Chapter Six

Babylon the Great

Modernism and the Dwyer Papers

And the Kings of Babylon are strong,
Their dungeons dark and deep,
and the rich rejoice in a reign of wrong
And the priesthood joins in the robbers song,
While the workers die or weep.¹

John Dwyer was a hungry reader. Rather than diminish his appetite for radical action, Dwyer’s enthusiasm for new ideas and causes intensified after his imprisonment over the Slattery libel. Despite the daily demands of work and financial problems Dwyer found time to read and copy out extracts from books and tracts, speculating about the nature of existence, and preparing notes for evening meetings and speeches in the Domain. Released from prison in December 1894, Dwyer revived the Active Service Brigade under his own control, and continued its barracks operation on behalf of unemployed men. In 1895 Dwyer tried to extend the ASB’s activities to running a coal mine at Wentworth Falls, in the Blue Mountains to the west of Sydney, to be worked on co-operative lines by some of the unemployed who took refuge in the barracks.² Dwyer was also active in the Independent Order of Good Templars, a temperance organisation, and the Theosophical Society. During 1896 Dwyer served as editor of The Socialist, the journal of the Australian Socialist League.

¹. 'Babylon the Great', anon., noted ‘published by ASB Sydney Justice 1894’, Dwyer Papers ML MSS 2184/1.
². Dwyer’s activities with the Active Service Brigade, and his agitation on behalf of the unemployed in the period after 1894, are discussed in chapters six and seven.
These activities were expressions of Dwyer's imaginative struggle with Babylon the Great, a symbol for an insidious network of state and capital power. Dwyer and his contemporaries, John Arthur Andrews and Henry Lawson, contested with this corrupt authority, trying to find a path to liberation. Arthur Desmond challenged them to break the social and cultural conventions to which they remained loyal, and embrace a new Babylon of the brave and the strong.

John Dwyer's papers reflect an autodidactic urge to imaginatively comprehend his existence in that 'fermenting decade' of the emerging modern condition and all its complex disjunctions and opportunities. A need that is most clearly expressed in Dwyer's 'occult writings', notes and manuscripts largely written during the late 1890s, rather than in the records of his political radicalism. The surviving fragments of John Arthur Andrews' fiction which Dwyer preserved (discussed below), are an important and overlooked attempt by Andrews to express a vision of transformation, while gripped by an intimidating apprehension of the forces ranged against change. Dwyer and Andrews were part of a self-conscious network of radical readers, influencing one another. Loyal to the ASB's aims, Dwyer encouraged working class reading through the

3. Bradbury and McFarlane’s definition of modernist consciousness captures a sense of the contradictions evident in Dwyer's papers: 'Modernism was in most countries an extraordinary compound of the futuristic and the nihilistic, the revolutionary and the conservative, the naturalistic and the symbolic, the romantic and the classical. It was a celebration of a classical age and a condemnation of it; an excited acceptance of the belief that the old regimes of culture were over, and a deep despairing in the face of that fear; a mixture of convictions that the new forms were an escape from historicism and the pressures of the time with convictions that they were precisely the living expressions of these things. And in most of these countries the fermenting decade was the eighteen nineties.' Malcolm Bradbury & James McFarlane, 'The Name and Nature of Modernism', in their Modernism, A Guide to European Literature, 1890-1930, Penguin Books London, 1991, p.46.
books and pamphlets he made available in the barracks. Radical reading was not confined to political texts. Dwyer and Andrews were receptive to a vast range of ideas - the new literature of science fiction, the pseudo-mystical popular fiction of Rider Haggard and Rosa Praed, and the scientific discoveries which shook the received traditions of religion, blurring the division between fantasy and reality.

Scates has argued that 'it is something of an anachronism to see first-wave socialist circles as the purveyors of modernism', a generalisation disturbed by reading Dwyer's papers. Dwyer and his contemporaries were not attempting to prefigure some carefully constructed notion of artistic or literary expression: they responded to the conditions that generated the historical phenomena of modernism. The modernist project charted the collapse of the old certainties in an age of transition, and probed the psychological distress of the individual caught up in these rushing changes. Modernism was not the preserve of a skilled elite, whether in Europe or Australia, living in some rarefied space outside conventional society. The dilemmas articulated by the modernist artist emerged from the social and economic tensions of everyday life. The nameless and impoverished hero of the early modernist classic Hunger (1890) is

4. Scates argues that reading 'was integral to the oppositional culture of the 1890s. It was not just that the books were (sometimes) written by radicals, or that conservative authors were reinterpreted in a radical way. When workers took to reading they laid claim to a world poverty had denied them.' Scates, A New Australia, p.45.

5. 'The relationship between "imagination" and "action" and between "fantasy" and "reality" were becoming more complex in the 1890s as the religious props which had sustained traditional societies began to be knocked down and as the scale of economic enterprise was enhanced.' Asa Briggs, The 1890s, Past Present and Future in Headlines', in Asa Briggs and Daniel Snowman (eds.), Fins de siècle, How Centuries End, 1400-2000, Yale University Press New Haven 1996 p.173.

presented to the reader immediately from his conditions, without a clearly established heritage or family context, reacting to his harsh daily life with no more resources than a starved body and a furious imagination. Dwyer and his contemporaries were swept up into their own turbulent brew of hard reality and beguiling dream, from which they struggled to conjure the secrets of transcendence.

**Changing the face of the world**

There exists in nature...a force more powerful than the ordinary electricity, by the help of which, a single man able to grasp and direct it, might change the face of the world.8

Theosophy and temperance strongly influenced Dwyer's efforts to transform the material and spiritual conditions of the working class. Dwyer's activities in the Theosophical Society in Australasia and the Independent Order of Good Templars are outlined later in this chapter; firstly, it is necessary to probe the ideas that spurred his activism. Theosophy was an attempt to achieve 'divine revelation'.9 Adherents hoped that the study of eastern religions and philosophies, and the investigation of 'the mystic powers of life and matter', would serve the establishment of 'the brotherhood of man'.10 Temperance was also linked to working class reform, by the suppression of liquor and its often

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8. Extract from Rosa Campbell Praed's *The Brother of the Shadow*, quoted by Dwyer. John Dwyer Papers, ML MSS 2184/3 'Occult writings'.
destructive influence on working class family life. It was not enough to act as an agitator on behalf of others: to change the face of the world, Dwyer had to change himself. Personal transformation began in the mind, a lesson that Dwyer took from Rosa Campbell Praed’s novel, *The Brother of the Shadow*, and carefully transcribed in a notebook:

Concentrate your vital energies, and direct the fluid, while you mentally conjure the larvae in the form of evocation. Beware of faltering - the great impetus once given, and the astral potencies set in motion, they will accomplish their aim, but if arrested, the force will rebound upon yourself.

Dwyer believed that self-discipline was the key to transformation, and in temperance and theosophy he found satisfyingly strict moral codes to replace the traditional mores he had abandoned. A theosophical tract Dwyer deposited in the Mitchell Library warned that the key notions of karma and reincarnation that theosophy borrowed from eastern mysticism were 'entirely a doctrine of free will...it is true that Karma is destiny...but it is destiny of man's own making; and it is destiny which he is making and modifying every day.' Destiny was another test Dwyer had to face, and which he might fail; when he was spurned by the powerful, or rejected for a job, did he imagine that he was the victim of his own destructive energy?

11. *Australian Temperance World and Good Templar Record*, 1 July 1896.
12. Dwyer quoting Praed, 'Occult writings'.
13. 'Karma and Reincarnation', *Theosophical Society in Australasia, Tracts*, ML. All the pamphlets in this bound volume are stamped 'John Dwyer'.
Dwyer sought to master fate and the forces of the universe, to win through to that 'grand occult life, the acquirement of power and knowledge.'

Dwyer recorded beguiling promises in an effort to render them vivid and achievable. He also rehearsed his duty, as he transcribed a solitary paragraph from Cuncliffe Hyde's *The Lost Continent*: 'making all those responses which were required of me; and trying as well as might be to preserve in my mind those sentences which were the keys to power and learning and not mere phrasing of grandeur and devotion.'

Dwyer's sense of duty was implicit with a fear of forgetfulness and struggle, trying to determine if his chosen path was the right one, or whether it was just another dead end.

Only the disciplined acolyte could find the right road. *Winged Seed* (see appendix 7), an extract from Madame Blavatsky's *The Key to Theosophy*, which Dwyer preserved, defined theosophy as 'the quintessence of duty'.

To drink to the last drop, without a murmur, whatever contents the cup of life may have in store for us; to pluck the roses of life only for the fragrance they may shed on others, and to be ourselves content but with the thorns.

Dwyer and his family had suffered the consequences of economic depression and imprisonment since their arrival in Australia, sufferings worsened by a sense, as Annie expressed in 1893, that the immigrant dream had been betrayed. There was no New World in John Dwyer's

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14. Dwyer quoting Praed, 'Occult writings'.
15. Extract from C.J.C. Wright Hyne, *The Lost Continent*, copied in the John Dwyer Papers, ML MSS 2184/3 'Occult writings'.
16. 'Winged Seed', *Theosophical Society in Australasia, Tracts*. 
reality, so he conceived of one in his imagination. Theosophy was a soothing reassurance that Dwyer's hardships had not been endured in vain, and indeed might be the source of his liberation. By selflessly enduring his troubles Dwyer might prevail over them, and win through - to what outcome? Theosophy was vague about whether the reward for stoic suffering would come in this life or in another reincarnation, or what might constitute earthly reward.17

Dwyer's papers do not indicate when his interest in theosophy developed. Annie Besant toured Australia in 1894, exciting considerable interest and publicity, assisted by her powerful gift for oratory. Dwyer languished in gaol while 'this noble apostle of the truth' lectured to a rapt audience in Sydney.18 Dwyer may have been drawn to the story of her 1889 conversion to theosophy, and her dogged efforts to overcome ridicule and hostility. By the mid 1890s Dwyer looked to theosophy as a unification of his political and spiritual aims, as revealed in his 'occult writings'. 'The Book of Notes and Observations on the Occult Subjects' and 'The Aureum Scriptum [golden script] of Occultism' are both over eighty handwritten pages long; the 'Essay on the Human Mind and its relation to the Body' runs to over twenty pages. The three manuscripts largely cover the same themes and issues.19 Their substance is a testament to Dwyer's curiosity, his desire to work through the issues and understand 'whence came man?', and what kind of men would emerge from the turbulence of the last decade of the nineteenth century.

17. ibid. 'The main fundamental object of the Society is to sow germs in the hearts of men which may in time sprout, and under more propitious circumstances lead to a more healthy reform conducive of more happiness to the masses than they have hitherto enjoyed.'
18. Worker, 22 September 1894.
19. The manuscripts are in the Dwyer Papers, ML MSS 2184/3.
Dwyer drafted 'the Book of Notes and Observations on the Occult Subjects' in 1897 as a basis for Theosophical Society talks. Dwyer's proselytising reflected his desire to lead and ideologically mould a group of followers, and to exhibit his learning. An intuitive, working class intellectualism is reflected in Dwyer's texts - littered with quotations, and lists of the thinkers who had influenced him.20 In 'the Book of Notes and Observations' Dwyer expresses his 'deep gratitude' to over twenty individuals who aided his 'pursuit of enlightenment': a list heavily populated with Darwinists and rationalists, including the contending evolutionists Herbert Spencer and Thomas Huxley.21 Spencer's 1850 Social Statics argued that Darwin's struggle for survival in the natural world was aggressively at work in human society; Huxley's famous 1893 lecture emphatically denied Spencer's claim.22 Dwyer also acknowledged his debt to Dr. John Draper, author of the History of the Conflict between Religion and Science; the German anthropologist Robert Hartmann (who, interestingly, challenged the notion that black Africans were racially inferior to white Europeans), and the pioneer psychiatrist Henry Maudsley, a Darwinian troubled by a suspicion that humanity revealed a

20. Scalmer observes that working class readers 'able to call upon quotations in their own writing and speaking were applauded, as this, it was argued, "implies knowledge of what is being read"'. Sean Scalmer, 'A model of reading practice in the Australian Labour Movement During the First Half of the 20th Century', in Robert Hood and Ray Markey (eds.), Labour and Community, proceedings of the Sixth National Conference of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, ASSLH Illawarra Branch University of Wollongong 1999, p.158.


greater tendency to degeneration than development. The list of experts - most noted with the appropriate doctoral or professorial honorific - declared that Dwyer had acquired learning despite the obstacles thrust into his path, and had overcome his poor education, an inadequacy he keenly felt.

The elaborate hand-drawn cover Dwyer designed for the 'The Book of Notes and Observations' indicates his desire to be included, on his own terms, amongst the company of authors and thinkers (see Appendix 6). He laboriously sketched out mystical imagery that only he could unite in meaning. It is possible to identify some of the symbols - the five-pointed star represented God in man; the Egyptian *ankh* symbolised eternal life. Seeking the source of knowledge in ancient wisdom, Dwyer inscribed the names of ION and ISIS across the bottom of the cover - Ion, the legendary founder of the Ionian race, and Isis, the Egyptian god of fertility and nature. The title page, with its redrafted descriptions of Dwyer's meditation on life, death and birth, reflect the uncertainty that plagued his quest.

Dwyer was well aware that breaking with constraining tradition came at a cost. He began 'The Book of Notes and Observations' by welcoming the spiritual freedom opened by the collapse of 'ecclesiastical authority', which in the past had 'sternly forbade' the study of the occult, an

24. Dwyer's complaint about his poor formal education was made during a debate at the 1902 PLL conference. See chapter seven, p.297.
authority backed by 'physical force...the axe and the burning stake loomed grimly.' The instinct to repress unconventional thought was still strongly at work in western culture. 'If we do not burn our thinkers to-day "Pains and Penalties" and "Persecutions" on account of ideas are as plentiful yet, in most parts of the civilised world, as are blackberries in their season upon an English hedgerow.'

The persecuted and ridiculed thinkers Dwyer admired included Robert Ingersoll and Charles Bradlaugh, the free thinkers who helped him cast-off the constraints of traditional Christianity. Absorbing their ideas, and very likely having stood spellbound in an East End crowd before Bradlaugh's powerful denunciations of conventional religion, had opened up Dwyer's path to theosophy, and the writings of Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, Annie Besant and William Judge. Blavatsky, a Ukrainian mystic, provided the ideological framework of theosophy in *Isis Unveiled* (1877), *The Secret Doctrine* (1889) and *The Key to Theosophy* (1889). Besant and Judge competed for control of the international theosophical movement after Blavatsky's death in 1891. Blavatsky, Besant and Judge were amongst the thinkers Dwyer acknowledged in the preface to 'the Book of Notes and Observations': all three had endured rationalist scorn, and claims of fraud and plagiarism.

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28. Working out of the East End of London, by the 1850s Bradlaugh, 'with his sonorous tones, dramatic gestures, and authoritative presence', had become 'the acknowledged leader of secularism', a position he would occupy for thirty years. Taylor, *Annie Besant*, p.79. From 1866 until his death in 1891 Bradlaugh was the President of the National Secular Society. See Edward Royle, 'Secularists and Rationalists, 1800-1940', in Gilley and Shiels, *A History of Religion in Britain*, pp.412-17.
29. Madame Blavatsky's career as a medium and theosophist was plagued by accusations of fraud; she was also accused of plagiarising a raft of books to produce *Isis Unveiled*. The
Controversy had not destroyed Dwyer's faith in theosophists who had dared 'to turn, to doubt, to question...and to ask "now, whence and wither am I".' Orthodox religion failed to answer the riddles of identity and fate: 'Today Reason smiles at the golden crowns and painted pleasures of the theological "Heaven", has nothing but contempt for its "hell fire", and not the slightest use or fear of its extra cosmic god.' Occult study had won from 'father nature' many secrets contributing to 'clearer ideas as to the evolutionary progress of man...and a grander, greater realisation of the possibilities and potentialities of every human being.'

Evidently some human beings had more potential than others: Dwyer's insistence on the authority of 'father' nature - he had crossed out 'Mother' - reveals his vision as firmly patriarchal, and possibly follows the views expressed by Darwin about the superiority of men in the Descent of Man (1871). The contradiction between Dwyer's male-centredness and the groundbreaking roles of Blavatsky and Besant as women leading social and spiritual movements never troubled him. Indeed, Dwyer's reading of Blavatsky and Besant seemed to serve his imaginative construction of father nature.

Dwyer explained that his purpose in writing the Book was to throw some light on the nature and powers of man, and clarify 'the trend of things' that was becoming known to many thinkers, a trend to 'social unrest'. The masses were reacting against the 'frightful oppression and

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31. 'Man is more powerful in body and mind than woman and in the savage state he keeps her in a far more abject state of bondage than does the male of any other animal; therefore it is not surprising that he should have gained the power of selection.' Charles Darwin, The Descent of Man, quoted in Jay and Neve (eds.), 1900: a Fin de siècle Reader, p.225.
superstitious subordination' of capitalism, and as a result 'human earthquakes' shook the globe:

On the one side, the red fires of social chaos in turn flicker and glare, and on the other, cold clammy materialistic cynicism reigns. Men claiming nothing nobler for themselves than mere mechanical functions, and holding to nothing but to live a brief space, reproduce and die forever - we can get no clue to whence came man this way it is blocked.32

In the occult Dwyer found a way of reviving the promise of eternal life extinguished with his rejection of Christianity. Dwyer's new faith rested on a pastiche of eastern mysticism and platitudes, mixed with a little Freemasonry and Darwinism, plus some fragments of popular and pseudo-science. Explaining 'the how of matter', Dwyer claimed that 'a real being called mind exists', separate from the body; we are bodies 'plus something', capable of reincarnation. Evolution was a process of 'cause and effect', manifesting the multifarious forms of nature and man, creating the lobster with his protective shell, or the Englishman, with 'all his national peculiarities'.33 The 'form', the body, might die, but the spirit, the 'astral light' endured.34 The astral plane was the plane 'next to the human'. Clairvoyants could perceive astral forms, 'bodies of an elastic

32. 'The Book of Notes and Observations on the Occult Subjects', p.15.
33. ibid., pp.51-52.
34. ibid., p.39.
semi-material essence' (which he also described as 'spooks' or 'elementals').

Dwyer was sensitive to the mockery of the disbeliever: defensively, he noted that in the East the existence of 'higher and lower entities' was recognised, and that 'only a few years ago' Röntgen (who discovered the X-Ray) and Edison 'would have been regarded as madmen or fools'.

Röntgen revealed the transparency of the human body, and by implication its transmutable nature; Edison transformed night into day with electric light. The pace of astonishing change and scientific revelation in the nineteenth century could, Dwyer believed, be pressing relentlessly towards a discovery of the invisible world:

Protoplasm, atomic theory, the eternal persistence of matter...the revelations of the microscope...meterological and astronomical observations...investigations of the solar spectrum...are deep marks upon the old order of ignorance, notches cut for a higher climb by humanity up the spiral stairway of evolutionary progress.

35. ibid., pp.66-70; Jill Roe has noted the influence of spiritualism - direct communication with the dead - on theosophists; Blavatsky had been a noted medium before the Society was formed in 1875. Roe, Beyond Belief, pp.37-8.
Dwyer was hardly alone in believing that the modern was a vehicle to an
unlimited future: there was a widespread fascination with a rapid
succession of scientific and technological advances, opening up a possible
link between science and an invisible, mystical universe. Scientists were
gripped by the 'mysterious' power of radio - communication through the
'ether', without wires. A contemporary English science journal observed:
'Wireless is the nearest approach to telepathy that has been vouched to
our intelligence'. Dwyer agreed - 'Marconi and others have proved
scientifically that messages may be passed through space over great
distances and without any known connections, such as wires.' What is
the difference, Dwyer asked, between Marconi's science, and 'the akasa of
the occultists?'

Traditional prejudices, and the apparent evidence of one's own eyes,
remained significant obstacles in the path of enlightenment; the physical
act of birth misled people into believing that this life was 'the first and
only one'. Conventional belief in mortality was reinforced by Christianity,
'by the concept of an arbitrary, capricious, irresponsible and savage deity -
man-like but over man, extra cosmical but belonging to the world,
unnatural yet creating nature - a contradiction in terms'. Just as his
prose was excited by an anticipation of the fires of social unrest, Dwyer
was stirred to a passionate outburst by his struggle with the hard god in
his head, capriciously ruling man, driving him to the unnatural fate of
mechanically living and dying forever. Death was the perverse
unification and triumph of Christianity and materialist capitalism, death:

40. John Dwyer, 'the Aureum Scriptum of Occultism', Dwyer papers ML MSS 2184/3 item 2,
p.54.
41. 'The Book of Notes and Observations on the Occult Subjects', p.32.
Dwyer believed that capitalism perverted the very ideals that marked the climb by humanity up the spiral stairway of evolutionary progress. Dwyer might draw Darwinism into an apparently seamless conjunction with eastern mysticism in order to explain the potential of the seen and unseen world, but like all human ideas it was capable of perversion, of being twisted to the service of a predatory power:

I will admit that we live in a State, and in a State where the fittest survive and get on top all the time, but the fittest today is the biggest bully, or the greatest rogue. The shark and the hypocrite sit in the high places in broadcloth. The State we live in is one of unmitigated fraud and corruption. Where women are openly sold to the Chow and the Kanaka, where white men fight with hungry dogs at the muck boxes for offal to keep miserable bodies alive.43

Dwyer's manuscript, 'The State or Government', was probably speech notes for the Sunday Domain rallies or evening meetings of the Active

42. ibid., p.40
43. John Dwyer, 'The State or Government', or 'What is a State?' notes c1895 in ML MSS 2183/3, item 3, p.1.
Service Brigade. Dwyer knew how to trigger his audience's outrage. The struggles Dwyer saw tormenting society worked within him, stirring his resentment of the 'chow' and the 'kanaka'. Under capitalism the 'fittest' who prospered were rogues and bullies, sharks and hypocrites. Dwyer's anger at his marginalisation was both destructive and creative, feeding his prejudices and stimulating his thirst for solutions and escape.

Dwyer believed that the way to escape capitalism and Christianity lay beyond traditional notions of good and evil. From Rosa Praed's *The Brother of the Shadow* Dwyer recorded that Jehovah and Satan 'are but brothers struggling together in a pleasant love-wrestle of exercise, in which the equilibrium of the universe is preserved.' Humanity would remain 'wretched' until it understood that evil and good were one and the same. 'Does not the Christian world even now adore God in the Devil and a Devil in God?' The first lesson every occultist had to learn, Praed wrote, 'is not to fear even the power of evil.'

Like Dwyer, Praed, an Australian born novelist, was fascinated by the occult. *The Brother of the Shadow* tells the story of Doctor Lemuel Lloyd, dabbling in 'psychological telepathy and the projection of the Astral double', who becomes obsessed with a beautiful married patient, Antonia Vascher. Lloyd is tempted to summon occult power, to take Antonia and murder her husband, by Murghab, an evil Adept or magician, 'the brother of the shadow'. Lloyd is ultimately defeated by the power of good, symbolised in

44. Dwyer quoting Praed, 'Occult writings'.
45. Praed said she wrote her short 'mystery of to-day', at the instigation of her publishers, presumably keen to tap the market for sensational melodramas of the occult. 'I willingly accepted the idea, because it is one that floats upon the wave of thought which is just now swelling in so strangely on modern English society'. Rosa Campbell Praed, *The Brother of the Shadow*, George Routledge & Sons London 1886, p.iv. For Praed's interest in the occult see Robert Dixon, *Writing the Colonial Adventure*, Cambridge University Press Melbourne 1995 ch.6.
the stubborn resistance of Antonia; however all the rhetoric of personal transformation, of overcoming conventional morality and realising one's potential as a free and fulfilled individual, is expressed by the evil Murghab. The only quotations that Dwyer transcribed from the text are speeches made by Murghab.

Are you not disobeying nature, when you try to strangle your human sensibilities - your natural affections?...trample on your passions and they will burn and sting you. Let them exhaust themselves upon the universe and you have mounted many steps on the evolutionary ladder.46

Dwyer responded to this compelling temptation to live and to seek the transformation of a single man, capable of summoning the forces of nature to change the face of the world. Both Praed and Marie Corelli borrowed the metaphor of the invisible power of the newly harnessed science, electricity, to summon a vision of the electric force in us all. As Dwyer transcribed from Corelli's *A Romance of Two Worlds*, this force may become, 'if its growth is fostered by a persevering, resolute WILL...a spiritual creature, glorious and supremely powerful,'47 free to live an unconstrained life, free, as Dwyer copied from Crosland's *The Lords of Creation*,

46. Dwyer quoting Praed, 'Occult writings'.
47. Extract from Marie Corelli, *A Romance of Two Worlds* copied in the John Dwyer Papers, ML MSS 2184/3 'Occult writings'.
To speak the Truth and shame the Devil, to spend as much money as he can honestly lay hands on; to quarrel and fight with all rogues, bullies, blusterers, quacks and pretenders; to clear his mind of man worship; to indulge in proper contempts; and to be afraid of nothing that walks.48

Crosland’s defiance was a fragmented dream of wild release extracted from his reading and transcribed in his notebook. Dwyer struggled to unite the clues and construct a liberating vision from them. He shared his dream of escape with Arthur Desmond, the creative nemesis of the Active Service Brigade. Annie warned her imprisoned husband in 1894 to distrust and avoid Desmond, but Dwyer maintained contact with the wilful anarchist after Desmond left Australia in 1895. Desmond would have eagerly endorsed Crosland’s provocative individualism.

The Language of Liberty

The Mitchell Library holds at least two volumes recording the link between Dwyer and Desmond after 1895. One is a miscellaneous collection of tracts deposited by Dwyer and gathered under a generic description, ‘Anarchy’.49 The other is Dwyer’s copy of Desmond’s 1896 The Survival of the Fittest, also known as Might is Right.50 On the frontispiece of The

49. ‘Anarchy’, primarily consists of papers related to John Arthur Andrews, but also contains material which can be sourced to Arthur Desmond. The bound volume is also annotated, ’10.7.17 Dwyer Collection’, and many pages are rubber stamped ‘John Dwyer’.
Survival of the Fittest Dwyer has crossed out the named author, 'Ragnar Redbeard', and written beneath: 'Arthur Desmond'. Ragnar Redbeard, with its aggressive, nordic overtones, was the identity Desmond summoned to give expression to the views he felt unable to publish under his own name. Desmond's shyness was partly prompted by a fear of legal action: the outrageous Ragnar Redbeard was also an identity which could live more freely than the anonymous editor of Hard Cash and the hidden author of The Survival of the Fittest.

John Dwyer could identify the true author, and identify with him: the cover is also stamped with Dwyer's name. Dwyer was also impressed enough by Desmond to spread the word amongst his lodgers: the volume was marked, 'return to John Dwyer'. Inside the cover, someone, presumably Dwyer, has pasted a newspaper clipping of a Desmond poem, 'The Gospel of Might', and in the back cover another typewritten poem, 'The Flames of Freedom', apparently written by one 'Catiline' in London in 1899. The neo-Catiline conspirator was of course Arthur Desmond, who apparently shocked London socialists with his wild ways at the turn of the century. That Dwyer had vicariously identified himself with Desmond by marking up his copy of The Survival of the Fittest is also reflected in the lines that Dwyer inscribed along the side of a preface page: 'Force is the foundation of virility, its principle psychic manifestation is courage. In the struggle for life violence is the first virtue.'

Dwyer seemed to respond to Desmond's exclusively masculine code of rebellion. Desmond exulted in man, 'the fighting, roving, pillaging, lusting, cannibalistic animal, par excellence'. It is man's destructive energy, not his altruism, that 'makes him absolute monarch of all he

surveys.' A monarch who rules women, 'frail beings at the best of times...for the welfare of the breed, and the security of descent, they must be held in thorough subjection.' The potential freedom of women threatened the mastery of man and the preservation of the race - it is hard to tell which threat more alarmed Desmond. Woe unto men and our race, he thundered, 'if ever these lovable creatures should break loose from mastership, and become the rulers or equals of man.'

Desmond typically took to an extreme the prevailing instincts of the masculinist culture of late nineteenth century Australia - part of his attempt to fashion an unrestrained life, breaking away from the timidity he saw about him. Freedom for Desmond meant servitude for others. James rather coyly notes Desmond's 'residual authoritarianisms', the 'key' to which James attributes to Desmond's 'diatribes about sex, love and women...sexual frustration allied to and tangled with frustrated social ideals perhaps turned his fear of women, that is, the unknown, into hatred.'

Fear of the unknown; or perhaps, as Theweleit suggests, the 'dread of dissolution' - the loss of identity that the Freikorpsmen, the first

52. Desmond, *The Survival of the Fittest*, pp.80, 98-99. In 1898 Desmond had his fears of the power of women published in London as a pamphlet, *Women and War*, which consisted of extracts from the previously published *The Survival of the Fittest*. Desmond may have been reacting to the notion of the liberated, 'New Woman', gaining currency amongst British radicals in the 1890s. Dwyer's copy of *Women and War* is held by the Mitchell Library. Again, Dwyer has revealed to the reader the true identity of 'Ragnar Redbeard'. Ragnar Redbeard (Arthur Desmond), *Women and War*, Holbrook and Daniels Ltd., London 1898. ML. For the debate on the 'New Woman' see Jay and Neve (eds.), *1900: a Fin de siècle Reader*, chapter 7.


wave of Hitler’s SA and SS, feared in women.\textsuperscript{55} Desmond also took refuge from dissolution in the celebration of man as the fighting, roving, pillaging, lusting, cannibalistic animal, \textit{par excellence}: man in violent action, and therefore man. Violence as an end in itself is the ‘horrifying’ proposition that Ehrenreich sees in \textit{Male Fantasies}: in killing, the fascist is doing ‘what he wants to do.’\textsuperscript{56}

\textit{Survival of the Fittest} is an extended repetition of the obsessions that animated Desmond’s contributions to \textit{Hard Cash} - an intolerance of a passive working class\textsuperscript{57} and a vicious anti-Semitism.\textsuperscript{58} It does reveal, a little more clearly, the influence that Darwin, Nietzsche and Max Stirner’s ‘radical individualism’ had made upon him, in a crude and fragmentary form, a mutual influence merging in Desmond’s declaration that life was ‘the survival of the strongest’ - a heroic, transforming individual, a leader asserting his right to rule.\textsuperscript{59} ‘It is natural for men of Power to rule feeble

\textsuperscript{55} Klaus Theweleit, \textit{Male Fantasies}, Polity Press Cambridge 1987: See Ehrenreich’s foreword, p.xiii, and p.244 - faced with ‘the fact of erotic femininity’, the Freikorpsman ‘freezes up’, and so ‘holds himself together as an entity, a body with fixed boundaries. Contact with erotic women would make him cease to exist in that form.’

\textsuperscript{56} ibid., p.xi. ‘The “bloody mass” that recurs in these men’s lives and fantasies is not a referent to an unattainable “something else,” and the murders that comprise their professional activity are not mere gestures. What is far worse, Theweleit forces us to acknowledge, these acts of fascist terror spring from irreducible human desire.’

\textsuperscript{57} The average man ‘is trained to obedience, like oxen are broken to the yoke of their masters...born...to be governed by others.’ Desmond, \textit{The Survival of the Fittest}, p.3.

\textsuperscript{58} Repeating the ‘popular superstition’ that ‘jew rabbis steal and murder christian infants’ to use their blood in passover ceremonies. ibid., p.67.

\textsuperscript{59} ibid., p.82. While Nietzsche’s ideas were largely absorbed as superman rhetoric, Darwin’s ‘law’ was baldly presented as ‘a cosmic Fact....whatever Nature promulgates is RIGHT.’ (p.83) Introducing \textit{Survival of the Fittest}, one ‘Douglas K. Handyside MD, PhD’, noted that Desmond had read Nietzsche and Stirner in ‘fragmentary translations and antagonistic reviews’ (p.vi). Chamberlain would likely see Desmond as one of those ‘hundreds of thousands’ of Nietzsche’s readers, ‘who have appropriated “will to power”
multitudes'. Theosophy required that Dwyer be dutiful; Desmond demanded that he be brave, and stare unblinking into the moral void yawning before him.

The world belongs to the brave and strong
Who laugh when the war gods call.
And there is no room for the craven throng,
And the fearful race shall fall.
For there is no right; and there is no wrong,
And there is no grace at all? 61

How did Dwyer reconcile his disciplined faith in a pantheistic creed with Desmond’s feverish, egocentric nihilism? Perhaps there was no attempt at reconciliation. Dwyer drew new ideas into his restless imagination as he piled them into his disparate papers, competing for primacy in reckless collision, or selected at need for comfort, anger, resolve.

as the exercise of blunt, brute force.’ Nietzsche was an elitist with little taste for democracy; that may not have made him a fascist - and certainly Nietzsche, despite his reputation, would have disapproved of Desmond’s violent anti-semitism. Nonetheless that Desmond found comfort in Nietzsche for his social Darwinism and violent fantasies indicates how readily Nietzsche’s ideas could be appropriated to the fascist project. Kolakowski has argued that another Desmond influence, Max Stirner, also displayed fascist tendencies in his key work, The Ego and His Own. Stirner was another theorist of ‘radical individualism’ whose exhortations for a rebellion against state communal conformity attracted a following amongst late nineteenth century anarchists and, later, German fascists. See Lesley Chamberlain, Nietzsche in Turin, Quartet Books London 1996, pp.4, 88-89, 99, 106; Leszek Kolakowski, Main Currents of Marxism, Vol.1, Oxford University Press 1985 pp.163-168; For Nietzsche’s repudiation of anti-semitism see Robert C. Holub, introduction to Friedrich Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, Oxford University Press, 1998, pp.viii, xxii.

60. Desmond, Survival of the Fittest, p.126.
Frustrated ambition also seethed in Dwyer's mind. Desmond was a model of the crusading and defiant radical whom Dwyer strove to emulate. Like Desmond, Dwyer was attracted to Nietszche's vision of a morality liberated from conventional religion and social values, of an unconstrained individuality living above the passive crowd. Unlike Desmond, Dwyer could not cut himself off from his milieu, his family, his inherited values, to embrace an itinerant libertarianism. Desmond, often reviled, was rarely ignored, stirring vivid memories of his escapades from Billy Hughes, Jack Lang, and George Reeve, who recorded the impact of that 'cool, audacious and daring man' for a new generation of Australian radicals in Ross’s *Monthly* in 1921.

Desmond made a strong impression on young Henry Lawson. Lawson, who married Bertha McNamara in 1896, knew the Castlereagh Street radicals well in the 1890s - Bertha's parents, William and Bertha; John Andrews and Desmond. Lawson was undoubtedly familiar with the ASB and the barracks behind McNamara's bookshop, and it is odd that such a compelling setting did not feature in one of his stories. Like Dwyer, Lawson was besotted with Desmond's fiery Social Darwinism,

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64. Reeve, 'Ragnar Redbeard', *Ross's Monthly*.
66. Two Lawson stories from 1894, 'Board and Residence', and 'Going Blind', record the dispiriting boarding house life of unemployed men. Dwyer and Lawson must have crossed paths in this close world, but there is no surviving record of them meeting. At least one significant obstacle stood in the way of mutual regard: John and Annie would have disapproved of Henry's fondness for the bottle. By the mid-1890s Lawson's heavy drinking was well known, and serious enough for friends to warn Bertha against marrying him. Henry Lawson, *A Camp-Fire Yarn, Complete Works 1885-1900*, Lansdowne Press Sydney 1984 pp.382, 454; Roderick *Henry Lawson, A Life*, p.147.
which apparently hit Lawson 'like a blow between the eyes.'67 Desmond inspired several works from Lawson's pen, although Lawson's vision of Desmond was not entirely starry-eyed. An 1893 Worker essay, 'A Leader of the Future', exults a prophet of angry class retribution, leading the unemployed to overthrow the forces of greed, but his leadership is also 'ignorant and narrow-minded'. Lawson's leader was an irrational and temporary 'god for the time' soon struck down by the same cyclone of hate he stirred into life.68

'The Dying Anarchist' suggests why Desmond was an unlikely leader of the future. Lawson's story is a playful and acute satire of Desmond's scatter-gun diatribes, collapsing into contempt for 'the blind, selfish, ignorant fools' the anarchist ostensibly championed, 'poor curs who would bite you if you tried to stop their masters from kicking them.'69 Yet Lawson relished Desmond's 'awful crime in saying what so many people thought.'70 Emboldened, Lawson integrated his own revulsion for the 'cant' of mateship into the story: 'Comrade? No! I hate that word now. It has become a word of cant like "Brother", and "Union" - like your "Mateship"! I am disgusted with it all.' Although, of course, the words were not presented as Lawson's, but those of the dying anarchist. The readers of the Worker of 15 September 1894, where the story was first published, could reassure themselves that Henry Lawson did not really entertain such a harsh opinion of the bushworker's mateship. Some readers may have been troubled by Lawson's brave attack on the use of the word 'scab' in the 6 October edition, a word he described as an 'evil-

69. Worker, 15 September 1894; also reprinted in Henry Lawson, A Camp-Fire Yarn, p.380.
working, brutal’ slur of non-union workers who took the jobs of striking unionists, a word used 'mostly used behind a man's back'. Lawson understood that the mate and the scab were the conflicting instincts of the same individual, every worker trapped in a daily test in the depression-struck colonies: whether to sacrifice a chance of work, or his good name amongst his peers. That was why the word scab 'should never be used by one man in reference to another.'

Arthur Desmond might have reinforced Henry Lawson's resolve to say what he thought - although Lawson had a linguistic sensitivity that Desmond wilfully lacked. Both Lawson and Desmond understood that words could wound - a source of delight for Desmond, an intimidating responsibility for Lawson, who felt compelled to acknowledge the moral weight of words. 'The language of liberty’ was precarious, Lawson observed, easily spilled into deceit or impossible dreams.

That egoistic word 'mateship’ - which was born of New Australian imagination and gushed about to a sickening extent - implied a state of things which never existed any more than the glorious old unionism which was going to bear us on to freedom on one wave. The one was altogether too glorious, and the other too angelic to exist amongst mortals.

71. 'Brave' in at least risking his rising popularity as a writer amongst bushworkers. As Lawson wrote, the bitterly contested 1894 pastoral strike was collapsing into defeat for the bush unions across the colonies. Scabs were regularly subjected to physical and verbal abuse by striking unionists. 'The cant and dirt of Labor literature', Worker, 6 October 1894; also reprinted in Henry Lawson, Autobiographical and Other Writings, p.26.

72. ibid.

73. ibid.
Desmond could not forgive the failings of mortals. Lawson, despite his insights into the contradictions of mateship, was still drawn to its promise of transforming the lives of true mates - he said so, two sentences on from the quotation above. 'When our ideal "mateship" is realised, the monopolists will not be able to hold the land from us.' Here was Lawson's own angelic dream, an escape idly promised at the end of an article otherwise rooted in the circumstances and the slurs which kept mortals pinned to the ground.

Clinging to an ideal of mateship, Lawson tacitly acknowledged that he could never follow the leader of the future, any more than he had developed a close affinity with the labour movement: he was always an outsider. Lawson shared many of Desmond's obsessions, if not quite Desmond's taste for blind violence and misogyny. The First World War appealed to a militarist instinct: some kind of identity might be found in heroic struggle, a desperate celebration of man made whole in conflict.

Lawson might have fantasised of an army of warriors, but he knew them better as the army of the ragged poor, whose cause was hunger, and who called for relief of their sufferings from 'God and Mary and Christ of Nazareth.' That army, Lawson wrote, 'wore a uniform that I have often worn!' The identity Lawson constructed for himself reflected the persecuted Nazarene, who 'preached peace and goodwill and suffering', and with whom Lawson contrasted the new leader, that turbulent man-

god, unable to endure. Lawson and the radicals might rail against the hypocrisies of the church, but they could not abandon an empathy with Jesus, the icon of crucified humanity, with whom they identified their own struggles.\textsuperscript{77}

\textit{'Just for to-day': John Arthur Andrews' Imaginary Revolution}

The dilemma of 'The cant and dirt of Labor literature' can also be found in a handwritten poem left in Dwyer's papers, 'Babylon the Great'. A poem which promises working class liberation, but which also reflects a morbid fascination with the oppressive power of capital and the state which ruled their lives.

\begin{quote}
Oh the walls of Babylon are high
And their niches grim and low.
And the birds of commerce scream and fly,
While the proud Euphrates wanders by,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{77} Marian Zaunbrecher demonstrates that Lawson's enthusiasm for 'the leader of the future' could not long endure against the increasingly sentimental conception of mateship he embraced by the turn of the century, and the example of Jesus, with whom Lawson associated his own 'rejection', and whom he idealised as 'the champion of the underdog'. As noted in chapter one, John Dwyer claimed in 1891 that socialists were only trying to fulfil the message of Jesus, that 'great social reformer', who preached and practised 'the great doctrine of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man', a sentiment later reflected in the Active Service Brigade's association of the crucified Christ with their own cause. Even Arthur Desmond once idealised Jesus as 'the divine democrat', but sometime after 1890, when he wrote 'Christ as a Social Reformer', he decided to replace Jesus with himself, presumably under the influence of Nietzsche and Stirner. By 1896 Christ was no more, in Desmond's eyes, than 'a mean insignificant-minded Jew!', as he wrote in \textit{Survival of the Fittest}. See Marian Zaunbrecher, 'Henry Lawson's Religion', \textit{The Journal of Religious History}, Vol. 11, No.2 December 1980, pp.312, 316-7; Patrick O'Farrell, 'The History of the New South Wales Labour Movement, 1880-1910. A Religious Interpretation', \textit{The Journal of Religious History}, Vol.2 No.2 December 1962, pp.141-42; Arthur Desmond, in the preface to 'Christ as a Social Reformer', Auckland 1890, ML; Desmond, \textit{Survival of the Fittest}, p.14.
In its dark relentless flow.\textsuperscript{78}

'Babylon the Great' may have been written by Dwyer, or his good friend, the anarchist John Arthur Andrews, who published his own 'Babylon' in the \textit{Worker}, remarkably similar to 'Babylon the Great'. Babylon luxuriates in riches while 'countless lives' are oppressed. 'Come ye forth swiftly from her ways, o nation!', the poet warns in sternly biblical tones, as Babylon's glory will soon be 'smitten to desolation'.\textsuperscript{79} Both Andrews and Dwyer shared a fascination with the power that ruled them - understandably enough; they were intensely familiar with its conditions. Dwyer and Andrews' dream of liberation was just that - a hazy fantasy, pursued in a number of apparently disparate causes and directions.

Andrews' fiction reflects many of Dwyer's concerns - the prospect of social revolution, stirring exhortations to rouse the working class,\textsuperscript{80} an interest in the lost world of Atlantis, and escapist adventure stories - Jules Verne-style science fiction and detective stories.\textsuperscript{81} Andrews and Dwyer were familiar with several of the international and Australian classics of the \textit{fin de siècle} 'literature of crisis'. Dwyer had read Praed, Corelli and H. Rider Haggard's \textit{Heart of the World}, and also deposited copies of Haggard's \textit{She} and Sam Rosa's \textit{The Coming Terror} with the Mitchell Library. The fiction Dwyer collected reflected a mentality based in the

\textsuperscript{78} 'Babylon the Great', Dwyer Papers ML MSS 2184/1.
\textsuperscript{79} \textit{Worker}, 30 July 1898. A draft of the poem is also contained in 'Poems, J.A.A.', volume in Dwyer Papers ML MSS 2184/17, 'Material relating to John Arthur Andrews, c.1888-c.1902.'
\textsuperscript{80} The Anarchist Battle Song' in Dwyer Papers ML MSS 2184/16; also 'The Brotherhood of Man', \textit{Justice} 10 March 1894 - 'Dare to be yourselves and freemen! Wheat that's sown - will wheat come back!/Or upon your heads be all the shame and curses of the track!'.
\textsuperscript{81} Andrews fiction included 'The Lost Atlantis' and 'Adventures on Mars', discussed below; 'A Mysterious Hoax' is a poorly structured conventional detective/mystery story. Dwyer Papers ML MSS 2184/16, 'Material relating to John Arthur Andrews, c.1888-c.1902.'
fraught socio-economic conditions of the period, a mentality caught between dream and nightmare.82

Andrews fictionalised the struggle with capital and State power. 'Trouble' is a rough, partly reworked story of a group of 'well-known' agitators, battling a capitalist conspiracy to break up labour organisations, which Andrews wrote after his 1894 imprisonment.83 The 'well known' agitators are certainly familiar to readers of Dwyer's papers. The economic boom has collapsed; the capitalists want to 'retrench' to cut costs, and they seek Government support for lockouts of workers, and to 'set-up' interfering local radicals with an 'anarchist bomb scare'. An agent provocateur attempts to flush out the anarchists with inflammatory literature, advocating the use of dynamite 'as the emancipator of the human race'. One of the agitators, Arthur Meyrick (Andrews) initially tells his colleague Fred Rigby (Dwyer) that he doubts the threat from the State is serious. 'They have their detectives everywhere, and know well enough that we are engaged in nothing more desperate than expounding a philosophy as the basis of future society, when the people are educated up to the ideal'. Despite this hopeful - and typically Andrews - rationalisation, the situation intensifies when another government agent visits Meyrick and entices him with foreign language anarchist tracts advocating violence (which he asks Meyrick to translate). Meyrick spurns the agent's overtures: 'a policy of terrorism and personal violence tends to throw society backwards instead of bringing it along.' Meanwhile, the banks suspend payment, with further crashes predicted by one Esdaile (Desmond), and his fiery scandal sheet, 'Ready Money', which he

publishes anonymously. As the crisis mounts the agitators meet. Meyrick argues that he endangers the others, as he, as 'the most publicly known Anarchist', is the target of the State. He is 'doomed', as they all are, until they throw off the yoke of 'property and authority'. Esdaile becomes angry and impatient with his friends, telling them that they let themselves walk into traps. Rigby retorts, 'if you don't walk into the trap they build it over the top of you'. Another of them, Britton (Douglas?), accuses Esdaile of promising to 'put everything right with your bank-smashing, but so far you have only put other people in gaol, and things seem to get worse instead of better for those you were going to save.' Britton and Esdaile exchange blows; Rigby remonstrates with them, telling them they shouldn't be fighting amongst themselves.

'Trouble' outlines the agitators' efforts to mould the unemployed lodgers into a militant force, working from a 'tumble down' lodging house run by Rigby and another agitator, Vermont (Tommy Dodd). The fictionalised agitators embrace an ASB style militarism - a 'war contingent' of 'men leagued for the last resort of personal self-defence against a threatened state crime' was organised by the agitators 'Inner Circle' into a 'complex and mystifying' structure of 'Armour Plated Auxiliaries' who surrounded and protected 'democratic champions' at public meetings. The 'Silent Sixty' provided 'defence against intimidation and violence proceeding from legal authority'. The 'Electric Invincibles' were charged with 'extinguishing' by 'lawful means' corrupt politicians and to 'prevent the manufacture of spurious public opinion.' Through the 'Electric Invincibles' a metaphor of Irish struggle infiltrated Andrews' fantasy: the title was probably adapted from the Irish National Invincibles, the fringe
republican group who carried out the Phoenix Park murders in 1882.84 Carried into the future by the new force of electricity, the 'Electric Invincibles' were also a metaphor of transformation, although somewhat constrained by their 'lawful' nature.

Meyrick conceded that 'many people who lodged on the premises...declared that this was all high-faluting humbug; but others knew differently.' The Inner Circle of the 'Secret Seven' understood that these various 'manifestations' had a purpose: 'a popular uprising and social revolution'. The Inner Circle were known only to each other, and communicated amongst themselves with special codes, including a 'daily liturgy':

Eternal Power, if Power there be,
To whom we pray,
Keep us in unity divine
Just for to-day.

Let us no harsh or angry word
Unthinking say
Unto our fellow sufferer, Lord,
Just for to-day.

As for tomorrow and its needs
We do not pray,
But keep us, guide us, help us win,

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Just for to-day.

The Inner Circle prayed and organised, drilling the war contingent, bracing for the final confrontation with the State: nothing happened. Without explanation a magistrate dropped charges against one of the Armour Plated Auxiliaries unfairly accused of threatening violence; his comrades had planned to rescue him from gaol. The Silent Sixty and a detachment of Electric Invincibles had planned to march on Parliament House, but 'the insurrection is not proceeded with.' As the story abruptly concludes, Rigby says they must remain vigilant of plutocratic conspiracy. 'They will not let it be so badly bungled another time.' Vermont concurs, noting the plutocrats might yet have more than an 'imaginary revolution' to contend with. The story ends with the agitators singing the Marseillaise.

Unlike most contemporary radical literature, 'Trouble' peters out without any triumphant or cataclysmic resolution of the class war it describes. 85 This collapse reflects the fatalism Andrews expresses in another story, 'Spiders'. 86 Two international financiers, Braunschild and Barling (presumably based on the London financiers Rothschild and Baring), discuss their plans to capture control of the emerging Australian market

85. Another slim Andrews manuscript, 'The Triumph of Freedom', does envisage a revolutionary government which 'evaporates'. Papers related to John Arthur Andrews in the Merrifield Collection, Box 16 State Library of Victoria. Docker outlines the significant radical literature of the period - Morris's News From Nowhere, Bellamy's Looking Backward and Donnelly's Caesar's Column, which had Australian echoes in William Lane's The Workingman's Paradise, and Sam Rosa's The Coming Terror. Lane's is an apocalyptic vision of an Australia 'ruined by capitalism'. Rosa offers a vision of revolution leading to a liberated and classless Australia. Docker, 'Can the Centre Hold?', pp 64-66, 83-84.

by forcing a depression and buying up the cheap currency. Barling objects that he wants more than the precarious control exercised by a power over money. 'What do you say to a continent that is all your own estate, and everybody on it practically your property - nobody owning a dashed thing, and the whole lot only existing because you let them?' Barling suggests that they can rule these 'tenants on sufferance' and suppress the Australian 'hotbed of radicalism' by divide and rule, filling up the country with millions of 'Chinamen and Hindoos', to promote racial tension between these settlers and the white population, and thus perpetuating a regime of serf labour. This bare and unfinished sketch was Andrew's fantasy of the power of the international finance barons, men he described as 'world compellers'.

In the face of direct aggression from state and capital 'Trouble' is literally reactionary, a tale of 'men leagued for the last resort of personal self-defence against a threatened state crime', a tale mirroring the siege mentality of Andrews and the Brigade in 1893-4. Rigby, the Dwyer character, retorts to Esdaile's (Desmond's) taunt, 'if you don't walk into the trap they build it over the top of you'. As in 'Spiders', a defensive working class does not initiate action: workers respond, sometimes without realising, to the play of the 'world compellers'. Workers and agitators are sufferers, persevering 'just for to-day'. In these stories Andrews may have exaggerated the power of the world compellers for dramatic purposes, yet his imaginative response to the social and economic situation of the working class seemed to be more vividly stirred by the forces controlling workers, rather than by a vision of their liberation.

Like his anarchist writings, many of Andrews surviving stories and poems are fragmentary manuscripts and literally hand-made texts,
although he had two volumes of verse published in his lifetime - *Temple Mystic* (1888) and *Teufelswelt* (1896).\(^87\) 'Trouble' was typically unfinished, because it was hard to muster the resources to imagine a complete life. Andrews was acutely aware of his own dilemma. In a brief manuscript, 'Individualism' - little more than a note - he argued that in 'present society' the individual was but a 'puppet', his capabilities and aspirations 'only exist in sufferance and in so far as they can be cut to fit the dominating system.' This fate was nothing less than an 'arbitrary annihilation' of his 'natural being', a fate that directly impacted on Andrew's work.\(^88\) In the introduction to *Temple Mystic*. Andrews warned the reader that if any of the poems seemed 'too melancholy or bitter', it was because 'they bear the impress of the circumstances with which I have been surrounded. The few that are at once thoughtful and joyous indicate the line of writing I should have pursued if I had been allowed to retain the disposition and health into which I was born.'\(^89\)

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\(^87\) John Arthur Andrews, *Temple Mystic and Other Poems*, F.W. Niven & Co. Ballarat 1888; *Teufelswelt*, Melbourne 1896. The poems collected in *Temple Mystic* reveal little of Andrews anarchism - their themes are mainly those of conventional Victorian poetry - including 'Khartoum', a melodramatic celebration of General Gordon's heroic death in the Sudan. The romantic nature of others is indicated by their titles - 'Sunshine and Shade', 'The Railway Phantom', 'Moonlight' and 'The Wreck of the "Kapunda"'. The only 'political' poems are two celebrating the winning of the eight hour day. *Teufelswelt* is discussed below. The Mitchell Library also holds another of Andrews hand-made verse volumes, 'Poems of Freedom', published in 1894 and containing two anarchist poems, 'Onward for Freedom' and 'The Day of Rebellion'. 'Poems, JAA', volume in Dwyer Papers ML MSS 2184/17.

\(^88\) 'Individualism' in papers related to John Arthur Andrews in the Merrifield Collection, Box 16 State Library of Victoria.

\(^89\) Andrews, *Temple Mystic*, introduction.
Like Dwyer, Andrews wanted to win his way to renewal, to clear his 'clogged consciousness' and rediscover his 'vanished self.' Politics was only partly an answer to this dilemma. In an epic poem, *Teufelswelt* ('Devil's World'), Andrews reworked Dante's *Divine Comedy*, sending a spirit from a past life, Menos, into the seven circles of Hell, in pursuit of the 'marvels and terrors' of the void between things as they are, and as they once were. As the Roman poet Virgil led Dante, Menos is guided through his encounters with bankers and excommunicated religious schismatics. Menos discovers that death is 'only a phase of life': renewal is reincarnation. The 'karma self' grows from 'age to age'; 'only its discords die.' As Menos’ guide explained, in this way 'hapless mortals' could become 'as the gods'. Finally Menos understood that his guide was the Devil himself, the 'spirit of revolt/the power for better life, shaped forth as will.'

Andrews may have believed that to change his fate he had to clear his blighted consciousness by summoning the Devil of revolt, but he was no more willing to embrace the Devil than Dwyer had been to accept the temptations of Murghab. The God whom Andrews beseeched to provide guidance 'just for to-day', to encourage sufferers to calmly persevere, seems remarkably like the conventional Christian construction of the Almighty, rather than the Devil of revolt. Andrews and Dwyer may have believed that they could conceive of a new consciousness beyond good and evil, but their writings also express the tension *between* their constructions of good and evil, suffering and rebellion.

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91. ibid., pp.134-5.
In 'Adventures on Mars' Andrews dabbled in science fiction. Like the
dark fantasies of H.G. Wells, Andrews' heavens 'are indeed populated,
though not by gods.' 92 'Adventures on Mars' is a rather laboured report
from a Professor A. Mann of his solo flight to the red planet, which he
finds inhabited by a race of man-like creatures and a race of spiders. 93
Some Martian communities exist in commercial competition, others
along 'anarchist communist' lines. Andrews fails to develop the
imaginative possibilities of his story, and it is plainly derivative of Wells'
bestsellers (although it is impossible to specify when the undated
'Adventures on Mars' appeared in relation to The Time Machine [1895]
and The War of the Worlds [1898]). 'Adventures on Mars' shares Wells
(and Verne's) fascination with space travel, and the troubled encounters
Wells set up between the human and the alien. Echoing the Eloi and
Morlocks of The Time Machine, Andrews' Martians are a metamorphosis
of human and animal forms, plagued by war and cannibalism: their
entrapment in conflict is symbolised in their lurid and ugly mutations,
and their social divisions recall human class struggle. 94 Mann is able to
use his 'newly-invented apparatus' to travel vast distances only to
rediscover himself, and his own familiar failings. Even in a fantasised
future, Andrews could not escape the human condition. Here was the
intensely felt contradiction of the modern mind, a fate which Dwyer and
Andrews strove to escape and which they repeated in each search.

Dwyer wanted to believe in novelist Edward Bulwer-Lytton's fantasy of
extra-terrestrial life. Dwyer described Bulwer-Lytton's 1842 Zanoni as a
'remarkable' tale describing 'extraordinary forces' of alien life. Dwyer

93. Dwyer Papers ML MSS 2184/16.
94. John Docker, The Nervous Nineties, Australian Cultural Life in the 1890s, Oxford
acknowledged that some would dismiss tales of alien life as merely 'fanciful flights of imagination': they meant 'much more' to those who 'search beneath the surface of things'. It might have been just as well that these 'mysterious tribes of space' did not exist. As Bulwer-Lytton described, aliens were like hidden microbes in a drop of water; some wise and gentle, others vast and terrible. Man, Dwyer wrote, was shielded from 'dangerous and hostile' aliens by 'providence' - by a wall of matter between them and us. Dwyer stepped towards that opaque wall, touching it with his hand, trying to sense the mysteries beyond, fearing to press too hard. If Dwyer broke through the wall, he might be forced to confront its greatest terror - the possibility that there was nothing beyond, and that searching beneath the surface of things only led to more questions, more doubts.95

Perhaps a wholesome renewal of humanity could be found in the past. Andrews and Dwyer shared a fascination with ancient cultures believed to be the repository of lost and arcane knowledge: both were drawn to the myths of ancient Egypt, Lemuria and Atlantis. Dwyer was impressed with the architectural wonders of Egypt - 'the area occupied by the pyramid of Cheops is more than double that of St. Peters at Rome', implying that some mystical force must have been employed to enable its construction.96 Theosophists also believed that ancient societies had solved the riddle of 'whence came man', a solution that modern humanity might regain through the tantalising myth of Lemuria, a vast prehistoric continent stretching across what is now the Indian Ocean,

South-East Asia and the South Pacific. Madame Blavatsky and Rosa Campbell Praed embraced the Lemurian myth as fact; Praed believed that Australia was the last remnant of Lemuria, and was also a link to the lost city of Atlantis, the home of a wise and supernaturally powerful ancient culture.

In 'The Lost Atlantis' Andrews tried to draw the tenuous links together, suggesting that 'northern aborigines' were descended from the Ancient Egyptians (who 'possessed the boomerang'), and that the Polynesian islands contained relics of a great 'barbaric' civilisation. It is also recorded that some of the natives possessed a knowledge of freemasonry, or something supposed to be identical. The 'Lost Atlantis' is too brief a manuscript to bear much comparison with the 'adventure romances' of the Lemurian literary genre, but it shares some basic fascinations - the hidden lore of indigenous culture, Australia as an imagined space of lost wisdom. Like Dwyer's speculations, Andrews' disparate selection of 'facts' concerning indigenous peoples is never developed into a clearly argued case - it rests uncertainly on its implications, insinuating that somewhere in indigenous culture is a lost source of human liberation. Perhaps it is not surprising that Andrews was also drawn to theosophy, the spiritual non-religion that constantly pulled its punches as to what exactly it was, or how its slogans could be effectively translated into human action.

97. 'The Book of Notes and Observations on the Occult Subjects', pp.4, 9; see also Magic (journal of the Theosophical Society in Australasia), October 1896 p.13.
100. Docker, The Nervous Nineties, p.230; see also Dixon, Writing the Colonial Adventure, chapter 4.
An Enterprise of Brotherhood: Dwyer and Theosophy

In 1896 Dwyer was the President of the Isis Lodge of the Theosophical Society in Australasia, a splinter group of dissidents who left the mainstream Australian Theosophical Society in 1895. The dissidents supported the American William Quan Judge as the leader of international theosophy, following the death of the movement’s founder, Madame Blavatsky, in 1891. Shortly after Blavatsky’s death Annie Besant claimed to have received written messages from Blavatsky’s spirit, indicating that Judge was Blavatsky’s preferred successor. By 1894 Besant suspected that the messages had been composed and planted by Judge, scheming to take control of the Society. A controversial and inconclusive inquiry into Besant’s allegations resulted in the American theosophists declaring their support for Judge's leadership and their independence from the European theosophists. 101 In Australia, theosophy split along similar lines, with the dissenters in Theosophical Society of Australasia electing the distant Judge as their President. 102 The Australian Theosophical Society remained devout Besant loyalists.

Despite his lingering respect for Besant, Dwyer threw in his lot with the dissidents led in Australia by T.W. Willans. 103 Apparently Dwyer preferred Willans emphasis on the role of the working class in a scheme

102. Minutes of the 1st Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society in Australasia, 11 December 1895, p.10; pamphlet held by the Mitchell Library and stamped 'John Dwyer'. The rival, Besant-loyalists confusingly organised as the Australasian section of the Theosophical Society, under the leadership of J.C. Staples. Roe, Beyond Belief, p.108.
of muscular theosophy. Willans conceived of a united body of workers leading a theosophical movement purged of the dilettante self-seekers, the vain-glorious, 'the devotees of authority', who looked for 'rest by the wayside and demanded to be garlanded with red flowers and green laurels'. They were left behind as 'band after band of workers joined under the bugle call of Brotherhood', a 'task for MEN'. Willans’ was a rather coy notion of brotherhood, with the implicit class critiques of the bourgeois theosophical dilettante, and the notion of a brotherhood of workers, never really developed beyond rhetorical blustering. Judge's conception of Universal Brotherhood, which Willans borrowed, was itself (perhaps usefully) vague. While Jill Roe notes that theosophy and international socialism 'had much in common, and their histories overlap', she also outlines the ambiguity of theosophy towards socialism and class issues, exemplified in the contradictions which Annie Besant, the socialist turned theosophist, struggled to reconcile. Doctrinal ambiguity may have represented theosophy’s appeal for Dwyer, torn between instincts of rebellion and duty, brotherhood and individual gratification.

104. Willan was a surveyor by trade who embraced theosophy in 1889. Roe, Beyond Belief, pp. 109-11, 154n.
105. Australian Theosophist, 26 July 1897 p.82.
106. The Society's guiding precepts were defined as 'Universal Unity and Causation; Human Solidarity; the Law of Karma; Reincarnation. These are the four links of the golden chain which should bind humanity into one family, one Universal Brotherhood.' 'Winged Seed' Theosophical Society in Australasia, Tracts, ML. Undated, stamped 'John Dwyer'.
107. In 1891 Judge wrote that the Theosophical Society's Universal Brotherhood 'can make no distinctions', and 'All should be admitted, for we can refuse no one.' William Q. Judge, Letters That Have Helped Me, Theosophical University Press, Pasadena California 1981 p.4.
108. Roe, Beyond Belief, pp.XIV, 52-3.
Dwyer took his duties seriously: attending meetings, organising functions, writing copious notes and essays on theosophical subjects, speaking at public meetings, styling himself 'a student of occultism and a worker for the advancement of humanity'. Theosophy was a happy merger of all his creative instincts - the student and worker of the spiritual and the material worlds, in the vanguard of a movement which might yet bring 'the enterprise of Brotherhood out of the realm of speculation into the region of possibility of actual accomplishment.'

The Isis Lodge was active from at least early 1896, holding meetings at the Liberty Hall, Harrington Street, near the Argyle Cut in the Rocks, where Dwyer gave talks on 'Matter, Light and Vibrations', and 'What is Death'. The ASB conducted a barracks at this address, and ASB members Joseph Schellenberg, Tom Brown and Clem Johnson were Lodge members; Andrews had also signed on. In Dwyer and his associates Willans must have felt he had found those working class evangelists capable of infiltrating 'the social and organised institutions of the day', promoting the cause of brotherhood. The Isis Lodge claimed 71 members by January 1897. Willans praised the Isis Lodge at the Society’s conference in late 1897. One of the most active of the four Society branches in Sydney, the Isis Lodge held over 80 meetings during the year, and conducted an 'active public propaganda' campaign. Andrews and

110. 'Theosophy' by T.W. Willans, Australian Theosophist, July 26 1897 p.90.
111. The Socialist, 22 August & 17 October 1896.
112. Isis Lodge charter, issued 16 December 1897. Dwyer Papers, ML MSS 290. Andrews and several ASB members - Dwyer, Brown, Schellenberg, McCoy - are listed as Lodge members in on the Charter. Johnson is noted as Isis Lodge Secretary in The Socialist 31 October 1896.
113. Australian Theosophist, July 1897 p.91.
114. ibid., January 1897 p.10.
Dwyer also contributed to the conference debates: Andrews gained unanimous support for 'an interchange of views and ideas on such subjects as Brotherhood', and said a few words on 'self effort in study and investigation'.

The high point of Dwyer's involvement in the Society was probably the visit by the American 'Crusaders' in January 1897. Katherine Tingley, who succeeded William Judge as leader of the American Theosophical Society in 1896 following Judge's sudden death, toured Australia with several of her colleagues, and generated a rapturous response from her Australian followers (Tingley maintained the split with the supporters of Annie Besant). Dwyer was the Secretary of the Home Crusade Committee which organised a 'brotherhood supper' at the Temperance Hall to welcome Tingley. The supper was an 'immense success'. 'The beautiful gold and purple banner of the Crusaders' was strung above flower displays on every table of the light and graceful hall, impressing not only the Crusaders but their invited guests, the poorest people the Crusade Committee could find in Sydney, a gesture reflecting the Society's brotherhood principles. Presumably, Dwyer was called on to rally the unemployed men from the barracks, although present were 'destitute people of both sexes and all ages, creeds and nationalities'. Some of the touring Crusaders remarked that 'if these were our poor then, in comparison to other countries, they were rich.' The *Australian Theosophist* observed that they were 'hungry enough for sympathy and goodwill'. The young children sat attentively through speeches and song;

115. ibid., December 1897 pp.30, 40
Mrs. Tingley gave one of the best speeches of her tour, on the subject of the life and work of William Judge. Fifteen year old Dan Dwyer sang 'The Rising of the Moon' in a 'fine soprano voice' without instrumental accompaniment, and 'carried away the audience and the Crusaders to accompany him in the chorus'. Dwyer must have felt an immense pride as his son won the crowd with his charm, symbolising an evening when his spiritual and political beliefs were united in celebration.

Despite his efforts, Dwyer largely failed to push the theosophical cause beyond the confines of the faithful. During 1896 Dwyer seized an opportunity to unite his spiritual and material causes when he temporarily assumed control of the journal of the Australian Socialist League. The editor of The Socialist, Harry Holland, was jailed for three months after being convicted of the criminal libel of Joseph Creer, the Superintendent of the Government Labour Bureau. Under Dwyer's influence The Socialist featured increasingly prominent reports of ASB campaigns and meetings, and the activities of the Isis Lodge. Holland's disapproval of Dwyer's interests became apparent upon his release, quickly announcing that The Socialist was 'itself again'. Dwyer was no longer associated with The Socialist; and the paper was 'not in any way connected with the Active Service Brigade'. The Socialist would no longer 'meander aimlessly' down strange paths (presumably a reference to theosophy) or wallow in 'purposeless denunciations'.

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120. *Daily Telegraph*, 13 January 1897.
121. Holland was found guilty of defaming Creer in an article in The Socialist as an alcoholic, who corruptly administered the Bureau and encouraged job-seekers to act as strike-breakers, or 'blacklegs'. *The Socialist*, 6 June 1896.
122. ibid., 31 October 1896.
would resume its 'straight forward' march to 'the promised land of socialism'.

Labour movement hostility to theosophy was not restricted to radicals like Holland. In 1892 the *Australian Workman* declined to publish a theosophist piece on reincarnation, citing a preoccupation with 'the social conditions of humanity on earth.'

Annie Besant's Australian tour in 1894 prompted several critical articles in the *Workman* and the *Worker* from the Reverend Philip Moses, a Jewish convert to Congregationalism, and a Labor candidate in the 1894 NSW elections. He denounced theosophy as 'a mixture of dull platitudes, spooks, Mahatmas, reincarnated spirits...dishing up the old, effete and useless philosophical rubbish of a decayed and ruined Eastern people.' Moses, an advocate of 'christian socialism', directly contested Dwyer's association of theosophy with working class liberation. Theosophy was a 'lullaby', whispering 'remain as you are...what is, must be'. Moses conceded that this static philosophy, born amongst the degenerate peoples of the Indian subcontinent, was paradoxically one of the modern 'isms' - although the most 'stupid'.

Despite the apparent success of the American Crusaders visit, the Isis Lodge briefly flourished and lapsed. There is no further mention of the Lodge after 1897 in the directory published in the *Australian Theosophist*. Roe says that Tingley's visit excited little interest outside the Society, and by the turn of the century the Sydney affiliate of Judge's dissidents had

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123. ibid., 4 December 1896.
124. *Australian Workman*, 17 December 1892.
rejoined the mainstream theosophy movement. Only 26 Australian theosophists had broken with the local Besant loyalists in 1895. A claim of 71 Isis Lodge members was probably inflated by a count of the captive audience of unemployed men in the Brigade's barracks. The men were willing or idle enough to sit through a Sunday evening talk, but many of them were likely as sceptical of Isis Lodge talks as were the fictional boarders of Andrews' 'electric invincibles'. The active membership of the Lodge was probably the eight members whose names appeared on the Lodge charter in December 1897 - a charter issued two years after the Lodge began functioning, and as its activities began to fade. Preserved in Dwyer's papers, the charter has acquired a deceptive permanence. The charter symbolises Dwyer's transitory affiliations, a restless quest for knowledge and a meaningful role in society, at odds with an inability or reluctance to settle. Perhaps Annie was right: John was still trying to live on the wind.

Striving to Save: Dwyer and Temperance

Dwyer's allegiance to temperance was more consistent than his commitment to theosophy, although his active participation on behalf of the temperance cause in Sydney seems also to have been relatively brief. In Mittagong Dwyer had been a member of the local lodge of the Independent Order of Good Templars; in Sydney he soon joined an IOGT lodge. Dwyer had a small army of potential converts in the barracks, who would have found it difficult to escape a lecture on the evils of drink from either John or Annie - Detective Rochaix noted at the Justice trial that the Barracks were run 'on strictly temperance lines'.

126. Roe, Beyond Belief, p.111.
By 1896 Brother Dwyer was the Secretary of the IOGT's Lifeboat Lodge No.9, whose sober motto was 'We strive to save'. The Lifeboat Lodge merged the serious and the social, conducting a series of entertainments between May and August 1896 - the 'Queens Birth Night', 'Question Box and Comic Cuttings', 'Pound Night', 'Brothers Surprise Sisters' and 'Brothers Sewing Contest'. Various lodges visited on social occasions, encouraging a wide participation of members in the life of the Order.129

In 1896 the IOGT had 39 lodges and over 6,000 members, with 1,489 in the Sydney district.130

Dwyer's personal affiliation to the IOGT was encouraged by the link the order drew between temperance and class issues. The IOGT declared in July 1896 that it strove to 'lift humanity to a higher level' by suppressing one specific 'labour-crushing' evil. There was no 'class distinction' in the IOGT, which promoted an idea of equality in its ranks 'very repugnant to certain sections of the community, and probably largely accounts for the comparatively few of the classes joining.' The IOGT believed that the 'lower orders' initiated and carried through almost all the world's great reforms. 'Liquor law reform is not likely to prove an exception.'131

131. Australian Temperance World and Good Templar Record, 1 July 1896. Each of the Protestant denominations had their own temperance organisations, and there was also a range of other temperance organisations including the Band of Hope, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and the Sons of Temperance. The IOGT seemed to attract the greatest working class support. J.D. Bollen, Protestantism and Social Reform in NSW, 1890-1910, Melbourne University Press 1972, pp.50-52.
The IOGT’s membership included a number of significant labour movement identities - Political Labor League President Fred Flowers was a prominent member, addressing a Protestant Hall gathering in July 1896 on the urgent need for state prohibition of liquor. W.G. Spence, the General Secretary of the powerful Australian Workers Union, also spoke on 'the drink question' at the Protestant Hall as a 'life abstainer and an ex-Good Templar' in February 1896. Support for temperance crossed Labor's ideological spectrum. Phillip Moses was a temperance advocate, and, among the radicals, Sam Rosa was a member of the Independent Order of Rechabites. William Lane was a 'strict teetotaller', who unsuccessfully attempted to impose a temperance regime at the New Australia settlement in Paraguay. Rose Summerfield, who joined Lane's communal experiment in 1899, was, as Metropolitan District Assistant Secretary, a relatively senior IOGT official. She was also the treasurer of the Heart of Oak Lodge at Waverley, in Sydney's eastern suburbs. The IOGT's Grand Templar in 1896 was former Labour parliamentarian (1891-94) G.D. Clark, who stood bail for Dwyer during the Justice case in 1894.

The IOGT reached a high point of political activism in New South Wales in the mid-1890s, pushing for a popular referendum on prohibition. In June 1896 Dwyer was issued with a 'special commission' to act as an Electoral Deputy to the IOGT's Grand Electoral Superintendent, James

132. *Australian Temperance World and Good Templar Record*, 1 August 1896.
133. ibid., 1 February 1896.
134. ibid., 1 January 1901.
Agnew. Dwyer was the IOGT's Deputy for the Lifeboat Lodge district in central Sydney, charged with lobbying the press and assisting political candidates who supported the IOGT's principle of 'prohibition without compensation' - banning alcohol sales without compensating the colony’s breweries and public houses for their losses.

Dwyer drew the Active Service Brigade into the cause, conducting a 'juvenile temperance meeting' under the name of the brigade at the barracks in April 1896. Dwyer presided as ASB 'General Manager' over a meeting of some 200 children, and a program of songs and recitations. Perhaps the stories included 'Johnny's Pledge': Johnny refused Grandma's offer to relieve a toothache with brandy-soaked cotton wool. Precocious Johnny must have won Grandma's heart as he recited: 'Into my mouth shall never come/Gin, Brandy, Whisky, Wine or Rum.' Undoubtedly the Dwyer children were well drilled in temperance rhetoric. Close to eighty names were gathered at the barracks meeting to form a juvenile temperance society.

Dwyer also worked the temperance cause into the Brigade's Domain proselytising, and his Isis Lodge talks. Dwyer identified the colony's two major beer brewers, Tooth and Co. and Toohey's Limited (whose products overtook the popularity of imported beers in the 1880s), as key 'public institutions' propping up the predatory power of state, church and capital,

138. Australian Temperance World and Good Templar Record, 1 April 1896.
139. ibid., 1 May 1896.
maintaining the squalor of the poor.  

It is indeed a State whenever the pillars of the Church stand on Toohey and Tooth, and Chinese keep the white men in charity - do we want a state like this - you will answer me, no!'  

Drink also worked its corruption upon the soul; in his notes on the occult Dwyer claimed that 'indulgent practices' - drink and 'illicit sex' - can upset a 'wholesome body', opening a door to 'mischief', adding that some of us know this from observation, if not 'personal experience.'  

Despite strong views on drink, Dwyer's agitation on behalf of the IOGT did not endure beyond 1896, just as his commitment to the Isis Lodge flagged by late 1897. By February 1897 the Good Templar Record reported that the Life Boat Lodge, once 'the most successful lodge in Australia', is 'needing help just now'; by mid year the Lodge had changed meeting rooms, and Dwyer's name was never again mentioned in relation to it.  

While the IOGT specifically pitched its appeal to the working class, the temperance movement generally failed to persuade workers to embrace their cause and remained middle class in character, reluctant to draw a link between alcohol and 'social injustice and deprivation'.  

Premier Reid's reliance on Labor in Parliament also weakened his Government's

141. John Dwyer, 'The State or Government', or 'What is a State?' notes c1895 in ML MSS 2183/3 'Occult writings'.
143. Australian Temperance World and Good Templar Record, 1 February 1897; 1 January, 1 June 1898.
commitment to temperance. By early 1897 the IOGT's Grand Electoral Superintendent had to concede that the campaign for a referendum on prohibition had failed. The Life Boat Lodge's difficulties were not isolated: IOGT membership in New South Wales fell from 6,605 to 5,222 during 1896. Dwyer's drift from active involvement may be read as part of the IOGT's decline, or his inability to maintain a long-term commitment to the causes he once enthusiastically embraced.

The music of a dream

And you yourselves should create what you have hitherto called the world: the world should be formed in your image by your reason, your will, and your love! And truly, it will be to your happiness, you enlightened men!

John Dwyer embraced a challenging ideological mix of socialism, spiritualism and temperance, and a little of Desmond’s anarchism, yet his quest for personal and class liberation was torn by instincts of order, duty and ambition. Temperance was a metaphor for Dwyer's innate caution, ingraining the lessons of 'thrift, self-reliance, sobriety', those hallmarks of 'working class respectability and political radicalism in the nineteenth century'.

century'. Respectability and radicalism, competing instincts that tested John Dwyer: he knew the evils of drink from observation, but not from 'personal experience.' Temperance was not simply a victory over insidious effects of alcohol on working class lives. As 'the ascendancy of reflection over desire', temperance was a victory over one's self. Dwyer's radical ideology was framed by an equally insidious appeal to that uniting the disparate causes of nineteenth century middle class reform: 'civilised people had to take control, and the most necessary kind of control was beyond question self-control.' Dwyer felt a tension between the well-being of his body, and the pursuit of personal or political liberation. Andrews interpreted his body as a site of suffering, Dwyer rendered his as a symbol of his restrained duty: their bodies were expressions of their alienation.

Dwyer's anxiety over the damage caused to a wholesome body by his classifications of indulgent practices - drink and illicit sex - was a reflection of the wider neuroses at work in a colonial society under strain, a society concerned at 'the loss of energy at a personal and a national level', disturbed by the exhaustion and 'unproductive expenditure of energy' that characterised modern urban life. Dwyer, torn between his own well-being and the pursuit of personal and political liberation, rendered his body as a symbol of his restrained duty. Their bodies were expressions of their alienation.

151. ‘Historians have never been interested in what has really happened to human bodies - what bodies have felt. Yet until we have succeeded in reconstructing the development of our bodies in history, we will remain strangers to ourselves’. Theweleit, Male Fantasies, pp.362-3.
152. Theweleit’s lament is answered, at least in part, by Walker’s research into anxieties about the fear of seminal fluid loss in late nineteenth Australia. Walker draws a link between the perceived needs of the body, and the challenges posed by the unprecedented changes of modern life - changes to the order of the physical world, and in perception. ‘The
circumstances and his imagination, was desperate to remain in control of his body and his life. Control, power over what was happening to him, was a sense of security denied to Dwyer, and denial intensified his craving.

Fear of losing control infiltrated Dwyer's most radical ideas. Despite recommending clairvoyance, hypnotism and 'telepathy experiments', Dwyer had not participated in these spiritualist experiments. Clairvoyance, he warned, needed careful handling. 'Any fool can walk into a gunpowder factory with a naked light'. The seance room was 'a potential minefield of behaviour and display', where everyday constraints were cast aside or challenged. Dwyer shrank from crossing the threshold of spiritualism, from opening up into a new identity, as he was both attracted and repulsed by that brother of the shadow, Arthur Desmond.

Desmond left Australia in 1895, and the temptations of his wild life filtered back from the itinerant radical to Dwyer in Sydney. Desmond travelled to London and the United States, and seems to have based himself in Chicago for some years. Well into the twentieth century,
Desmond’s diatribes found their way into Dwyer’s hands, and were collected together with some of Andrews’ papers, bound together as the volume, ‘Anarchy’. As a kind of memorial, ‘Anarchy’ preserves a tense relationship. Neither Andrews nor Dwyer could live by Desmond’s code, although they were as challenged by Desmond as by any threat from the State. As Dwyer dutifully swept the barracks, or worried over a speech in the Domain or an Isis Lodge talk, did he hear Desmond’s mocking voice, telling him that duty was nothing but a mirage of freedom? Esdaile taunted Meyrick’s and Rigby’s timidity, to which Rigby could only feebly protest: ‘if you don’t walk into the trap they build it over the top of you.’ Yet Rigby, a manifestation of Andrews' insight into his friend John Dwyer, is the same Dwyer who embraced violence as the first virtue in his copy of *Survival of the Fittest*. Trying to avoid the traps, violence was a virtue that Andrews and Dwyer suppressed; unable to find the right path to liberation, they rationalised the structures of discipline looming over them, complex and inert.

By December 1902 John Andrews was dying of tuberculosis in Melbourne Hospital. For some years, he had been editing *Tocsin*, the journal of the Victorian labour movement. From his hospital bed he sent a final message to his friends, and some last advice to the budding Labour journalist: avoid ‘smart writing’, he urged, and ‘socialist sectarianism’.156 ‘Anarchists’ should not dismiss ‘parliamentary socialists’ as ‘a pack of frauds and tricksters’; and laborites should not condemn anarchism as a gospel of despair, ‘Such things can do nothing but hurt the feelings of many of our best and staunchest comrades.’ Andrews’ article was an appeal for reconciliation, and a dream of a better humanity which he had never abandoned: we should try to find how ‘we can agree and work

156. *Tocsin*, 18 December 1902.
together’, he pleaded. Reconciliation was an elusive dream, slipping away even as Andrews died in July 1903. A fellow Melbourne anarchist, John Fleming, wrote to Dwyer in Sydney, noting that 'poor Andrews died an R.C. He sent for the priest the night before he died...when he was well and his mind sound he was an Anarchist.' Fleming seemed unable to conceive of a mind capable of rationalising two opposing ideas. Fleming’s own views were untroubled by doubt: 'Anarchy and no compromise with the political shysters is my idea', he assured Dwyer.157

Andrews was indeed an anarchist when he was well; as he might have reminded Fleming, he was often unwell, and acutely aware that life was a internalised struggle, as much as a contest with others or a hostile society. From his sick bed Andrews sang again his Death Song, written when he was 'not twenty years old'.158 As the poet lay dying he felt 'the force of what I wrote, somewhat prophetically, many years ago'. The 'rust of decay and sickness' weakened the grip of his pen as he struggled to describe the 'thousand magic voices' that echoed in his breast.

But, alas! I cannot paint them,
These visions that to and fro
Move around me like tides of Ocean
In their mystic ebb and flow;
And I cannot write the burden
Of the wondrous sounds that stream
With their strange unearthly beauty
Like the music of a dream.

Yet he tried to summon the singing voice within, if not in rhyme then at least in plain prose.

To the people I would say...love your neighbour as yourself...If you love yourself no better than to let yourself be walked over and kicked, you will let your neighbour be sweated and abused, and you won't care a bit. Try and love yourself so much that you'll be prepared to fight to get yourself all you want and keep anyone from sitting on you, and then when you start out to love your neighbour as yourself, it will do him good.

Andrews had predicted and fulfilled his own dilemma: the anarchism he embraced, well and unwell, was too inhibited to reach out and achieve its social ambitions. Andrews vision was never steeped in hate, or sectarianism: so much could not be said for Arthur Desmond. In 1913 Desmond sent Dwyer his latest production, The Lion's Paw - 'a journal of the Gods', no less, an extended tirade along familiar themes, railing at Christ, that 'false prophet' and 'crucified JEW', against whom he contrasted Nietzsche, 'the philosopher with the hammer', and Nietzsche's demand to 'get up off your marrow bones. Stand erect and shape the destiny of the world to your own will.'159 Desmond had certainly tried, but it is disputable that his efforts were any more successful than those of the meek Andrews. Desmond created a world of violent caricature, one voice of hate rising out of the collision of social injustice, racial prejudice, male anger. The imminent First World War unleashed

159. The Lion's Paw, Chicago, March 1913, No.7, pp.7, 8. Included in the volume, 'Anarchy'. 
the suppressed potential of his ideological brethren.\textsuperscript{160} \textit{The Lion’s Paw} carried a subversive message from the Babylon of power Dwyer and Andrews struggled to tame. On the last page was a small illustration of a priest raising a crucifix towards the reader. By the priest ran an inscription: ‘In this sign you are conquered’.\textsuperscript{161}

\textsuperscript{160} \textit{The Lion’s Paw} was another paean to violence as an end in itself: ‘strife is sure and death is sure and aggressive combat is the instinctive philosophy of all successful men.’ ibid., p.6. Carsten notes that the various European fascist movements had their origins before the First World War, amongst ‘disinherited and disgruntled’ minorities. These movements carried over into the far more promising post-war climate and developed a mass following. Although divergent in nature, they drew their support from common sources - including a violent nationalism and anti-semitism. FL Carsten, \textit{The Rise of Fascism}, Methuen & Co Ltd London 1974 p.10; Theweleit, \textit{Male Fantasies}, pp.xvi, 18-26.

\textsuperscript{161} ibid., p.8.