanish."²⁶⁶

The wines on show were noted as of distinctive local character: products of the upper Yarra were likened to those of Burgundy; of

²⁶⁴SMH, 23.9.1879; cartoon in Sydney Punch, 4.10.1879.

²⁶⁵Record, p.863.

²⁶⁶Sydney Mail, 10.4.1880, p.686-7.

the Hunter Valley to Bordeaux; of the Murray and South Australia to Spain, Portugal and Madeira. Exhibits from Queensland were few and, with the exception of rum, inferior to those from the southern states. New Zealand was noted as producing fruit wines and liqueurs.

Most exhibitors appear to have been the vigneron himself, though some wine merchants showed samples of their stock. From NSW there were 42 exhibitors; from Victoria, 30, and from South Australia, 18. Some names are familiar today: Lindeman of Cawarra; Wyndham of Dalwood; Seppelt of Nuriootpa; Hardy of Barossa; Penfold of East Torrens. Many received First Degrees of Merit, but only one Australian wine was awarded the topmost First Degree of Merit Special - an 1877 Hermitage from St Hubert's, Victoria, entered by De Castella & Rowan, wine merchants of Collins St, Melbourne.

Colonial beer was well and widely represented. The five Sydney commercial breweries each exhibited and the top prize of the Exhibition was awarded to Mr Joseph Marshall's Paddington Brewery. He showed pale, strong and stock ales, bottled and on tap and bottled stout. The recommendation for a gold medal was unanimous.

Group 9: Animal and vegetable textiles

Wool was the focus of Group 8, where the fame and wealth of the Australian colonies was exhibited, compared, tested and judged. Some wool was arranged in decorative trophies in the body of the Garden Palace, but most was shown in the Wool Show which opened in the Agricultural Hall in December 1879 and ran for four months.

"It formed undoubtedly the most comprehensive collection of wool ever seen in Australia or possibly elsewhere. It represented Australia's premier industry...Like erudite work whose pages teem with sentences which are golden, the Wool Show has been available for months to afford information to those who wish to learn."²⁶⁷

All the Australian colonies exhibited wool. A scarce handful of French, German and American wools represented the rest of the world. The Bergerie Nationale of Rambouillet sent a number of Rambouillet merinos to Sydney; they were shorn just before the Wool Show opened but perhaps the "four months exposed to sea air"²⁶⁸ that they endured en route did not improve their fleeces, for though the display was highly commended, the judges noted only that it was "highly instructive and interesting".²⁶⁹ A selection of unwashed fleeces from pure merinos from R. von Mens of Schlesien was judged of very superior quality and received a First Degree of Merit Special. From the USA came twenty-four exhibits of merino wool from the Vermont Sheep Breeders' Association, and five from upstate New York.

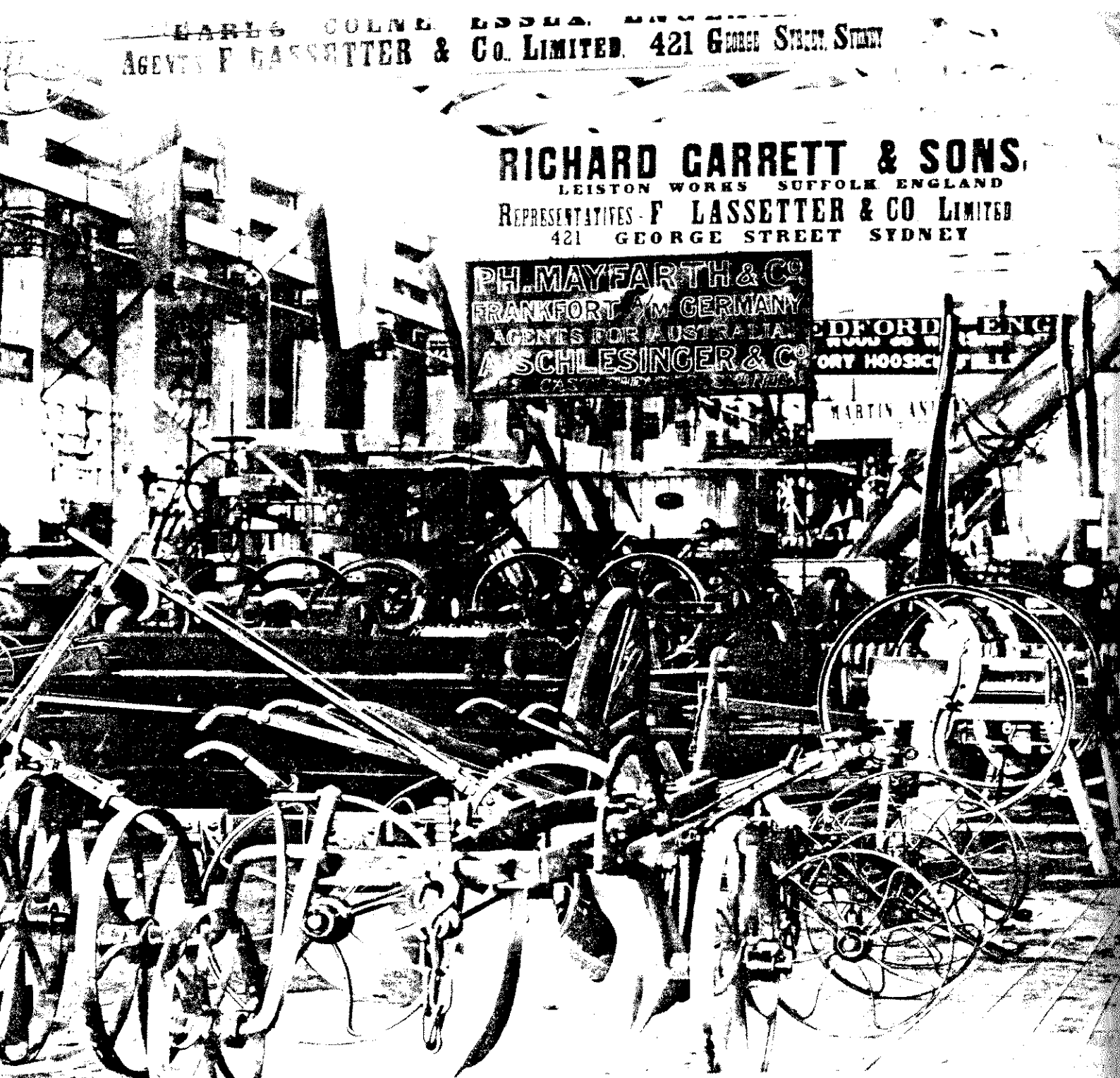
Australian woolgrowers were urged to enter the show to improve their own and the national staple: "...a liberal (competition) will enable graziers to determine their ideas as to which breed of animal comes soonest to maturity under the same conditions and there-

²⁶⁷Sydney Mail, 17.4.1880, p.737.

²⁶⁸French Catalogue, p.34.

²⁶⁹Record, p.911.

4.45 British agricultural machinery, Machinery Halls; SIE Photo Album, vol.2, p.13



AGENTS F LASSETTER & Co. LIMITED. 421 GEORGE STREET, SYDNEY

RICHARD GARRETT & SONS,
LEISTON WORKS SUFFOLK ENGLAND
REPRESENTATIVES - F LASSETTER & CO LIMITED
421 GEORGE STREET SYDNEY

PH. MAYFIRTH & CO
FRANKFORT AM GERMANY
AGENTS FOR AUSTRALIA
ANSCHLESINGER & CO

EDFORD ENGLAND
AGENTS FOR AUSTRALIA
HARRY HOOSICK FIELDS

MARTIN AND

fore, in the interests of the general public, which breed it is most desirable to adhere to and to improve."²⁷⁰

After the Exhibition closed the General Report on the Agriculture Department observed that the comparative display had been gratifyingly successful: "The experience gained by growers of wool in this manner is sure to have valuable results leading to great improvement in the staple."²⁷¹

Group 10: Agricultural Machinery

This crucial group was sub-divided according to the basic processes of agriculture: tillage and harvest; and the specialised equipment: engines, dairy fittings and so on. It was a delicately-balanced mixture of traditional tools and modern technology. The former predominated in number but the potential of the latter was clearly perceived by the judges. A commentator noted; "I never expected to see so many fine collections of 'labour-savers' on Australian ground, and I look forward hopefully to the effect the inspection of them will have on the agriculturalists and mechanics of this colony."²⁷²

British exhibits typify the development. Manual tools of essentially ancient form were well represented: spades, hoes,

²⁷⁰Sydney International Exhibition: Department VI: Agriculture, (pamphlet) Sydney 1879, in FL Rare Books section, p.4.

²⁷¹Record, p.697.

²⁷²"Wanderer", Sydney Mail, 4.10.1879.

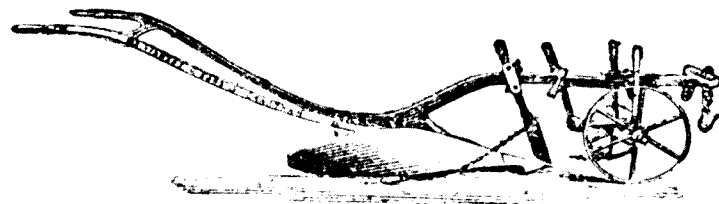
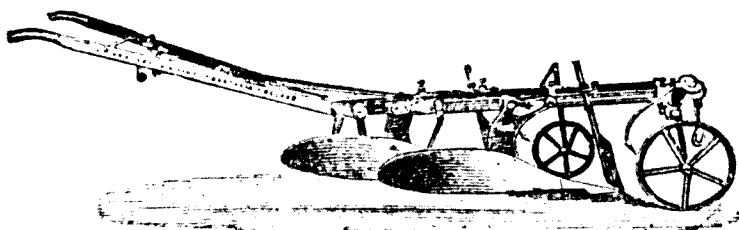
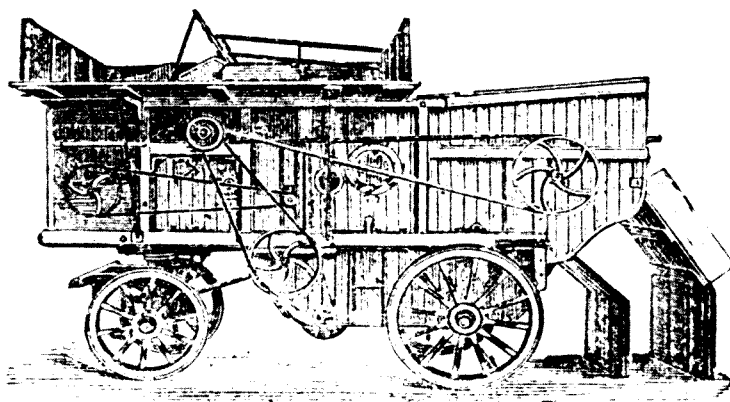
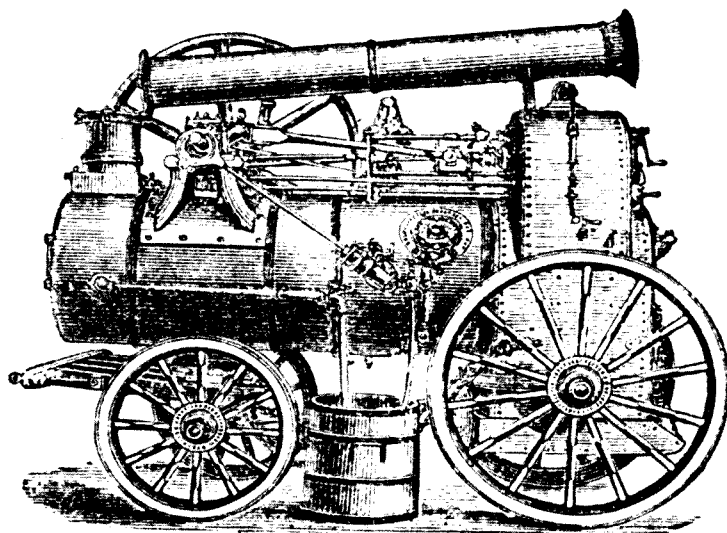
sickles, reaping hooks, hay forks and so on; they were generally acknowledged to be the sturdiest and soundest in the Exhibition. There were the machines of the eighteenth century agricultural revolution, such as the seed drill (which had still not come into widespread use in backward NSW,²⁷³ though was commonly used in more progressive South Australia). Then there were the steam engines applied to agricultural functions, featuring machines by the same manufacturers who exhibited prime movers in Class 5. Certain other products such as wire netting and iron water tanks were the results of modern technology applied to old problems; they were fast moving into the realm of necessity in colonial agriculture.

Top prizes were awarded to two well-known manufacturers: Fowler & Co. for steam machinery and J. & F. Howard for ploughs and other implements. Norman Selfe described the display of Fowler engines as "without doubt, the most important set of agricultural machinery in the Exhibition".²⁷⁴ The Fowler steam ploughing apparatus was demonstrated and tested on a Bathurst property in April 1880, and was declared an unqualified success. Thirty acres a day were ploughed to the unusual depth of 8 inches; grubbing to a depth of 24 inches and triple-furrow ploughing to 12 inches were also proved.²⁷⁵ The jury opined in its citation: "We consider the introduction of steam ploughing machinery and traction engines

²⁷³Birmingham et al, Australian Pioneer Technology, p.24.

²⁷⁴SMH, 22.12.1879, p.3.

²⁷⁵Illustrated in Sydney Mail, 24.4.1880, p.784.



likely to be of great advantage to the Australian farmer."²⁷⁶

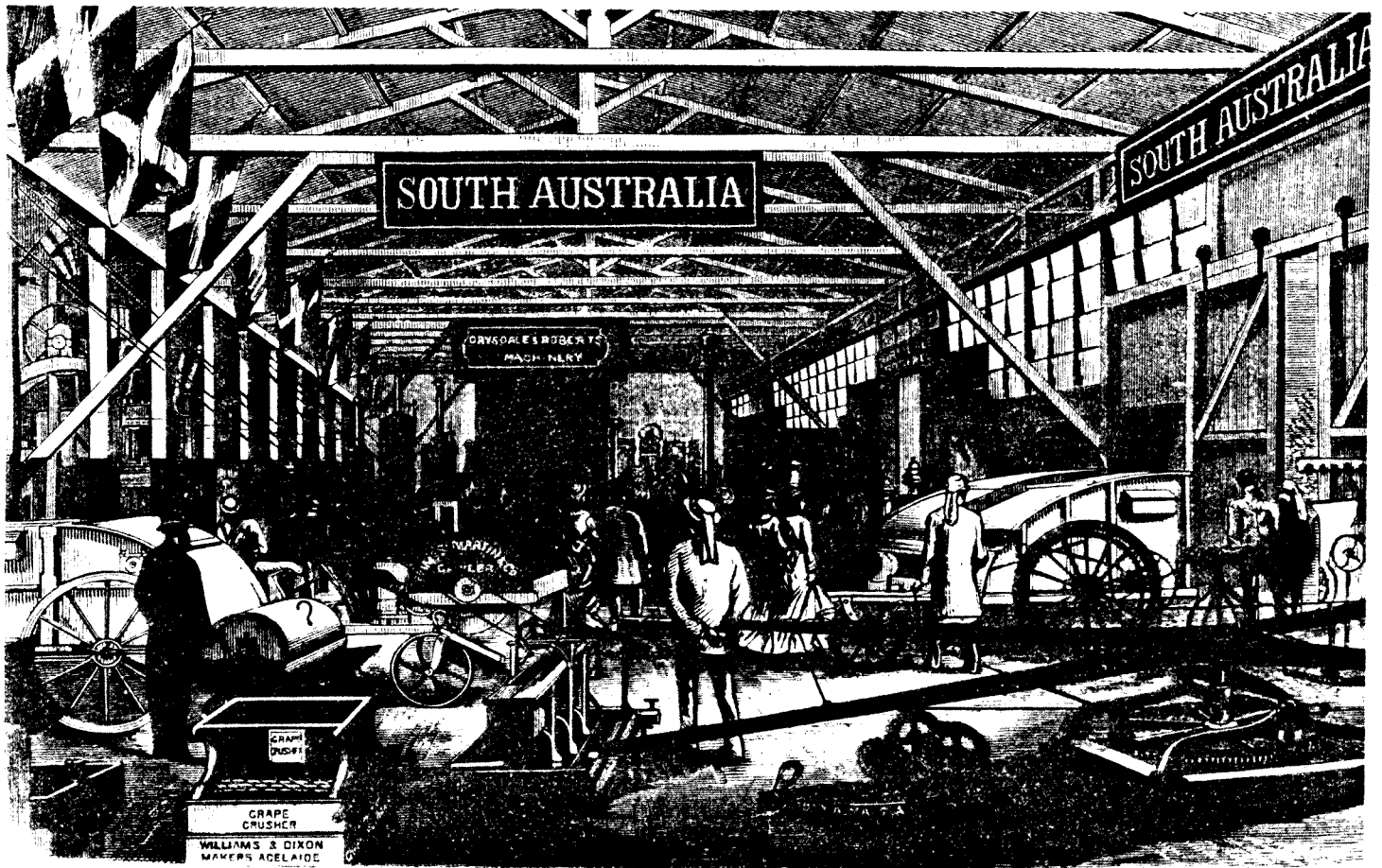
J. & F. Howard, the top prize-winners, were implement makers of Bedford. They showed a substantial range of products: ploughs -single, double, triple and four-furrow; harrows - chain, seed, drag-over, light and heavy; cultivators with patent self-lifting gear; reapers and mowers for one and two horses; and rollers. Other familiar names among British exhibitors were Ransome, Sims & Head; Marshall & Sons and Foster & Co.

A number of French and more particularly German agricultural implements and machines were well received. Continental equipment appears to have been little known before the Exhibition, but the products of the Actiengesellschaft fur den Bau Landwirth - Schaftlicher Maschinen und Gerathe und fur Wagen-fabrikation of Berlin were commended for good design and workmanship. As with the greater proportion of British machinery, horse-powered threshers, chaff-cutters and mowers predominated.

The New World offered ingenious additions and improvements to the canon of agricultural implements. Of six exhibitors from Ontario, three showed variations on the stripper-harvester; two showed steam chaff-cutters; and one a light grain drill. The USA made a large showing with six exhibitors of ploughs and eleven of

²⁷⁶Record, p.987. This seems to imply that steam engines were less commonly used than may have been though (cf Birmingham et al, Australian Pioneer Technology, p.13-16). Steam ploughing never caught on in Australia due to the large size of paddocks and the hard, dry conditions of the soil.

4.47 South Australian court, Machinery Halls; Illustrated Australian News, 24.12.1879, p.205



reapers and mowers. Many were awarded First Degree of Merit though the most frequent judicial assessment of Yankee products was a comment on the roughness of the workmanship. One machine took out a First Degree of Merit Special - the Automatic String Sheaf-Binder made by Wood & Co. of Hoosick Falls, NY. With the aid of this device, one man and two horses could mow and bind into sheaves ten to twelve acres of crop. The sheaves were bound with string rather than metal wire, which was said to increase the value of the straw by 10/- a ton.²⁷⁷

The Australian colonies had been manufacturing their own agricultural tools since 1788, finding, even nearly a century later, that overseas-made implements were rarely tough enough to cope with antipodean conditions. A few significant inventions and developments stood to colonial credit. In the South Australian corner of the Machinery Hall, for example, were four stripper-harvesters: one by Ramsey & Co. perpetuating John Ridley's 1843 patent; one by Mellor Bros, sons of Joseph Mellor who improved the Ridley machine to become the "Pony Reaper"; one by Martin & Co. capable of reaping and threshing in damp weather or in a coastal environment (and thus saleable in NSW); and one by Jas. Stott, with an improved comb.

Victorian manufacturers were awarded many prizes. The most successful was Hugh Lennon of Melbourne, a salesman of his product if ever there was one. His seven ploughs rejoiced in optimistic

²⁷⁷Record, p.996; illustrated in an advertisement, Sydney Mail, 2.8.1879, p.200.

names: "The Cup Winner", "Gardener's Pride", "NSW Favourite" - "peculiarly adapted to the soil of NSW."²⁷⁸

Mr Lennon also showed visual aids to his lecture "Victorian Ploughs and Ploughing"; among them were a painting depicting Rural Life in Victoria, "Industry Presided over by the Breadwinner" and an emblem representing Ceres and Pomona presiding over Ploughing and Harvesting.²⁷⁹ Lennon undoubtedly had the welfare of farmers at heart: the innovative feature of his "Challenge" combined-reaper and mower was a patent elastic-spring seat. This must have been a welcome change in comparison with the standard wrought iron seat on most machines.

NSW was famously backward in agricultural technology compared with South Australia or Victoria. The largest component of its native-produced agricultural machinery was ploughs, numbering about forty, from eleven manufacturers. Two of the three firms advertising in Sands' Sydney Directory as ploughmakers were represented; the other entrants were from the south, west and north of the colony. Most were highly commended; one, John Wright, ploughmaker of Sussex St won a first prize, with the comment, "good work, design and finish".²⁸⁰

²⁷⁸Victorian Catalogue, p.66.

²⁷⁹Regrettably, there is no trace of them today.

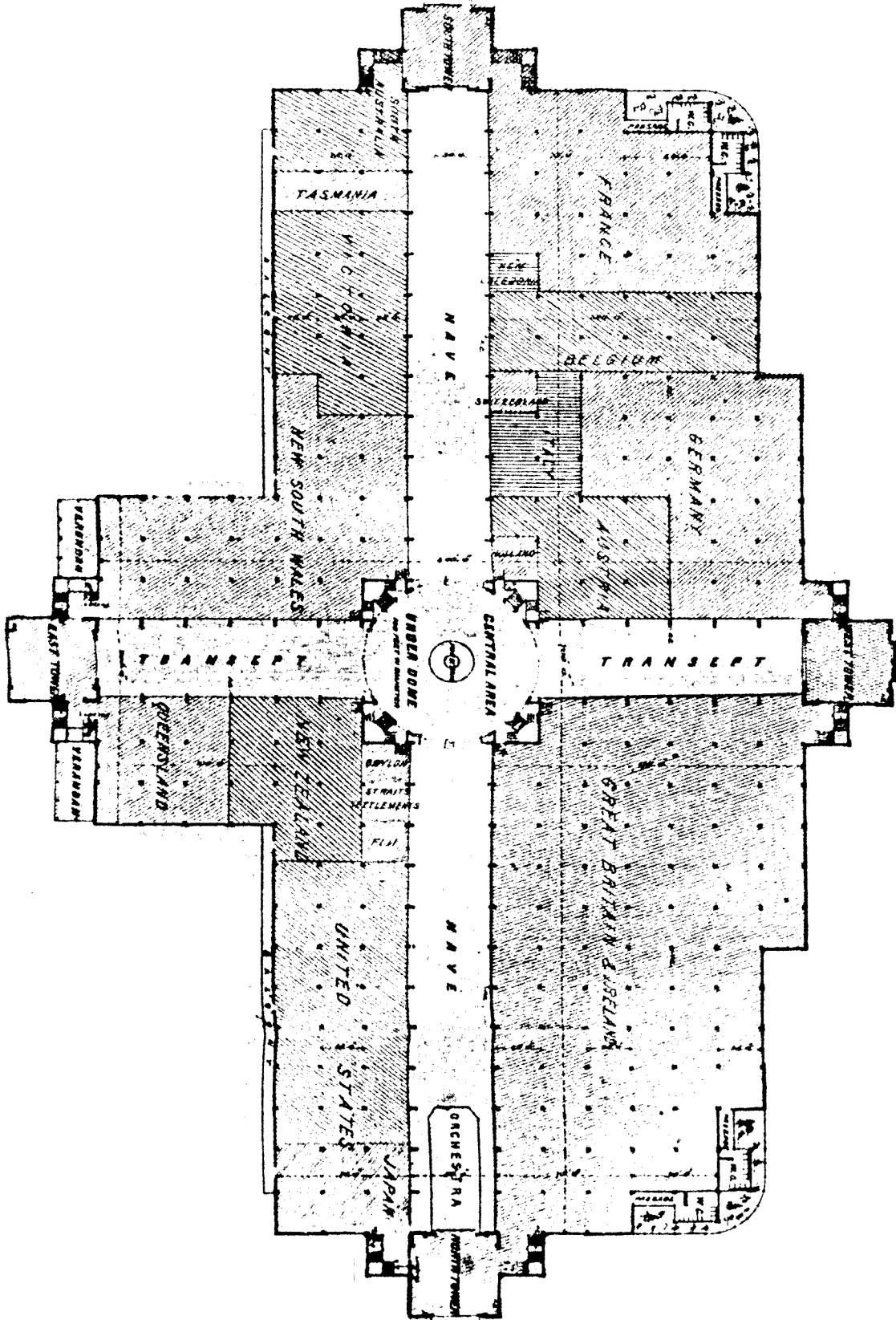
²⁸⁰Record, p.992.

CHAPTER FIVE

The way to do the Exhibition properly:

Visiting the Exhibition

5.1 Garden Palace ground floor plan; Record, appendix



The way to "do" the Exhibition properly is to do it leisurely and to spread the pleasure over a number of visits. To attempt too much at a time is to see little or nothing...Indeed, to go systematically through the Exhibition with the object of seeing everything in one day is a most fatiguing and unsatisfactory operation.¹

Visitors to the Exhibition expected both to improve and enjoy themselves. To this end exhibitors prepared the grandest displays allowed by their resources - and found they had a receptive and enthusiastic audience in Sydney.

The following description takes the latter-day visitor round the Garden Palace and its grounds, looking at displays not as prize-winners or historically significant presences,² but as the spectacles of novelty, richness, ingenuity and style that Sydneysiders paid their shillings to wonder at and admire.

The main entrance to the Garden Palace led from Macquarie Street through a chamber under the Western Tower, hung with German tapestries and decorative bronzes. From here the visitor gazed along the transept towards Marshall Wood's statue of the Queen, though the view was diffused and refracted by the huge, glittering display of Thomas Webb & Sons' glassware, which occupied the middle of the passage.

To the left, the entire north-western angle of the Garden Palace was occupied by Britain (which also filled the galleries above, a large portion of the basement and several areas in the

¹SMH, 9.10.1879, p.5.

²See Chapter 4.

5.2 British exhibits; ISN, supplement, 29.11.1879



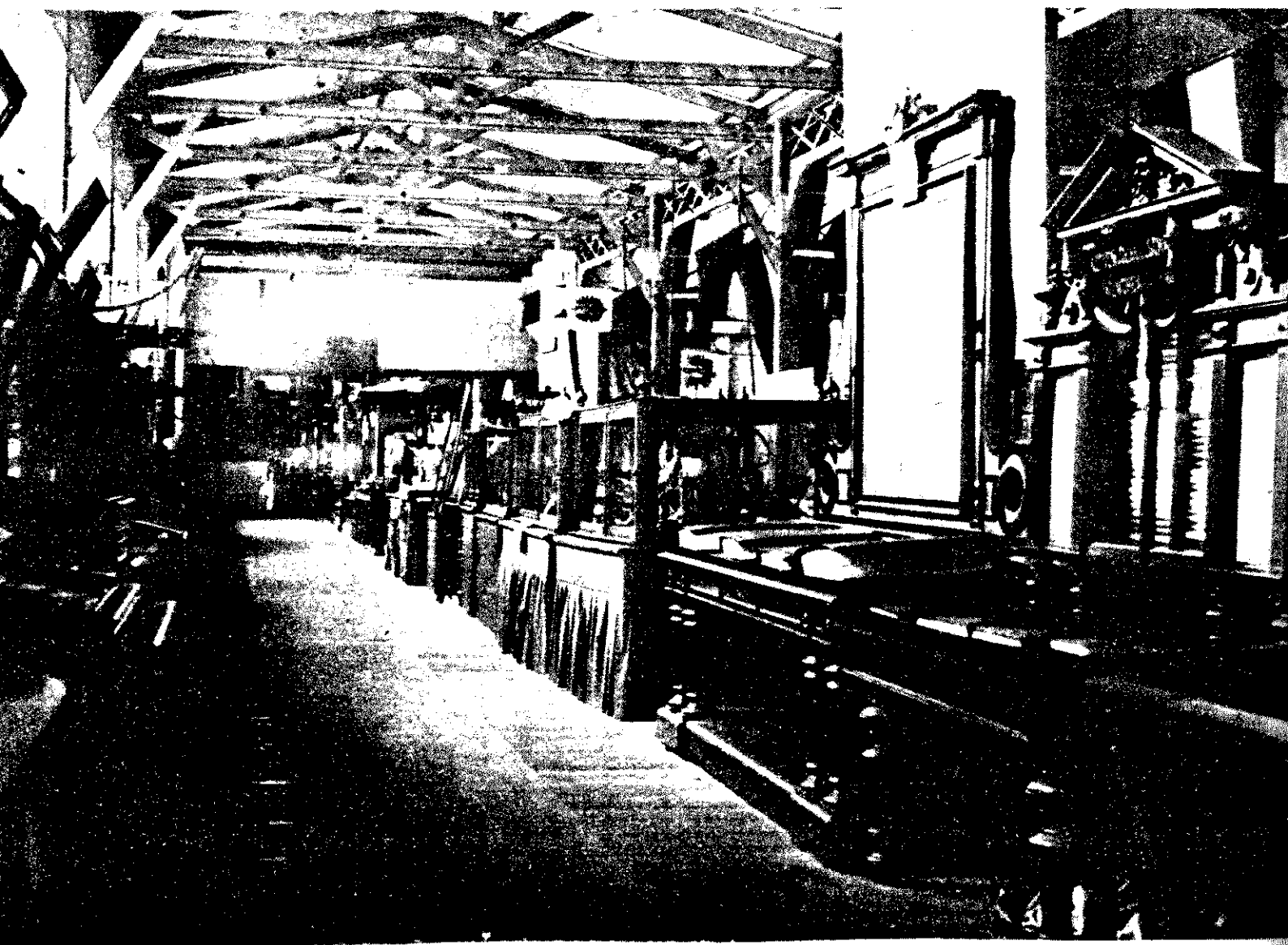
Machinery Halls). The court was painted pink and gold; on the panels of the gallery circlets of oak leaves containing the monogram VR were interspersed between the names of British cities. The exhibits were housed in splendid ebonised showcases, labelled in gold. To mark some division between the dense islands of show goods, carpets, tapestries, maps and prints hung from the rafters. The first impression was such, wrote the Herald, that "the visitor is puzzled as to where to commence making his inspection."³

The most prominent display was composed of tightly-packed pottery and glass: "thousands of elegant articles of the most exquisite design and modelling," bubbled a commentator.⁴ Many of these pieces were Exhibition spectaculars - virtuoso examples of the specialties of the various potteries. More humble ceramics were on show too - painted and printed earthenware as table, toilet and kitchen utensils; decorative tiles; stoneware bottles; architectural pottery and bricks.

As well as a huge range of domestic and table glass there was an avalanche of fancy crystal - vases, flower stands, mirrors, chandeliers, portrait busts of the Queen, the Pope and well-known politicians. Articles were embellished with characters and themes from mythology, the Bible, Scott and fairy stories; they came in all possible styles - Egyptian, Greek, Moorish, Chinese, Early English, Renaissance, Queen Anne...Not only the technical skill of

³SMH, 20.9.1879, p.5.

⁴Notes on the Sydney International Exhibition, Sydney 1880, p.31.



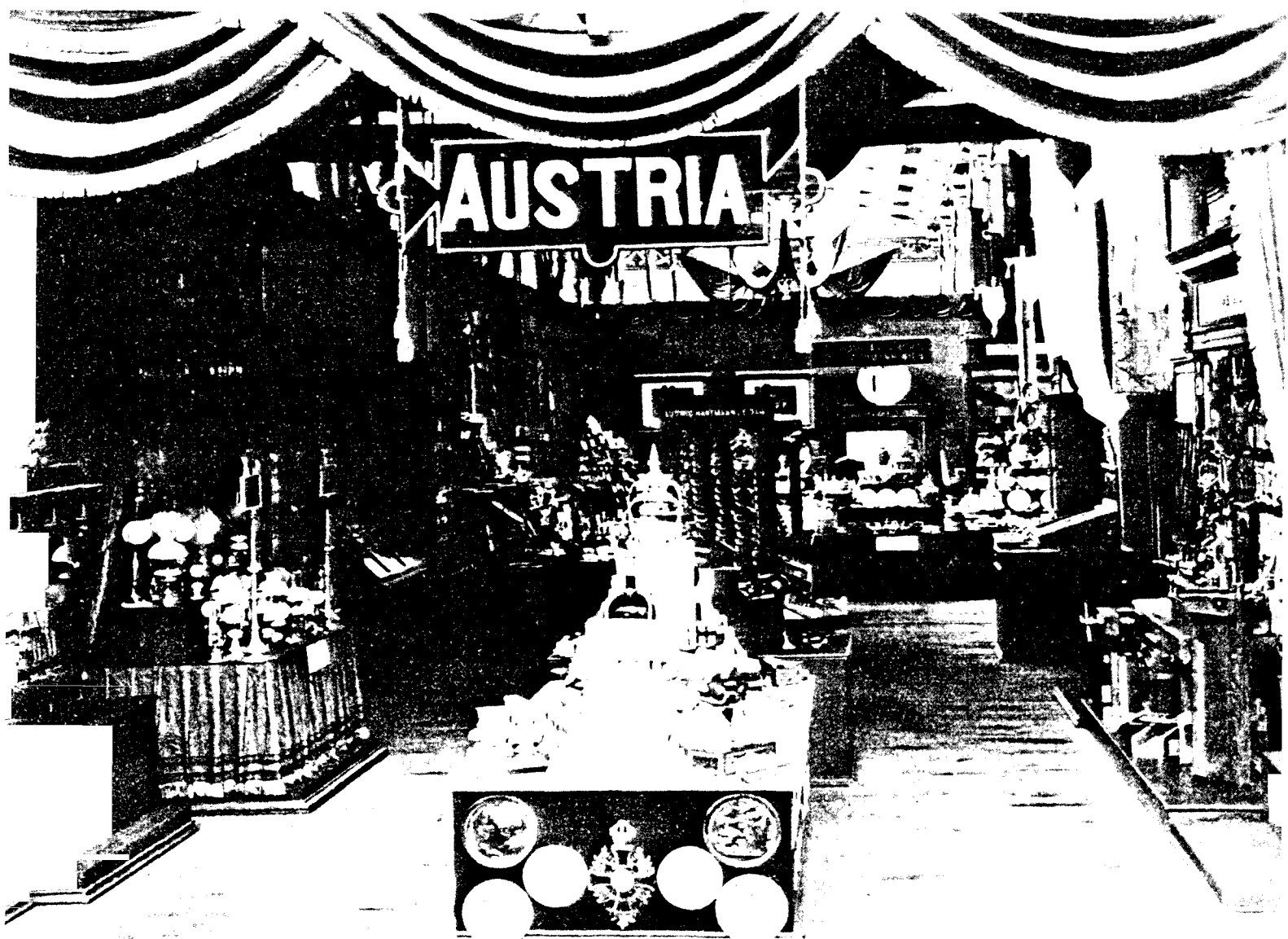
British industry was on display, but also its taste and imagination.

From the looms of Manchester, Lancashire, Leeds and Nottingham came a huge show of yarns, fabrics and ready-made clothes. The forges and foundries of Sheffield and Birmingham showed cutlery, circular saws (including one of 88 inches diameter, said to be the largest in the world) and other tools, and electroplated tableware. "Every article seems to be of the most substantial character, and so elegantly made as to satisfy the most fastidious taste", approved the Government-sponsored Notes on the Sydney International Exhibition.⁵

British exhibits ranged from needles to locomotives. In between were pianos, sewing machines, the thickest iron plate yet manufactured, models of steam ships and railway engines, bales of galvanised iron wire netting and pyramids of pots and pans. There were more than 1600 individual and corporate exhibitors, comprising the largest national group in the entire Exhibition.

Opposite the British court, on the right as the visitor walked in from Macquarie Street was the German Empire - the last court to be finished and commonly acknowledged as the most handsome. A case of brilliant ostrich feathers and feather ornaments stood enticingly at the entrance, leading on to a rich display of Dresden china. Doubling as showcases and backdrop was a collection of ornately carved furniture, the style of which, remarked a waspish

⁵Notes, p.50.



Herald correspondent, "is not what most of us in Australia have been used to".⁶ However, its arrangement in domestic tableaux, complete with carpets, wallpaper, books and oleographs was admired.

The breadth of German technology represented in Sydney ranged from Black Forest cuckoo clocks to gutta percha hoses, to glass eyes, to specimens of wrought and cast iron. In all, they comprised some 720 exhibitors.

The court of the Austro-Hungarian Empire stood at the southwest angle of the crossing, fronting both the nave and the transept. The most spectacular display here was a veritable warehouse of Bohemian crystal, brilliantly multicoloured and opulently decorated. It was surmounted by crystal chandeliers in the grandest taste. The next most popular Austrian item was without doubt Dreher's beer, judged by a journalist to be "very superior to the English draught or bottled ale".⁷ It was available on tap in the Austro-Hungarian Wine and Beer Tasting Hall in the grounds of the Garden Palace, but in spite of many ingenious schemes for importing it cheaply, it remained too expensive (at 15/- a dozen) to become a natural Australian drink. Austrian bentwood furniture formed another prominent display; it was already well known and appreciated in Australia.

The tiny Dutch court nestled in a corner of the Austrian, presenting "a decidedly cozy and attractive appearance".⁸ It was

⁶SMH, 6.11.1879, p.3.

⁷SMH, 15.10.1879, p.3.

⁸Sydney Mail, 20.9.1879, p.467.

5.5 Italian exhibits; SIE Photo Album, vol.2, p.19



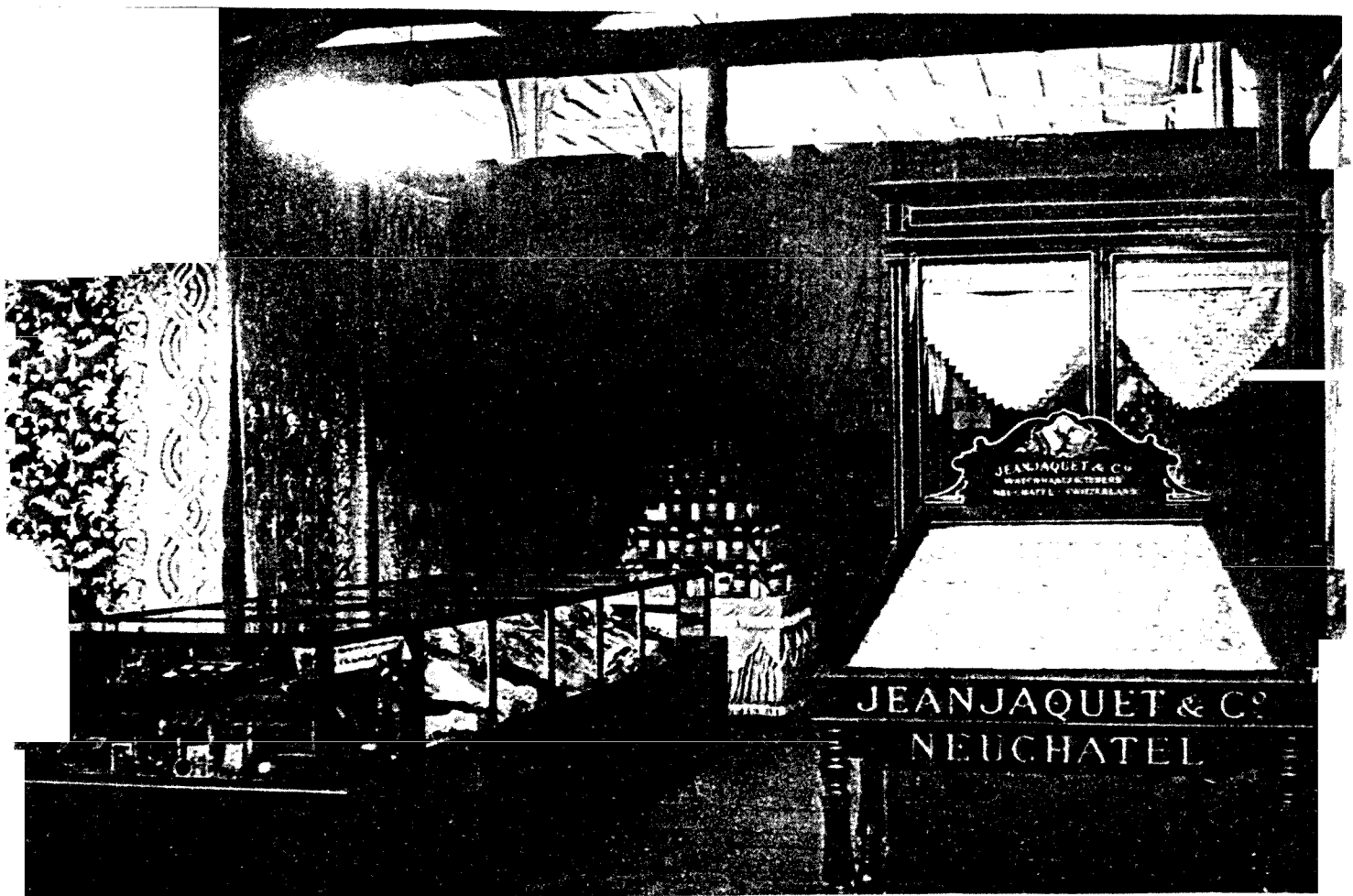
framed with heavy curtains which themselves framed a handsome cabinet of liqueurs from the Bols distillery. This was the source of the wouser outrage: "...a bold exhibition of the cupidity which panders to the very lowest appetites of man", as the Editor of the Herald was informed in a letter.⁹ In the event, the Bols display remained; had it been removed, as the Temperance advocates insisted, a further nine of the total 23 Dutch exhibitors would also have been disqualified, for gin was the major exhibit of Holland. There were also Gouda and Edam cheeses; preserved herrings; Java cigars; and clay pipes.

Next to Austria in the southern nave was the Italian court. The Italian government had not responded to the official Exhibition invitation and the display in the Garden Palace was in fact a commercial venture by a pair of Florentine entrepreneurs. It was not, therefore, broadly representative of the products of the Kingdom of Italy, but concentrated on the fine and decorative arts.

About half the show comprised carved walnut furniture, Capodimonte-style porcelain, filigree jewellery and mosaic nicknacks. More than fifty marble and alabaster statues mounted on serpentine columns and pedestals made up much of the remainder. The quality was not high - unlike the prices. Exhibition commentators were drily critical.

The Swiss court occupied a corner of the Italian, facing the nave. Its show consisted of a striking mixture of old and new

⁹SMH, 23.9.1879, p.6.



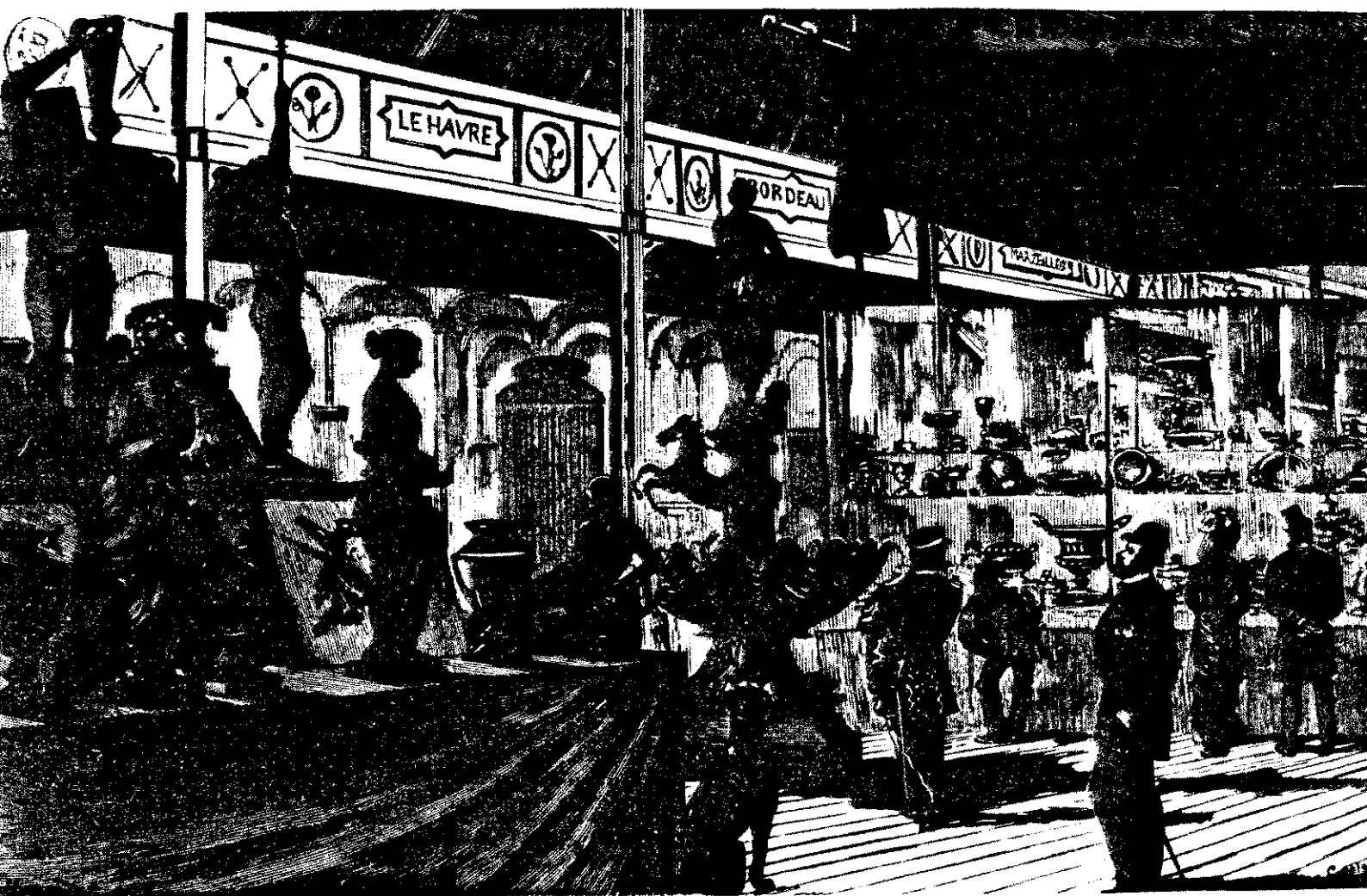
technologies. On the one hand there were alpine herbal remedies and quaint wooden carvings by peasants - the most popular was a box shaped like the trunk of a tree with a fox and two hounds on the lid. On the other hand there were delicate machine-made laces and famous Swiss watches. One of these - clearly a special for the antipodean market - was blazoned with kangaroo, emu and motto "Advance Australia".¹⁰

The third biggest European exhibitor, Belgium, occupied a swathe of the Garden Palace fronting the north nave. Belgian industrial wealth was displayed in all categories. The most notable were iron and steel products, which formed two gigantic trophies towering above the court. Steel bars, plates and rods were fantastically bent and twisted to demonstrate their strength and versatility.¹¹ Glass was the other specialty of the court and it was exhibited with some flair - an immense mirror, 11'10" x 6'7", stood in the centre of the court and a sheet of plate glass of similar dimensions fronted it. The famous decorative marbles of Belgium were displayed both in slabs and in worked examples such as mantelpieces; widely admired, this stock was subsequently bought up by an unknown Sydney masonry yard.

Last and largest of the European courts was that of France. It was an impressive display rather than an industrially represen-

¹⁰cf one such illustrated in Mona Brand, Australiana, Sydney 1979, p.107.

¹¹Three of these survived the Garden Palace and remain in the collection of MAAS; see the Catalogue of Relics.



tative one, so much so that the comment of a French traveller visiting Sydney in 1879 may be less blatantly chauvinistic than its first appearance seems:

Notre exposition vendra de grands services sans doute aux habitants de la Nouvelle Galles du Sud, elle formerá leur goût.¹²

The Herald seemed to appreciate this style of Gallic enlightenment: "The French exhibitors appear to have been actuated largely by a desire to educate the tastes of the people of Australia."¹³

The articles that were to educate colonial taste were examples of the magnificent decorative arts of France. There were tapestries from the Gobelins, Beauvais and Aubusson works. Specimens of Sèvres porcelain were prominent among the displays of fancy ceramics - large Sèvres vases were presented by the French Commissioner to the City of Sydney and the Art Gallery of NSW.¹⁴

But the most passionately admired exhibit was that of occasional furniture and bijouterie manufactured from Algerian onyx, carved, polished and gilded. "To say the exhibits were works of art is not giving them half the merit they deserve," noted the Herald rapturously.¹⁵

¹²philibert Picrochole, Lettres sur l'Australie, Paris 1880, p.2.

¹³SMH, 29.9.1879, p.3.

¹⁴These survive: the City's vase stands in the Lady Mayoress's Room and the Art Gallery's pair is in store; see the Catalogue of Relics.

¹⁵SMH, 15.9.1879, p.3.



The eastern side of the Garden Palace was occupied by the nations of the new world. The largest, save New South Wales itself, was the court of the United States.

"The exhibitors in the American quarter are eminently practical: things that are useful and contrivances that are highly ingenious are ... conspicuous," observed the Sydney Mail's correspondent.¹⁶ Popularly acclaimed as the finest exhibit was the "tasteful little boudoir" of the Waltham Watch Company. This comprised a pyramid of watches surrounded by twenty two stereoscopic views of the Waltham factory, in which half the employees were women who were paid, the Herald noted with interest, the same wage as male workers.

The New England silversmiths showed splendid cases of silver and electroplated ware, which was rapidly snapped up by the local market. Lassetter's, for instance, bought out the entire stock of Reed & Barton and promoted it with a reprint of an article describing the factory and its processes.¹⁷ Gorham's, however, were perhaps too lavish; the Mail commented:

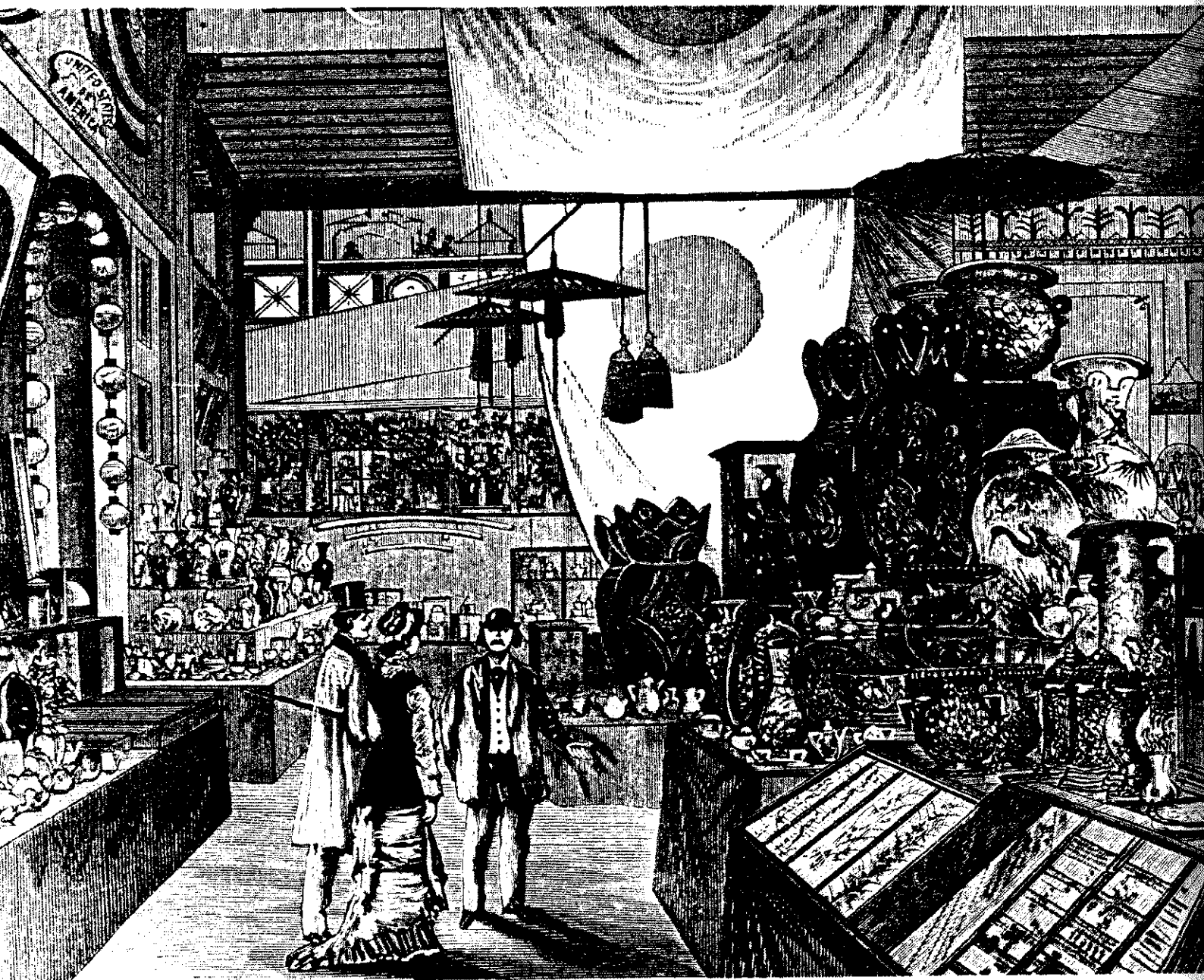
They have probably overrated the purchasing power of the Australian market...prosperous though they may be, the number of those who can afford to place solid silver ware upon their tables is necessarily very small.¹⁸

The United States had participated in NSW exhibitions since 1875. In 1879 they showed nearly a thousand products, some of

¹⁶Sydney Mail, 20.9.1879, p.467.

¹⁷"The Americans at work - the factory of Reed & Barton", reprinted from Appleton's Journal, n.d., in ML pamphlet collection.

¹⁸Quoted by Terry Ingram, A Matter of Polish, Sydney 1979, p.45.



which - notably the steam elevator and the agricultural machinery -were rapidly adopted and widely used.

The Japanese court stood at the northern end of the nave, enclosed by the long orchestra stage and entered through an arched gate hung with paper lanterns. Visitors were welcomed with tiny cups of green tea, disconcertingly served by "celestials"¹⁹ immaculately dressed in Western suits. The display was neither large nor representative of contemporary Japanese technology - it showed almost exclusively the traditional fine arts.

Porcelain, from thimbles to vases nine feet high, was the focus: "as manufacturers of pottery and porcelain they cannot be surpassed", acknowledged the Australian judges.²⁰ They marvelled over the enamel cloisonné work and intricate cast bronze. Samples of silk from cocoons to lengths of massy brocade illustrated another famous Japanese art.

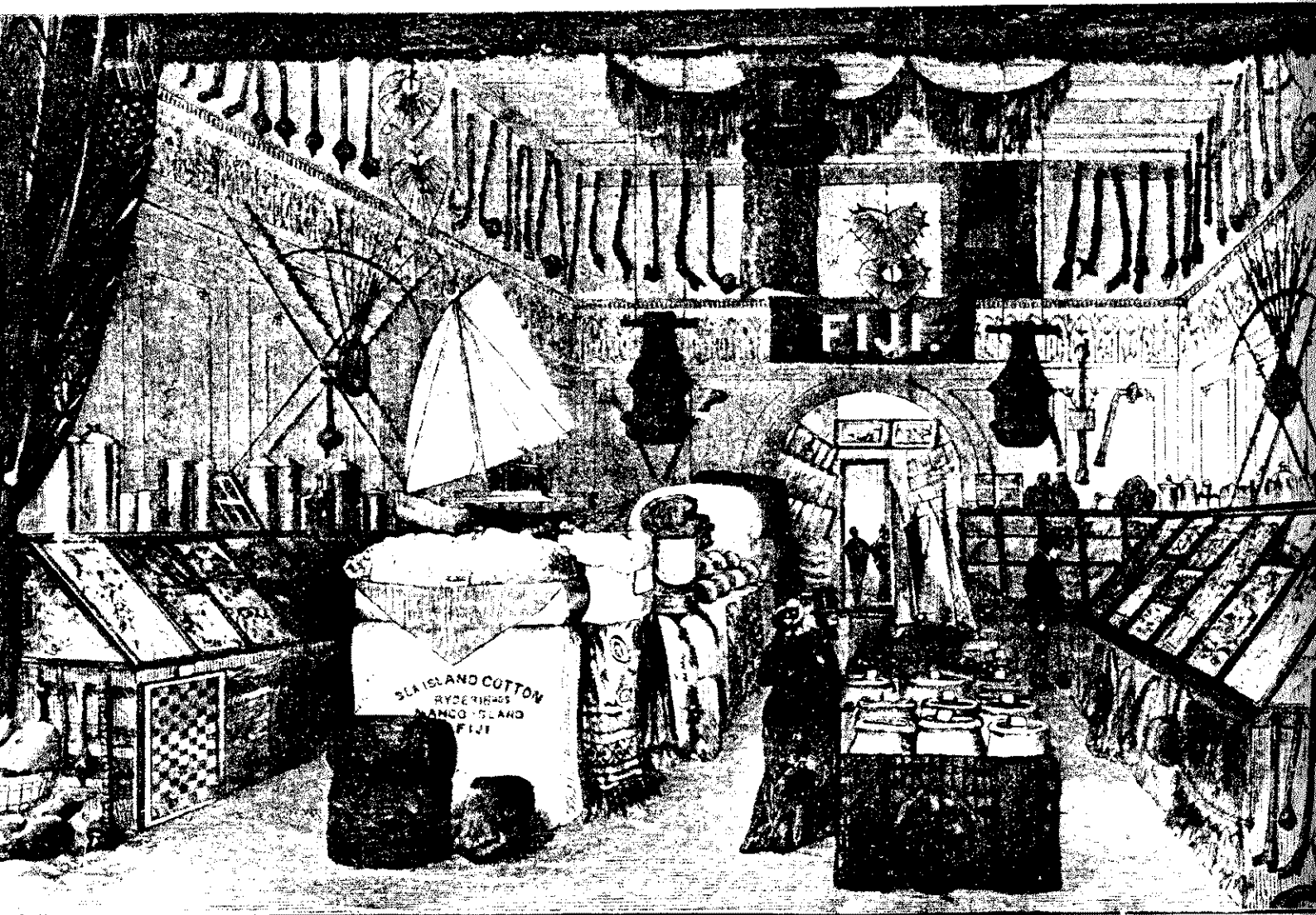
After the Exhibition the entire display of ceramics was presented to the Art Gallery of NSW.²¹

India, which had made a sensational display at the Great Exhibition, was meagrely represented by only two states, Madras and the Northwest Provinces. Even these exhibits arrived late and con-

¹⁹Australians have never been very aware of national or ethnic distinctions in their use of patronising insults.

²⁰Notes, p.101.

²¹Some of it is still to be seen there; some has been transferred to MAAS: see the Catalogue of Relics.



sequently were scattered throughout the Garden Palace without a central court. However, a dozen very large "jail" carpets from Agra and Mirzapore lined a corner of the nave enclosing a couple of cabinets of chased and enamelled metalwork, stone mosaic panels and Persian blue pottery. A portion of the gallery was filled with herbal products: medicines such as quinine; dyes such as indigo and Madras-red; tobacco; spices; and no less than 116 samples of tea.

The colony of Ceylon was better organised in a tiny court in the northeast corner of the crossing. It was hung with native matting, immense palm leaves and a pair of fine leopard skins, "in far better use adorning the walls...than they would be on the backs of these ferocious animals".²² Besides cinnamon and tortoiseshell - the specialities of Ceylon - the exhibit contained collections of gems, teas and precious woods.

Singapore, Malaya, Borneo, and the Straits Settlements exhibited adjacent to Ceylon. To the Anglo-Saxon eyes of Sydney Exhibition-goers it seemed a motley collection of native curiosities and badly got up raw materials. There were malacca canes; rattan furniture; models of Malay stilt houses and pirate junks. The most important commercial products on show were India-rubber, gutta percha and varnishes such as shellac. The most exotic were a stuffed ape and a sample of pineapple brandy.

Fiji occupied another tiny court, adjoining the Straits Settlements. It was fondly looked upon as the youngest of the

²²Notes, p.129.



Australasian colonies and regarded as showing promise: "The Fijians are a fine race of people, and in manners and morals contrast favourably with other dark races".²³

The court was dominated by gargantuan bales of sea-island cotton, a relatively new industry already showing handsome profits. The other great resource of Fiji was the coconut palm. A remarkable trophy was formed of its multitudinous products - nuts, bristles, sinnet, yarn, matting, rope, copra and oil.

New Zealand was represented in a large court in the eastern transept. Its display was typical of the Australasian colonies - an abundance of natural resources and primary products and a small but vigorous manufacturing industry, leavened with self-conscious culture in the form of oil paintings, watercolours and woolwork tapestry.

The most prominent display was a magnificent collection of native wood cabinet work, of which the tour de force was a cabinet constructed specially for the Exhibition of 8508 pieces of wood. Thirty exhibitors showed collections of native timbers, raw and dressed; the ornamental woods particularly interested Sydney cabinet-makers, for NSW provided few such decorative and easily worked timbers. There were woollen textiles and Maori weavings - mats worked with peacock, pigeon and kiwi feathers. The ladies of Sydney admired a collection of feather collars and muffs, to the detriment of shags, bitterns, gannets, penguins and even albatrosses.

²³Notes, p.172.



The pursuit of science in New Zealand produced displays of minerals, fossils, plants, stuffed animals and ethnographica. There were new analytical maps of the topography and resources of the islands and studies of local vulcanology. Several mineral waters were on show, accompanied by exhaustive chemical analyses.

There were also a number of piquant curiosities. One was a tapestry said to have been worked by Mary, Queen of Scots, and preserved in the family of a courtier. Another was a bronze medal struck in 1772 to commemorate Captain Cook's departure from Britain; it had been discovered in the possession of natives in 1876.

At the eastern end of the transept, making strategic use of the veranda overlooking the gardens and Farm Cove, was the Queensland court. It was fronted by the most diverse assembly of trophies in the entire Garden Palace - an obelisk of gold, a pyramid of tin ingots, a double-storeyed pyre of sugar canes, a "tree" of polished timber slabs surmounted by a broad-leaved fern, another pyramid of gleaming mother-of-pearl shells and a rack of greasy fleeces. Faintly incongruous among these fruits of nature was a railway carriage constructed of native Queensland timbers.

An immense selection of primary products was displayed in sacks, jars, cans and bottles - wheat, corn, barley, rice; preserved fruit; essential oils and tinctures; canned bêche-de-mer, dugong and turtle soup prepared expressly for City of London Corporation banquets; and, of course, Castlemaine beer. A remarkable specimen of tanned dugong leather was on show, an inch

5.13 South Australian exhibits; Australasian Sketcher, 22.11.1879, p.140



and a half thick. There was an extensive display of stuffed fauna, and in somewhat the same spirit, the mummified bodies of several Torres Strait aborigines. One of these was said to be that of Naada, leader of the Trinity Bay tribes two hundred years before.²⁴

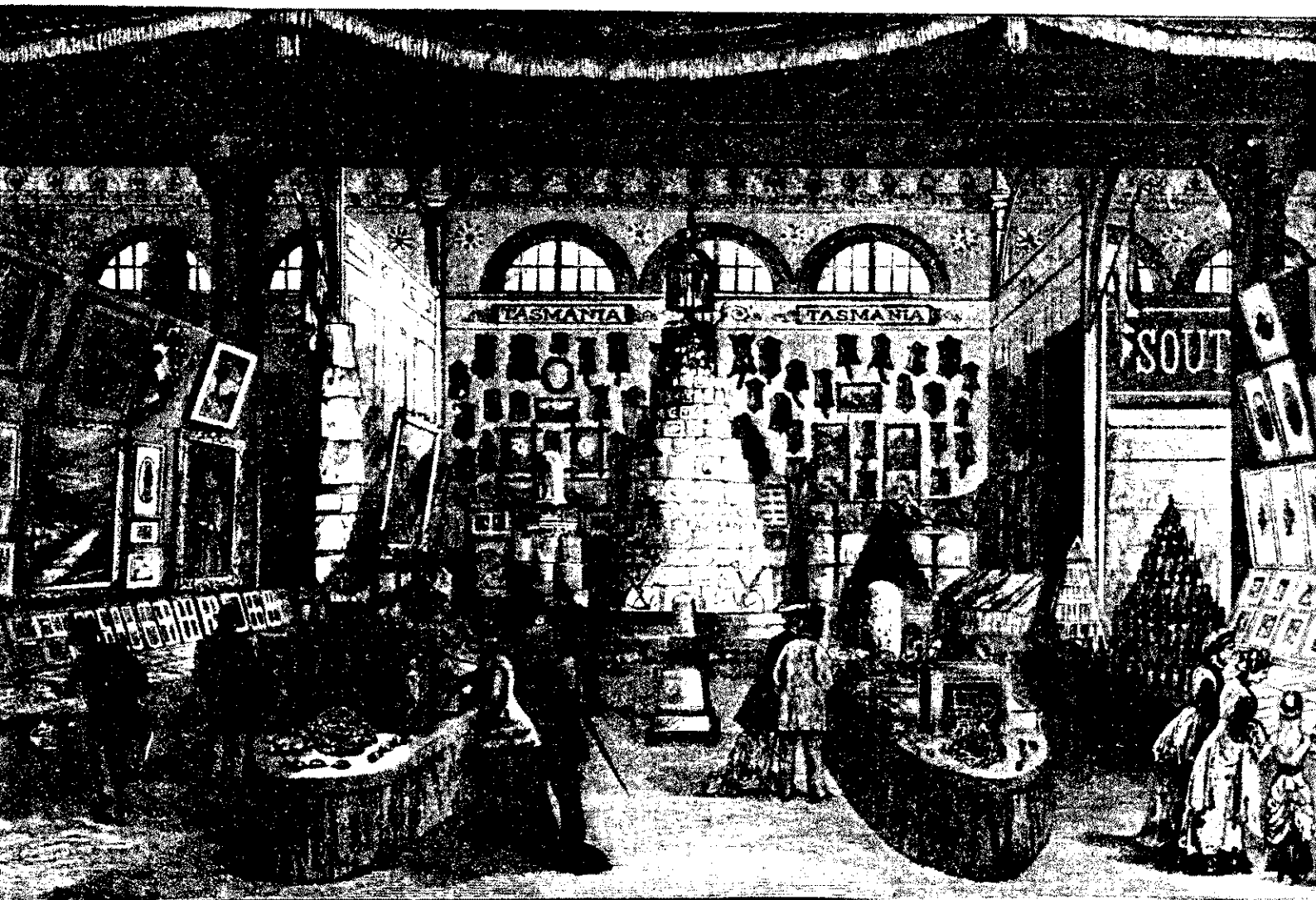
Outside the court on the verandah was set a small jungle of potted native ferns and trees; it became a popular spot in which to relax and admire the superb view.

At the far southeastern end of the Garden Palace was the court of South Australia. A good part of this display comprised metals in raw, refined and worked forms; they accounted, too, for a good number of South Australia's first prizes. Copper from Burra was shown in cakes, bars, tiles, ingots and polished blocks; it was shown rolled, plated, twisted, beaten into paper-thin sheets and hammer-formed into decorative objects. The Adelaide silversmiths showed quantities of mounted emu-eggs, serving a remarkable variety of purposes: vases, cigar holders, jewel boxes, claret jugs and clock cases. Emu eggs fitted with spring openings were got up as ladies' companions, each containing a pair of "Queensland beans" prepared as scent bottles: "great novelties", commented the Herald.²⁵

Samples of South Australian wheat, which had won a first prize at the Paris Exposition the year before, were shown in fine glass-

²⁴The Queensland Museum holds two Aboriginal mummies from the Trinity Bay area, collected in or before 1879; none, however, is identified by name or rank. The attribution therefore seems very dubious.

²⁵SMH, 29.9.1879, p.3.



topped cases. A score of exhibitors showed more than ninety wines, assessed in Sydney as full-bodied and sweet; it was suggested that exchanging these with the lighter New South Wales wines could add variety to the Australian palate. The court was decked with flasks of olive oil, a new and promising industry in South Australia; it was pointed out that four acres of olives produced the same profit as one hundred of wheat.

The Tasmanian court stood next to South Australia's. It was a small but dense exhibit, dominated by a sturdy trophy of tin ingots heraldically supported by picks and shovels. It was capped by an oriental finial fringed with filaments of tin and tin letters spelled out "Advance Tasmania" around its girth. Attracting much attention was the exhibit of Moir's shot manufactory of Queensboro Glen. This was a model of the shot tower, samples of the finished product and illustrations of the processes involved.

Ten exhibitors plus the Royal Society of Tasmania sent samples of polished veneers of native timbers. The local fauna was on display in the form of skins, which lined the walls of the court. The most spectacular product of this southern fur industry was a sledge rug (so described) made of 3400 black possum tails and native cat skins. Whaling was still a profitable venture in the antarctic oceans off Tasmania; it was illustrated with blocks of spermaceti and samples of whale oil.

Already exterminated, the native Tasmanians were commemorated by busts and photographic portraits of William Lanney and



Truganini.²⁶ A small collection of Tasmanian aboriginal artefacts and several skulls and casts represented their culture. Representing the invading British was Governor Davey's 1816 pictorial proclamation of impartial justice to black and white, "an object of curiosity and amusement to visitors".²⁷ More admired were the pictures of Tasmania's rich, green landscape by W.C. Piguenit.²⁸

The large Victorian court occupied the middle of the southeast nave. It contained an ambitious range of natural and manufactured goods but gave preeminence to a display of replicas of the twenty four biggest gold nuggets discovered in the colony. One consequence of Victorian goldfields industry was the development of Australia's most efficient mining and refining machinery; on display were a patent rock-boring machine, a water auger, an air and gas compressor, dredges, stampers and - most basic tool of all - adze-edged picks.

The Melbourne Botanic Gardens showed a collection of woods analysed for useful chemical properties - gums, dyes, mordants, tannin and so forth. Another collection illustrated the pharmaceutical preparations to be had from the eucalyptus and other indigenous

²⁶Unattributed, but possibly by Charles Woolley who took many portraits of them; Jack Cato, The Story of the camera in Australia, Melbourne 1955, p.64-5.

²⁷SMH, 22.9.1879, p6. The article exhibited was probably a later copy; all the surviving ones seem to be.

²⁸W.C. Piguenit, 1836-1914, was the first Australian-born artist of note. Three of his four entries were Tasmanian scenes and were hung on the walls of the Tasmanian court.



trees. The elaborate and ornamental furniture that lined the court demonstrated the degree of taste and skill attained by Victorian cabinetmakers.

Foods of various kinds were on display, but the multitude of tomato sauces caused the Herald to posit that Victorians had a particular weakness for this well-known condiment.²⁹ At the front of the court loomed the immense, turretted trophy of Swallow & Ariel, Melbourne biscuit-makers: the four corners were composed of wedding cakes and the panels in between were formed of geometrical patterns of biscuits. There were also meat, poultry and game preserved in tins; fruits, vegetables, jams and chutneys in jars; and wines and spirits arranged in bottle pyramids.

New South Wales occupied a huge court in the southeast angle of the Garden Palace, fronting both the nave and the transept. It extended into the galleries above and the basement underneath. The flagship exhibitor was the Department of Mines, which organized an enormous and comprehensive display of New South Wales' mineral resources; the most spectacular of them were mounted in a mini-court in the nave.

The genesis of the city of Sydney was illustrated by trophies of locally quarried sandstone and locally manufactured iron and glass. Its progress was documented by a grand display of photographs of notable buildings and panoramas, some taken from the dome of the Garden Palace. Its industrial capacity was

²⁹SMH, 25.9.1879, p.3.

demonstrated by displays from local mills, tanneries, foundries, presses and chemical works.

The decorative arts were seen to be flourishing too. There was a large display of jewellery based on Australian motifs such as Aborigines, kangaroos and the southern cross; "This may seem to European eyes a strange style of art," observed a patriotic commentator; "yet it is undoubtedly in excellent taste for colonial artists to imitate the natural forms peculiar to this new continent".³⁰

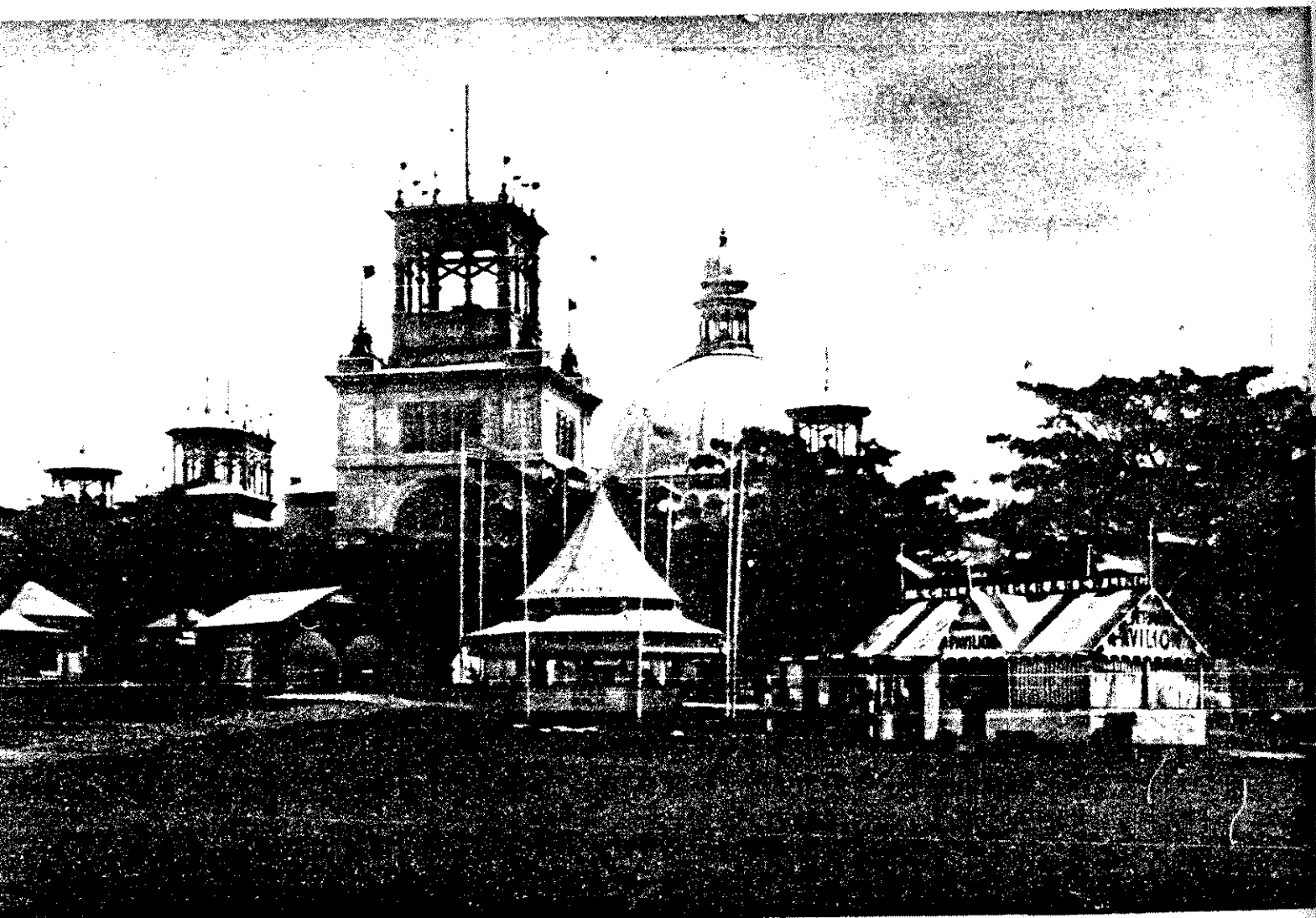
Exhibits from several boat-building yards indicated the popularity of water recreation in Sydney. A model of Port Jackson was a particularly keen attraction to the crowds. Saddlery and harness manufactured in all parts of the colony hotly contested the top prizes for leatherwork, for "in no country in the world are good mountings for a horse more appreciated than in Australia".³¹

Committees had been formed in most of the principal country towns to gather exhibits that would illustrate the diverse resources of the colony. They were mainly agricultural, of course, and New South Wales wool, wheat, maize, cereals, sugar, tallow, wine, tobacco and fruit dominated the agricultural division of the Exhibition.

The sum was an impressively handsome show. But the attractions of the Exhibition were not confined to the Garden Palace. The

³⁰Notes, p.196.

³¹Notes, p.208.



exhibition grounds reached from the Government Stables to St. Mary's cathedral, and from Macquarie St almost to Woolloomooloo Bay, bounded by the Botanic Gardens. Within the grounds were many popular promenades and picnic spots and, for the duration of the Exhibition, more than thirty galleries, pavilions, halls, restaurants and booths.

Largest were the two Machinery Halls, hastily constructed south of the Garden Palace when it became clear that exhibition space inside would be at a premium and that the number of engineering exhibits would justify a separate display area. Machinery was shown static and in motion; a 180 h.p. steam engine by Robey & Co. powered a shaft three hundred feet long to which other engines on display could be linked. The bulk of the exhibits came from Britain; firms from America and Europe showed few of the novelties that had excited so much attention at Philadelphia and Paris in the previous couple of years. Nonetheless, it was the biggest such show yet to be seen in Australia.

West of the Machinery Halls was the Agricultural Hall,³² in which a series of agricultural and horticultural competitions took place throughout the Exhibition. The first was a sheep show; it was rather a sorry show, for it clashed with the spring shearing and many prominent producers did not participate. It was followed

³²The Agricultural Hall had the doubtful distinction of being the only Exhibition building to survive municipal and incendiary demolition. After the Garden Palace burned down it became the home of the embryonic Technological, Industrial and Sanitary Museum, which shared the shed (it was little more) with Sydney Hospital. It was condemned in 1891 by the City health authorities.

5.19 Fijian dancers at the Exhibition; engraving by George Collingridge; ISN, 20.12.1879, p.16



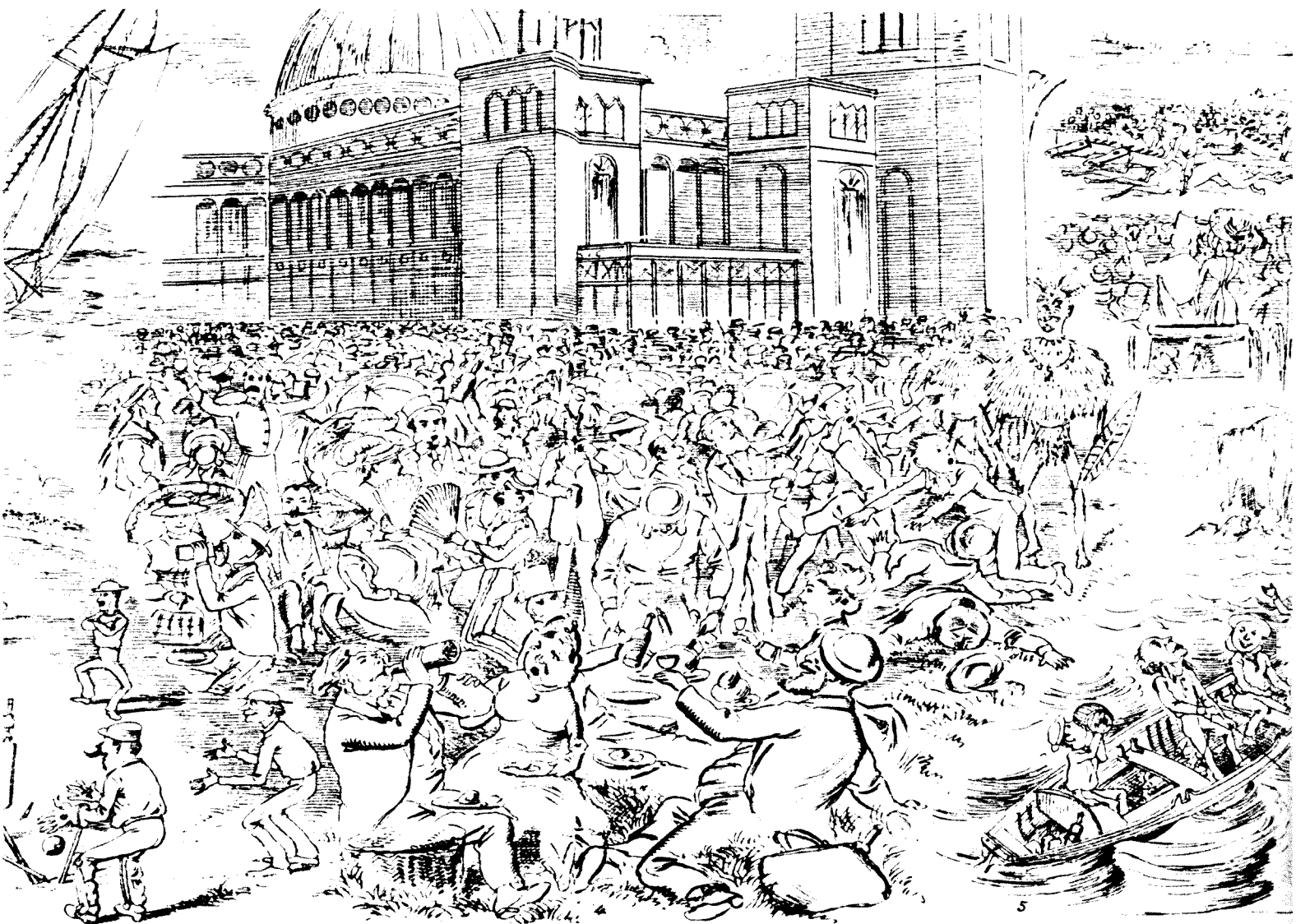
by shows of flowers, poultry, dogs and cats, fat stock (in time for Christmas), horses, cattle and wool - the latter being an international competition, in which Australian fleeces joyfully swept all the first prizes before them.

Halfway between the Garden Palace and Farm Cove stood the Exhibition Art Gallery. It was a triple-naved wooden hall lit by skylights and clerestories; the corrugated iron roof was cooled by an ingenious irrigation system which also served as an emergency fire hydrant. It was divided into nine national halls, painted sober maroon. Generally approved of, it was opened with considerable ceremony on the Prince of Wales' Birthday holiday, 10 November.

If the people's appetites ran more to sensation than to art, still they were catered for at the Exhibition. Two examples of barbaric art graced the grounds - a Maori house and a Fijian house. The magnificently carved Maori house had been built thirty years before as a gesture of reconciliation between warring tribes; the Herald's correspondent marvelled at its "wonderful hideousness".³³ In the Fijian house a pair of painted natives performed a regular war dance and delighted their audiences with claims, through an interpreter, that they had been cannibals until British annexation of the islands only five years before. Rather mildly in view of this shocking revelation, the Herald noted it as "one of the most attractive shows in the grounds".³⁴

³³SMH, 16.10.1879, p.6.

³⁴SMH, 4.10.1879, p.3. ...c'est plus la même chose: a party of Fijian dancers complete with palm-thatched hut was one of the features of the 1982 Festival of Sydney.



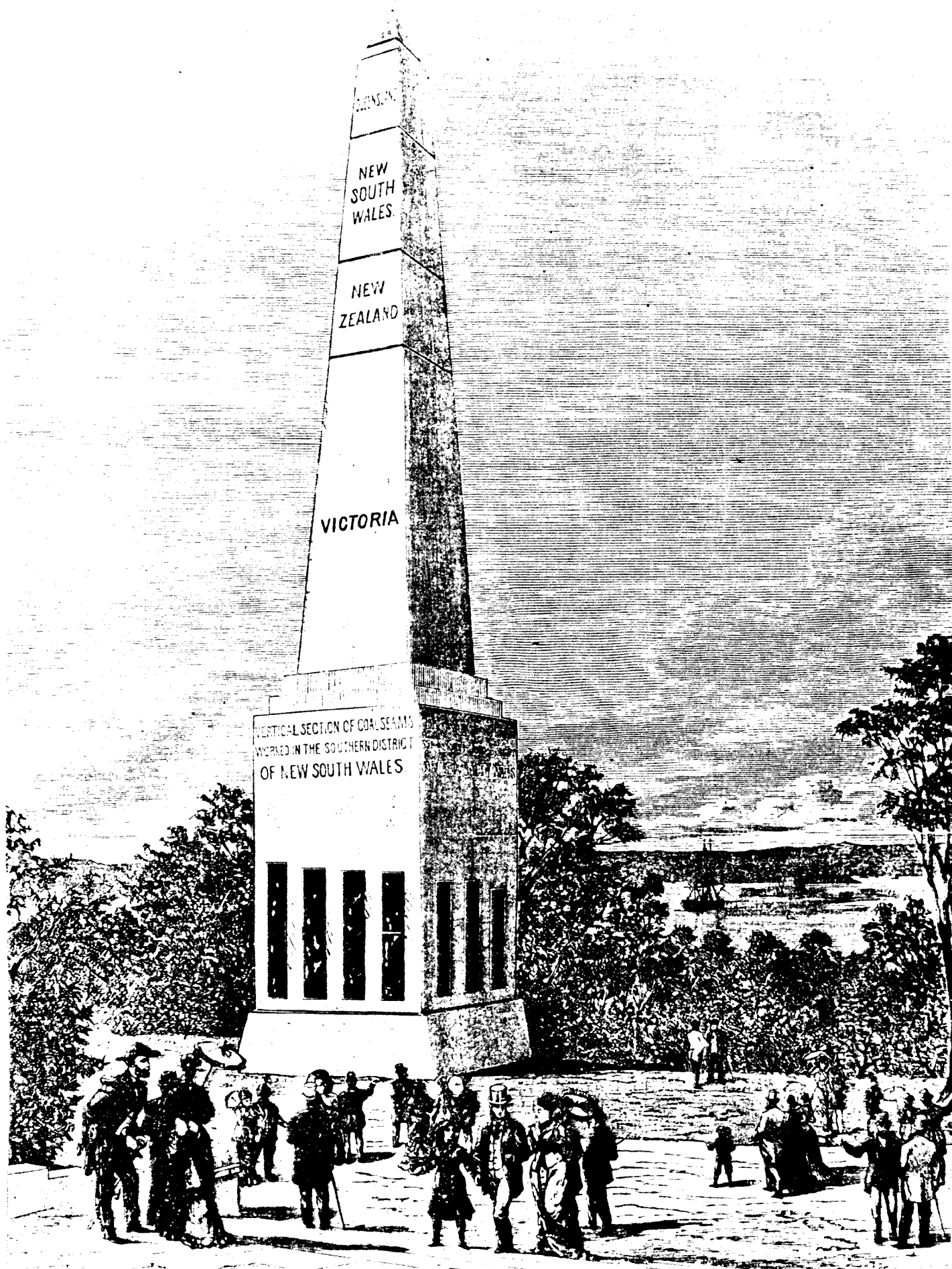
SYDNEYEN FÊTE.

The Garden Palace grounds were gay. The Figtree Avenue, which led from the Eastern Tower towards the Harbour, was lined with booths and pavilions selling refreshments, Bibles and nick-nacks. Schweppes sold mineral waters; the "Australian Dairy" sold fresh, cold milk; the Temperance Society sold gingerbeer and lemonade; and they all competed with the Austro-Hungarian Wine and Beer Tasting Hall. Cafes sold sandwiches and ices; Sydney's finest cost a shilling a dozen at Emerson's Oyster Saloon; or a hot dinner could be had for half a crown at the two large and elegant restaurants south and east of the Garden Palace. Many visitors preferred to bring their own provisions, noted by the Herald with distaste as "greasy sandwiches"; this fastidious reporter feared for the safety of the hems of ladies' gowns, lest "they should be destroyed by contact with the fragments of bacon, butter, cheese, sardines, orange peel etc. left from the banquets of the frugal-minded."³⁵

Novelties abounded. More like a gingerbread house than a rugged construction was Lascelles Patent Concrete Cottage, a demountable kit house of concrete tiles.³⁶ A number of American windmills whirred purposefully above the crowds; they would soon be commonplace throughout Australia. In front of the Garden Palace a

³⁵SMH, 30.9.1879, p.6.

³⁶"Requires no brickwork, wood floors, excavations, window or door frames, tiling, lathing or plastering; they are waterproof, fireproof, verminproof and indestructible; cheaper than a brick house and one fourth its weight. Comes in all sizes, 1 to 6 rooms, 1 and 2 stories. The price is such as to admit of their being brought within the means of all." AT&CJ, 28.2.1880, p.405. Not a single one is known to remain.



multi-purpose obelisk represented the gold and coal production of the colonies. It was undeniably imposing but gave the scene, suggested the Herald, "somewhat of a necropolitan aspect."³⁷ Close to the main gates was the glasshouse gallery-cum-studio of Roberts, Richards & Co., Official Photographers to the Exhibition Commission. Here the visitor could purchase views of the Exhibition or have his own photograph taken against a backdrop of sweeping garden views leading up to a distant Garden Palace.³⁸

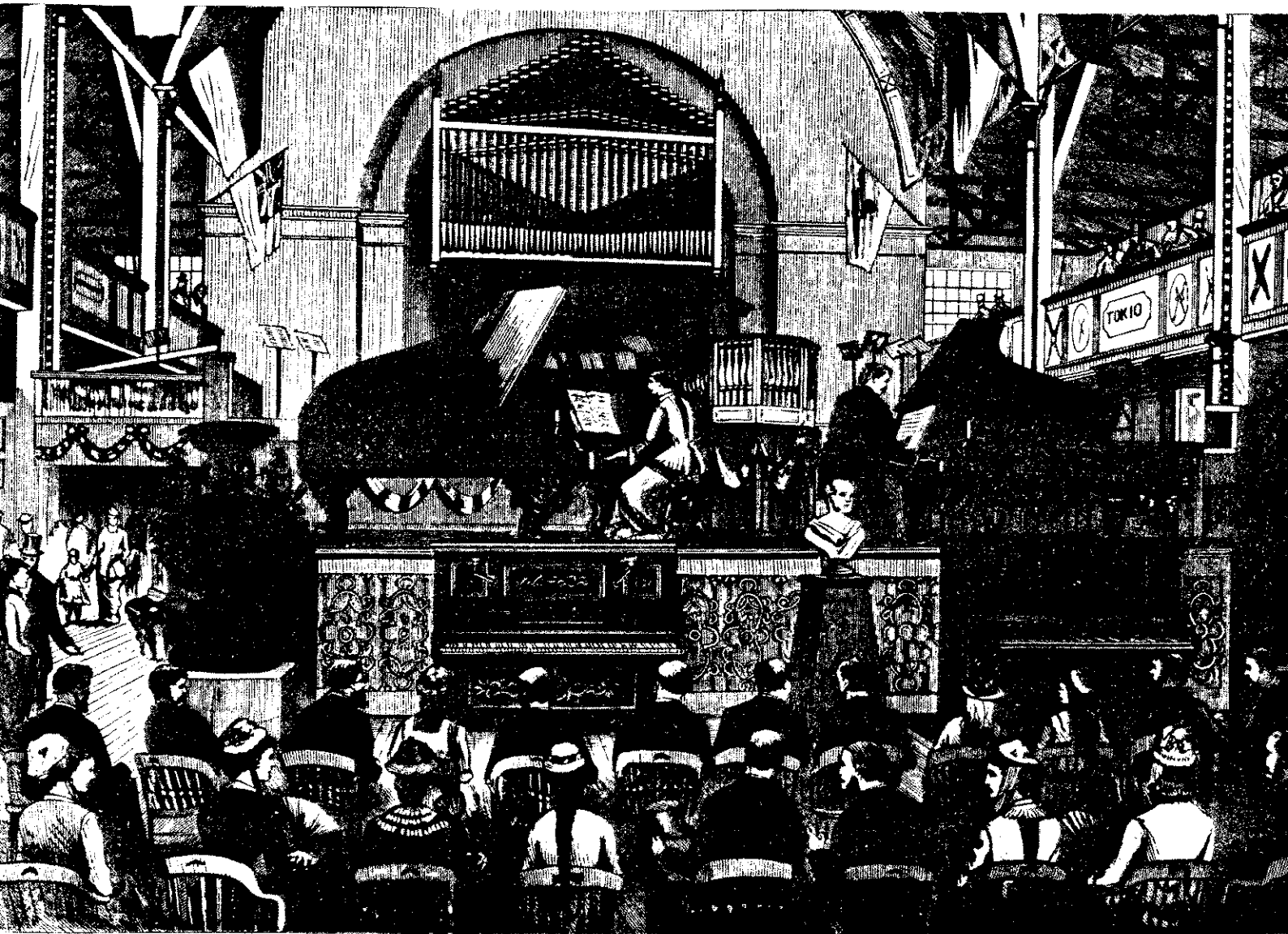
Two companies held concessions to strike souvenir medals on the premises - Stokes & Martin of Melbourne and Evan Jones of Sydney. They produced a range of designs, sizes and prices, but they couldn't always spell: one observer noted, to his chagrin, that he had acquired a "comemoration" medal.³⁹ Another popular souvenir was a scarf or handkerchief printed with views of the Garden Palace; such were to be had in silk or cotton, monochrome or brightly coloured.⁴⁰

³⁷SMH, 1.10.1879, p.3.

³⁸These turn up from time to time in antique and print shops. Thomas E. Richards and (probably, according to Alan Davies, Macleay Museum) William F. Roberts seem to have gone into partnership expressly for the Exhibition; their association ceased soon after. This is interesting but enigmatic: both Roberts and Richards were very new in Sydney, having perhaps come from Melbourne about 1877-8. No tenders were called for the Official Photographership; they were simply appointed. The official caterers, who were likewise appointed, were the top, the most respectable caterers in Sydney. It is peculiar that Bayliss or Boake, the top photographers of the day, did not take on what must have been a prestigious goldmine of a job. Were Roberts and Richards brothers-in-law or some such family connection to one or another of the Commissioners?

³⁹Letter to the Editor of SMH from "Native", 8.10.1879, p.3.

⁴⁰See the Catalogue of Relics for a number of these.



There was something in the Exhibition to satisfy the visitor's every sense. Early in the planning a musical director, Paolo Giorza had been appointed; he composed the Exhibition Cantata for the opening ceremony and thereafter produced regular musical offerings. He gave daily performances on the Exhibition organ and presented grand monthly oratorios with the Sacred Choral Association - Haydn's "Creation", Handel's "Israel in Egypt" and "Messiah" and Mendelssohn's "Elijah". Brass bands gave picnic concerts in the grounds. Indoors, the exhibitors of pianos engaged, and even imported, artistes to demonstrate their wares. These recitals tended to the popular taste e.g., "Home, Sweet Home", the "Blue Danube Waltz" and extracts from Chopin, and were consequently immensely enjoyed. Such was the number of pianos on show that there was music to be heard in the Garden Palace at nearly every hour of the day. Indeed, until the Commissioners established a timetable for recitals there were some unmusical clashes between piano exhibitors and some awkward crowding of audiences in the aisles of the Garden Palace. At least one commentator found it all much too entertaining: "...the Commissioners have permitted the Exhibition building to be used as a concert-hall - thus distracting visitors."⁴¹

Saturday was always the most popular of the six days of the week on which the Exhibition was open. There was some agitation to open it also on Sunday afternoons, as were the Museum and the Public Library, but the Commissioners concluded that since "the

⁴¹Letter to the Editor, SMH, from "F.C.B.", 18.12.1879, p.6.

5.23 "'Arry's dream"; engraving by W. Warton; The Australian, Nov. 1879



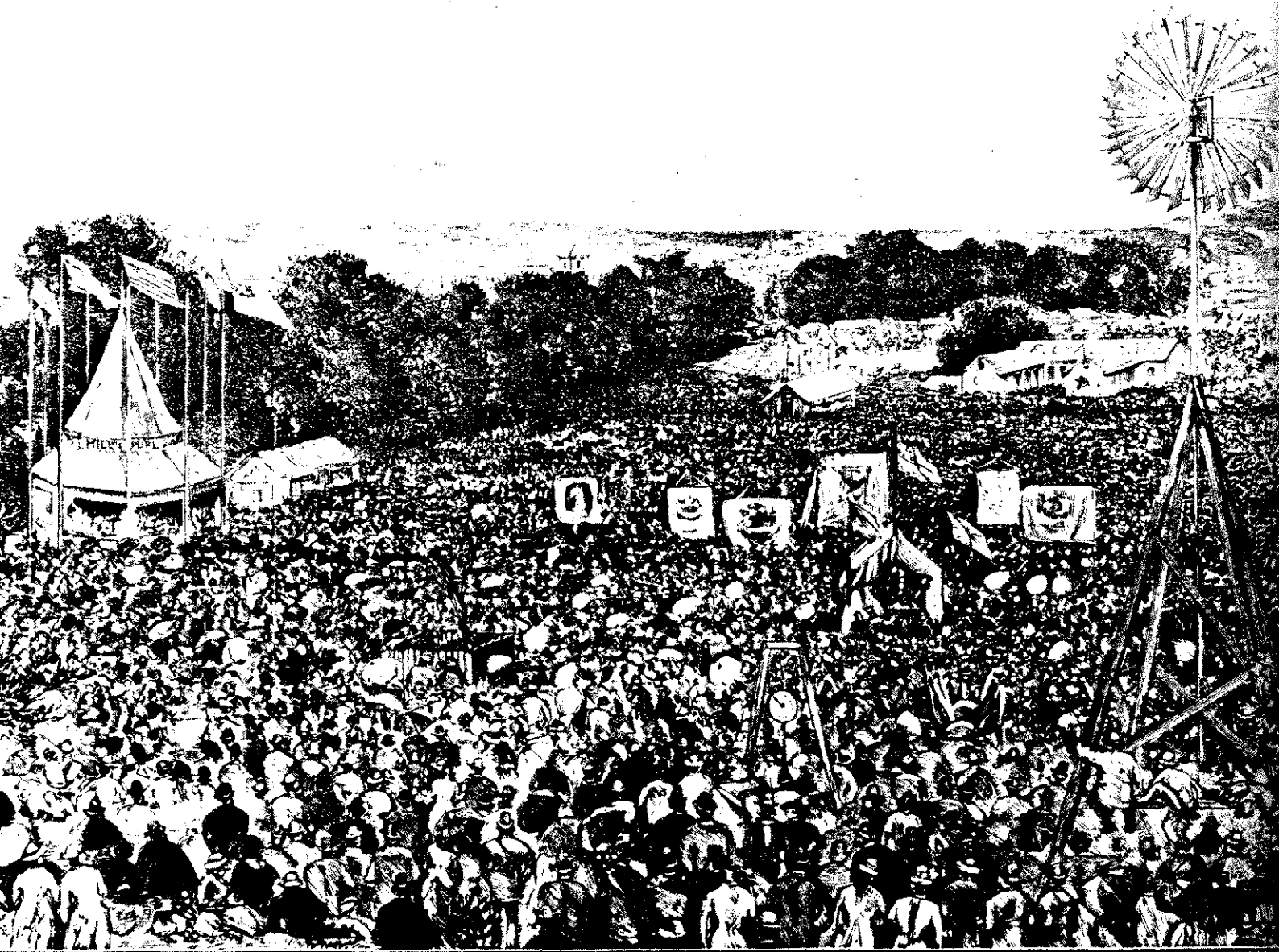
eight-hour system of labour prevailed, and Saturday was observed as a half-holiday in nearly every trade and profession, it would be possible for all classes to have the opportunity of paying the Exhibition several visits."⁴²

And visit it they did, especially on public holidays, "when the native Australians may be seen marching up Hunter Street toward the Palace, as proud as when they assembled to witness the triumph of the Demon Bowler."⁴³ 26,500 came on the Prince of Wales' birthday to witness the opening of the Art Gallery and a loyal demonstration by members of trade and friendly societies. They marched from Prince Alfred Park - the Odd Fellows, the Rechabites, the Knights of Sheba, the Sons of Temperance and Burton's Circus bringing up the rear - in their colourful regalia, with banners flying and bands playing, accompanied by horse-drawn fire engines. At the Garden Palace they presented a testimonial to the Governor; gave hearty cheers for the Queen, the Governor's lady, the Executive Commissioner and the Exhibition itself; and at length dispersed to enjoy its pleasures. Exhibition authorities were never quite at ease when the masses came to the show; every wary of King Mob, the reports are filled with a faint relief - "unvarying good conduct...", "cheerful and obliging demeanour...", "the behaviour of all present was admirable..."

By Christmas more than half a million visitors had been to the

⁴²Record, pxcvi.

⁴³The Australian, vol. III, October 1879, p.209. The Demon Bowler was Fred Spofforth, the Dennis Lillee of his day.



Exhibition. On Boxing Day another 24,000 crowded in to picnic in the glorious summer weather. The biggest day's attendance came on Foundation Day, 26 January 1880, when 27,500 visitors celebrated the birth of the colony with a Temperance Holiday at the Exhibition. A choir of a thousand children clad in white sang temperance and patriotic songs, and had to encore "Rule, Britannia" and "Advance Australia Fair". The ring events of the horse show then in progress culminated in a grand parade and everyone had a wonderful time:

The sense of enjoyment is so apparent, and the appreciation of holiday-making and fun is so keen, that a sympathetic feeling of joyousness pervaded the social atmosphere, and calls forth the most pleasurable emotions.⁴⁴

Spleen and resentment emerged, however, when the serious business of judging began early in the new year. Two hundred and fifty-four unpaid judges were appointed; their brief was to reward such of the 14,000 exhibits as showed "originality, invention, discovery, utility, quality, skill, workmanship, fitness for the purpose intended, adaption to public wants, economy and cost."⁴⁵ It was a small number of experts to examine a vast range of products and judges were almost instantly damned as incompetent in one area or another. Disgruntled exhibitors wrote to the papers nearly every day with variations on the theme: "I can assure you that an exhibit of mine has been judged by gentlemen who did not know one end of it from the other."⁴⁶

⁴⁴Record, pxcvi.

⁴⁵SMH, 21.4.1880, p.9.

⁴⁶Letter to the Editor, SMH, from "An Exhibitor", 11.3.1880, p.5.

5.25 Mr Punch observes winners and losers; Sydney Punch, 31.1.1880,
p.36



In spite of their questionable expertise the judges recommended that 7554 prizes should be distributed among the exhibits. It was a protracted business - some categories taking months to judge - but the awards were confirmed at last in the Closing ceremony and rancour was displaced by the flush of successful achievement.

The Exhibition had been scheduled to remain open for six months, but March drew near and the judging was still not finished. It was therefore informally and then formally proposed to the Commission that the Exhibition should remain open an extra month. In late March it was announced that the closing date would be set back to 20 April 1880.

This was not an entirely successful move, for many exhibitors had either committed their goods for sale or further exhibition or felt that they had already had sufficient exposure. By early April the Herald could report: "Evidences of disintegration are making themselves conspicuous in many quarters..."⁴⁷

The last great public attraction was a performance on Saturday, 10 April of the oratorio "St Peter" by Sir Julius Benedict.⁴⁸ It was sung by three hundred members of the Sacred Choral Association, accompanied by an orchestra assembled for the occasion (apparently the worse for want of an authoritative leader) and conducted by Montague Younger; Paolo Giorza played the organ. "The applause on Saturday was frequent," noted the Herald, "and at the close prolonged".⁴⁹

⁴⁷SMH, 14.4.1880, p.7.

⁴⁸Composed in 1870; this was its first performance in Australia.

⁴⁹SMH, 12.4.1880, p.3.

In the last two weeks school groups were admitted free and even the number of paying visitors picked up. The day after the Closing it was assessed as "remarkable that the enthusiasm of the public was as great on the last day as on the first...(it) therefore has not died of inanition."⁵⁰ It was also remarked that although the number of admissions exceeded expectations, the income received from the door was below the estimates.

The weather for Closing Day, like Opening Day, did not at first promise well. However, the early morning rain cleared by eleven o'clock when Lord Loftus and Sir Henry Parkes arrived at the Garden Palace. The northern half of the building was roped off for invited guests - commissioners, visiting commissioners, judges, politicians, civil servants, diplomats, gentlemen and their ladies. Sydneysiders crowded into the southern nave, too distant to see the ceremony on the dais, but able to console themselves (as the Herald suggested) "by a parting glance at the many interesting and beautiful exhibits in many parts of the building."⁵¹

Mr Patrick Jennings, the Executive Commissioner, gave the first speech, describing the progress of the Exhibition and offering graceful thanks to all concerned. He concluded with an inspiring challenge to the colony to make good the promise of the Exhibition:

It remains for us to prove by our energy and patriotism that we shall prove worthy of the exalted destiny which lies before us, and that foremost in the van of great colonies planted by the Anglo-Saxon race all over the habitable globe will be found our colony of New South Wales.⁵²

⁵⁰SMH, 21.4.1880, p.10.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.

Next Lord Loftus rose to declare the Exhibition closed. He praised and thanked the Commissioners, reminded all of the Queen's and God's benevolent interest in the enterprise and recommended means of extracting maximum benefits from the show:

Let not this gathering disperse without carrying into every home in the land some of its lessons. Let those who are engaged in husbandry and in the mechanical arts observe and, as the occasion offers, adapt to their pursuits the improved appliances given to us by the discoveries of science. Let the laws of proportion and design be cultivated in our finer manufactures. Let the young aspirant in the higher walks of art cherish in his inmost soul the bright lessons of form and colour on which his eyes have feasted. By these means of assiduous attention and inspired effort a rich fruitage will be garnered from the seed which has been so abundantly sown.⁵³

Loud applause accompanied the presentation of the 250 judges to the Governor, who then proceeded to declare and distribute the awards to each of the national or colonial commissioners. The official proceedings concluded with "God Save the Queen" and a Vice-regal luncheon. Many proud colonists paid farewell visits to the Exhibition that afternoon until the gates were shut for the last time at the usual closing hour, five o'clock.

That graceful hall, where all was brilliant life,
Must now be left to trade's dull plodding crew;
'Tis melody dispelled by labor's strife,
Whilst lingering beauty still enchants thy view.
'Tis sad to see dismantled space
That yesterday was gay -
To range bright galleries of grace,
Whilst charm doth fade away.

Thoughts on the Closing of the First Australian
International Exhibition, by an Old Colonist⁵⁴

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴"An Old Colonist" (initials G.K.M.), Sydney 1880, in ML pamphlet file.

CHAPTER SIX

The world has seen us at home:

Consequences of the Sydney International
Exhibition

The closing of the Exhibition sent the pundits' pens to their ink-wells to assess the consequences. In general, the contemporary responses can be reduced to two strands: the Exhibition as a means of increasing international awareness of New South Wales and the Exhibition as a means of increasing New South Wales' awareness of the world. Most of these arguments had already been put as propositions in support of the Exhibition during the long period of its gestation and again at the time of the Opening. Indeed, but for continuing complaints about the cost, it is difficult to find a sustained critical response to the Exhibition.

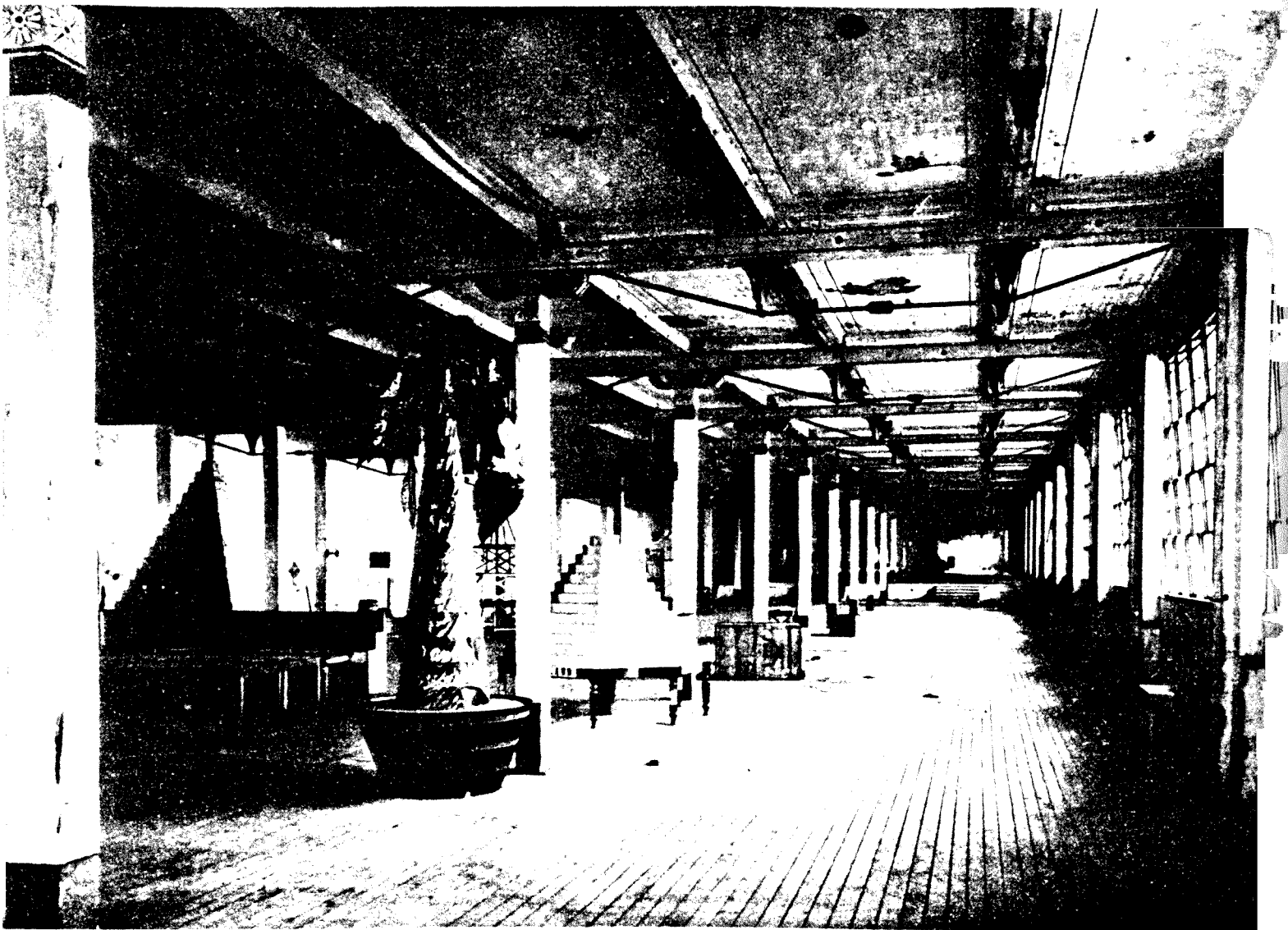
The most widespread assessment of the useful consequences of the Exhibition put it that the worldwide publicity arising from the show would improve international knowledge of New South Wales' natural resources and manufactured products, leading to increased trade. An editorial in the Sydney Mail forecast optimistically that:

We must expect that more attention will be given to the colony abroad, now that special means have been employed to disseminate a knowledge of its conditions and resources. We must suppose that the colony will be better known as a field for enterprise, a place for the investment of capital, and a seat of profitable trade...¹

This expectation appears to have been fulfilled - though in one direction only. The trading figures in the annual Statistical Registers of NSW show significant developments between 1879 and 1885 in the value of imports to the colony from nearly all the nations and colonies that participated in the Exhibition.

¹Sydney Mail, 24.4.1880, p.801.

6.1 After the Exhibition; photo by Charles Bayliss; ML



Imports from Britain shot up, doubling by 1883. By 1885, goods from the USA, New Zealand and Tasmania had also doubled their 1879 levels. Imports from the other Australian colonies grew slowly but surely. New economic contacts with Europe developed from 1879 onwards: French and German imports nearly doubled every year up to 1885 and Belgium began from zero in 1880 to rise to nearly 200,000 pounds five years later.

Exports of New South Wales produce and manufactures, on the other hand, made little, slow or even no progress at all in the world economy, with the exception of the entirely new markets of France, Germany and Belgium. Only the trade with the United States showed any substantial growth up to 1885.

Conventional modern economic histories of Australia place the period of the Exhibition at a turning point in "the long boom" of the 1860s to the 1890s.² The New South Wales economy had been expanding mightily: wool continued to boom; new mineral industries - tin, shale, silver-lead - were developing at a fast pace; and urban manufacturing and construction had begun to grow similarly in response to active local demand. To overseas, particularly British, capitalists the Australian colonies looked fertile grounds for investment and in the decade of the 1880s foreign capital poured in.

But there can be no causal relation posited between this flood of capital and the Sydney International Exhibition (or the next year's Melbourne International Exhibition).

²eg, N.G. Butlin, Investment in Australian Economic Development, Canberra 1977, ch.2. The Exhibition doesn't rate a single mention in modern economic histories - sic transit...

Even the entrepreneurs and ideologues of the two exhibitions acknowledged that the structural conditions of the local commercial scene were at least partly responsible for the gratifyingly profitable ten years of money-making that followed. Yet the beginnings of that investment boom coincided so conveniently with the need to justify the costs - which many had called extravagances - of the Exhibition that they were eagerly incorporated into the canon of acclaimed consequences.

In this vein, Executive Commissioner Jennings confidently wrote in his Report in 1881 that "a tangible measure of benefit has already accrued to the trade and consequent prosperity of this country."³ It developed into an article of faith in colonial free trade capitalism, surviving even twenty years when Coghlan and Ewing wrote of the Exhibition in 1902:

The resources of New South Wales were displayed to advantage and became widely known, with the result that there was almost immediately a great quickening of trade and many people who came merely as sightseers remained in Sydney to prosecute the lucrative business which they found awaiting them.⁴

Coghlan and Ewing introduce another popular contemporary conclusion: the international advertising of the colony via the Exhibition could be expected to stimulate emigration. New South Wales (like all the other Australian colonies) had emigration agents in both the United Kingdom and the United States, but the

³Record, pcviii.

⁴T.A. Coghlan and T.T. Ewing, The Progress of Australasia in the nineteenth century, London 1902, p.382.



boost provided by the Exhibition was hoped to tip the balance for many potential emigrants. Sir Daniel Cooper (a former NSW Agent General in London) had written confidently in 1878 to Sir Henry Parkes, "They only need an excuse to come and the Exhibition will be that excuse. You indirectly subsidize the steam lines but you will gain in population and serve in getting the best class of emigrants without directly paying for them."⁵

In the wake of the Exhibition Jennings reported:

...the knowledge disseminated throughout Europe and America of the wealth of the resources, products, and the extent of the Australasian colonies must produce a profound effect on the minds of those to whom Australasia has been heretofore a sealed book, and will undoubtedly eventually cause a continuous flow of population of a desirable class to our shores.⁶

In reality these seem to have been over-optimistic expectations. The immigration figures of the next five and ten years increased and continued to increase, but no notable jump is perceptible in 1881 or 82, the years that might be expected to see the arrival of emigrants stimulated by reports or experiences of the Sydney International Exhibition. We must presume that the general attractions of Australia, or the exigencies of the old country, remained the chief reasons for emigration.

Meanwhile, on the home front, colonists hoped to derive benefit from being exposed to the Exhibition in the form of a supposed improvement in taste, understanding and skill acquired through exa-

⁵Parkes Correspondence in ML, vol.50, p.16-17.

⁶Record, pcviii.

mining the range of exhibits. This echoes one of Prince Albert's original arguments in favour of the Great Exhibition of 1851 - that English products would be improved by English workmen having the opportunity to study the best examples of their foreign competitors' work. In the Australian context of 1879 this process of comparative study had even wider implications in that industries were capable not only of being refined but of being established, given sufficiently inspiring examples and adequate investment capital.

To thousands of colonial artisans, the Sydney Exhibition furnishes for the first time a means of comparison between their industrial skills and those of workers in the old world. There is scarcely a native industry which may not be benefitted more or less by a careful study of corresponding industries of other countries. Prohibitive tariffs may appear to many the best mode of protecting the infant manufactures of a young colony; but the best and most effectual protection is to be found in that ceaseless striving after excellence which forms the real basis of all industrial improvement and prosperity.⁷

A similar argument was applied to the principle of public education - that the chance to see, compare and cost a far wider range of products than had ever before been available in New South Wales would extend the minds and develop the tastes of all Australians. As the Executive Commissioner noted, "This effect, though perhaps less tangible and not indeed to be measured by any money value at all, ought still to find a due place in estimating the beneficial consequences flowing from the International Exhibition."⁸

⁷John Plummer, "Some lessons from the Garden Palace", SM, 6.12.1879, p.979. Plummer came to Sydney as Exhibition agent for the London Graphic and subsequently settled here; he became a pundit of cricket and culture of some influence.

⁸Record, pcix.

Proposals to make this effect not only tangible but enduring had come forward even before the Exhibition closed. Mr John Plummer proposed a school of industrial art on the model of that established at South Kensington after the Great Exhibition.

...perhaps the Garden Palace, which has already proved instrumental in arousing the more intelligent and thoughtful of our colonial artisans to a sense of their educational deficiencies, may ultimately fulfil its mission by leading to the establishment of an institution...⁹

Other people too had been thinking about such institutions. In January 1880 the Trustees of the Australian Museum (most of whom were active as judges and commissioners for the Exhibition) established a Committee of Management to develop a Technological, Industrial and Sanitary Museum, "in the hope that a collection might thus be formed which would be a means of imparting practical information to the industrial classes upon technical and industrial matters."¹⁰

They immediately resolved to apply to the government for part of the Garden Palace to house the new Museum and at the same time requested 1,000 pounds with which to purchase a selection of exhibits from the show. Treasury was predictably slow to approve the grant for purchases and it was not until May 1880 that some exhibitors were paid for goods sold to the new Museum. Its first

⁹John Plummer, "Some lessons from the Garden Palace: Part III", SM, 20.12.1879, p.1085.

¹⁰J.H. Maiden, Australian Museum Annual Report 1889, p34; see also J. Willis, History of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, (MS, to be published 1984).

6.3 Exhibition Building, Melbourne International Exhibition, 1880;
Australasian Sketcher, supplement, 25.9.1880



Curator, young English botanist Joseph Maiden, was appointed in October 1881. He began immediately to catalogue and label the growing collection for arrangement in its quarters on the ground floor of the Garden Palace. Many exhibitors were keen to assist and sold or presented their displays to the new Museum. Other displays, however, were bespoke, for they were moving on to the Melbourne International Exhibition, due to open in October 1880.

The Melbourne International Exhibition had been planned simultaneously with Sydney's, though with a conspicuous absence of cooperation. It was largely chance and bad luck that put Melbourne second on Australia's exhibition calendar. Intercolonial rivalry aside, it was anticipated that the series of the two exhibitions would reinforce each other by encouraging foreign exhibitors to participate with the lure of two for the price of one passage. Still, the Victorian authorities tried very hard to obtain more, newer and larger exhibits than had been shown at Sydney, and they succeeded.

Three new exhibitors were officially represented - Italy, India and Western Australia - and eleven further nations and colonies exhibited for the first time in Australia - China, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Portugal,¹¹ Spain, the Philippines, Russia, the South Sea Islands, the South African Settlements and Turkey. (This list

¹¹A prospectus describing NSW and the Sydney International Exhibition, Estudas Colonias: Nova Galles do Sul, Lisboa 1879, had been circulated in Portugal, but no Portuguese exhibitor took it up. It is possible, of course, that it stimulated the response to the Melbourne Exhibition. The pamphlet is in LaTrobe Library, *LtP/919.44/BlN.

sounds rather grander than was the reality; most countries were represented by two or three uncoordinated exhibitors.) The majority of the participants in the Sydney Exhibition sent considerably augmented displays to Melbourne; only Austria, Belgium and Switzerland seem to have been substantially the same.¹²

New South Wales' display was stylish but neither large nor very representative. Executive Commissioner Dr Arthur Renwick reported great difficulty in collecting for the Melbourne Exhibition. He ascribed the problem first, to the "lethargy" of New South Wales after the efforts of the Sydney Exhibition; and second, to Victoria's well-known and intransigent protectionism, "precluding as it did all possibility of any interchange of goods or the establishment of other commercial relations."¹³

The display was significantly non-metropolitan; Sydney's industries were thinly and sporadically represented. The goods were arranged in three major courts spread throughout the Exhibition site, a matter of some irate concern to the Executive Commissioner, who had spent much fruitless time and effort in an attempt to obtain one larger, more central court.

Making the best of the allocation, a smallish court in the principal Exhibition Building was handsomely fitted out as the "Fine Art Court". A portico of gilded, mirrored glass piers marked

¹²cf the various national Catalogues of the two Exhibitions.

¹³Report of the Executive Commissioner to the Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-81, Sydney 1881, p.8.

6.4 NSW court, Melbourne International Exhibition, 1880; Report ...
p.16



the entrance, which was flanked by badges and the specially composed motto, "Soror hospita gratia sorori".¹⁴ Inside were fine and decorative art works: paintings (most notably by Piquenit, the Collingridges and Macleod); photographic panoramas of Sydney, including a large collection of views from the Government Printer; a case of presentation plate by Evan Jones, a drawing room suite in fifteenth century French style by James Lawson, arranged en tableau; at the back of the court were windows set with stained glass panels by Lyon, Cottier & Co. and Ashwin & Falconer. "Nearly all the exhibits here displayed received the highest awards, (and) the general impression which they produced upon visitors was pleasing and satisfactory."¹⁵

The largest New South Wales display was in the vast Annexe. Fronting the central Grand Avenue marched a series of large mineral trophies interspersed with statues - three of Simonetti's commissions for the Colonial Secretary's Office, "Justice", "Mercy" and "Minerva",¹⁶ plus his "Venus of the South". Tubbed orange trees and tree ferns were dotted about among the cases of minerals, wool, timbers and stuffed animals. The central display was an "arbour" of New South Wales wines, many of which were available for tasting at the Exhibition Wine Bar.

¹⁴Another production by Dr Badham. "Sister to sister, with the thanks of a grateful guest" translates the spirit of the motto, if we accept R.I. Jack's emendation and delete the comma.

¹⁵Report..., p.14.

¹⁶These are still in situ on the n.e. corner; "Minerva" is labelled "Wisdom".

The third New South Wales site was its Machinery Court, "although not large, yet valuable and interesting."¹⁷ It was dominated by a sleeping car made for the Government Railways by Hudson Bros.

The New South Wales exhibits were awarded 86 first prizes, 78 seconds, 92 thirds, 35 fourths, 76 fifths and 12 honourable mentions, totalling slightly more than one prize per exhibitor.

On his return to Sydney, Commissioner Renwick prepared a report on the Exhibition.¹⁸ He concluded with a reflection on the benefits of the two Australian Exhibitions, in which he defended the expense even though predicting that tangible results would be some time away.

...this is a matter which cannot be reckoned up within a few weeks in pounds, shillings and pence...Visitors from other lands have gained an insight...which will have its effect in increased commercial dealings. But such influences must take some time to work out their full results. The seed is sown by

¹⁷Report..., p.15.

¹⁸This Report is the most thoughtful and coherent document in all the Australian exhibition literature; Renwick's apologia for exhibitions in the antipodes is still a valuable statement:

In a country which is far separated from the great centres of civilization there must always exist the danger that the inhabitants will become too much absorbed in their own immediate surroundings to pay sufficient attention to the doings of mankind at large, and that they will thus fall out of sympathy with the great movements which are passing over civilized mankind, lose the benefits of great experiments elsewhere as regards the problems of life, and drop behind the progress of the human mind... From such exclusiveness all sense of proportion and of the relative importance of affairs is lost, and a narrow and parochial spirit, a feeling of satisfaction with ourselves, and contempt for the rest of the world, is imported into affairs, social and political, which must always be inimical to the well-being of any community. Anything which, by bringing men into direct connection with the world at large, goes to counteract such tendencies, must be highly beneficial. Renwick, Report..., p.58.

the Exhibition, and the harvest will come in due time.¹⁹

He recommended new trading connections, prompted by meetings with the Japanese and Indian Commissioners, and concluded optimistically:

The world has during the last two years seen us at home, and thus studied far more effectively the conditions which make us what we are, and which hold out to us the prospect of playing a great part in the future history of mankind.²⁰

Meanwhile, in Sydney, the Garden Palace lived on. Though intended as a temporary structure and built accordingly to short term specifications, the Palace had been written into the Executive Commissioner's Report as an asset worth 160,629 pounds 13/8d. It was structurally sound, popular with the citizenry and a prestigious symbol of New South Welsh enterprise. It was so clear that it would not be dismantled that its future was not much discussed until Sir Henry Parkes answered a question on the matter in the Legislative Assembly on 19 October 1881.²¹ By then the Census had already moved into offices on the ground floor, accompanied by branches of the Railways and Public Instruction Departments. Parkes announced that portions of the building would be assigned to the new Technological Museum, the Mining Museum,²² the Art Society of New South Wales and the Linnaean Society and that the large

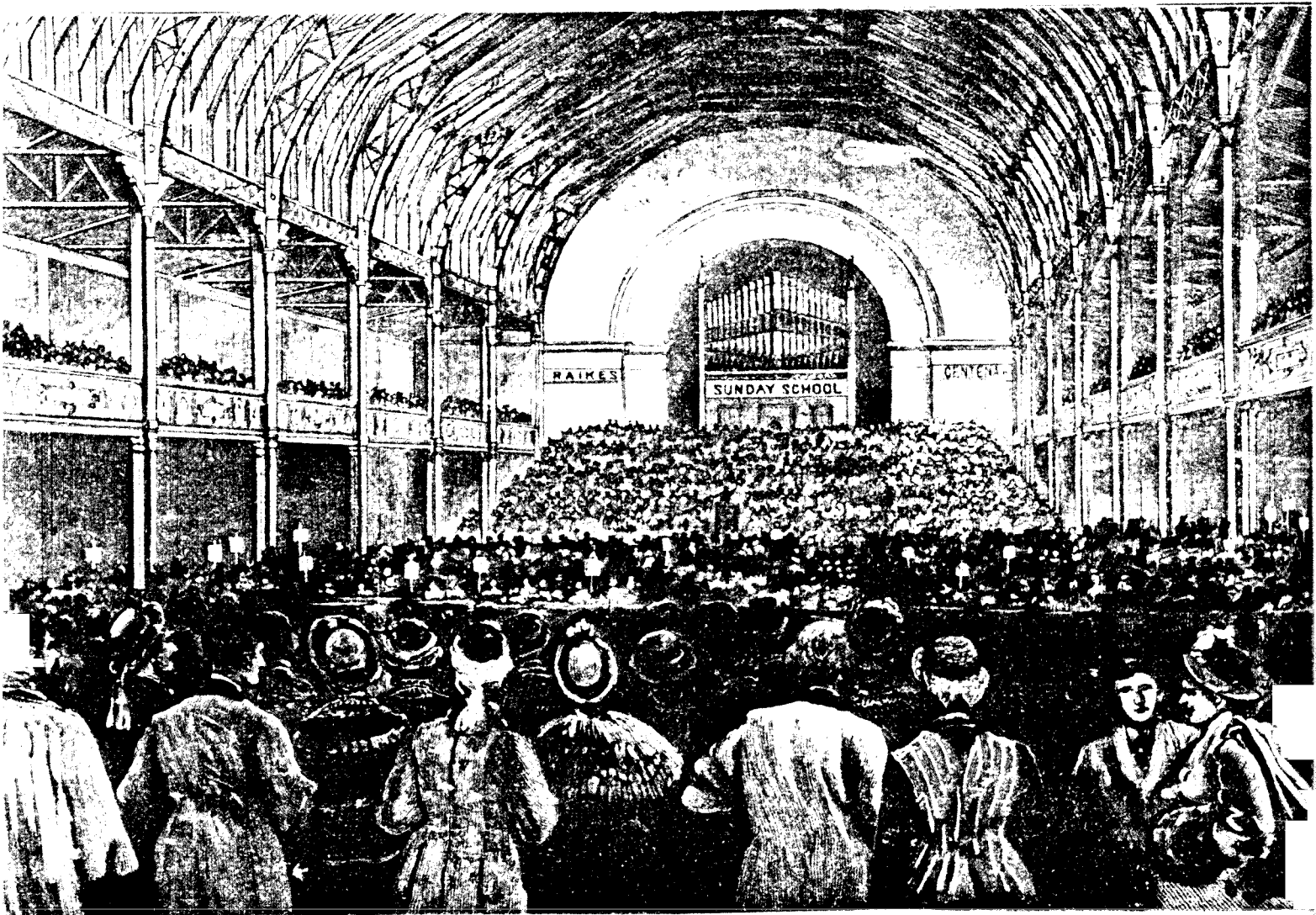
¹⁹Ibid., p.57-8.

²⁰Ibid., p.63.

²¹V&P, 1881, vol. 1, p.241.

²²The Mining Museum had already been established in quarters in Hunter Street.

6.5 The Garden Palace lives on: Sunday school celebration;
Australasian Sketcher, 17.7.1880, p.169



halls of the nave transept would be kept as "places of public resort" for concerts, flower shows and the like.

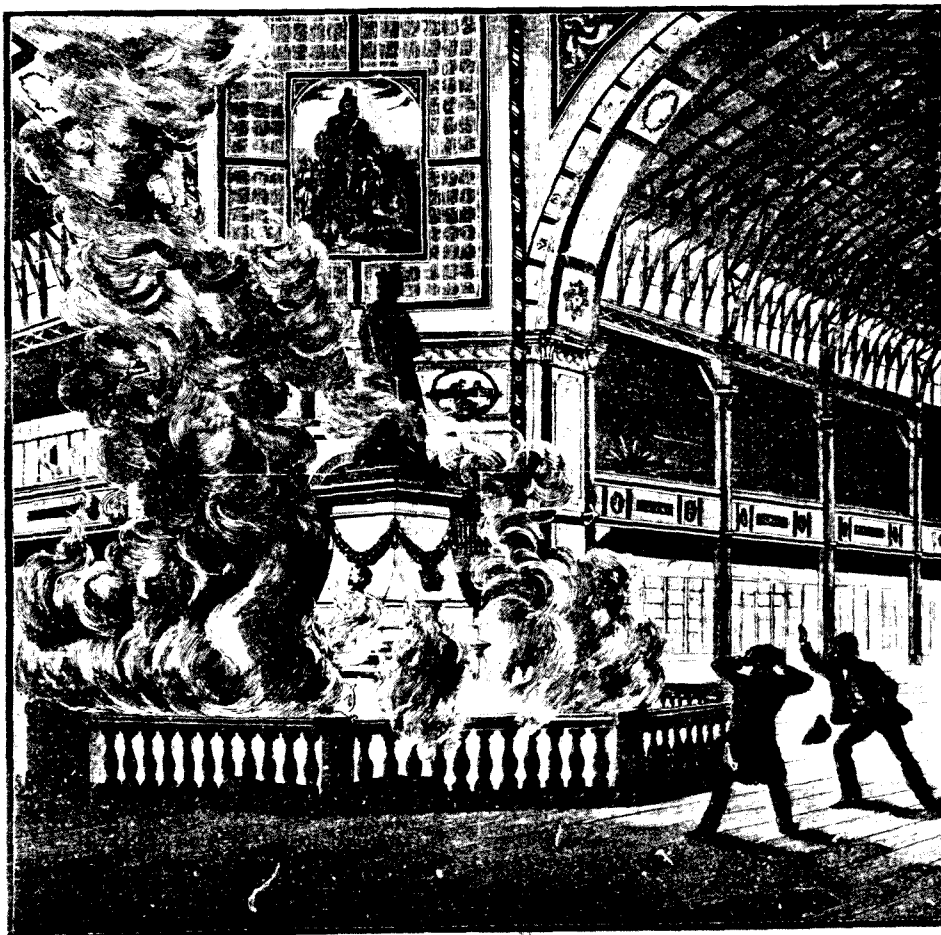
And so it was. The Garden Palace saw temperance rallies, learned lectures, art shows, charity balls and organ recitals. The museums arranged their specimens, though only the Mining Museum actually opened. More government departments moved into the basement, among them the Lands Records Office. Preserving a link with the Palace's original function, the Commission for the Amsterdam International Exhibition to be held in 1883 set up office in the gallery.

The Garden Palace became the new focus of Sydney. Souvenir views of the city, which from the earliest days had been taken looking east over the Harbour towards the Heads, now turned around to gaze from Bradley's Head and Mrs Macquarie's Chair to the urban centre, with the Palace in prominent sight.²³ The Illustrated Sydney News launched a new masthead showing the Palace at the crest of Sydney's ridges and many local businesses incorporated the image or name of the Exhibition building into their advertising.

The Palace had become a monument, proud evidence of colonial ambition and achievement. But it survived just 28 months after the Exhibition closed. On Friday morning, 22 September 1882, it burned to the ground.

²³eg, Andrew Garran, Picturesque Atlas of New South Wales, Sydney 1888: published, of course, after the fire, yet still recalled as an ideal view of Sydney.

6.6 Discovery of the fire; ISN, 25.10.1882, p.1



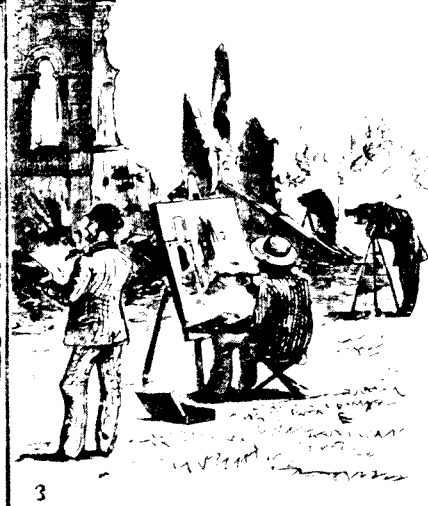
In less than an hour yesterday morning the whole edifice with its contents was totally destroyed, leaving only a few crumbling brick piers and heaps of black and smouldering cinders to mark the spot where there stood the day before one of the finest and most graceful structures on the southern side of the Equator.²⁴

The fire began about 5.40 a.m., just as the night watchman had stepped out to Macquarie Street to greet the incoming day watchman. The sun had not risen but the sky was light when the two men turned back to the Garden Palace; they were horrified to see smoke escaping from the roof. As they raced towards the building, night watchman Frederick Kirchen fumbled for his keys to unlock the Macquarie Street door: "I cannot describe it," he said later; "there was a great cloud of smoke and then an immense burst of fire."

Flames were already roaring from the basement through the well around the statue as the two men struggled to connect a fire hose to the nearest hydrant. The attempt was hopeless - smoke choked them and their hands blistered on the hydrant fittings. One man now raced to the telephone that connected the Garden Palace with Number 2 Sydney Volunteer Fire Company at the corner of Phillip and Bridge Streets; the other frantically tolled the alarm bell. At last, as flames reached the wooden purlins of the dome, they fled.

Outside in Macquarie Street they met the Volunteer Firemen galloping their three steam fire engines and four manual engines to the scene. Even as they arrived the firemen saw flames burst

²⁴SMH, 23.9.1882, p.7; all the following quotes are from the same report.



through the dome "like a gigantic firework." They turned their hoses onto the nearby Government House Stables as grooms led out the terrified horses, for it was clear that nothing could save the Garden Palace.

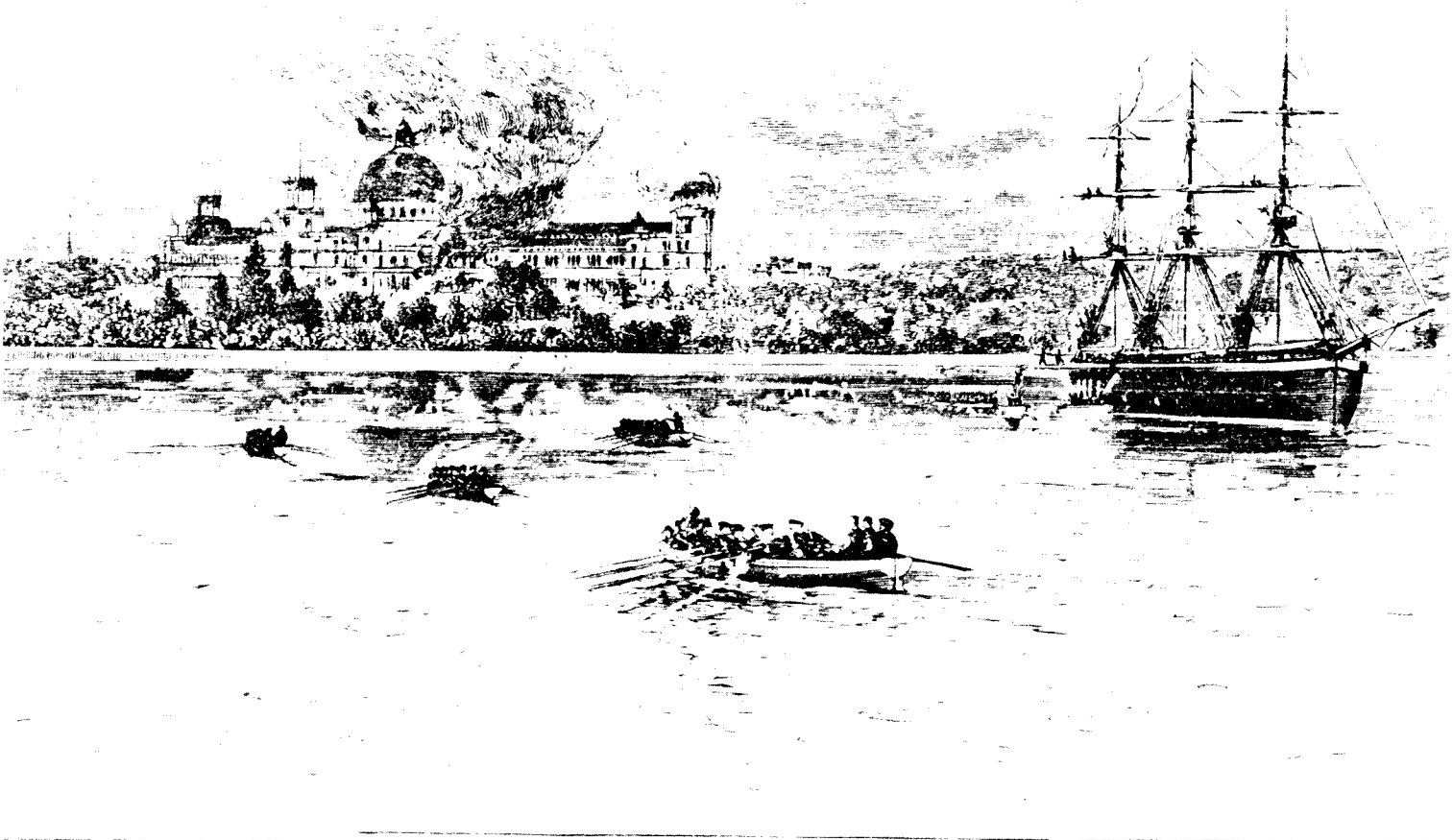
As the morning wind turned northwest the fire engulfed the southern nave. Residents of Macquarie Street lined their verandas to watch the terrible spectacle.²⁵ "Then came a dull roaring sound and a crackling like the discharge of firearms. An immense flame leapt into the sky, volumes of black smoke rolled up and with a crash like a peal of thunder the mighty dome fell in." It was perceptible far across the city. In Balmain a small James Tyrrell watched the great pillar of fire amid clouds of smoke that shadowed the sunrise.²⁶ In Elizabeth Bay sheets of red hot galvanised iron crashed into the garden of Alexander Macleay's Elizabeth Bay House. Showers of burning cinders fell on Woolloomooloo, Rushcutter's Bay and Darling Point; a shingled cottage in Potts Point caught fire, but was saved without major damage.

Crowds began to gather in Macquarie Street. The other three city fire brigades stood by, stationed near the Art Gallery, Richmond Terrace and the Stables. A detachment of sailors rowed in to Farm Cove from the Nelson in the harbour. Journalists scribbled

²⁵See also a letter, Ethel Pockley to Frank Pockley, 22 September 1882, describing the fire; reprinted in Newsletter, RAHS, August 1982, p.1-3. Another description from the House Journal of the Sacred Heart Convent, Rose Bay, quoted in Leila Barlow, Living Stones, Sydney 1982, p

²⁶James Tyrrell, Old Books, old friends, old Sydney, Sydney 1955, p.8.

6.8 "To the rescue"; ISN, 25.10.1882, p.4



and newspaper artists sketched. "The scene was the most imposing, as it was the most pitiful, ever seen in the colonies," reported the Herald.

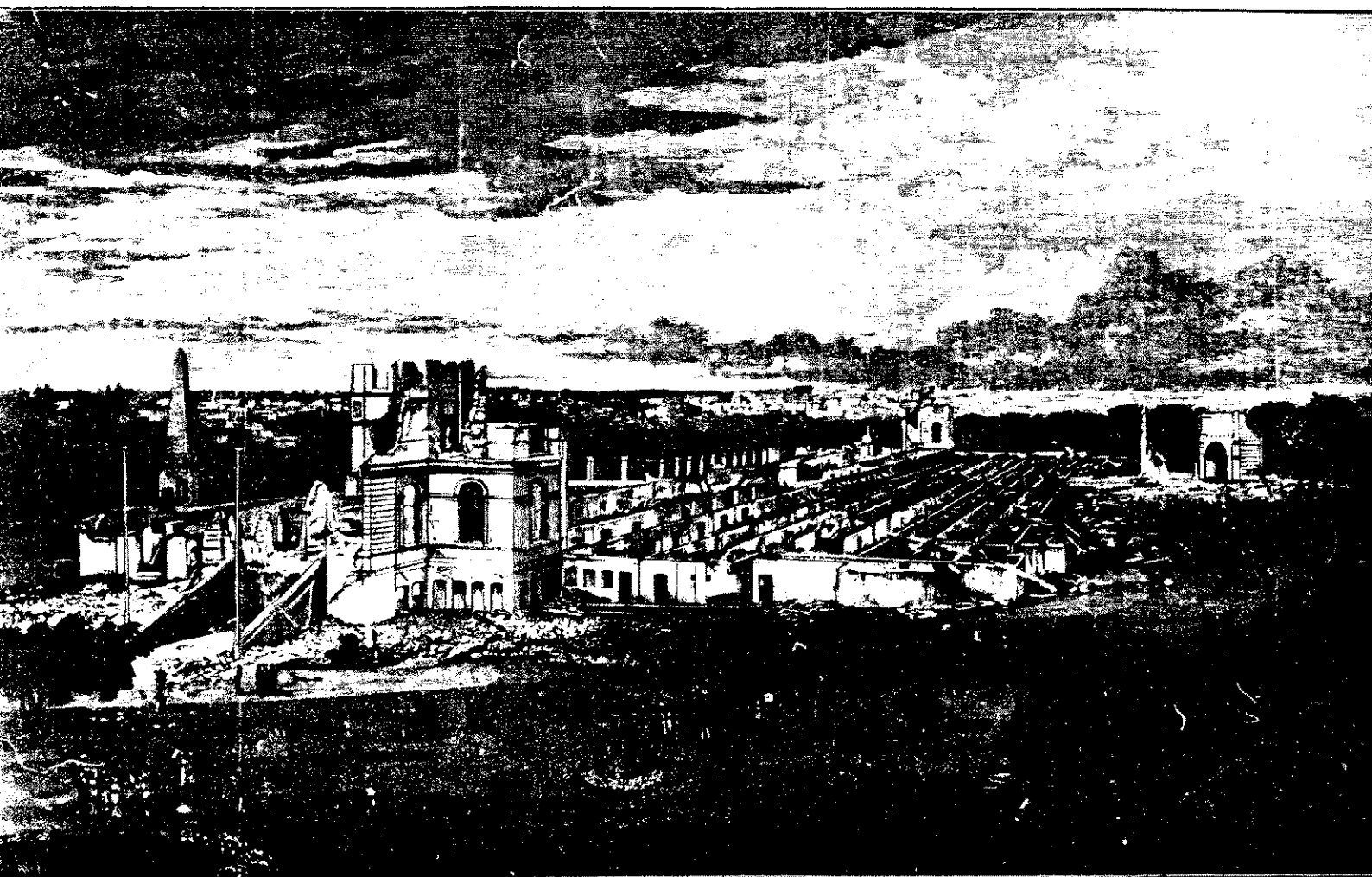
The Garden Palace burned like a torch. The fire had apparently begun in the basement, the site of great repositories of government paper. It rushed to the central well, which would have functioned as a giant funnel of oxygen, and caught on to the joists and panels of dry pinewood of which the building was largely composed. The windows and coloured oculus of the lantern rained molten glass; the bronze statue of the Queen disintegrated; metal fittings liquefied and bled into "the great lustrous sea" of fire.²⁷

By 9 a.m. it was all over.

The residences in Macquarie Street had their view of the harbour restored to them, and the pretty Garden Palace, whose gray-tinted dome could be seen lifted above the pine and fig trees - a beacon light to those "incoming to our shores", the first object of beauty in the city as the Heads was passed - was a mass of smoking timbers and fallen walls.

Speculation about the cause of the fire enveloped the city. Night watchman Kirchen, though an admitted smoker, claimed that he never smoked on duty. The Herald dismissed rumours of a gunpowder plot as absurd. However, it gave more credence to the report from a pair of gas-lighter lads of a limping stranger spied jumping from a window of the Palace just before dawn. No trace of such a man was ever found but from this story grew the theory that the fire had been deliberately lit in order to destroy convict records held in

²⁷See Catalogue of Relics.



the Lands Department offices.²⁸

The inquest into the fire returned an open finding. Sitting for six days, it exonerated Kirchen and rejected the limping stranger theory. It also found against suggestions that the fire had been caused by a meteor, by a thief after the Mining Museum's collection of gold, or by spontaneous combustion of the Fisheries Commission's preserved specimens.

Whether or whatever the intention, the result was disastrously effective. Among the material lost were records of the occupation of lands, including surveys, claims and grants, from the earliest days of the colony; all the raw data of the 1881 Census, almost none of which had been analysed or published; railway and harbour surveys; papers, specimens and paintings of Australian fish belonging to the Fisheries Commission; the plans of the NSW Commission for the Amsterdam International Exhibition; the Art Society's annual exhibition, comprising 300 canvasses and a quantity of ladies' china painting (the sole insured material in the building); the collections of the Technological and Mining Museums; the Australian Museum's ethnological collection, which had recently been transferred to the Technological Museum²⁹; the colony's collection of statuary, which had adorned the promenades of the nave; and the instruments of the Eastern Suburban Brass Band. Fittings of the Garden Palace such as the organ and Marshall Wood's

²⁸See W.F. Morrison, The Aldine Centennial History of NSW, Sydney 1888, vol.1, p.172, for the persistence of the arson theory.

²⁹Australian Museum Minute Book 1879-83, p.276.

statue of the Queen were also destroyed.³⁰

The ruins smouldered for several days during which sightseers flocked to the sad scene. They collected souvenir specimens of fused glass and metal; amateur photographers and artists took views of the shattered piers³¹; the illustrated papers re-ran pictures of the glorious days of the Exhibition³²; and local bards produced elegiac verses mourning the Palace's demise:

Palace of Dreams, farewell! How oft, like thee,
Alas! Those smiles have met a fiery grave!
The diva's song is o'er! The summer sea
No more reflects thine image in its wave...³³

A memorial was proposed almost immediately: "an elegant rustic pedestal" to be build of "the masses of fused porcelain presenting the form of variegated marble in the form of slag; also masses of semi-fused bronze and calcined marble..."³⁴

No rustic pedestal was ever built, but early in 1883 the burnt-out ruins were demolished³⁵ and the site levelled. The Botanic

³⁰The statue of the Queen standing in Queen's Square was commissioned as a replacement for the one lost in the fire. By Joseph Boehm, it was unveiled on 24.1.1888. See also Rosemary Young "A Pigeon's Guide to Sydney's Statues", Sydney City Monthly, May 1982, p.116.

³¹Photos of ruins significantly outnumber photos of the Garden Palace in ML Small Pictures File.

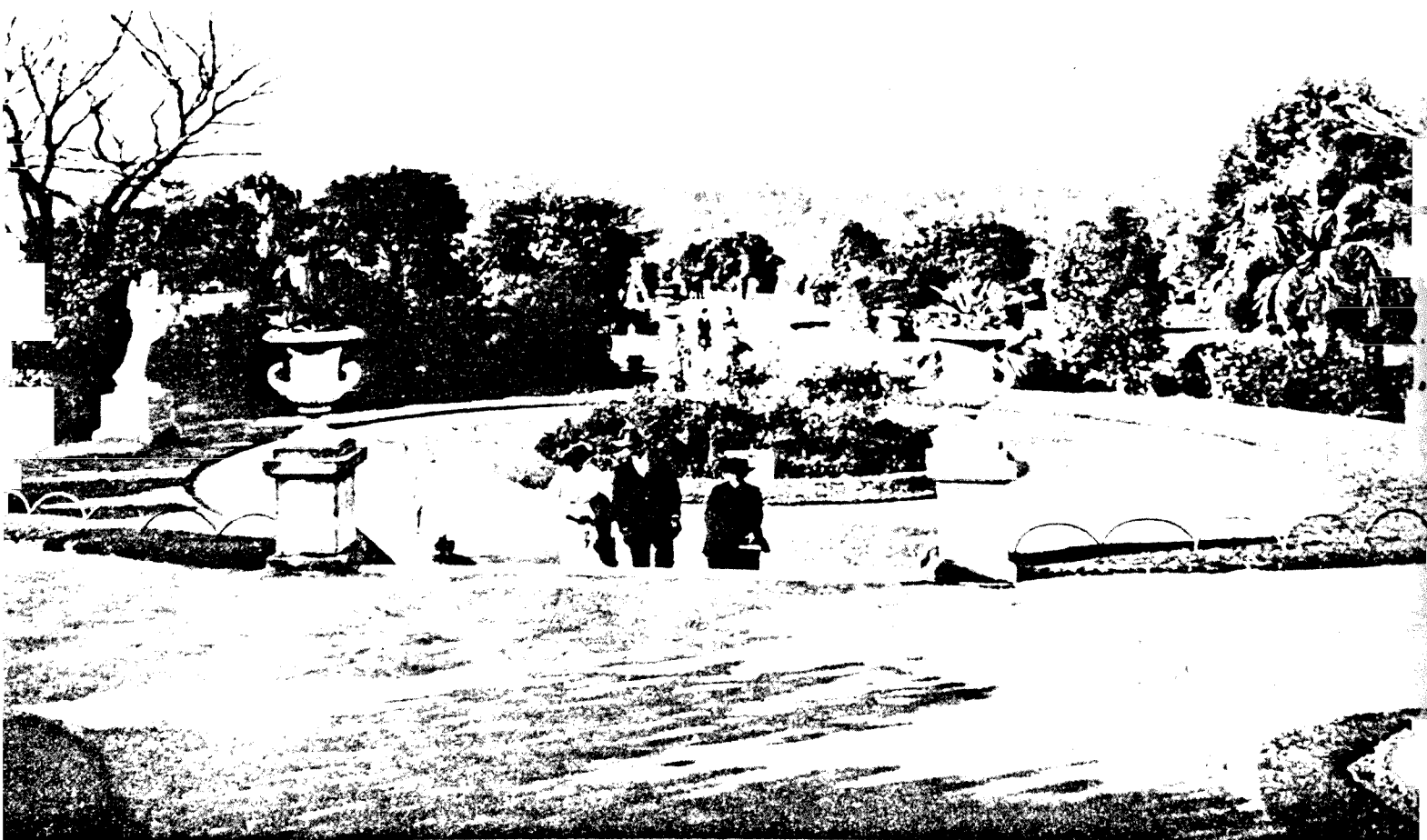
³²eg, ISN, 25.10.1882, p.9, 12-13.

³³W.J.B., "Ashes", Bulletin, 30.9.1882, p.5; also Veni, "The Garden Palace", ISN, 25.10.1882, p.3.

³⁴Letter to the Editor, SMH, from "Architect", 3.10.1882, p.4.

³⁵The precise details remain unknown; there were no tenders called, no reports in the newspapers.

6.10 Site of the Garden Palace, 20 years after; Botanic Gardens
Annual Report, 1915



Gardens acquired the area and named it the "Palace Garden". Special plantings, including a sunken circular garden on the site of the dome, commemorated the Garden Palace, but the entire site required frequent filling and levelling due to continuing subsidence.³⁶ The only sign remaining of the Palace was the concrete core of the pedestal upon which the statue of the Queen had stood. This was finally demolished in 1898, when it was broken up as fill for the floor of the new Garden Pavilion slightly in front and to the north of the Palace site.³⁷

Five years after the Sydney International Exhibition closed the possibility of another was raised. The occasion mooted as justifying an international exhibition was the approaching centenary of the foundation of the colony of New South Wales, the year 1888.

For three full years a regular polemic raged between pro- and anti-exhibitioners. The latter won the struggle: New South Wales celebrated the centenary without an exhibition. Instead, Victoria took up the discarded gauntlet, to mount the Centennial International Exhibition.

³⁶The garden is described in ISN, 3.12.1883, p.1081.

³⁷Botanic Gardens, Annual Report 1898, p.6. It has since been covered over, but it's nice to know it's there. In 1888 the fine Palace Garden gates now situated in Macquarie Street were erected at the Figtree Avenue entrance to the Gardens; they were removed to their present location during the construction of the Cahill Expressway. They commemorate both the original Exhibition and NSW's failure to hold a centennial exhibition.

The fire was commemorated on its centenary by a Museum-sponsored event, of which the *pièce de résistance*, a firework replica of the burning Palace, was - ironically - washed out by rain. See MAAS Archives.

The arguments from both sides comprise an important contemporary summing-up of the objectives and values of exhibitions. They also form a telling assessment of the Sydney International Exhibition of 1879. Perhaps the most striking fact of the battle was that the proposal for an international centenary exhibition was opposed by both Sir Henry Parkes and Sir Patrick Jennings, now on opposite sides of Parliament but formerly among the chief protagonists of the Sydney Exhibition.

Formal moves to mark the centenary with an exhibition began in May 1886 when Harold Stephen, Member for Monaro, so moved in the Legislative Assembly.³⁸ He stressed the importance of the occasion, pointed out that national centenaries were now universally celebrated with exhibitions (witness the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition and the coming 1889 Exposition Universelle in Paris) and suggested that the government's plans to eliminate the budget deficit of the current financial year would be so sweepingly successful that the colonial economy could easily cope with an expenditure of 300,000-400,000 pounds. He adverted to the successes of the 1879 Exhibition and (in familiar language) predicted similar consequences:

...we shall bring hundreds of thousands of foreign capital into the country. Every trade will receive an impetus...I would also point out that it will give private employment to many hundreds of men.³⁹

Sir Patrick Jennings, now Premier, replied immediately that he had a great deal of sympathy for the proposal, and he remembered

³⁸V&P, 1885-86, vol.1, p.216.

³⁹PP, 1st series, vol.XIX, 6.5.1886, p.1654.

the achievements of the Sydney International Exhibition:

I for one am bound to say that there has been no event in the colony which I thought more fraught with importance and significance, and which really did more solid and substantial good with regard to the progress of the colony than the holding of that exhibition.⁴⁰

But Jennings' present responsibility of political office now turned his thoughts away from the benefits he had helped to produce in 1879. His government was faced with a program of large taxes to meet the deficit and with a growing unemployment problem. "Standing here as I do, as the custodian of the public purse, I am not prepared to recommend that expenditure," (i.e., on an exhibition).⁴¹ The government had definitely decided against an exhibition.

Even the spectre of competition from south of the Murray could not deter them: "If we do not hold the exhibition nothing is more certain than that Victoria will!" shrieked the Member for Queanbeyan,⁴² but money spoke louder than he. The saga of how the 1879 Exhibition costs had mounted from 5,000 pounds to 20,000 pounds to 50,000 pounds and ultimately to more than 100,000 pounds was revived: "I simply mention this," explained the Member for East Sydney, "to show how careful we ought to be in initiating an exhibition now."⁴³

⁴⁰Ibid., p.1655.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid., p.1656.

⁴³Ibid., p.1661.

It was already clear that the motion would be lost, but Harold Stephen, rising to reply at last, added one more argument:

I am satisfied that the people throughout the length and breadth of the colony are in favour of a centennial exhibition. They have been looking forward to it, and know it will be the grandest opportunity we ever had to advertise the colony to the world.⁴⁴

He then withdrew the motion.

But he was right: a public meeting at the Town Hall two months later concluded in favour of a centenary international exhibition and sent a petition to this effect to Parliament:

1. Your petitioners are of the opinion that the honour and credit of the colony demand that the centenary of Australia should be celebrated in a fitting manner by the colonists of Australasia.
2. That the most appropriate and useful manner in which the centenary can be celebrated is by the holding of an International Exhibition.⁴⁵

The petition was taken up in the Legislative Assembly and a modified exhibition of Australian-only produce was proposed. Nonetheless, after much the same discussion as in May this motion too was withdrawn. The Premier announced that he would shortly make a statement on what events he and the government considered would be appropriate to the centenary.

This he did on 27 August 1886. Of the calls for an international exhibition he said: "The Government has thought over the

⁴⁴Ibid., p.1663.

⁴⁵V&P, 1885-86, vol.8, p.1139.

matter very carefully, and they do not think...that it is requisite for the successful commemoration of the great event...that there should be an international exhibition."⁴⁶ Instead he outlined a carnival fortnight of distinguished visitors, public entertainments, state banquets, illuminations, military parades, races, prize competitions and the laying of a foundation stone for a permanent Centenary Memorial Hall to house the Art Gallery and the Technological Museum.

The next day the Sydney Morning Herald led: "They disapprove of an international exhibition without giving any reason for doing so..."⁴⁷ which prompted Sir Patrick Jennings to claim the next time the House considered the issue that there had been no popular movement for any particular celebration at all. On this occasion Jennings' political adversary Sir Henry Parkes agreed with him. Defending his opposition to an exhibition, Parkes later claimed that the professional commercialisation of such events had destroyed their value. For better or worse, both politicians were adamantly opposed to celebrating the centenary with an international exhibition.⁴⁸

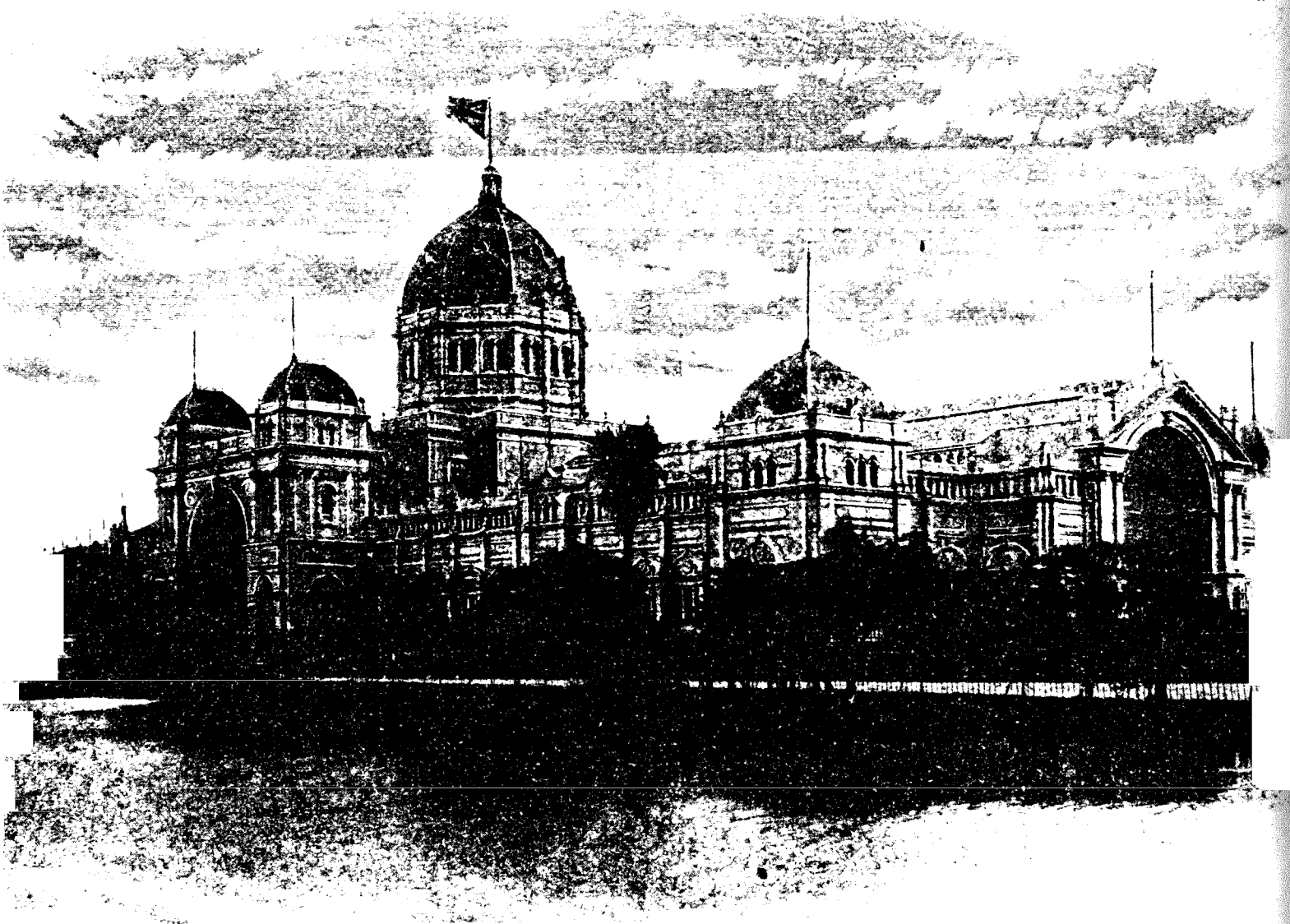
In Victoria, however, the situation was very different.

⁴⁶PP, 1st series, vol.XXII, p.4004.

⁴⁷SMH, 28.8.1886, p.10.

⁴⁸Parkes, who took power again in 1887, soon developed a more attractive plan than Jennings': the conversion of the Botany Swamps reservoir (newly superseded by the Nepean Dam) to a Centennial Park and the building of a pantheon-like institution on the hill above. Though the latter was never realised, Sydney people still enjoy the greenery and open space of Centennial Park.

6.11 Exhibition Building, Centennial International Exhibition, Melbourne, 1880; Official Record, frontispiece



There was a feeling among many leading Australians that without a "World's Fair" in which should be displayed the results of the industrial progress of the colonies since their foundation, the celebration of Australia's centenary would be lamentably incomplete.⁴⁹

When it became clear that New South Wales would not mount an exhibition, the Victorian cabinet discussed the possibility. In November 1886 Premier Duncan Gillies wrote to Sir Patrick Jennings with his proposal:

For some time past I have thought that your younger sister Victoria might be able to aid you materially in your efforts to make your centennial commemoration worthy of the occasion... There appears to be one thing wanting to crown the event, and that is a grand exhibition. It has struck us that Victoria could aid you...⁵⁰

The Sydney Morning Herald applauded the Victorian move, with a swipe at New South Welsh gutlessness:

Mr Gillies is to be commended for his decision and public spirit...If the oldest colony of the group is not prepared, whether by reason of public apathy or through the timidity and inefficiency of its Government...to undertake the holding of such an exhibition, we may congratulate the people of Australia on the fact that there is one colony in a position to take up the work, and possessed of the means and the men to do it.⁵¹

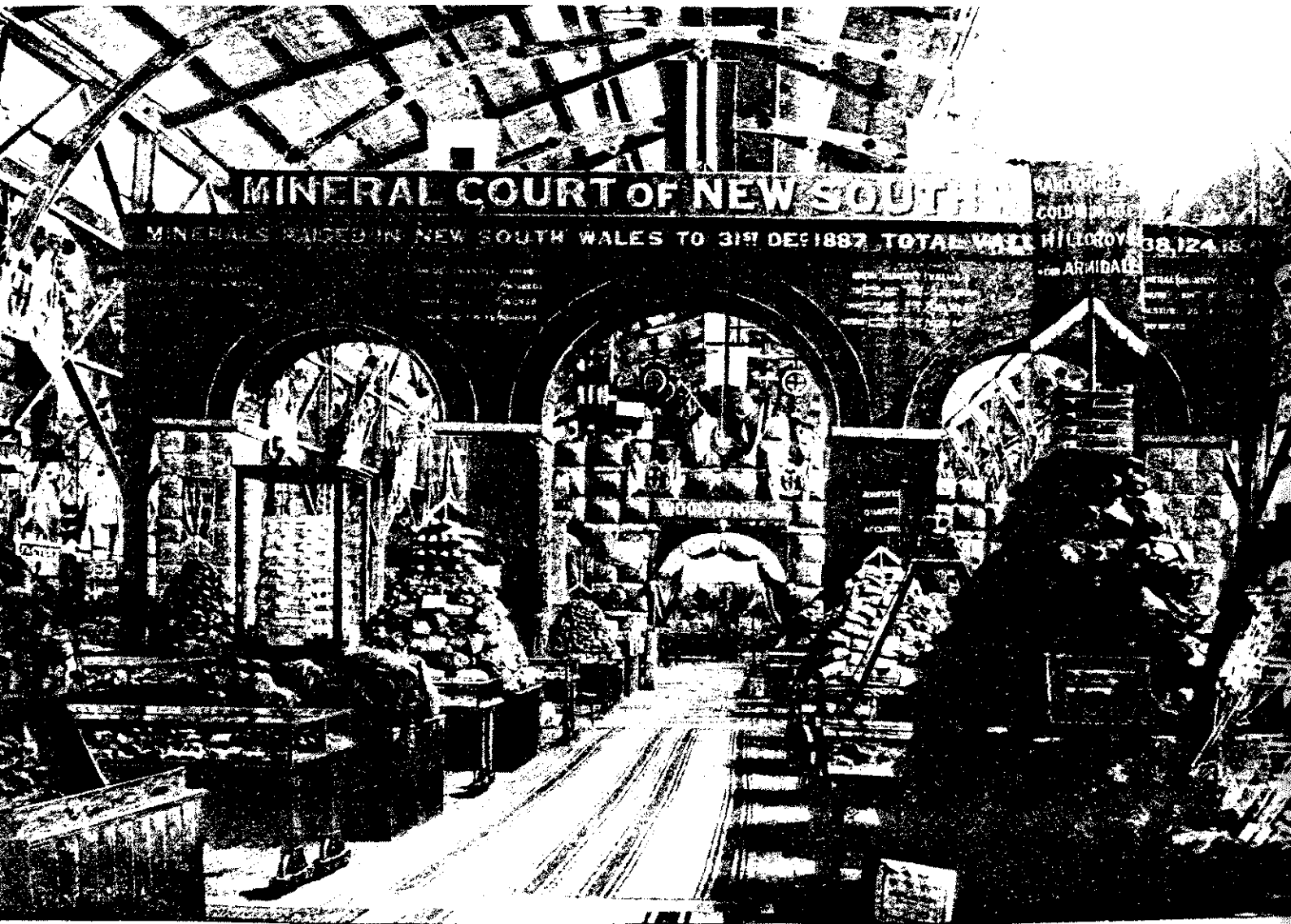
Plans for the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition moved forward fast. A Royal Commission was established on 6 January 1887, with plans to open in August 1888, diplomatically well after New South Wales' January celebrations.

⁴⁹Official Record of the Centennial International Exhibition, Melbourne 1890, p.128.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹SMH, 3.12.1886, p.7.

6.12 NSW court, Centennial International Exhibition, Melbourne, 1888;
Official Record, opp. p.238



In the event, New South Wales was handsomely, though not extensively, represented. The mother colony was allocated a prominent site midway along the "Avenue of Nations". It was adorned with "massive arches bearing the names of the principal cities, and elegant and costly canopies"⁵² and on Opening Day the main entrance was enclosed with a wirework structure decked with oranges, lemons and other citrus fruits. At the centre of the court was a garden pavilion decorated with a collection of ferns from the Botanic Gardens. Other notable exhibits were a composite replica in cork of several chambers in the Jenolan Caves;⁵³ a life-size tableau of the landing of Captain Cook with waxwork figures and papier maché scenery;⁵⁴ and a model, 13' x 7', of Sydney Harbour.⁵⁵

The largest component of the New South Wales entry was in Class VIII: Alimentary Products, dominated by butter, wine and wheat in that order. Specimens of school pupils' work in Class II:

⁵²Official Record, p.238.

⁵³80' long, up to 45' wide and up to 27' high. It was made by a Mr Noonan, who "has shown a great amount of artistic ingenuity in the way in which he has gathered together all the more striking features of the caves, and set them up again with wonderful accuracy in the midst of Melbourne." SMH, 4.8.1888, p.12.

⁵⁴Conceived and supervised by Jules Joubert and Roger Burdett Smith; figures by Mr. White; scenery by Mr Winnmark. The tableau was based on Gillfillen's painting, then in Melbourne Art Gallery. Potted plants added verisimilitude, but a gauze screen curtained the stage to soften and historicize the scene. SMH, Ibid.

⁵⁵Conceived by Burdett Smith; based on maps by Major Scratchley "The model has occupied six weeks in preparation, and the artist Prof. Maurice of the Ecole des Beaux Arts de Paris has not only imparted a surprising amount of artistic effect to it, but has in a most painstaking manner introduced various details which have evoked the admiration of everyone." SMH, Ibid.

Education, and samples of rocks, ores and processed minerals in Class XII: Mining, comprised the bulk of the remaining exhibits. New South Wales took home nineteen gold medals and 201 first prize certificates.⁵⁶

The Centennial International Exhibition was open from 1 August 1888 to 31 January 1889, but by the closing date its particular character as a centenary celebration seems to have faded and so, perhaps, had the national taste for exhibitions. It was farewelled and summed up in familiar language: "We have obtained instruction for ourselves; we have kept ourselves en evidence to the world. We have lost some money; we have gained much credit..."⁵⁷ But there were a number of harsher assessments too: "It can hardly be said that it has been in any respect a great success."⁵⁸

The Centennial Exhibition had been the fourth Australian international exhibition in ten years⁵⁹ and it was effectively the last.

International exhibitions in Sydney continued to be proposed whenever historic events or anniversaries loomed, e.g., Federation in 1901 and the New South Wales sesquicentenary in 1938. True to

⁵⁶Official Record, p.484-514.

⁵⁷Argus, 1.2.1889, p.7.

⁵⁸Editorial, Age, 31.1.1889, p.4; and others.

⁵⁹1879: Sydney International Exhibition; 1880: Melbourne International Exhibition; 1886: Adelaide Jubilee International Exhibition; 1888: Centennial International Exhibition. Travelling shows of exhibits from Sydney and Melbourne in 1881 were touted as "International Exhibitions" in Adelaide and Brisbane. In 1894 came the last flame, the Tasmanian International Exhibition, for the pitiful history of which see Peter Mercer, "The Tasmanian International Exhibition 1894-5", Papers and Proceedings of the Tasmanian Historical Research Association, vol.28. no.1, March 1981.

form, an expo (as international exhibitions are now commonly called in Australia) was proposed as early as 1974 to mark the two hundredth anniversary of European settlement in Australia.⁶⁰ The development and demise of the plan form an interesting twentieth century variation on the nineteenth century theme.

Late in 1979 a joint federal-state project group began a feasibility study of the expected attendance and participation, the possible sites and the estimated costs of a bicentennial expo, already named hopefully "Expo 88". Its report⁶¹ proposed a "modified" universal exposition - an event smaller and less costly than a full-scale universal exposition (such as Montreal's Expo 67 and Osaka's Expo 70) but of more general nature and appeal than "special category" or theme exhibitions (such as the Knoxville Energy Fair in 1982).⁶²

Basing its estimates on studies of recent expos and commissioned public opinion surveys, the report concluded that 22 million people could be expected to visit and that some 45 governments would probably participate in a Sydney bicentennial expo.

The group studied five of sixteen proposed sites: Darling Harbour railway goods yards; the Anzac rifle range at Long Bay;

⁶⁰SMH, 19.11.1980, p.6.

⁶¹Possible Exposition Australia 1988 Sydney: Feasibility Study: Report of the Commonwealth/State task force to the Australian Bicentennial Authority, 15.4.1980; not officially published.

⁶²The organisation, timing and categorisation of international exhibitions are controlled by the Bureau International des Expositions, formed by the 1928 "Convention regarding international exhibitions". See John Allwood, The Great Exhibitions, p.179.

Homebush Bay; OTC-owned land at Eastern Creek near Blacktown; and the Campbelltown Regional Centre. Although it made no specific recommendation, the Darling Harbour site was clearly the favourite. It was publicly-owned land, ready for redevelopment; well-equipped already with visitor accommodation and public transport facilities; adequately serviced for power, drainage and sewerage; highly suited to the residual benefits envisaged from an exhibition; and both a historically apt and (potentially) scenically superb setting.

The report costed the expo - with many paragraphs of caution - at \$370 million for construction; \$42 million for exhibits; and \$184 million for operations. (These costs would have been shared between the expo authority and the Australian and overseas participants). The expo authority was credited with profits of \$120-122 million and visitors were expected to spend between \$196-297 million. In addition (c'est plus la même chose) the report predicted a great boost to the national economy based partly on tourism and partly on new developments in trade and industry.

The report was submitted in April 1980 and almost immediately Premier Neville Wran's government began to cool towards the scheme, claiming that the state would be able to contribute no more than a third of the expected costs. Federal cabinet was reported to be considering the matter, but no statement was ever issued describing its thoughts. At the same time Victorian Premier Hamer, receiving the report of his federal-state project group, announced that should Melbourne be selected as the site for the bicentennial expo, the state government would pay half of its cost.

Meanwhile, the recently established Australian Bicentennial Authority was enthusiastically in favour of an expo in Sydney; it produced reams of historical, commercial and promotional documentation to support the plan.⁶³ The Sydney Morning Herald weighed in, in grand tradition, in favour of the expo:

It is hard to think of a more civilised way of involving other nations in our celebrations and of projecting an image of Australia as a middle power with international interests and obligations. It is worthy of consideration - and soon.⁶⁴

But as had occurred a hundred years before, the State government was grimly opposed to spending the undeniably huge sums necessary to mount even a "modified" expo. "Do we want to spend the public's money...in job creation programs, on educating people and looking after their health, or a grand six months splash in 1988?"⁶⁵ thundered Premier Wran in the rhetorical footsteps of Sir Henry Parkes. He claimed that Sydney businesses would offer no more than moral support to the scheme and predicted that expo costs would rise fast to more than \$1.5 billion. A vigorous exchange of opinions emerged in the letters column of the Herald.

At last, on 4 February 1981, Wran and Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser officially rejected Expo 88. The Premier proposed instead to transform the South Sydney brick pits into a "Bicentennial Park"...

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⁶³Australian Bicentennial Authority files and library.

⁶⁴SMH, 19.11.1980, p.6.

⁶⁵SMH, 7.1.1981, p.1.

"How like England we can be..."

This line from the chorus of the Cantata composed for the opening of the Sydney International Exhibition encapsulates all the aspirations, a good deal of the rationale and a tellingly small proportion of the results of Australia's first international exhibition.

It was intended to mark New South Wales' arrival on the world stage of prosperous, civilised nations. Yet the foundations of the scheme were so shaky that sensible analysis of its origins must still conclude that it was a folie de grandeur. Nonetheless the Exhibition was shortly realised as a grand event and it sustained the interest and commitment of the people of Sydney not only for the six months it was open but also for the lifetime memory of those who had seen it.

The facts of the Exhibition can seem pitiful. Little of outstanding or long-lasting originality was exhibited. Its vaunted international economic effects were in reality small, though perhaps not negligible. Its immediate financial consequences were sufficiently drastic to prevent another such exhibition ever taking place again.

For all this, the Sydney International Exhibition marked a high point in colonial confidence and enterprise. New South Wales, less than a hundred years old, shone very brightly.

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Many titles in the bibliography are confusingly similar. In order to make it both clear and useful for specific purposes, it is divided into subject categories:

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2. Sydney International Exhibition: Official publications - p.247
3. Sydney International Exhibition: Other contemporary material - p.248
4. Other material - p.250

1. Exhibitions before and after the Sydney International Exhibition

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1. THE CANTATA (Plus Cassette Tape)
2. CATALOGUE OF RELICS (Separate Volume)

SONATA

WRITTEN EXPRESSLY FOR THE

OPENING CEREMONY



OF THE SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION

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HENRY KENDALL ESQ.

MUSIC BY

VINCENTI GIORZA

PUBLISHED BY

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P. A. JENNINGS ESQ. C.M.C.

1879-80

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WORDS OF CANTATA.

PART I.

Songs of morning, with your breath
Sing the darkness now to death—
Radiant river, beaming bay,
Fair as summer shine to-day—
Flying torrent, falling slope,
Wear the face as bright as hope—
Wind and woodland, hill and sea,
Lift your voices—sing for glee!
Greet the guests your fame has won—
Put your brightest garments on.

Lo, they come—the lords unknown,
Sons of Peace from every zone!
See above our waves unfurled
All the flags of all the world!
North and South and West and East
Gather in to grace our Feast.

Shining nations! let them see
How like England we can be,
Mighty nations! let them view
Sons of generous sires in you.

By the days that sound afar,
Sound and shine like star by star!
By the grand old years aflame
With the fires of England's fame—
Heirs of those who fought for right
When the world's wronged face was white—
Meet these guests your fortune sends,
As your fathers met their friends;
Let the beauty of your race
Glow like morning in your face.

PART II.

Where now a radiant city stands,
The dark oak used to wave,
The Elfin harp of lonely lands
Above the wild man's grave,
Through windless woods, one clear sweet stream
(Sing soft and very low)
Stole like the river of a dream,
A hundred years ago.

Upon the hills that blaze to-day
With splendid dome and spire,
The naked hunter tracked his prey,
And slumbered by his fire.
Within the sound of shipless seas,
The wild rose used to blow
About the feet of royal trees,
A hundred years ago.

Ah! haply on some mossy slope,
Against the shining springs,
In those old days the angel Hope
Sat down with folded wings!
Perhaps she touched in dreams sublime,
In glory and in glow,
The skirts of this resplendent time,
A hundred years ago,

PART III.

A gracious morning on the hills of wet,
And wind and mist her glittering feet has set;
The life and heat of light have chased away
Australia's dark mysterious yesterday.
A great, glad, glory now flows down and shines,
On gold green lands where waved funereal pine:
And hence a fair dream goes before our gaze,
And lifts the skirt of the hereafter days;
And sees afar, as dreams alone can see,
The splendid marvel of the years to be.

PART IV.

Father, All Bountiful, humbly we bend to Thee
Heads are uncovered in sight of Thy face,
Here, in the flow of the Psalms that ascend
Thee,
Teach us to live for the light of Thy grace.
Here in the pause of the anthems of Praise
Thee,
Master and Maker—Father and Friend
Teach us to look to Thee—give all our days
Thee,
Now and for evermore, world without end