

THE FIRST NINETY YEARS

The Printing House of Massina
Melbourne
1859 to 1949

by

RONALD G. CAMPBELL

A. H. MASSINA & CO. PTY. LTD.
350-352 Swanston Street, Melbourne, Australia



ALFRED HENRY MASSINA
1834 – 1917

Founder, The Printing House of Massina (1859)
Inaugural Chairman, The Herald and Weekly Times Limited (1902)

Massina, Alfred Henry (1834 - 1917)

Birth:

3 November 1834, Stepney, London, England

Death:

4 February 1917, Richmond, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Cultural Heritage:

- English

Religious Influence:

- Anglican

Occupation:

- book publisher
- colonial militia (Australia)
- goldminer
- local government councillor
- magazine/journal owner
- printer

- Life Summary
- Resources
- Abbreviations

MASSINA, ALFRED HENRY (1834-1917), printer, was born on 3 November 1834 at Stepney, London, son of Charles Edward Massina, artist, and his wife Susan. In April 1850 he was apprenticed to the London printing firm of Sydney Waterlow. In 1854 he married Frances Hemming, née Bridges, sailed with her for Victoria in the *George Marshall* and arrived at Port Phillip on 5 April 1855. Almost penniless he left his wife working in Melbourne to support herself and their baby son and made a luckless foray to the goldfields. He returned to Melbourne and was employed by W. H. Williams, printer. A fellow employee was Samuel V. Winter with whom Massina was later associated on the board of directors of the *Herald*, Melbourne.

In 1859 Massina joined with William Clarson, Joseph Shallard and Joseph T. Gibb to form the printing firm of Clarson, Shallard & Co. In 1866 Clarson and Gibb went to Sydney and the firm became Clarson, Massina & Co. Massina's son, Alfred Lionel, was admitted to partnership in 1868. After Shallard withdrew his financial interest in 1876 Richard John Foster and William Smith Mitchell were admitted as partners and the firm reconstructed as A. H. Massina & Co., which is still its name.

The firm engaged in publishing as well as printing. Its most famous publication was the *Austral-ian Journal*, which gained overseas sales as well as finding its way to bush shanties and city homes throughout Australasia. The first issue, 2 September 1865, announced that 'the ablest COLONIAL pens of the day will be engaged on our staff. Historical Romances and Legendary Narratives of the old country will be mingled with tales of Venture and Daring in the new'. Adam Lindsay Gordon, Henry Kendall and Marcus Clarke were 'able pens' who contributed to this magazine, which outlived Massina by many decades. His imprint on the firm was energetic application of sound business judgment rather than editorial work; he left the running of the *Australian Journal* to George Walstab and later to William Smith Wilson. However, Massina is credited with the decision to fund Marcus Clarke, then only 23, for visiting Tasmania in 1869 to gather material on the early convict days. In 1870 the *Australian Journal* commenced serialized publication of Clarke's powerful and brooding convict story, *His Natural Life*. Massina met deadlines and expected others to do so. He locked the

brilliant and erratic author in an office, with sustaining drams of whisky, to force production of instalments for the magazine. Massina later gave this experience as his reason for disregarding business acumen and allowing a rival, George Robertson, to take the profitable opportunity to publish the work in book form.

Massina's financial management ensured the firm's steady growth. Along with job printing it was sustained by popular publications which had originated in the 1860s. These included the *Australian Melodist*, a series of booklets of words of popular songs, and *Clarson, Massina & Co.'s Weather Almanac and General Guide and Handbook for Victoria*, to which a medical section was added and led to publication of *Dr. L. L. Smith's Medical Almanac*. The *Colonial Monthly* was a notable short-lived magazine issued in 1867 as a revamped version of the newly-acquired *Australian Monthly Magazine*. Clarke was again a contributor, as were Kendall and R. H. Horne. The magazine was sold in 1868 but the firm continued to print it. A notable later success was the collected poems of Adam Lindsay Gordon, published by A. H. Massina & Co. in 1877. It is known that Gordon owed the firm money for costs of printing his book *Ashtaroath* and Massina refused him a loan on the day of Gordon's suicide on 24 June 1870. Debate continues as to circumstances of Massina having rights to publish the poems.

In the early 1880s Massina's sons, William and Henry, joined the partnership. The decade saw a miscellany of new publications, ranging from *The Australian Merino* to *Men and How to Manage Them*. In addition the firm printed the *Sportsman*, then owned by Massina's friend S. V. Winter, and acquired by Massina in 1896. The light-weight *Massina's Penny Weekly* was issued from 1899 to 12 February 1901.

In 1891 Massina visited the United States and England. His observations led to A. H. Massina & Co. installing Victoria's first linotype machine in 1894. Its worth being proven, the machine was introduced to the *Herald* in 1895. By then he had released management of A. H. Massina & Co. to his son Alfred Lionel, and had given increasing attention to the *Herald*. Winter's Melbourne Newspaper Co. had obtained control of the *Herald* in the early 1870s and Massina is reputed to have given periodic financial support. He and William Baillieu were directors who saw the *Herald* through the financial crisis of the early 1890s, and Massina was chairman by 1902.

In 1909 Massina retired from business, styled as 'hale, energetic and hearty', of 'frank bonhomie', yet one who 'has not ... mingled in public life'. In 1864 he had joined the Richmond Rifles Volunteer Corps, attaining the rank of captain, and later was a member of the Lillydale Shire Council. Overall he appears as a man who set wheels turning yet preferred to see that others ran them. His home was in Richmond, Melbourne: his retreat at Wandin.

Massina was an Anglican and a Mason. His first wife died in 1893. On 15 October 1898 he married Edith Elizabeth, née Hicks. He died on 4 February 1917 at Richmond. He had seven children, all by the first marriage. He was survived by his second wife, a son Henry and daughters, Fanny and Alice. He was buried in Boroondara cemetery. His estate was probated at £33,438.

Select Bibliography

R. G. Campbell, *The First Ninety Years: The Printing House of Massina Melbourne 1859 to 1949* (Melb, 1949); Cowans: *the Australasian Printing and Stationery Magazine*, Apr 1909; *Argus* (Melbourne), 5 Feb 1917; Affidavits and recognizances, newspaper registrations, Companies Branch (Registrar-General's Dept, Melbourne). More on the resources

Author: Frank Strahan

Print Publication Details: Frank Strahan, 'Massina, Alfred Henry (1834 - 1917)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 5, Melbourne University Press, 1974, pp 222-223.

Australian Masséna Families (Pages 8-11)

1. Jean Charles Domenica Antoine Paul Masséna b abt 1783. In 1822 married Susannah Reynolds b 1802. Parents of 8 children including Alfred Henry Massina b 1834 and Charles Edward Paul Massina b 1825, and
2. Dr Louis Masséna b abt 1770 and wife (nee Countess van Lear), parents of:
 - i) Eliza Lola Masséna* b 1807 in Westham, Essex. In 1827 married Dr William Florance* b 1800 – a daughter (one of at least 16 children), Mary Eliza Florance b 1839, married William H. Williams in Melbourne, 1857 (Pages 32, 45, 80 and 115),
 - ii) John Nathaniel Messeena b abt 1801 (Surgeon). Page 9 and below Notes and Queries – 1917, and
 - iii) Dr Henry Messeena b abt 1800 (Chemist) – a daughter, Grace Carr d 1909 married Richard Henry Trevor-Roper (son of Charles Blayney), 1864. Page 9.

Antoine-Francois Masséna (b 1733) was the father of Charles Masséna and Louis Masséna. He was an uncle of Napoleonic Marshal Andre Masséna. 1758-1817 (Page 8).

*Great grandparents of Roy Edward Morgan (1908-1985) – founder of the Australian Gallup Poll (today Morgan Poll). On April 1, 1940 Roy Morgan was appointed to the staff of The Herald & Weekly Times Limited by Keith Murdoch, Managing Director. Prior to this Roy Morgan was a freelance “Financial writer” for The Herald, The Argus, and The Stock Exchange of Melbourne.

Roy Morgan Research office (from 2006) is at 401 Collins Street. (See 1949 photo of office building, before Page 129.)

The above note on the Masséna family in Australia was prepared by Gary Morgan, son of Roy Morgan, December 2007.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

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[12 S. III. MARCH 3, 1917.

Queries.

WE must request correspondents desiring information on family matters of only private interest to affix their names and addresses to their queries, in order that answers may be sent to them direct.

JOHN NATHANIEL MESSEENA was a son of one of the medical attendants on the first Napoleon. The father subsequently had a fashionable practice in Albemarle Street, and he and his wife were buried at Portsmouth. John Nathaniel had a practice in the East End of London. Jonathan Pereira, 1804-53 ('D.N.B.'), was the paternal uncle of his wife. I should like some corroboration of this family tradition. Did the Messeenas hold English degrees? Were they natives of this country? Any additional biographical details will be much appreciated.

ISRAEL SOLOMONS.

* Dr Louis Masséna



ROY EDWARD MORGAN

1908 - 1985

by Sir William Dargie, 1978

Founded

Australian Gallup Poll, today Morgan Poll (1941 -)
The Roy Morgan Research Centre Pty Ltd (May 1959)



Dr. Louis Masséna brother of
Jean Charles Domenica Antoine Paul Masséna
(Pages 9 and 10)



Madame Masséna (nee Countess van Lear)



Eliza Lola Florance (nee Masséna),
cousin of Alfred Henry Massina,
great grandmother of Roy Edward Morgan



William Henry Williams, 1831 -1910,
grandfather of Roy Edward Morgan
(Pages 32, 45, 80 and 115)

A. L. Gordon, Clarke and Others

HISTORICAL JOURNAL

In the fortunes of Adam Lindsay Gordon and Marcus Clarke a great part was played by the publishers of that hardy monthly, "The Australian Journal." The story is told in "The first ninety years: the Printing House of Massina, Melbourne, 1859 to 1949" by Ronald G. Campbell

By I.M.

GORDON'S STORY WAS not ended when, on the morning of June 24, 1870, he walked from his home in Middle Brighton along the Beach-road to Picnic Point, half-way between what are now Hampton and Sandringham—a spot which today, even in June, suggests nothing more gloomy than perhaps a Sunday School outing—and shot himself.

Gordon then was £500 in debt, of which £50 were owed to Clarson, Massina and Co., as it then was, for the cost of printing his second and third volumes of verse, Ashtaroth and Bush Bal-lads.

Last Interview

The last business interview in Gordon's life seems to have been with the firm on the afternoon before his suicide. It was rumored, of course, that the suicide was the result of the interview. Forty years later Alfred Henry Massina, the Englishman who had founded the firm, seemed to confirm the rumor.

By then Massina and Co. (as it was by about 1880) owned, as holder of the Gordon copyrights, what Mr. Campbell calls "that rarest of all literary properties, a best-selling collection of poems."

However, old A. H. Massina's confirmation of the most interesting way of putting the story of Gordon's suicide was merely the publisher's bad conscience.

But Massina did not kill Gordon. After all, a debt of £500 should

leave a poet unscathed. And £50 is the least part of £500. Gordon was the victim of—look at his portrait, his statue—hypertrophied rectitude.

Gordon was a casualty in an old conflict—the fight between the money standards and the living habits of a rich man's comparatively poor son.

The year of Gordon's suicide saw also the first publication, by Massina's, of another classic, Clarke's novel "For the Term of His Natural Life." Classic rank for Clarke's novel was confirmed during 1946 by publication in that growing repository, the Penguin Library.

Lock-up

"His Natural Life" was a serial in the "Australian Journal." Clarke seems to have edited the "Journal" for a time. Being Clarke, he did things on the side, including the contemplation of starting another magazine.

"His Natural Life," A. H. Massina said, was more trouble than it was worth. To Clarke, it was worth his job.

Massina had to lock Clarke in a room—all alone with table and chair, paper and pen, a bottle of ink—to get the monthly instalments written on or near time.

Clarke, always the gentleman, took offence at this. Other papers, other magazines, were in the wind. Clarke's loyalty, as always, was to Clarke. Massina's simply had, as the phrase goes, to let him go.

Early editors of the "Journal" included Robert P. Whitworth

(horsebreaker, actor, company promoter, playwright, novelist and author of the greater part of the second volume, 1888, of Alexander Sutherland's "Victoria and Its Metropolis"), George Arthur Walstab (born in Demerara, historical novelist at 18, translator, editor at 25 of the "Calcutta Englishman," gold escorter), William Ewart Gladstone Symons (who helped edit the "Journal" by night and—himself "lean and cadaverous in appearance"—stuffed animals at the National Museum by day).

Mr. Campbell himself, from incomplete files and incomplete office records, has made a lively and coherent yet scrupulous volume of literary and, indeed, industrial history. It deserves a form of presentation—with indexes, notes and all—for a wider than family and house circulation.

Henry Kendall

He could enlarge then on the relations between Massina's and our first properly Australian poet Henry Kendall, as he has enlarged so well on that originator of wonders, that freelance advertising physician, Dr. Louis L. Smith, and on Massina's transient periodicals, of 50 years ago and more, with names like "Massina's Penny Magazine," "The Australian Melodist," and an "Australian Almanac" whose weather forecasts, we read, were drawn from a hat.

FOREWORD

In days when our debt to the past is often either ignored or belittled, it is refreshing to find in one's hands a volume such as this, which is an acknowledgment by one man of his debt to his forebears and an expression of pride in the accomplishment of one family which already extends over four generations.

When Mr. A. W. Massina returned to active business in 1937 after an illness which would have provided a lesser man with sufficient excuse to retire, he was actuated mainly by a desire to consolidate and expand the business which had been founded by his grandfather almost eighty years previously and to which he, with his brother, had devoted the most active years of his life.

His pride in the firm is exemplified in his expressed wish that the history of his family and its business organisation should be recorded. In this venture he found willing co-operation from within the organisation, and this volume from the able pen of Mr. R. G. Campbell is the result.

Throughout this story, as is natural, no reference will be found to the author, to whom, probably more than any other, is due the success of "The Australian Journal," which is the most widely recognised of the activities of the organisation.

After being associated with the magazine as a contributor from 1921, Mr. Campbell joined the staff of A. H. Massina & Co. Pty. Ltd. in 1926 as Associate Editor of "The Australian Journal" in conjunction with Mr. S. L. Massina. In 1931 he was appointed Editor, and since then his sound literary judgment has been a major contribution to the ever-increasing popularity of the Journal.

Rex Grayson, the pen-name under which he has written several hundred stories for the Journal, is well known to readers throughout Australia, New Zealand and even further afield.

In addition to his own immediate task, Mr. Campbell has always displayed an active interest in all movements for the advancement of Australian literature, and many well-known Australian authors are in his debt for his cheerful and patient advice and encouragement when, as beginners, they submitted their early contributions for his consideration.

Over a period of several years, Mr. Campbell conducted a thorough research not only into intimate family affairs, but also into contemporary history, which has been blended into his work so successfully that this story will be valued beyond the immediate circle of those directly interested.

The work, completed towards the end of the war, was left in the office safe to await a time when the demands of customers on the production capacity of the organisation was not quite so pressing as it has been since we returned to peace-time activities.

However, when the staff realised that on 1st July, 1949, Mr. Massina would complete fifty years of association with the organisation, they asked to be allowed to produce the publication as a gesture of their goodwill towards him and to mark this unique occasion.

They are confident that they have achieved their desire to complete this task without his knowledge, and the first copy is presented to him as an example of the craftsmanship of the organisation which he leads, and as a token of their sincere regard for a man who cherishes friendship and goodwill above fame and fortune.

TRAFFORD M. COSH.

Melbourne,
1st July, 1949.

The author gratefully acknowledges assistance received from the late Mr. W. C. Baud, B.A., Chief Librarian of Victoria, without whose encouragement this book could never have been started; and from Messrs. A. W. Walstab, W. A. Asher, James Mitchell, J. A. McDonald, A. Jerome, Brian Elliott, B.A., S. Simmons, and J. P. Toohey, who all added information which helped its completion.

ERRATA

Page 15, line 27

"Eldridge" read "Edridge."

Page 73, lines 18 and 19.—

For "Picnic Point, Hampton" read
"Park St., Brighton."

Page 86:

To the list of Kendall's contributions, add—
"The Ballad of Tanna," July 1869;
"Mount Erebus," July, 1870;
"Camped by the Creek," November, 1870;
"Manasseh," September, 1870.

I

AMONG the crafts which have contributed to the growth of civilisation, printing stands first. Without the printer, the world heritage of literature, philosophy and science would have been but a trifling legacy, in which none but the wealthy had any share.

It is, then, just that the printer has always been held in high esteem. Although he has called in the aid of electricity, photography, chemistry, metallurgy, and a dozen allied sciences, the major principles of his craft remain the same, so that Gutenberg and Caxton, could they visit a modern printing office, would have little difficulty in comprehending the basic processes, although they would rub their eyes at the speed with which they are performed.

The printer has always been something of a wanderer. In the early days of the craft in Europe, the travelling press, which moved from city to city, was a familiar institution, while in the pioneering epoch of America the printer, with his few cases of type and his hand-press, followed close behind the trapper and the gold-seeker, ready to run off anything from a daily newspaper to a handbill advertising a circus or a lynching.

As in America, so in Australia. Sydney was barely named before the printer started work, while Melbourne was a mere handful of huts when Fawcner, having

produced a few issues of the *Port Phillip Advertiser* in manuscript, imported type and press, and opened the first printing office in the future State of Victoria.

In 1834, the year of the Hentys' first settlement at Portland, a boy was born in the old London parish of Stepney, who was destined to play a notable part, not only in the printing industry in Victoria, but in the development of Australian literature and journalism. The boy was Alfred Henry Massina.

The origin of the Massina family is unknown. A name so uncommon should have been readily traceable, but researches in England unfortunately proved without result. Tradition links the line with that of the great Napoleonic Marshal Massena, but while there is no proof of so distinguished a connection, it is reasonable to assume that the name originated on the Continent, and most probably in Southern France. There seems to be no record of it in standard works on English surnames.

In the eighteenth and the early part of the nineteenth centuries, surnames were by no means constant quantities. Both spelling and pronunciation were varied at the whim of those who bore them, or in accord with the ideas of parish clerks when taking down details of such events as births, marriages and deaths. No better example of this could be quoted than that of the celebrated name of Pepys, of which seventeen different spellings have been traced.

The original London Massinas may well have been *emigres* who came from France with the refugees fleeing from the Reign of Terror which followed the outbreak of the French Revolution. If this were the case, it can easily be supposed that the name underwent one or more changes before it became standardised as Massina, or that other branches of the family adopted

different spellings. The names of foreigners were especially liable to such mutations. Every petty official would have his own notion of how a Frenchman should spell his name.

The only English mention of any name resembling Massina in the eighteenth century is that of one Anthony Messina, recorded in the parish register of Rotherhithe, on the Surrey side of the Thames, as having been drowned in that river in 1737. He was laconically set down as a "foreigner", but no note was made of his nationality. The eighteenth-century Englishman was not very interested in the origin of anyone from beyond his own island.

Seventy-six years were to elapse before anyone with a similar name was to appear in official records. This was when Letters of Administration were granted in the estate of Bonto Messena, late ordinary-seaman in the East India ship *Dover Castle*. He left £6, which apparently was promptly claimed by one Emanuel Buland, cryptically described as a "creditor". Robson's Directory for 1837 quotes "H. Messeena", a chemist, who lived in the Mile End Road, and "John Nathaniel Messeena", a surgeon, of 73 High Poplar Street. We have to wait until 1840 for the first official mention of the name in its present form, when the birth was recorded of Eleanor Virginia Massina in St. Pancras parish. In 1848 Charles Massina, tobacconist, was in business at 6½ Exmouth Street, Clerkenwell, but he had left that address by 1849. That year the death of a Susanna Massina is reported at Edmonton.

On 5th April, 1850, Charles Massina himself died in the Islington Workhouse. On his death certificate his age is given as sixty-seven, and he is styled "drawing-master", but he was undoubtedly the same Massina who was in business as a tobacconist in Exmouth Street. That he was in poor circumstances at the time of his death is not surprising. It must have

been very difficult for an elderly man to make a living as a drawing-master a hundred years ago. Apparently Charles Massina sought to combine art with shop-keeping—a not unusual thing at that time—and obviously he did not make a success of either. His death certificate does not show whether his wife predeceased him, but she was very probably the Susanna Massina who had died at Edmonton the year before. In any case, he was the father of Alfred Henry Massina.

There was at least one other son, Charles, probably the elder, as he bore his father's name. Of Charles' career nothing is known, except that he survived until 1912, when he died in London. His son, the third Charles, came to Australia in the 1880's as a ship's steward, and served for several years with the Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigade, dying at the age of thirty-five as the result of an over-dose of chloroform while undergoing an operation in the Melbourne Hospital. He left a widow and son, who were living in Scotland.

In 1948 a letter was received at the office of A. H. Massina & Co. from this son's son, also named Charles, then living in Edinburgh. He had seen the firm's imprint on an old book in his mother's possession, and wrote to enquire whether, as he believed, any relationship existed between the proprietors and himself. Thus, almost a century after the death of the original Charles Massina, contact between his descendants was renewed.

Four days after the death of his father, Alfred Henry was apprenticed to the famous printing firm of Waterlow, then located at 66 London Wall. The

following extract from the Records of the Stationers and Newspaper Makers' Company gives the bare details:

9th day of April, 1850.

Alfred Henry Massina, son of Charles Massina, deceased, to Sydney Hedly Waterlow, of No. 66 London Wall, Stationer and Printer — 7 years, no money.

No money! The terse phrase does nothing to suggest the struggle that lay before a sixteen-year-old printer's apprentice in the London of 1850. Apparently he had no resources, nor, so far as is known, had he any near relatives apart from his brother, but with characteristic determination he managed to do more than merely keep his head above water, for four years later he married. Just how bold a step this was can be imagined when it is realised that it meant the breaking of his indentures.

In a letter dated 12th June, 1939, Sir Edgar Waterlow, then head of the firm of Waterlow, pointed out that no apprentice of that period was allowed to marry until he was out of his time or had reached the age of twenty-one. Love, however, who laughs at locksmiths, was also no respecter of indentures, for in 1854 Alfred Henry Massina was married at the Stepney Registry Office to Frances Hemmings Bridges, the daughter of Thomas Bridges, butcher, of 2 King Street, Stepney. That also was Massina's own address, and it may be assumed that he was lodging there. His bride was six years older than he.

Usually a young man of twenty would have to face a good deal of opposition from his family if he announced his intention of marrying a girl of twenty-six, but young Massina was practically alone in the world, and there was no one to influence his choice —

fortunately, for the marriage was destined to be a happy one, and the partnership thus begun in that gloomy riverside London parish remained unbroken for almost forty years.

An even bolder step was to follow. The end of 1854 saw the young couple on their way to Australia.

II

THE ship chosen was the *George Marshall*. By the time she sailed, Massina had acquired a fresh responsibility, for his son Alfred Lionel had been born.

The total passage money for the little family amounted to forty pounds. From this, twelve shillings was subsequently deducted, as the departure of the vessel was postponed from the 5th to the 12th of December, and shore maintenance money of one shilling per day was allowed.

Sea travel has long been regarded by many people as an agreeable way of spending a holiday, but it was neither restful nor luxurious at that period. Compared with the smallest of the present-day Australian coasters, the *George Marshall* would be tiny; alongside the modern overseas liner, she would be almost as insignificant as a tugboat. Nowadays a man who proposed to take his wife and infant child on a 12,000-mile voyage in a 1,300-ton sailing ship would be regarded as either heartless or insane, but the travellers of a century ago had different standards.

Even so, it is very doubtful whether Fanny Massina looked forward to the voyage with anything but trepidation. It was winter in northern latitudes, and the North Atlantic is no holiday cruising ground in December, even for modern steamers. How it dealt with vessels of the eighteen-fifties can scarcely be imagined by the pampered guests of twentieth-century floating hotels. The thought of caring for a baby in the cramped quarters of a sailing ship on a voyage

lasting at least three months must have daunted any young mother.

The odds were against the child ever reaching Port Phillip. It was a rare ship which made the passage to Australia without some epidemic breaking out. Seasickness, crowded quarters, cabins almost hermetically sealed for days on end, lack of deck space for exercise, monotonous food and primitive hygiene all had the worst possible effect on the health of the passengers, young or old, and burial at sea was an all-too-common occurrence. As a general rule, only the most robust adults would venture on so long a voyage, and the mortality among young children, heavy enough ashore, was very much greater under the conditions prevailing at sea.

The ticket issued to the young couple is still in existence. It shows that passengers were expected to provide their own bedding, cutlery and crockery. On the other hand, the master of the ship was compelled to issue each adult with three quarts of fresh water daily. This would have to suffice both for drinking purposes and for washing. For bathing, salt water would be used, although, as there were no facilities for heating it, one may imagine that, at least until the ship reached warmer latitudes, the bathroom stewards, if any were carried, would not be overworked.

The supply of food was reckoned up, like Shylock's pound of flesh, to the last scruple. In lieu of bread, each adult received a little less than five pounds of biscuit a week. Half a pound of meat — salt beef or pork — was issued daily, except on Fridays, when the ration was the same amount of "salmon or other fish." Tuesday and Friday were soup days, half a pound being served on each occasion, although just how it was weighed out is not explained. For puddings, each voyager was served with a weekly ration of two pounds of flour, half a pound of raisins, and six ounces of suet.

Tea drinkers were not liberally treated, two ounces a week being the issue, but it could be eked out with half an ounce of cocoa. To help the hard biscuit down, six ounces of butter and a quarter of a pound of treacle were supplied every seven days, while such luxuries as pickles, mustard, vinegar, salt and pepper appeared in infinitesimal quantities. No fruit comes into the picture, and the only vegetable mentioned on the ration scale is a weekly allowance of two-thirds of a packet of peas, although a footnote adds that, if practicable, the master may issue a pound of potatoes a day, to take the place of the flour, rice, raisins, peas, suet and vinegar — in fact, of practically everything! Curiously enough, the tea and butter ration scales were to be in force throughout Australia during and for some time after World War II.

Passengers who could afford it took with them private supplies of jam, coffee and any fruit or vegetables that would keep for a reasonable time, but even so, their diet could scarcely be called well-balanced, or even balanced at all.

A week on so monotonous and restricted a menu would drive the modern voyager to violent protest, and the seamen to mutiny, but in those days it was regarded as normal for a three-months voyage. The members of the crew, who existed on weevily biscuits, plum-duff and "salt-horse", probably regarded the steerage passengers, with their Friday fish, their butter, treacle, pickles and peas, as pampered children of luxury.

The *George Marshall* was a 13-year-old full-rigged ship, frigate built, of 1,361 tons register. Commanded by the famous J. Bulwer Godfrey, she was advertised by her owners, Marshall and Eldridge, as being "a packet expressly built for trade with the Colonies, with accommodation of the most superior description for cabin and intermediate passengers."

What was even more to the point, she carried a qualified surgeon. In a ship crowded with over three hundred passengers, few of whom had ever been to sea before, his post could have been no sinecure. The modern ship's doctor must often long for some medical emergency to vary the tedium of bridge and dancing, but the sea-going surgeon of that period was one of the hardest-worked men on board. The *Whirlwind*, which made the passage from England about the same time as the *George Marshall*, her destination being Launceston, suffered an outbreak of scarlet fever, from which forty-four passengers died — one every other day of the voyage!

Nor was it Death alone which kept the surgeons of the emigrant ships at work. It was unusual for a vessel to reach Australia without a few small passengers whose names had not appeared on the original sailing list.

Fortunately, no serious outbreaks of sickness occurred in the *George Marshall*, but it was remarkable that she reached Port Phillip at all. After leaving London the ship steered for Plymouth, where she lay over Christmas, taking more passengers aboard. It would not be a particularly merry Christmas for the emigrants, cooped up in a sailing vessel in the middle of an English winter, amid the confusion of imminent departure, with intending passengers falling over their own luggage on the rain-swept decks and taking tearful farewells of those they were leaving behind, never, in most cases, to meet again. But at last, to the infinite relief of everyone on board, the anchor was weighed and the ship towed out to sea, where sail was set and the misty coastline of England dropped astern. Neither young Massina nor his wife were to see those shores again, but their son was to revisit them many years later.

These Directions, and the "Notices" to "Passengers" below, form Part of, and must appear on, each Contract Ticket.

- SEABOARD'S CONTRACT TICKET.**
1. A Contract Ticket in this form must be given to every Passenger engaging a Passage from the United Kingdom or any place out of Europe, and being within the Mediterranean Sea.
2. The Victualling Scale for the Voyage must be printed into the Body of the Ticket.
3. All the Bills must be correctly filled in, and the Ticket must be legally signed with the Christian Names and Surname and Address in full of the Purser or Clerk.
4. The Day of the Month, in which the Ship is to sail must be inserted in Words and not in Figures.
5. Where once issued this Ticket must not be withdrawn from the Passenger, nor any alteration or erasure made in it.

Ship Geo Marshall of 1361 Tons Register, to sail from London,
for S. Phillips on the 2nd Day of Dec 1854.

I engage that the Parties herein named sailing on the Ship James Caird with a Stevedore Passage to the Port of London in the Ship James Caird with not less than Ten Cubic feet for Luggage for each Slave Adult, and shall be victualled during the Voyage and the Time of Detention at any place before the Termination, according to the following Scale, for the Sum of 40/- including Government Dues before Embarkation, and Mail Money, if any, at the Place of Landing, and for other Charge, except Freight for Boxes of Luggage beyond the Quantity above specified, and I hereby acknowledge to have received the Sum of 10/- in cash payment.

NAMES.	AGES.	Equal to State Adulthood
Alfred Matsumoto	23	1
Benjamin do	23	1
Alfred Matsumoto	6 mo	

In addition to any Provisions which the Passengers may themselves bring, the following quantities, at least, of Water and Provisions, (to be issued daily,) will be supplied by the Master of the Ship, as required by Law; viz., to each Stow-Adult 3 Quarts of Water daily; and to each Passenger, according to the following Scale:

DAYS.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31																													
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY																											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

When Fresh Reef is built, the Port is good & will be a Day well bestowed, and if practicable, the Strand
of Salt Water and Oats Paved or Fulsider. Toward N. W. low of Flood, River, Estuary, Port, South, Fitzroy,
St. John's, and New York, West, North, and South, all Rivers, all Rivers.

It will be in the discretion of the Captain to issue, three times a week, to Children under seven years of age, four ounces of Rice or Wheat or any of aye, in lieu of Salt Meat or Fresh Meat Provided.

(N.B. If Mess Channels and Holding are to be bracketed by the skin, the Struts must be inserted first.)

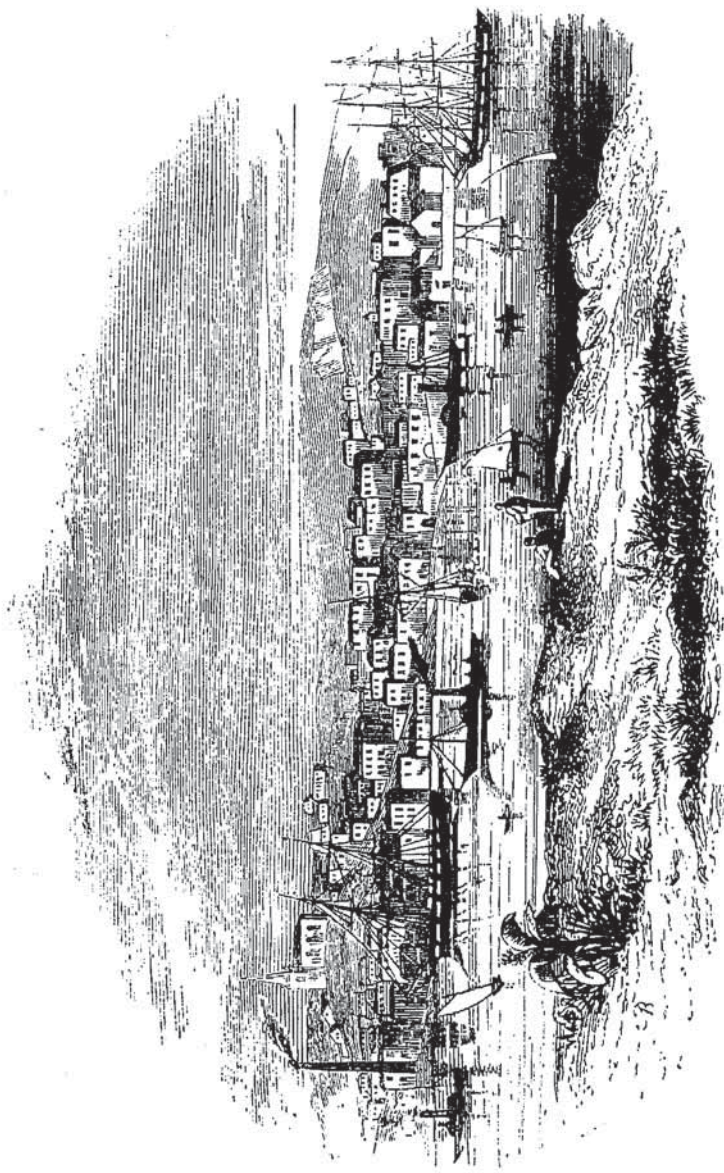
MARSHALL & EDRIDGE,
2, PRINCE STREET, LONDON.

Per *Thomas Edward Estlin*
John Estlin
 Signature in full _____ Place and Date *St. Dunstons Church, London*
 Deposit ... £ *10* [if signed by a Broker or Agent, state on whose behalf] *16th Nov 1854*
 Balance ... £ *0* to be paid at *St. Dunstons Church*
£10

NOTICE TO PASSENGERS.

[illegible]

(N.B.—This Contract Ticket is exempt from Stamp Duty.)



Melbourne from the River Yarra, 1855.

III

NO doubt most of the passengers had looked forward to the voyage with the keenest apprehension. Their fears were fully realised, for almost immediately the *George Marshall* encountered a northerly blizzard, which carried away the fore and main-topmasts, and brought down the yards and a good deal of the rigging. The seasick and terrified emigrants, battened down 'tween decks so that they would not be washed overboard by the tremendous seas that swept the ship, might have been pardoned for wishing themselves at home again, no matter how precarious the condition of their life in England, but there was no turning back.

As soon as the weather improved, Captain Godfrey set about repairs, but from then on the ship's progress was slower than usual, as the improvised rigging was unable to carry normal sail. Nevertheless, by the end of January she had crossed the Line with all the ceremonial consequent upon such an occasion. Now the northerly which she had ridden so far died away, and for many days the ship lay becalmed. At first the warmth of the sun must have been welcome indeed to the emigrants who had shivered in the storm-torn Bay of Biscay, but after a week or two in a flat calm under an equatorial sun, conditions on board became almost intolerable. At last, however, the *George Marshall* was picked up by the trade wind and the Atlantic was crossed, Pernambuco, on the Brazilian coast, being

made on 20th February, 1855. South from Brazil the ship ran among bergs, and sailed in sight of a solid wall of ice for three hundred miles. Early in March, another cyclone caught them, but the magnificent seamanship of Captain Godfrey brought them through. No wonder that, when Melbourne was finally reached, the ship's company was unanimous in praise of his skill and urbanity. Without doubt, both qualities had been severely tried.

The Massinas were indeed fortunate that they made the passage with such a captain. Rudston Read, who had sailed to London with him in the *Statesman* a year or two before, mentions Bulwer Godfrey as a "complete master of his work and a perfect gentleman. He maintained on board that ship as good discipline as ever there need be, and he came into London docks as clean almost as if turned out of a handbox, instead of having come from a voyage round the Horn."

To the sea-weary passengers the coast of Australia must have seemed the shores of the Promised Land, and the calm expanse of Port Phillip a haven of rest, when, on Wednesday, 5th April, after a perilous and wearisome passage of ninety-nine days, the *George Marshall* dropped anchor in Hobson's Bay. During the entire period only one ship had been sighted—the *Calder*, on her way from Hobart to London.

Disembarking was a tedious process, and most of the immigrants, desperately tired of the ship though they were, had still a day or so on board before they achieved the freedom of their adopted country. Had they been in the mood to be interested in matters nautical, there was a good deal to observe. As they came through the Heads they passed the magnificent new clipper *Great Britain*, outward bound for London. Though the sight filled the more sentimental with nostalgia, few in the *George Marshall* would have been willing to tranship and essay the voyage back again.

Soon afterwards, they encountered the Geelong steamers, *Express* and *Prince Albert*, and the 166-ton schooner, *Goldseeker*, which carried passengers to and from Hobart for a fare of five guineas.

Hobson's Bay, indeed, was a tangle of masts, spars and rigging. When the *George Marshall* plunged her anchor into the mud off Williamstown, she joined a fleet of thirty-seven full-rigged ships, sixty-four barques, fifteen small steamers, and innumerable brigs and schooners. It is to be doubted whether even the younger passengers were interested in this Armada. The seemingly interminable voyage had ended, a new life lay waiting for them ashore, and they were anxious to come to grips with it.

They had left Britain involved in a major European war for the first time since the end of the Napoleonic era, just on forty years before. British and French troops were fighting in alliance to keep Russia from wresting control of the Dardenelles from Turkey. In another fifty years they were to fight again, over the same waterway, but in 1915 it was to be against Turkey in order that Russia should have the Straits! And this time, instead of being merely a distant rumour to the people of Australia, the campaign was to be of poignant interest to every man, woman and child in the Commonwealth, and the outcome was to alter the destiny of the human race.

The battle of Inkerman had taken place just before the *George Marshall* sailed. By the time she arrived in Melbourne the Siege of Sebastopol was in progress, and Florence Nightingale was at Scutari organising the nursing service that was to make her name immortal. The English public was becoming alarmed at the dragging on of a futile campaign, and angry at the accounts of mismanagement and ineptitude that filtered through. Another six months would elapse before Colonials would hear that Sardinia had joined the Allies against

Russia, that the Tsar Nicholas was dead, and that his successor, Alexander II, was throwing out peace feelers.

In the United States, where President Franklin Pierce presided at the White House, and Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, first of the long line of American best-sellers, was still rolling off the presses by the hundred thousand, Northerners and Southerners, divided on the question of negro slavery, were already endeavouring to avoid by compromise the inevitable conflict.

In the Far East an event had just occurred which, though it received no notice in the press, was, in the years to follow, to have the most profound effect upon Australia. This was the visit to Japan of the American Squadron under Commodore Perry. While the *George Marshall* was making her passage from London, Perry's powerful fleet of steam frigates and sloops still lay in eastern waters, to the admiration and terror of the Nipponese, though they were allegedly delighted that the Commodore had negotiated a treaty of "amity, peace and commerce."

The Mikado's representatives were encouraged to sign by the fact that, when the Commodore landed, he was escorted by his suite of officers and a detachment of five hundred armed marines. This treaty, which opened the ports of Japan first to the United States, and shortly afterwards to the world, was one of the first of a long series of events leading, step by step, to Pearl Harbour and the Pacific War of 1941-5.

All this caused little concern in Australia, where the war news was always months old, and consisted mainly of extremely stale clippings from London newspapers. In any case, Victoria was just recovering from its own little war, for, just before the emigrants left London on their long voyage, Peter Lalor and his men, burning with grievances against the dictatorial Governor Hotham, had raised the five-starred flag of the Australian republic at

Ballarat, and on 3rd December, 1854, they had tried conclusions with the official redcoats at the Eureka Stockade.

When the *George Marshall* reached Melbourne, the trial of the ringleaders was in its last stages, and one of the first things the disembarking passengers read in *The Age*—which claimed a circulation of four thousand, and proudly boasted that none of its advertisements were dummies—was the report of their acquittal. Possibly young Massina, used to the law-abiding sentiments of the English press, was amazed to read that—

“The Attorney-General did everything that an unscrupulous, factious, heartless Crown lawyer could do to induce the successive juries to return a verdict of ‘guilty,’ but it was all in vain; the juries were inflexibly upright, and would not be either cajoled or bullied.”

The same newspaper added that the trial was:—

“... as criminal a piece of folly, and as gross a burlesque on law and justice as ever was enacted by the authorities in any part of the British Dominions at any period of British history. The Lieutenant-Governor is thoroughly and universally despised; there is but one sentiment respecting him pervading the whole community; he has no supporters, no party, no friends.”

Journalism packed a punch in those days!

IV

THE town in which, after a ferry trip up the Yarra, the three hundred new Colonists from the *George Marshall* presently found themselves was just twenty years old. Almost every year of those two decades had been a year of progress, but the last four had seen developments without parallel anywhere in the world. Melbourne, which in 1850 had been a remote colonial settlement with a population of about twenty-three thousand, had been transformed by the gold discoveries of 1851 into a big frontier city containing over one hundred thousand permanent residents, and a floating population of many more. The population of the whole Colony of Victoria had increased with like rapidity, more than a quarter of a million people having arrived in about four years to spread themselves over goldfields extending from Beechworth to Ararat.

But, young as Melbourne was, it was already old enough to have experienced its trade depressions and financial crises. For some time prior to the arrival of the *George Marshall*, business had been stagnating. This slackness of trade was a natural reaction to the conditions of a year or two before, when, as Rudston Read says in his book on the goldfields, nothing in the shops seemed to be sufficiently expensive for the fortunate diggers, many of whom had never known what it was to have a spare five pounds, and now not only found themselves in possession of hundreds, but implicitly

believed that there was plenty more where that came from.

For the vast majority these golden dreams faded all too soon, but while the money lasted they flung it around as though it had been of no more value than the gravel from which it had been taken. Read mentions many instances of diggers who had so much more money than sense that, having been married at one church, they insisted on going through the ceremony all over again at another, in order to provide themselves with an excuse for a second wedding breakfast, complete, of course, with plenty of champagne.

A back swing of the pendulum was the inevitable result of such inflationary conditions, and it came as soon as the first tremendous yield from the goldfields fell away, although the influx of penurious optimists continued. Many of them came to Australia expecting to follow their ordinary avocations—like most immigrants, they had very little idea of what lay in store for them—and those who were physically unfit for the goldfields, but could not turn their hands to whatever other occupation offered, fell on evil times if, as was generally the case, they had no capital.

Another cause of financial distress was the land system of the period. The Government, as sole owner of the Colony, was throwing it open to settlers a little at a time, and then to the highest bidder, so that the land-hungry ran the prices up to preposterous levels, and then had nothing left to improve or develop the areas they had bought.

Very little land was actually under crop, so that Victoria had to import practically all its wheat, flour and horse-feed from other colonies and from abroad. Flour was even brought from South America at a cost of between £40 and £50 a short ton, while wheat realised over seventeen shillings a bushel, and hay more than £16 a ton. In country districts staggering cartage

charges had to be met in addition. To the Bendigo district £26 a ton was the ruling rate; while £22 a ton was paid for cartage to Ballarat, Maryborough and the Jim Crow diggings at Daylesford. These charges applied to well-frequented roads where there was plenty of custom; to distant places off the beaten track, over £150 a ton had to be paid to carriers. This was a severe handicap to business, and many Melbourne merchants and retailers, unable to clear the goods they had imported, went bankrupt. Particularly was this so with dealers in luxury lines—always excepting alcoholic liquor, for which there was, as usual, a brisk demand, no matter what the price.

In 1855, however, business was improving, and the passengers in the *George Marshall* could scarcely have arrived at a better time. Melbourne was being modernised. Many of the flimsy shops, hastily run up to meet the exigencies of the first phases of the great gold rush, were being replaced by more durable buildings. The principal streets, hitherto ankle-deep in dust in summer and mud in winter, were being metalled, while the pavements were being levelled and flagstones laid. Street trees were being planted, so that future generations of city fathers would have something to chop down. Pipes were being laid to supply the city with gas, and the Yan Yean reservoir was under construction, although not without some opposition, amateur hydraulic engineers expressing the belief that it would be a failure. So large an area of water, they claimed, would deteriorate when exposed to evaporation, and the reservoir would soon become a swamp!

Cabs plied in the streets, and an omnibus service had been inaugurated. So many were the improvements planned that, said *The Age*, "We do not despair of being blessed with a National Debt and honoured with a pensions list."

Both these blessings were not far distant.

V

THE first thing the new arrivals did, no doubt, was to study the newspapers. They found that, despite the distance now lying between them and civilisation, amenities were not lacking. Those who wished to recover from the tedium of the voyage and find a footing in local society were delighted to learn that on Easter Monday, the Salle Valentino was to be the scene of a Bal Masque, "got up on a scale of splendour hitherto unequalled in Melbourne, when all the resources of the spacious Salle will be brought into requisition. The saloon will be brilliantly illuminated and handsomely decorated, and the band augmented and under command of the brilliant and accomplished musician, Mons. Fleury."

As a change after the spartan fare on shipboard, they could look forward to "refreshments of the most recherche description, provided by Signor Landini, whose name alone is a sufficient guarantee." As a further inducement, ladies were admitted free.

Those not up to the social standard of the Salle Valentino were not necessarily deprived of terpsichorean exercise. They could perform the mazurka and the galop at the establishment of Monsieur Beauvais, who was located at the European Hotel, Fitzroy Street, Collingwood. Monsieur, apparently, had had rather a bitter experience, for his advertisement, framed more in sorrow than in anger, explained

that "from motives of liberality having opened his rooms to the public generally, and finding that his liberality had been abused by the intrusion of troublesome guests, he has determined hereafter to admit none but respectable company, the test of which will be a charge of a shilling." Respectability was modestly valued in 1855.

Nor was culture neglected, young though Melbourne was. New arrivals with a liking for the drama could forget the rigours of the passage at the Queen's Theatre, where, under the management of Mr. George Coppin, the celebrated tragedian, G. V. Brooke, was drawing packed houses in a season of classical and Shakespearean drama.

For those who felt that something a little lighter was indicated, education and amusement were combined at the Criterion Hall in Collins Street, where, by means of that ingenious apparatus, the "cosmopolygraphicon", a series of "dissolving views" measuring no less than sixteen feet by twelve took the applauding multitudes a tour of Europe and the East, to the accompaniment of a descriptive lecture and appropriate music on the "megaphonicon". This thrilling entertainment, a precursor of the "talkies", was reinforced by Mr. Turgue, who appeared in his "classical delineations of marble sculpture."

Even these attractions far from exhausted the amusements of Melbourne. Having seen the cosmopolygraphicon, one naturally gravitated to Astley's Circus to witness the "romantic equestrian spectacle of St. George and the Dragon," confident that no unseemly behaviour would mar the show, as "all improper characters are excluded from the dress circle and side-boxes."

Rivalling the cosmopolygraphicon was the appropriately named Mr. Moon's entertainment at the Mechanics' Institution, where were being shown "Aerial Sketches,

or scenes taken from the car of a balloon at home and abroad." An additional attraction there was Herr Rubin, who performed on the zither, and charmed the audience — including the Mayor and Corporation — with several Tyrolese melodies. If this did not satisfy the musically-minded, they could attend the promenade concerts in the entrance hall of the half-completed Theatre Royal — now Manton's Stores — and hear Madame Carandini, or — to go down the scale a little — make one of the company at Mooney's Music Saloon at the National Hotel, where business was so brisk that Mr. Mooney was forced to advertise for additional talent, "vocal, instrumental and histrionic."

It is, however, doubtful whether many of the new arrivals could afford to attend the St. Kilda Steeple Chases, together with the race dinner at the Victoria Family Hotel, which cost two guineas, including wines.

It was not only the Age of Gold; it was the Age of the Horse. The recently opened line between Melbourne and Hobson's Bay was as yet the only railway in the colony; indeed, only twenty-seven years had elapsed since George Stephenson's "Rocket" had astounded England by drawing a train at the hazardous speed of thirty miles per hour, to the alarm of coach-builders and horse-breeders, and the detriment (it was declared) of the domestic animals who witnessed the appalling sight. Queen Victoria had not yet given the invention her Royal patronage; several years were to go by before she would forsake the safety of her coach and entrust herself to the hazards of the Royal Train.

As far as Australia was concerned, it might have been called the Age of Centaurs. Practically every man could ride, and most women; many superlatively well. Horse ownership was a clue to social — or at least financial — status. Even the driving of horses, nowadays so prosaic an accomplishment, was considered among the fine arts, and one in which the practitioners

took as much pride as their descendants were to take in their ability to handle an automobile. Indeed, it must have required great skill to manage a fiery four-in-hand on the rough roads of the period, particularly in mountain districts. The man who set up a new record for driving his tandem from Geelong to Melbourne talked about his feat quite as fluently—and probably quite as untruthfully—as the modern motorist who boasts of his fast time from Brisbane to Sydney.

It was also, apparently, an Age of Hustle, if we are to judge from an anonymous writer of the period, who not only gives a graphic description of the Melbourne of the 1850 era, but also hints that the inevitable Melbourne-Sydney rivalry was already in evidence.

"Melbourne," he says, "is generally a much finer and livelier place than Sydney, but, being younger, and not having had the equivocal advantage of convict labour, it lacks the substantiality of its sister metropolis. In Sydney there are many public buildings, every stone in which is marked with the initials of the convict who chiselled and laid it. They are sad monuments of the past, and perhaps after all Melbourne is better without them! And at this point it may be as well to state, with becoming brevity, my comparative impressions of the two great metropolises of the Australias.

"Sydney is about seven times the age of Melbourne — which was a mud village but the other day — and is, it would almost seem as a consequence of this seniority, about seven times more comfortable to live in. In support of this, I may mention that Sydney has by this time a well-arranged, and all but complete, system of sewerage; while the Victorian capital, whose geographical position requires it far more, is woefully deficient in this particular. The climate of Sydney, too, cooled by those perennial breezes, is more genial than

that of Melbourne; the inhabitants are more staid and steady than the bustling, gold-digging, go-ahead Victorians. Sydney, again, lies with her breast against the sea; at Melbourne, three miles of hot, shifting sand, through which it is almost impossible to walk, glares, like a burning lake, between the harbour and the city. So far, then, Sydney carries the palm. Still, were I ever to return to Australia, I should pitch my tent in Melbourne. The lively, business-like character of the place and people pleases me, and consoles for some lack of comfort. Moreover, the battle of 'old-handism' against 'new-chumism' is not everlastingly waging in Victoria as it is in New South Wales, where the natives are more intolerant and intolerable than the Bowery boys from America.

"Melbourne itself is splendid. Fine wide streets—finer and wider than almost any in London—stretch away, sometimes for miles, in every direction. At any hour of the day, thousands of persons may be seen scurrying along the leading thoroughfares, with true Cheapside bustle and earnestness. Hundreds of cabs and jaunting cars rattle through the streets; all the classic cries of London, from hot pies to iced ginger beer, echo through the town; restaurants and well-furnished coffee-houses send out the alluring perfumes of their shilling luncheons at every hundred yards; while, at each populous point of the city, rival newsboys make both day and night hideous with their constantly and competitive yellings."

Generally speaking, it was an extraordinarily law-abiding community in which the new arrivals found themselves. Certainly, Australia had just experienced its one and only revolution, while the roads were anything but safe for solitary travellers—the Bendigo track through the Black Forest had a particularly bad name—and crimes against persons and property were frequent enough at the goldfields, but when one remem-

bers the vast influx of immigrants; the inefficiency of the police force; the feeling of unrest developed when a large number of people abandon their usual pursuits for such an occupation as gold-seeking; and the crowds of ex-convicts who made their way from Tasmania and New South Wales, one is struck with admiration and astonishment at the peaceable manner in which most of the cosmopolitan arrivals settled down as colonists.

VI

OF Alfred Massina's early years in Australia, little or nothing is known. Except to say that when he landed in Australia he had half-a-crown in the world, he seems rarely to have spoken of his initial struggles, while those in whom he confided have long since passed on. It is curious that a man of literary tastes, as Massina undoubtedly was, did not keep a diary or commonplace-book in which to jot down the day-to-day details of a life passed amid scenes which must have been strange and picturesque indeed to a young man straight from London, but such was unfortunately the case, while no record of his private correspondence remains.

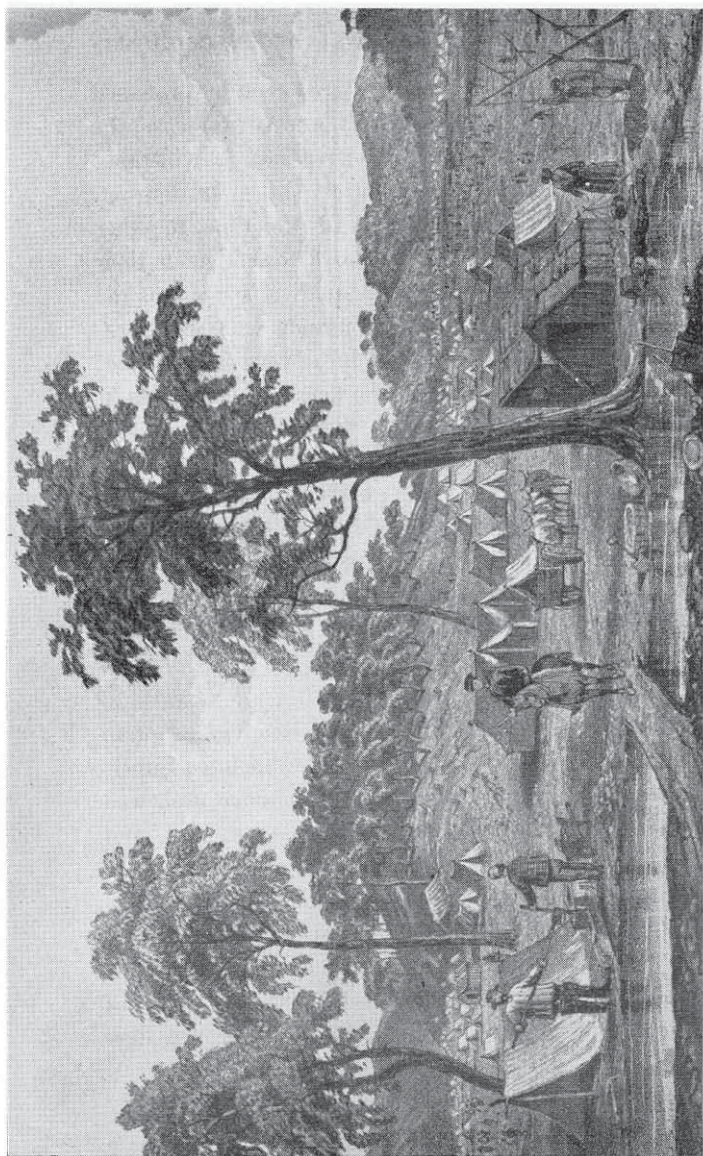
He tried his luck on the goldfields, though with such complete lack of success that, as he told one of his partners, W. S. Mitchell, many years later, he was, in one black moment of depression, tempted to suicide. At the time, he was tramping along through the bush, and, tired and hungry, sheltered under a tree from a sudden downpour, but the thought of his wife, who was working in Melbourne to support herself and her child, stayed his hand. The rain passed over, and Massina, picking up his swag, trudged back to the city, where he managed to secure employment in his old trade.

His movements for the next year or two cannot be traced, but it is certain that for some of the period he worked for W. H. Williams, a well-known printer. One of his fellow employees was S. V. Winter, a young man with whom he formed a lifelong association. Both were bound for success, for Winter was destined to be manager and editor of the Melbourne *Herald*.

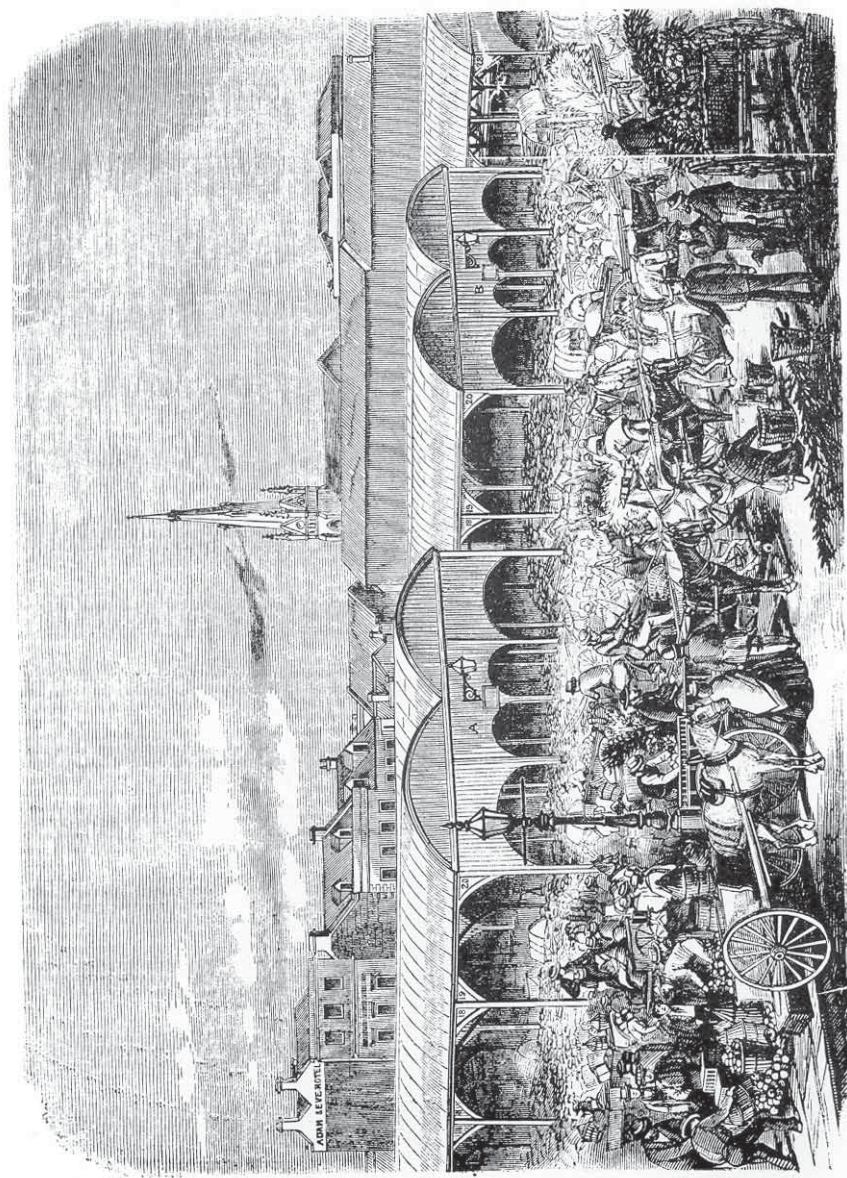
Although he had not completed his apprenticeship in London, Massina was an excellent machinist with a natural instinct and love for his craft. Even so, he must have worked hard and lived in a manner the reverse of luxurious, for in 1859 he was able to join forces with Messrs. Clarson, Shallard and Gibb, and establish the firm which is the subject of this memoir.

Premises were secured at No. 85 Bourke Street East, on the north side, between Swanston and Russell Streets. It was a convenient and central position, between the Cosmopolitan and Continental Hotels, and next door but one to the Theatre Royal, in which building was also located the famous Cafe de Paris, conducted by Spiers and Pond, who, through the profits of the catering business, were in 1862 to finance the first visiting English cricket team to Australia. Also at No. 85 was the drapery establishment of J. Joseph, and a billiard saloon and tobacconist's shop, so that the printing office probably occupied the rear portion of the building.

It was not, apparently, the most propitious moment to start in business, for the printing trade in Melbourne was in a state of confusion — at least, if we are to judge from a circular addressed to the master printers of the city by an embittered individual anonymously styling himself "Two Eyes", who let himself go to the following effect: "Gentlemen, allow me to congratulate you on the pleasing position of the printing business of this city. A pretty state of things you have arrived at, certainly! Three-fourths of your men walk-



On the Victorian Goldfields.



Bourke Street, Melbourne, 1865. Scene outside the Eastern ('Paddy's') Market.

ing about unemployed — all your offices nearly empty. If you don't know it, I'll tell you; you are just now reaping the harvest of your own sowing, and a pretty miserable crop you must find it. Take my advice, bury it, dig it under for manure — sow again for another crop and with different seed.

“Metaphor aside, gentlemen, what do you think of the printing business generally and your own credit at the banks particularly? You gentlemen who have been years in the business, through the good times, who have studied economy and never had a man where a boy could do the work, what is the result of your extensive business?

“The opinion formed of you by those who know you best is that you are a set of men grossly ignorant or culpably regardless of the very alphabet of commerce . . . men without the faintest spark of religion or benevolence — men who care neither for God nor their fellow-men. . . .”

The remedies suggested by “Two Eyes”, who may not have been as unbiassed as his pseudonym would imply, were an organised scale of charges and no price-cutting.

In comparison with other trades, journeymen printers were fairly well paid, about three pounds a week being the ruling rate. This, when prices returned to normal after the gold rush, had considerable buying power. The principal trouble seems to have been the excessive employment of boy labour. This custom, which excited the wrath of “Two Eyes”, was one of the first things to be combated by the Victorian Typographical Society, the union of printers formed in 1867 from the ashes of several previously existing organisations which were benefit societies rather than trade unions. It was a long time before the juvenile labour question was settled, but it would appear that, almost from the first, Clarson, Massina and Co.'s establish-

ment was regarded as a "good union shop", even when such places were rare.

The conditions in the printing trade were generally a little ahead of the standards of the time. Two o'clock closing on Saturday afternoon was instituted as far back as 1857, in marked contrast to many other trades which had to wait years for a weekly half-holiday. Later, in the 'seventies, Clarson, Massina and Co. became, through *The Australian Journal*, strong advocates of the Eight Hours Movement, then regarded as a most radical suggestion, and one likely to lead to the decline and fall of the country.

Regrettably little is known about Massina's partners. Gibb and Shallard were practical printers, but Clarson, although his name stands first in the style of the firm, appears to have been a horticulturist and journalist rather than a tradesman. He was one of the founders of the Horticultural Society's gardens at Burnley, and he wrote a great deal on the subject, his books on the orchard, the farm and the kitchen garden being for long standard works in their field.

It is possible that he provided most of the capital to start the new firm, as obviously Massina could not have been in a position to contribute much more than experience. From a financial point of view, Gibb and Shallard remain unknown quantities.

Massina does not appear to have taken part in many activities outside his business. A busy life left him small leisure for extraneous matters, though in his youth he was very interested in military affairs, and toward the end of the 'fifties, when the Russian scare was still at its height, he was one of the first batch of Victorian volunteers sworn in. His detachment was the Richmond Rifles, and the swearing-in ceremony, conducted by Colonel Neild, commanding the Royal Artillery in Melbourne, was held in what were then open paddocks between St. Stephen's Church

and Swan Street, Richmond. Among Massina's comrades were George Gordon McCrae, the poet, and his brother Alexander, whose mother, Georgiana, left so many charming and interesting pictures of earliest Melbourne in her famous Diary.

Even though fortifications were erected at what were then considered strategic points around the coast — rusty guns and crumbling gunpits are still to be seen at Port Fairy and Portland — a Russian attack was almost as unlikely as an invasion by Martians. Nor in those happy days was there much possibility of an onslaught by any other nation. Great Britain had long been the only naval power of any consequence. She was on the friendliest possible terms with all the German States. More than a decade was to elapse before the birth of the German Empire, and another twenty years before the young Kaiser William II began to shake his mailed fist. The French had long since given up the habit of disputing with the British for colonial possessions, while the Japanese were still in the bow-and-arrow stage of civilisation.

Whatever their patriotic ardour, the Richmond Rifles were unlikely to find themselves involved in anything more spectacular than an occasional review or sham fight. Still, with their green-faced uniforms of French grey, complete with brown caps, belts and gaiters, they added something to the colour of Melbourne life, even if they were happily denied the opportunity of distinguishing themselves in the fields of glory.

The uniform apart, another inducement offered to volunteers was a Crown grant of land, but many members of the detachment sold their allotments to help the building of a drill hall. Nowadays, volunteer soldiers would take a high stand if it were suggested that they provide themselves with a building in which to meet and drill, but the men of the 'sixties had not

yet learned to depend on the Government for everything. Instead of spending their time in deputations to a Minister, the Richmond Rifles got on with the job themselves. One method by which funds were raised was the holding of an entertainment at Cremorne Gardens, where, on approximately the site now occupied by the Rosella factory, the famous entrepreneur, George Coppin, conducted pleasure grounds modelled on Vauxhall Gardens, London.

Here on summer evenings the merry Melbournites gathered to eat, drink, dance and witness shows of various kinds, from animal acts and tight-rope walkers to prima donnas and fireworks displays. Mr. Coppin provided ferry steamers to convey patrons from Prince's Bridge. The Richmond Rifles engaged the entire place for one night, and Massina, Major Clipper-ton and T. S. Small, son of J. W. Small, the photographer, placarded the town with posters. Partly as the result of this publicity, the function was so successful that the building was soon in progress.

In 1864 Massina gained his commission and was subsequently promoted to captain, but he does not seem to have been ambitious for any further military distinction. Many years later he was a member of the Lilydale Shire Council for a time, but this gave him no appetite for public life, as an invitation to stand for Parliament was declined.

Where he was living in the 'fifties cannot be ascertained. The Melbourne of the period contained a vast floating population, less than a quarter of the inhabitants being mentioned in the directory. The housing problem was quite as acute then as it is to-day. The homeless colonists lived in hotels or boarding-houses, in tents or shacks, or roomed in private dwellings. Of the four partners in the new firm, only Clarson's residence is mentioned in the directory. He lived at Northcote, at that time a very distant outer suburb,

or rather country district. He must have driven to town every day, or, perhaps, like many others, he rode to the office and left his mount at a livery stable. The addresses of the other three partners are given as 85 Bourke Street East, so that it is probable they lodged nearby. One or more, indeed, may have slept on the premises, no uncommon thing at that time. In the directory for 1864, however, we find that Massina had acquired a private address. He had bought or built a house at 231 Swan Street, Richmond, a suburb with which he was thereafter to be closely identified.

VII

THE new firm entered the 'sixties with optimism.

The great waves of immigration which had set in with the discovery of gold had subsided, but there was still a steady flow of new settlers from abroad, so that Melbourne was always a busy city — much more so than Sydney, which, despite its seniority and its advantages as a port, was forced to play, for the time being, a secondary role in Australian affairs, although Sydney-siders would not admit it.

Alluvial mining had ceased to be Victoria's principal industry. The shallow workings were played out, and those who had followed them in the hope of making a quick fortune had either gained it or, more likely, taken to some other occupation. The gold seeker had to follow the precious metal into the deep reefs, so that mining became big business, and the "rush" towns, with their tents and humpies, changed into stable and prosperous communities. Only in the mountain wilds and along lonely creeks was the prospector, with his dish and cradle, to be found.

The land was thrown open to agriculture, and Victoria, which twenty years before had been the domain of the isolated flockmaster, and had since passed through the turmoil of the greatest gold rush in history, was now becoming a land of farmers and settlers.

The population of the colony had grown to well over half a million, and country towns were springing

up, their own breweries, coach factories, flour mills and implement works making them self-contained to a degree unknown in later years of centralisation.

Whatever his troubles may have been, the lot of the Victorian was in one respect enviable. The din of the outside world worried him not at all. Possibly the members of the Italian community may have been thrilled to learn that Garibaldi had invaded Italy with his red-shirts, while a few internationally-minded busybodies may have discussed the election of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency of the United States, and the imminence of civil war in America, but for all these things concerned the people of Marvellous Melbourne, they might have happened on Mars.

Yet Australia was being brought nearer to Europe every day, for de Lesseps and his human ants were soon to start cutting the Isthmus of Suez to form the ditch in whose defence so many Australians were to die eighty years later. Of more immediate interest was the development of the railway system. It was already possible to travel to Geelong and Sunbury by rail, but the 'sixties saw steam transit extended to Bendigo and Echuca in the north, and to Ballarat in the west.

Much happened to interest any Melbourne citizen who had the opportunity of being present when history was being made. He could have witnessed the departure in August, 1860, of the Burke and Wills expedition, and its sad sequel, their public funeral, a couple of years later.

He might have spent New Year's Day in 1862 watching the All-England Eleven, the first team of overseas cricketers to visit Australia, playing their initial match against Eighteen of Victoria, whom they trounced by an innings and ninety-six. A few years later, in 1867, he could have watched the aboriginal cricketers, the first Australian team to tour England,

play a farewell game before embarking on the greatest adventure of their lives. They were to astonish the English not so much with their play as their names — Dick-a-Dick, Tarpot, Bullocky, Mosquito, Jim Crow and Tiger must have looked strange on the score-cards at the Oval — and leave through rural England a legend that all Australians were black.

The 'sixties were vintage years for bushrangers — the Kellys were yet to come, but Ben Hall, Daniel Morgan, Thunderbolt, Power and many others kept the troopers busy. Then there was Royalty's first visit. As a Londoner, Massina was no doubt among the crowd which in 1867 welcomed with bonfires, barbecues and the inevitable speech-making, H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, second son of the Queen who had given the colony her name.

Like most printing establishments of the period, the new firm went in for publishing in a small way, and produced books and pamphlets, mainly, it is to be supposed, at the expense of their authors.

About 1864 the style was altered to Clarson, Massina and Co., and a move was made to 72 Little Collins Street. Then on 2nd September, 1865, occurred an event which was to have a profound influence on the future of the firm, and may, indeed, be said to have ensured its survival. This was the publication of *The Australian Journal*.

VIII

THE production of a new Australian magazine of fiction and general interest might not be considered so bold a venture nowadays, but in 1865 everything was against it. Despite the progress of the previous fifteen years from a publisher's point of view, the population was small and scattered. Apart from the gold-mining centres, there were few really large provincial towns. To distribute any periodical was a matter of great difficulty. The railway system which now links every village with the metropolis was still in its infancy, and the horse-drawn coach remained the principal means of inland transport, although the coastal towns were served by lines of small steamers. The only links with the other States were by sea. The difficulty of placing any publication in the hands of a reader was therefore one of the greatest of the many obstacles to be overcome. Postal rates were crippling, a flat rate of twopence a copy being charged within the colony, which meant that each weekly issue of a three-penny paper cost fivepence before it reached the postal subscriber. If it had to be carried across the border, there was an additional charge.

Another handicap was the "Colonial" sentiment of the time. At that date Victoria was only thirty years old, and the vast majority of its inhabitants had been born in the United Kingdom or in Ireland. No matter how long it was since leaving their birthplace, they

still thought of it with unconscious pathos as "Home", and most of them hoped to return after they had made an independence. Australian sentiment was so lacking that the native-born was generally regarded as a somewhat inferior being. But time brings its revenge, and the day was to come when the descendants of the nostalgic exiles considered themselves a cut above the new arrivals, and to apply to them terms much more derogatory than "Colonial".

That day was still very distant, and the people of the 'sixties wanted to read the publications to which they had been used before leaving "Home". They found it difficult to adjust themselves to a new and raw country where Christmas came in a blaze of summer heat, and, just as they continued to send each other Christmas cards decorated with snow scenes and holly, so they continued to read periodicals which reminded them of the familiar places so few of them would ever see again. The arrival of the English mail was the event of the week, and the favourite literature the letter from "Home". Next to that came the home newspaper and periodical. They could scarcely believe that anything written and published in Australia was worth reading.

If modern booksellers and librarians still encounter a prejudice against the Australian book or magazine, what this bias was like in 1865 can only be imagined. Added to the difficulties of the prospective magazine publisher was the fact that a considerable proportion of the population was only semi-literate and the habit of reading far from popular even among the better circumstanced sections of the community. Australia was still in the very early stages of development and the bulk of the people were engaged in mining or in some agricultural or pioneering pursuit. It was a frontier country in which people worked long hours, and in their scanty leisure had neither energy nor

inclination for reading, which was often regarded as sheer waste of time. Not until after the introduction of compulsory education did the taste for reading become at all general and the mass of the people lose their prejudice against it as a pursuit exclusive to the learned and cultured.

IX

THE *Australian Journal* was far from first in the field. To the uninitiated there has never seemed an easier way of making money than by starting a periodical of some kind. As early as 1841 a Melbourne magazine was projected, but its promoter was wise enough, or lucky enough, not to let it go beyond the prospectus stage. *The Port Phillip Magazine* started in 1843 and perished after three issues. Geelong's lone effort, *The Australia Felix Monthly Magazine*, came out in 1849, but lasted only one month longer than its predecessor. Then came *The Melbourne Magazine* in 1855, *The Journal of Australasia* a year later, and *The Month* and *The Southern Spectator* in 1857. In 1859 *The Epitome of News and Miscellany Gleaner* made a fugitive appearance. In addition, there were many weeklies, most of them doomed to a speedy demise.

That these early publications died young was no doubt owing in part to the adverse conditions against which they strove, but also to their rather uninspiring appearance and to the nature of their contents. The matter published had a high cultural standard, but unfortunately no great general interest. To a population consisting in the main of pioneers, the editors of the period persisted in offering reviews of heavy books, philosophic and political essays, notes on the drama, and an extraordinary amount and variety of verse, mainly doggerel. The most ambitious and possibly best directed venture among these early periodicals was *The Australian Monthly Magazine*.

Some confusion has always existed over this publication and its relation to Clarson Massina and Company, and to *The Australian Journal*. The facts, so far as they can be extricated from the literary bogs of the past, appear to be that *The Australian Monthly Magazine* was started by W. H. Williams in September, 1865, the same month as *The Australian Journal* appeared.

It opened its career with an editorial in the usual jargon of the time: "Our first number is an earnest of what our future efforts will be, and we trust that we give a good guarantee that all reasonable anticipations that may be formed of our enterprise will be realised. The contents of the following pages and the style in which the magazine has been set up are sufficient proofs that we have set before us a high standard for our aim. There are difficulties inseparable from the inauguration of a new project of this character in a country like Australia, and making due allowance for those difficulties, our first number, we venture to affirm, both as to its literary and typographical merits, is not only a creditable, but a highly successful production. . . ."

All the same, the first issue must have seemed pretty heavy-going to its readers. To modern eyes, it looks about as inviting as a government gazette.

"The Political Crisis in Victoria" set out in heavy detail the discussions of the Legislative Assembly on the tariff question; "Robin Goodfellow" contributed an account of his boyhood, liberally sprinkled with French and Latin tags; a three-thousand-word article dealt with "Interesting Facts in Connection with Elizabethan Days and the English Drama"; there was a piece on "Intellectual Vagabondry" and a character sketch of President Lincoln. Evidently *The Australian Monthly Magazine* aimed at capturing an erudite circle of readers, but a few album verses and two serials, "Chick Chick — a Story of a Waif and Stray" and "Phemie

Keller," were thrown in as a concession to the non-intellectual. Most of the material was culled from overseas sources and the only really live topical feature in the magazine was an article on the search for Ludwig Leichardt.

Even so, six months later it was announced that the magazine had met with "a fair degree of success," although the "newspaper press, from which we expected a kindly and fraternal assistance, has certainly not displayed any excess of cordiality towards this attempt to supply a deficiency which has long been felt and acknowledged in the periodical literature of Australia.

. . . The greater portion of the newspaper press has either ignored the existence of the magazine or criticised it in a manner which neither reflected credit upon their judgment nor evinced a friendly feeling towards a publication of this nature." It is sad to read that: "These remarks apply chiefly to the newspapers of Victoria; in other colonies *The Australian Monthly Magazine* has been welcomed by the newspaper press.

Modern newspapers and magazines usually maintain a sort of armed neutrality among themselves, but the morning paper of the 'fifties and 'sixties was worth reading not only for what it had to say about public questions, but for its opinions of "our reptile contemporaries," among which, apparently, the unfortunate *Australian Monthly Magazine* was included.

Whether due to press opinions or to its own inability to interest, the publication did not prosper. In 1867 Clarson Massina and Co. bought it. Perhaps they were doing so well with *The Australian Journal* that they imagined that they could put the other magazine on its feet. Their first move was to change its name to *The Colonial Monthly*. This was obviously done in order that the adopted infant should not be confused with their own child.

"It is due to readers of *The Colonial Monthly*," says the announcement in the September issue (Volume 1, No. 1 of the re-christened periodical), "that some words should be spoken as to the views of the proprietors in taking up *The Australian Magazine* and the adoption of the present title in place of the former one, for a periodical essentially Australian in aim. These words shall be brief, and they shall be final. The title *Colonial Monthly* has been chosen as much for convenience as for its comprehensive character. In Victoria alone there are many publications bearing the distinctive term 'Australian' or 'Australasian', and this is found not infrequently to confuse correspondents and lead to other inconveniences. Indeed the term has been adopted in the Colony above-named to such an extent and for such purely local purposes that there is some danger distant readers may come to regard Victoria as herself constituting Australia! — a conclusion fairly to be resented by her sister colonies.

"Besides, it was desirable to mark, in some clear manner, the change in the management and scope of the magazine and that the proprietors looked for support to contributors and readers beyond the Australian continent — to the important colonies of New Zealand and Tasmania. . . ."

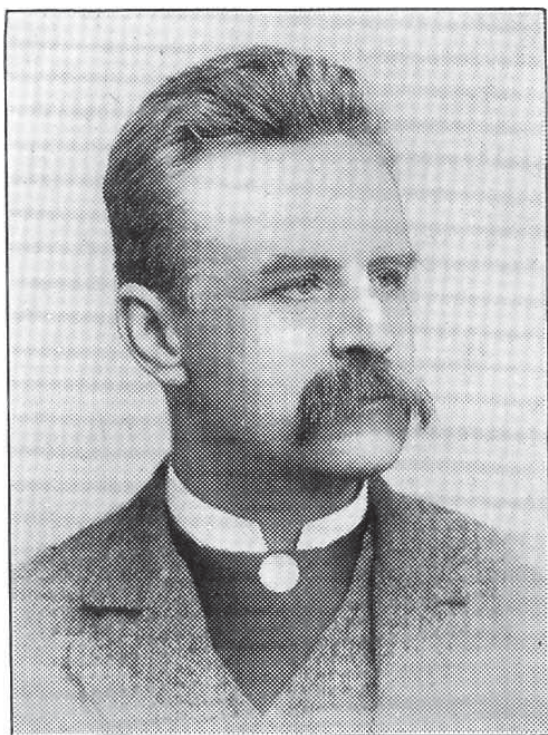
The new proprietors' hopes were not to be realised. Under any name, the magazine was doomed. It floundered along under the new management for about twelve months, and in 1868 was sold to Marcus Clarke, although Clarson, Massina and Co. continued to print it. Whether Clarke had been actually editing it before he bought it is not clear, but it had already had the honour — in 1866 — of presenting his first published work. The reason for the sale stated by Clarson, Massina and Co. was that they had too much on their hands to give the requisite attention to the new venture, but it is rather to be supposed that *The Colonial*

Monthly was proving a sink into which too much money was being poured.

However, most writers are certain that they have the secret of running a magazine, and the younger they are, the more firmly they are convinced of it. Clarke, who was then twenty-one, no doubt believed that he could save this one. Within a year his dreams — and a large part of his bank balance — had evaporated. After that it apparently passed into the hands of G. A. Walstab and J. J. Shillinglaw, only to cease publication in 1870. *The Colonial Monthly* lives in Australian literary history both for the gallant fight it put up and the brilliant writers who were associated with it. Adam Lindsay Gordon and Henry Kendall both wrote for it, as well as Walstab and, of course, Clarke himself.



J. T. GIBB.



GEORGE A. WALSTAB.

X

EITHER Clarson, Massina and Co. evidently determined to profit by the melancholy experience of their predecessors, or they possessed a more intimate knowledge of public opinion. An examination of the first issue of *The Australian Journal* shows that the editor wisely determined on a new policy. His aims are shown in a preliminary announcement worded in the florid manner of his period:

"Inexorable fashion exacts from us an exordium to our new periodical, and we gladly avail ourselves of the custom to come face to face with those whom we trust to hold in social intercourse for many a month of happy companionship. Let us bespeak, if we can, their sympathy, their goodwill, their kindly judgment, for we cannot flatter ourselves that we shall never deserve their censure, though we would fain hope we shall never receive it.

"We do not appeal to a sect, a clique, or a class, for we design to interest, to amuse and, if possible, to instruct everybody who will read us.

"Yet do we hope to embrace a wide and genial audience; to record the phases of Colonial literature; to direct attention to the triumphs of art, and to explain the most recent efforts of mechanical genius, until these pages reflect the Literature, Art and Science of Australia. Neither shall we neglect to satisfy our readers with abundance of matter for mirth and entertainment, mingled with food for thought. We shall

lead them into the realms of romance; into the fairy-land of poetry.

"The ablest Colonial pens of the day will be engaged on our staff. Historical Romances and Legendary Narratives of the old country will be mingled with Tales of Venture and Daring in the new; Nouvellettes, whose scenes will be laid in every nation, varied occasionally with Fairy Stories for the Young, and Parlour Pastimes for boys and girls. Then there will be the Fashions, and last, though not least, Answers to Correspondents.

"In a word, we seek to please everybody, and shall succeed if we can but carry out the work which, with a full sense of its high responsibility, we have commenced, and with the confident hope of success, we now launch into the world the first number of *The Australian Journal*. Welcome it, O readers!"

Despite their ostensible aims, both Massina and his editor probably realised that the publication which sets out to please everyone pleases no one. From the start they appear to have concentrated on the ordinary reader of the time.

The first editor of *The Australian Journal* was in every respect a remarkable man. George Arthur Walstab, like so many of the personalities of the period, had an adventurous and turbulent youth. The son of a West Indian planter, he was born in Demerara, Trinidad, in 1834, and went to school in London, being dux of the famous Merchant Taylor's School at the age of sixteen.

By the time he was eighteen, Walstab had not only written a historical novel in the tradition of Sir Walter Scott, but had helped in a small way to make history by taking some part in the French political upheaval culminating in the *coup-d'etat* of December, 1851, which resulted in Charles Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, President of the French Republic, becoming Emperor

of France. During this period young Walstab not only obtained material afterwards used in a novel called *Harcourt Darrell*, which in 1867 ran as a serial in the *Journal*, but he gained a knowledge of French literature which later enabled him to translate a number of French novels, including many of the works of Gaboriau, in a manner which earned high praise from contemporary critics.

The early 'fifties found the Walstab family in Melbourne. The gold rush was at its height and police officers of integrity were hard to obtain. To help maintain order, a number of adventurous youths was enlisted as cadets. Walstab joined, and served on many of the escorts which guarded consignments of gold from the diggings. After a year or two of this work he resigned and went to India, and served through the Mutiny as a member of Gough's Irregular Horse. A severe leg wound ended his soldiering, and forced him to exchange the sword for the pen.

Joining the staff of the *Calcutta Englishman*, he became editor of the paper in his middle twenties, probably one of the youngest men ever to hold so important a post. Returning to Melbourne, he was for some time on the staff of *The Argus*, later becoming associated with Clarson, Massina and Co. Not only was he a prolific contributor to *The Australian Journal* and *The Colonial Monthly*, but for a time he was also part-owner, with Shillinglaw, of the latter publication, and, it is to be feared, lost a good deal of money over it.

From 1874 to 1880 Walstab was an officer of the Lands Department, although he still did a great deal of writing in his spare time. Later he returned to journalism, and after a period with the *Castlemaine Reporter*, joined the *Herald*, with which newspaper he remained in various capacities — at one time he was editor — until his death in 1908.

In his prime Walstab was a striking figure. He paid considerable attention to his dress, and was the possessor of a somewhat lofty manner which earned him good-natured raillery from his colleagues, but he had considerable talent and industry and was for years one of the best-known figures in Melbourne, especially in Bohemian circles, where he left his mark as one of the founders of the Yorick Club. A noted swordsman, in his younger days he frequently gave exhibitions of fencing.

Although a voluminous writer of serials, articles and stories, all his work, with the exception of a few contributions to short-story collections, appeared in magazines and newspapers, and unfortunately none of his novels has been preserved in book form. It has often been stated that he deputed for Marcus Clarke in writing some portion of *His Natural Life*, but this was denied on the best possible authority — his own. The misunderstanding arose through his supplying a portion of the original version of Clarke's *Long Odds* when that story was running through *The Colonial Monthly*.

Unfortunately it is impossible to say how long Walstab carried on as editor of *The Australian Journal*, or who succeeded him. His term may have lasted until Clarke took over in 1870. It was not the custom of the time for a magazine editor to give himself, or be given, any publicity. His identity was invariably concealed behind a profound and pontifical "we". It is a great pity that this should have been the case, for it would be interesting to trace the various hands that guided the Journal through its years of infancy. The magazine itself is silent on the point. The only thing that the first five years definitely establishes is that the person or persons responsible possessed a remarkably high standard of literary values combined with a sound knowledge of the popular taste of the time.

XI

THE *Australian Journal* began life as a weekly of octavo size, issued at threepence. The first number contained sixteen demi-quarto pages, and was without advertising. As each page contained approximately fifteen hundred words of reading matter, the public received good value, judged by contemporary standards.

The first issue began with an Australian serial story, *Force and Fraud — A Tale of the Bush*, by Mrs. Arthur Davitt. Mrs. Davitt has been long forgotten, but she must have had some reputation in the 'sixties, as she is quoted as "Author of 'Edith Travers', etc., etc."

Other local contributions included *The Shepherd's Hut* — published anonymously, but probably by G. A. Walstab, as it was quoted as being "The Recollections of an Australian Police Officer" — and an article on Bourke Street, the first of a series on "Southern Thorougfares." Scissors and paste, those great editorial standbys of the 'sixties, were responsible for the remainder of the issue. At that time the laws of copyright were far from rigid, and if the editor of *The Australian Journal* called upon his overseas contemporaries for odds and ends to fill up stray pages, he was merely following a well-established custom.

The second issue saw the start of another Australian serial, *Mary Summers — A Romance of the Australian Bush*. This was by Robert P. Whitworth, a writer who,

though now unknown to fame, was mentioned as having five novels to his credit, including *Whakeau, the Pakeha Maori, Matutira, the Maori Queen*, and, of course, the inevitable "etc., etc." The serial enthusiast of the 'sixties was evidently easier to please than his or her modern contemporary, for Mr. Whitworth did not hesitate to fill a page or two with a very florid description of a homestead on the "Maneroo" — now known as the Monaro — and to include many asides. Still, if we would find *Mary Summers* somewhat heavy-going, the reader of 1865 would be astounded at a novel of to-day.

In the second issue a page of "Notices to Correspondents" made its appearance. At first this section was devoted to answering the inquiries of readers demanding information on various points, even as they do to-day. The omniscient editor gave hints on everything from the cleaning of leather to the rearing of canaries; he also advised on matters of behaviour and punctilio, laid down the law on such important matters as the leaving of cards, and anticipated the "Problem pages" of the modern newspapers by helping to straighten out domestic tangles. Even then family life did not always run with perfect smoothness, as we can see by the reply to "A.K." in the third issue of the *Journal*:

"You have evidently displeased your husband," says the editor sternly, "and much of his present conduct is occasioned by your own. You must turn over a new leaf and alter your demeanour towards his relations. By no means think of so serious a step as parting from him for what is, after all, a trifle easily remedied. Change your demeanour completely; do all you can to make his home comfortable; always receive him with smiles; avoid 'scenes' and you will rejoice till the end of your days that you followed this advice."

Here was little of the pseudo-psychology with which the modern "problem page" writer befogs the inquirer, but probably a good deal of horse-sense.

On points of deportment the editor was continually consulted. "You have no occasion to be offended with the offer of the left arm," he informs "Matilda". "It is as much in accordance with the laws of etiquette to give the left as the right."

He did not hesitate to prescribe for readers' ailments, a propensity to which a correspondent signing himself "A Chemist" took exception. Fortunately, the editor was able to say that "many invalids to whom we have given advice in their emergency have gratefully acknowledged the benefits derived." He also firmly added: "In cases where a disorder may be simple or transient, or in which remote residence or other circumstances may preclude the privilege of medical attendance, we shall continue to give our best attention to alleviate suffering."

To add point to this retort, the next paragraph courageously advises "H.J.E." to "recline upon a sofa or bed, and take a pill composed of two grains of camphor and half a grain of powdered opium, every four hours during the attack."

XII

AUTHORS were more easily satisfied in the 'sixties than at the present day. By the end of November the editor was able to announce that his paid staff of contributors was fully organised . . . "All contributions will be treated as voluntary, and inserted or rejected according to their general suitableness."

In order that writers should not consider their efforts entirely fruitless, he was, however, generous enough to offer a free copy of the issue containing the accepted contributions, provided the author sent his address. He evidently relied largely upon the vanity of the amateur to keep his columns filled, but occasionally came across a contributor sufficiently sordid to demand payment, whereupon the matter in question was regretfully declined.

It was an era of unsigned contributions, when our old friend "Anonymous" did a great deal of work, and even the most hardened seeker after literary fame hardly ventured more than a set of initials or a cryptic *nom de plume* at the foot of article, story or verse.

October, 1865, saw a concession to what was then called the "fair sex", illustrated fashion notes being included.

"Bonnets," says the writer, "are as cloud-like and aerial as milliners' fingers can make them. The fronts — for there is nothing else — consist of puffed tulle with a shower of tiny flowers over them. Daisies,



A Picnic Group, San Remo, 1891.

From left—W. Turner, Boxing Editor, "Sportsman"; J. J. Shillinglaw, proprietor "Journal of Pharmacy"; J. C. Smith, secretary, I.O.F.; S. V. Winter, Managing Editor, "The Herald"; A. H. Massina; Henry Massina; I. Fiegal, Printer, "The Herald"; W. S. Mitchell; R. H. Thompson; A. Haughton Crundell; J. Smith, Racing Editor, "Sportsman"; E. Green; W. G. Symons, Associate Editor, "The Australian Journal"; W. Massina.



WILLIAM MASSINA.

roses de mots, primroses, lobelias, violets — in fact, any floral production that is small, and the leaves are all dusted over with crystal. The crowns are a mass of the smallest ringlets — a positive profusion, in fact — fastened together with an ornamental gilt comb at the top. The strings are of tulle, dotted over with similar small flowers to those on the top. 'But what are we to do if we have not enough hair to effect this clustering mass of ringlets?' we hear asked by those to whom nature has dealt with a niggardly hand in the matter of hair. — '*Buy*' is the answer to those who lead the fashion in Paris; the hairdressers can provide any quantity."

When the *Journal* first appeared, Queen Victoria was forty-six. Her eldest son, later to reign as Edward VII, had two sons of his own. The younger, then a three-months-old baby, was destined, as George V, to become one of the best-beloved kings in British history.

In 1865 there were many people still living who had seen Napoleon Bonaparte, even though the Corsican adventurer had been dead for forty-four years, and, of course, thousands remembered Wellington, for the Iron Duke had been laid to rest only thirteen years before. It was the year that saw the end of the American Civil War, the surrender of the Confederate forces after four years fighting, and the murder of Abraham Lincoln.

German duplicity and aggression were already making themselves felt. The year before, Prussia and Austria had invaded Denmark and robbed the Danes of the provinces of Schleswig and Holstein, and Bismarck, the Prussian chancellor, was already secretly preparing a campaign against his former allies for the subjugation of the other German states, for the 1870-71

war against France, and for the founding of the German Empire, that sinister volcano which was to pour so much trouble on the world.

Turning to lighter matters, 1865 saw the great English cricketer, W. G. Grace, start on a long career of century-making. Whiskers and fame were to come later, for he was then only a lad of seventeen. They were playing cricket in Australia, of course, in 1865, but thirteen years were to elapse before the first white Australian Eleven, resplendent in striped shirts and bowler hats, appeared on English turf.

The ladies who read the first issue of *The Australian Journal* were wearing "comparatively plain dresses, looped up in front to show an elaborately trimmed underskirt," although many preferred their frocks ornamented by a judicious combination of straw and velvet, or designs in mother of pearl, surrounded by jet or steel beads. Thus outfitted, her dainty feet shod with "high boots, the tops heart-shaped in the centre, from which depend tassels matching the dress in colour"; or perhaps preferring "small, high-heeled shoes with gaiters, fastened at the sides with buttons of mother of pearl and crystal," Miss 1865 was ready to meet her bearded gentleman friend, who, if he really *was* a gentleman, was up to the moment in a frock-coat to his knees, trousers as shapeless as the hind legs of an elephant, square-toed boots, a large tract of stiff white shirt, formidable cuffs, a stovepipe hat and a cane.

Unfortunately, the Journal did not make its appearance at the happiest moment. It had scarcely been established before another business depression, partly due to drought and partly to a slackening in the gold yield, hit the colony. Circulation figures of those early years have vanished, but it is obvious that the infant publication was having a struggle, even though an

optimistic editorial announcement proclaimed that the magazine "passes on to its second year full of hope and confidence in the future."

Sales-building measures were soon adopted. One scheme did not lack enterprise, although it catered for readers' love of gain quite as much as — to quote the Editor — "aiming to extend popular acquaintance with the more elevated walks of literature." This was when — by permission, one is relieved to learn, of the Attorney-General — every copy of four consecutive issues was numbered, each number representing a chance in a raffle for a sewing machine. To make all fair, the raffle was held under the supervision of a committee of booksellers, including the well-known Samuel Mullen. The machines were valued at £16 10s., but, strange to say, the prizes allotted to South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland were never claimed, although the winners were advertised for until the following May. Presumably they were bachelors.

The fact that the free machines were in so little demand did not apparently damp Massina's interest in these new contraptions. A few years later the firm, as a sideline to the printing and publishing business, took up the agency for the "Little Wanzer" sewing machine and established a showroom in the Eastern Market.

The machines were certainly durable, for as late as 1938 a letter reached the office stating that a "Little Wanzer" had been in the family for half a century, but had now ceased to function for want of an essential part. Unfortunately it was not possible to supply it.

At the end of three years the Journal was able to announce that "in the face of a fierce competition which has for some months been carried on among the importers of European periodicals, it has not only been

able to hold its own, but that . . . it has every prospect of allowing a still larger measure of success than has hitherto marked its steady progress. . . .”

About this time a musical supplement made its appearance, and remained an occasional feature for many years. At a period when “musical evenings” were the standby of the socially-minded, the arrival of a new ballad, schottische or mazurka was the highlight of the month in many a remote township, and was considered as being more important than a fresh instalment of a serial.

XIII

IN 1869, after the Journal had been in existence three and a half years, monthly, instead of weekly, publication was decided upon. "This," declared the editorial announcement, "has, in a very great measure, been necessitated by the adverse influence of the heavy colonial postage upon periodical publications, and which, as compared with the postal rates of the home country, amounts practically to a high premium in favour of English productions, to the unfair disparagement of colonial literature, whilst as regards America, the *free* circulation of periodicals by mail, and the paternally fostering care of its literature by that great republic, offer a brilliant illustration of the rapid, healthy and vigorous growth of a sound, manly, public opinion in regard to literature, art and science, as well as politics, that it would be wise in our Colonial governments to imitate.

"One anomaly may suffice to exemplify the commercial hardships which proprietors of serial works have to sustain in Australia: the postage of a Monthly Part of *The Australian Journal* is twopence, whilst the very same sheets, by being forwarded weekly, would be charged eightpence postage. A similar quantity of English or American printed matter, *not* news, is conveyed by post half over the globe for sixpence, and in the case of newspapers, the same or a greater weight is conveyed the same distance for a single penny.

"There is also another reason — partly arising, indeed, out of the foregoing — for the discontinuance of the weekly issue. The fiscal regulations above adverted to render the weekly issue unavailable to remote subscribers, and there are so many advantages attending the classification in a monthly, rather than a weekly, form that, after mature deliberation, it has been resolved to afford our subscribers in the more distant parts of Victoria and the sister colonies the certain benefit of the alteration."

This roundabout method of saying that the postage on a monthly magazine was a quarter that charged to mail four weekly issues shows how strongly the great Doctor Johnson still influenced the editorial style. At the same time it serves to illustrate one of the many hardships suffered by publishers. It must have been difficult to persuade subscribers to pay almost as much for postage as they did for the periodical itself. Unfortunately, the Journal could scarcely be sold to remote readers other than by postal subscription, and in those days country dwellers were nearly all remote in a way that cannot be realised by a generation accustomed to the present-day rail network, to good roads and fast cars, and to air transport.

Metropolitan dailies, now read in every corner of almost every State, were then almost unknown outside the cities. The rural population, linked to small centres only by tedious horse transport over roads knee-deep in dust in summer and in mud in winter, relied for news — when it bothered at all — on the local paper or an occasional glimpse at a city weekly.

Poverty was another factor. The mining industry was on the decline. The alluvial fields had practically petered out, and the men who a few years before would have been working their own claims were now employed at comparatively low wages in deep mines, or, if they had taken to the land, were struggling along with large

families on pioneer selections, with very little ready cash to spend on reading matter. Henry Lawson has left many a vivid picture of the lives of these small farmers, and after one has read his stories it is easy to understand that to such people even sixpence a week made a distinct hole in the family budget.

The first monthly issue was that for March, 1869, and was priced at a shilling. Apart from solving the postal difficulty, the change was a decided advantage, as it enabled the inclusion of a great deal more general matter, such as gardening and scientific notes, a cookery column conducted by no less a person than the chef of the Melbourne Club, medical hints by the celebrated Dr. L. L. Smith, and other regular departments.

Soon after it became a monthly, the Journal featured a few pages of news summary. Nowadays, when flashes come over the radio every hour or so, few people would be interested in items which, if local, would have been at least six weeks old, or about six months if from overseas, but the readers of the 'seventies, not so hard to please, were not offended at being offered a precis of Mr. Disraeli's latest speech in the House of Commons long after Mr. Disraeli himself had forgotten he had made it, or at being told that the war was imminent in Europe half a year after the German Uhlans were riding into France. However, this news summary was more than merely interesting—it rated the publications which featured it as newspapers under the Act, and gave them the benefit of the cheaper postage rate.

XIV

ANOTHER venture of the late 'sixties was *The Australian Melodist*. It was so successful that the first edition was followed at intervals by many others. These booklets, which contained the words, though not the music, of most of the current popular songs, sold well for many years. Although it was unorganised, there was a great deal of community singing in those days, before the drinking party took the place of the musical evening as a home entertainment, and when every young lady of social pretensions could rattle off the *Black Hawk Waltz* or *Warblings at Eve* on the piano.

A really popular modern song is so scarce a commodity that smoke-night and picnic choristers have very little from which to choose, and soon have to fall back on the past. The biggest "song hit" of the present day is remarkable if it remains in the public memory for a fortnight, but the popular music of the Victorian era—and, indeed, of the Edwardian—stayed popular for years, so that it was of little social value to be able merely to hum the tune—the words must be available as well, and these *The Australian Melodist* supplied.

Armed with the latest edition, the gregarious young man of the time was able to take his place in the group around the piano, or, on the homeward-bound picnic van or excursion steamer, add his confident baritone to the chorus of the rollicking *Man Who Broke the*

Bank at Monte Carlo, the richly humorous *Two Lovely Black Eyes*, the tenderly romantic *Ashore*, or the somewhat lugubrious *Miner's Dream of Home*.

The Australian Melodist must have been one of the best sellers of its period, and its career came to an end, not through lack of public demand, but because Francis Day & Hunter and other English music publishers invoked the copyright law to prevent the lyrics of songs they controlled being printed without their authority. And so *The Australian Melodist* died, though it was not forgotten for decades. As late as 1930 occasional inquiries were received for copies, doubtless from people for whom time had stood still.

XV

IT is regrettable that so few relics of those very early days of the firm have been preserved. In one sense that is understandable — businesses, like individuals, seldom worry about the past until they are old enough to have one. No doubt any books of account and other records which looked as if they would not be wanted again were dumped as excess baggage in the various moves necessitated by an expanding business. One interesting souvenir, however, remains — an old wages book covering the years from 1865-1870. From this it would appear that, at the end of 1865, when *The Australian Journal* appeared, there were thirty-one on the regular payroll, including Clarson, Massina and Shallard, though, for some reason, not Gibb. Shallard's name appears for the last time in January, 1866.

The men all worked forty-eight hours a week, sometimes with considerable overtime added, and judging by the rate at which their services were valued, a good many of them appear to have been apprentices or lads. Even taking the difference in the purchasing power of money into account, not many boys of the present day would care to work six full days and twelve hours' overtime for a modest ten shillings, but this, for the week ending 3rd November, 1865, was the fate of one Harry Haughton. One can only hope that he gained a thorough knowledge of his trade!

The best-paid man on the list was a Mr. Borlase, whose salary was £4 4s. a week — a high rate for that day — and as his daily working times were not stated, it is probable that he was a foreman or superintendent of some kind. He might possibly have been a timekeeper or clerk, but clerical work was not usually rated highly in the 'sixties. At all events, the fortunate Borlase drew more in actual salary than either of the then partners, who seem to have averaged about £4 a week each.

The usual rate for a tradesman was about £2 10s. a week — wages had come down since the 'fifties — but some of the men worked a great deal of overtime — in odd cases up to seventeen hours a week. The total weekly wages bill was in the region of £60, but the accountant did not need to bother himself with either tax deductions or payroll tax. Those modern improvements were still in the far future. Even so, the pay clerk of 1866 had his headaches, for, during the week ending 12th January, we find that W. and E. Haughton, Foster, Shand, Booth and West each incurred a fine of sixpence, though for what offence is not stated. Possibly they had been celebrating the New Year a little more than wisely.

A few months later some light is thrown on these penalties when we find Kelly and Blair were fined sixpence each for talking. They were apparently apprentices, but the system seemed to have applied to qualified tradesmen as well, for later on Sands — obviously an adult by his wage-rate — also incurred the managerial wrath to the same financial extent.

The first week in February, 1867, must have been a bad one in the printing house of Clarson, Massina and Co., for no fewer than six of the hands were penalised for inattention. Poor Kirkham was a particularly sad case, for he was forced to hand back a shilling out of his modest half-sovereign. Needless to

say, work proceeded in dead silence for the next few weeks — except, no doubt, when the boss' back was turned!

Later, however, a little negligence creeps in — or could it have been minor sabotage? — when Blair and Hill were fined sixpence apiece for “damaging press boards.” After that outburst the sheet was clean for months, except when someone was paid threepence short, perhaps because the paymaster had insufficient change in his pocket. Fines became rarer as time went on, though whether because the apprentices became more docile or the foreman more lenient is hard to say.

Even so, the penalty system remained in vogue for many years, James Mitchell, who entered the service of the firm in 1882, recalling them very vividly when talking to the writer more than sixty years afterwards. The severe discipline of the early days was not easily forgotten. His father, W. S. Mitchell, who was overseer for many years, was particularly stringent. He brooked no argument, and any man who ventured to dispute a point with him was immediately told to find another job. The apprentice whom pay-day found with his envelope intact was either very lucky, very astute or almost angelically well-behaved. During Mitchell's regime all fines went to the Melbourne Hospital, and his son declared that he and his brother paid enough to make them Life Governors before they were out of their time.

On 1st January, 1868, the name of another Massina was added to the payroll when Alfred Lionel, the child who had arrived in the *George Marshall*, made his modest debut at the foot of the list at a weekly salary of five shillings. Although the son of the boss, he was not exempt from discipline, as a few weeks later we find that he incurred a threepenny fine for garrulousness. Nor, it is regrettable to state, was this his last offence. A month or so afterwards, he was docked

twice in the same week. After that he learned to control himself during working hours, and a year later — presumably as a reward for silence — had his wages raised to seven-and-sixpence.

Young Clarson had joined the staff some little time before Massina junior, though how long he remained a member cannot be ascertained. Presumably he left with his father when, towards the end of 1872, Clarson moved to Sydney.

XVI

A MAJOR European war sounded a harsh reveille to the dawn of the 'seventies, but although the result was to have an incalculable effect on the future of their children and grandchildren, few Australians worried over the disastrous defeat of the French by the Prussians, though from it emerged on the one hand the German Empire and on the other a France desperate to avenge the calamity of Sedan and the loss of Alsace and Lorraine. Australians, if they took sides at all, were probably in sympathy with Germany. France, despite the temporary and none-too-effective alliance in the Crimea, was the hereditary foe of the British, whereas Germany was the traditional friend. The Queen of England had married a German prince, and their daughter, the wife of the Crown Prince of Prussia, would be, if all went well, the future Kaiserin. On the other hand, the French monarch was a mere upstart who bore the still-reviled name of Napoleon. There were few Frenchmen in Australia, but a great many Germans, well-known as a kindly, hard-working people, fond of beer, food and song, and the best possible colonists.

In any case, wars in Europe or elsewhere did not greatly concern the average British citizen, whether he lived in Melbourne or Hammersmith. The Empire rested secure behind the guns of the most powerful fleet the world had ever seen. Redcoats campaigned

on many fronts in India, Burma, Africa and China, but these were little private scraps, and even the British taxpayer scarcely realised that they were going on unless he happened to find some mention of them tucked away in some obscure corner of *The Times*. To Australians they were as unreal as the War of the Roses.

Victoria was prospering. Railways extended deeper and deeper into the colony. Local politics occupied a deal of attention, but the ins and outs of seven successive governments between 1870 and 1880, and the rivalries of Messrs. Higginbotham, Graham Berry, Duncan Gillies, McCulloch and the rest of them merely made a topic of conversation for clubmen and bar-room politicians, even though, as a result of their manoeuvres, the celebrated "Black Wednesday" saw the dismissal of many State public servants and a crisis which had no Australian parallel until the toppling of the Lang regime in Sydney more than half a century later.

Taken all in all, Victoria probably enjoyed the Sedate 'Seventies. The colony was now past its turbulent adolescence, and was old enough to appreciate the amenities of life.

The decade opened with a literary tragedy — the death of Adam Lindsay Gordon. Gordon's sad story is so well known that it scarcely calls for repetition here in any detail. The son of a British cavalry officer, he was born in the Azores Islands in 1833, was educated at Cheltenham College, England, and sailed for Australia at the age of twenty. Although trained to no profession, he was a classical scholar, and in addition — a combination by no means unusual at the time — was passionately fond of horses and horse-racing.

On his arrival in South Australia he became a mounted policeman in the Mount Gambier district, but after a few years of service, left the force and

turned horse-breaker and amateur rider — dangerous occupations for a man both reckless and short-sighted.

In 1857, on the death of his father, Gordon inherited about £7,000, bought land, and successfully contested a seat in the South Australian Parliament, although he soon lost interest in politics, and did not stand again at the next election. While in South Australia, as well as making himself famous as a gentleman steeplechase rider, he began to develop the poetic talent latent in him since his school days, and contributed verse to *The Colonial Monthly* and other publications.

Racing, added to a natural generosity and a complete lack of business ability, soon dissipated his fortune, considerable as it was for those days. For a short period he attempted, with the assistance of a partner as unpractical as himself, to carry on a livery stable at Ballarat, but that soon failed, and he came to Melbourne, where, in 1867, he published what is generally considered to be his first volume of verse, *Sea Spray and Smoke Drift*. It was issued by George Robertson, most probably at the poet's expense. Unfortunately, it did not sell. Nor, for better reasons, did *Ashtaroth*, printed for him by Clarson, Massina and Co.

Here an interesting point is raised. It is usually taken for granted that *Sea Spray and Smoke Drift* appeared before *Ashtaroth*, but researches made by Dr. Kenneth Binns, of the Federal Parliamentary Library, Canberra, indicate that this is reversing the actual order. In a letter to the Melbourne *Argus*, published in November, 1923, Dr. Binns mentions that Gordon's three books were among the earliest registered under the Victorian Copyright Act of 1869, the entries being Nos. 24, 26 and 27, copyright in each case being granted to Clarson, Massina and Co. According to these entries, *Ashtaroth* was published



A. H. MASSINA.

*As they knew each
other.*

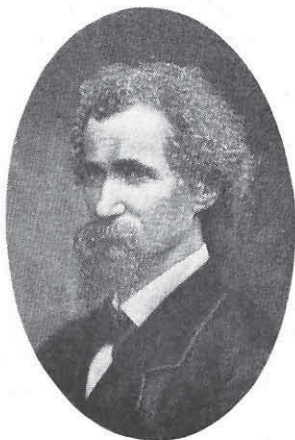
A. H. Massina and
three distinguished
Australian men of
letters.



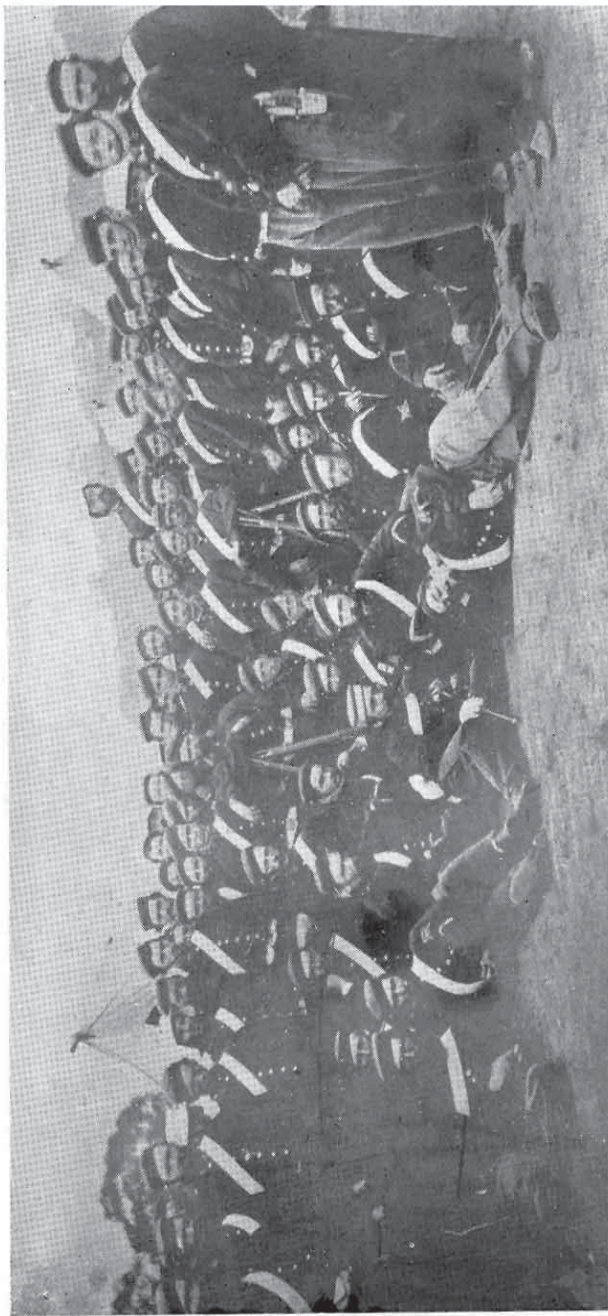
MARCUS CLARKE.



ADAM LINDSAY GORDON.



HENRY KENDALL.



Military life in the early 1860's. The Richmond Rifles in camp. A. H. Massina is probably the bearded figure seated in the centre.

on 10th June, 1867, and *Sea Spray and Smoke Drift* on 19th June of the same year — that is, ten days later.

By 1869 Gordon was heavily in debt. The money he owed his publishers was a drop in the bucket of his general liabilities, but he hoped to recoup his shattered fortunes by another inheritance from Scotland, to which he considered he had a claim. Legal proceedings were instigated, and in 1870, while the case was pending, he decided to issue a third volume of verse, *Bush Ballads and Galloping Rhymes*.

By the time it was ready, the case was decided against him, and as he had apparently been living on his expectations for months, he found himself bankrupt. The blow was shattering to a man of naturally morbid temperament, whose health had been ruined by accidents on the racecourse and in the hunting field.

On the morning of 24th June, 1870, the day after the publication of *Bush Ballads and Galloping Rhymes*, he walked from his home at Brighton to Picnic Point, Hampton, where he shot himself.

It is rather unfortunate that one of the last calls he paid on the afternoon before his death should have been at the office of Clarson, Massina and Co., where, apparently, he discussed the question of his liability to them. What this amount was cannot definitely be stated, but he apparently owed them between fifty and seventy pounds for the printing of *Ashtaroath* and *Bush Ballads*, and the fact that he had no means of meeting it gave rise to a legend that he committed suicide on this account. Not to improve matters, Massina himself, in an interview nearly forty years afterwards, to some extent regretfully endorsed this theory.

It is scarcely to be imagined that Gordon committed suicide because of a paltry debt of seventy pounds. At all events, let us hope that Clarson, Massina and Co. were not among the unfortunate poet's most pressing creditors. Actually, he owed money in many quarters,

and had been foolish enough to become involved with a professional money-lender who had made advances on the strength of his Scottish expectations, charging a bare ninety per cent. for the accommodation. The sum of these debts could not have exceeded five hundred pounds, an amount which, though certainly embarrassing, would of itself have driven few men to suicide.

The trouble lay deeper than that—deeper even than Gordon's indifferent health, which, in his own view at least, had broken down as a result of his many accidents. The man was of an essentially melancholy disposition. His life appeared to him as one of continual frustration, and though he possessed physical courage in the highest degree, he lacked the inner strength which would have enabled him to defeat the misfortunes which, when they had any existence outside his imagination, were only too often the result of his own folly and negligence. On horseback, no fence was too high for him, but he never learned how to rise to life's hurdles.

His acquaintance with Massina was apparently very slight, and confined, one would imagine, almost solely to arranging for the publication of *Ashtaroth* and *Bush Ballads*. The tall, gaunt, unsmiling steeple-chaser and poet could have had little in common with the busy printer, especially as the latter had no interest in sport. In after years Massina mentioned Gordon as one of the most honourable men he had ever known, but it does not appear that they were on close terms. It is, however, on record that Massina always deeply regretted that the question of money was raised between them on that last afternoon. He was not to know the despair hidden behind the poet's sombre face.

Some time after Gordon's death, the firm of Clarson, Massina and Co. acquired from his widow the copyright in most of Gordon's work, reprinting in *The*

Australian Journal all except a few fugitive pieces, while in collected form they went through numerous editions.

Mrs. Gordon re-married and survived for many years. In an interview published in the *Adelaide Advertiser* in 1912, she mentioned that she had disposed of the rights in her husband's poems thirty years before, but it was obviously much earlier than that. It may seem odd that Mrs. Gordon should have sold the copy-right at all, but it was no unusual practice in those days, before the royalty system became properly established.

She added that she had received much less than the poems were worth. In the light of after events she was possibly right, for Gordon's work achieved a vast popularity, but at the time of his death there was nothing to indicate that this was likely to happen. Clarson, Massina and Co. had no means of telling that they were buying that rarest of all literary properties, a best-selling collection of poems. To quote Alexander Sutherland, the copies of *Ashtaroath* "lay like a weary load upon the shelves of the publisher," while *Sea Spray* and *Smoke Drift* had also met with a discouraging reception when issued by George Robertson.

In his previously-mentioned letter, Dr. Binns says: "No doubt the lack of success which attended it (only one hundred copies having been sold) resulted in that firm handing over their rights to the printers and publishers of Gordon's other two works." On the other hand, it is uncertain whether George Robertson actually owned any rights.

Despite Dr. Binns' researches and Mrs. Gordon's claims, some mystery still surrounds the Gordon copy-rights. If Mrs. Gordon owned the rights, how were Clarson, Massina and Co. able to register them in their name the day after he died? If Gordon had made them over to the firm, how did it come about that he still

owed them for the printing? Miss Edith Humphries says: "The poems were sold for the benefit of the widow." But when, and under what circumstances? The questions remain unanswered.

XVII

THE year 1870 is notable in the long history of *The Australian Journal*, for it saw the first publication of Marcus Clarke's famous novel, *His Natural Life*.

Many years afterwards Massina was quoted as saying that the story caused him so much trouble that he wished he had never heard of it. No doubt he had many bad moments while Clarke was writing it instalment by instalment, but he knew well enough that he had helped bring a literary masterpiece into the world and that its presentation had given *The Australian Journal* a prestige which nothing else could have done, and which would last for all time.

As a pioneer publisher, Massina naturally came into close contact with all the literary celebrities of the early days. As a business-man, he probably deprecated what he naturally considered their unorthodox way of life and their inconvenient habit of being continually out of funds. Many were men of the highest talent, who, under stars more auspicious, would have achieved wealth and fame. Unfortunately for themselves, they were born long before their proper time.

Even to-day the path of the Australian writer is not noticeably strewn with rose petals. In the 'sixties and 'seventies it was paved with the sharpest possible flints. Artists, writers and musicians all had much the same rough road to travel. The population of Australia

was too sparse, its general mode of life too rugged, for any of the liberal arts to find much encouragement, financial or otherwise. To make the plight of the writer worse, there was always the pressure of competition from abroad. For people who wished to read, new novels by Dickens, Thackeray, Trollope, Wilkie Collins and the rest of the Victorian giants were arriving by every mail.

Under these circumstances, the marvel is that there were so many writers in Australia at the time, and that they wrote so much and so well. It was a day when hard drinking was the rule rather than the exception even among men of affairs, but the profession of journalism was regarded — by its practitioners, at least — as sufficient justification for irregularities beyond the average. Add to this the impossibility of making a reasonably good living by authorship alone, so that most of the writers of the time were chronically bankrupt, and it will be seen that they must have been a particularly trying set with whom to maintain business relations.

It is no extraordinary thing for an author to have a grievance against publishers, and probably Massina came in for his full share of condemnation when the Bohemians foregathered. Even in these comparatively prosaic and abstemious days, when literary workers seldom let their temperaments get out of hand, clashes are not unknown; there can be little doubt that the man who had to deal with the authors of the 'sixties and 'seventies needed the tact of a diplomat and the patience of an angel.

Most of the Australian literary lights of the time have long since faded, but among those whose reputations burn undimmed, Marcus Clarke stands easily first as one of the finest prose writers this country has yet produced, and as the creator of a book — part history, part fiction — which is unlikely to die.

No other Australian novel has so far achieved the fame of *His Natural Life*, to give it the title under which the original serial version was published. Later, when it was condensed and altered for book publication, the title was changed to *For the Term of His Natural Life*, the name by which it is best known.

The original version has been serialised no less than four times in *The Australian Journal* — in 1870, 1881, 1886 and again in 1914. The novel, a considerably revised version of the serial, has been published and reprinted many times in Australia, England and America, and translated into German. In 1946 it made its appearance in the "Penguin" series, this time as *Men in Chains*.

Dramatised, it has been played in every city, town and hamlet in the Commonwealth and New Zealand. For the old-time Australian touring theatrical company it was as reliable a money-spinner as *East Lynne* or *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and not only filled metropolitan theatres, but helped many a barn-storming troupe out of an outback town. When the legitimate stage gave place to the silent motion picture, *For the Term of His Natural Life* was one of the first Australian books to be filmed, at least two celluloid versions being produced. Several radio dramatisations gained wide popularity. At the time of writing, it had not yet made its appearance as a sound film, but there is no doubt that it eventually will.

Clarke was born in Kensington, London, in 1847. He had relatives of some distinction in Australia and as a lad was sent out to their care. After gaining what was called "colonial experience" on a sheep station, he entered the service of the Bank of Australasia, but he was as ill-fitted to be a bank official as for country life, and soon found his way into journalism. At twenty-one he married Marian, the daughter of John Dunn, a popular comedian, and herself a capable

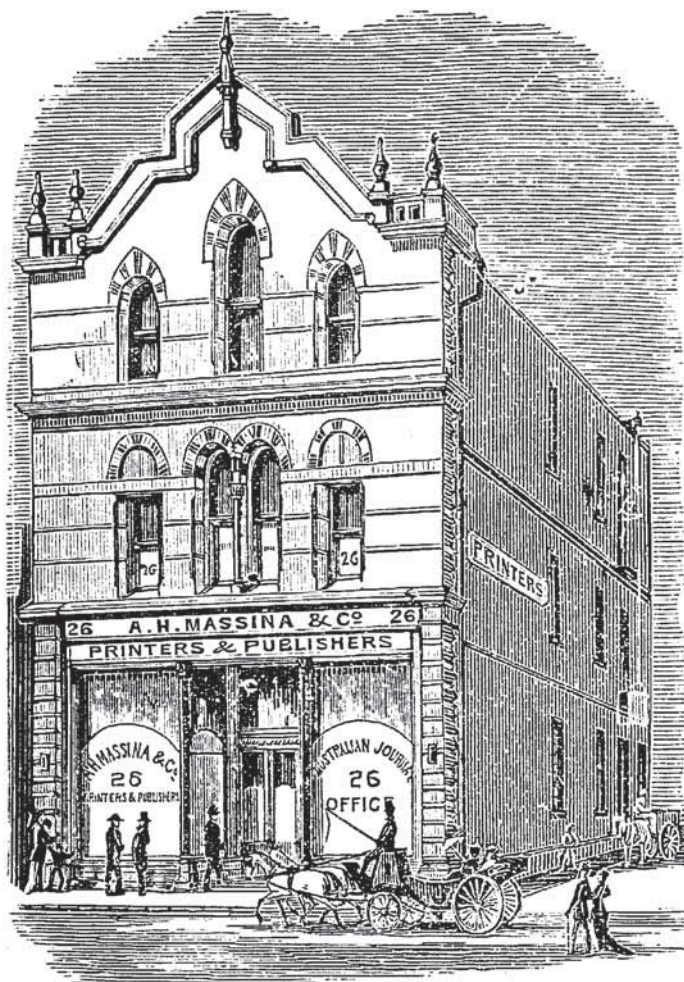
actress. They had six children, one of whom became well-known on the Australian stage as Marian Marcus-Clarke.

His first published work appeared in May, 1866, in the *Australian Monthly Magazine*. About the same time he joined the staff of *The Argus* and *The Australasian*, and for the latter paper wrote a weekly column under the somewhat unwieldy pseudonym — characteristic of the time — of “The Peripatetic Philosopher.” For a mere boy, as Clarke then was, the quality of his work was amazing. No other Australian writer of the same age has shown talent so precocious.

There is considerable controversy over many points in Clarke’s career. It has been asserted that it was he who bought the *Australian Monthly Magazine* from Williams and changed its name. Others have stated that he founded it. The facts seem to be that he acquired it from Clarson, Massina and Co., in 1868, either in conjunction with G. A. Walstab and others, or as sole proprietor. In any case he was editor — at the age of twenty-one!

It was in the *Colonial Monthly* that his first novel appeared. This was *Long Odds*, portion of the serial version of which was written by Walstab while Clarke was recovering from a spill in the hunting field. In 1869 Clarson, Massina and Co. published this story in book form with most of the material supplied by Walstab deleted.

In the same year Clarke proposed to Massina the idea of a novel dealing with the convict system of Van Dieman’s Land. The suggestion bore such immediate fruit that he was commissioned to visit Tasmania for the purpose of studying the scenes and collecting material for the story. Looking back, this may seem no very remarkable thing, but in reality it showed an enterprise and a literary interest quite without pre-



26 Little Collins Street East.

These premises, which were situated on the corner of Howey Place and Little Collins Street, were occupied by the firm from 1879 until 1889, when a move was made to a new building erected in Howey Place itself, where the Capitol Theatre now stands.



A. H. MASSINA IN MIDDLE LIFE.

cedent. The idea of commissioning an Australian work of fiction by a twenty-two-year-old Australian writer would certainly have been laughed at by any other publisher of the time, and it is to be doubted whether any real parallel could be found to-day.

Massina had no need to send Clarke, expenses paid, across Bass Strait merely to write a serial story. He could obtain all the serials he wanted from London publishers for a few pounds each. He had no reason to suppose that young Clarke was about to produce a masterpiece, or that the story, when written, would appeal to readers of *The Australian Journal* more strongly than the stories of *High Life* in London to which they were accustomed. But, to his eternal credit, these considerations did not weigh with him. Clarke pocketed his advance, went to Tasmania, and came back to write *His Natural Life*.

Both men may have regretted their bargain afterwards. Massina may not have anticipated that the story would be the grim tragedy it turned out to be. Clarke may not have considered the difficulties of grinding out the required instalment month after month. Many legends have gathered around the writing of the tale, one being that, owing to Clarke's bibulous habits, he had to be locked in a room at the Journal office, supplied with pen, ink, paper and whisky, and not released until the required space had been filled. Another is that Walstab filled in when Clarke was not to be found. Walstab himself denied the latter rumour, which had gained credence owing to his share in writing *Long Odds*.

The story of the locked room is more difficult to refute, especially as, on one occasion, the Journal went to press with an apology instead of the current instalment. It is reasonable to assume that Massina had a great deal of worry over his erratic author, simply because, as was the custom in those days, the tale was

written from month to month, and not, as it would be nowadays, completed before it was submitted.

Although looking for trouble when he consented to such an arrangement, he was merely adhering to a practice long established, and followed by such writers as Charles Dickens, W. M. Thackeray and Alexandre Dumas. Unfortunately, it involved the risks of illness, accident or even death, and unless the writer had a good deal of a story up his sleeve, so to speak, he was always liable to land both himself and his publisher in difficulties. Apparently Massina had his full share of them. Driving Marcus Clarke to meet a monthly deadline must have taxed his temper to its limit.

In its original serial form, although enriched with copious and invaluable historical references, *His Natural Life* is a very lengthy and—it must be admitted—wandering story. Beginning in the issue for March, 1870, and not concluding until June, 1872, it must be one of the longest novels ever serialised, and how the readers had the patience to stick to it through all those months is difficult to comprehend.

It would be interesting to know the amount the author actually received for the serial rights—whether the original hundred pounds with which it is said Massina subsidised him covered the whole story, or whether he received additional “refreshers” later. If not, it is hard to understand why he kept it going for so long, when he could so easily and with so much advantage, both to himself and his readers, have cut it short months before.

For a time Clarke was actually editor of *The Australian Journal*. For what period he had charge of it cannot be definitely stated. In an interview published in the *Herald* on 2nd March, 1909, on the occasion of his retirement from business, Massina is quoted as saying:

"On one occasion we determined to improve *The Australian Journal*. We hit upon Marcus Clarke to give it the boost we had in view. He ran it for a month, during which time the circulation dropped from 12,000 to 4,000. If he had run it for another month, it would have been dead."

Obviously there is something wrong here. Clarke may not have been the world's best editor, but even had he been the worst, he could scarcely have changed the character of a monthly magazine so greatly in one issue that the sales of the next dropped by two-thirds—unless, of course, he took over the Baptist Gazette and turned it into the Rationalists' Chronicle. Massina was in his seventy-fifth year at the time of this interview. Many things had happened since the Marcus Clarke days, and quite possibly the events and people of forty years before were a little less clear in memory than they had once been.

The question of Clarke's editorship of the Journal—an important one to Australian literary historians—cannot be settled by the remarks quoted in this interview, assuming, indeed, that they were correctly quoted. Clarke must have been editor of the Journal considerably longer than a month. One of his biographers, Mr. Brian Elliott, of Adelaide University, is of the opinion that he was in control of the publication during most of the period *His Natural Life* was appearing.

This is not improbable, although the only evidence on the point is somewhat negative, consisting as it does of an announcement, in the issue for September, 1871, that he was "relinquishing the duties of conductor," although he would "continue to write the leading tale." Had he been in charge for only one month, such an announcement would scarcely have been necessary.

Referring to the origin of the story, Massina was also reported as having said:

"Clarke came in to me one day and said: 'Massina, I want fifty pounds.' 'Oh,' I said, 'you've had enough out of me. What more do you want?' 'Fifty pounds,' replied Clarke. 'I can write a story for your Journal. I am going to Tasmania to write up the criminal records, and I'll do the story for one hundred pounds.' We jumped at it. Now, Clarke was going to write that story in twelve monthly sections. At first he wrote enough for two months, then enough for one month, and got down to very little. In fact, we had once to put it in pica type instead of brevier to swell out the size of that month's (January, 1871) contribution. But on one occasion he had nothing ready, and we had to go to press with an apology to our readers. Finally, we had to lock him in a room to get his matter written.

"A funny thing," continued Mr. Massina, "happened when Clarke brought in the last of his copy of *For the Term of His Natural Life*. He said: 'There's the end of it,' and I said: 'Thank God!' Clarke said: 'Why?' and I said: 'I don't want to hear the name of the blessed thing any more!' 'Will you give the story to me?' said Clarke. I did, there and then. He went right away and got twenty-five pounds for it to start with from George Robertson. I could have made a lot of money out of it, but at the moment was glad to get rid of it.

"So," said Mr. Massina, "you can understand my relief when 'Finis' was written in connection with *His Natural Life*. One day on board a bay excursion steamer an acquaintance was speaking about books and calmly remarked: 'I'm sure there's a book which you have never read. It is called *For the Term of His Natural Life*.' I told him I'd heard of it."

The real story lies somewhere between the lines of this statement. It seems more than likely that when Clarke started to write *His Natural Life*, he was offered the editorship of the Journal in addition. There has always been a vague tradition that the first publication

of the famous story found readers disinclined to accept a tale so stark, and that the circulation fell off as the serial progressed. This might easily account for Massina's statement that Clarke's editorship did the magazine so much harm. His job as editor might also provide a foundation for the legend that he had to be imprisoned in order to keep him on the job. Clearly he must have been working at the Journal office, or it would have been very difficult to get hold of him in order to lock him up, as it is scarcely likely that his home would have been invaded for the purpose! It is equally improbable that, at his age, he would have been as addicted to whisky as the story suggests.

It is not unreasonable to assume that for a considerable time during the run of *His Natural Life* Clarke was working at the Journal office in some kind of editorial capacity, and that — perhaps in consequence of being locked in his office! — he left it in September, 1871. At all events, it was after that date that the difficulties with the copy really set in.

Apparently there were no hard feelings, for apart from *His Natural Life*, a good deal of Clarke's later work appeared in *The Australian Journal*, including *Chidiock Tichborne, or the Catholic Conspiracy*, and a reprint of *Long Odds*, published serially in a revised version and, according to Mr. Samuel R. Simmons, an authority who has devoted a lifetime to the study of Clarke's writing, with some of the portions supplied by Walstab omitted and the rest re-written.

Clarke did a great deal of general journalism, wrote a number of plays and pantomimes, and for some time was Secretary to the Trustees of the National Library and Museum.

His wit and charm of manner gained him many friends — perhaps too many — at an age when most young men are diffidently feeling for a foothold on the first rung of the ladder. If his success came too soon,

so did his death in 1881, when he was only thirty-four. He has come down in Australian literary history as the traditional erratic genius, but there may be something wrong with this theory, too, because few really erratic men could have crowded so much work into so short a life.

Some of Henry Kendall's work appeared in *The Australian Journal*, but there is nothing to suggest that the distinguished poet had any personal relations with its proprietors. His first appearance in the Journal was in September, 1869, when *On a Cattletrack* appeared. He is also represented by *About Some Men of Letters in Australia*, an article which appeared the following month, the subjects being Charles Harpur, Daniel Henry Deniehy, William Bede Dalley and J. L. Michael.

Other contributions by Kendall are *Sperm Whaling* (November, 1869), *Passing Away* (December, 1870), *Acis* (February, 1870), *Kiama Revisited* (March, 1870), and *Elijah* (June, 1870).

XVIII

ENTERPRISE was shown when, in 1871, Clarson, Massina and Co. established a branch office in Lennox Street, Richmond, and *The Richmond Free Press*, one of the first suburban newspapers in the Colony, began publication under the editorship of the twenty-four-year-old W.E. Adcock, a versatile young man, who, in addition to his activities as a journalist, also conducted an estate agency at 68 Bridge Road and advertised that he had £10,000 to lend on approved security. His father had a book shop and library next door.

The news sections of *The Richmond Free Press*, with their accounts of council meetings and court cases, their church notices and their long and heavily facetious "Letters to the Editor," differ little from those in suburban newspapers of the present day, although occasionally a gleam of mirth lightens the columns. One can smile, for instance, at the five small boys who, during the heatwave with which 1871 ended, were prosecuted for bathing in the Yarra not only during prohibited hours, but without clothing. The bathing suit, of course, was unknown then, at least for men. When ladies ventured for a dip, they did so in strict seclusion, and enclosed in a home-made garment more voluminous than a Roman toga. Gentlemen took to the water after dark, or, if they were unusually formal, in a cut-down pair of trousers.

In this particular case one is relieved to read that Inspector Ximenes, prosecuting on behalf of the municipal council, proved big-hearted. "He had not contemplated the punishment of such juvenile offenders, whose appearance in a state of nature would scarce offend even the most sensitive modesty." The quintet of young nudists, therefore, was dismissed, though not without a caution.

It is in the advertising columns that one must search for comedy. Richmond had already become a self-contained suburban community where all the amenities of life were to be obtained. The citizen of Richmond could be born at Hygeia House, which offered "superior accommodation for ladies during accouchement." Equipped by Mrs. March of the Beehive Underclothing and Baby Linen Warehouse, he could be educated under Mr. Batten at the Richmond Grammar School for a guinea a quarter — "Latin, drawing, etc., each half a guinea extra." Later he could lodge at the Cricketer's Arms Hotel — where not only respectability was to be found, but, what was even more important, a bath — and obtain *Instruction and Amusement* at Adcock's Library.

After having had his hair cut, shampooed and brushed "by machinery" at W. Cook's noted hair-cutting saloon, he could dance at quadrille parties to pianoforte music provided by Miss Henniker. No doubt on such a social occasion he wore one of Mr. Howard's black cloth suits to order at £2 15s., and encased his feet in a pair of Flexura Spring Waist boots, whose chief feature was an "Elastic Steel Spring inserted in the waist of the boot." The maker, Mr. Kent, supplied them for sixteen shillings at his premises in Bridge Road. After this life was ended he would be taken care of by Mr. John Deakin, who styled himself a "Funeral Economist" — nowadays he would probably be called a "mortician" — who provided four black

horses, complete with black trappings and waving plumes.

The Richmond Free Press must have been ahead of its time, for it ceased publication within a couple of years, but while it lasted, it was well up to the standard of any modern suburban paper.

XIX

ONE of the firm's most popular publications was the annual first known as *Clarson, Massina and Co.'s Weather Almanac and General Guide and Handbook for Victoria*. The Almanac appears to have originated about 1860, although the earliest copy now extant is dated ten years later. Each issue contained a mass of general — and at the time extremely useful — information, ranging from chronological and astronomical tables giving the times of the rising of the sun, moon and major planets, to a "digger's ready reckoner" which enabled the fortunate user instantly to calculate the value of a nugget of gold of any size up to a thousand ounces.

In another form, this publication was called *Dr. L. L. Smith's Medical Almanac* and described as "A Handbook for the Mothers of Australasia and a Vade Mecum for the Profession." Dr. Smith's Almanac, however, was merely Massina's Almanac plus a section contributed by the learned doctor, who, with a courage which at this distance of time can only be admired, handed out hints on the treatment and cure of ailments of every kind, even those of the most dangerous nature, and for good measure threw in recipes for making anything from face-powder to horehound beer.

The name of Louis L. Smith has faded from public memory, but in his time he was one of the best-known men in Victoria. His fame, indeed, extended over the

border into neighbouring Colonies, the *Sydney Bulletin* going so far as to refer to him as Dr. £. £. Smith, presumably because of the advertisement in which he offered to mail medical advice anywhere on receipt of a pound — and, of course, a list of the sufferer's symptoms. The laws controlling the practice of medicine were by no means stringent then, and L. L. Smith was only one of many advertising doctors who treated patients by post as well as personally, but he was easily the best known. His announcements appeared in almost every publication in Australia, generally illustrated by a picture showing the entire medical end of Collins Street, although it may be doing his memory an injustice to imply that he wished to suggest to prospective patients that his rooms occupied the whole series of buildings between Exhibition and Spring Streets.

Dr. Smith did not disdain journalism, and for several years conducted a page of medical hints in *The Australian Journal*, first under the pseudonym of "Colonial Lancet," but later dropping this cloak and using his own name, under which, it is refreshing to find, he trounced "quacks" with irrepressible pugnacity.

At that period, when it was difficult for residents of remote districts to obtain medical advice, it is not impossible that many found his mail-order system valuable. At all events, he became popular enough to gain a seat in the Victorian Legislative Council. Another of his hobbies was the breeding of bloodhounds. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was one of the most popular dramas of the time, and no Melbourne production was complete unless it borrowed bloodhounds from the doctor's kennels to chase Eliza across the ice-bound Ohio.

Frock-coated and top-hatted, and driving the inevitable pair of horses, Dr. L. L. Smith was a familiar Melbourne figure from 1870 until after the end of the century, but it is doubtful whether his Almanac was

a really adequate substitute for personal consultation. Some people never tire of reading medical works, but even so it would be interesting to know just what the reader of the 'seventies could have made of such an item as this:

"Pilocarpine for Hiccough — The value of pilocarpine in the treatment of severe hiccough, to which attention was called some time ago in the *Revue Medicale Chirurgicale*, has been confirmed by the success attending its use in a very severe case which had lasted for three months and resisted all other remedies. Dr. Ruhdorfer administered a subcutaneous injection of the hydrochlorate of pilocarpine (of the strength of 3 centigrammes in a gramme of water) and the hiccough was at once cured."

It is not easy to imagine an early settler giving himself a subcutaneous injection of pilocarpine, even if he had been suffering from hiccough for years. Nor can one see any private person following the doctor's suggestion and using nitro-glycerine as a substitute for alcohol. Rather difficult, too, was the administration of "kooso" as a remedy for tapeworm, no matter how urgent the case, as the remedy in question consisted of "the dried flowers and immature fruit of the *Brayera anthelmintica*, a tree native to Abyssinia," and therefore, it might be thought, rather difficult to obtain, at least in some parts of Australia.

Glancing through these old issues, one is mildly surprised to find that, according to the *Monde Pharmatique*, "a new exhilarating product has been discovered, which presents a singular analogy to protoxide of azote. This is a mixture of ergot of rye, 5 grammes, and solution phosphate of soda to tenth degree, 15 grammes."

"It has," Dr. Smith genially added, "the effect of producing a kind of inebriety and continuance of good spirits even after the height of hilarity has passed

away." Possibly, as the doctor mentioned, "it would prove useful in depressed conditions of the system," but it seems an odd sort of home-brew for a physician to recommend to the presumably unsophisticated readers of his Almanac. Fortunately the difficulty of acquiring the right materials deterred most people from seeking synthetic hilarity in that manner.

Easier to obtain was "the smoke from burning woollen rags" which, the doctor averred, "is said to have cured, among others, two cases of extremely dangerous wounds; one made by a sewing machine needle which broke in a woman's finger after penetrating it. Another case was from the bite of an angry cat, which tore the flesh from wrist to elbow. The danger of lockjaw and the pain, which in both these cases was extreme, were entirely removed by holding the injured finger and arm in the smoke of woollens burned over the coals."

Apparently no lives were lost as a result of the doctor's advice, for the Almanac went on year after year, readers, we hope, ignoring suggestions that, on the authority of Dr. Legroux Manotti, they should treat themselves with tincture of cloves for tuberculosis; try three-quarters of a grain of ichthyol for their red noses, or rid themselves of St. Vitus's Dance with doses of arsenic. Nor, probably, was much notice taken of the doctor's claim that champagne was a specific for influenza, even though the prescription may have been based on personal experience.

One remedy that may have been tried — with what success it is impossible to say — was "a wineglass of vinegar to restore the faculties and powers of locomotion to a man who is hopelessly intoxicated."

The gifted doctor may have intended the advice given in his Almanac to be followed exclusively by the medical profession, but it is doubtful whether his colleagues based their treatment on his theories.

The two Almanacs, Dr. L. L. Smith's and Massina's, one with medical notes and the other pleasantly free from them, existed side by side for many years — indeed, into the 1920's, when, there being no longer room for two such publications, they were amalgamated. Finally, the medical notes dropped out altogether, the title was changed to *The Australian Almanac*, and an attempt made to revive its flagging fortunes. The effort was abortive. Almanacs belonged to the antimacassar age, when newspapers were scarce and information on any topic difficult to obtain. Despite the addition of a large sporting section, and a general overhaul, sales gradually fell away until, after the outbreak of World War II, the publication was quietly dropped.

Its passing was by no means unregretted. Years afterwards enquiries were still being received from people who, for various reasons, relied on the information it contained. Some planted seeds according to the phases of the moon or the movements of the stars; some fished according to the table of the tides; others settled bets and arguments with the aid of the sporting records, while, curiously enough, many relied on the weather forecast.

The Almanac is gone forever, but the subject cannot be dismissed without revealing the secret of those weather forecasts. The table of the rising and setting of the sun, moon and major planets, together with the other astronomic details, were supplied by an officer of the Government Observatory, but the weather forecasts, which covered the entire year ahead, were compiled, the present writer eventually discovered, from what was called "Dr. Herschel's Formula." This, like the Almanac itself, was a survival from the middle of the previous century.

When it came to forecasting the weather for a whole year, even Dr. Herschel's formula seemed to leave an enormous margin for error, particularly as it applied

to the northern hemisphere only, so that its mysterious prophecies had in every case to be reversed. So a private compromise was effected, and the weather forecast drawn from a hat. This arrangement, though perhaps unscientific, worked quite well, one particular triumph being the forecasting, six months in advance, of the rain and floods which washed out the Victorian Easter of 1939!

XX

THE original partnership was broken up in the early 'seventies, Gibb and Shallard transferring their activities to Sydney, where they set up as "Printers, Lithographers, Account Book Manufacturers, Artists, Engravers, Electrotypers and Stereotypers." They also published the *Illustrated Sydney News* and acted as agent for *The Australian Journal* and the Little Wanzer Sewing Machine. The friendly relations which existed between the two firms is evidenced by many an old invoice, which show that Clarson, Massina and Co. purchased large supplies of pictorial calendars from the Sydneysiders.

The titles are an interesting sidelight on the sentiment of the period. Thus in 1878 we find that "Kissing Grandfather under the Mistletoe" ran a close second to "The Duchess of Devonshire" as a popular subject, the Duchess for some reason being a much greater favourite with buyers of calendars than even Princess Alexandra of Wales. As was only to be expected, the Princess was twice as popular as the Prince.

One of their most notable printing customers was George Adams of "Tattersalls" fame, who at that time conducted his "consultation" in Sydney. Until his banishment from the mainland, Gibb, Shallard and Co. had the responsible and lucrative job of printing his tickets and result slips, and lost a good customer when the government decided that the people of New South



WILLIAM S. MITCHELL.



ALFRED LIONEL MASSINA.

Wales must not be contaminated by the holding of a sweep in their capital. If they were alive to-day, Gibb and Shallard — not to mention George Adams himself — would smile wryly at the spectacle of the crowds queueing up to buy tickets in the State Lottery!

In the big fire of August, 1890, the establishment of Gibb, Shallard and Co. was burnt to the ground, together with several other old buildings. The land was then resumed by the City of Sydney to allow for the widening of Martin Place. Some months after the fire they reopened in Clarence Street, but in a much smaller way, and eventually the business was purchased by McCarron, Bird and Co., though Gibb continued to act as Sydney agent for *The Australian Journal* for some years until the New South Wales distribution passed into the hands of Messrs. Gordon and Gotch.

In 1872 Clarson also moved to Sydney, but his name appeared in the Journal imprint and in the style of the firm for several years afterwards. Before leaving Victoria, he was presented with a purse of sovereigns by the Horticultural Society of Victoria. He had been Honorary Director of the Richmond Park Experimental Gardens (now the Burnley Horticultural Gardens) for some years.

Apparently the dissolution of partnership gave rise to rumours regarding the financial stability of the firm, for in *The Australian Journal* for September, 1872, the following cryptic statement appeared.

"In reference to the 'change' referred to above, we deem it desirable on this occasion to take the reader into our confidence; the more especially as it has recently come to our knowledge that certain mis-statements (to use a mild term) are current in reference to the proprietary of *The Australian Journal*. In September, 1865, the Journal was started by Messrs. Clarson, Massina and Co., by whom it has ever since been carried on. One of these gentlemen, however,

being about to leave the colony, it is probable that the present business arrangements in connection with the *Journal* will undergo some change, and whilst everyone who has had the happiness of knowing Mr. Clarson will bear ready testimony to his honourable principles, his uniform urbanity, scientific knowledge, and strict business habits, it would be simply impossible for us to speak in adequate terms of the loss we shall sustain by his departure. We have made this little statement as a prelude to another. A rumour has reached our ears that *The Australian Journal* has been charged with 'having ruined three proprietors, one after another.' It would not be very difficult, we believe, to trace this slander to its source; suffice it, however, to suggest the only possible ground for the origin of the calumny.

"Another periodical, called the *Colonial Monthly*, was some time ago commenced by the same proprietors, but finding that its efficient superintendence interfered unduly with their general business, the proprietors of that magazine transferred to it a well-known popular writer, who, with all his undoubted talent as an author, and his influence upon the press, was unable to render the work a commercial success, although he unquestionably made it the best 'high class' magazine in the southern hemisphere. From this gentleman's hands the *Colonial Monthly* passed into those of a *third* party, with whom Messrs. Clarson, Massina and Co. never had any other connection than as printers of the magazine. We feel that no apology for this apparently personal explanation will be required by our regular readers, but there are others who, especially at the commencement of a new volume, must be guarded from giving credence to injurious statements, which are calculated, whether designedly or recklessly uttered, to damage the reputation of *The Australian Journal*—a journal that has cultivated a host of envious and more pretentious rivals.

"There is a very prevalent notion that in the conduct of a literary serial a popular writer must necessarily make the best possible editor, and that a high-sounding name is the talisman of success, an error which has before now cost many a proprietor 'heaps of gold,' yet, nevertheless, the same fallacy continues very generally to pervade public opinion. Whatever may be the cause — and *we* shall not attempt to assign a theory on the subject — the fact is that successful novelists, dramatists, poets or other writers of works of fiction, or imagination, have uniformly proved decided failures when they have tried their hands at the practical business of editing a journal. . . ."

"The well-known popular writer" is obviously Marcus Clarke, while the "third party" was probably J. J. Shillinglaw.

After leaving Melbourne, Clarson was for many years on the staff of the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*. After his retirement he passed his last years in Mildura.

XXI

IN 1874, almost a decade after it had been founded, *The Australian Journal* was dying on its feet. A major operation was clearly required. A letter was sent to newsagents and other retailers, attributing the malady to the competition of English magazines, and asking whether it would be advisable to reduce the price from a shilling to sixpence. The agents were evidently in favour of the reduction, which began with the September issue. September, 1874, therefore, is an important date in the Journal's history, as, once reduced, the price has remained unchanged regardless of wars and economic upheavals. In the same month it was announced that Robert P. Whitworth had been appointed Editor.

One of the circle of brilliant journalists which included Clarke, Walstab and Garnet Walsh, Whitworth was perhaps more versatile than any of his fellows. Certainly few Australian writers have had a more varied career. Born in England in 1831, he arrived in New South Wales at the age of twenty-four, and for some time was an actor in Sydney. The stage offered an even more precarious living then than nowadays, and before long Whitworth, who was apparently prepared to try anything once, drifted into the Hunter River district, where he engaged in the less cultural but probably more lucrative business of horse-breaking.

Back in Sydney again, Whitworth secured a job on the *Empire* newspaper, afterwards taking the surest

way of ridding himself of his savings by starting several periodicals.

Having reduced his bankroll in this easy fashion, he became a riding master, but a severe fall ended his career — either it gave him a distaste for the business or his pupils lost confidence in him — and he returned to journalism, for a time doubling the parts of writer and auctioneer. He spent four years in New Zealand, where his activities included the exploration of the then little-known West Coast. Melbourne saw him first in 1864, when he joined F. E. Balliere in compiling gazetteers of Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales, an assignment that took him all over the three colonies.

The second volume of *Victoria and Its Metropolis*, published in 1888 under the editorship of Alexander Sutherland, and containing a vast amount of descriptive matter as well as brief biographies of most of the prominent citizens of the colony, is almost entirely Whitworth's work. In addition he wrote plays, novels and countless newspaper articles and short stories, contributing to almost every publication in Australia. His last traceable published work appeared in 1893.

He continued as Editor of the Journal until about 1875, when he was succeeded by one E. Kidgell, whose reign was apparently of the briefest. Whitworth was almost certainly responsible for the "Current Crazes" column run under the pseudonym "Birdseye" and consisting of cynically humorous—and, to the modern idea, even libellous—comment on topics of the moment, while two of his novels, *Hine-ra*, or *the Maori Scout* and *Mary Summers*, appeared serially.

Whether Whitworth was a more successful editor than Clarke is doubtful. He does not seem to have stopped the decline in circulation, thus unfortunately providing additional evidence that "successful novelists, dramatists, poets . . . have uniformly proved decided

failures when they have tried their hand at the practical business of editing . . .”

A man devoted to the theatre, he was responsible for the introduction of dramatic criticism, for several years a theatrical column being one of the Journal's regular features. Thereafter it became rather spasmodic, continuing for months at a stretch, and then dropping out without explanation. Possibly the later critics were unpaid, and did the job in return for an issue of free tickets — quite a common arrangement at the time.

The column could never have been of much real service to readers, as in those days a play had to be highly successful to run three weeks, so that most shows were things of the past long before *The Australian Journal* directed its readers' attention to their merits—or, more generally, their defects. To the modern researcher, however, that is of no consequence, and the historian of the Australian theatre will find the early files a mine of curious theatrical information. The names of many distinguished actors appear in its pages. In October, 1874, is recorded the first Melbourne appearance of J. C. Williamson and his wife—better known as Maggie Moore—in *Struck Oil*. The old Theatre Royal was the scene of this notable occasion, of which the Journal critic said:

“The working out of the piece devolved almost entirely on the shoulders of Mr. and Mrs. Williamson, who enacted the parts of John and Lizzie Stofel in a manner that claimed the entire sympathy of crowded audiences night after night for seven weeks—a thing almost unparalleled in the colonies.”

Williamson was an American who had been playing in California when he decided to try his luck in Australia. So successful was his initial tour that he returned subsequently to found the most successful

theatrical enterprise ever known in Australia, and to leave behind him a name which still has drawing power.

Candour was a feature of the theatrical criticism of that era, and the Journal critics had their full share of it. Consider, for instance, the feeling of the optimistic Mr. Defries, who in 1878 appeared as Hamlet in Melbourne:

"Mr. Defries, like many other people," said the Journal, "has a hobby, and his is that he fancies the spirit of Shakespeare has requested him to give a new reading and interpretation of the philosophy contained in the immortal play. We are requested to state that Mr. Defries labours under a delusion, and that it is not the wish of the immortal bard of Avon to have the offsprings of his brain murdered."

Nor could J. B. Steele, who played the part of Orpheus in Genevieve Ward's production of *Medea*, have been better pleased to be told that he was "so faulty in text and delivery as to be beneath criticism, and calling for the severest reprobation."

When George Rignold produced *Romeo and Juliet* with Frank Cates and Fanny Reid as the star-crossed lovers, the best the Journal could say about the production, for which the management had imported Irving's wardrobe and scenery from the Lyceum, London, was that "the effect of two years' wear and tear to which the canvas and costumes have been subjected was very palpable." Moreover, "the English Juliet, Miss Fanny Reid, fell far below the standard set up by previous representatives of the love-lorn maid of Verona, and in no respect exceeded mediocrity. Mr. Cates was a well-looking and otherwise tolerable Romeo, but no more."

Scarcely more acceptable was Marie O. C. Grey's presentation of "Ouida's notorious novel *Moths*, in which Mr. Morton Sellers' Corregge was most amateurish, and for as uncouth and awkward a delineation of

Zouriff as could well be imagined, commend us to that of Mr. Hilton."

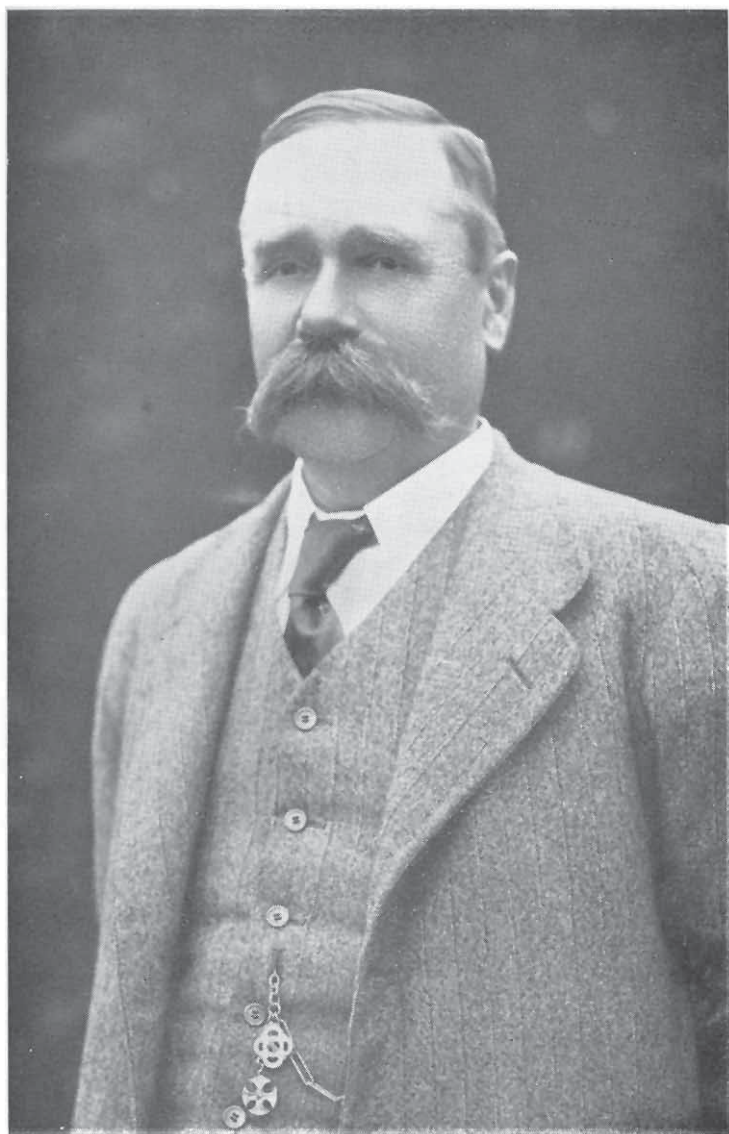
But although it pulled no punches, and trounced leading professionals in a manner that in these days of milk-and-water theatrical notices would be considered insulting by the tamest amateur, the Journal was by no means blind to merit. Genevieve Ward's performance as the gipsy in *Guy Mannering* brought the critic cheering to his feet:

"Death was then shown with a terrible realism that swelled the eyes of all and blanched the cheeks of the most susceptible. The haggard face and hollow eyes framed in tangled tresses of jet black, the convulsive twitching of the limbs, and the choking utterance, depicted the death struggle with awful power, and it was quite with a sigh of relief that the audience welcomed the fall of the curtain . . ."

Frankness notwithstanding, the Journal critic was not always the best of prophets. The modern cult of Gilbert and Sullivan opera would astonish him, for he was only moderately impressed by *Iolanthe*.

"... the music is musicianly and poetic, but while it is by no means wanting in good things, it is much less abundant in them than any of the works by the same hands which we have quoted. The humour is essentially characteristic of Mr. Gilbert, but it is very thin as compared with his previous efforts. And it is on the last-mentioned grounds that we base our opinion that the success of the work will not favourably compare with that of others. That everybody will go to see and hear it is certain, but that the pleasure-seeker will be drawn to it again and again, as was the case with Gilbert and Sullivan's former works, seems very problematical . . ."

The disgruntled man was no more enthusiastic about some of the other Savoy operas:



HENRY MASSINA.

"It is very noticeable that the recent works of the gifted duo are not nearly so distinguished for humour as are *H.M.S. Pinafore* and *The Pirates of Penzance*, with which their names are so popularly associated. There is much of refined and most delightful burlesque in the pieces named. But it may be questioned whether the success attained by the other noteworthy essays of the musical and literary partnership in question have not been but temporary. When, in a few short months — if not already — we have forgotten the recent aesthetic craze, who will care to hear *Patience* again? It will then be difficult to understand. And there is nothing of the hypercritical in the suggestion that *The Mikado* is largely favoured by reason of the present fashionable patronage of Japanese art. But while it may be doubted if *The Mikado* will do more than please a passing fancy, that fancy rules us just now, and Messrs. Williamson and Co.'s latest production serves to while an evening very pleasantly away . . ."

The theatrical section continued to make furtive appearances until the end of the 'eighties. In later times the question of including a section devoted to film criticism has sometimes been raised, but it has always been considered that the screen is amply covered by other publications, and that a magazine which attempts to cater for every field of interest will end by catering for none.

XXII

DESPITE Whitworth's ability and the reduction in price, the circulation of the Journal fell to such an alarming extent that Massina, tired of a venture which on the whole had brought him more trouble than profit, seriously thought of ceasing publication. Perhaps, too, he was weary of dealing with brilliant but sometimes irresponsible editors whose literary tastes were too far above those of their readers, and whose colourful personalities were scarcely equal to the drudgery of the daily round. Fortunately, he was persuaded to give the venture a further trial.

The man who at this critical stage saved the life of the magazine was one of his new partners.

Although, as previously mentioned, Clarson transferred to Sydney in 1872, he did not entirely sever his connection with the business, remaining financially interested until 1876, when William Smith Mitchell and Richard Joseph Foster were admitted.

Little is known of Foster, except that he had been a machinist at Ferguson and Moore's, and that Mitchell had a high opinion of his capacity. Foster dropped out in 1883, but Mitchell remained an active partner for over thirty years, and a great deal of the subsequent progress of the firm — and particularly of *The Australian Journal* — was due to him.

Eleven years Massina's junior, Mitchell was born in London of Scots parents, and came with them to

Australia in 1854. He began his working career in Victoria as a pupil teacher, but soon abandoned an occupation about as lucrative as that of bootblack. As reader-boy and apprentice in the printing office of Wm. Goodhugh and Co. (afterwards Ferguson and Moore, and later Edgerton and Moore), he gained valuable experience. Among his fellow apprentices were J. F. McCarron, the founder of McCarron, Bird and Co.

After serving his time as a compositor, Mitchell joined Clarson, Massina and Co. as overseer. Then, Clarson finally dropping out, he was offered a partnership.

In 1878, actuated partly by sentiment and partly because he considered that it could still be turned into an asset, he suggested that *The Australian Journal*, instead of being sent to the grave, should be carried on under his editorial direction. Obviously he possessed an innate flair for gauging public taste, for, as it happened, he proved an ideal man for the job. For more than thirty years — indeed, up to the time of his retirement from the firm in 1909 — he combined the duties of overseer and editor, though just how he did it is something of a puzzle. Apparently he was an overseer by day and an editor by night, a combination rarely found nowadays, even in the smallest provincial newspaper offices. As a result of his work, the *Journal* was soon transferred from the debit side of the ledger to become one of the most successful monthly publications in Australia.

Most of this time Mitchell had the assistance of William Ewart Gladstone Symons as an associate and sub-editor. Symons, a writer of occasional short stories and sketches, was also guilty of burning the candle at both ends, for as an employee of the National Museum he was able to devote only his spare time to literary endeavour. Despite his resounding given names, he

was a man of nervous temperament, and, living in perpetual dread that his superiors at the Museum would discover his guilty secret, seems to have conducted his sub-editorial activities very much under the rose.

Symons seems to have been allotted the job of reading likely material, and revising anything finally selected by Mitchell. Although of lean, not to say cadaverous, appearance, he was nevertheless a gregarious soul, and an active member of various social clubs, at whose entertainments he appeared as actor and elocutionist under the nom-de-theatre of "Gilhooley". Unlike the majority of his fellow members, however, he was of surprisingly abstemious disposition. So popular was he as an amateur entertainer that on one occasion he was tempted to engage the Athenaeum Hall and appear as a professional monologist in a one-man show entitled *Punchinello Gilhooleyana*, which, however, proved a flop.

If Symons goes down in Australian literary annals, it must be as probably the only man who ever combined the cataloguing of stuffed birds and animals with an editorial job on a fiction magazine. His connection with the Journal lasted until about 1910.

One of Mitchell's editorial innovations was the first story competition ever held in Australia. Competitors were sportingly divided into two sections, professional and amateur, professionals being offered a "work of art" or ten guineas, while the winning non-professional had to be content with the "work of art" without the cash alternative, thus preserving his or her amateur status.

Apparently the results of the competition, like many others of the same kind held in later years, were disappointing to the sponsor, as we find the Editor lamenting the comparatively low standard of the entries received.

It is of interest to note that, in this direction, as in so many others, *The Australian Journal* led the way other publications were to follow so long afterwards. More than half a century later, when the Ballarat South Street Society included a literary section in their annual competitions, *The Australian Journal* frequently offered prizes for stories, but once again results did not justify the trouble involved.

It may be worth mentioning that, from the point of view of a magazine, prize competitions for fiction are of little real value. They necessitate a great deal of work in the judging and rarely succeed in unearthing an author who would otherwise have remained undiscovered. Even worse, they only too often place the publication in the embarrassing position of having to pay for a story not particularly good in itself, but merely the best of a bad lot, and which would have been summarily rejected if submitted in the ordinary way. In later years those responsible for the literary side of the Journal found that the best means of encouraging authors is not to offer prizes, but to take a continuous and personal interest in new and likely writers.

Throughout the 'seventies *The Australian Journal* was in the forefront of the battle for the complete abolition of postage on newspapers, but although that dream was never realised, the early prohibitive rates were eventually reduced. Meanwhile the Journal continued its publication of current or near-current news items, sometimes apologising for them, and occasionally making a virtue of necessity.

XXIII

IN the late 'seventies women made their first appearance in the printing trade of Melbourne. In the office of Massina and Co. their role was the unusual one of compositor. James Mitchell, son of W. S. Mitchell, recalled that eight women compositors were employed when he entered the service of the firm in 1882. They worked in a separate room, were not permitted to mix with the men, and were paid piece-work rates, though on a lower level than their male colleagues.

Afterwards the Typographical Society objected to their employment, but a compromise was reached, the firm undertaking to replace them with men as they left. One by one they dropped away, the last to leave being Miss Annie Healing. Her brother, A. G. Healing, who later founded the business which still bears his name, had at that time a small bicycle shop in Bridge Road, Richmond.

The employment of women and girls in various other capacities in the printing and publishing trade soon became general, but as far as can be ascertained, Massina and Co. are the only Australian printers ever to have used their services as compositors.

It is surprising to find women working in such a capacity so many years ago, when, generally speaking, the only positions open to them were in domestic service, shops, schools and hospitals. James Mitchell

thought they were all of local origin, but Mr. P. J. Toohey, Secretary of the Victorian Branch of the Printing Industry Employees' Union, believes that they hailed from Scotland, but one would like to know more about these pioneers—how and where they learned their trade and what prejudices they had to overcome before they were allowed to begin it. History gives us nothing but the picture of a row of girls busy at their cases, their faces, innocent of powder and lipstick, pale in the light of the hissing gas jets, their swirling skirts pinned up to avoid the dust of the composing-room floor.

Shortly after the admission as partners of W. S. Mitchell and Foster, the firm was further enlarged by the inclusion of Alfred Lionel Massina. The young man who had arrived in Australia as an infant in arms was now in his middle twenties, and having started as an apprentice at the age of fourteen, had learned the trade the hard way. His personality was largely responsible for the increase in general business during the next few years.

By 1879 the firm had outgrown the premises at 72 Little Collins Street East, and a move was made westward to No. 26, at the corner of Howey Place, or Howey Street, as it was then called. Here, too, the accommodation soon proved inadequate, and the overflow had to be transferred to adjoining buildings.

The printing house of A. H. Massina and Co. was a busy place during the prosperous 'eighties. Under the editorship of Mitchell and Symons, *The Australian Journal* regained popularity, and most of the other publications were doing well, among them being *Our Doctor*, *Sporting Celebrities*, *Parlour Games*, *Australian Plain Cookery*, *The Australian Merino*, *The Housewives' Manual*, and Clarkson's three books on gardening.

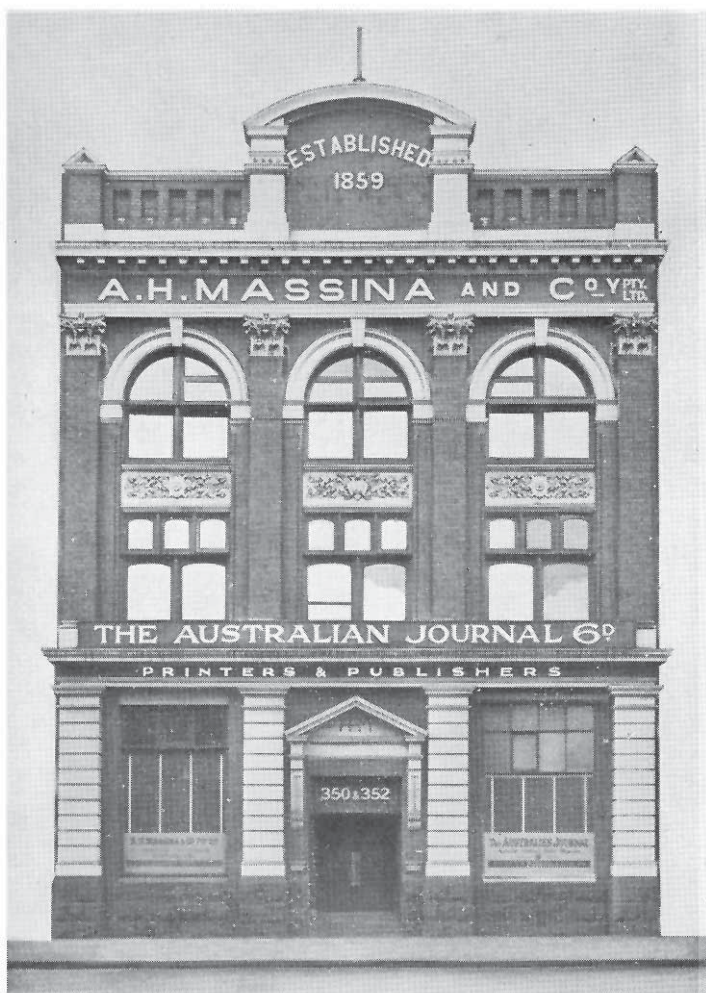
In 1884, for instance, nearly 100,000 copies of *The Australian Melodist* were sold, and though the

numbers varied during the next few years, they were several times around the six-figure mark, and once over it. *Gordon's Poems* was another best-seller, 20,000 volumes being disposed of between 1880 and the end of the decade — figures startling to a modern publisher of poetry, in Australia or anywhere else.

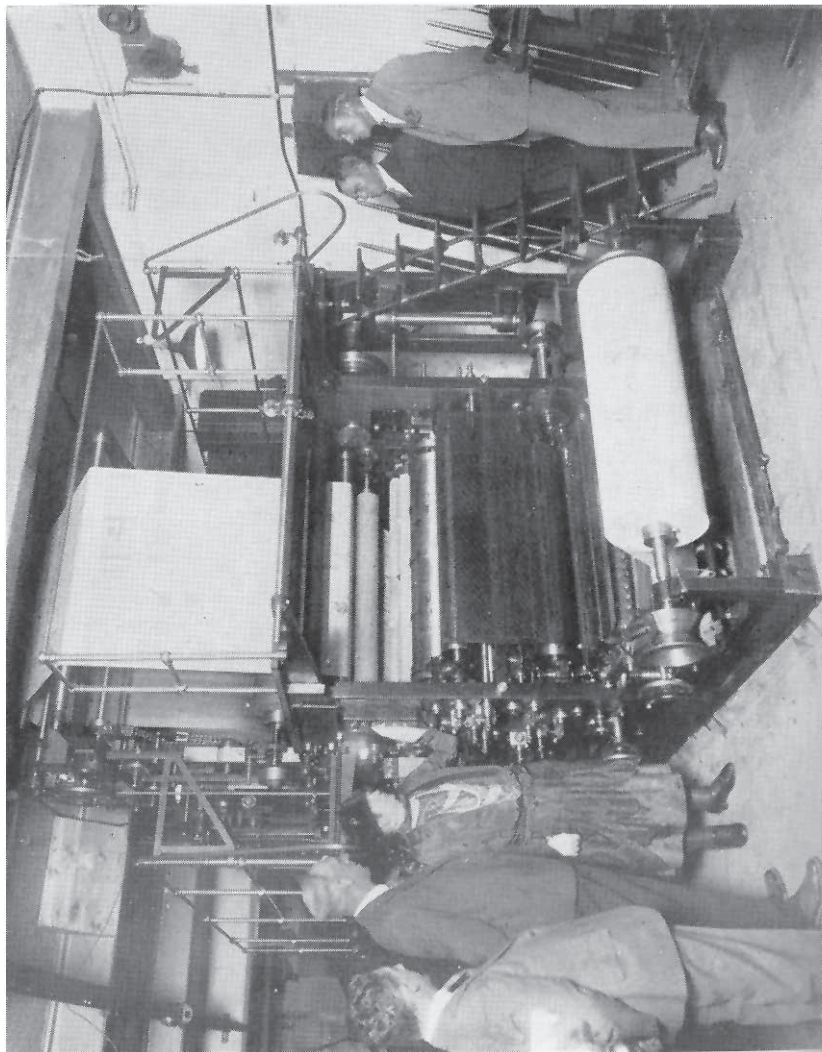
The year 1885 must have been an unlucky one for women, over 1,000 copies of *Men and How to Manage Them* being bought, but the sales soon shrank, for in 1890 only thirty-one ladies wanted to learn the secret, and in 1893 a mere dozen thought it worth while to study the question. On the other hand, 134 acquired a new work, entitled *How to Read Men*, which presumably covered the same ground, while — not, let us hope, as a result — over three hundred copies of the new Divorce Act were sold during the following twelve months.

Among the most successful publications of the 'eighties was *The Visitors' Guide to the Upper Yarra District*. This shilling handbook, which antedated the modern road guide, is evidence that the Warburton and Healesville regions were becoming tourist country, although conditions beyond Lilydale — the then rail-head — must have been fairly rugged, for the hardy traveller is advised to wear "Crimean shirts without collars and with a loose necktie," and told that "good strong blucher boots are to be preferred to elastic-sided or half-Wellingtons." Another piece of sage counsel suggests that "a leather waist-strap for the trousers is useful, in case brace-buttons give way, as they are provokingly prone to do when any extra strain is put on them."

No suggestions for feminine attire are given. Either ladies were regarded as unlikely to venture into the wilderness, or it was considered that they would, as usual, please themselves what they wore.



350 - 352 Swanston Street, home of the firm from 1908 until the present day.



Starting the Koenig & Bauer Rotary Press, January 14, 1929.

From left - H. E. Israel, Advertising Manager; A. W. Massina, Managing Director; Mrs. A. L. Massina; R. G. Campbell, Editor; S. L. Massina, Director.

Portion of the book is devoted to the Fern Tree Gully district, then to be reached only by coach from Oakleigh or Ringwood. As well as becoming almost lyrical over the scenery, the unnamed author of the guide adopted the role of prophet. Some of his forecasts have been more than justified. Could he revisit the locality, he would certainly be delighted to find the hundreds of thousands of week-end visitors he envisaged, but he would look in vain for Mr. Martin's cable tramway, which was to take them to the summit of One Tree Hill, where a commodious coffee palace was to be erected. He would also be disappointed at not seeing the electric tramway from Oakleigh, although when he wrote the money for both these projects was in hand, engineers had given their approval and apparently everything was in readiness to make a start. Probably both schemes evaporated when the land boom, then at its height, burst a few years later.

The publishers did not depend altogether on sales to make the *Guide* pay. It carried a great deal of advertising, attention to which was duly drawn through the text. Usually this was done neatly-enough. No one could quibble at the hint that, after the ascent of some particularly steep hill, a call at the genial Mr. So-and-So's inn would repair the fatigue of the climb, but there were times when the puff, instead of being comparatively oblique, was amusingly direct, as when the hungry traveller is informed that "we have ourselves often taken from town a dozen or so of the small pork pies sold by Mr. Hearne of Swanston Street. They are tasty, portable, and no plate is necessary in serving up."

The extension of the railway to Warburton, Healesville and Fern Tree Gully eventually rendered the *Guide* obsolete, and apparently it was never thought worth while to revise and reprint it.

XXIV

THE 'eighties were obviously the great years of the firm's earlier period. In addition to their own publications, innumerable books were produced in the ordinary course of job printing, and the Massina imprint appears on volumes of every type, from epic poems by amateur and optimistic versifiers to sheet music and political pamphlets. They printed *The Sportsman* and other newspapers while, apart from books and periodicals, their general business was expanding fast.

Melbourne, grown in half a century from a lonely riverside settlement to a magnificent city of over half a million, was riding a wave of prosperity. If there were rocks ahead, no look-out observed them, or if he did, his warnings, as usual, were unheeded. The fashion parade along the Block rivalled Bond Street, although within the memory of many a middle-aged boulevardier the pavement he promenaded had been a stump-strewn bog. The new cable trams were the admiration of the world. Boom-time buildings shot up as fast as speculators could approve the plans.

For the firm, the auguries were all propitious. The principal, now in his business prime, was rich in the experience of nearly forty years.

No man in Australia knew more about printing and publishing, while as well as his partner, Mitchell, he now had the assistance of his three sons, all brought

up in the business. William and Henry Massina, admitted to partnership in the early 'eighties, seem to have played comparatively minor parts at this time, but the eldest, Alfred Lionel, speedily became the executive head of the concern. A man of extraordinarily active disposition, he seems to have inherited all his father's energy and optimism, without his austerity and reserve. The early years in London, and the struggle to establish himself in Australia, had left their mark upon the elder Massina, but his son developed under more fortunate auspices. A good mixer, he proved an ideal outside representative, and his personal popularity helped him to add many valuable accounts to the list of the firm's customers.

During his regime a happy relationship, rather unusual at the time, existed between the firm and its employees. Picnics, cricket matches and other social events were held frequently, some of them being on the grand scale, as on the occasions when the steamer *Genista* was chartered for a day's cruise on Westernport Bay — excursions that were long remembered at Cowes and San Remo.

With Mitchell running the Journal and the operative side, and his eldest son taking over the business management, Massina was able to give more attention to *The Herald*, with which he had been closely associated almost from its inception.

His long connection with this newspaper was in great part due to his lifelong friendship with Samuel V. Winter. Ten years Massina's junior, and an Australian by birth, Winter was, like his friend, a practical printer. They became acquainted when they were fellow-employees at the establishment of W. H. Williams, and they remained intimates until Winter died in 1904. Both men lived in Richmond, and had their country homes at Wandin.

Winter turned journalist when he became one of the group which established *The Advocate*, of which he was editor-manager for some years, relinquishing the post in 1871 to form a syndicate to take over *The Herald*. Either Massina was one of this original syndicate, or he became interested very shortly afterwards. To him must be given credit for extricating the newspaper from a very awkward situation. J. A. McDonald, who was associated with *The Herald* from a very early period, and eventually became its manager, related how on one occasion, when there was insufficient money in the till to pay the staff, Massina saved the day by arriving in a cab with five hundred pounds in cash. Winter must have awaited him with all the eagerness with which Wellington watched for Blucher.

So rapidly did business expand that by 1889 another move was forced on the firm. The ground lease of a site in Howey Place was secured, and new four-storey premises erected where the rear of the Capitol Theatre now stands. The building, it was proudly stated in *The Australian Journal*, "towers over most of its neighbours," and was "in keeping with the improved architecture of Marvellous Melbourne."

Although Massina and Co. paid £7,500 to have it erected, and a good many hundreds more for the new equipment necessary, the building was eventually to revert to the owners. This was all to the advantage of the descendants of the original Howey — or, rather, of his brother — for Henry Howey, who in 1837 had been reckless enough to pay £97 for an acre and a half in the heart of Melbourne, was lost at sea without even seeing the white elephant he had so casually acquired. The property passed to brother John, who, like Henry, was a small farmer near Sydney. Except, perhaps, when he was called upon to pay the rates, John thought no more about it until after the gold discoveries. Then he found that he had the most payable gold mine in

Australia, and without the trouble of so much as driving a pick in the ground.

With the aid of a far-seeing lawyer, he drew up terms stipulating that sections of the land would be let to tenants only on condition that they erected buildings of a stated value, kept them in repair and handed them over at the end of twenty-one years. Matters being arranged so satisfactorily, Mr. Howey left for England. When Massina and Co. occupied their new building, their ground landlord was a Major Howey, who, though he had never set foot in Melbourne, collected the handy sum of £40,000 a year from it.

Just why Massina and Co. built on his land and on his terms is difficult to understand. Perhaps the central position influenced them, and to prosperous men under the spell of the great land boom, then at its height, the years ahead seemed filled with promise. The new building, considered the last word in design—the composing room was regarded as the finest in Australia—was opened with due ceremony and much speech-making, and here the firm made its home for the next sixteen years.

XXV

SOME English writer, recalling end-of-the-century London, with H.R.H. Edward Prince of Wales in his stout, frock-coated prime, and Princess Alexandra in her beautiful maturity presiding over a society which had trampled down the inhibitions of half a century of Victorianism, has called the 'nineties "gay". The label stuck, but for Australia generally, and for Melbourne in particular, the term misleads. Starting well, the 'nineties eventually saw Australian banks closing their doors, streets of empty houses, bankrupt merchants, factories shutting while soup kitchens opened, charitable hand-outs, crowds lining up for every job, wages whittled to the bone and all the other grim symptoms of depression. Land for which fabulous prices had been paid could not be given away; the scrub grew over subdivided areas until it covered even the rotting signboards pointing out non-existent streets; office buildings stood devoid of tenants; the rails of newly-built railways rusted for want of trains.

In 1888 the Typographical Society had numbered 1,000 members, but by 1894 the list had shrunk to 500, while wages had been reduced from £3 to £2 12s. per week. The union exhausted its funds providing unemployment relief and assisting members to emigrate to West Australia, whose recently discovered goldfields helped to save the situation in the east.

Massina and Co. rode out the storm, though not without considerably shortened sails and no doubt a good deal of buffeting. Where so many foundered altogether, it was unlikely that either their business or their private interests could come through undamaged. There is, indeed, reason to believe that both A. H. Massina and his partner Mitchell lost considerably over land and investments.

By 1900, conditions were improving, and when, a year later, the Federation of Australia was at last accomplished and the Duke and Duchess of York arrived to open the First Parliament of the Commonwealth, the cheers which welcomed them as they drove down the decorated streets greeted also the return of prosperity.

At first the new offices were extremely busy. As well as the Journal, and several small newspapers printed under contract, S. V. Winter's paper, *The Sportsman*, was published from there, and the number of people needed both in the editorial and mechanical sides to produce a weekly as well as a monthly magazine, together with the employees engaged on general printing, filled the place with activity. *The Sportsman* went to press on Monday evenings, after which it was the custom of the hands to gather round the "stone", which was invariably adorned with a keg of beer supplied by one Riado, a friendly publican nearby, who probably secured enough custom during the rest of the week to enable him to dispense this hospitality without ruining himself. On other occasions, thirst was alleviated by sending out a boy on some pretext, and lowering a billycan out of a window on a string. The boy having taken this away to be filled, it was returned the same way, without, of course, the attention of the management being drawn to it.

In 1891 A. L. Massina visited the United States and England. Interviewed in Detroit, he expressed his

disappointment with the appearance of American cities, comparing their potholed streets very unfavourably with those of Melbourne. Nowadays any such public criticism would arouse a storm of controversy, but the inhabitants of Detroit were more interested in the fifty-three murders and the 2,500 cases of assault and battery, the 500 burglaries and the 6,000 cases of disorderly conduct that had taken place in their State during the year to worry over-much about their paving.

One important result of his trip abroad was the introduction of the linotype machine into Victoria. The first linotype in Australia had been imported by the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, and there were several others at work in that city, but, influenced possibly by reports of earlier failures, Melbourne printers had been wary of the machine. Impressed by its speed and accuracy, however, A. L. Massina returned to report favourably on Mergenthaler's new invention, and in December, 1894, one was installed in the composing room in Howey Place.

The Australian Journal, therefore, was the first Melbourne publication to be set on the linotype. The machine was installed by Edmund Coulson "with the able assistance of Mr. William Massina, the member of the firm in whose charge the mechanical department is conducted." William Massina had inherited his father's interest in, and aptitude for, handling printing machinery, and the high standard of the firm's work, as shown in their various publications, is an enduring testimony to his skill.

Among the first to learn the operation of the new machine was William Mitchell Junior, third son of W. S. Mitchell. He afterwards became one of Melbourne's leading linotype experts, but died as the result of gas injuries received in the First World War.

The Herald, carrying the story of the linotype in its issue for 8th December, 1894, mentioned that the four hand compositors which the unit displaced had been granted a bonus by the firm. However ordinary this may seem, such treatment was far from usual in those days of summary dismissals, and it was not without reason that the men concerned were, as the report stated, "warm in their expressions of gratitude to their employers, who had displayed a solicitude for their welfare well worth the emulation of others."

It has sometimes been stated that Victoria's first linotype machines were installed at *The Herald* office, but that newspaper did not begin to abandon hand-setting until the following year, and then not before S. V. Winter had seen Massina and Co.'s machine in operation.

Glass screens were built around the early linotype machines, not, as has been sometimes asserted, to protect them from sabotage by angry compositors whose jobs the machine had put in jeopardy, but merely because their owners considered that a device so intricate must necessarily be as delicate as a fine watch. As time went on, and linotypes became common, the glass partitions vanished. Actually there was never any opposition on the part of the men, though the machine was introduced in Victoria at a most inopportune time, when business was at its lowest ebb.

The death of his wife in 1893 dealt the elder Massina a severe blow. She had faced the rigours of the voyage out with him, and had shared the vicissitudes of the pioneering days. Now with seven children grown to maturity, and the hardships of the past a memory, it seemed unkind of destiny to deny her the mellow years of old age.

James Mitchell recalled her as a quiet and pleasant woman, who came in contact with the younger employees when the Massina country home at Wandin was thrown

open for the apprentices' picnics, and impressed them with her natural kindness. It is a thousand pities that, like her husband, she left no written record of her life. The story of the beginnings of Clarson, Massina and Co., from the woman's angle, would be worth having.

To a very considerable degree, Massina relaxed his control over the business he had founded. *The Herald* claimed a great deal of his time. He was now Chairman of Directors, and a very active one, his interest extending far beyond the business side. An expert machinist, he was able to give invaluable advice on methods of production, and when, in 1895, *The Herald* moved to new offices in Flinders Street, a block west of its present home, he was thanked by the Board for the time and trouble he had devoted to planning and laying out the new premises, the lighting and ventilation having been his special care. As Chairman, he was associated with such men as the late Theodore Fink, C. L. Pinschof, and W. L. Baillieu.

XXVI

A NEWSPAPER with which for many years the firm was very closely connected, first as printers and later as proprietors, was *The Sportsman*. Printed on pink stock — possibly in imitation of *The Pink 'Un*, the famous London sporting and dramatic sheet — this threepenny weekly was founded in the early 'eighties by S. V. Winter, but it was printed by Massina and Co. and published from their office.

Although horse-racing had a vast following, sport in general did not command as much public attention then as it does to-day. The older generation had been brought up to the six-day working week followed by a Sunday which, apart from church-going, was a period of suspended animation. In his monumental *History of New South Wales*, written not so long before, the celebrated Presbyterian divine, Dr. J. D. Lang, had gone so far as to condemn cricket as a low pastime, and to stigmatise those who played it as very little better than ruffians, and there were many who, if not so outspoken, agreed that there was something to be said for his view. What the doctor would have said about Sunday golfers and tennis players can only be surmised.

As soon as the country settled down after the feverish years of the gold-rush and the subsequent expansion, sport made great headway, with horse-racing, naturally, an easy first in the public mind. At

one stage, including pony races and trots, a race meeting of some kind was held somewhere in the Melbourne metropolitan area on every week day. There was also a rapidly growing interest in cycle racing—the “penny farthing” bicycle was in its heyday, and the “safety” bicycle just around the corner—and in coursing, boxing and wrestling. Football, though not organised to the same degree as now, commanded a big following, while cricket had just received a tremendous stimulus.

Ever since the early 'sixties, teams from England had regularly toured the Australian colonies, but it was not until 1878 that return visits were arranged, and the success of Australian players at Lord's, Old Trafford, the Oval, Trent Bridge and other celebrated grounds gave unprecedented publicity and popularity to the game in Australia. George Giffen, Murdoch, Spofforth and other players became national heroes.

Many now familiar games had yet to be introduced. Hurley, or “Shinty”, as it was sometimes called—it was a kind of hockey played in strict accord with Rafferty's rules—was popular on some of the old mining fields, but hockey proper was yet to come. Lacrosse had not been introduced from Canada, nor baseball from America. Such exotic games as squash and badminton had never been heard of. Despite its long history in Scotland, golf had made little impression on the Australian, and the golfer, with his odd costume—which usually included a bright red jacket—and his bag of queer-looking and queerly-named implements was to be a joy to comic artists for decades.

Not until after World War I did golf cease to be regarded as a whim of the elderly, eccentric and well-off, and become not only a universal game, but “big time” sport in the newspaper sense. When *The Sportsman* was founded, lawn tennis was a very recent development, only a few years having elapsed since Major Wingfield produced his “sphairistike”—surely



ALFRED WELLINGTON MASSINA, 1916.

the major did not expect a game so named to achieve popularity! — which was played on a court shaped like an hour-glass with a net across the neck. "Sphairistike" was adopted first by the Marylebone Cricket Club, which squared up the court, changed the name, and passed the game on to the All-England Croquet Club, who further revised the rules, and in 1877 held the first big tournament at Wimbledon, forerunner of all the Wimbledon championships to come. By the 'eighties the game was finding its way into Australia, but it was a long time before it was considered worthy of public attention, and before its devotees could carry their racquets abroad without gibes of "forty love" being hurled after them. The boy leaving school in the 'eighties played cricket and football, if he continued to play anything, while the girl who did more than take a turn on the croquet lawn was as rare as she was considered unwomanly.

Cricket apart, there was practically no international sport. To the modern sporting editor, whose readers devour anything from stroke-by-stroke accounts of American golf championships and Davis Cup matches to the results of Olympic games held at Stockholm or Athens, the scope of *The Sportsman* must seem extremely limited, but the writers of the time did so much with the restricted material at their command that they managed not only to produce an eight-page paper every week, but to achieve a paid circulation in the region of 20,000. At one time it could certainly claim to be the leading paper of its kind in Australia, as most of the other sporting sheets started in opposition led precarious lives and died early deaths. Its principal competitors were the *Sydney Referee* — now defunct — and *The Sporting Judge*, which was started in 1892.

Although printed and published from its inception by the firm of Massina, *The Sportsman* did not actually

become their property until 1896, when the editorial offices were accordingly moved to the premises in Howey Place.

Apparently the new management started off optimistically enough, but for some reason a decline set in. Despite attempts to stimulate the circulation by insurance schemes — any reader killed in an accident to a public conveyance or while riding a bicycle was covered by a hundred-pound policy — the paper gradually faded. The last issue appeared on 3rd May, 1904, after which *The Sportsman* became the property of Messrs. Treadwell, and was incorporated in their still-existing *Sporting Judge*.

Among the apprentices of *The Sportsman* period was Charles P. Smith, who, after serving his time as a linotype operator, transferred from the mechanical to the literary side of journalism, and later to the managerial. From writing the "Harriers' Notes" for *The Sportsman* he joined *The Argus* as a reporter, and later went to West Australia, eventually to become General Manager of *The West Australian*, and a prominent figure in the Australian newspaper world.

XXVII

FOR some years the firm had been publishing the Australian edition of the English weekly *Tit-Bits*, printing it first from plates supplied by the London publishers and later from matrices.

In 1899 this arrangement fell through, and the first issue of *Massina's Penny Weekly* made its appearance. James J. Wright, the editor, who had been a railway locomotive driver before he took to the pen, conformed to the custom of his time in that he was a hard-drinking journalist. He had written a great deal for *The Australian Journal* before he took over the *Weekly*, and, tradition declares, was at that time so addicted to the bottle that he did not care very much what he was paid for his work, so long as it was paid promptly enough to assuage the chronic thirst which writing made even more devastating. Despite his easy-going financial outlook, he must have had unusual ability to be given the responsibility of an editorial position. Strangely enough, Wright eventually conquered his enemy. He was persuaded to take a course of treatment at an institute which undertook the cure of tipplers, and responded so well that not only did he become a total abstainer, but eventually became proprietor of the institute! Certainly no better testimonial for the efficacy of the cure could have been found.

Described as a "family newspaper," containing "Australian stories and clippings from all sources,"

Massina's Penny Weekly was obviously designed as a counterblast to such English publications as *Answers*, *Tit-Bits*, *M.A.P.* and *T.P.'s Weekly*, which at that time had risen to great popularity. That a weekly could be brought out under such a cumbersome name is ample evidence of the prestige enjoyed by the firm, but the publication itself cannot have done much to enhance it. It was a 16-page paper of quarto size, unillustrated, and the opening announcement declared that: "The Proprietors believe there is an ample field for such-a publication. As a purely local production, it will give much-needed employment to a number of people, a practical consideration not to be overlooked, while as a pleasant medium of information, or to while away a spare hour in the home or while travelling, it should also prove acceptable. The aim of the proprietors is to make the Weekly fully equal to the best journals of the sort published anywhere, while its Australian character should make it doubly welcome."

An Editorial notice added that humorous sketches, short stories and items of Australian interest would be considered.

Judged by modern standards, the popular English weeklies of the turn of the century were not hard to beat, while the greatest Australian competition came from *The Bulletin*, then, and for some years afterwards, at its peak, even though its somewhat radical viewpoint and its attitude towards the Boer War caused it to be frowned upon in "respectable" circles.

It must be admitted that *Massina's Penny Weekly* did not make a very serious attempt to oust opposition from the field. Its price was probably the only thing in its favour. The first issue is largely made up of jokes and allegedly humorous anecdotes, most of them even then well-roasted chestnuts. Whether the readers of that time actually laughed at the jokes of the period



STANLEY LIONEL MASSINA.



Melbourne in 1949.

*401 Collins Street,
Roy Morgan Research
Office from 2006.*

is as much a mystery as whether readers of fifty years hence will chuckle at the wisecracks of the present day.

In addition to humour, the initial issue contained four anonymous Australian stories—of the type known nowadays as “short-shorts,” and the first instalment of an Australian serial by the editor himself. This was *At Last, or the Cross of Silver*, and was described as “a strange story.” The only other feature was a “woman’s section.”

Most of this — and, indeed, of the rest of the paper — was a scissors-and-paste job, consisting mainly of clipped paragraphs of the “It is not generally known . . .” type. We learn, for instance, that Queen Victoria was the happy possessor of sixty-four pianos, that a jury of twenty-three had declared the millionaire Alfred Stein to be a lunatic on account of his habit of throwing empty champagne bottles through windows without the formality of opening them, and that the Begum of Bhopal was the smallest monarch in the world.

The habits of ruling sovereigns were apparently considered of vast importance to the readers of *Massina’s Penny Weekly* and no issue passed without as many references to Royalty as could be packed in. One issue gave full details of the breakfast menus of Queen Victoria, the Kaiser and Kaiserin, King Humbert of Italy, the Sultan of Turkey and Queen Olga of Greece. As if that were not enough for a week, another column was devoted to Queen Victoria’s personal entourage, while the section headed “Personal Items” was almost completely made up of pars about Royal ladies, with an occasional almost patronising reference to a Duchess or so. The local “gossip” paragraph, so striking a feature of the modern weekly, is almost entirely absent.

A few photographs would have brightened it up, but for some reason — perhaps the low price did not admit of any expense in that direction — they were not included. Glancing through issue after issue, one cannot help feeling that the readers of this type of publication were expected to be easily pleased. Even to while away a railway journey, one can hardly imagine oneself studying page after page of such items as "Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman is said to greatly dislike letter-writing," "Mr. Cecil Rhodes is the fourth son of a rector of Bishop-Stafford, and in his boyhood often scandalised the good people of the place by his tricks," "There are at least 10,000,000 nerve fibres in the human body," and "The first envelope ever made is in the British Museum."

Approximate statistics played a large part in the make-up of the Weekly, but although no doubt it was interesting to know that "in the last ten years the Baptists in Great Britain have increased by 50,000," "It is calculated that 10,000,000 photographs of the Prince and Princess of Wales are produced annually," and "There are 672 known volcanoes in the world," such information must have become a little wearisome after a time, although had there been any "quiz" sessions half a century ago, contestants would have found *Massina's Penny Weekly* a gold mine.

The liveliest features of the early issues were Wright's serial, and his series of unsigned articles on unusual railway happenings.

Despite its apparent dullness, the Weekly hung on, and at the end of six months an editorial announcement declared that it was to be made "peculiarly Australian in character." The change was not particularly noticeable.

Although the South African war was raging at the time, there is scarcely a hint of it in earlier pages of

Massina's Penny Weekly. On 28th October, 1899, three months after the founding of the paper, the first detachment of Victorian soldiers marched through Melbourne to embark in the *Medic*. The city was decorated, and the streets were lined with enthusiastic crowds. That afternoon, amid sobbing and cheering, the troops sailed for Cape Town. It was the first time that such scenes had been witnessed in Melbourne, although fifteen years later they were to become all too common. One might imagine that *Massina's Penny Weekly* would have been cognizant of the history that was being made, but the event passed without even an editorial comment. When the troops reached Cape Colony, the actions in which they fought must have been the principal topic of conversation in the Colony, but they received no mention in the peaceful pages of the *Weekly*.

Looking back through the haze of two shattering global wars, the South African business takes on the proportions of a skirmish, but it was of vital importance at the time, and the initial failure of their armies shook the British people as much as the final victory stirred them. Under these circumstances it seems incredible that *Massina's Penny Weekly* practically ignored the whole business, except in paragraphs quoting such startling news as Lord Roberts' passion for chess, or that Sir William Butler spent his boyhood in Tipperary.

Towards the middle of 1900, however, the paper became slightly more war-minded, publishing a column of "War Items," and even going so far as to reprint some verses on Mafeking, a portrait of Baden-Powell, and the words and music of a song — *The Bushman's Corps*—composed by Joseph Gillott to words by Edward A. Vidler.

Even with these attractions the weekly was obviously making no headway. Nor as a circulation-building measure could the next step have been much more successful, although the announcement makes odd reading:

"For the best original conundrum, with answer accompanying, a prize of 2/6 will be given."

The pun alone excepted, the conundrum is possibly the most degraded form of wit ever perpetrated, so that this offer seems, if anything, over-generous. Scarcely so munificent was the prize of 5/- for a short story of not less than two columns in length. Entries had to be accompanied by a coupon. No genius was unearthed as a result of these features, which, indeed, were only the death rattles of a moribund publication. On 12th February, 1901, after a precarious existence of a little over eighteen months, *Massina's Penny Weekly* went quietly to its grave.

"If . . . the Weekly has not panned out a financial success," declared the editorial valedictory, "the reason is not far to seek. The Colonial market is, and has been for some time past, fairly inundated with cheap English publications, which come in duty free. This, coupled with the fact that labour is so much cheaper in the old country, places Colonial producers at a distinct disadvantage. That is the sum and substance of the whole matter in a nutshell."

Considering that most of the Weekly was filched from other publications, this was really rather cool, and it is difficult to see how, from an editorial standpoint, at least, the paper could have been more cheaply produced. The sad facts are that it was about as ill-conceived and badly-conducted a publication as can be imagined. The most prohibitive duty on English periodicals could not have prolonged its life. So carelessly was it edited that while the last issue carried on

one page the somewhat bitter farewell message, on another was featured the standing announcement calling for half-crown conundrum and five-shilling stories! To modern eyes, at least, *Massina's Penny Weekly* had so little to recommend it that it would, one imagines, have been rather difficult to give away!

XXVIII

IN 1898 the sudden death of Alfred Lionel Massina dealt the firm a heavy blow. Although only forty-four, he had been a most active partner for over twenty years, and since his father's partial retirement, the general management had been in his hands. His premature death not only robbed the business of its principal outdoor representative, but marked the end of an epoch in its policy. Interest in job printing declined, and reliance was placed on the firm's periodicals, backed up by a few contracts.

The following year his elder son, Alfred Wellington Massina, entered the firm's service. Shortly afterwards he was joined by his brother, Stanley Lionel Massina.

Dying in 1902 at the early age of forty, William Massina survived his brother Alfred by only four years. The firm was now in the hands of Henry Massina and W. S. Mitchell, with A. H. Massina in the backstage role of advisory partner.

The principal feature of the next few years was the recognition that *The Australian Journal* could not hope to exist indefinitely by presenting matter reprinted from abroad, plus an occasional local story. In 1905 the initial step was taken towards building up the magazine as it is known to-day. This was the disappearance of the long-standing paragraph which baldly stated that "our paid staff being complete, no payment whatever will be made for any contributions sent in. Contributors will please bear this in mind."



WILLIAM E. ADCOCK.



MRS. A. L. MASSINA.

Actually, this notice had never meant exactly what it said, for the management had always been willing to come to some financial arrangement with any local writer whose work they particularly wanted, but the very presence of the announcement must have had a deadening effect upon aspiring talent. A more heartening editorial notice took the place of the old one:

"The proprietors invite writings of an Australian character, especially in narrative form." It added that "Verse, essays, etc., will only be received as voluntary contributions. In all cases where payment is expected, author's price must be stated."

The last sentence put many an aspiring author in a quandary. One afterwards well-known Australian novelist, who began his literary career as a contributor to *The Australian Journal*, has spoken of the difficulty he had in putting a value on his early stories. The question was how to strike a nice balance between what he thought the story worth, and what he hoped the Editor would pay, and his fear that, when a story was declined, its rejection was due not so much to lack of merit as to his over-optimistic idea of its financial value. Admittedly, the rates paid for literary work were low, but so they were almost everywhere at that time, although the big American publications had begun to set new standards for payments to writers. In England the principle had been established of magazines paying high rates to established novelists and giving the rest mere lineage rates — until they complained, when an assessment would be made of their probable value to the publication, and an agreement arrived at.

The new Journal policy of seeking Australian fiction and paying for it did not at once bear fruit, although a search through the issues of the time reveals the names of many writers who afterwards became

well known. Marie E. J. Pitt and Miles Franklin made appearances. In 1908 Mrs. M. Forrest, afterwards better known as a poet, contributed a serial, *In a Sunny Land*. Later the eye is caught by a story called *The Exile of Sundown Camp*, by E. Vance Palmer. This is obviously one of the earliest efforts of one who afterwards became one of the Journal's best-known contributors, and a distinguished figure in Australian literary circles. About the same time we find the name of Lindsay Russell, later to achieve brief note as the author of *Smouldering Fires*. Most of the other stories were fugitive contributions, appearing under such pseudonyms as *Gumnut* and *Bluebell*, but the change of policy was to have important consequences as time went on.

In 1906 the ground lease of the Howey Street premises expired and it became necessary to seek a new home. The present site on the east side of Swanston Street was selected, and H. V. and A. Champion designed the building, erected by J. Baxter at a cost of £3,000. Although just north of Latrobe Street, the position was so far off-centre that removal there was probably regarded as a bold venture for a firm which for so many years had been established in the very heart of Melbourne.

Only those with foresight enough to envisage the continuous growth of the city could anticipate the time when, instead of being almost the sole building of its kind in the area, the premises of Massina and Co. would be surrounded by offices, warehouses and industrial plants.

Three years after the move, the firm was re-organised. A. H. Massina finally retired from active business, and W. S. Mitchell dropped out, taking with him his son, James Mitchell, to become partners in Wilke, Mitchell and Co. Later, with his father and

two brothers, William and Herbert Mitchell, James Mitchell became one of the founders of Mitchell and Casey. Apart from a brief period with Gibb, Shallard and Co. in Sydney, he was with Massina and Co. from 1882 to 1909, and for many years acted as overseer.

Unusually vigorous for a man of seventy-five, Massina took with him into retirement memories of a working career of more than sixty years. Half a century had passed since he landed in Melbourne as an almost penniless youth with a wife and child, and the changes he had seen must have seemed a little bewildering as, pacing the garden of his home in Westbank Terrace, Richmond, he turned back the pages of his own long story. His surviving son, Henry, remained proprietor of the business until the following year, when his son, Mr. H. M. Massina, and his nephews, Messrs. A. W. and S. L. Massina, joined him as partners.

XXIX

ASSOCIATED with the business since boyhood, Mr. Alfred Wellington Massina started in the humble capacity of errand boy in 1899, the year after his father's death. The errand boy of the 'nineties rested upon no bed of roses, and it does not appear that the son of the late managing partner received any special consideration. Indeed, more than usual seems to have been expected of him as a penalty for having been born, as it were, in the business.

Although not then fifteen, he had already spent a few months as apprentice to a process engraver, who, perhaps fortunately for the lad, automatically cancelled the indentures by going bankrupt. In his new position his first job was pasting labels on parcels of *Australian Journals* being made ready for despatch. On occasion he was sent to extract copy from tardy contributors, gaining an insight into the bohemian habits of some of the writers of that period.

With a love of the craft and a capacity for detail inherited from two generations, he left little unlearned during the next few years, but his grasp of figures automatically inclined him towards the managerial side of the business. By 1910 he had graduated in accountancy, in which he retained a keen interest for many years after qualifying. If the years he had spent in the firm's service had taught him its weaknesses as a static concern, they had also shown him its potentialities.

ties, and he applied himself to the job of realising them with an energy and singleness of purpose for which, in the long run, he was to pay dearly.

Eighteen months younger than his brother, Mr. Stanley Lionel Massina already possessed considerable experience of the practical side of printing. Apprenticed as a hand compositor in 1899, he quickly saw that the future lay with machine setting, and turned his attention to the linotype, which in a few years had already superseded hand composition in newspaper offices, and was gaining ground everywhere. He emerged from his six years' apprenticeship so expert that he was soon regarded as one of the fastest operators of his time. He was among the first in Australia to set 10,000 ens an hour, while his natural aptitude for mechanics enabled him to make, for his own convenience, several improvements which have now become standard equipment on linotype machines. After serving his time, he gained further experience with various Melbourne firms, spent some time in Albury on the *Border Morning Mail*, and then in 1907 went to New Zealand.

At that time fast operators were rare in the Dominion, so that when he applied for a position on the *Auckland Star*, his claim to setting an average of 8,000 ens an hour was discredited, and when he arrived to take up his new job, his performance was watched with critical interest. An initial effort of 11,600 ens an hour, however, amply proved his case. Incidentally, while in New Zealand, Mr. S. L. Massina was responsible for a considerable improvement in the conditions of the *Star's* linotype operators, for previous to his arrival, payment had been based on an average of about 4,000 ens an hour, but this was raised to 6,000, and as a result he became known in New Zealand offices as "The Whip of the Dominion."

Soon after the two brothers joined the firm, W. E. G. Symons, who had retained charge of the Journal since W. S. Mitchell left, retired. His place was taken by W. E. Adcock.

One way and another, this unusual personality had been connected with the Massinas as far back as the early Richmond days, when he was editor of *The Free Press*. The son of a bookseller in Bridge Road, William Eddrup Adcock was born about 1847, and after some varied business experience, tried his hand at journalism. When the *Richmond Free Press* ceased publication in 1871, he went to what was then called the Northern Territory, where he opened a store at Darwin, at that time a singularly rough and primitive place.

In those days the North was almost as foreign a country to most Australians as Peru, and in a letter published in *The Australian Journal* in 1873, Adcock describes his surprise and delight at the magnificent bay and prospect which met his gaze on reaching Palmerston, N.T., and the "admiration mingled with disgust at beholding the summit of the cliffs round the town lined with naked women." Later he was to be even more shocked when the ship in which he was returning to Melbourne for supplies was wrecked in Torres Straits, and the ship's company given up for lost. Adcock, however, survived, and quickly made a small fortune by indenting coolies from China for the Margaret and other diggings, and through more normal channels of trade. In 1879 he sold out for £12,000 and returned South.

His successors did not do so well, so that a year later Adcock took over the business again, this time in partnership with others. Branches were opened at Palmerston and Derby, then the port for the famous Kimberley gold rush. A few years afterwards trouble started. In 1888 Adcock became involved in what

must surely be the longest drawn-out insolvency proceedings ever instituted in an Australian court. When this historic case began, he was in Melbourne, and outside the jurisdiction of the South Australian courts, but, apparently in order to expedite matters, he went to Adelaide, only to be immediately arrested. Most of the next four years were spent in prison, varied by occasional appearances in court. The bench held the view that Adcock had made over considerable private assets to his wife, a contention that he as strenuously denied, counter-claiming that the motive behind his imprisonment was a desire on the part of his creditors to hold him, as it were, to ransom, so that others might pay his firm's debts in order to set him free.

Whatever the truth of the matter, the Adcock case became a *cause celebre*. Such distinguished and expensive counsel as Parris Nesbit and C. C. Kingston appeared; the Adcock case became the theme of a vast newspaper correspondence and the inspiration of innumerable leading articles in the Adelaide and Melbourne press. The Victorian Government was moved to inquire into the details, with a view to protecting one of their citizens against the alleged injustice of a "foreign" state — there was no love lost between the colonies at that period — and finally the South Australian Bankruptcy Laws were amended to prevent any similar occurrence.

The rights of the case apart, Adcock must have been a man of extraordinary strength of character, and one of the most obdurate witnesses ever to take the stand. He spent his time in prison writing one lengthy memorial after another, addressing everyone in authority from the Governor downwards, drawing attention to the undoubted fact that he was incarcerated without having been brought to trial, and without, indeed, having any specific charge made against him.

He gave the full details in a racy booklet, *Four Years Imprisoned and Refused a Trial*, published by A. H. Massina and Co. in 1892, and written, declared the author, in order "to make it clear to my Victorian readers what they may expect if, in a credulous and confiding moment, they entrust their purses or their persons to the keeping of South Australian law."

After his release, Adcock returned to Victoria and engaged in journalism and various other activities, the land in Swanston Street being purchased through his agency.

Apart from the account of his imprisonment, his only other published book appears to have been a work entitled *The Gold Rushes of the 'Fifties*, published in 1912 by E. W. Cole, of Book Arcade fame. This was a revised version of *The Early Days of Victoria*, which appeared anonymously in *The Australian Journal* during 1894 and 1895.

When Mr. S. L. Massina assumed responsibility for *The Australian Journal*, he retained Adcock as assistant, a post he held until his retirement in 1926 at the age of 79, a few years before he died. In his latter days a somewhat patriarchal figure, Adcock kept his energy and optimism until the last, and was forever on the verge of making another fortune in northern mining speculations, principally on the mica fields.

XXX

WHEN the two brothers joined the firm, it had, in a measure, been running under its own momentum for several years. A certain amount of general printing was executed, mainly under contract, but new connections were not sought with any assiduity, reliance being principally placed on publications, but as these had been reduced to *The Australian Journal* and *The Almanac*, such an outlook obviously required revising.

One result of this revision was that in 1910 Mr. A. W. Massina, seeing the necessity for blazing a fresh trail, appointed the firm's first outside representative. This was Mr. Alfred J. Lazarus, at that time a traveller for the Keystone Press. A more fortunate appointment could scarcely have been made, for Mr. Lazarus was responsible for introducing many new and important customers, and at the time of writing, nearly forty years afterwards, he defies time by remaining still actively in harness, the doyen of Melbourne's printing salesmen. Among the more important customers secured at this period were Craig Williamson and Co., Lincoln Stuart, the Colonial Bank and the New Zealand and North British Insurance Companies.

In 1912, H. M. Massina dropped out, and his father, Henry Massina, relinquished active participation, remaining, however, a sleeping partner until the following year, when his interest was purchased by his nephews, the two remaining partners. The business was formed into a proprietary company, with Mr. A. W. Massina as managing director.

It was a time for new ideas. The social habits of Australians were changing fast. As yet these changes were in the main confined to the cities. Country people still lived and thought much as they had done for the past half-century, their time governed by the sun and the seasons, their only links with the outside world the muddy road leading to the nearest town and the railway line stretching thence to the distant city, to which, finances permitting, they made an annual show-time pilgrimage. An occasional car penetrated into the rural wilderness, to the loud amusement of the farmer, who, frequently enough, was called to its aid with spade and draught horse.

Change, nevertheless, was in the air. Reversing the Depression of the 'nineties, the years since Federation had been years of prosperity. The march of Melbourne's suburbs, temporarily halted when the boom burst, was resumed again. The other cities were growing, too, and the cry was raised that the capitals were becoming unwieldy, that the head of the country was rapidly growing bigger than its body. It was an old lament — Dr. J. D. Lang had voiced it eighty years before, when he pointed out that Sydney contained more people than the rest of New South Wales, and gloomily declared that no good could possibly come of it.

The years before World War I brought new factors into Australian national calculations. Along with prosperity went industrial unrest. The worker was breaking down the inhibitions of the past. A wave of strikes swept the Commonwealth and the word "socialism" began to take on more than academic meaning. While a commission toured the borderland between New South Wales and Victoria, seeking a site for the new Federal Capital, the Labour Party came to power for the first time, and although its initial term of office



MRS. A. W. MASSINA.

under J. C. Watson was short-lived, it merely gathered strength for another spring, and the names of Andrew Fisher and the even more radical William Morris Hughes began to hit the headlines, presaging, as many thought, the doom of the country. The Commonwealth Bank, Universal Military Service and the Royal Australian Navy were born in those years, while bank notes ceased to be bank notes and became, for the time at least, "Fisher's flimsies."

The silk topper, emblem of respectability for generations, made rarer and rarer appearances in the city streets, while the carriage-and-pair, with its coachman in cords, top boots and cockade, put up a last desperate struggle against the limousine. The hansom cab and its lumbering cousin, the four-wheeler, fought harder against the relentless advance of the taxi, but they, too, were doomed, and curious groups no longer gathered whenever a private car pulled into the kerb, although the misadventures of the motorist long remained part of the raw material of the jokesmith.

Slimming was unheard of, women being confident that in the street-sweeping frocks of the period the worst that could be said of them was that they were merely "splendid" rather than "magnificent". Indeed, the monumental Edwardian and early Georgian coiffure, crowned with its enormous befeathered hat, needed a good deal of live ballast to keep it on an even keel. There was a panic among the plump when for a brief season Paris decreed that the skirt be a long, narrow tube permitting a maximum stride of about six inches. A few daring women, revolting against such constriction, braved the streets in a trouserish rig, reminiscent of the East, and called a "harem skirt," but these pioneers of slacks fled for shelter before the derision of the mob and had to be rescued by the police.

Public opinion split on the question of mixed bathing, which was denounced by the serious-minded as leading straight to perdition. Ladies who took to the sea did so, according to an *Australian Journal* fashion note, in "pants to the knees, trimmed and frilled, with a short full tunic on top, the bodice always being well-cut and trimmed."

For men, nothing but complete coverage from neck to knee, with half-sleeves, would suffice. There was no sun-bathing, the popular feminine complexion being milk-and-roses, or as near to that as possible. Neither nice girls nor real ladies wore make-up.

The theatre, as usual, was in decline. Old-timers, with memories of G. V. Brooke, Walter Montgomery and George Rignold, deplored the enormous popularity of such meretricious musical plays as *The Merry Widow*, *The Chocolate Soldier*, *A Waltz Dream*, *The Quaker Girl* and *Our Miss Gibbs*. Nevertheless, drama retained a kick, for the years immediately pre-war brought visits from, among others, Matheson Lang, H. B. Irving, Oscar Asche, Lewis Waller, Ethel Irving, Marie Tempest and Cecily Courtneidge, and saw the beginning of the Americanisation of the Australian theatre, foreshadowed by Fred Niblo in *Get Rich Quick Wallingford* and Muriel Starr in *Within the Law*. But the machine was catching up with the theatre, for, although the name "Hollywood" meant nothing, the films — variously called moving pictures, living pictures, the bioscope or the biograph — had quickly developed from a none-too-popular music hall diversissement to a full-dress show in its own right.

The phantoms flickered by to the accompaniment of anything from a tinny piano to a full orchestra, but they had something the new public wanted — and they were cheap. Silent, they spoke all languages, hailing

from France, Italy, Norway and Great Britain as well as America.

Racing was more popular than ever; golf was increasing its grip on the more prosperous; cricket rose to its peak in 1912 and then declined; tennis forged ahead rapidly after the establishment of the Davis Cup contests, until by 1914 Norman Brookes co-starred with Nellie Melba as Australia's best-known figure abroad. International sport was, in those forgotten days, the Commonwealth's strongest link with the rest of the Empire. Foreign affairs worried Australians little more than they had done fifty years earlier. Alarmists, such as W. M. Hughes, issued their usual grave warnings about the "yellow peril," but the Japs, if they had the same ideas, were not ready to put them into action and welcomed the alliance with Great Britain which set the British Navy free to cope with that much more urgent problem, Germany. But Kaiser Wilhelm II was even farther from Australia than the Mikado of Japan.

It was, then, an Australia as isolated and complacent as any other South Sea Island which was presently aroused, though slowly, by the shot which killed the Austrian Archduke at Sarajevo.

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XXXI

THE two young men threw themselves with unremitting energy and enthusiasm into the task of giving fresh impetus and direction to the firm. New machinery was purchased and more travellers appointed. Among them was Mr. William Spence, who combined salesmanship with commercial art, and is now widely known as a landscape painter. Business mounted steadily, but there were no breathing spaces. Those with experience confined to conditions obtaining during World War II and the period immediately subsequent can have little conception of the effort required to start a static concern rolling forward again in the years before 1914. The work of the partners can be compared only with the endeavours made by the founders of the firm in the 'sixties.

With the future at stake, both men worked long hours, and turned their hand to anything that came along. Mr. A. W. Massina combined the offices of manager and accountant; he prepared estimates, purchased stock, found time to maintain contacts with printing customers, and to give attention to the advertising and circulation sides of *The Australian Journal*. His brother's immediate care was the composing room, but in addition to his other duties he soon found himself acting as managing-editor of *The Australian Journal* in much the same way as W. S. Mitchell had done so many years before. His interest had been aroused



ALFRED WELLINGTON MESSINA, 1949.



ALFRED HENRY MASSINA, 1949

when, as a linotype operator, he had been setting copy for the magazine and, often enough, sub-editing it as he went.

A keen advocate for the work of Australian writers, he developed an innate flair for gauging the taste of readers, and under his guidance the Journal began to lose its scissors-and-paste appearance and re-establish its original character, so that by 1914 most of the stories it contained were written by Australians. His influence was not only visible in the improved literary standard, but also in the typography and general appearance. If W. S. Mitchell saved its existence in the 'seventies, Mr. S. L. Massina gave it new life forty years later, while, like Mitchell, he for a long time combined the jobs of editor and overseer.

Results justified all this endeavour, for not only did the general business extend, but the circulation of the Journal was steadily rising by the beginning of the First World War.

On the business side, a great advance was made when, in 1916, Messrs. Walker and Welford were appointed as the Journal's first advertising contractors. This arrangement resulted in a greatly increased advertising revenue, and continued in force for several years, until it was found necessary to engage a full-time advertising representative.

A few years later, a London representative was found in Mr. A. J. Chard, a well-known Fleet Street advertising man. Through him considerable overseas business was obtained, and he continued to represent the Journal until his retirement at the end of the Second World War, when his successor, Mr. Harvey Tonkin, took over.

Early in 1917, A. H. Massina's long life ended. His eyes closed on a sombre world. The war was at its height; Australia was still stunned by the appalling

casualties of the abortive Battle of the Somme; President Woodrow Wilson was on the point of hurling the United States into the conflict. The death of an old man of eighty-two, almost all of whose contemporaries had preceded him, was of little moment outside his family circle. Nevertheless, *The Herald*, though with bigger news to cover than ever before, considered the event of sufficient note to give a front-page obituary to the man who had done so much to lift it from a struggling sheet to an evening newspaper of the first importance.

In many respects Massina had been fortunate. He had lived through an age when few questioned the simple philosophy of Samuel Smiles and Horatio Alger, that to rise to prosperity by one's own efforts was the principal duty of any man. Unlike too many of the heroes of those biographers of success, he remained simple and straight-forward, devoid of arrogance and with a kindly spirit not very effectively concealed behind a natural reserve.

His period was the most interesting in Victorian history. He had watched a colonial seaport, restless with the gold fever, grow into one of the great cities of the world, and he had played some part in its development. He had seen the erection of most of its public buildings, the laying out of its parks and gardens, the replacement of its spluttering oil and gas-lamps by electricity, the superseding of its horse-drawn transport by steam, the introduction of the telegraph, the telephone, the electric tram and the motor car — all these things and countless others.

During his life-span, progress had been more rapid than in any other eight decades in human record. Anyone who, talking idly on the deck of the *George Marshall* as she lay becalmed in the doldrums off the Brazilian coast in 1855, had seriously prophesied that

the young printer from London would live to see a time when men would fly over the sea and sail beneath it, and when ships would speak to each other through empty air, might easily have spent the rest of the voyage locked in the lazarette as a potentially dangerous lunatic. Long before Massina died, these things were accomplished facts.

In his own craft there had been developments quite as remarkable. As a boy, in 1850, he had seen the first rotary newspaper press in action at the great London exhibition. Photo-lithography was invented the year he set up in business in Melbourne. A little later came the folding machine and the development of the curved stereo plate for printing newspapers, leading, in 1865, to printing from a continuous roll of paper, while by 1870, half-tone engraving was on its way.

Massina was in his early forties when photogravure was born. He saw the development of offset printing, the end of the wood-engraving, and the application of the half-tone screen to the making of three-colour blocks. The linotype machine, lithography, rotogravure, colour-printing, the use of steam and electric power — all these forward steps had been taken during his lifetime, transforming an esoteric craft into a modern industry.

And — what possibly meant much more to him than any of these things — he died knowing that the business he had founded nearly sixty years before was being carried on in his own tradition and by men of his own blood.

W. S. Mitchell, who had been his partner for so long, survived him by two years, dying in 1919.

XXXII

THE war over, Australia, after a brief interval of slackness, revived again the gaudy drama of the land-boom years, in modern dress and with inflationary trimmings. Europe, which had seemed a very near and troublesome neighbour during the years of conflict, receded again into the northern mists, although never again to be as distant as in the pre-1914 days, for hordes of tourists crowded the outward-bound steamers and inward ships landed cargoes of immigrants, driven from home by the restlessness which stirs men's minds after every great war.

An outwardly docile Germany lay stifled beneath vast piles of million-mark notes. Austria had been throttled. Russia was a bloodstained and mysterious waste over which loomed the sinister figures of Lenin and Trotsky. Italian communism was being cowed by the clubs and castor oil of Mussolini. Mustapha Kemal Atatürk, a figure from the Arabian Nights in a boiled shirt, was rebuilding Turkey. Woodrow Wilson died of disappointment, and the United States, having declared themselves sober by Act of Congress, enthroned the bootlegger and racketeer and set out on the biggest binge in history.

Great Britain, her streets thronged with workless ex-soldiers, sent out her most noted salesman, the Prince of Wales, to tighten the bonds of Empire and revive the export trade. People told each other that there would be no more wars, and that the various

conflicts still in progress were no more than the squabbles among the spectators on their way out from the big fight. It was all as interesting as a three-ringed circus.

In Australia the golden sovereign became a museum piece. Prices and wages started to chase each other. The horse plodded off the stage, and the automobile rolled on. Women shortened their hair and their skirts, pulled out their cigarette cases, applied make-up in public and, disdaining the madeira which dear Queen Victoria had favoured, called for beer. Hotels, formerly only closed while the proprietor took a nap between the departure of the last customer and the arrival of the first, now shut at six, so that serious drinking became a home amusement, taking the place of the social evening of pre-war days. The private car robbed the last train of its urgency, and the midnight streets became as hazardous as battlefields.

Melbourne's population grew, crowding personalities off the streets and leaving just people. Land salesmen and sub-dividers sang their siren song. There was industrial unrest, and a police strike showed the city how thin a line divides order from anarchy. Money poured in from a world which wanted Australian wheat and wool. There was money to lend, too, and Australia, sure of the future, borrowed with both hands. Pockets were full, and there was plenty more where that came from.

Fantastic in retrospect, the post-war period brought its problems to the two young men in control of Massina and Co. A three-months printers' strike — one of the very rare stoppages in the industry — was weathered. The old flat-bed press on which *The Australian Journal* had long been turned out was superseded by a Bell & Valentine rotary.

In 1922 a further step forward was made when Mr. H. E. Israel was appointed Advertising Manager of the

Journal. A little later, he took charge of circulation. Previously a member of the advertising staff of *The Age*, Mr. Israel had a distinguished war record, gaining commissioned rank in France and being awarded the D.C.M. Entering enthusiastically on the task of building the revenue of the Journal, he rapidly established the friendliest relations between the magazine and its advertisers.

He became a well-known personality in advertising circles, and has been for many years on the Executive of the Victorian Institute of Advertising, of which body he was President in 1934-5.

Sales and advertising now rose together. Among the factors which undoubtedly contributed to the increasing popularity of the Journal was the publication, in 1922, of a serial entitled *Sunny Ducrow* by Henry St. John Cooper, a comparatively obscure English author. None of Cooper's many books ever achieved anything like best-selling status, but his combination of sentiment and light humour appealed strongly to Journal readers, and *Sunny Ducrow* proved a tremendous hit, and its publication is a milestone in the more recent history of the magazine.

By 1926 sales had reached 30,000. That year the twenty-year-old building was found too small to cope with the growth of the Journal and the equally rapid extension of the jobbing side of the business. Additions were made, carrying all three stories back to the lane at the rear, and increasing the available space by about a third. This permitted the installation of new machinery, and the replacement of the Bell & Valentine rotary press, already unable to cope with the output required.

A Koenig and Bauer magazine rotary was therefore imported from Germany and erected on the spot by a representative of the makers. Apart from the better quality of its work, it had the advantage of greater speed and capacity, and of a colour unit, which though

not used immediately, was to be an asset in the future. In February, 1929, the press was set in operation by the late Mrs. A. L. Massina, who had always taken the keenest interest in the firm, particularly since it had come into the control of her two sons.

The machine has been running constantly ever since, and up to the time of writing has printed, at a conservative estimate, some fifteen million copies of *The Australian Journal*. During the whole of this period it has been in charge of Mr. Leo Bloink, who started with the firm in 1920 as an apprentice machinist and has spent practically the whole of his working career in its service.

XXXIII

BUSY as the Howey Place office had been in their great days, 350 Swanston Street was even busier in the late 1920's.

Unfortunately a setback was on its way. Cracks appeared in that vast uneasy edifice, the post-war boom. Through overseas news boomed the hollow note of lament. Factories were closing down, while workless roamed the streets of Europe and America. Great Britain went off the gold standard and on the dole. The United States, which had believed itself dedicated to perpetual prosperity, saw with terror the locked doors of banks, the panicking of Wall Street and the establishment of soup kitchens. A stout man with a comedy moustache rose to the surface of the German ferment.

Symptoms of depression were soon manifest in Australia. The unemployed multiplied as fast as the prices of primary products fell. Someone had to be blamed, and the Bruce-Page Government vanished in the storm of a bitter general election. Labour was again on the quarter-deck, with J. H. Scullin at the wheel and E. G. Theodore to help him chart the course. Sir Otto Niemeyer came from England to tell them how to steer off the rocks.

Good times were in full retreat. Prices and wages were cut, taxes rose and moratoriums were declared. In Sydney, J. T. Lang claimed by his supporters to be "greater than Lenin," refused to pay the interest on his State's overdue debts, and left the Commonwealth



H. E. ISRAEL.

to square up for him. New South Wales civil servants went unpaid, and the savings bank closed down. Fearful of revolution, a "New Guard" formed, drilling privately after dark. One of its members, De Groot, opened the Sydney Harbour Bridge with a sabre, beating Premier Lang by minutes and gaining a flash of limelight. Theodore suggested bringing the printing press to the aid of the currency, and the Government split, its remnants going down in another election, which brought the amiable and astute Lyons to the Prime Ministership, to remain there for nearly a decade. Then Lang, too, went out, dismissed after an historic interview with Governor Sir Phillip Game.

Better days slowly returned, and Australia settled down for a fresh start under new management.

The motion picture, silent for so long, suddenly acquired speech, at first dreadful to listen to, and to be tolerated only because of its novelty, but rapidly improving. The word "talkies" was added to our language, and the speaking stage, already just keeping its head above the depression, went down without a gurgle. By now the radio, for several years little more than a hobbyist's box of tricks, was established in the field of entertainment, and listening threatened to become a serious competitor of reading.

The Australian Journal was among the first publications to use this new medium of advertising, but soon abandoned it as useless for the purpose. Had it been economically possible to plug its message home night after night, it might have had some value, but sporadic efforts were wasted, and an intensive campaign, though it might have increased sales, could only have done so at enormous cost.

The economic blizzard now swept away several old-established periodicals. The Journal withstood it magnificently, sales at the worst period of the depression never dropping below 54,000, and the advertising

revenue being maintained with remarkable consistency. Economies of production were effected, and the size of an issue shrank from an average of 152 to 128 pages, but it should be recorded that at no time during those uncertain and harassing years did the Journal cut the rates paid to writers. This was in strong contrast to the policy followed by most other periodicals and newspapers. Many an Australian author had reason to be grateful to the magazine for the part it played in keeping the wolf from his door.

Although there was a natural falling off in general business, the solid foundations on which the Massina brothers had rebuilt the firm enabled it to withstand the depression in comparative security. An asset was the esteem in which the outside representatives were held — Mr. Lazarus, already a veteran in the service, and the two younger men, Messrs. W. G. Stevens, who joined the firm in 1926, and Mr. W. H. Hirst, who came in 1931.

Unfortunately, one disaster occurred against which no precautions could have been taken. This was the sudden illness of Mr. A. W. Massina who, collapsing at his home early in 1931, was for a long time in grave danger. So serious was his condition that he was unable to return to the office for several years.

At this critical juncture, Mr. S. L. Massina relinquished editorial control of *The Australian Journal* and took over the general management, retaining command through a period as difficult as any in its long history.

Not until 1936 was Mr. A. W. Massina sufficiently recovered to attend to business, when his brother decided that the time was ripe for him to go in for the pastoral life for which he had always had a liking. He disposed of his interest in the firm to his partner, purchased a property in the Riverina, and with his

family settled on the land, thus severing a connection begun in 1899.

During his time he had restored to the Journal the prestige which had been gradually slipping away from it for many years. Illustrations and colour had been introduced, and the leading writers in Australia invited to contribute at rates commensurate with their ability, so that from a compilation of stories by amateurs or semi-amateurs the magazine developed into a vehicle for almost every Australian whose work was worth reading. Among the established authors who wrote for the Journal in the 1920's were Vance Palmer, Roy Bridges, J. H. M. Abbott, Bernard Cronin, Myra Morris and Georgia Rivers. Their names drew the attention of other writers, and soon several young and brilliant men were coming forward, including Xavier Herbert, whose celebrated novel *Capricornia* became a world best-seller, and Osmar E. White, afterwards internationally famous as a war correspondent and as the author of *Green Armour*.

XXXIV

AT the departure of Mr. S. L. Massina, the firm was again reconstructed, with Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Massina as Directors. The necessity for close and energetic control being realised, Mr. Trafford M. Cosh was appointed manager in 1937. After returning from the First World War in 1919, he had qualified as an accountant, and spent thirteen years with Vardon & Sons, of Adelaide, later taking charge of the printing section of the *Launceston Examiner*.

Among his early innovations was the revival of the spirit which had flourished in the eighties and nineties, but had gradually died out in the more stringent times that followed. A social club was formed, and a series of dances and other functions held until they were interrupted by the Second World War. Mr. Cosh is also to a great degree responsible for the extensions of the Group Assurance Scheme for employees. This, inaugurated in a comparatively small way in 1928, was re-formed on much more generous lines in 1946.

Outside the business he has been active in affairs affecting the trade, and after being on the Executive for several years, was elected president of the Victorian Master Printers' Association for 1946-47.

In 1937, after some useful experience with Gordon & Gotch, the fourth successive Alfred Massina, great-grandson and namesake of the founder, entered the service of the firm, joining in the traditionally unspecta-



TRAFFORD M. COSH.

cular manner of his predecessors. He could not have begun at a less auspicious time, for the world was already moving inexorably towards war. Indeed, it had already broken out in Spain and Abyssinia, and nothing remained but to begin the inevitable major conflict. Munich passed, and Chamberlain assured the world that he and Hitler understood each other very well, but no one believed that anything more than a respite had been gained.

War, when it did come, presented the management with unprecedented problems. Government regulation followed Government regulation, bringing almost everything under control, from newsprint to manpower. Anything uncontrolled was also unobtainable. It became as impossible to foresee what the next day held as to prophesy the course of the war.

Gradually the various services absorbed almost all the younger men and several of the women employees, until, when the Japanese entered the war in 1941, thirty members of the staff were in uniform. Fortunately, although spread over many theatres of war, all eventually returned in safety.

A considerable strain was thrown upon those who were left, for, although private printing was reduced to an essential minimum, *The Australian Journal* had to be produced, and an enormous amount of work was undertaken for the forces. As with most firms, the story of the war years is one of almost continuous effort, but a spirit of cheerfulness animated the whole establishment, and not a complaint was raised. A heavy burden fell upon the Factory Superintendent, Mr. Robert C. Bryant, now in his twentieth year of service, but the loyalty and untiring energy of the whole staff during those strenuous years should be placed on record here.

At one period the possibility that Melbourne might be bombed had to be taken into account. Arrangements

were made to print the Journal elsewhere in case of necessity, and type enough to make up an "emergency issue" removed to a place of safety at the editor's home. Fortunately, as it turned out, the need to put these measures into effect did not arise.

Melbourne presented a new and strange face at the height of the war. Shuttered windows, sandbagged walls, and slit trenches in parks and open spaces were constant reminders of the presence of the enemy just over the horizon. Khaki and blue became the dominant notes of colour. Petrol shortage drove all but essential cars off the roads, while the skies filled with aeroplanes. At night, the brown-out revived the gas-lit gloom of the sixties and seventies, except when it was varied by the flashing of searchlights in training for raids which did not eventuate. Taxation soared. A regimented populace carried ration-books and identity cards. Everywhere there were marching men, and at night citizens equipped with steel helmets, gas masks and stirrup pumps prowled the suburbs. Strange uniforms appeared in the streets, British, Dutch, Indian and even Polish. American servicemen, at first a novelty, became a commonplace, and the American military policeman with his revolver and heavy baton was soon as familiar as the civilian constable. The Stars and Stripes fluttered in the Melbourne sky.

The end came at last. The Japanese, surviving by only a few months the disintegration of Germany, crumpled under the devastating impact of the atomic bomb. Melbourne celebrated V-P Day, and went back to work a little dazed, and wondering if it really could be all over.

Paramount during the war years was the paper question. As soon as the first shots had been fired, wisdom dictated the necessity for economising, in order to make the supply in hand or on the water last as long as possible. Later greater restrictions were necessitated

not only by commonsense, but by government decree. Eventually the formation of the government newsprint pool ensured the Journal's continuous publication, but there were many moments between September, 1939, and early 1944 when the future looked precarious indeed. At one stage the size of each issue was reduced to sixty-four pages. As an offset, advertising was drastically restricted, the size of type reduced and the width of columns slightly increased, so that readers still received excellent value by any standards.

The end of the war multiplied the problems of management instead of solving them. Few private orders had been executed for several years, and those only of the most essential nature, so that customers now rushed to make up the leeway and long banked-up work began to flow in again.

Materials were still scarce, even when obtainable, and labour even more so, despite the demobilisation of the men who had been on service. Abnormally high taxation and the difficulty of replacing old machinery or buying new plant added their quota of complications, superimposed on a great increase in the circulation of *The Australian Journal*.

In 1939, monthly sales were just over 70,000 and it was at first believed that some of this would be lost as, with so much war news appearing and with so tense a feeling of excitement in the air, the public would not be interested in magazine fiction. This forecast was wide of the mark. Instead of a reduction, there was a continuously increasing demand which could never quite be overtaken although every spoiled sheet from the machine was utilised. This may have been to some degree due to the presence of so many overseas troops in the Commonwealth, but the pressure remained even after they left, and when the newsprint restrictions were at length relaxed, the size was increased and the circulation jumped to over 120,000

copies a month, thus throwing an additional strain on the team responsible for its production. Not to simplify matters, the firm has once more outgrown the building in which it is housed, and a new home is essential to any further development.

Returning from several years war service, Mr. Alfred H. Massina joined his father on the directorate of the firm his great-grandfather had founded eighty-six years before. There is every probability that the century will be passed with the control still in the direct line of succession. The London apprentice who landed from the *George Marshall* with a few shillings in his pocket would certainly be proud of that.

The enterprise he began has reached no vast proportions, but there is romance in small businesses as well as great, and if there is none in the story of the penniless boy who, dismissed from his employment because he married, came to Australia to found a dynasty of printers, romance does not exist.

There is romance, too, in the magazine he hopefully offered to the world in 1865, and which is now the oldest monthly publication in Australia, and one of the oldest in the world. In the British Empire, only *Chambers' Journal* and *Blackwood's* have had a longer continuous existence. Surviving wars and depressions, it has outlasted generation after generation of competitors, many of them apparently with the highest claim to public favour, but lacking some mysterious quality which makes for continuity.

During the last war it did a job whose value could only be assessed by the men and women of the Australian Services who read and enjoyed it the world over. It went wherever they went—to the Middle East, to England, to Canada, to New Guinea and the islands of the Pacific, and, of course to the remotest corners of the Commonwealth. It even found its way into prisoner-of-war camps in Germany, Italy and



RONALD G. CAMPBELL.

Austria. Many interesting letters were received from men on service, testifying to the pleasure the Journal had given them, and to the way each copy was passed from hand to hand to be read and re-read until it was worn out.

There are mail subscribers in the United Kingdom, Canada, U.S.A., South Africa, India and Malaya, and the remote nature of some of the places into which the Journal penetrates is continually causing surprise. Copies were found in sunken luggers in the Pacific and picked up in villages in Malaya during the Japanese occupation.

Appreciative letters have been received from Ceylon, Hong Kong, Uganda, Uruguay, and even Siberia, though how the writers ever came in contact with it remains a mystery.

If it is thought that this account of *The Australian Journal* occupies too great a part of what is the history of the firm, it is necessary to remember that to some extent, at least, the firm owes its continued existence to its publication, and that it is *The Australian Journal* which has made the name of Massina familiar to countless thousands in Australia and New Zealand.