

**POETS AND PROSE  
WRITERS OF  
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649174263

Poets and prose writers of New South Wales by G. B. Barton

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**G. B. BARTON**

**POETS AND PROSE  
WRITERS OF  
NEW SOUTH WALES**



912m  
B293  
p<sup>o</sup>

## CONTENTS.

---

	<i>Page.</i>
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
W. C. WENTWORTH . . . . .	17
J. D. LANG . . . . .	33
CHARLES HARPUK . . . . .	38
W. FORSTER . . . . .	49
JAMES MARTIN . . . . .	64
HENRY PARKES . . . . .	83
D. H. DENIEHY . . . . .	94
ROBERT SEALY . . . . .	149
W. B. DALLEY . . . . .	164
HENRY KENDALL . . . . .	192
HENRY HALLORAN . . . . .	207
SIR T. L. MITCHELL . . . . .	215
J. L. MICHAEL . . . . .	218
G. R. MORTON . . . . .	221

#### ERRATA.

OWING to the extreme haste with which this book has been printed, a few errors of the press have escaped notice. They are as follows :—

- Page 111, line 20, for "A vein this which Robert Browning," read *A vein this which cannot, and never dreams of typifying, like Robert Browning.*
- „ 114, line 4 from bottom, for "want of specific matter" read *want of consideration of this specific matter.*
- „ 117, line 10, for "the first thing," read *the finest thing.*
- „ 120, line 11, for "lonely," read *lovely.*
- „ 134, line 22, for "regain," read *repair.*
- „ 148, line 23, for "thirty-five," read *thirty-seven.*
- „ 149, line 10, for "1861," read 1862.
- „ 153, line 26, for "love," read *love.*
- „ 205, line 12, for "too," read *to.*
- „ 207, line 2, for "of," read *on.*
- „ 217, line 29, dele *wild.*

## INTRODUCTION.

---

THIS volume is intended to supplement one already published, under the title of 'Literature in New South Wales;' the object of both being, to illustrate the progress of literature in this colony. In the work mentioned, an attempt has been made to give some account of every publication of importance that has issued from the local press, including those which, having been published elsewhere, have been written either by natives of the colony or by old colonists. These publications have been classified, arranged in chronological order, and accompanied by a critical estimate of each. In this way the Editor endeavoured to compile a work which might not only serve to give distant readers an exact idea of our progress in literature, but might also prove an historical record of some value to ourselves. The task was undertaken at the request of the Executive Commissioner for the Paris Exhibition.

In the present volume, the Editor has endeavoured to carry out the design attempted in the other, by collecting those contributions to our literature which seem of most worth. With few exceptions, every local writer who has gained a reputation among us is represented here. Writings which would otherwise have remained buried in obscure prints are reproduced. In some cases, as for instance in that of Mr. Wentworth's College Poem, the writing is reproduced, not so much on account of its intrinsic merit, as on account of the interest felt in the author. In other cases, as for instance in Mr. Denichy's, the writing possesses a value of its own sufficient to warrant its republication. Without

this republication, no evidence could be furnished to substantiate the eulogies pronounced elsewhere. In the remarks which he has thought fit to make, the Editor has endeavoured to be as concise as possible—desiring to say nothing which was not requisite to illustrate his subject. He regrets that he has been unable to do as much justice to his task as he could have wished to do. Being under the necessity of producing both these volumes within a certain time, in order to serve the purpose of the Exhibition Commissioners, he has been compelled to hurry them through the Press, while the facilities he has had in their compilation have been extremely slight. However, he trusts that, imperfect as they may be, they will yet effect the object for which they were produced.

There is a matter connected with the first of these publications to which the Editor would particularly call the attention of foreign reviewers. Soon after its appearance, a "Review" of it was published in the leading journal of the colony, the *Sydney Morning Herald*. This "Review" was simply a personal attack upon the Editor. The writer made no attempt to criticise the book impartially. His remarks from beginning to end were directed at the Editor, with the view of disparaging him, and by that means of depriving his book of all weight with its readers. Almost every sentence contained either a wilful misstatement or a wilful misrepresentation. The Editor, whose personal history was dragged before the public, was at one moment represented as depreciating the literature of the colony, and at another as exaggerating it: while the book was in one sentence pronounced a valuable one, and in another declared to be not worth the expense of its publication. The *malice prepense* of the article was obvious: but the writer used his weapons so clumsily that, as ROGERS said of CROKER when he 'reviewed' MACAULAY—"he attempted murder, but only committed suicide." His falsehoods and his contradictions were so apparent, that they scarcely required exposure: and his attempts to justify himself exhibited only a worse degree of



illogical argument and spiteful insinuation. The Editor, however, would not trouble himself to refer to this matter on the present occasion, were it not for the fact that it affords him an opportunity of still further illustrating the literature of the colony.

The "Review" mentioned was provoked by the critical account of the *Herald* given by the Editor in his work. He stated that

As a rule, the leading articles of the *Herald* are not distinguished by their brilliancy. Curiously enough, although this journal has been, and is, far more successful than any other in the colony, it has never possessed any reputation for literary ability.

Offence was also taken at his statement with respect to the causes of the *Herald's* prosperity. One of these causes he alleged to be the policy adopted by the proprietors in advocating Tory politics. His argument on this matter will be found at page 28 of the book. In preparing that book, the Editor wished to represent the literature of the colony in as favourable a light as he conscientiously could; and he also wished to avoid giving offence to those whose publications he was called upon to notice. In his account of the leading journal, he stated its merits, and proclaimed its great success, without reserve. He felt that if the leading journal of a wealthy community were represented as a worthless one, nothing more damaging to our literary character could be said. But he would have been false to his functions as a critical historian had he not alluded to the literary deficiencies of the *Herald*. They are so notorious that it is impossible to pass them over. It is 'curiously true' that throughout the whole of its existence—and it has now reached its thirty-fifth year—this journal has never possessed the slightest reputation for literary ability. So far from possessing any such reputation, it has been a public laughing-stock on the score of its imbecility. The evidence on this point, as regards the past, is both written and traditional; as regards the present, it may be found in the journal itself. For the last thirty-five years every contemporary journal in Sydney has ridiculed the intellectual weakness of the *Herald*; and the ridicule has been echoed by the public. Every term that could express or typify mental weakness

has been fastened on it. It has generally been spoken of as the Grandmother of the Press, by the popular abbreviation of 'Grannie.' Except in commercial matters, its editorial management has never exercised the slightest influence over the community. Politically, it goes for nothing; but that may be accounted for by the fact that it has always advocated principles antagonistic to those of the people.

It may be asked, How could such a journal as this outstrip its many rivals, and achieve so much success? To answer that question, it is necessary to review the history of our journalism. It cannot be answered by considering the paper as it is now: we must go back, and examine its career from the commencement. When the *Herald* was started in 1831, its appearance was insignificant in the last degree. A badly printed sheet of bad paper, it was destitute of everything that could attract a reader. In its appearance, as well as in its contents, it was inferior to its contemporaries. It did not improve in either respect for some time. The journals it had to compete with were (1) the *Gazette*, established in 1803 as a Government organ—(2) the *Australian*, established in 1824 as an Opposition organ—and (3) the *Monitor*, established in 1826 as a second Opposition organ. The two last-mentioned papers were conducted with much ability, the *Australian* especially. But the *Gazette*—which ought to have retained the lead of all our journals—lost its character through a variety of causes, and never succeeded in recovering it. No journal ever did. The Opposition papers, on the other hand, went too far in their advocacy of liberal politics; they devoted themselves with too much zeal to politics altogether, forgetting that politics alone will never pay the expenses of a newspaper. The *Herald* was brought into existence by men who knew nothing of literature, and cared nothing for politics except as they affected 'business.' It adopted a policy which could not possibly give offence to men of property—a policy which advocated the claims of rank and wealth with unflinching ardour. It was edited for

many years by a reverend gentleman who had previously edited the *Gazette*, and whose contributions to our infant literature were rather solid than splendid. By this means, although the paper was little more than a sheetful of advertisements and news—although it was a mere dead letter so far as literature and politics were concerned—it gradually increased its circulation and rendered itself indispensable to a business community. The leading features of its character have been faithfully preserved up to the present day. No one expects to find the graces of literary composition in its leading articles, just as no one expects to find roses or daffydown-dillies on a sheep-walk. But it contains all the advertisements and all the news of the passing day—it is the first to publish the European telegrams on the arrival of the mail—it has abundance of foreign correspondence—and it maintains the cause of good old English Toryism in all its glory.

The politics advocated by this journal throughout its career are not Conservative politics merely. There would certainly be nothing in that to render its success a matter of surprise. Its politics are Tory politics, and of the most inveterate stamp: politics not only repulsive to the bulk of the people, but such as few educated men can agree with. The principal feature in the system appears to be a blind adoration of wealth and position. It seemed to the Editor 'a striking fact' that a journal so conducted should, in times like these, in a community overrun by radicalism, not only maintain its ground unshaken, but daily increase in prosperity. The really 'popular' journal—that which advocates radical politics, and advocates them with some degree of ability—is, to use a turf phrase, actually 'nowhere' in the race. Its influence in political matters is infinitely greater than that of its rival. But it seems to be following in the steps of the old liberal journals already mentioned. It devotes its energies to politics with the fiery zeal of a martyr; and thus cuts off from itself the sympathies of an important section of society. This section happens to be a peculiarly important one, so far as the success of our newspapers is concerned. Radical politics will