

CHAPTER I

THE ORIGINS OF AUSTRALIAN SOCIALISM— ITS OBJECTIVE

No term in history, science, or economics is more confusing, and, intentionally or unintentionally, confused and abused, than the term Socialism,—one of those conventions of speech which has crept into usage, more by reason of its associations in modern history than of any connection between the definition and the thing defined. History is not concerned with definition. Its province is bounded by the accuracy of the narrative of human events, the proper focussing of their relation, and the analytical grasp of their sequences. That is, the historian is primarily concerned with the task of giving the record of the facts and events occurring during the period of his investigation, and their dependence on each other, as illustrating and often proving the purposes and objectives of the persons, the politics, and movements of the time. We must seek to find these objectives, these definitions, rather in the expressions of the authors and persons concerned, than in any attempts at simple and acceptable definitions deduced from the storehouse of writings or speeches or legislative enactments. The