

then enjoying every opportunity which liberty, justice, intelligence, and prosperity could procure for it. It was a leap backwards to the ideals of Plato's *Republic* or More's *Utopia*. It was adopted by the Australian people after they had eradicated all vestige of privilege, and, politically, had established almost absolute class equality. At the ballot-box all men were not only equal, but had an equal right to go there, and equal power when they went there. It was adopted at a time when, economically, the people were living at a standard of general comfort the highest in all past history. In general confusion of wealth and prosperity; in opportunities by way of schools, colleges, and universities, all liberally endowed by the State and generously encouraged by private benefactions; in facilities for treading the upward rungs of every ladder in every walk of life, Australia was not only "The Paradise of the Working Man," but apparently had uttered democracy's last word.

We can trace the causes and origins of every other revolutionary social ideal or upheaval. Such reforms as have been clearly evolutionary, bear on their face the indications of their cause and progress. No investigation of these processes throws any light on the origins, or present or future form of the Australian Socialistic obsession. It fell like a bolt from the blue; like a comet, unheralded; and it remains with its orbit undefined, and its path and progress barely calculable by historical analysis.

All "obsessive" movements are characterised by one common feature. They have their origin in the commanding influence of some one or more individuals