

turned the currents of history. There have been periods when peoples have passed very rapidly from one obsession to a contrary and a reactionary revolt. For example, from the comparatively mild and ineffective tyranny of Charles I. to the actual tyranny of Cromwell's "Instrument of Government," and the absolute tyranny of a Government under martial law; from the puritanical piety of a Cromwellian régime to the voluptuousness of the reign of "The Merry Monarch"; from the infamous fanaticism of a Titus Oates, warning the people by perjuries against an imaginary conspiracy by an ecclesiastical organisation, to the indifference which established and rooted so firmly the supremacy and tremendous power of another. The history of every country which has attained a front rank in civilisation furnishes similar parallels. But such obsessions, with their consequent reactions, were the outward signs of a consciousness of the danger and the imminence within, of some grave evils, and of the necessity for remedies. The reactions exhibit the futility or the excess of such remedies. Is Australian Socialism another instance of such an obsession? If so—and probably a very short time will show that it is—there is, on the other hand, not the faintest discernible trace of any cause in Australia for such similar obsessions as have marked heavily the progress of civilisation in other communities.

Australian Socialism is, in this sense, a phenomenon. And in another sense also. It had its origin, not in protest against any social tyranny, any economic oppression; not from the dominance of any ecclesiastical or monarchical régime; but in the deliberate adoption of an ideal, to be realised by a community