GROUPS IN VICTORIAN POLITICS

1889 - 1894

M.A. THESIS

by

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1.
A. The
B. The
C. Economic and Social Background.

Chapter 2. The Decline and Fall of a Government.
A. 1889 Election.
B. 1889 Session.
C. 1890 Session.

Chapter 3. The Munro and Shiels Ministries.
A. Munro's Government.
B. 1892 Election.
C. Shiels' Government.

Chapter 4. The Patterson Regime.
A. Patterson replaces Gillies.
B. 1893 Session.
C. Protection Attacked.
D. 1894 Session.

Chapter 5. Election of 1894.
A. The Candidates.
B. The Organisations.

Chapter 6. Groups within the Legislative Assembly.
Appendices

I Victorian Ministries, 1875-99.

II Platform of Liberal Party, February 1889.

III Platform of Victorian Farmers’ Protective Association, February 1889.

IV Platform of Trades Hall Council, March 1889.

V Platform of Progressive Political League of Victoria, June 1891.

VI Platform of United Labor and Liberal Party of Victoria, July 1894.

VII Membership Lists of Legislative Assembly, 1889 and 1894.

VIII Analysis of 57 members, present in Assembly, 1889-94.

IX Members of Ministries, 1889-94.

X Map of Victorian electorates, 1889.

Tables

I Table of General Statistics, 1880-99.

II Heads of Revenue.

III Heads of Expenditure.
The function of the historian is not to reshape or reform the past, but to accept it and to analyse what he finds significant in it, to isolate and illuminate the fundamental changes at work in the society in which we live and the perhaps age-old processes which lie behind them; and this will entail a view of the processes by which the problems set to the present generation by these changes can be solved.

(K. H. Carr)

"It was a period of violent tension during which even civil war seemed possible, and when the Governor and Premier were constantly threatened or warned that their lives were in danger."

(C. H. Pearson's account of Victoria in 1879.)

"It would be rash to assume that the marvellous prosperity of the last three years will be continued indefinitely. Thus far, however, there is only a general tale of well-being."

(Governor's Speech at Opening of Parliament 1889)
Chapter 1

Introduction

A. The Historical Problem

To most Australian historians, the political history of Victoria during the final decades of the nineteenth century is a closed book. Except for the considerable attention bestowed upon the labor party, which was after all of minor importance in Victoria until the early years of this century, few historians indeed have ventured to comment even briefly on this colony's political life.

Marjorie Barnard, for instance, the latest addition to the band of general historians of Australia, has managed to confine her remarks on the non-labor parties during the late nineteenth century to a single paragraph. To Barnard the outstanding characteristic of nineteenth century colonial politics lay in their instability, which in turn, she said, gave rise to legislation aptly described by Fitzpatrick as "hasty, inconclusive, ad hoc, amateurish."¹

Those historians who have felt the need to say something more about the political activities within the colonies, especially of the non-labor parties, are in general agreement about their interpretation of events, although the manner in

which they present this argument varies considerably. Brian Fitzpatrick, for instance, felt confident of his interpretation of events in the colonies, and stated his position bluntly. Referring to the period after the Strikes, he wrote, "There was no longer doubt in the minds of men of affairs, after 1890 that great owners had the deciding of great public matters, and that accommodation with the powerful was the utmost that any other group might reasonably hope for." To Fitzpatrick, it was evident that before and after 1890 government in all the colonies was in the hands of "the great owners". It did not much matter which "party" was in power, he implied, for their differences were inconsequential.

Although less extreme than Fitzpatrick, Professor Crawford too reveals similar preconceptions in his general account of the period. To him the emergence of the Labor Party into the political world was the event of paramount importance, which rendered meaningful again the conflicts of that world, after an interregnum of apathy. Summarising the period in question, he wrote,

In the seventies and eighties there was on the whole a dimming of the reforming zeal of the earlier years. Great battles for political rights, for land, and, in Victoria, for protection had been won.... In part, the decline of reforming enthusiasm was a measure of the expanding prosperity of these years. It was a measure also, of the

spreading acceptance of common assumptions, the absence of major conflicts of principle. The colonists used the familiar labels, 'conservative' and 'liberal', though parties were slow to develop; but these terms, as many realized, were misleading. There were few conservatives who defended the concept of a traditional, hierarchical society; and the difference was hardly more than this, that 'liberals' would go a little farther and a little faster. 3

To Professor Crawford, the pattern of Victoria's political history is clear. After the idealism and enthusiasm of the fifties and sixties, when the struggle was waged over land and tariff reform, politics were in the doldrums, with coalitions the order of the day. Only with the formation of the Labor party by zealous and idealistic reformers did the political conflict again become meaningful. This time though, the basis of the division was primarily economic. The "haves" were forced to close their ranks, to withstand the challenge issued by the "haves nots".

This same interpretation of Australian history is evident in Greenwood's Australia, where the chapter dealing with the late nineteenth century is entitled "Nationalism, the Labor Movement and the Commonwealth." 4 The author of this chapter, Dr. Gollan, clearly sees the formation of the labor party as the focal point of that period when Australian politics came of age.

While no historian would wish to deny that this generally-accepted view is substantially correct, nevertheless, as a complete interpretation of Australian history it is open to certain criticism. An acceptance of the theory, whether in its more or less extreme form, does necessarily involve underestimating or even ignoring the role played by the non-labor parties. While it may yet be true that most politicians before 1891 were "opportunist and demagogues" as Evatt has suggested, these established parties at least merit more analysis than they have so far received. For only when this analysis has been undertaken will it be possible to evaluate the above estimates of the Labor party. And it is the aim of this study to attempt just such an analysis of Victorian political groupings in the early 1890's, with emphasis necessarily on the non-labor parties, for the Labor party scarcely existed.

The only detailed study of Victorian politics during this period that has so far been undertaken is that by S. M. Ingham in his unpublished thesis, "Some Aspects of Victorian Liberalism, 1880-1900." Here Ingham was concerned to examine, on the evidence mainly of members' speeches, two main problems.

First, he realised that the political stability of this period resulted from the fact that Victoria was governed by

7. The Coalition Ministry formed by Service and Barry in 1883 lasted until October 1890. Hitherto the longest life of any Victorian Ministry had been enjoyed by the McCulloch Government from 1863-1868.
coalition Ministries, formed by the combination of hitherto
sworn enemies. Secondly, he was aware, as most historians
have been, that the Victorian labor party displayed none
of the strength and radicalism of its counterparts in New
South Wales and Queensland, and was scarcely distinguished
from the radical wing of the liberal party.

To Ingham, these facts were closely related. The two
parties were able to form a coalition because there were no
significant differences separating them. With only a few
exceptions, Ingham discovered that every member of the
Assembly during the two decades was a Liberal, and so of
course they could combine to support a joint Ministry. The
strength of Liberalism in the House also explained the
relatively advanced social legislation that was passed
during the two decades. This in turn helped to explain the
weakness of the labor party, as members of the Trades Hall
Council did not see a political organisation as essential for
the protection of working class interests.

Broadly Ingham stated as his main conclusion concerning
Victorian politics during the two decades,

3. See for instance, T. A. Coghlan, Labour and Industry in
R. Gollan, Radical and Working Class Politics, Melbourne

9. Ingham realised that there were amongst the members of
the Victorian Legislative Assembly a few dyed-in-the-wool
conservatives. Robert Murray Smith and Walter Madden,
for example, opposed the minimum wage movement because
they thought it impossible to achieve in a free capitalist
system.
After reading the Parliamentary debates and the Melbourne press of this period, one gets the general impression that the Liberals and Conservatives - the two main parties - were not divided by any fundamental differences of opinion.10

In seeking to define 'liberalism', Ingham applied to the Victorian situation tests derived from late nineteenth century English political thinking. The liberal, it seemed to him, supported the Chartists' points and agreed that the State had the right to interfere in the workings of the economy to provide basic services, and even minimal working conditions. As few if any members of the Legislative Assembly during the two decades opposed the Chartists, or challenged this right of the States, Ingham argued that "the terms Liberal and Conservative were quite artificial and wholly misleading."11

Examining more intently specific political issues, he claimed that the period 1883-93 provided the perfect demonstration of "the arbitrary nature of party lines."12 Ingham saw no significant differences between Ministerialists and Opportunists; members who crossed the floor seemed to do so only to further their own interests, and not because they felt a difference of principle from their opponents.

Political divisions between the non-labor parties were then, throughout the period, artificial and meaningless -

12. Ibid., p.37.
"the citadel of Victorian conservatism had already been stormed and won," during the sixties and seventies. Since then there had been no major political conflicts, and Victorian Liberalism languished for want of conservative opposition. This identity of interests between the two parties became increasingly obvious as the Labor Party increased its strength, until in 1909 the non-labor parties were able to combine, with the Labor Party as the official opposition.

Thus Ingham saw Victoria's political history towards the end of last century in much the same way as Crawford, Evatt, Gollan and others saw the whole nation's history at this time. In the decade or so prior to the formation of the Labor Party, government was in the hands of the middle classes, and the political struggle for office was waged between two essentially similar groups. They were scarcely distinguishable, Ingham says, "because neither party consisted of a homogeneous social, economic and therefore political group." Essentially, he suggests, there could not be significant political differences because there were no social and economic divisions. Then, with the formation of the Labor Party, it was only a matter of time before the non-Labor 'parties' combined to form the 'party of resistance.'

16. Ibid., p.178.
and whether they depended on different sections of the community for financial and electoral support.

Secondly, Ingham may be criticised for the criteria he employed in his comparison of the two parties. While he has demonstrated convincingly that almost every member of the Legislative Assembly during the period under review would have been regarded as a Liberal in the contemporary British political scene, he was mistaken in making this the focal point of his analysis. For his criteria, such as the attitude to the Chartist programme, and to state intervention, were relevant only to contemporary English politics. At no stage in Victorian history could the attitude to State intervention have been the useful test of political conservatism it was in England. The role of the State in a young and developing colony was obviously and necessarily much greater than in an old and established country such as England.

Thus a comparison of the platforms and attitudes of the liberal and conservative parties needs to be made on the basis of live issues that politicians were struggling over, rather than dead ones imported into the colony from outside. It is certainly true, and this is Ingham's most valuable contribution, that Victoria's Conservatives were much more radical than their English contemporaries. It does not follow from this, however, as Ingham suggests, that the two parties were consequently almost indistinguishable.
Finally, Ingham has treated the two decades of his study as a whole, as if there were no political development at all during the period. In the sentence quoted earlier he considered the years 1883-1893 as a homogeneous period, with fixed and unchanging political characteristics. He has assumed that what holds true for the early part of this period remains equally true for the later part. This is, however, an unjustified assumption, and, as this thesis demonstrates, there was a marked change in Victorian politics between 1889 and 1894.

One concrete illustration of the weakness of Ingham's approach can be seen in his treatment of the Service-Berry coalition. To Ingham, the fact that the leaders of the two major 'parties' could unite to form a Ministry was a sure sign that there could not have been much to divide them. It was, however, only after three elections, and several years of political instability that Berry and Service agreed to combine. The formation of the Coalition attested rather to the urgent need for effective government than to the lack of significant differences between the parties.19

And so, while Ingham has undoubtedly contributed greatly to our understanding of Victorian Liberalism, and his remarks on the general nature of Liberalism are

19. This is demonstrated later in this chapter.
unquestioned, his conclusions about the specific political parties, and their essential similarity, are on less solid ground. While it is true that most Victorian politicians would have sat on the same side of the House of Commons, it is not the case that there is thus no real political difference between them in the colonial Assembly.

It is the aim of this thesis to examine in more detail the vital segment of Ingham's two decades, the period of the Depression, to analyse more closely his comments about the non-labor parties. This thesis will consider not only what politicians said, but also their voting patterns in the Assembly, their electoral activity and their extra-Parliamentary support. For only then will it be possible to assess the political divisions in Victoria in the late nineteenth century.
B. The Political Background.

Between 1877 and 1881 Victorian politics had been dominated by a violent and dramatic political struggle over the reform of the Legislative Council. Looking back after twenty years, Deakin could write "Whatever the relative importance or interest of the years 1875-82 may be, it is certain that the tide of political life ran then much more fiercely than at any subsequent period."20

The tension and turbulence of the crisis is reflected in the judgments passed on the period by Victoria's historian, H. G. Turner21 writing at about the same time as Deakin.

The period during which Sir Graham Berry had been so politically prominent was scarred with many disasters ... His advent to power excited great expectations, and he had been accorded the support of the largest and most docile following in Parliament that any man could desire. Yet after filling the Legislature with turmoil and drilling his outside supporters to the flippant use of threats of "broken heads and houses in flames", he had gone out of power with nothing to his credit...

21. Turner's contribution to Melbourne's intellectual and commercial life would be well worthy of further study. For several decades he was one of the most prominent figures in both commercial and literary circles. As one time President of the Chamber of Commerce, manager of the Commercial Bank of Australia, editor and founder of the Melbourne Review, and President of the Shakespeare Society, he was at home in both worlds. His commercial interests, however, explain the rather conservative bias of all his history, nowhere more evident than in his assessment of Berry's Ministry.
Few old colonists can look back without shame and mortification at the mischievous pranks which this politician was encouraged by the masses to play with the well-being of his fellow-men.  

Berry had been swept into power in 1877 on a radical platform that included the ratification of the payment of members bill, land tax, Council reform and increased Protection. With the electoral support of the Reform and Protection League Berry identified himself with every popular movement of the previous fifteen years. If elected, he promised to break up large estates with his land tax; to limit the squatters control of legislation by broadening the Council’s franchise and checking its power; to enable working men to enter Parliament, and to guarantee them employment by imposing a more protective tariff. When the ex-grocer and newspaper proprietor was returned with a majority of thirty-four in a House of eighty-six, it seemed as if the "paradise for the working man" was at hand.  

Berry immediately made full use of his power by forcing through the Council his Land Tax bill. Then, when he tried to 'tack' payment of members on to the Appropriation Bill, the Council retaliated by refusing to accept the Bill. The final thrust was Berry's, however, for he reacted by

23. Age, 10 Feb. 1880.
Dismissing a significant proportion of his Civil Service, including County Court Judges and Police Magistrates. This was the infamous "Black Wednesday", and the origin of the "Berry Blight". He then delivered a body blow at the Council by drawing money from the Treasury as if the Council’s assent to the Appropriation Bill was no longer a constitutional necessity. Finally the Premier proceeded to draft legislation designed to bring about precisely this effect. He introduced a bill\textsuperscript{25} to limit the Council’s power over financial measures, and to permit bills twice rejected by them to be referred to a plebiscite. When the upper House quite naturally returned this Reform Bill to the Assembly, Berry, with Professor Pearson,\textsuperscript{26} made a fruitless pilgrimage to seek the British Government’s assistance – only to be told that the colonies had now to solve their own problems.\textsuperscript{27}

On his return from England, Berry was at the height of his power, which, according to Deakin, was almost despotic.\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{25} Victorian Parliamentary Debates [Afterwards referred to as V.P.D.], Vol. 28, p.101.

\textsuperscript{26} Professor Pearson was one of the most distinguished men ever to sit in the Victorian Parliament. Fellow of Oriel College (1864-71) and Professor of Modern History at King’s College (1865-65) he came to Australia for health reasons. One of the first history lecturers at Melbourne University, he was commissioned by Berry to enquire into Victorian education. This introduced him to politics, and he was a member from 1878-92. His most valuable work was in the field of education where he was responsible for the separation of primary from secondary divisions.

\textsuperscript{27} For a further account of the whole struggle, see H. C. Turner, \textit{op. cit.}, pp.193-216.

\textsuperscript{28} A. Deakin, \textit{op. cit.}, p.21.
Alighting at Spencer Street Station, he was accorded a
torch-light procession as he was driven the length of
Collins Street through the crowded ranks of his cheering
supporters.29 Commenting upon this many years later to
Alfred Deakin, Berry remarked, "Yes I then had absolute
power, but only upon the one condition - that I did not use
it."30

This was a period when men regarded politics with
deadly seriousness, and when political divisions ran very
deep. Attitudes supporting or opposing reform were struck -
and held - with quasi-religious fervour. Theodore Fink,31
reflecting on the temper of the time, wrote:

The time was one of unparalleled excitement.
Class feeling ran high, and for a young man
of education to announce himself a Liberal
was, at that day, in the minds of the
comfortable classes, an admission that he
was a scoundrel who was certainly selling
his convictions for a mess of pottage in the
shape of salary.32

Despite the strength of Berry's mass support, however, the
Council would be neither coaxed nor threatened out of
existence. The Reform Bill made no inroads on the

29. The cause of their jubilation is rather mystifying, as
Berry had achieved nothing by his trip to London.
31. Theodore Fink was a prominent Victorian lawyer, politi-
cian and educationist. He was admitted to the bar at
the same time as Deakin. He became Chairman of Direct-
ors of the Herald, and served on several Royal Commissions
into Technical Education and the Melbourne University.
32. Quoted in W. Murdoch, op. cit., p.53.
entrenched position of the Upper House.

And so the election of May 1880, occurring in an atmosphere heightened intensely by the Crisis, resolved itself into a struggle between two sharply distinct political parties. Supporting reform was Berry\(^{33}\) and his radical party, while defending the role of the Council was the Constitutionalist party, lead by James Service.\(^{34}\) Differing markedly in their election programmes, the two parties represented the interests and sought the support of separate sections of society. Service was obviously acting "with an eye to property", whereas Berry was more concerned to further the cause of his mass supporters.

The result of the election was that Service had a sufficient majority within the House to overthrow Berry's Ministry, and to form his own, though insufficient to weather his first storm four months later. A dissolution followed the successful motion of no-confidence, and Victorians went

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33. Graham Berry, born near London in 1822, was at various times during his life draper, storekeeper, wine and spirit merchant and newspaper proprietor. He was a member of the Assembly almost continuously from 1860 to 1886, and then again from 1892-7. A convinced Protectionist from early in his career, Berry was a skilful manipulator of men, and would not hesitate to use rather violent tactics to secure his ends.

34. James Service, Berry's political antithesis, was one year his junior. Born in Scotland, Service was educated to pursue a commercial career. He arrived in Victoria in 1853, and founded his own wholesale business two years later. A member of most Parliaments between 1857 and 1886 Service was, until 1883, generally on the opposite side of House to Berry, being himself a free-trader. He was as well much more cautious and conservative than Berry, and abhorred the political tactics of "Black Wednesday".
to the polls for the second time in a few months.

This time it was Berry who gained an insecure majority, and formed a Ministry. Politicians had, by late 1880, become so tired of living in a state of perpetual siege that they were prepared to make certain compromises. 35 Berry's demands became less extreme, and thus he was able to push through both Houses a modified version of his Reform Bill, although only after desperate last minute negotiations had been conducted by Deskin. 36 Although, as Deskin points out, Berry originally opposed the Bill for its concessions, he was able to say at a public meeting a year later, "it is true that the Reform Bill isn't all I desired, but it was better to have some measure of reform than none at all." 37

With the Reform Bill passed, opponents of the Ministry could not start plotting against Berry soon enough. The Opposition, comprising Service's Constitutional party, was approached by several Corner members, who proposed a merger. As was so often the case, the Corner benches proved to be the Achilles heel of colonial government. Within the Corner there were Catholic opponents of any government supporting secular education, liberals slighted by their exclusion from Berry's Ministry, and opportunists seeking

36. Ibid., pp.74-77.
37. Age, 23 June, 1881.
place and pay. Under Sir Bryan O'Loughlen's leadership, a plot was laid, and the Government was brought down.\textsuperscript{38} It is an interesting commentary on the state of contemporary political feeling that O'Loughlen's threat to Berry immediately resulted in a rush of protest meetings throughout the colony and an upsurge of party feeling as the National Reform Leagues tried to force their wayward representatives into conformity. By marshalling public support they were trying to succeed where the Whips had failed.\textsuperscript{39} Although the Reform Bill had been removed from the arena, party feelings still ran deep, as accusations of treachery were hurled at the heads of O'Loughlen and his supporters. Deakin, by no means an uncritical supporter of Berry, saw the bid for power at its true worth. Any attempt to unseat the Ministry at this stage, he said, "was simply to stop public business by a sordid and unscrupulous scramble for office."\textsuperscript{40}

The most commonly held view of the current political crisis was expressed by W. F. Murphy\textsuperscript{41} at a meeting organised

\textsuperscript{38} O'Loughlen himself was an Irish baronet and a barrister who arrived in Melbourne in 1862. He entered the House in 1878 and at once became Berry's Attorney-General. However he was excluded from Berry's third Ministry in 1880, and from that point on he seemed to be more interested in holding office than any particular political programmes.

\textsuperscript{39} The Berry Government was defeated on O'Loughlen's motion by 41 votes to 38. Amongst the 41 were 'Berryites', including Fincham, Bolton, Gawnan and others.

\textsuperscript{40} Age, 20 June 1881.

\textsuperscript{41} W. F. Murphy was Secretary of the Melb. Trades Hall Council and one of the three members of that body who stood for election in 1886 in the working class interest. This followed several months of heated debate of a motion which urged that the T.W.C. might endorse candidates to represent the trades. See Trades Hall Council Minute Book, 16 Oct. 1885.
by the National Reform League. That he believed party
lines were clearly drawn, and party labels significant is
evident. He said:

If Berry and his colleagues were put out
of office, then the Conservatives would
soon jump the Treasury Benches and
remove the burden of taxation from the
shoulders of the wealthy, and place them
on the people. 42

Berry, in his address to the meeting, said that he was
not objecting to the fact that they were being attacked by
the Opposition. That was only to be expected, for, as he
said,

They differed from the Government on
fundamental principles: they went to the
country advocating antagonistic principles,
and he and his colleagues had no right to
expect anything but opposition from them. 43

But what the Premier was objecting to, and why the protest
meeting was being held, was that the opposition emanated
from the so-called liberal members of the House, such as
O'Loghlen himself.

Thus it is evident that even after the Reform Bill
was passed, politics were seen essentially in terms of a
conflict between two parties, which, as Berry said, "differed
on fundamental principles." However, not all the objections
and mass protest meetings could counteract the fact that

42. Age, 28 June 1861.
43. Age, 28 June 1861.
O'Loghlen had the numbers, and so Berry's Ministry gave way to its successor.

The O'Loghlen Ministry was the first of the Coalition governments of the 1880's, and the least impressive. Its essential weakness stemmed from the circumstances surrounding its creation. When O'Loghlen was authorised by the Governor to form a Ministry, he intended to invite the leading men from the conservative party, the group of discontented liberals who had crossed the floor, as well as the independents. He anticipated having men such as Murray Smith and O'Shamnassy in his cabinet. However, the conservatives had in the meanwhile been quietly laying a plot against O'Loghlen whereby all the conservatives, on being asked, would refuse to join his Ministry, thus forcing him to hand over the Premiership to Murray Smith, conservative leader in Service's absence in England. The plot was only partly successful, for while the most eminent members of the House did refuse the invitation, the inveterate schemer Bent accepted, and between them, they were able to collect a team to survive until the next election in 1883. 44

This election was no more successful than the previous two in resolving the basic conflict between the two parties. O'Loghlen's Ministry was decisively defeated, O'Loghlen himself even losing his seat; but neither Berry nor Service secured a comfortable majority, Berry claiming thirty-two followers, and his rival thirty-eight.

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44. For a full account of the formation of the O'Loghlen Ministry see A. Deakin, op. cit., pp.78-81.
When the Liberal party met after the election, the writing was clearly on the wall. The meeting unanimously agreed to entrust their leader, Berry, with sole responsibility for "such negotiations with the Constitutional party as may be necessary." Similarly, the meeting of the constitutionalists authorised Service to negotiate with the liberals, to form a Coalition government.

The formation of the Service-Berry government was thus an attempt to solve the apparently irreconcilable parties in the Assembly. Consisting of four liberals and four conservatives from the Assembly, as well as two members of the Council, the formation of the Coalition Ministry was the only way in which political stability could be achieved.

Attitudes to the coalition were rather mixed.

McIntyre, squatter and conservative member for Maldon, was

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45. Argus, 2 March 1883. It is an interesting reflection on the strength of party loyalty at this time that three members absent from the meeting sent apologies, and promised to be bound by the decisions of the party.

46. Ibid.

47. Argus, 16 March 1883.

48. Representing the liberals in the government were:
   - C. Berry. Chief Secretary. Postmaster-General.
   - G. D. Langridge. Customs.

Representing the conservatives were:
   - J. Service. Premier, Treasurer, Education.
   - D. Gillies. Commissioner of Railways.
   - J. E. Levien. Minister of Mines and Agriculture.

From the Council came,
   - Col. Sargood. (without office).
the only member of the conservative party who refused to accept the arrangement, and he moved over to the opposition. He stated in a rather extreme form what many may have been inclined to think when he said, "but I protest against the destruction of the two great political parties of the country by the forming of a government simply out of the heads of both." To the Argus, forever a bitter opponent of Scy, the new government was not particularly attractive, but could simply not be avoided. To others the idea of a coalition was not so repulsive. Deakin, for instance, thought favorably of the experiment:

The Reform Bill removed the substance for which the two great parties in the state contended in the past, and those who desired to continue the contention wished to keep up the fight for a shadow. That fight should now pass away, and each side having given its allegiance to the leader of the other union of the trusted chiefs would lead to the creation of a national party.

Service, in the course of his election address, claimed that there was no longer any great dividing principle between the two parties, and so no political reason why these two bodies should not unite if they could agree upon a policy. Looking back over the previous decade, he said,

50. An Argus editorial read, "There is considerable objection to the idea of a Coalition Govt. but it is unavoidable."
51. Argus, 5 March 1903.
52. Argus, 10 March 1903.
38. Vol.
it was evident that "the strife of parties" had entirely blocked the way for all measures that were for the advantage of the colony. No member of the coalition would be called upon to vote against his principles, and the policy which he presented to the colony was composed largely of bread-and-butter affairs. Included in his government's policy were the abolition of political patronage in the civil service, and in the railways, the development of the Mallee, and the improvement of water conservation. Now that the Reform question and the tariff and education questions had been solved, it was time to resume the task of practical government, the task which Service hoped his composite government would undertake successfully.

Patterson, who had been amongst the strongest supporters of Berry during the Crisis, justified the coalition by this same emphasis on the needs for practical government. He described the coalition as "the only way by which we can secure progressive legislation and honest administration." Levien, a conservative member of the coalition said,

53. J. B. Patterson, radical member of the Berry Ministry 1877-80, had been, according to Seakins, almost revolutionary during the days of most acute tension. His political ideas were to become considerably more conservative. Born in England in 1833, Sutherland says his advancement is mainly due to his own industry and taste for self-improvement. Member for Castlemaine from 1871-1897. Patterson was a successful business man.

54. Argus, 16 March 1883.

55. J. F. Levien, was born at Williamstown in 1840. Engaged firstly in pastoral and agricultural pursuits and later in commercial and industrial, as a director of a number of leading companies. Represented a Western District electorate from 1871 to 1906.
It was better that they should join together by sinking political differences for the purpose of passing practical measures which the country was earnestly desirous of seeing carried into law, and which the late protracted mode of doing business has rendered such an pressing necessity. 56

Nobody suggested that the differences between the liberal and conservative members of the House or of the government had miraculously evaporated. Service clearly recognised that there were still differences of principle, but explained that his government would ignore such contentious matters, at least until urgently needed non-party legislation was carried. The formation of this coalition government was not primarily an indication of the lack of difference between the two parties, although it did suggest that the differences had become less great. Essentially it was a recognition of the need for the continuation of government.

The arguments employed at the formation of the coalition by Service were reiterated three years later when Gillies and Deakin succeeded their former leaders in office. Again Gillies argued that his Ministry was composed of men from both parties, but in the absence of any major issues of principle, he would see no real reason why the two parties could not continue to co-operate. 57 Nor could the colony's

56. Argus, 16 March 1883.
57. Age, 23 Feb. 1886.
electors, who returned the Ministry with a large majority, a majority they continued to enjoy until the 1889 general election.

Victorian politics then, during the eighties, underwent a considerable measure of change. In the late seventies, the whole political community was split on a fundamental issue, which involved the political rights of the squatter-merchant group in society. While the Council remained unreformed, this small economically powerful group exercised a veto over all legislation, and in fact prevented the passing of much progressive legislation.\textsuperscript{58} While a fundamental issue of this sort dominated politics, there were two fairly united antagonistic parties struggling for the ascendancy, although even at the height of the crisis, there were some members with no strong allegiance to either party.

Once this issue was settled, however, the great barrier between the two parties vanished. The two broad groups that had for some years been openly in conflict, became latent. Parliament, instead of being divided vertically from left to right, was, during the eighties, split horizontally, as bread-and-butter issues, such as railways and

\textsuperscript{58} See generally, G. Serle, "The Victorian Legislative Council 1856-1950", \textit{Historical Studies, Australia and New Zealand}, 22 (1954). Dr. Serle points out that between 1856 and 1901, 9\% of all legislation passed by the Assembly was vetoed in Council.
agricultural bonuses became the objects of contention. The potential divisions which continued to exist did not emerge into the open because the issues debated in this period of prosperity were mainly local ones.

Briefly, for this will be examined in much more detail in the course of the study itself, the main political events between 1889 and 1894 were as follows.

The election of 1889 returned the coalition to office with a comfortable majority which was maintained for eighteen months. The onset of the Depression, the government's awkward handling of the Great Strike, and the general accumulation of discontents which accompanied seven years in office enabled James Munro to oust Gillies, and form a more or less liberal Government. Munro governed for fifteen months, and then resigned for personal business reasons to allow his more able deputy, William Shields, to lead a government that included Berry as Treasurer. Not even his ability and experience was able to bridge the rapidly increasing gap between revenue and expenditure, and this Ministry was voted out of office in January 1893. In their place there appeared a conservative cabinet, led by Patterson and including several merchants and free traders in the most senior posts.

After eighteen months, it was clear that this government too had failed to redeem its promise to balance the budget, so that when it tried to bring down a Budget
which included some free-trade measures, the Opposition had only to find a suitable leader to move a successful motion of no confidence.

The man selected to lead the liberal party in 1894 - Deakin again having declined office for personal reasons - was George Turner. He had been a member of Parliament only since 1889, but in that short time had been Commissioner of Customs in both Munro's and Shiels' Ministries. He was a politician who impressed not by his eloquence or obvious brilliance, but by hard-working efficiency, his mastery of detail, and his clarity of exposition. This was the man who was to restore stability to Victorian politics, and was to preside while the colony's economy regained its equilibrium.

It is evident that Victoria's political history during these two decades can be divided into three phases. Throughout the first Victoria enjoyed stable government as a result of the coalition of the two major political parties. From 1890 to 1894 there were four Premiers in the colony within four politically unstable years. During the third phase, Turner's Liberal Ministry ruled continuously from 1894 to 1899.

Now, it is significant that for each of these political phases there is a corresponding economic phase. While the coalition government in Victoria was riding the crest of a wave of prosperity that appeared to contemporaries
to be lasting for ever. The Coalition then fell, just when the early signs of the Depression were becoming evident, and the colony experienced political instability until the worst of the crisis was passed. Turner’s election to the Premiership coincided with the beginning of the recovery.

Thus before continuing the more detailed examination of politics between 1889 and 1894, some examination of these three economic phases, and their consequent social effects, is called for.
C. Social and Economic Background.

The tone of Victorian society during the eighties was one of excitement, jubilation and optimism, which reached its peak in 1888. This was an age when men were borrowing more, spending more, building more, and were living more lavishly than ever before in the colony's history. The speech of the Governor, proroguing Parliament in 1888 gives some indication of the mood of the time. He said,

The prosperity of the country is greater than it has ever been. If there is some falling off in our mineral wealth, it is more than compensated by the growth of our manufactures and by the solid development of agriculture ... The revenue was never more abundant or more easily collected. 59

This was the year of the Centennial Exhibition, which was conceived to celebrate Australia's first hundred years and to boast of her development before the world. Significantly enough, Melbourne, although scarcely fifty years of age herself, was the site for the Exhibition, not Sydney. The Victorian Government spent £4 million on the project, inviting countries from all over the globe to participate. As Turner wrote,

To the untravelled Australian it seemed as if the eyes of the world were turned upon him, and he cheerfully anticipated making a display that would place Victoria high in the estimation of all mankind. 60

Of these days of opulence and extravagance, Ada Campbell wrote,

59. Speech printed in The Age Annual, 1888, p. 45
60. H. G. Turner, op. cit., p. 265.
It was high tide in the fortunes ... generally speaking, of the whole community. All in their degree were rich and lived lavishly; the upper classes seemed wholly given over to pleasure-making, and their appetite for social diversion was catered for as it never was before or since. 61

This was a decade of expansion and prosperity in every sector of the economy, and in every aspect of the community's life. The population increased by more than one quarter of a million, a high proportion of whom settled in 'Marvellous Melbourne' itself. By the end of the decade, Melbourne contained 43% of Victoria's total population, while another 9% lived in Ballarat, Bendigo or Geelong. 62 It was this influx of population into Victoria's capital which caused the construction of 40,000 new dwellings, an increase of 80% on the 1881 level. 63

The wealthy Victorians - or at least those who thought themselves wealthy - were ready to spend £20,000 on mansions in areas such as Kew or Camberwell, while even the poorest aimed at owning his own home in one of the rapidly expanding suburbs of Prahran, Richmond or South Melbourne. For men, who suddenly found themselves rich from the profits of one of the innumerable land companies that were springing up, licensed servants became a necessity. Armorial bearings were displayed

63. Census Report 1891, p.55. In 1891 Melbourne was the Largest city in the Southern Hemisphere.
by the nouveaux riches, each trying to outdo the next in the scale of his entertainments. 64

The prosperity that Victorians were enjoying, partly real and partly illusory, was dependent primarily on two factors. First there were the high prices commanded by her main exports, wool and wheat, and secondly and more importantly was the high level of capital inflow from Great Britain. For, during the decade 1880-1890, recent studies 65 have revealed that annual British overseas investment increased from £36m. to almost £100m. It is here that one finds the explanation for the boom of the eighties. Table I shows clearly the rapidly increasing levels of private and public investment, reaching a peak in 1888, and then falling off sharply.

It is against this background, of a boom economy stimulated by high export earnings and a high rate of capital inflow, that one must see the coalition governments of the eighties. The coalition was possible because one set of contentious questions had been solved, and the prosperity rendered it unnecessary to raise new ones. The political questions that were raised were sectional or geographical ones, as men strove for railway lines, agricultural bonuses or tax reductions. During these "good times" the Government had no need to make

64. H. G. Turner, op. cit., p.263.
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demands on the community; instead, they were in the position of being able to offer concessions. As Deakin wrote in a letter to Sir Charles Dilke, "This principle (land tax) and that of a graduated succession duty will be extended when we want money, but at present we are too prosperous to feel any need."66 As long as there was only a tale of general prosperity to tell, and the government was not trying to increase taxation, the electorates remained politically apathetic;67 and the coalition Ministry remained in power.

The political situation however quickly altered when the economic conditions changed. Just as the basic factor underlying the prosperity of the eighties was the high level of British investment in Victoria, likewise the sharp decline of that figure provides a starting point in explaining the depression of the next decade. Between 1891 and 1893, the total level of Investment in the colony fell from £10.29m. to £3.78m., largely because British investors became less willing and less able to lend.68

The most immediate effect of this decline in capital

66. Deakin Papers, Deakin to Dilke, May 1889.
67. The Census Report of 1891 enables us to compare the proportion of eligible voters who were actually registered to vote in 1881 and 1891.
   In 1881, 207,000 out of 213,000 eligible males were registered.
   In 1891, 258,000 out of 329,000 eligible males were registered.
68. See also E. A. Boosh, "Australia in the Depression, and the Recovery of the Nineties", Roneoed Paper. Dr. Boosh has shown that both the private and the public sectors were heavily dependent on British capital.
Imports may be seen in the unemployment figures for 1891. Of the 23,000 returned as unemployed, representing about 5% of the work-force, more than 7000 stated that they were normally employed in the building trade. It is not surprising that Turner wrote "By the beginning of 1891, a financial spectre began to haunt a large section of the community." By 1894 the spectre had become very real indeed. Only six years after the Centennial Exhibition, Nat Gould could write of Melbourne:

It was not only moderate-sized houses that were tenantless, but gentlemen's residences were closed, or were merely left in charge of a caretaker. In some instances there was no one in charge, and the once beautiful grounds, that were gay with flowers and echoed with the merry laugh of children, were neglected and solitary. ... I was told by a gentleman, well informed, that at this time there were over twenty thousand houses to let in and around Melbourne.

Within a few years recollections of the good times had been crowded out of men's minds by the collapse of the land companies, the bank crashes and the soup kitchens.

Primarily, it was the reluctance and inability of the British investors to continue investing in Victoria that gave rise to the Depression. However, a full explanation requires consideration of the way in which this investment capital had

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69. Unfortunately this is the only year for which there are accurate figures, as this was the Census year. One can only estimate the level of unemployment in 1893 and 1894 on the basis of the 1891 figure combined with qualitative evidence in the form of contemporary comments.


71. Quoted in J. Grant and G. Serle, op. cit., p. 212.
been employed. For, if it had been used with discretion, the decline in investment after 1891 would have been little worse than uncomfortable. It was because the investment in both sectors of the economy was spent so carelessly that the Depression was so severe. In the private sector, the capital had financed the urban land mortgage companies, the inevitable failure of which reinforced the contractionary the decline in investment. Similarly in the the capital was used mainly to finance 'political' railway lines. This progressively more difficult to interest bill increased steadily, to keep pace.

In the boom year of 1888, there was £9.1m. of private investment. In that same year, there were 433 new companies registered in Victoria, about half of which were recorded as finance companies dealing in 'land, property and investment.'

This was the greatest and most extravagant of a series of great and extravagant years, when every Victorian seemed to be flocking to Melbourne, and every Melbournite wanted to own his own home. This £9.1m. was used primarily to purchase blocks of land at inflated prices for speculative purposes, in anticipation of the ever-increasing demand for land.

Once, however, the banks adopted a dearer money policy, the bubble burst. The demand for land eased, and the large

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number of land companies suddenly found themselves holding
either long term assets or blocks of land worth only a fraction
of the price paid. Nevertheless, the end of the boom did not
mean immediate disaster for most of the companies. British
investors remained free with their money for a while longer,
and Australian export receipts were sound: for a time the
urban land companies managed to remain afloat. But gradually,
as the real estate market did not recover, the fraudulent
practices employed by some companies were revealed; and as
the London money market tightened many investors withdrew their
capital from the companies. The Australian banks, then, at
last realised that they could not afford to become more
involved with these companies, and so they refused them
further advances. Collapse now became imminent. Between
July 1891 and March 1892, says Boehm,

There were 21 failures in Melbourne of the
companies engaged in building and/or finance of
real estate transactions and which had accepted
deposits from the public. 73

In particular, most of the collapses occurred between November
1891 and March 1892, the period when, for private business
reasons, James Munro was obliged to resign, and his Ministry
underwent some reconstruction.

The failure of so many land companies, causing the
ruin of such eminent public figures as Sir Matthew Davies,
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and the Premier

73. R.A. Boehm, op.cit., p.19. The account of the Depression
that follows owes much to Dr. Boehm's analysis.
himself, had a general contractionary effect on Victoria’s economic activity by locking up deposits, and throwing suspicion on the colony’s business acumen and integrity. Finally, it had a serious effect on the stability of the colony’s banking system. The banks had become dangerously involved in those land companies, when they accepted the mortgage on much of the companies’ assets, assets which had become worthless, or were at least highly illiquid.

Dr. Boehm, in his treatment of the financial crisis of 1893, has pointed to three basic weaknesses in the banking system in the early 1890’s, which made a collapse almost inevitable. First, he says, largely as a result of the land and building boom, a considerable proportion of the banking business was tied up in highly illiquid mortgages. Secondly, their usual caution relaxed by their desire for quick returns, the banks had allowed their liquidity ratio to fall. The standard of banking practice was rather low, because few of the bankers themselves appeared to have much idea of the minimum ratio. Thirdly, in extending their credit in the early 90’s, the Australian banks did so by reckoning on their British deposits as the equivalent of their Australian ones.

Given this highly fragile structure, it remained only for the public to lose confidence in the banks and to withdraw

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74. Kimbo had founded two banks, and it was the failure of one of these, the Real Estate Bank, in 1891, that induced him to go to London as Agent-General. Sir Matthew Davies was linked with the Mercantile Bank of Australasia Ltd., which collapsed in 1891.
their deposits for the house of cards to collapse. When the mortgage companies began to collapse in 1891-2, the seeds of doubt were sown in the minds of many about the soundness of all of the colony's financial institutions. Gradually, as uncertainty became more widespread, more and more tried to withdraw their deposits. The result in early 1893 was unavoidable. In April and May of that year almost all the major banks were forced to close their doors.

The effect of the bank crash was to further the depression which had worsened in 1891. For several months trade was almost throughout the colony, as bank balances began to dwindle.

In office to cope with this grave crisis was the conservative Ministry lead by Patterson and G. Downe Carter. Hiding behind the outworn shibboleths, such as "the state ought to interfere as little as possible in private enterprise"; Patterson took the extraordinary step of declaring a five day bank holiday. Designed to put a check to the snow-balling panic, the moratorium had the opposite effect, and banks continued to close. Had the Victorian Government been able to handle the crisis, giving even an impression of confidence, then the shattering loss of confidence throughout the colony would not have been so great.

76. Between 6 April and 17 May 1894, 13 Banks suspended payment. Another nine remained open. Of the seven Australian banks whose head offices were in Melbourne, six closed their doors.

77. See Patterson's address to a Premier's Conference, in May 1893, Argus, 29 May 1893.
The main function of any late nineteenth century government, and certainly the Victorian one, was the provision of basic services for the community, such as railways, posts and telegraphs, police and judicial functions and defence. Finance for these services came from the railways which were sometimes profitable, customs and excise, land taxes and death duties and proceeds from land sales.\(^7\)

Whatever the ability of the various Ministries, they were certainly placed in an invidious situation. Every major source of revenue fell from the all-time high reached in 1889/90, as each of these revenue raisers was geared to the general level of economic activity. While careful governing was able to prune expenditure to keep pace with the declining revenue, there was one item of expenditure which rose inexorably. For the financial year 1889/90, expenses of the public debt amounted to £1.5m. out of a total expenditure of £9.6m. Six years later the debt required £1.8m. as interest payments, out of a total expenditure which had fallen to £6.5m.

Here lies the fundamental cause of that long series of budgetary deficits between 1890 and 1896 which, more than anything else, were responsible for the political instability of the period. It was the failure of three successive governments to balance their budgets which was largely responsible for their inability to remain in office, for governments thought

\(^7\) See Tables II and III.
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it was just as essential for them to produce balanced budgets as it was for any private enterprise.

It was with this first budgetary deficit in 1890/1 that there commenced the development in Victorian politics from the coalitions of the 1880's to the party politics of 1894 and after.

Until this time politics in Victoria had revolved around the problem of how to spend its buoyant revenues, so as to please the greatest possible number of electors. Once, however, the government was forced to cut down its expenditure to balance the budget, then Victorian politics became concerned with different sorts of issues. Now the government had to decide whether to increase revenue or decrease expenditure. If revenue were to be increased, they had to decide whether this should be through increased customs duties or direct taxation. The depression forced men also to think about their tariff policy, which had hitherto been accepted without question as a cause of their prosperity. These were the questions which the economic situation raised, and which became the stuff of the political struggle.

The manner in which members tried to answer these questions bore some relationship to their own economic and social position in society, and also that of their constituents. Both inside and outside the House, the political groupings of the eighties disintegrated, and the old ones of the seventies were re-established, based broadly on class
lines. This process occurred between late 1890, when the depression was setting in, and August 1894. By this latter date there were in Victoria two parties with fairly distinct images, each sharing a broad programme which attempted to answer the questions that had been raised by a new set of economic and social circumstances.

It is against this political, social and economic background that the following analysis of Victorian politics, 1889-1894, must be considered. The study deals with the changes in political groupings inside and outside Parliament, which were brought about mainly by the Depression.

In the period prior to that studied, there was an economic boom that has never been excelled in Australian history - a boom that was centred on Melbourne. Socially, the colony was exuberant, enjoying a standard of living equal to that anywhere else in the world. This prosperity tended to discourage sharp political issues, and so the coalition government was able to rule, keeping only the lightest rein on the galloping horse of affluence.

The purpose of this study is to examine the way in which this coalition type of government responded to the depression, and gave way to a political system similar to that which prevailed in the late seventies.
"Though the former party names still fall with wearisome iteration from the lips of every candidate in the present election, yet it would be impossible for a stranger to learn from their speeches the difference between Conservative and Liberals, Constitutionalists and Radicals.

The candidates themselves are careful to inform us, or otherwise no one could tell what colours they were wearing, so nearly are the colours alike in the race for seats in the new Parliament."

(The Australasia, 23 March 1889.)

"In Victoria, the Liberalism of the old days, of the old colonists, is a spent force; we play with its name, and glorify its shadow: it is dead, it has passed. The new generation care far less, for politics and are far less trained to cope with their difficulties. We are abandoned to cliques, coteries, the reign of accident or of domineering ability; principles are really extinct and we are governed by cries and catch-words."

(Alfred Deakin)
Chapter 2.

The Decline and Fall of a Government

1889 Election.

In March 1889 the thirteenth parliament expired, by the effluxion of time. Victoria had enjoyed six continuous years of peaceful government, during which time a substantial body of more or less progressive legislation had been enacted,\(^1\) unhampered by the party conflicts of the previous six years. To a large extent the predictions of Service and Berry in 1883 had been fulfilled, for the colony had benefited from the respite in political wrangling afforded by the coalition.

At first sight, the elections for the fourteenth Parliament seem remarkably simple. Basically, the electors were asked to decide between an experienced and successful Ministry, which had enjoyed a solid majority in the previous Parliament, and an Opposition, comprising a most heterogeneous group which lacked even a leader.\(^2\) The campaign was without fire,

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1. The main legislation passed by the Coalition included:
   - Payment of Members, which was finally secured.
   - Employer's Liability Bill.
   - Chinese Exclusion Bill
   - Local Option.

2. The leader of the Opposition during the 13th Parliament had been Tommy Bent, who assumed leadership of the 'party' after the defeat of Sir Bryan O'Loghlen in 1883. Bent announced in Feb. 1889 that he had resigned as leader of the Opposition, although he was in full accord with most members of the Opposition. *Age*, 25 Feb. 1889.
and the election itself hardly seemed to warrant attention, because the result for the Ministry was a foregone conclusion. However, below the surface there were a number of subsidiary issues, a consideration of which introduces several new dimensions into the contemporary political scene.

In an editorial a month before the election, the Age compiled a list of all the issues that had thus far been presented to the electors. In all, they numbered sixteen, and the most important of them were - coalition versus party government, the claims of the farmers versus intercolonial free trade, women's suffrage, and the extension of Protection. Although the debate between the Government and the Opposition was the most important, it was by no means the sole one, and certainly not the one most likely to arouse men's passions.

The campaign waged by the Ministry was not a single, centrally directed one led by the Premier, but comprised two more or less distinct campaigns. Even after six years of continuous government the two "parties", which had coalesced in 1863, had in no way lost their separate identities.

Six weeks before the election Deakin summoned a meeting of the twenty-six members of his liberal party, to discuss their election campaign, to draw up a platform and to elect a leader. The meeting unanimously elected Deakin as leader of the party, and agreed to remain in harness with the conservatives, as long as Gillies' policy speech contained

3. Age, 22 Feb. 1889
4. Age, 21 Feb. 1889
nothing objectionable to the liberals. Despite their willingness to be united with the conservatives, the meeting decided to contest the election separately. As Deakin said,

It is necessary ... to guard against the strength of the party being split up through a large number of liberal candidates being brought forward in any one electorate.

...There is some optimism that the number of liberal members would be increased at the election, so that they would then be justified in demanding increased representation of liberals in the cabinet.  

The meeting then nominated a seven man committee to draw up a platform for the party. (See Appendix II).

The platform that emerged from this meeting provides, in itself, some explanation of why few liberals objected to remaining in harness with the conservatives. If the conservatives were said to have become much more liberal, and Deakin claimed that this was the case in his speech to the meeting, then the liberals, in turn, had become much more conservative. The first plank, advocating Federation, was generally accepted by the candidates at the election, whatever their other political views, although few of them possessed the zeal of a Deakin for the cause. The third and fourth clause urged the preservation of the principle of protection and of the existing system of secular education; this underlined the changed tone of this liberal

5. By absenting themselves from this meeting, several liberals announced their resignation from the party, including G.W. Hall, journalist, and member for Shepparton and Euroa since 1880, and George Graham, farmer and member for Numurkah and Nathalia since 1883. They resigned in protest against the liberal party's refusal to support the stock tax.

programme compared with earlier ones, when protection, education, and constitutional reform were live issues. The next two clauses merely recommended concessions for specific interest groups. In all, then, only two of the Liberals' seven planks could have been described as radical: the second supporting the abolition of plural voting, and the seventh favouring the development of local government. The general statement of the party's aims likewise possessed none of the qualities of a manifesto—there was nothing likely to frighten or antagonise its conservative ally.

Its general end is to secure wise legislation in the interests of the community as a whole, coupled with administration that is vigorous and pure. Its leading principle is that of government by and for the people.

In a farewell address to his old Bacchus Marsh constituents, Deakin explained more fully his attitude to the existing political situation. He believed that a coalition government was more appropriate, at that time, than a party government, because there were no questions of principle outstanding. At times, he said, party politics were necessary, when there was a specific question at issue, such as the Reform Bill, which could be solved only by the two parties contending. Such a system, he said, could easily degenerate, as it had some years previously, when the colony suffered "a very painful experience." Any measure proposed by one side provoked the fiercest opposition from the other, so that by 1883, after ten years of party struggles, there were countless problems awaiting a solution.

8. Argus, 4 March 1889.
Since the formation of the Coalition, he said, there had been "years of fruitful work without strife." Therefore, as the leader of the liberal party, he could see no reason for separating from the conservatives, and forming a new government. On the important issues confronting the colony, such as allegiance to the Education Act, to the protective system of tariffs, and to Federation, the liberals and conservatives were in agreement. Thus, given the practical needs of the colony, in a time of great prosperity, Deakin could see no advantages to be derived from the Coalition. While stressing this, he clearly realised that there were still obvious differences between the parties. That he emphasized so strongly their similarities was, in itself, evidence of their distinctness. There were, Deakin admitted, a number of questions, such as plural voting, on which he differed from Gillies. The differences between the parties were, however, of potential rather than actual importance. They would not emerge until a new set of political questions were asked by men in a radically changed social and economic context. Deakin recognised this when he said that "sooner or later, this difference would reveal itself, and when it did, then would be the time to form a purely Liberal administration." 

9. Ibid.
Deakin's senior partner, Duncan Gillies,\(^{10}\) was concerned in his campaign speeches to demonstrate two things. First he wanted to show the benefits the colony had reaped during the previous six years' Coalition, and secondly he tried to convince the electorate that it would enjoy further blessings while his government remained in power.

Gillies challenged strongly suggestions that the time was ripe for a return to party government. Like Deakin, he ridiculed such a suggestion. The coalition government had functioned successfully for six years, and certainly, he said, his government had fulfilled its election promise of 1896. He admitted that the coalition would not always be the appropriate form of government, but until some specific issue arose to divide the parties then he could see no reason for abandoning it. As he said, immediately prior to the election,

> Party government would come inevitably, so soon as there was an important question upon which public men could not agree, but (I submit) that the time has not yet come.\(^{11}\)

Those persons raising the cry of party line, he said, "meant strife because strife appeared to be their only hope of getting above the waves."\(^{12}\)

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10. Duncan Gillies was born in Scotland in 1834, and arrived in Victoria in 1862. The son of a market gardener, Gillies entered Parliament as a miners' representative in 1889, and was a member continuously until 1894 when he became Agent-General in London. He became more conservative with age, in the eighties opposing one man one vote, much State intervention and being a free-trader. A self-made man, Gillies was a prosperous business man who had encouraged the introduction of capital into mining. During the fifties, he had been a fairly radical mining representative. For references to his early Parliamentary career see generally, C. Serle, *The Golden Age*.


For the rest, Gillies' appeal to the electors was a two-fold one. In the first place, he boasted of his record.

This Government has been in office three years, during that time it has brought no discredit upon this country. The honour, prestige and character of this colony stand as high now - higher perhaps - than they did when this Government took office.13

In the second place, his most recent Budget showed a surplus of £337,000.14 If returned he promised to abolish duties on tea, coffee, cocoa and kerosene; the "free breakfast table" was his most frequently used catch-cry.15

The elections were being held at an ideal time for the Government. The enormous budgetary surplus, which resulted from the booming economy, enabled Gillies to offer taxation reductions, not increases. Few entertained any doubts concerning the reality of the colony's prosperity. To most, the salutary days were, in fact, a mark of the government's virtues.

The campaign waged by the Opposition was considerably less formal and organised. There was no leader, no programme, and no attempt to establish an electoral organisation to prevent vote-splitting. What opposition to the Coalition there was,

14. Ibid.
15. Gillies' two main election addresses may be found in Argus, 12, and 14 March 1889.
16. An article in the English Statist predicting a land crash, and hard times, in late 1888 was indignantly refuted in the columns of the Age. The Age wrote, "It is hardly necessary to say that the prediction of a "tremendous crash" owing to the banks having over-lent on doubtful securities has no substantial foundation. Age, 16 January 1889."
emanated from individuals who were not, for a variety of reasons, prepared to support the Government. The successful candidates, in general, owed their election to their personal prestige in the constituency, and to the efforts of their own committees.

George Turner, for instance, contested the St. Kilda seat for the first time, after years of municipal service. He agreed with Deskin and Gillies that the Coalition had done well "to do away with party strife, at a time when political parties were closely divided." But he claimed, it had now outlived its usefulness. "After a few years" he said, "it became injurious, and Parliamentary government degenerated into mere caucus meetings and private arrangements." If returned, Turner would not support the Ministry, because he believed there was a need for a strong Opposition, and for a return to party government.

Similarly, James Munro who was assuming the role of leader of Opposition claimed he objected to the continuation of Coalition Government, although he could suggest no very clear reasons why. Munro agreed that there were "no sharply defined

17. George Turner was born in Melbourne in 1851, and was admitted to the bar in 1881. After a brief career in St. Kilda local politics, he entered the House in 1839, and remained a member until 1961, when he became the Commonwealth's first Treasurer. He joined the Munro and Shields' Ministry, and gained wide respect throughout Parliament as a capable and cautious "man of business."


19. James Munro was born in Scotland in 1832 and arrived in Victoria in 1853. He was secretary to the Victorian Permanent Building Society for 17 years until the 80's, when he became a millionaire by founding several banks - which all collapsed leaving him bankrupt. He was a Member almost continuously from 1874 to 1892 when he retired as Premier after sixteen months in office, and became Agent General in London.
questions to divide politics, although he had called a meeting a fortnight before of all liberals in the colony who were dissatisfied with the coalition. In moving a motion at that meeting to recommend the formation of a committee to compose a platform, he said,

For the last three years, the Liberals have been simply hewers of wood, and drawers of water, and the humility with which they have accepted that position has surprised me.

Both Munro and Turner objected strongly to the continuation of the Coalition, without having either specific grievances against the Government, or very concrete proposals for reform. Both believed, for a number of vague and indefinable reasons, a liberal ministry would be greatly preferable to the Coalition, and that, consequently, liberals ought to combine to support such a government.

This impression of confusion in Victorian politics is further accentuated by Patterson's behaviour. In his election address he explained that he had been in opposition to the ministry during the previous session, "because they lacked any clearly defined principles." He had, however, changed his mind, because in the interim they had acquired such principles. For

22. Argus, 15 March 1889.
instance, he said, the Coalition Government was obviously concerned to enforce decent Parliamentary procedure, and to establish Australian unity. One can only speculate whether he knew that a few weeks after the election he was to be admitted to the Cabinet, as Minister for Customs.

Amongst the candidates who opposed the Coalition there was indeed very little in common, as most had their own personal reasons for challenging the Government. From Radicals such as

23. W. A. Trenwith was a Collingwood bootmaker, and President of the Trades Hall Council. He was the leader of the Victorian Labour party from 1892 until 1900, when he joined the 2nd Turner Ministry.

24. John Woods, born 1832, had been a radical on the goldfields, and was one of the miners appointed to see the commissioner for a reduction of the license to 10/-; he also took part in the move to enfranchise the miners. He was first elected to Parliament in 1859, and was one of the most radical members of Berry's 2nd Ministry. Of Woods, Denkin wrote, that he was a Chartist by training, "to whom restraints of any kind were obnoxious."

25. John McIntyre, born Glasgow 1832, was active in the "unlock the banks" campaign. He was mayor of Bendigo 1863-8, and was chairman of a Bendigo mining Board. He was to lead the Conservative party from 1885-8, - the only leader in two decades to have extensive pastoral connections. He had been a member of Parliament since 1877.

26. Robert Burrowes, born Canada 1827, came to Victoria during the gold rushes, and was a miner for a while. He became a member of the Bendigo Council, and engaged in various mercantile pursuits, being, in 1889, chairman of a number of companies. He had been a member of most Parliaments since 1865, and held office under O'Loghlen.
Some, like O'Loghlen, Bent, and Burrowes, opposed the ministry as members of the previous ministry formed by O'Loghlen in 1881. Others, like Trentham and Maloney, opposed it because it contained conservatives, while others still, like L. L. Smith, were intriguers and opportunists.

Thus Members and candidates contesting the 1889 election could assume one of two different attitudes. They could, like most, support a successful government during a period of prosperity, and climb aboard the "band-wagon"; alternatively, they could, as did a minority, for a variety of reasons, contest the election, opposed to the government.

To a considerable number of candidates, however, many of them supported by a powerful electoral organization, this was not the question at issue in the election. J. B. Patterson, for example, said to his Castlemaine electors,

"The real question of policy at present concerns intercolonial relations and the stock tax. To say that there is no question which now divides public opinion is misleading." 29

27. William Maloney was member for West Melbourne from 1892-1904, when he entered Federal politics. He was a surgeon, with great sympathy for the working class, and later joined the labor party. One of the most outspoken radicals in the Legislative Assembly, he consistently supported minimum wages and the rights of the unionists.

28. L. L. Smith was born in London in 1830, and arrived in Melbourne in 1852. He was a quack doctor, who advertised his patent medicines, and performed illegal operations. He was also prominent in the Chamber of Manufacturers, and was concerned with Victoria's wine industry. Member of Parliament intermittently from 1859 to 1894, he had no obvious political principles.

The organisation that was mustering support for the stock tax was the Victorian Farmers' Protective Association. The purpose of this Association was explained by its President at its general meeting. The farmers were combining, he said, to secure for themselves the benefits of protection, which had been enjoyed for many years by the city interests. Numerous delegations had waited upon the government, he said, asking for increased duties, only to be told that they were not an organised body, and so could not be considered. Now, Davis said, they were organized, and they would demonstrate this by returning to Parliament a majority of members pledged to vote for an increase in the stock tax. The Association consisted of branches throughout the colony, which were to select candidates for the election, aid in their election campaigns, and, in short, "throw aside all considerations, save the welfare of the farming community."

Specifically, the platform of the Association, and of the ninety-two candidates who subsequently pledged themselves to it, included an increase in the stock tax, and in the tax on imported cereals and dairy produce, a system of light railways to develop the resources of the colony, and a reduction in railway freights. (See Appendix III)

That this demand of the farmers was a live issue in the election is evidenced by the fact that it was the second question that most candidates discussed. Gillies and Deskin, in their

30. Age, 7 Feb. 1889.
32. Age, 23 March 1889.
speeches, objected to the stock tax because it was likely to hinder the cause of Australian unity. J.B. Patterson too agreed with this view. "To expose the cause of Australian unity and also an increased stock tax is an impossibility." 33 James Munro took exactly the opposite point of view. To him, the electors were confronted with a choice between Australian unity and Victorian protection, and, as he said, "unless the farmers gained protection, there would be no protection at all in Victoria." 34

The outstanding feature of the stock tax question was that it cut directly across the lines of the conflict between the government and the opposition. City and gold-field candidates tended to oppose the tax, whereas country areas, though divided, favoured it. As an Argus editorial said,

> Although the stock tax is spoken of as the issue of this election, there are in fact only twenty-six contests in ninety-five seats. In the rest all candidates are in agreement on the question. 35

It remained to be seen, when Parliament met, which of the two factors exerted greatest pressure on those members, pledged to the stock tax, who were also supporters of a Ministry which opposed it. Such were the paradoxes involved in the politics of the Coalition.

Two other electoral organisations which exerted some influence on the course of the elections were connected with one

33. Argus, 14 March 1899.
34. Argus, 13 March 1899.
35. Argus, 26 March 1899.
or both parties which comprised the committee of the liberal party which he the six-man committee to rems campaign, to manage it in the liberal candidates, to appoint a secretary, and hire committee communicated with liberals throughout the colony, ensuring that no constituency would be lost to the party through vote-splitting. They avoided intervening directly in the electorate unless the liberals concerned were unable to reach agreement amongst themselves. While they never opposed any conservative colleagues, it was their aim to increase their membership of the House. Strengthened they could increase their representation in the Ministry, by the recently vacated position of Commissioner of Customs.

When planning the campaign, aimed at bringing forward between twenty and thirty new candidates besides the sitting Members. Giving support to the Ministry as a whole, and composed of men outside the House, was an organisation called the Coalition Committee. This consisted of a group of prominent Melbourne business men, who had first combined in 1886 at a meeting held signi-

37. Age, 5 March 1889.
38. The Commissioner of Customs, Walker, had resigned, and his place had yet to be filled. The member eventually selected for the position was J. B. Patterson, hitherto one of the leaders of the Opposition. Deakin hoped to have the position filled with a liberal, making their strength 5, in a Cabinet containing 3 M's, L.A.
39. Age, 21 Feb 1889.
sufficently at the Stock Exchange. At that meeting it had been unanimously decided "that the Coalition had provided the best government for years, and no serious measures might be taken to ensure that they were returned to power." 40

Three years later, the same group of men met again, just six weeks before the election, 41 and they decided to perform once more their work of 1886, although they would be unable to work actively until after the nominations had been received, when the committee would, if appealed to, "use its influence to prevent more than a sufficient number of Ministerial supporters being in the field." The Committee proclaimed its determination "to uphold the principle of Australian unity"; thus it said it "will be opposed to any candidate who favors an increase of border duties." Twice, at least, the Committee intervened in the elections. In the St. Kilda contest, with the assistance of James Service, it persuaded Robert Murray Smith to retire in favour of another candidate with prior claims, W. Jenkins, 42 and, in South Yarra, it induced Edward Langton to retire in favour of the sitting member, Joseph Harris. 43

40. Argus, St. February 1886.
41. Argus, 13 February 1889.
42. Argus, 20, 23 March 1889.
43. Argus, 30 March 1889.
The only organisation which played a significant role in the election was the Trades Hall Council, and its importance was potential rather than actual. After a controversy dating from at least October 1885, the conservative members of the Council had finally been forced to give way on the subject of the Council's role in politics. Until 1889, it had been orthodoxy amongst members that the trade unions had no part to play in the political processes. A motion to that effect had been passed three years earlier, postponing the movement for reform. Part of that motion read,

"They consider that it would be extremely unwise and outside of its functions to pass any resolution declaring themselves in favour of any particular persons or party for Parliamentary honours."

Urged on by unions such as the Shop Employees' Union, and guided by men like Murphy, Tremith, and Bromley, who had contested the 1886 election, the Council agreed that "the Parliamentary Committee be recommended to take steps to call the attention of candidates for Parliament to several important questions." The movement finally bore fruit a week later, when the Council authorised a programme (See Appendix IV) with the explanation "That the foregoing form the platform of the Council, and that all workmen be urged to vote for those candidates who definitely state their intention to support it." Although the Council would still not agree to support particular candidates, the announcement of a

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44. Minutes of the Trades Hall Council, 24 Nov. 1885. (Afterwards T.H.C. Minutes)


46. [Recording date, not provided in the document].
platform represented the breakdown of their splendid isolation from the sordid world of politics. Formally independent of the Council, several of its members contested the election. Trentham was successful in Richmond, and became the first working class member of the Legislative Assembly.

Besides the organisations already considered, there was a large number of others which concerned themselves in a greater or lesser extent with the election. As an Argus editorial said, "This general election is remarkable for the number of leagues formed to promote particular fade or interests." While these organisations certainly provide a measure of the range of men's concerns during the period, politically they were largely insignificant. There is no evidence that any one of these societies, with the exception of the Temperance bodies, engaged the attention of more than a minority, or that they were of general political importance. And while the Temperance movement had a considerable amount of support, and was largely responsible for the Local Option legislation, it was not much interested in other political questions. For these reasons, then, these numerous other organisations may be ignored, as being largely insignificant in the contemporary political scene.

47. The T.H.C. members who contested the election were W.A. Trentham (Richmond), W.E. Murphy (North Melbourne)

48. The second, if one includes Charles Jardine Don.

49. Argus, 18 March 1889.

50. Included in this list of organisations were the National Scripture Education League
United Temperance Political Council of Victoria
Shop Employees' Union
North Melbourne Reform Association
Home Protection Party
One group in North Melbourne even met to endorse a candidate to represent the "athletic interest in Parliament."
In terms of the two main issues over which the election was fought, the Gillies-Deakin Government emerged triumphant. In a House of ninety-five members, the Coalition had secured a majority of twenty-seven, yielding the promise of a long life ahead. The farmers’ efforts, on the other hand, had not been crowned with such success: in the final analysis, they could find only thirty-five votes for the stock tax, and many of these thirty-five were supporters of the Ministry. Thus, it seemed as if the Premier could anticipate a fairly trouble-free Parliament.
The most notable characteristic of the 1889 election had been the fact that there was little discernible difference between the parties striving for election. The Ministerialists, as a whole, all agreed, were not markedly different from Oppositionists, as a whole. Certainly there were issues on which candidates were divided, most notably the stock tax, but these divisions did not coincide with the Ministry versus Opposition division. All conceded that there were still differences between the liberals and the conservatives, but, in these prosperous days, there were few who wanted to break the six year truce between them; few could see any need to make these potential differences explicit.

This general pattern did not alter during the first session of the new Parliament. The Ministry was challenged only once, and then the motion was delivered by a Ministerial supporter, Allan McLean, without the co-operation or assistance of the Opposition leader, James Munro. The occasion of the motion was the failure of the Government to include the stock tax in the Budget. Otherwise the Ministry was unchallenged, it and prorogued Parliament in November, seeming to be as powerful as ever.

51. Allan McLean was born in Scotland in 1840 and arrived in Victoria two years later. His father, a grazier, was able to assist him/establish his own Stock and Station agency which was very successful. After being president of his local Shire, McLean was first elected to Parliament in 1880, and was a member for twenty years. He was a member of the Munro, Shiel, and Turner Ministries before becoming Premier himself in 1899.
The country party's policy during the session followed
the farmers' election campaign. Their overt claim for protection
for stock and produce was that, as city manufacturers and
producers enjoyed the benefits of tariff barriers, they, as
farmers, were entitled to this too. In fact, there was a strong
undercurrent of rural jealousy, perhaps even fear, at the rapid
development and prosperity of Melbourne during the previous
decade. In addition, the demands for the tax may be seen as
one more expression of that city-country division which had
long been a fairly constant feature of Australian politics. It
is difficult, however, to provide any very clear-cut explanation
for the movement, because the squatters and farmers were fairly
evenly divided on the question.52

Very early in the session, three groups began to
organise themselves. First, the Opposition met to elect a
leader, and to decide on their policy for the session.

Secondly, the members of the country party met, also to discuss
their tactics for the session.54 The outcome of this meeting
was a "pledge to ask for increased duties on cereals, dairy
produce, live stock and dead meat imported into Victoria." The

52. Supporting McLean's motion in favour of stock tax were
graziers and pastoralists such as J. McIntyre, S.T. Staughton,
and J.F. Higlett. Voting against the motion, were graziers
like G.M. Officer, C.L. Forrest, J.F. Lehien. It would,
thus, be very difficult to justify an economic class
explanation for the stock tax movement.

53. Argus, 5 June 1889.
54. Age, 7 June 1889.
third group to make some attempts at organisation was the mining representatives, who combined to try to force the Government into selecting a committee to enquire into the mining industry.

During the session, only one of these - that of the farmers - offered a challenge to the Government. When Gillies announced his Budget the country party met, and decided to move an amendment requesting increased duties on stock and cereal. Spurred on by opportunist like O’Loghlen and Woods, the Country Party, led by McLean, joined forces with the Opposition, to do battle with the Government on the question of protection for the farmers.

From the beginning, however, the farmers’ challenge was weakened by the absence of Munro, who realised that the initiative had been taken from his hand, so that, if a new government were to be formed, he realised he would have little say in its composition. Nor was there unity within the country party itself. When the pressure was applied, and men who were pledged to support the Ministry as well as the stock tax were asked to chose, not all decided the same way.

Groom, Ministerial and stock tax supporter, member for West Gippsland, provides an example of a man in this dilemma. In a speech during the no-confidence debate he explained his attitude.

55. Argus, 14 June 1889.
56. The miners were quickly placated by Gillies’ promise to appoint a Royal Commission into Mining, and the Opposition, as will be seen, were unable to find an issue on which to challenge the Government.
57. See series of meetings reported in Age, 7, 8, 15 August 1889.
58. Age, 20 August 1889.
59. V.P.D., Vol.61, Pg.1096-1097.
He had been a member of the country party, and had attended its early meetings, having been returned to the House as a supporter of the stock tax. However, he felt that McLean’s motion was being used by certain members of the Opposition, like Trensmith and Collard Smith, for their own ends, and that the gains from passing the motion would be outweighed by the losses. In a revealing letter to McLean, Groom wrote,

I also consider that the proposals of the present government are too valuable to be lightly thrown away, and upon going into the question with a number of my most highly valued constituents, who are themselves supporters of the stock tax, I find we all agree in this opinion, that, as we are getting many valuable considerations from this government, it would be folly to displace them for the sake of the one thing they deny us.

Had all members of the country party, as well as all members of the Opposition, voted for McLean’s motion, it would have been passed by 3 votes; in fact, it was able to muster a total of only about thirty. The fact that the Ministry was able to overcome this threat with such ease was an indication of the lack of opposition inside the House — and outside it — even after such a long period in office. A number of members of the Opposition actually crossed the floor to show their opposition to this tax.

60. William Collard Smith first entered the House in 1861, and reached the height of his power during the Berry period. He was a mining representative, and generally regarded as fairly radical.


62. Opponents of the Coalition who supported the Government on this motion included M. Butterley, R. Richardson, R. Burrowes, W. Beazley, G. Bennett, and seven others. All had been elected as opponents of the stock tax.
This melting of support for the stock tax occurred even though a meeting of the Victorian Farmers' Protective Association coincided with McLean's motion of no confidence. 63 The purpose of the meeting was to protest against the Budget, to provide a show of public support for the country party's claims, and possibly to exert some pressure on members elected under the auspices of the Association. A second meeting ten days later thanked those members who voted for McLean's motion, and condemned those who "ratted." 64 On the platform at the first meeting were four members from Opposition benches, Messrs. Trenwith, W. T. Carter, Hall, Graham and Baker, who endorsed the meeting's complaint that the government was trying to break the alliance between the protectionists, farmers, and manufacturers, and also its demand for protection for the farmer.

There were two main reasons why the House continued to support the Ministry. First, Gillies had brought down a budget which provided for a surplus of £1.7 m. Secondly, the Government was in the process of drawing up a Railway Construction Bill, to plan the colony's railway development for the following ten years. 65 This first factor meant that, as far as the efficiency of the government was concerned, there was little

63. Age, 20 August 1889.
64. Age, 30 August 1889.
The three specifically mentioned as having "ratted" were Cheetham, Duncan and Groos.
65. The drawing up of a Railway Construction Bill was part of Gillies' election programme announced in March. It was necessary because most of the lines recommended by the last plan in 1883 had been completed.
justification for attacking the Ministry, and certainly less likelihood of bringing it down. Furthermore, by continuing to support, the Government, members hoped to enjoy a share of the surplus in the form of local government, mining, or agricultural grants. The importance of the second factor was that most members - at least those who hoped to secure a railway for their electorate - were tempted to wait until the bill was announced before criticising the Ministry. During the late nineteenth century, country areas were completely dependent on railways for their development, and consequently representatives of rural electorates tended to become rather servile in their attitude to Governments planning a decade of the colony's railway development. For these reasons, then, once the stock tax challenge was defeated, the Ministry could confidently expect to remain in office for the duration of the session.

There were, however, two developments later in the year which represented danger signs for the Government. First, during the latter part of the session, the opposition began to set its house in order, "closing up its ranks for eventualities," as the Age suggested. One Ministerialist crossed the floor, while a second, Dixon, said that he would follow suit if the Government did not pursue a directly protectionist policy. Furthermore, the Opposition appointed C. L. Hail, their Whip, and his salary was to be paid by millionaire Munro and one or two others. Nevertheless, this increased organisation of the Opposition would be in vain unless the Ministry made a mistake, or lost their hold on Members.

66. Age, 6 Sept. 1889.
67. Ibid.
The first suggestion that this had happened was made towards the end of the year, when acute observers were experiencing their first doubts about the general solidity of their prosperity. In November 1889, the *Argus* published a series of articles asserting that the financial statements of the Treasurer, Gillies, were not completely accurate. Because of an unorthodox system of book-keeping, claimed the Ministry's staunchest ally amongst the press, the surplus really amounted to only £0.5 m. The articles then hastened to add that, while this was worthy of consideration and attention, it was not a matter for alarm.

The *Age*, however, increasingly prepared to criticise the Government, adopted a more hostile attitude. An editorial in late November attacked the Ministry because "it has not prevented the improper expenditure of money; it has not preserved the non-political nature of the administration, and it has not secured sound financing." A second and more forthright editorial still said,

"Unless we are very much mistaken, six months' contact with their constituents will produce such an effect upon members of the Ministerial following that, when Parliament re-assembles, there will be a disposition on their part, not to blindly obey the orders of the Premier, but rather to let him know that the colony says to him through them,

'Be officer of mine no more'"

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68. *Argus*, 13 December 1889.
69. *Age*, 29 Nov. 1889.
70. *Age*, 27 Nov. 1889.
Professor C. H. Pearson, liberal Minister for Education, was also rather uneasy. It worried him that the "disposition to use foreign capital has increased faster than the population or wealth." Pearson had been alarmed when, at the end of the session, Gillies had had to call in an extra £1 m., and when the Railway Commissioners had announced that their estimate had fallen short by £1.68m. While assuring his English readers that Australian securities deserved a high price, he said, "A few of us are a little uneasy, for we would have a smaller surplus and a less permanent debt."

These revelations concerning the unreliable nature of the Government's financial statements coincided with the gradual growth of mistrust in the private land and building societies. The first major shock occurred in December, with the suspension of the Premier Permanent Building Association of Melbourne. It is significant that the first important manifestation of the depression occurred almost simultaneously with the first significant and influential criticism of the Government. Gillies clearly regarded the challenge as important, because he called a special meeting, after Parliament had been prorogued, to answer the charges, and, as the Argus commented, "It is unusual for a Premier to address his constituency in recess, except in a crisis." There was, then, every indication that the second session would not prove as easy-going as the first.

71. Pearson was the author of a series of unsigned articles on colonial politics in the Speaker, 1889-1893. See The Speaker, 8 Feb. 1890.
72. The Premier Permanent Building Association of Melbourne suspended on 20 Dec. 1889. Subsequent enquiries revealed that members of Parliament J. Nimmo, J.L. Dow had been involved in fraudulent transactions with the Association.
73. Argus, 27 Dec. 1889.
1890 Session

The absence of firm lines of division between parties that was evident during the elections and session of 1889 was never more obvious than in the following year. Victorian politics were never more dominated by local and sectional interests, and less affected by ideas or principles, than in 1890, the year of the Railway Construction Bill. Never could it have been more truly said, "Principles are really extinct, and we are governed by cries and catch-words." 74

During the recess, the Government had been constantly subject to the snipings of the Age, so that, when the new session opened, it had suffered a certain loss of prestige. Deakin was not confident that his Ministry would last long when he wrote to Sir Charles Dilke,

The Government may fall this year or next. Personally I shall not regret it much, and unless a Federal Parliament is created I have frequent inclinations to retire from the field. 75

Thus when the second session commenced, in May 1890, there was widespread expectation of more excitement than in the previous years. The suspicion that the Ministry had lost support during the recess was realised, for, when the Members took up their positions, the Opposition had gained three from the Ministerial benches.

74. This was Deakin's appraisal of the political scene, two years later. Quoted in W. Murdoch, Op. Cit., P174.
75. Deakin to Sir Charles Dilke, 31 March 1890.
76. Of the three who had crossed the floor, Calvert had responded to the pressure of his wheat-growing electorate, which claimed that the Government had not given them a share of their bonuses. (Age, 21 May 1890.) Armstrong claimed he crossed because the Irrigation proposals of the Government meant the development of the north at the expense of the south. Furthermore, he had been misled by the Treasurer's statement. (Argus, 22 May 1890.)

At the beginning of the session, the Govt. had 57 supporters to 38.
The main item on the agenda for the session was, as Gillies had promised, the Railway Construction Bill. Attention was to be focused on this Bill for nearly four months, at the expense of all other public business. An index of the importance of the Bill to Members may be observed from the fact that, in response to Gillies' request for suggested routes, a total of six thousand miles had been requested. The cost of these lines would have amounted to between £40m and £50m. The Bill was of vital importance to most members of the House. Each realised that it would greatly strengthen his own Parliamentary position, and bring added prosperity to his constituency, if he could secure favourable treatment from the Bill, while Gillies himself must have realised the importance of pleasing at least a majority of the House to retain their support. The presentation of the Railway Construction Bill was one of the rare occasions when the attention of the whole colony was focused on the Legislative Assembly; for many, this was the culmination of years of waiting, of organising, and of lobbying. Within the Assembly the Bill destroyed previous political alliances, and created completely new ones, these lived vigorously for a few months, and then vanished, when the need for them had passed.

Aware of the growing discontent with the Government, Munro decided to probe the weaknesses of the Ministerialists early, by attacking the Governor's speech. Encouraged and

77. This figure is calculated on the basis of the cost of the lines Gillies did recommend in his Bill.
78. There had been a large number of local railway societies formed in the past two years and most of them had sent delegations to the Premier during the recess.
informed by *Age* editorials, the leader of the Opposition concentrated his attack on the financial administration of the Government, and on Gillies' mismanagement of the Railways. He accused Gillies' 1889 Budget of having been a "pure sham", which had seriously weakened the colony's credit, while he claimed that the management of the railways was a "disgrace to the colony." The Coalition was weakened by the fact that the Premier, having assumed responsibility for the key portfolios of the Treasury, Railways, and Mines, had so increased his personal liability that most attacks on the government were directed at him.

Short of bringing the Government down, Munro's motion could not have been more successful. The *Age* made the debate an occasion to direct a series of frontal attacks at the Ministry for its financial and railway policies. A number of liberal supporters of the Government took the opportunity of thoroughly criticising the Ministry, without actually crossing the floor. Finally, a second motion, directly attacking the Government, was delivered - this time by Ministerialists C. F. Taylor and E.J. Dixon. Although the Coalition survived, it was evident that its hold on a number of its supporters was loosening.

Ministerialists such as McLean and Thomas Smith made damaging attacks on the government, and said they would not attempt to unseat it until they had seen the Railway Bill, and the Board of Works Bill. Kirton went even further than this.

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80. *V. P. D.* Vol 63 P 143.
82. Kirton first entered politics in 1889, as "representative of a large and influential centre, which has at all times been on the side of liberalism." Kirton himself was not always as consistent as his electorate, West Ballarat.
and predicted that, "in a few months time", a strong liberal administration would be formed, which he would support; but, until then, he declared he would vote for the Government. 63. J. W. Dunn, 64 in seconding the Address-in-Reply, had said, too, that he preferred to support a liberal Ministry, but would support the Coalition while it continued to pass good legislation. 65

These were four of the members who, six months later, crossed the floor, to support Dunro's no-confidence motion. These were the ones the opposition leader had in mind when, in his summary of the debate, he spoke of those who continued to support the Ministry in anticipation of favours about to be received.

I say the Government are going to have a large majority — I know they are; but honourable members who are going to vote for them — I am stating what is within my own personal knowledge — have decided that they are going to vote for the Government because they are afraid that if they do not they won't get their railways. 66

Soon after the conclusion of the no-confidence debate Gillies introduced into the House his long awaited Railway Construction Bill. In a carefully prepared speech, the Premier presented it to the House for inspection. 67 Its main provision was for the construction of 617 miles, less than a sixth of the total mileage demanded. Almost as soon as he finished his speech, the storm broke that was to rage for four months, wrest control of the House from the Premier, and finally help sweep him from office.

63. [Note: Missing reference]
64. J. W. Dunn, enjoyed a brief parliamentary career between 1903-04, during which time he managed to support every government formed, be represented ballot last.
65. [Note: Missing reference]
66. [Note: Missing reference]
67. [Note: Missing reference]
The shocked and resentful response of the House to the Bill led to the organisation, by four of its most prominent members, of a Railway Caucus, consisting of some forty members, all of whom were dissatisfied with the Bill. The caucus appointed a twelve-man committee to discuss with Gillies the possibility of adding some extra lines to the Bill. The discontent felt in the House mirrored that felt throughout the colony. In most rural constituencies protest meetings were held, to voice disapproval of the 'injustices' contained within the Bill. As a result of pressure from the Caucus, and from the electorate, Gillies consented to the addition of another 400 miles of line to those already proposed.

The Age, always eager to criticise the Premier, attacked his Railway Bill strongly.

By a remarkable coincidence, Gillies, in making a selection of lines, discovered that the majority of the most urgently needed ran through the districts represented by members who happened to be sitting on Ministerial benches.

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88. C. M. Officer was born in Tasmania in 1829. Studied medicine in Scotland for some years, then took over a squatting property in the Wimmera. Contested the 1880 election in opposition to the Berryites, and had represented Dundas since then.

89. W. Shields was born in Ireland in 1849 and came to Victoria in 1854. After a brilliant academic career he went to the Bar, entering Parliament in 1880. He opposed the Coalition during the 80's.

90. J. W. Taverner was born in Melbourne in 1852. Went to Kerang in 1864, and in time became senior partner in a firm of stock and station agents. After being very prominent in local affairs for many years, he agreed to stand for Parliament in 1889, against the Coalition. Throughout his parliamentary career he was prominent in the affairs of the country party.

91. *Age*, 23 June 1890.

92. *Age*, 19 June 1890.
A later criticism accused the government of being too concerned to placate constituencies, without much regard for the general interests of the country.

After two weeks spent trying to reduce the demands to the 400 miles allowed, the Caucus decided that many of the problems would be solved if less expensive, light lines were constructed, and that it would attempt to persuade the Government of this, even though both the Government and the Railway Commissioner had, in the past, refused to have anything to do with light lines.

When the revised Railway Construction Bill emerged, on 15 July, it contained plans for 1,116.31 miles of railways, at an estimated cost of £9.4 m. The plans, if carried out, would have increased Victoria's railway mileage by 45%.

For the next two months the whole attention of Parliament was focused on the Railway Bill, and when it was not the actual subject for debate in the House the Speaker was hard put to find a quorum, the absentees being engaged in lobbying.

Even when a comparatively important measure, like the Metropolitan Board of Works Bill, was being considered, interest was at a low ebb. The Age commented on this.

It is indicative of the demoralisation of Parliament that the railway mania has caused, that so important a measure as the Metropolitan Board of Works Bill has been dealt with in the Assembly by an average, less than a score of members.

93. Age, 1 July 1890.
94. Obviously, if the lines were cheaper, many more could be built. The Government, advised by the Railway Commissioners, objected to the light lines on the grounds that they were uneconomical in the long run. In pressing for light lines, the Caucus was obviously influenced by country party members, who supported the construction of as many lines as possible.
95. Age, 15 July 1890.
96. Age, 11 July 1890.
Even the Budget occasioned little debate, Munro's motion of no-confidence being negatived on voices.

The Railway Caucus was still not prepared to accept the Bill, believing that light lines would enable far more to be constructed, and perhaps solve the problem revealed by the Budget—that of the railway deficit. Gillies tried to blackmail the House when he announced that he would refuse to consider the appointment of a Joint Parliamentary Committee on Railways until the Second Reading of his Railway Construction Bill was passed. Another fortnight's debate revealed that the House was hopelessly divided on the Bill, and on the question of the type of lines to be constructed. The problems were worsened when it was suggested that the whole question of the relative merits of various lines be re-opened. As a result of this, Gillies moved in late August, that a select committee of the House be appointed to take expert evidence on the cost of lines in the Railway Construction Bill, and, if necessary, the cost of other lines surveyed by the Railways Department.

The Government hoped that this Committee would be able to take over the general functions of a Public Works Committee, whereas the Opposition wanted to limit its field to the Railway Construction Bill, being prepared perhaps to appoint a general Public Works Committee later.

By the end of September, the Railway Construction Bill had been laid aside, and the matter of future railway development was entrusted to the committee on public works. The day of large-scale political jobbery, at least as far as railways were concerned, was over. In future, railways would be undertaken singly, and no Government would be able to commit its resources up to 10 years in advance.
The dog-fight which had been witnessed for the previous three months over the Railway Bill was a watershed in the political history of these two decades. Localism and parochialism then reached their highest point, for at no stage, in the next ten years at least, were politicians as overtly pre-occupied with possible material gains from the Government, and so obviously prepared to sell their support for a railway. The fall of the Coalition must be seen in the context of a House, which had long been anticipating generous railway provision, being sorely disappointed by the Government's failure to satisfy their wants. This was surely the politics of democracy at their worst!

Just when the Government had openly antagonised many of its supporters, and, in fact, definitely lost the support of some of them, the Great Strike broke out. When the Ship Officers' union applied for affiliation with the Trades Hall Council the ship-owners threatened to dismiss them. The officers promptly resigned. This precipitated an Australia-wide strike, lasting for periods ranging from a fortnight to two months, over the issue of the precise rights of trade unions.99

The Gillies' Government attempted to preserve its neutrality and, in general, was successful, except for James

98. The Government had antagonised J. W. Fawcett by trying to exclude him from the Standing Committee for Railways, while F. C. Mason said he was quite prepared to abandon the Ministry, because of this breach of faith with regard to the Railway Bill.
Patterson, who was unable to resist the temptation to antagonize the unionists. He said he "would be ashamed to belong to a government which would not stand by free labour." In a letter quoted by O'Loghlen to the House, Patterson had written,

It had unfortunately to be admitted that the unions, by their late proceedings, had endeavoured to create a reign of terror - to strike terror in fact to the hearts of every working man who was not a unionist and who wished to provide for himself and family. If they were successful, the trade unions would be masters of the situation, and the result to the colony would be most disastrous.

Two other factors encouraged the tendency to identify the Government with the capitalists in the Strike. First Deakin's action in ordering out the militia to preserve public order was criticised for being premature, and secondly, radicals inside and outside Parliament were outraged by Col. Price's instructions to his troops in handling crowds, "Fire low, and lay them out." Several times during the Strike, radicals like Beamley and O'Loghlen castigated the Government for its handling of the dispute.

Thus, just when Gillies was deprived of the Railway Bill with which to cajole his supporters, the Strike occurred raising in the House questions such as freedom of contract.

100. V. P. D., Vol. 64. Pp 1652-9.
101. Ibid. P 1656.
102. T. H. C. Minutes, 2 Sept. 1890.
104. V. P. D., Vol. 64 Pp 1655-7.
When members of the government, such as Patterson, were unable to conceal where their sympathies lay, many members found a further reason for deposing the Coalition.

To a government dependent upon the support of representatives of urban working class electorates, the development of such an image was certain to prove fatal. There were at least ten such members originally elected as Ministerialists whose crossing the floor in October 1890 meant Gillies' downfall.

Then, in the middle of October, Gillies' weakness in the House was again demonstrated. He tried to appoint to the Standing Committee on Railways four Ministerialists who were not approved by the rest of his 'supporters.' This opposition forced him to alter his nominations. Likewise, when he rejected one of the Opposition's nominations to the Committee, J. Tavener, on the grounds of youth, he was again forced to concede.

Consequently, when Munro moved a motion of no-confidence in the Government, at the end of October, the Age could rightly say,

All the discontent and disaffection which has been felt towards the Government for the past month culminated in the motion of no confidence by Munro.

The burden of Munro's attack had not altered greatly since June. He agreed that Gillies' fake system of book-keeping,

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105. In Sept. 1890, there were amongst the Ministerial ranks the members for the following working class electorates. Ballarat West, Ballarat East, Clunes and Allandale, Maryborough East Bourke Borough, Prahran, Emerald Hill, Collingwood, and Fitzroy (2). All supported Munro's motion of no confidence in Gillies.

106. Age, 15 October 1890.

107. Age, 29 October 1890.
combined with his spending of the surplus, in the form of political bribes, had led the colony into a dangerous position. His second arrow was also directed at Gillies - for his continued failure to reform the Railways Department. 108

The Age supported Munro’s allegations to the hilt. It bemoaned Victoria’s misfortune in being inflicted with a Treasurer “who knows nothing of finance, and who... made the gross blunder of mistaking a paper surplus for a real one.” Since May, said an editorial, thirteen separate changes had been made to the cabinet - a sure sign of uncertainty. 109

As the Age had been first to attack the Government, it, fittingly enough, provided an epitaph.

There is obviously no reason for regretting the disappearance of the Gillies-Deakin Ministry from the scene, and if the combination about to be formed does not give complete satisfaction, we can always console ourselves with the reflection that it cannot do worse than the Administration which preceded it. 110

Inside the House, the end had come very swiftly for the Government. Munro had introduced his motion on Tuesday evening, and, in little more than 48 hours, the Gillies-Deakin Ministry was found “no longer to enjoy the confidence of Parliament,” and the Governor was sending for James Munro to form a new Cabinet.

There was little debate on the motion because Munro had assured himself of a majority before issuing his challenge. This is evident from two speeches delivered after the Coalition

108. V. P. D., Vol. 65 Pp 2227-2233
109. Age, 20, 30 October 1890.
110. Ibid., 1 Nov. 1890.
had fallen. In asking the House for an adjournment to enable
the new Government to go to the poll, McColl said,

I desire to say that previous to the vote that
was taken last week, and by which the late
government was put out of office, an arrangement
was come to between the gentleman who is now
Premier and a number of members of this House
as to the constitution of the incoming government. 111

Taking part in the same debate, Kirton said,

I have been for some time associated with several
liberal members sitting in the Ministerial corners,
and a distinct understanding was arrived at that
we should support Munro if we go on assuming
that he would undertake to form a liberal
government. An assurance to that effect was
given to us, and in accordance with our promise,
we supported the motion of no confidence. 112

In late October, Munro arranged to meet some twenty
or so liberal supporters of the Coalition, seeking their support.
About twelve of them agreed to cross the floor if he would
undertake to form a wholly liberal government. Gillies' and
Deakin's prediction, that the day would come when the coalition
form of government would no longer be appropriate, had come true,
probably rather more suddenly than they had anticipated.

Of the fifty-five votes that were cast in favour of
Munro's motion by members elected in March 1889, thirty-three
came from members who had been elected to oppose the Coalition.
Their reasons for opposition to the Government therefore require
no explanation. 113

111. V.P.D., Vol. 65. P 2299-2300.
112. Ibid., p 2304.
113. Only one member John Brock, member for Benalla and Yarrawonga,
crossed the floor from the Opposition benches to support
the Government.
Munro's remaining twenty-two supporters had all crossed the floor, sixteen of them since June 1890. The outstanding characteristic of the twenty-two members is that most of them justifiably labelled themselves 'liberals', and believed that such a term was meaningful.

Of the twenty-two who had crossed the floor, ten had belonged to the previous Parliament, and so may have been invited to the meeting, called by Deakin, of his liberal supporters prior to the 1889 election. Eight of these ten had, in fact, attended that meeting. This suggests that, amongst the more senior supporters of the Coalition, the liberals were much more likely to abandon the Government than were the conservatives. The criterion that is being used here to recognise liberals is that which contemporaries such as Deakin acknowledged.

Of the remaining twelve who had not belonged to the previous Parliament, at least five, and possibly seven, might also be described as 'liberals.' Here the criteria being used are the sorts of electorates they represented, the sorts of meetings they attended, as well as their expressed attitude to such contemporary questions as the rights of unionists, plural voting, minimum wage and labor, income taxation and protection. Using these as tests of late nineteenth century liberalism in Victoria, as well as contemporary classifications such as Deakin's, it is possible to assert that most members who crossed the floor to bring about the downfall of the Coalition were liberals. Those who crossed the floor, but could not be
described as liberals, were either conservatives like Taylor, or independents.\footnote{114}

Finally, it is worth noting that of the sixteen who crossed the floor between June and October 1890, five became members of the new cabinet. The significance of this becomes clear only when compared with the corresponding number in Turner's cabinet four years later.

The downfall of the Coalition Government signifies the beginning of a change in the nature of Victorian politics - from a system based on coalitions to one based on 'parties'. The development, which commenced when mainly liberal members crossed the floor to oppose Gillies, was to continue for the next four years. By 1894, the distinction between Government and Opposition would coincide closely with a distinction between a 'liberal party' and a 'conservative party' in Parliament. The division between these two parties would in its turn be evident by reference to types of electorate and broad social classes represented, and by difference attitudes to specific questions such as protection, direct taxation, and the rights of unionists.

Such a development had, in October 1890, just begun. It was to take several years for the allegiance of the Coalition

\footnote{114. The analysis of members into these three groups will be refined in the course of this study. It is possible however, on the basis of this small amount of admittedly crude analysis, to establish certain trends. Fourteen or fifteen who crossed the floor were liberals, and another four or five were 'independents' who, as will be seen later in this study, appeared more concerned to gain office than to follow a consistent policy.}
era to fade; conservatives such as McIntyre and Bent would continue to support the liberal Munro until they realised that their natural allies were clustered around Gillies. Likewise, prominent Liberals Deakin and Pearson would remain loyal to their old Ministry for several years. However, issues had already been raised, and more would emerge, that would force these men, and others, to cross the floor in search of a more congenial atmosphere, and that would set party against party, almost as violently as in the late seventies.
"The country is breaking up into two definite and strong parties - the Labour Party, which is bitter and determined and thoroughly organised; and the party of Property, which is gradually being welded into shape by the necessity for concerted action."

(Charles Pearson)

"We are on the verge of an unparalleled contest in Victorian history. For many years, politics have been stagnated by coalition, but that coalition has now been broken up, so that there will be a change in the next Parliament. It is for the Labor Party to bring about that desirable condition."

(J. Winter Age, 24 March 1892.)
Chapter 3

The Munro and Shields Ministry

A Munro's Government

In nearly all that has to do with the monetary interests of Victoria, the year 1891 has been a year of unrest, culminating in a species of crisis. The broad features of the year have been a falling off in borrowings from England both by the State and private institutions, owing to the disfavour with which Australian finance has been regarded; a fall in stock exchange values - partly from exhaustion of speculation - diminution of profits, curtailment of trade and so of profits, resulting from industrial depression, and from a lessening of the aggregate income of the people. 1

So wrote the Argus financial editor, on the last day of that mournful year. The political editor of the same paper would have been equally justified in writing of the year's politics in a similarly depressed vein.

From the time that Munro first formed his Ministry, until he resigned fifteen months later in an effort to salvage something from his bankrupt enterprises, 2 the Premier failed to command a majority in Parliament. As soon as he announced his cabinet Munro was attacked by a number of his so-called "supporters", for including several members popularly regarded as conservatives. McColl, who had crossed the floor to support

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1. Argus, 31 December 1891.
2. Munro, regarded as a millionaire in 1888, lost almost his entire fortune within four years.
3. J. H. McColl, member for Gunning since 1886, when he entered Parliament as a supporter of the Coalition, was a legal manager from Sandhurst. He was originally regarded as a liberal, but was forced by the crisis of the nineties to adopt a more conservative position. He was a member of Patterson and McLachlan's Ministry in the nineties.
Munro's motion, claimed that the new Ministry could not be anything more than a stop-gap Government, because of the poor selection of members. He accused Munro of breaking faith with his liberal supporters because he had failed to take advantage of the opportunity to form a Liberal Government. 4 So strongly was this dissatisfaction felt that the Age wrote,

The discontent existing among the disappointed office seekers in the rats' corner, to which utterance was given directly the new Government was sworn in, is taking the form of an intrigue with the direct Opposition to oust the Government even at the eleventh hour; but the leader of the Opposition has plainly indicated that he will have nothing to do with such fickle politicians and moreover realises that it would be a false move on his part to defeat the Government at the present juncture, when a dissolution would readily be granted to the Ministers. 5

Professor Pearson, admittedly writing with the bias of a deposed Minister, interpreted the situation similarly.

The discontent of the Liberals who deserted Gillies in order to replace a Coalition Government by a Liberal Government has proved stronger than expected. It has rested only with Mr. Gillies to carry a vote of want of confidence in the Ministry that replaced his own less than two months ago. 6

This would almost certainly not happen, said Pearson, for three reasons. First, the country was opposed to frequent changes of government. Secondly, he would be unable to form a potentially strong Ministry. Thirdly, he was more friendly

4. V. P. D., Vol. 65 P 2355.
5. Age, 16 December 1890.
6. The Speaker, 7 February 1891.
towards the Ministry than to the Members who "ratted".

This general dissatisfaction which Munro engendered from the outset seems chiefly due to one factor. Most of those who crossed the floor were anxious to see a return to "party government". Yet it was plainly impossible to achieve this in the space of a few days, as the core of the Ministerialists and of the Opposition, comprised members who had adopted their position in response to the system of coalition Ministries. While Munro's following was predominantly "liberal", there were, nevertheless, "liberals" opposing and "conservatives" supporting him. Furthermore, these policies and practices of the Coalition Ministry that Munro had indicted, involve questions purely of efficiency, and not of principle. Thus while Munro's Ministry marked the beginning of a return to a "two party" system of government, it was to be several years before such a system was fully established.

In his indictment of the Coalition, Munro emphasized two main points. In the first place, he attacked it for borrowing money recklessly, and spending it carelessly. Secondly, he accused it of having mismanaged the railways. The new Premier's positive proposals were derived from these criticisms. The financial maladministration, he said, called for a "financial reform, in which expenditure must be kept within the bounds of income". The chaos in the Railways Department called for "railway reform", involving separate railway accounts and increased ministerial responsibility.

7. V. P. D., Vol. 65 P 2232.
8. Age, 14 November 1890.
Railway reform, initiated by one of the more capable members of the Ministry, William Shields, was quickly carried out. The general aim of the new railway policy was to restore to the Minister full control over railway policy. In 1883, the Service Ministry had created a Board of three Railway Commissioners, who were to take responsibility for the railways, and manage them almost independently of the Government. This legislation had been an attempt to lessen the degree of political influence which, when Tommy Bent was Minister, had become alarmingly high. By 1890, however, it was felt that the pendulum had swung the other way: the Commissioners appeared to be subject in no way to Ministerial control, and were, at the same time, reporting an annual loss.

Shields summarised his railway policy when, in introducing the 1891 Railway Bill, he said,

> From the preamble to the last clause, the thread of one continuous purpose runs through it - to put a curb on the spendthrift, to apply to a rule, which is practically arbitrary and wholly autocratic, those constitutional checks and counterpoises, in the interests of the State, which distinguish responsible government from absolute rule. 11

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9. V. P. D., Vol. 43 P 103.

10. Tommy Bent was born in N.S.W. in 1838, the son of a contractor, who later became a market gardener. Bent received little formal education, and at 21 acquired his own market garden. He was an active member, and later President, of the Moorabbin Shire Council during the sixties, and entered Parliament in 1871. He was a member almost continuously until 1907, serving under Service, O'Loughlin and Irvine before becoming Premier himself. He was involved in the land boom and lost his considerable fortune in the crash. In general, he can be classified as a "conservative-opportunist", who never hesitated to accept the spoils of office.

11. V. P. D., Vol. 66 P 532.
This railway legislation was the most constructive and beneficial achievement of Munro's Government, and its principles have since been imitated many times by Governments wanting to compromise between the requirements of managerial freedom and public accountability. While the Railway Act was mainly an attempt to remedy the serious financial situation in that department, it was based on principles that could be called distinctly "liberal". Shiels emphasized the importance of the bill in that it provided democratic control of the largest State department; by contrast, Gillies opposed the bill, claiming that increased efficiency and incorruptibility accompanied a semi-independent Commission. To Shiels, the crucial thing was that there should be public control of the spending of public money. To Gillies, what mattered was that the money be spent wisely - and that, he thought, was best achieved by railway experts, not politicians. It will be readily recognized that Shiels' position, demanding popular control of public money, was decidedly more "liberal" than Gillies'. The former Premier's lack of trust in the processes of democratic government stamped his position as clearly

13. *V. P. D.*, Vol. 66 P 517. Shiels said, "Our object is to substitute constitutional and responsible government ... for a system of administration practically absolute, wholly irresponsible, and, in the last resort, wielded by one man.
"conservative".

With only one other exception, however, Munro's platform was not informed by any theory of government, liberal or otherwise. Broadly, Munro's attack on the Coalition emphasized its lack of success, not its illiberal principles. With the exception of an Electoral Reform Bill, which was to contain the abolition of plural voting, and women's suffrage, the new Premier promised only a balanced budget, and a smaller railway deficit. Consequently, when he was finally discarded fifteen months later, it was because he had made certain promises which were obviously unfulfilled.

The weakness of the Munro Ministry, despite the complete absence of any serious criticism from the Opposition, was demonstrated by one incident late in the 1891 Parliament. When the Premier introduced his new Electoral Bill, he was immediately forced to abandon the clause establishing female suffrage. Almost to a man, the House believed that the "physical incapacity of women for the duties of public life" made it impossible for them to enjoy the vote. The remainder of the bill, however,

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15. The terms "liberal" and "conservative" are used here, not to connote any precise political programme but to suggest a direction or habit of thought. The two words refer to the two extremes of a left-right continuum against which most members can be classified. It remains to be seen, in terms of specific political issues, what distinguished the liberal left from the conservative right. See also the extract quoted from Robert MacIver, on page 2/5.


17. It was one of Munro's most serious charges against the Coalition that Gillies' surplus of £87,000 for 1890 was in effect, a deficit of £577,050, because the Treasurer regarded as assets payments not due until the following year.

18. *Argus*, 5 October 1891.
abolishing plural voting passed unscathed through the House. When the Minister for Defence, Sir Frederick Sargood, introduced the bill into the Council, he caused a Ministerial crisis by indicating that neither he nor any of the other Ministers in the House would vote for their Government's bill. Consequently, the bill was easily defeated.

The radical members of the Assembly then attacked the Government for its weakness in permitting its own measure to be so treated. When Munro requested the Councillors to accept the bill they resigned. Other Government supporters in the lower house immediately berated Munro for being so easily manipulated by the Trades Hall Council members. The resultant Ministerial caucus finally decided that the resignations ought not to be accepted. The Opposition, with the fate of the Ministry resting in its hands, agreed not to attack it while there remained the chance of worth-while legislation being passed.

Thus, by the end of the 1891 session, it was generally recognised that Munro's term of office had almost concluded. His budget had announced a deficit of £797,443, and recent revenue returns had shown the position to be deteriorating. Munro, however, showed little awareness of this, when in a speech towards the end of the session, he claimed that the

20. Argus, 16 October 1891.
21. Argus, 16 November 1891.
colony had emerged from the hard times. Deakin, however, in
a letter to Sir Charles Dilke wrote,

The present administration cannot survive. I go
back to the Bar in February and propose to put my
profession in first place for the next three or
four years. I was offered the leadership of a new
coalition and would have organised a strong Liberal
party on certain lines, independently, but as far
as I can gauge public feeling, there will be little
stability in our politics for some time to come. 24

At the same time Pearson was writing,

The last three months have been almost uneventful
in politics ... the unparalleled depression has
helped to make the Opposition timid. There is a
feeling that any change of Ministry would unsettle
the country and prevent a restoration of confidence.
Thus mumbo has lasted on, though a vote of want of
confidence might almost certainly have been carried
by a comprehensive majority. 25

The most significant political event of the year
occurred, partly in response to the failure of the Strike,
partly in response to the onset of the Depression, and partly
as the culmination of a six-year development within the Trades
Hall Council. When the Chief Secretary died, leaving the
Collingwood electorate vacant, the Trades Hall Council decided
to endorse one of their number, to contest the seat. 26 The labour
candidate, John Hancock, secretary of the Typographical Union,
campaigned vigorously for two weeks, and was rewarded with a
majority of 500 at the by-election. 27 This success stimulated

27. The result of the by-election was J. Hancock, 1692; E. Williams
1154; W.C. Poll 1121; G.A. Maxwell 443
the Council to call a meeting of representatives of all working class organisations in the colony in May 1891, to establish the Parliamentary Political League. The P.P.L., endorsed by the Trades Hall Council in June 1891, set out to establish branches in all the Metropolitan electorates, and in a few country ones, in preparation for the forthcoming general election.

The challenge issued by the P.P.L. did not remain long unanswered. Within two months, a second organisation sprang into being, with its attention focused on the next election. In early August, a group of prominent Melbourne businessmen, led by a merchant and member for East Bourke, Robert Harper, formed the National Association. Its purpose was stated by one of its sponsors, John Cooke, who said,

Organisation must be met by organisation, and the platform of this association which has been very carefully prepared, was such as to commend itself to every person desiring to maintain the well-being of the colonies.

The general aims of the Association were explicitly stated in the preamble to its constitution.

"Inasmuch as the political prospect in Victoria demands that all who are interested in the welfare of the colony should sink minor differences and unite to maintain law, order and good government, and secure fair legislation; and inasmuch as the

28. The convention that created the P.P.L. was attended by representatives of the Melbourne, Bendigo, Ballarat and Geelong central union organisations, as well as the A.S.U., A.A.A.,... Social Democratic League. See Report of Convention of Trades and Labor Bodies of Victoria.

29. Within the next six months branches of the P.P.L. were formed in about 40 of the 84 electorates - mostly in metropolitan and mining areas.

30. Age, 7 Aug. 1891.

31. Ibid.
majority of electors are not organised, or represented by any form of political association, while around them class organisations are being constituted to their detriment and to the injury of the best interests and credit of the colony; it is therefore deemed expedient at this juncture to form the National Association for the purpose of supporting a national party.32

The formation of the National Association was clearly an attempt to organise and consolidate the conservative elements in the community, in reaction to working class activity. A brief analysis of the prominent members of the Association demonstrates their conservative interests. Robert Harper, fifty year old Scotsman, had engaged in mercantile pursuits since arriving in Melbourne in 1856. He was a member of the Chamber of Commerce an office bearer in the Presbyterian Church, and was one of the most conservative members of the House. The chairman of the Association was James MacDougall, a wine and spirit merchant, who had been a member of the Coalition Committee. J. M. Bruce, wholesaler and president of the Coalition Committee in 1886, was another supporter of the Association.33

With the Munro Government slowly fading out of existence, two political organisations had been formed which were to be of considerable significance in the 1892 election, and which indicated the polarisation that was taking place in Victorian politics. The days of coalition politics were certainly over when Pearson could write,

32. Age, 4 July 1891.
33. Ibid., for a list of the office bearers and organisers of the association.
"I hear it freely said that conservatives and liberals will have to lay aside their differences and oppose a solid phalanx to the labor party. It is true that party feeling is not very strong just now, and if we had anything like the organisation that prevails in American parties, it would be easy to elect SAFE MEN for every constituency. There is however scarcely a vestige of party discipline... The seats liable to capture by the new party were roughly estimated at 35 in a House of 95, although there are no more than 20-25 likely seats."  

The next election was not likely to be as quiet an affair as the previous one, with lines like these being drawn.

34. The Speaker, 8 August 1891.
1892 Election.

We have seen how, in the 1889 election, political groupings seemed fluid and amorphous; a circumstance to be explained chiefly by reference to the economic prosperity, which caused attention to the riveted not on any single issue, but rather on a range of sectional and local questions. In 1889 there had been, according to the Age, at least seventeen different questions being disputed by the various candidates. But, by March 1892, the economic situation had altered markedly. Victoria was, by this time, approaching the depth of the depression, and no section of the community could escape the effects of severe unemployment, the decline in investment, and the worsening Budgetary deficit. The effects of this economic crisis were, by then, also becoming apparent in politics.

That general consensus of opinion throughout the electorates which had facilitated the seven years of coalition had been destroyed after 1890. Events had occurred, and issues had been raised, which shattered the old unanimity. The strike and the economic crisis raised questions which created fundamental differences between the extremely conservative and the extremely radical. It was the conflict between these two groups, organised into the National Association and the Progressive Political League, that gave the 1892 election its novelty. Although their influence did not extent beyond Melbourne, these two organisations represented the two extremes of the political spectrum, and most members could be classified by reference to one or other position.
Superficially, the 1892 election bore a strong resemblance to that of 1889. In neither, for instance, was there a hard fought contest between the Government and the Opposition. The charges that the Gillies Opposition could have levelled against the Government were deprived of their sting by the reconstruction of the Ministry. Munro resigned from politics, and became Agent-General in London, succeeding Berry. In his place William Shiels became Premier, and, soon after the elections, Berry became Treasurer. Furthermore, the Ministers from the Legislative Council were replaced. The Government which contested the election was radically different from that which had made all the mistakes during the previous year, thus it was not obliged to defend that Government's policies. Shiels was fortunate that the legislation for which he was personally responsible, the Railways Management Act, was highly regarded in the colony, especially by the all important David Syme.35

The Shiels Ministry was also aided by the fact that Duncan Gillies remained leader of the Opposition and alternative Premier. This weakened the opposition case, because he was generally believed to be one of those responsible for the crisis of 1890-1, and few were prepared to follow him into office again.36

35. Age, 13 Jan 1892.
36. This is substantiated by events during the 1892 session. Only when Gillies resigned as leader of the Opposition were members of the Ministerial corner prepared to cross the floor to support a motion of no-confidence.
In addition, in conservative circles there was the fear that the defeat of the Government would indicate to London that the Colony lacked political stability, and the already reduced flow of investment would be further diminished.  

For these reasons, then, and because many conservatives were more anxious to keep the Trades Hall candidates out of Parliament than to oust the Ministry, which was, after all, composed of professional men and men of property, Shiel's Government did not have to fight for its existence during the 1892 election campaign.  

In the course of his main Ministerial address, Shiel's said that "the rot had set in" during the Gillies - Deakin Government, as a result of their financial and railway administration. As a result of those mistakes, he said, the prime duty of his government was "to restore confidence, and to provide work and wages for the thousands without them." In detail, he would reduce the extent of government borrowing, he would make the railways self-supporting, and, by more economical management of the public service, he would keep expenditure down to the limits imposed by revenue. In addition, he would re-introduce the 2d. postage, impose a heavy stock tax, and also impose a form of direct taxation which would probably be an income tax. Finally, he said, although an opponent of plural voting, he...
would make no effort to force through Parliament one-man-one-vote legislation, because it would involve a dissolution which would be injurious to the colony at the present moment.

Despite Munro's ineffective efforts as Premier, very few members who had originally supported his Ministry had changed their minds by March 1892. A majority of candidates accepted Shiels' programme, and even those who identified themselves as opponents of the Ministry did not seem very concerned to challenge them.

The Opposition were about as disorganised and chaotic during this election as had been the opposition three years before. Gillies called a meeting of his supporters several weeks before the elections to formulate policy. After some discussion by the dozen or so present, mostly the conservative followers of Gillies - it was decided that each man must

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39. An interesting exception was E. J. Dixon, Frahren auctioneer, who crossed the floor to oust Gillies in 1890 because of his financial policy. Dixon however abandoned Munro's Ministry because of its dalliance with the Labor party. In his election speech, Dixon said, "The Labor leaders have done more to produce the present depression than all other circumstances combined."

40. Age, 24 Feb. 1892.

41. The election programme of Oppositionists like W. Madden, J. Harris and C. L. Forrest were obviously aimed more at the P.P.L. than at the Ministry.

42. Age, 26 March 1892.

43. Those present at the meeting called by Gillies were Deakin, Wrixon, Anderson, Derham, Shackell, Gordon, Zox, Craven, Staughton, Madden, Leven, Ferguson.
formulate his own policy, as there was some difference of opinion among them. It was also announced to the meeting that Deakin would cease to act as co-leader of the Opposition. He would henceforth continue to sit on the Opposition side of the House, but it would be as a private, independent member.

Gillies' attack on the Ministry was a two-fold one. In the first place, he accused them of having defeated the Coalition fraudulently. Munro, he said, frightened members into crossing the floor by reminding them of the dissolution that might follow a close vote. Thus the Government support was deceptively powerful. Furthermore, he said, Munro's attack on the Coalition had been unjust. It was not Gillies' financial and railway maladministration that proved the Coalition's undoing; rather was it "the action of the Government pursuing law and order" in the face of the strikers.43 Secondly, said Gillies, Shiels' policy relied too much on taxation to bridge the widening gulf between revenue and expenditure. Income taxation, which Shiels had threatened, was a "vexatious and inquisitional" measure. A more certain method of eliminating the deficit seemed to Gillies to lie in the reduction of expenditure on public works and in the civil service.

We have seen earlier that, in 1889, Gillies mainly discussed practical, political measures, such as railway construction and tax reductions. Similarly, the Opposition, then, could express itself only in the same terms. By 1892, however,

43. Age, 26 March 1892.
a new set of questions had become politically relevant — largely in response to the Depression. With an increasing deficit, the Government was forced to consider whether taxation or decreased spending was the appropriate means of bridging the gap. Shiels believed that new revenue should be found even, if necessary, by recourse to income taxation. Shiels' reaction to the crisis was clearly liberal; he preferred to attack property by increased taxation, rather than reduce the services provided by the State. By contrast, Gillies' policies were clearly those of a conservative; he justified the use of the troops against the strikers, blamed the Depression on the unionists, and then preferred, as an economic remedy, retrenchment to the taxing of property. In the contemporary English setting, doubtless both would have been regarded as Liberals; in Victoria, however, only Shiels was regarded in this way.

It would be an exaggeration to interpret the election as contested by a 'liberal' ministry and a 'conservative' Opposition. Deakin was still a member of the Opposition, while men such as McIntyre, T. Langdon and L. L. Smith supported Shiels. Nevertheless, the terms 'liberal' and 'conservatives' do have some meaning as descriptive words in 1892, which meaning they lacked three years before.

44. It is worthwhile noting again that Deakin had ceased to act as co-leader of the Opposition, although the reasons for this undoubtedly lie in his personal life.
45. T. Langdon, member for Kerang, was born in Somerset in 1833, and arrived in Victoria in 1853. After mining for several years he farmed for a while, and then established his own wheat and produce business. He had been a member almost continuously since 1880.
There had arisen new political and economic problems to which politicians reacted in ways that may best be described as either 'liberal' or 'conservative'. Most candidates could be assessed as broadly 'liberal' or broadly 'conservative' in 1892, unlike the candidates three years before although not all liberals supported Shiels, nor all conservatives Gillies.

Because party lines still remained somewhat blurred, and because the ministry was effectively an untried one, the main issue raised during the election campaign was not related to the Ministry versus Opposition conflict. The question that candidates felt most obliged to answer concerned the incursion of trade unionists into politics, and the extent to which unionist activity during the previous two years was responsible for the existing crisis. It was on the labor party, weak and inoffensive as it was, that the main political conflict of the 1892 election was focused, and this bore on the Ministry - Opposition conflict only indirectly.

The attitude of Patterson, an Opposition front-bencher, to the labor party was typical of the large body of conservatives. He criticised Shiels' programme where it resembled that of the P.P.L., and the Ministry itself for seeming to be in cahoots with the Trades Hall. He expressed his main political fears and pre-occupations in an extended syllogism, "one man one vote equals equal electorates equals obliteration of the country equals ascendancy of the Trades Hall equals farewell to confidence at home." Patterson was obviously more intent on

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46. Age, 6 April, 1892.
reducing the political influence of the Trades Hall than on
defeating the Ministry.

During its first five months existence the P.P.L. formed branches with ten to seventy members in about thirty-five of the eighty-four Victorian constituencies - the majority of them being within the Melbourne suburban area. The central executive, dominated by prominent members of the Trades Hall Council, exercised loose control over the branches, and could, though rarely did, veto nominations submitted by the branches. Apart from this, the branches were fairly independent, having to finance their own activities. Likewise, the endorsed candidates were fairly independent of the branches. They were expected to accept the platform of the League, but no pledge was demanded, and no provision was made to deal with 'labor' candidates who voted against the platform. There was an instance of this during the fifteenth Parliament when the endorsed P.P.L. member for Williamstown voted against Shiel, and supported the conservative Patterson Ministry. No action could be taken against Carter until the next election, when the labor organisation endorsed another candidate, who subsequently won the seat.

The P.P.L. candidates were a heterogeneous group, only a few of them being genuinely working class men. In many cases,

47. Thomas Smith, P.P.L. candidate for Emerald Hill, said that although he accepted almost every plank of the league, he refused to “give himself to any party.” When asked by a T. H. officer to sign certain regulation forms Smith refused. He claimed that even Trenwith had adopted this independent stand, on the grounds that “his reputation was enough.” Age, 26 March 1892.
the P.P.L. was clearly unable to find suitable candidates, so they merely endorsed either the sitting member, if he was radical, or else a candidate who was already in the field. At Emerald Hill, for instance, it was the sitting member, a manufacturer, Thomas Smith, who became the endorsed candidate of the P.P.L. In Port Melbourne, the League endorsed P. M. Salmon, who had opposed the sitting member F. T. Derham in 1889.

It has been argued of the New South Wales Labor Party, by historians such as Professor Nairn, that it was based on principles, and that it worked through organisations, which were novel. He has also said that "the Labor Electoral League was not preceded by members of parliament who were laborites." 48

Neither of these statements could be made of the 'party,' such as it was, in Victoria. The central executive of the P.P.L. exercised almost no control over the endorsed candidates, nor over their members once elected. The authority exercised by the central executive would not seem to have been any greater than that enjoyed by, say, the Coalition Committee in 1889, and certainly not as great as that of the National Reform League in the seventies. Nor were the labor candidates in 1892 men who had suddenly become aware of their political vocation in life, or who had received a 'call' to politics: a large number of them had, in fact, either been members of the previous Parliament, such as Maloney, Trenwith, Beazley and Smith, or else had contested the election - such were Derham and Bromley.

The P.P.L. was the result of the gradual development of an idea of a parliamentary labor party - an idea which was first voiced in the early eighties. Several meetings of the Inter Colonial Trade Union Congress had espoused the idea, and throughout the colonies it gradually gained favour amongst the rank-and-file unionists, some of whom stood for Parliament before their central organisations fully approved. Then the final assurance of payment of members provided the necessary means, and the failure of the strike the final spark, which rendered possible, finally, the political organisation of the working classes.

Certainly the Age did not believe that the P.P.L. was any radical innovation. Some seemed to look upon its members as a group of liberals anxiously tending the interests of the working class just as supporters of the temperance party were liberals looking after another particular interest.

Two men whose enthusiasm was partly responsible for the Trades Hall Council entering the political field were candidates in the election. One, Harwood, organiser of the Prahran branch of the Progressive Political League, one time president of the Anti-Chinese League, and secretary of the Furniture Manufacturers Society, was a candidate for the Prahran

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49. Second Inter Colonial Trade Union Congress, Report Melbourne 1884.
50. Payment had been first won by Berry but his legislation was only of a temporary nature, and the measure was not placed permanently upon the Statute Books until 1896.
51. Age, 18 January 1892, wrote "We don't object to the working classes having direct representatives in Parliament if they wish to. But they must be careful their candidates are not advocates of violent or ill considered measures."
constituency. It was evident from his election address that the failure of the strike was the crucial fact in his political life. It was that which was fresh in his memory, and which he used as a whetstone on which to sharpen his political knife. In an election speech he said that only working class men could represent labor adequately in Parliament - the need for which representation had been proved by the maritime strike.

Had there been a dozen labor members in Parliament, Colonel Price would never have ordered his troops to, "Fire low and lay them out." 52

The next Parliament, he said, must provide for the unemployed, abolish plural voting, and abolish the property qualifications for the Upper House. In addition, it must legalise the eight-hour day, establish a labor bureau, introduce stock tax and reform railway management and the civil service.

J. Winter, the successful candidate for South Melbourne, seemed also to have been pre-occupied by his memories of bitter defeats. He spoke of the great industrial conflicts of the past three years - conflicts in which capital had repulsed labor, but not beaten it. Labor now recognised that through their power at the ballot box they could meet this danger by having representatives in the legislature, and could preserve their rights and check unfair infringements.

It is apparent, both from what the men said, and from their platform, that they were not concerned to bring about any radical reform of the social order. They were concerned mainly to look after the interests of the working classes, and

52. Age, 18 February 1892.
53. Age, 24 March 1892.
prevent injustices being done to them. In the sense, then, that they were not intent upon bringing about long-range, radical, social reforms, and were not inspired by visions of a utopia involving fundamental re-arrangements of the social order, the Victorian Labor Party differed only slightly from the liberals. In interests, ideals and organisation, the labor party was not a radical innovation, but merely presented commonly accepted political aims and means in slightly new dress.

Thus the Victorian Labor Party was a much less distinctive group than its counterpart in New South Wales, and consequently enjoyed a much more limited influence. During the first decade of the party's rather tenuous existence, only a fraction of its supporters came from beyond the metropolitan area. Of the thirty-six P.P.L. candidates in the 1892 election, only nine stood for rural constituencies, and only two were successful. The labor party lacked rural support despite the enthusiasm of Spence and the Ballarat Trades and Labor Council. 55

54. The two successful P.P.L. candidates for rural seats were S. Samuel, (Dundas) a solicitor from Hamilton, who died four months after the election. J. Dyer, (Borung) a farmer from Rupanyup, who was not endorsed by the labor party for the 1894 election.

55. W. G. Spence was a member of the Provisional Committee of the P.P.L., appointed by the Convention in May 1891. He also contested the Dundas seat in the August 1892 by-election, resulting from the death of S. Samuel, P.P.L. member. The president of the Ballarat Trades and Labor Council and the president of the Ballarat Branch of the A.M.A. contested the pre-selection ballot in 1892, suggesting considerable enthusiasm for the cause of parliamentary representation of labor. It is worth recalling at this point that the Ballarat Trades and Labor Council actually endorsed a candidate for the 1899 election. (Age, 8 Jan. 1899)
Both ideologically and organisationally, then, the Victorian labor party was much weaker than its counterparts in Queensland or New South Wales. In origin, it was the progeny of the most conservative trade union movement of the three. Its ranks included none with the dynamic and utopian zeal of a Lane or a Holman: such men, if they did exist in Victoria, were regarded as too radical for the P.P.L. The policies of the party were little different from those of the radical members of the liberal party. Thus, the Victorian party could not exercise power as the New South Wales party could - by holding a balance of power between the established parties. Finally, the Victorian party throughout the nineties was unable to gain support from any other than Melbourne working class constituencies, reducing even further their ability to exercise much influence on the course of Victorian politics.

Pearson, not altogether an unbiased commentator, entertained a rather derogatory view of the labor party. He wrote, after the election, that it was

...hopeless for the labor electors or representatives to seek to force their nominees and platforms despotsically upon the liberal party. To that party they belong by every tie of interest and gratitude; they are not and cannot be strong enough to stand by themselves.  

Despite the moderate nature of the Victorian labor party, it was still sufficient to chill the hearts of the conservatives. Their opposition to the very existence of the labor party caused them to see the election as an extension of the Strike. The conservatives' case, against the P.P.L.'s expressed through the National Association, was, in essence, the same as


57. The Speaker, 15 April 1893.
that against the unionists in 1890-1.

Their election campaign commenced at the first Annual Meeting of the Association, two months prior to the election. On the platform were J. E. Patterson, soon to be appointed Gillies' successor as Leader of the Opposition, R. Harper, and L. L. Smith, M'as.L.A., James Campbell and Robert Murray Smith; the latter were former members who were soon to be re-elected. With the exception of L. L. Smith, a political opportunist of the first order, all were conservative and free traders. This latter point is relevant, not because the mentioned during the election, but beca

major issue soon after.

Patterson saw the election as a contest between two parties. The fir

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59. James Campbell was born in Scotla Ballarat in 1853. He was said to enter the Eureka Stockade after used to run his father's business preacher. A free-trader, and a Wesleyan conference in 1869, "The who would make the colony of the children this was great hope." He joined Patterson's Ministry, but

60. Robert Murray Smith was born in England Victoria in 1854, after several years in He was a prominent Melbourne merchant in Parliament in 1871. He opposed Berry throughout, and according to Deakin, might have been Premier in 1881, instead of O'Loughlen. After four years as Agent-General in London, he returned to lead a free-trade revival, and re-entered Parliament in 1894.
"party of order," which, he said, according to all the laws of
nature and experience, leads to national prosperity. Opposed to
this was that which he called the "party of anarchy," and which,
according to the same natural laws, would lead as inevitably to
national decay. Patterson said that he stood for the
restoration of confidence and the encouragement of investment,
while he stood against "fostering tyranny or boycott," the
confiscation of other people's incomes and the increase in the
voting power of the metropolitan area, which was, he said,
designed to cripple the country. 61

The motion of Robert Harper, seconded by G. Neudell,
also affords a revealing glimpse into the minds of the conserva-
tives who belonged to this Association. It read

That inasmuch as the main principle of the
National Association is the preservation of the
interests of all sections of the community - and
especially of the great producing interests - it
is, in the opinion of this meeting, highly desir-
able that every effort be made to form effective
alliances with organisations having similar aims,
in order that concerted action may be taken at
the forthcoming elections. 62

Supporting the motion, Harper claimed that the Association
was formed to bring about an alliance of all the forces and groups
in society to work out the salvation of the country - and, he said,
this included working men at present "dominated, persecuted and
tyrannised over by the Trades Hall Council." He believed that
the real cause of the Depression was the fear in England that
Victoria was being taken over by "a class of Socialist agitators,
who had partly succeeded in laying hold of the reins of government,"

61. Age, 26 February 1892.
62. TUD.
To overcome this Harper claimed

they must endeavour to restore confidence, avoid
all extremes, and lay aside the socialist and
communist theories that were being promulgated.

E. Jowett, in supporting a motion condemning the one

man one vote movement,

The arguments in favour of the one man one
vote were founded on abstract principles such as
had led to the French Revolution and the Reign
of Terror. The object of the men who were lead-
ing their movement was to counteract the influence
of the real workers of the community, and prosecute
their communist designs and schemes of confisca-
tion and disorder.63

The third group which organised itself for the election
was the country party, determined that this time it would attain
its goal of justice for the farmer in the form of the stock tax.

Early in February a meeting was convened by a squatter,
William Anderson, member for Villiers and Heytesbury, of all
members of the Legislative Assembly.64 The twenty-eight
members present appointed a committee to draw up a platform and
arrange a campaign, so that the farmers and country districts
of Victoria in general might be more effectively represented
in the House.

The platform agreed upon by the farmers comprised three
main sections.65 They demanded, primarily, the satisfaction of
certain sectional interests, in particular an increase in the
stock tax. Then they advocated several general government
reforms, such as greater economy in the management of the railways,
and reduction of civil service salaries. Finally they opposed

63. Ibid.
64. Age, 3 Feb. 1892.
65. Age, 10 Feb. 1892.
the Trades Hall Council, and their supposed domination. In
general, the committee felt that it was time the country
representatives united, to legislate upon matters needing reform.

The invitation extended by Patterson at the meeting
of the National Association was clearly accepted, at last
implicitly, by the country party. Patterson had labelled
the country party "the practical party of progress", largely
due to their anti-labor policy. Later, in 1893, it was to be
from the ranks of the country party that Patterson received
much of his support, as well as four of his Ministers. 66

The result of the election seemed satisfactory to most
groups which contested it. The Premier was delighted to see
his government returned with a majority of thirty-one. The Trades
Hall Council congratulated its members who had been elected,
and expressed satisfaction that labor would be well represented
in the coming session. 67 On the other hand, Pearson, writing
in The Speaker, was pleased to report that "the most striking
and unequivocal result of the election is the defeat of the
Trades Hall candidates." 68 In general, the conservatives were
pleased that of the thirty-six P.P.L. candidates who stood only
twelve were returned, and only a few of them were, in fact,

66. Amongst the twelve members of the committee which formulated
the country party platform, there were five who would be
members of Patterson's Ministry a year later viz. Patterson,
McColl, Baker, Webb and McIntyre. Ten of the twelve were
to support Patterson's motion of no-confidence a year later.

67. T.H.C. Minutes, 22 April 1892.

68. The Speaker, 11 June 1892.
working class men. The country party too were satisfied
with the results of their efforts; they had cause to be, for,
soon after the first session commenced, the stock tax was
introduced.

The 1892 election represents a half-way mark in the
transition from the coalition system of politics of the 1880's
to the two party system of the later nineties. In 1890 the
questions raised were, for the most part, local and sectional
ones which could not be fitted into any type of left-right
continuum. By 1892, the issues raised involved rights of
unionists and methods of taxation — opinions on which there
was a gradation from right to left. Because of the emergence
of these issues, groups arose to contest the election — one of
these was "rightist" or "conservative," while another was
"leftist" or "liberal." The election represents only a half-
way mark in the development of "party government" because these
liberal and conservative groups did not completely coincide
with the accepted Parliamentary divisions — Ministry and Opposition
Only when there was this identity would it be possible to see
Victorian politics operating on a "two-party" basis.

69. Of the twelve successful P.P.L. candidates four only were
members of the T.P.C. viz. Trenwith (Richmond) Winter (South
Melbourne) Wyllie (North Melbourne) Bromley (Carlton). Of
the remaining eight, there were two estate agents, two manu-
facturers, one journalist, one solicitor, one doctor, one
farmer.

Six of the twelve had been members of the Fourteenth
Parliament, while two more had contested the 1889 election.
C. The Shiela Ministry.

From the outset, the new Parliament was pre-occupied with the restoration of the colony's overseas credit, and the alleviation of the prevailing economic distress. Certainly, then, the government was aware of its responsibility. In his Address to the House, the Governor said,

"Your serious attention is invited to the state of the finances in the confident belief that you will provide measures to deal satisfactorily with the necessary questions of retrenchment and increased revenue."

In addition, Shiela wanted the House to ratify certain actions undertaken by the government during the recess. To help relieve the genuine unemployment he had commenced several railway lines in the Wimmera. Another more important action of the government which required discussion was the suspension of the three Railway Commissioners. Encouraged by the fierce editorials of the Age, Shiela had finally taken the step, in March, of suspending the railway commissioners, pending ratification by the House. So important a matter did Shiela regard this that he placed it first on the agenda after the Address-in-Reply debate, and made the existence of his government depend on its acceptance by the House.

For more than a year past Syme had been criticising the administration of the railways department in increasingly harsh terms. The climax occurred on the first four days of March 1892, when, in a series of articles headed "The Management of our Railways - How the Deficit has been Brought About," it

70. V. P. D., Vol. 69 p 9.
was shown how "the management of the Commissioners has been a gigantic failure"—largely as a result of Speight's inefficiency. The articles accused Speight of gross extravagance, of fostering red-tape and unnecessary bureaucracy, and of trying to mislead the public. 71

When Speight attempted to defend himself through the columns of the Argus, the Age again attacked him. It claimed that the unfitness of the Commissioners for high office was proved by

the accumulating evidence of...utter incompetence...

They are as men suffering from a sort of paralysis of the judgment incapacitating them for dealing with plain business matters on a business footing. 72

When another clash occurred between the Minister of Railways and Speight, the Age urged the government to suspend him and then appeal to the people at the election. In a leading article, 73 the Age quoted, in full, the suspension and removal provisions of the Railways Act, indicating that it would be a suitable time to take this drastic action with the Commissioners. Partly in response to this pressure, and partly as a result of his long-standing annoyance with the Commissioners' powers, Shields authorised an Order-in-Council suspending the three Commissioners.

Later in the Session, the Ministry hoped to introduce a Village Settlements Scheme. Amendments to the Companies Act, to protect the community from the activities of speculators, and to establish a bureau of labor. In addition, as promised in his election

71. Age, 1-4 March 1892.
72. Age, 8 March 1892.
73. Age, 14 March 1892.
address, Shields hoped also to pass a bill to "give effect to the principles of conciliation and arbitration in matters of dispute between employers and employees." The aim of this measure, said the Governor, was

to enable disputes to be settled at an early stage, and so to foster harmonious relations between labouring men and their employers.

In conclusion, the Governor expressed a wish that was fervently repeated by every member of the House.

The reaction following a period of over-trading and unwise speculation appears to have reached its limit; the great producing industries of the colony - wool, grain, livestock, gold, vines and manufactures - remain unimpaired; and I trust that the measures to be submitted to you will result in the restoration of the colony's normal prosperity, and that your deliberations, by the blessing of Divine Providence will advance the well-being and happiness of the people of Victoria.

Thus, at the beginning of the Session, the Ministry declared openly that its main aim was the absorption of the unemployed, the prevention of further industrial disputes, the balancing of the colony's budget and the general restoration of the economy to a position of stability. The fate of the government was to depend on its success in attaining these goals.

In an extremely witty and able maiden speech Isaacs moved the Address-in-Reply. Speaking from the Ministerial back benches, Isaacs fully endorsed the government programme, though he did suggest that an income tax might well be included.

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74. V. P. D., Vol. 69 P. 9.
75. Ibid.
76. Isaac Isaacs was born in Melbourne in 1855. He graduated as a Master of Law in 1880, and immediately went to the Bar, where he established a flourishing practice. He entered the Victorian Parliament in 1892, and was a member for nine years, during which time he was a member of three Ministries.
he described the income tax as a "direct, proportionate, just and productive means of taxation." He summarised his speech and his general attitude to the government when he said,

Sir, I believe from the pre-election speech of the Premier, and from the perusal of the speeches of various other Ministers that this Government has a firm and honest intention to do what is right to this country, and I, in common with every other liberal in the House, feel that so long as they manifest that intention, and so long as they carry out that intention, we shall be prepared to support them. 78

Alfred Deakin was another to use the debate to express a fairly friendly attitude towards the Ministry. One of the few men in the House gifted with some historical awareness, Deakin addressed himself to the future historian of the period. Such a person, he said, looking at the recent recess, must interpret it not as the domination of a particular government, or the success of a political party, but as primarily "a most striking illustration of a "power behind the throne!" The historian would see, said Deakin

that this interregnum was not marked by the rule of a government, but marked more distinctly than ever has been seen before in our history by the absolute rule of a newspaper. 80

The Shields Ministry he claimed had been typical of the House as a whole. Just as the Assembly consisted "very largely of disintegrated individuals or small factions," so
too did the Ministry lack unity. Forming the one Government, he said, were men who differed on every major political question that had been raised at the election. Nevertheless, the addition of Berry and Zeal since April had strengthened the cabinet so much that he regarded it as virtually, a new one. Largely because of the presence of these two Ministers Deakin declared

I have every confidence that their policy, re-shaped under the wise and experienced hands of Sir Graham Berry, will be a policy which this House as a whole can support, and which I myself, I hope, shall be able to support heartily. 81

In general, those who took part in the Debate, and most members of the House, agreed with the stated aims of the Shiels Government, and were prepared to give the new Premier time in which to prove himself. Member of the Opposition like Levien, Harper, Wrixon, Campbell and McKenzie 82 criticised the Government for being unconstitutional, in authorising railway construction, for dismissing the Commissioners, for having done insufficient to remedy the financial situation in the past eighteen months, and for being dominated by the Trades Hall, but no serious challenge was issued. The anxiety demonstrated by the conservatives at the elections that Victoria might seem politically unstable was a strong force supporting Shiels - at least for a time.

81. Ibid., pp. 101-5
82. Henry Wrixon was born in Dublin in 1839, and was admitted to the Irish Bar in 1861. He came to Victoria in 1863, and practised successfully, taking silk in 1890. He entered Parliament in 1868, and was a member of Gillies' cabinet. He was a free-trader.
83. M. A. McKenzie first entered Parliament in 1892, as member for Anglesey. He was a grazier and a free-trader.
Interest in Victoria's politics for the next nine months centres on the gradual erosion of support for the Shiels-Berry government. Desperately they tried to cope with the Depression - by increasing revenue and paring expenditure but in the end the problems proved insuperable. Berry bought down a budget that, applied in toto, may have been successful, but was, in fact, so mutilated in its passage through the House, that it was rendered ineffective. The deliberations of the Assembly were continually interrupted, by at least three motions of no-confidence, mostly inspired by that indefatigable plotter, Bryan O'Loghlen.

There were two main reasons why the Ministry gradually lost support. First the Ministry was not well led, and contained more than its fair share of nonentities. Secondly, the problems facing the government were almost insoluble given the techniques that had so far been developed by economists. When Victoria did finally emerge from the Depression, it did so largely for "natural" reasons, reasons almost totally unconnected with government policy. In 1892, the Depression was insufficiently understood, and so it could not adequately treated by a government.

The Government's balanced budget policy, which was the orthodox treatment for depressions, we now know tended to accentuate the crisis. Whether the conservatives' policy of reducing expenditure, or the liberals' one of increasing taxation, was adopted, the general economic effect was substantially the same. Thus, it seems that neither party could have succeeded in halting
or offsetting the deflationary tendencies in the economy in 1892.

As has already been indicated, the mark of a successful
government in 1892 was the balanced budget. This, it was felt,
would show private enterprise that, by careful management, a
recovery could be achieved, and it would, as well, demonstrate
in England the colony's stability which would, in turn,
encourage further investment. However, because of the increas-
ing gap between Shiels' promises and his achievements, condi-
tions were ripe for his overthrow, and once the Budget was
presented, the Ministry was continually subjected to sniping
from the Opposition, and from their own Corner.

A commonly held estimate of the Ministry's personal
qualities was that made by Dow, in the course of the final
debate on Patterson's successful motion of no-confidence.

The only men in the government that have
been at all able to lead the House or to mollify
the House when it had got into a state of riot
have been the Treasurer and the Minister of
Customs. Those are the only two members of the
government who have had any nous about them at all.

It was Shiels' inability to control the House that
caused him to experience such difficulty in having his Budget
accepted; and it was in the course of this debate that Victoria's
protective policy was challenged, for the first time in well
over a decade.

The question of tariff revision had first been raised
by F. Stuart early in the session, when he asked the Minister

84. V. P. D., Vol. 71 P 3961.
for Customs whether the Government anticipated revising the tariff. He claimed that this was necessary because many new industries had commenced during the past three years, and unless they were protected, "there will very soon be a large addition to the ranks of the unemployed."

The matter was next discussed when Berry called for suggestions for tariff amendments which might be included in the Budget. Convened by three P.P.L. members, twentyfour members met to discuss the tariff, and appoint a committee which could consult similar committees of the T.H.C. and the Chamber of Manufacturers.

After a fortnight's deliberation, the protectionists presented to the Treasurer a list of recommended tariff adjustments, including increases of up to 50%. Thus the Budget eventually brought down included a long list of tariff reforms, designed to reduce the unemployment by bringing greater protection to certain new industries.

In his Budget, Berry announced that the financial year 1891/2 had closed with a deficit of £1,589,950. He proposed to balance the Budget over a period of three years. In the first year, 1892/3, he hoped to reduce expenditure by $541,994, and increase revenue by $315,550. These planned

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85. V. P. D., Vol. 69 P 122.
86. Age, 20 June 1892.
87. All eight members of the committee were supporters of the Government, and five of them, T. Smith, W. Trenwith, W. Beasley, F. Salmon and J. Winter were P.P.L. members.
88. Both of these bodies had, early in 1892 appointed committees to enquire into the causes of the depression, and to see what changes could be made in the tariff to permit a remedy.
89. V. P. D., Vol. 69 P 722.
expenditure reductions were to result from reductions in all public service salaries, economies in the railway department, and reductions in the prospecting vote and the municipal subsidy. The cabinet decided that an income tax would not be satisfactory, at that time, to increase revenue, and it decided instead to increase stamp duties, re-impose the 2d. postage, and to levy an absentee tax, increased excise on beer, and increased duties on wines and spirits.

So weak was the Government's grasp on the House that many of these reforms were secured only after long and bitter debate, while there were several which were amended out of existence. The root of much of this objection to the new tariff list was nothing less than doubt as to the correctness of maintaining the traditional Protective policy. When the Government was able to force through one item of the new tariff list by only a few votes, the Argus wrote,

This marks the setting in of a change of feeling as to the policy and efficacy of high duties as aids to material progress.\(^90\)

Indicative of this was the fact that, when the government was challenged for its Budget, the main ground of criticism was its tariff. Wrixon, for instance, claimed that Shiels' Casterton address gave the colony no idea that he was likely to introduce a prohibitive customs duties list.\(^91\) Similarly, Patterson objected to the Government's policy of prohibition and said, "I cannot understand how the Government has been induced to take a step in the direction of prohibitive

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\(^{90}\) Argus, 17 October 1892.

\(^{91}\) V.P.D., Vol. 69, p.923.
There was clearly developing in 1892 a feeling of dissatisfaction with the economic creed of Protection, that would soon grow to great proportions, and become the major political issue in the colony.

While one section of the House was beginning to complain about the excessively high duties levied by the Shields Ministry, another major group was realizing that the rampages of the Depression were in no way being checked by the Government. Thus, when the House adjourned for a short period at Christmas, it was an "open secret" that the Ministry would be unlikely to survive long into the New Year. By early 1893, the general economic situation showed no improvement on the previous twelve months. Despite all Berry's efforts the deficit had only increased. As the government had pledged itself to restore the balance to the economy it stood convicted of incompetence.

The position in which Isaac Isaacs found himself was fairly typical - at the beginning of the Session he had been a strong supporter of the Shields Ministry, and until the recess, it continued to receive his loyal support. However, when Patterson moved a motion of no-confidence soon after the Session resumed in January 1893, Isaacs crossed the floor, and helped vote Shields out of office. As he said in his address to the House, he had continued to give his support to the Government, "when it was very difficult to accord support to them." However

32. Ibid., p 767.
he was now forced to change his policy towards them because they had not shown lines of policy to enable the country "to tide over its difficulties." 

In short, he said, the deficit had increased during the Government's period in office, and so it must be expelled. He was conscious that the atmosphere on the other side of the House was decidedly more conservative, but he justified himself on the grounds that any Government formed by Paterson must, in a predominantly Liberal House, contain its share of Liberals. Thus, Isaacs crossed the floor mainly because the Shiel government failed to fulfil its election pledges.

Sir Bryan O'Loghlen, another to change his allegiance, argued in similar vein, when he said:

"The outcome of all the reasons I stated amounted to this, that the Government had failed - failed not only to grasp the situation, but to deal with it as it ought to be dealt with."

This attitude taken by Isaacs and O'Loghlen was so common amongst members on the Ministerial side of the House that no less than sixteen members elected as supporters of Shiel had crossed the floor by the following January, to vote him out of office, by forty-six votes to forty-three.

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95. The sixteen members who crossed the floor were:
   J. McColl (Sunnower) W. T. Webb (Rodney) L. Isaacs (Bogong)
   B. O'Loghlen (Pt. Fairy) R. Richardson (Creswick) R. Baker (Lowan)
   J. McIntyre (Maldon) E. Murphy (Warren) T. Langdon (Kerang)
   W. Grattan (Shepparton) T. Murphy (Rodney) J. Dunn (Ballarat East)
   B. F. McRae
   A. Bales (Sandhurst) J. Kirkton (Ballarat West) W. Methven (East Bourke Boroughs)
   F. Stuart (East Melbourne)
Twelve months earlier, the Munro government had managed to gain a reprieve by a large-scale reconstruction. This time, although there was some talk of Shiels' ill-health causing another reconstruction of cabinet, the House would accept nothing but the complete eviction of the Government, to be followed by an invitation to James Patterson to form another.

96. *Age*, 11 January 1893.
"Parliament under the blighting system of 'the spoils to the victors' has come to be regarded, not as a law making machine designed for the common weal but as a theatre for the strife of petty ambitions and the play of party warfare."

(Age, 3 January 1893)

"In Australia, colourless cabinets, all of them more or less under conservative control, are struggling feebly with their deficits, and clinging to office with all the manifold inconsistencies which attend upon expediency."

(Charles Pearson, 1893)

"In Victoria, protection has been tried and found wanting. We can now hope to see a gradual return to free trade."

(F. Madden, 1894)
Chapter 4.

The Patterson Regime

A. Patterson replaces Gillies.

James Patterson had been leader of the opposition for only four days when he was invited by the Governor to form a new Ministry. Since the fall of the Coalition government, Duncan Gillies had been so widely respected by conservative members that there had been no attempt to replace him as their leader. However, as several motions of no confidence during the first Session had failed, many, including Gillies himself, came to realise that the Shiels Ministry would be unseated only by some one not closely connected with the disastrous economic policy of the Coalition. For the Age, as well as many members of the House, believed that Gillies had spent his £1m. surplus foolishly, to buy political support, and had been too carefree in increasing the Public Debt. It had also been during Gillies' period as Premier that the railways ceased to be a profitable concern, and became the heaviest drain on the Government. Not surprisingly, when the various attempts to unseat Shiels failed, Opposition members realised the need for a new leader, to woo the votes of those Ministerial supporters who had to cross the floor for a motion of no confidence to be successful.

By the beginning of 1893 the Government had lost the support of its most valuable ally, the Age. In August 1892 that paper had written, when the government was threatened,

It would be an act of such palpable treachery to the mandate of the country as given at the recent election that the Government would be justified in asking for a dissolution and another appeal to the electors in order to punish the office-seekers who would play ducks and drakes with the country's interests for their own private ends.²

A few months later, however, the editorials were being written in a very different vein.

We look at our present Assembly - honey combed as it is with miserable intrigues, plots and counterplots. Weak leaders truckling to a weak and venial House. More personal strifes and petty contentions everywhere - trivial jealousies, small envies. Little parties, with views bounded by a nutshell. Large national aspirations dead, or, if living in some obscure corner, quite overlaid by the graver aims of individual selfishness.³

A week later it laid more specific charges at the Government's door. The Ministry was described as being "weak in the House, often flouted by its nominal supporters," and "more than ordinarily wanting in the invaluable faculty of inspiring confidence." To the Age claimed that 1½% of the government's revenue was derived from indirect taxation, falling impartially on rich and poor: what was needed was a tax to fall on the

2. Age, 23 August 1892.
3. Age, 3 January 1893.
4. Age, 10 January 1893.
wealthy.

If Ministers are afraid to grasp the financial nettle, some other combination may have the requisite courage. 5

Thus the Ministry's chances of survival were slight when Parliament re-assembled after the recess. There had already been a number of attacks launched - ten members had crossed the floor during 1892, 6 - and finally the Age had decided no longer to support it. All that was required was a leader acceptable to those members of the Ministerial corner who were prepared to cross the floor.

At a meeting of the Opposition party 7 Gillies agreed that he was "an impossible quantity in bringing about the defeat of the Government", and that whoever else moved a no confidence motion would have to take the responsibility for forming a government. 8 The man first in line for the position was James Patterson, a member of every Parliament since 1868 and of four Ministries. 9 During that period Patterson had

5. Ibid.
6. The ten members were F. Stuart (East Melbourne), W. T. Carter (Williamstown), J. H. McColl (Gunbower), T. Langdon (Korong), R. Richardson (Greswick), R. Baker (Lowan), Sir B. O'Loghlen (Port Fairy), J. H. Graves (Delatite), R. Bowman (Talbot and Avoca), John McIntyre (Maldon).
7. Age, 12 January 1893.
8. This decision to step down as leader of the conservatives was rendered less odious for Gillies by the fact that, with the resignation of Munro as Agent-General, that position was vacant. One of the first actions of the new government was to appoint Gillies the new Agent-General.
9. During his political career Patterson had held the following offices: Commissioner of Public Works, Postmaster General, Commissioner of Railways, Commissioner of Trade and Customs, as a member of Berry's three Ministries, and also of Gillies.
undergone a political metamorphosis. Deakin claimed that as a prominent member of Berry's 2nd Ministry Patterson had been one of the four Ministers\textsuperscript{10} who tried to bludgeon the Council into submission by preparing a "revolutionary plot" in which they were to stop all imports, forbid the issue of notes by the banks, and close the Post Office and Railways.\textsuperscript{11} Fourteen years later the same man became the leader of the conservatives in the Assembly, following in the footsteps of the highly respected and conservative James Service and Duncan Gillies.

The key to this political change in the man would seem to lie in Deakin's analysis of him, written in 1900.

Patterson full of cunning adaptability and energy, had been a Free Trader with Conservative leanings but, having decided that the people were upon the other side, was prepared to prove his loyalty to his new flag by any action or speech that might seem necessary.\textsuperscript{12}

With the stocks of the Ministry rapidly falling, he was the man who introduced to the Opposition two members of the Ministerial corner as the representatives of a group that was prepared to cross the floor. Webb\textsuperscript{13} and Bailes,\textsuperscript{14} on behalf

\textsuperscript{10} The others were Peter Lalor, Francis Longmore and John Woods, all radicals.

\textsuperscript{11} For an account of this see A. Deakin, \textit{op. cit.}, pp.17-19.

\textsuperscript{12} A. Deakin, \textit{op. cit.}, p.15.

\textsuperscript{13} W. T. Webb was a pastoralist and company director who first entered Parliament in 1889. His political career is a little hard to follow as he supported then opposed both the Coalition and its successor. He then joined Patterson's Ministry.

\textsuperscript{14} A. Bailes first represented Sandhurst in 1886, and voted consistently with the Liberals except for a short flirtation with Patterson lasting from January to July 1893.
of another seven Ministerialists,\(^\text{15}\) claimed that their personal interests, as well as those of the colony, were being endangered by the Government's inability to check the steadily increasing deficit.\(^\text{16}\) Consequently they were prepared to cross over the floor to support a Ministry formed by Patterson. The one stipulation of their group was that Gillies be not associated with the new Government. With the defeat of Shiels thus assured the Opposition authorised Patterson to move the no-confidence motion.

In a desperate effort to rally its thinning ranks the Ministry announced large-scale reconstruction plans. Shiels, suffering from ill-health for several months past, announced that he would retire in favour of Berry, who would become the colony's Premier for the fourth time.\(^\text{17}\) However, it was too late, and after little debate, the Government was defeated by three votes.

The attitude adopted by Deakin throughout these negotiations was unchanged. In a letter to Sir Charles Dilke in early January, he wrote

> Politics are in a chaotic condition. I never had so much influence in the House as since I made it plain that I would not take office, and could have readily headed a strong party if I had been willing to lead where they wished to go.

\(^\text{15}\) The others were Dunn, Kirton, Methven, Grattan, T. Murphy, E. Murphy, Clarke.
\(^\text{16}\) Age, 18 Jan. 1893.
\(^\text{17}\) Argus, 16 Jan. 1893.
If ever I take office again, I hope to be independent in purse and in policy of everyone, and to build up a party to take my own way. Till then, I shall continue to follow a solitary and more private path. 18

His policy to meet the crisis that was then wrecking the colony, he stated in one sentence.

To put the fair share of the burden on wealth after practising the utmost economy is our policy, and must be that of all colonies henceforth. 19

Taken in conjunction with a statement made in the last paragraph of his Crisis in Victorian Politics, it is clear what Deakin expected of the new Patterson Ministry. In that paragraph 20 he spoke of "How I helped to defeat the Shiel Government", suggesting that he, like the Age, became disillusioned with that Ministry in the latter months of 1892, because they failed to balance the budget, and because they refused to introduce an income tax.

McColl, who had crossed the floor for the second time in three years, said 21 that the colony abounded with distress and that people wanted to see things improved. A new government, he claimed, could not make the situation worse, and would probably improve it, both at home and abroad. This attitude of McColl's was shared by a large number of those who crossed the floor to defeat the Government.

18. Deakin to Sir Charles Dilke, 8 January 1893.
19. Ibid.
21. V.P.R. Vol. 71 23976.
The Ministry which Patterson selected was a coalition, as indeed it had to be, for there were no more than thirty conservatives in the House. Isaacs had been correct when he remarked that any Ministry formed would necessarily contain a proportion of liberals.\(^{22}\) While this was true of Patterson's Ministry, it was also significant that the key portfolios were held by conservatives. Patterson himself was Premier, Chief Secretary and Minister of Railways, while as Treasurer he had George Downes Carter,\(^{23}\) a Melbourne merchant; as Minister of Customs and Public Instruction there was another merchant, James Campbell; as Minister of Defence yet another merchant Robert Reid, M.L.C.; and as Minister of Lands was wealthy squatter, John McIntyre. The departments responsible for the collection of almost the entire amount of government revenue, namely, Customs, Railways, P.M.G. and Land, were in the charge of conservative Ministers. As C. H. Pearson wrote of the new Ministry in Victoria,

> The misfortune is that it replaces a Cabinet which, since the inclusion of Berry, has been almost Radical in its prevailing tone, by another in which the Conservative tone pre-dominates; yet party lines have been so obliterated that the transference of power was achieved by the aid of a number of pronounced Liberals.\(^{24}\)


\(^{23}\) George Downes Carter represented Melbourne from 1877 to 1900. He was a prominent city merchant, member of the Chamber of Commerce and had been Lord Mayor from 1884-5. Throughout this period he had voted solidly with the conservative bloc.

\(^{24}\) *The Speaker*, 13 April 1893.
The problems besetting Patterson when he became Premier were similar to those recognised by Shiel twelve months before. Almost as similar were the resolutions he made concerning their solution. In his address to the Castlemaine electors, he said that the Shiel Ministry had been defeated because they had failed to remedy the colony's desperate situation. For two years the colony had been poorly governed. "Our policy," he said, "will be one of unswerving determination to stay the financial retrogression which has during the past two years assumed such enormous proportions, and which has been too long an undeserved reproach upon our national resources and vigour." Patterson's Government would eventually abolish the deficit, restore the colony's name abroad, and "pave the way at last for a United Australia."

When, a week later, Patterson outlined the new government's policy, he made no attempt to castigate Shiel or Berry; rather, he sympathised with them, claiming that they observed pity more than blame for the unfortunate situation in which they found themselves. Patterson estimated that at the end of the financial year 1892/3, despite Berry's Budget, the deficit would have doubled in magnitude in one year.

Their present predicament could, he said, be characterised by three words - Drift, Deficit and Doubt.

26. Argus, 1 February 1893.
The deficit can be removed gradually; the doubt can be removed only by a determination that income and expenditure should balance. Sacrifices must be made by everyone in order that the drift might stop, and every electorate must understand that in continuing the present course, we were simply courting disaster. Retrenchment would be insisted upon both in regard to grants and subsidies to the public service. 27

The precise financial reforms included the reduction of public service salaries and the amalgamation of departments, as well as the probable imposition of an income tax, and a small duty on goods that were, until that time, being introduced freely. Finally, he planned to introduce a Village Settlement Bill, to settle the unemployed on the land.

The crux of the problem confronting Patterson and Carter was this. From a revenue which was steadily declining, the Government had to pay an increasing amount to service the national debt of £46 million. For the financial year 1893/4, payment of interest to bondholders was the Government's largest single item, and was more than a quarter of their total expenditure. 28

The problem was yet further confounded by the fact that as the Government decreased their expenditure, the depression consequently worsened, and the two main sources of revenue, Customs and Railways, which varied in response to changes in the extent of economic activity, inevitably fell. Thus,

27. Argus, 1 February 1893.
28. See Table 77.
although this was not clearly recognised at the time, the
Government's position could not be very much improved until
the general economy recovered.

Now as the economy showed no signs of recovering until
1894, Patterson, by staking his existence wholly on improving
the financial position of the government, was seriously
jeopardising his political future. Probably no Treasurer,
given the economic theories prevalent in the late nineteenth
century, could have balanced the budget of the Victorian
government, until the seasonal changes, the development of new
markets especially in Western Australia, the movement of
overseas price levels and the large-scale use of refrigeration,
all occurring in the late nineties, brought about some economic
recovery.29

This, then, was the situation confronting the Patterson
Government, and on which their fate hung.

29. T.A. Sinclair, Economic Recovery in Victoria 1894-1900,
A.H.R. Social Science Monograph, 1956, p.16 ff.
B. 1893 Session

The problems that beset Patterson when he became Premier were greatly accentuated by the events of the Parliamentary recess. For, between 5 April and 17 May, twelve of Australia's banks collapsed, causing for a short time an almost complete paralysis of the country's commercial life. As the Australian Insurance and Banking Record wrote,

The convulsion in all Australian financial affairs which has occurred since the Easter holidays is unexampled for completeness, for the magnitude of the sum involved, and for the enormous proportion of the population which it affects, both as regards their accumulation and their current earnings from industry. (30)

The sum total affected by these suspensions was £103m.

Contemporaries surveying the wreckage in June 1893 regarded the calamities as more or less inevitable. One of them wrote,

it is abundantly clear to the impatient mind that the crisis is in reality the outcome of the irresistible operation of economic laws. (31)

Recent historians have been inclined to view this as unduly fatalistic. Blainey has written that the collapse of most of the colony's banking institutions was not the inevitable moral or financial retribution for the sins of the past. (32) Had the Associated Banks taken resolute action to prevent the fall of the Federal Bank and had the Patterson Government taken command of the situation even as well as... Dibbs in

(30) Australian Insurance and Banking Record, 19 May 1893.
(31) Ibid.
New South Wales, the crisis may have been averted.

Only when the progress of the Bank crashes was far advanced did Patterson take any steps to remedy the situation. When the National Bank announced that its suspension was imminent, Patterson finally acted. An emergency meeting of cabinet authorized the Government to declare a five-day bank holiday which was supposed
to allow for calm consideration and to prevent the heavy withdrawals of the previous fortnight. (33)

However, those banks that did take advantage of this proclamation did not benefit much from it. Of the four banks that took the week's holiday, only the Royal Bank of Australia did not succumb to the panic withdrawals. On the other hand, three banks with Australia-wide branches remained open during the week, and were in the end able to weather the storm. The policy of the Government was totally inept, a fact that cannot be explained merely by reference to the contemporary lack of banking expertise. Had Patterson imitated Dibbs' policy, which was to declare bank notes legal tender, then it is possible that at least this most calamitous phase of a long term depression might have been avoided.

The Government's inability to cope with the banking crisis, however, had no significant political effects. Berry criticised Patterson for his ineptitude, (34) but did not challenge the Governments' existence on the question. In

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(33) Argus, 1 May 1893.
(34) Argus, 2 May 1893.
fact, the Ministry's first crisis was not related to the banks, and resulted from a personal dispute between the two legal members of the cabinet. When the former Speaker, M.H. Davies, was committed to trial for his role in the suspension of the Mercantile Bank of Australasia, O'Loghlen, as Attorney-General, attempted to halt proceedings. Isaacs, in his capacity as Solicitor-General, claimed that O'Loghlen did not have the power to make such a decision. Following the resultant clash between them, Isaacs resigned from the cabinet, and rejoined the Opposition whom he had abandoned some four months before. (35)

Despite these two set-backs however, Patterson could be fairly assured that his position as Premier was secure. The House was obviously much too concerned about the financial situation to risk worsening it by another change of Government. Patterson clearly had to be given an opportunity to make good his promises. As John Gavan Duffy said,

- neither he nor any member of the late Ministry intended offering factious opposition to Patterson. (36)

This fear of rocking the boat was clear too in the Address-in-Reply debate. G. Bennett, speaking from the Opposition benches, said that

While (the working classes) have strong opinions with reference to the action the Government took

(35) Australian Insurance and Banking Record, 19 June 1893.
(36) Argus, 10 June 1893.
in regard to the banking business ... they desire that an opportunity should be afforded to the present Government of putting men on the land and providing work for them. (37)

D.C. Sterry too affirmed that he would support the Ministry, not because he had much faith in it, but because any government ought to be fairly tested (especially) ... when the country is passing through such trouble as never afflicted any other British community. (38)

So afraid were members of the consequences of another change of government, that the new Ministry was challenged only once during the session.

The most important issue raised in Parliament during the session, and that on which the Governments' continued existence depended, was income taxation. For the Government, anxiously casting about for new sources of revenue, were forced to include this unpopular new tax in the Budget. It might seem puzzling that a government which has been labelled conservative was responsible for introducing a measure that was anathema to most conservatives, a measure generally regarded as radical. For the principle of the income tax was far from being accepted in Victoria during the 1890's, and may, in fact, be employed as a useful test of liberalism.

(37) V.P.D., Vol. 72 P. 116. Bennett also said, "if a vote of want of confidence is submitted a few months hence, I may act differently with regard to it than I intend to do on the present occasion, when I propose to throw in my lot with the Government".

(38) Ibid., P.141.
in this colony just as in New South Wales. (39) To the conservatives, who at least claimed to believe that the role of government was minimal, income taxation was a gross interference by the government in the economic activities of private citizens. They could see no reason why the economically successful ought to contribute more to the cost of government than the unsuccessful.

Introducing the Budget, Carter carefully analysed the Depression, and isolated four factors which he believed were mainly responsible. (40) In the first place, he pointed to the all-round fall in values throughout the world; then he blamed the neglect of rural industries by previous governments; thirdly, he criticised the excessive legislation which had corroded the self-reliance of the people; and finally he attributed the financial collapse to the all pervading decline in confidence, which the colony had been enduring for the past three years. Again, the conservative nature of the interpretation is evident: the fear of "grand-motherly" legislation, and the emphasis on rural industry as the true source of the colony's wealth are both conservative attitudes.

In an effort to bridge the increasing gap between revenue and expenditure, Carter proposed an income tax to raise

(39) Dr. A.W. Martin points out in his unpublished M.A. thesis, "Political Developments in New South Wales 1894-6" (p.76) that in that colony members' attitudes to income taxation were one index of their "Liberalism".
(40) V.P.D., Vol. 72 Pp. 400-1.
£300,000, (41) and a primage duty of 3% on all goods, except those subject to duties of more than 25% ad valorem. So determined was Patterson that the income tax would be accepted that he made his continuation in office dependent upon it. McKinley (42) expressed the Ministerials' resentment of these strong-arm tactics when he stated,

But I understand that the object of making a question a test one is to obtain the votes of honorable members who do not altogether agree with the proposal that is placed before them. (43)

Patterson obviously expected to encounter some opposition to the new tax - after all, he himself had been converted to it only within the previous year. Previously his attitude had been just the same as that of his colleagues; he believed it "meddlesome and inquisitive". It was only the necessities of the time that induced him to change his attitude. As he himself declared

I was converted to the income tax in February last, when the necessities of the country made it absolutely indispensable. (44)

However, in thinking that he could bludgeon his 'supporters' into giving their assent to the measure, Patterson over-estimated his control over the other members of his party.

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(41) The rate of taxation proposed was, On incomes between £200 and £1200, 3d. in £. On incomes between £1200 and £2200, 4½d. in £. On incomes over £2200, 6d. in £. The rate was doubled on income from acquired wealth.
(42) Alex McKinley was a publisher, and conservative member for Toorak, 1892-4.
(43) V.P.D., Vol. 72, P.463.
(44) Ibid., P.455.
For the general repugnance felt by Victorian conservatives towards the income tax, even in a time of national emergency, outweighed their allegiance to the government. Of the forty-six whose votes had made Patterson Premier in January, eighteen abandoned Patterson six months later, solely because he insisted on introducing the income tax. (45)

The typical attitude adopted by those conservatives was expressed by C.F. Taylor, a barrister from Balwyn, and member for Hawthorn since 1889. In the course of his speech, he said

The Premier has just told us that the Government are going to introduce this income tax and stand or fall by it. ... I have no desire to do anything or to give any vote which will oust them from that position, but for this income tax I cannot vote. (46)

Taylor claimed that an income tax would be justifiable only as a last resort, and the occasion for it had by no means as yet arisen. According to Taylor, there was still a considerable opportunity for retrenchment, especially in the Education Department. There, he said, the original

(45) The 18 were:
E.H. Austin (Ripon and Hampden), S.T. Staughton (Bourke West), E.L. Zox (Melbourne East), R. Harper (Bourke East), J.F. Leven (Darwon), J.S. White (Albert Park), J. Keys (Dandenong and Berwick), J. Ferguson (Ovens), C.F. Taylor (Hawthorn), J. Bosisto (Jolimont and West Richmond), D. Gillies (Eastern Suburbs), J. Harris (South Yarra), W. Madden (Horsham), A. McKinley (Toorak), T. Langdon (Korong), W.M. Clark (Footscray), P. Stuart (Melbourne East), I. Isaacs (Bogong).
With the exception of Clark and Isaacs, all can be labelled as conservatives.

(46) V.P.D., Vol. 72 P. 457.
intention of the Act had been long surpassed—children were receiving free education beyond the rudimentary level originally guaranteed. In addition, there were many people receiving a free education who could in fact pay for it. He claimed, turning to the income tax itself, that the present time was unseasonable for such a measure, and that, furthermore, the tax was objectionable, because it is inquisitorial, and because it is a tax on personal energy. (47)

Similarly McKinley argued,

I do not think that the colony is in such a state that it must have either recourse to a new and obnoxious form of taxation or repudiate the debts that it has incurred. (48)

Many said they were prepared to accept the tax if it was shown to be absolutely necessary, but, as there always appeared to be the possibility of further retrenchment, it was exceedingly difficult to demonstrate just that. So strongly did they feel about this that eighteen were prepared to vote against the six month old Government that they had helped create.

In the opposite position to these conservatives were the liberals. They had opposed Patterson from the outset, but they also supported the income tax. Such was the dilemma of Sir Graham Berry in believing that the income tax was the

(47) Ibid., P.460.
(48) Ibid., P.464.
most just form of taxation. He voted for Patterson, even though he was Leader of the Opposition, and knew he could have brought the Ministry down had he so chosen.

At first glance then, the vote on the 1893 Budget seems to verify completely Ingham's statements about Victoria's political parties. The division lists appear to make a mockery of any attempt to analyse the House in terms of liberals and conservatives. Supporting the Budget there were twenty "opponents" of the Ministry, including Berry and Trenwith, while opposing it there were nineteen "Ministerialists", including conservative stalwarts, like Gillies, Madden (49), and Staughton (50). When the motion was put, Patterson and Berry combined to oppose Gillies and Turner.

Despite the fact that the two parties were completely divided on this motion, it is still possible to identify them as separate parties. Those Ministerialists who crossed the floor did so because of their conservative distrust of income taxation, and their belief that the emergency was not

(49) Walter Madden was a surveyor, who represented Horsham from 1880-1894. He was born in Ireland and arrived in Victoria in 1857. He was a member of O'Loghlen's Ministry, and between 1889-94, he voted solidly with the conservatives, supporting the Coalition, opposing Munro and Shiels, and supporting Patterson. He was regarded as one of the most conservative members of the House.

(50) Samuel Staughton entered Parliament first in 1880, and represented Bourke West almost continuously until 1902. He was a grazier and owned a large amount of property in Melbourne. He was returned unopposed in 1889, 1892 and 1894, and was regarded as reliably conservative.
such that this drastic legislation was necessary: the two
groups within the conservative party differed on a question
of tactics, not on basic attitudes. Likewise, amongst the
liberals, those who opposed the Budget did so in an attempt
to defeat the Ministry, not to show their dislike of the tax.
Both Berry and Turner favoured the tax, only Turner believed
that by opposing the Budget, a more liberal government could
be installed in office.

Thus, with a majority of four, Patterson was able to
survive the motion amending the Budget. Although the
Budget was formally accepted in this way, Patterson realized
that when the individual items were debated he stood little
chance of having them accepted: with twenty of his own
party opposing it he was an easy prey to anyone (later in
the session), wishing to form a new government. Consequently,
after the Budget debate, the income tax was quietly omitted
from the Ministerial programme, and a Supplementary Budget,
one likely to be more acceptable to his supporters, was
introduced. As Carter said, when introducing the second
Budget,

... the £300,000 anticipated as likely to accrue
from the income tax was from the narrow majority
by which its introduction was carried, rendered
doubtful of receipt. (51)

Responding to pressure from Gillies, (52) Patterson made
retrenchment and not taxation the first item of the Budget

(51) V.P.D., Vol. 73, P.1678.
(52) Argus, 12 Aug. 1893.
discussed, and he reduced the 3% prime rate duties to a 1% duty payable on all goods hitherto admitted freely. (53)
The Supplementary Budget finally passed included further retrenchment and increased sugar duties.

Despite its manifest inability to impose its will on the House, Patterson's Ministry remained in power. According to one political commentator, "the two most influential men in the House" were Gillies and Deakin, (54) and neither had the slightest desire to challenge the Government. The logical alternative to Patterson as Premier was Sir Graham Berry, and he showed clearly he did not covet the position when he supported the Ministry in the Budget vote. Thus, in spite of the Premier's weakness, and his dependence on other conservatives, not themselves acceptable to the House, he was not challenged again until the next session.

Because of this the Session was completed quickly and on a note of complacency and self-satisfaction. The Governor's speech announced that many of the unemployed had been gainfully settled on the land, thus easing the unemployment problem, and also fostering natural production. He said also that the budget had at last been balanced, and that because of the efficiency of the House and the courage

(53) Argus, 2 Sept., 1893.
(54) Argus, 4 Aug., 1893.
of the community, he nurtured "the hope that the country will very soon return once more to its normal condition of prosperity. (55)

With equal optimism, Carter announced when he introduced his Supplementary Budget

Now what I want to point out is, that when this Ministry was formed it undertook to do one thing, and that was to make both ends meet. We were to stop the drift; and we were at all sacrifices and at any cost to make both sides of the ledger balance. The House and the country said that that must be done to preserve the national credit and honour, and this government undertook to do it. It was incumbent upon us to carry out that work, and what I want to point out to the committee is that we have done it. The ledger balances and the deficit is decreased. (56)

Turner, who was at this time deputy leader of the Opposition, also congratulated the government and the House on their achievements during the session. The House, he said, (57) had sunk all questions of party politics; and although the front opposition bench felt that there was little justification for having been ejected from office, they had accepted the votes and had assisted their successors.

There was, however, one other question raised during this session which, although it was not the occasion of any radical division within the House, and was not even debated

(55) V.P.D., Vol. 73 P.2920.
(56) Ibid., P.1680.
(57) Ibid., P.2916.
heatedly, was an indication and a reflection of the shift in political emphasis that was taking place.
C. Protection Attacked.

On 5 September, Sir Henry Wrixon moved the following motion in the Legislative Assembly.

That the present industrial and financial condition of Victoria calls for an enquiry into the effect of our fixed system upon industry and production, and that a Royal Commission should be appointed for such purpose. (58)

In his speech supporting this motion Sir Henry bore witness to the resurgence of free-trade doctrines and beliefs that was taking place throughout the colony, which resurgence, he rightly predicted, was to change the character of Victorian politics. He claimed that many people in the colony were asking themselves

How is it that in Victoria, with every possible condition of plenty, with nature giving us good soil and plenty of it, good seasons, rich and productive mines, and a population which cannot be said to press upon the territory for support — how is it that in the midst of all this we find countries surrounded by the problems of poverty which distract the old countries of the world, how comes that about? (59)

To Wrixon, the answer to this question was no secret. The basic cause of Victoria’s difficulties was, in short, that the productive power of the colony was in decline; and the reason for this was that people were, and had for a long time past been flocking from the land into the cities — mainly Melbourne.

(58) V.P.D., Vol. 72 P.1396.
(59) Ibid., P.1397.
They went away from tilling the land, and the energy, intelligence, capital and power of combination which would naturally and properly go in such a colony as ours in the direction of tilling the land, left it. (60)

These people left the land and went to the cities, because it was there that the manufacturing industries were — which industries, he said, were the direct result of the policy of protection. The manufacturers were given the benefits of customs barriers to enable them to develop, but their development was strictly limited by their markets, which, when the other colonies erected similar barriers, were confined just to Victoria. As a result, there was only a limited demand for goods, resulting in a continual pool of unemployment.

The only solution to the present crisis, Wrixon thought, lay in a policy of encouragement to agriculture. Manufactured goods could only satisfy domestic needs as they could not produce cheaply enough to compete on the overseas market. With £2m. being spent annually on the public debt, Victoria could never regard itself as secure until it had exports to compete in overseas markets; thus the government had to encourage agriculture and see the limitations of manufacturing. To this end he felt that a Royal Commission ought investigate the tariff, with a view to reducing it, as tariffs were, in general, "a hindrance to farmers, and an unnecessary limitation

(60) Ibid.
on imports". (61)

At the next election, he predicted, this tariff question would be a major issue on which men would be able to take one of two different opinions. Either they would favour a policy of prohibition on goods that could be manufactured locally allowing the rest to enter free, or else they would support a gradual reduction in all duties, in the direction of, if not actually reaching, free-trade.

The debate initiated by this motion was a short one, and, before long, Patterson moved an amendment (62) that, instead of a Royal Commission, a Parliamentary Committee be appointed to investigate the tariff. The significance of Wrixon's motion lay not in the effects it had on political groups during the session, but as an indication of broader political movements - as a sign of the times.

We have already seen that the protection - free trade question was a dead one during the eighties. The prosperity of the boom period was to most evidence of the wisdom and efficacy of the protective tariff. The analysis of the 1889 election made it clear that what moved men to political action then were purely local issues. General questions, such as protection, were not raised because, as catch cries, they had lost their vote-winning potential. Throughout the colony in 1889 support for protection was unanimous.

(61) Ibid., P.1401.
(62) V.P.D., Vol. 73 P.1709.
During the eighties, only one organization—the Trades Hall Council—had shown any concern on the tariff question. In fact, during the decade the Council seemed more anxious to defend and extend the system of protection than to secure increased wages or better conditions of work. Not only did the Council's proceedings during the decade manifest this pre-occupation with protection, (63) but so also did the first plank of their 1889 platform, which read "The maintenance and extension of protection to local industries". (64)

But to no-one else was the tariff issue a matter of very much interest. Even though there were a number of free-traders in the Assembly, they knew that it was not worth their political lives to raise the question in debate. Free traders, such as Sir Henry Wrixon and Walter Madden, contested the two previous elections without even raising the tariff issue. When they did admit to their free trade beliefs, they were always quick to affirm that they would never interfere with the accepted system of protection.

It was not until the optimism and prosperity of the boom began to wane that free traders began to question the prevailing economic orthodoxy, and raise doubts in men's minds.

(63) See for instance, T.H.C. Minutes, 27 June 1884 when in response to a complaint from the Saddlers' society the Council urges the Government to have certain goods manufactured in the colony. T.H.C. Minutes, 4 Sept. 1885. Thanked J. Woods M.L.A. for emphasising colony's protective policy in Parliament. (64) See appendix V.
as to its validity.

The first sign of the resurgence of the free trade movement was seen in May 1890, when there occurred a "preliminary meeting in favour of the formation of a new free-trade organization". After discussion, the meeting resolved

That this meeting, recognizing the injustice and injurious effects of the so-called protective duties now levied in Victoria, and the resulting impediments to trade and discouragements to industry, hereby resolves to agitate in favour of the gradual adoption of a free trade policy. (65)

As a result of this meeting the Free-trade Democratic Association was formed to forward the interests of the free-trade cause in Victoria.

For its first two years, the Association pursued its task in a very quiet and not noticeably influential manner. The 1892 election came, and went, without the Association being mentioned. E. Jowett, who was secretary of the Association at its foundation, was prominent in the National Association, which never espoused free trade. Despite his loyalty to the free trade cause, he said to a meeting of the Young Victorian Patriotic League (66) in 1892

(65) Argus, 9 May 1890.
(66) The Young Victorian Patriotic League was an off-shoot of the National Association, specifically designed to foster an interest in politics among the younger generation.
The remedy for the present situation is to restore the national credit and get good business men to do it... The loss of confidence in Victoria has been caused by the attempt of the labor party to assume control of the country through the Trades Hall and the Parliamentary Political League. (67)

It was not until late in 1892 that the Association began to court mass support. In December, the Association sponsored a meeting, addressed by Sir Henry Parkes, to celebrate the recent free trade victory in the United States. (68) Also addressing the meeting were Sir Henry Wrixon and Robert Reid. (69) This meeting marked the beginning of a renewal of public interest in free trade, and was followed in February by a 'Revival Meeting'. (70)

It is a sign of the extent of free trade influence that, in January 1893, twenty men thought it necessary to meet, for the purposes of forming a "Liberal, Protective and Federation League". The aim of the meeting which formed this League was "to form a league for preserving and disseminating comprehensive and enlightened protectionist views". (71)

The chairman, W.J. Lomer, claimed that during the past few months the free-traders, supported by the Argus,

(67) Age, 10 Feb. 1892.
(68) Age, 20 Dec. 1892.
(69) Robert Reid, M.L.C. was a Flinders Lane wholesaler, member of the Chamber of Commerce and free-trader; he became a member of Patterson's Ministry.
(70) Age, 5 Feb. 1893.
(71) Age, 19 Jan. 1893.
had commenced a very determined attack on the policy of protection. Although protection had been generally accepted by almost all politicians for some time past, he said, the present apathy of protectionists was giving the free traders their chance. The formation of the Free Trade Democratic Association was one index of the earnestness of their purpose. The meeting then appointed a committee to call a public meeting, to revive enthusiasm for the protectionists' cause.

The public meeting in the Temperance Hall three weeks later, attracted about 400 people. (72) Explaining the purpose of the new association, the chairman Lormer pointed out that

the meeting had been called with a view to forming a liberal and protection league, inasmuch as certain gentlemen had started what they were pleased to call a Free-trade crusade.

The meeting then decided on a six point programme which called on all liberals to unite to form a single party, urged the maintenance of protection and the introduction of one man one vote as the basis of electoral reform. Several radical members, including Beazley, (73) Trenwith and Wyllie, (74) argued that with the free traders organizing, the time had

(72) Age, 9 Feb. 1893.
(73) W. Beazley first represented Collingwood in Parliament in 1889. He was born in London in 1854, and arrived in Victoria in the same year. After 17 years in the saddlery business he became an estate agent. He was an endorsed labor candidate in 1892 and 1894.
(74) D.R. Wyllie was a tinsmith who was the successful P.P.L. candidate for N. Melbourne in 1892. He died in 1893.
come for the liberals to follow suit. As Beazley said, "it was time to show the world what Victorian Liberalism was capable of". (75)

This political conflict that was gradually acquiring momentum outside Parliament in late 1892 and 1893 had already been prefigured by proceedings in the House during the first session of this Parliament. Barry's budget of 1892 had included substantial tariff increases which were strongly challenged by the free trade members of the Opposition who, for the first time for more than a decade, voiced criticisms of the protective poling of the colony.

Thus, within twelve months of the 1892 election, the protection - free trade issue was rapidly becoming one of the major political questions of the day. The cause of this seems to have been general economic crisis, which made men like Wrixon ask why a wealthy colony like Victoria should have been experiencing such unemployment and poverty. The depression was causing men to question what they had hitherto accepted as sacrosanct.

Merchants and squatters, many farmers and professional men, men to whom "land and labor were the true sources of wealth" (76) felt that there was something 'unnatural',

(75) Age, 9 Feb. 1893.
(76) This phrase occurs in the Governor's Speech, 1894 V.P.B., Vol. 74 P.2.
economically perverted about the trend towards urbanisation and industrialisation which had been the outstanding feature of the eighties. To these men, the political and social theories of James Campbell were ideal. Of him the Argus wrote on his death,

From the start to the end, Campbell held to the contrary faith, namely that the great work of this generation is to subdue the land, to dot hill and valley with rural homesteads. (77)

These men felt that the state was intervening too frequently in the lives of men and, as G.D. Carter said in his 1893 Budget speech, that too much legislation was sapping men of their independence. It was the same men who believed in the dual vote, on the grounds that men with property deserved a greater say in the affairs of government than those without property. The 1893 conservative believed that men should return to the land where they belonged, that industries which existed only with the assistance of large tariff barriers ought to close, and that customs duties, artificial impediments to trade, should be abolished. Victoria ought to be, they felt, essentially a primary producing country, whose manufactured goods should be supplied by merchants.

(77) Argus, 18 Sept., 1893.
The political pre-occupation of the conservatives had undergone a marked change since the 1892 elections. Then, they had believed the cause of all the trouble lay with the "socialists, communists and anarchists" on the Trades Hall Council. During the election their over-riding concern had been the defeat of the labor candidates. When the depression worsened after the election, the conservatives felt that only by reversing trends established in the last decade could the crisis be averted. Thus, during 1893 and 1894, their political aims were to reduce the tariffs, force inefficient manufacturers out of business and return people to the land. This would then reduce the general cost of governing which would enable the government to balance its budget, while society could return to its former and ideal state.
Parliament met next after a seven months recess. In the course of his speech, the Governor said that as a result of the government's policy, which was to settle people on the land or at mining occupations, the level of agricultural exports had reached an all-time high. (78) The main item in the government's programme was a Credit Foncier Bill, designed to enable farmers to borrow at a lower than normal rate of interest. The report of the Tariff Commission was not quite ready, he said, but would shortly be presented to the House.

Moving that the Address-in-Reply be accepted was Gillies' successor in Eastern Suburbs, Frank Madden. (79) His first comment on the speech concerned the Tariff Commission Report. He regretted that the Report was not prepared and hoped that this session would set about reducing the "absurdly high duties" that were at present in effect. Protection, he said, "has been tried and found wanting" and consequently he hoped to see in the near future a gradual return to the principle of free trade. (80) Although supposedly

(78) V.P.D., Vol. 74, P.2.
(79) Frank Madden, was a Melbourne solicitor who succeeded Gillies in Eastern Suburbs. Deakin described Madden as the heir to Gillies' seat who tried to take possession of his inheritance before it fell due by contesting the seat in 1892.
(80) V.P.D., Vol. 74, P.13.
supporting the government, he then continued by criticising it for its continued use of the bonus system.

The bonus principle is bad, and is producing an evil effect on the rising generation, who are being taught to depend on others instead of themselves. (81)

He was able, however, to support the proposed reduction in railway freights, this being "in accordance with his over-riding political principle, 'the greatest good for the greatest number'".

Madden then congratulated the government on solving the unemployment problem, and for doing so without being intimidated by the Trades Hall men, whom he abused for introducing the minimum wage question at a time when workers ought to be prepared to accept any wage, for the sake of work. Giving voice to the prejudices which he shared with so many, he said

The Trades Hall leaders used such of their baleful influence as was left to bully Parliament, and the municipal institutions into fixing a minimum rate of wages and otherwise disturbing the laws of supply and demand. (82)

Finally, he urged that the Education vote be reduced, pointing out that those responsible for the original Education Act intended children to be given only a basic standard of education and no more. Frank Madden was clearly a valuable asset to the forces of conservatism in the Victorian

(81) Ibid., P.14.
(82) Ibid., P.15.
Legislative Assembly!

Another new member, returned during the recess, was D.B. Lazarus, the only representative of a mining constituency to support Patterson. He seconded the Address-in-Reply, with a speech that was truly indicative of his political conservatism. Of the Tariff Commission, he said,

I sincerely trust that, from the way in which the gentlemen comprising the commission have gone into the matter, they will be able to recommend to the House a very marked reduction in the prohibitive taxation which we are suffering from. For my own part, I would go even further. I trust the commission will be able to recommend the complete abolition of those dues, duties and taxes which hamper external trade. (83)

The amendment to the Address-in-Reply was moved by Shiels and seconded by Deakin who had finally crossed the floor and given his allegiance to the Liberals. Since 1889, Liberals had been crossing the floor and abandoning the Coalition Ministry, which had become the Opposition and later the Patterson Ministry. Increasingly had it become true that Patterson's Ministry was essentially a conservative government supported by conservatives, while the Opposition was essentially a liberal one. However, until the most eminent liberal of the period abandoned the conservatives, such an analysis failed to be completely true.

Deakin announced his opposition to the Government by seconding the amendment to the Address. After a long and

(83) Ibid., p.17.
amusing speech in which he condemned the Ministry for its lack of activity during the recess, and its lack of programme for the Session, he said

I believe that they have not fulfilled the programme which they laid down to the House when they first took office. I see no promise of its being fulfilled. (84)

Since Patterson had become Premier with a majority of three in the House, he had been abandoned by two of the ablest liberals, Isaacs and Deakin.

A comment by Armytage, the only big landowner in opposition to Patterson, provides further evidence of the changing reactions to politics. Referring to Shiels' amendment to the Address-in-Reply, he said that its effect would be to draw the political lines again, dividing the House into liberals and conservatives. "The time must come, sooner or later, when we must draw distinct party lines". (85)

Nevertheless, although there was within the House considerable dissatisfaction with the Government, there were two reasons why Shiels' amendment was defeated. As the economic situation had not shown very much improvement, there was still considerable reluctance to provoke an

(84) V.P.D., Vol. 74, P.91.
(85) Ibid, P.81.

Armytage also said, "We know that in political circles, political feeling has been almost dead for some time past, but this motion ... is likely to revive political parties, and I think it would be in the interests of the country if political parties were revived". Ibid, P.79.
unnecessary struggle for office, which may have even prolonged the crisis. Secondly, the amendment had been moved by Shiels, who was thus the alternative to Patterson as Premier. Just as Gillies had not been regarded as a feasible Premier 18 months before, so, for the same reasons, Shiels was not looked upon favourably by the liberal opposition, especially by those corner men who would have to cross the floor to oust Patterson.

For those reasons, until Carter introduced his second Budget in July, the Ministry was safe from any personal challenge, although Patterson was continually nettled by some of his conservative "supporters". Just as in the previous session. Patterson had experienced great difficulty in having his programme accepted by the House, so, when he introduced his Credit Foncier Bill, it was subject to as much criticism from his side of the House as from the Opposition. So much was this the case that, in July, Patterson called a meeting of his supporters,

because of the need to have good understanding between the Government and its supporters in the coming long session. (86)

In reply, some of the Ministrialists, like Harper and the Maddens, accused the government of trying to bludgeon their followers, and force them to approve the Credit Foncier Bill. Patterson had clearly been trying to use these tactics

(86) Age, 5 July 1894.
since he became Premier, largely because his majority was so small. This, for instance, was the way in which he tried to force the income tax measure through the House in the previous session. On that occasion his plans had been unsuccessful, when some of the conservatives led by their leader Gillies, showed Patterson that he could not dictate to them. Although Gillies had resigned from the House to take up his position as Agent General, there were still many conservatives who did not seek office, and who felt no obligations to support measures which they did not approve. As a result of their resistance, Patterson was forced to adopt much more conciliatory tactics with his "followers".

Outside the House, as if anticipating the crisis, the political pulse was beginning to quicken. At Shepparton John West was at the centre of a movement to reform and purify politics. His brain child, the Triple Reform League, was rapidly spreading. As the meeting, which was held to form a Dookie branch, stated, (87) the aims of the League were first to reduce the number of members in the House to sixty; secondly, to reduce the payment of members; and thirdly, to alter the system of cabinet government. This latter reform included the election of Ministers by the House, making each one responsible to the House, and not to the Premier or to cabinet. As a result of this reform, West claimed, when one minister gave cause for dissatisfaction, this would not involve the whole Ministry. The effect of this would be to

(87) *Age*, 3 July 1894.
abolish party in its present degraded form, would put an end to the eternal scramble for office, and would secure a Ministry composed of the best men in the House.

The reforms espoused by the League had already gained some support in the House. Frank Madden, in the speech discussed earlier, expressed approval for the reduction in the payment of members. Later in the session when the Budget proved unacceptable, there was considerable support for the Government to give way to a composite committee to look after the finances. Particularly with the Maddens, Harper and Leven, were the ideas of a joint committee popular.

Even the Age had come to advocate one of the three reforms, although it opposed the others. An editorial on the subject of party government argued (88) that the notion of a two-party system of government was an old-fashioned one. Syme, for it was his idea, (89) claimed that as the franchise had become further extended and the concerns of government widened, there appeared more than just two broad interest groups. Because of this, he said, the present system of ministerial responsibility was the weakest link in the constitutional chain, fostering an incessant struggle for the Ministerial benches, which delayed effective governing, leaving power in the hands of the public service not the cabinet. For this reason, the Age favoured the system of

(88) Age, 9 July 1894.
elective ministers.

The position of the Patterson Ministry at the end of July 1894 had become fairly uncertain. Inside the House, members were waiting for the Budget before making any move to unseat the Government. Outside Patterson had lost the invaluable support of the Age. An editorial of the paper read

The one mandate which the existing Government declared it accepted was to make the national figures balance. Its ludicrous failure to carry it out has not been compensated for by any attempt to deal with the other side of the problem. Its achievement consists in the account of its stewardship which is about to be made by the Treasurer. The rest is silence. (90)

Before Carter brought down his Budget, his government had lost the support first of Alfred Deakin and then of David Syme. It required a very favourable financial report, combined with positive proposals for the next year, for the Government to withstand the growing opposition.

Unfortunately for Patterson, neither of these needs was fulfilled by the Budget. When Carter delivered his Budget Address it was for the fourth successive year that Parliament had to hear a tale of woe. (91) Despite the Treasurer's certainty the previous year that he had at last balanced the budget, he was obliged to confess that the financial year had ended with a deficit of £665,338 and that the actual receipts had fallen short of the estimates by £843,524.

(90) Age, 28 July 1894.
(91) V.F.D., Vol. 74, pp.1105-1121.
However, as far as most members of the House were concerned, there was worse to follow. In his attempt to find alternative sources of revenue, Carter included a "drag-net clause", by which a revenue duty of 10% was imposed on a large range of goods which had previously been introduced free, while on another list of goods, he reduced the duty from a high to a lower level. The other major source of new revenue was the income tax that had been so weakly supported, and then withdrawn the previous year.

The Budget came as a complete shock to the whole colony, and immediately provoked a chain reaction of opposition. The Age declared in its editorial on the morning after the Budget had been brought down,

Altogether, for sterility of thought, barrenness of invention, and confusion of ideas, it is safe to say that the Victorian Budget of 1894 will be looked back upon as something to make Mr. Carter's name famous, and to point a moral with, though it can never adorn a tale. (92)

There had been no similar case, said the Age, of Ministerial mal ± fides in twenty years - this because the 10% duties were a free trade measure, and, "in so far as they were levied upon new materials, are a blow at the Protective policy". Throughout the colony a whole range of interest groups marshalled themselves against the government's budget.

Inside the House, 31 members of the Opposition met, and unanimously disapproved it. (93) The bulk of the criticism centred on the 10% list which, it was said, removed the

(92) Age, 2 Aug 1894.
(93) Ibid.
burden of taxation from the rich onto the poor, raised the cost of linen and cotton goods, and ruined the wine industry. Thus Shiels was authorised to move a motion of no confidence.

A letter to the Age expressed an attitude that was becoming widespread.

The question of the hour is the readjustment of the burden of taxation ... the government has been piling bundles of straw onto the labour camel's back ... Now is the time to re-organize the liberal party: now is the time to advance a liberal policy. (94)

Member for Fitzroy, Best, explained to a meeting of the newly formed Liberal Protectionist Association why the Opposition had decided to move a no confidence motion. It was not for political purposes so much as from a "conviction that the commerce of the country would be dislocated by the tariff proposals of the government". (95) Meetings of the protectionist and free traders associations condemned the Budget.

A second letter to the Age (96) called for a Prince to unite and lead the Liberal Party, mentioning as the obvious choice Alfred Deakin. This was not the first time his name had arisen: it was commonly alleged by the political gossips that the liberals in the House had extended an open invitation to Deakin and George Turner to lead the party. So far, both men had declined for personal reasons.

(94) Ibid.
(95) Age, 3 Aug. 1894.
(96) Age, 4 Aug. 1894.
The weekly meeting of the Trades Hall Council discussed the Budget and passed the following motion.

That this council protests against the inequitable system of Customs House taxation proposed by the Patterson government, and records its opinion that the proper system of raising revenue would be by land, income and absentee taxes. (97)

In the city and throughout the suburbs members such as Berry, Vale, Trenwith, Prendargast, T. Smith, J. Winter, P. Salmon and others chaired or addressed protest meetings, condemning the measures included in the Budget, which represented direct attacks on the colony's protective tariff.

Not only was Patterson strongly attacked by his political opponents, but there was even a weakening of support for him from within his cabinet. Protectionist Ministers, who had not belonged to the committee which had drawn up the Budget, such as O'Loughlen, Webb, and Richardson, were anxious to revise it. (98)

Consequently Patterson followed the only course that was open to him — but a course which was almost the equivalent of political suicide. When Shiels condemned the Budget Patterson made no real attempt to defend it; rather he let it be known that he was prepared to withdraw it, and to introduce a second Budget favoured by the Assembly. (99) Patterson had been forced into this position because a meeting of 30 Ministerialists had appointed a committee to

(97) Ibid.
confer with the Ministers on what items should be omitted from the 10% drag net clause. (100) Carter then introduced a Supplementary budget (101) designed to win the support of his Ministerial supporters.

However, the fortunes of the Government had reached their lowest possible ebb. It was impossible for a Ministry which was clearly unable to control its so-called supporters to command the support of a majority of the House. The Ministerial corner let it be known that they would support a motion of no confidence moved by Turner or Deakin. Thus the Ministry would continue to exist for only as long as it took to persuade Deakin or Turner to lead the liberal party.

When the 41 members of the Opposition met (102) they did not take long to vote Turner to the leadership of the party. Deakin, supporting Turner, said that Shields deserved praise for his work, only Turner commanded the respect of members on both sides of the House. Thus, by a large majority, Turner became leader of the Opposition, and was, at the same time, authorized to move a motion of no confidence in the government.

Turner's speech condemning the government was like the man himself, unrhetorical and unemotional. He quoted Patterson's speech delivered under similar circumstances in January 1893, and showed how his accusations levelled at

(100) Age, 8 Aug. 1894.
(101) In the Supplementary Budget, the 10% list was revised and income tax was included.
(102) Age, 16 Aug. 1894.
Shields applied equally well to himself. In brief, he said,

it is clear and unmistakeable that this Government, no matter how long they may remain in their position, will not be able to carry through the laws and measures which are necessary in the interests of this country. (103)

Within a few days Parliament was dissolved and a new election was being prepared.
"We regard the issues before the country with great gratification because it is the first stirring amongst the dry bones of politics which the colony has seen through a wholly disastrous decade. But the presence of these great issues which confront the people are a solemn call on every Liberal to do his duty."

(Age editorial, 13 September 1894)

"Anyone who knows anything of the matter knows that (Deakin) held the affairs of Victoria in his hands from the time he left office until he left the State House altogether. Sir George Turner would have gone under many times but for the support he always got from Mr. Deakin."

(The Critic, 23 August 1902)
Chapter 5.

1894 Election

A. The Candidates

During the three weeks between the dissolution of parliament and the ensuing election Victorian politics witnessed the first pitched battle between two distinct groups for over fifteen years. Not since the election of 1881 had lines been drawn so clearly, and cut so deeply into the electorates. For the first time since before the coalitions were formed the electors were confronted with a choice between the ministry and the opposition - a choice which was the political issue. Hitherto, the result at this level had been largely a foregone conclusion, and the main struggles had concerned separate issues such as stock tax or the unionists. In 1894 the divisions between ministerialists and oppositionists were reinforced by divisions on the main questions at issue, taxation versus retrenchment, protection versus free-trade.

Patterson was in the difficult position of having to rely largely on the nineteen months of "his spotless administration". Given the unfavorable circumstances, he said, his government had performed ably, and had been subject to unfair

1. In 1889, the Gillies Ministry was returned with a majority of 30, as was Shiels in 1892.
2. Age, 7 September 1894.
criticism from the Opposition. Even though some retrenchment had been carried out by previous governments, Patterson claimed, he had managed to reduce expenditure by £1 million, in his short term in office. If returned, he would continue to retrench by curtailing government pensions, and by making further reductions in the civil service. To raise more revenue, he planned to re-introduce his measure for income taxation. His social policy hinged around his proposals to direct the unemployed from the cities and place them on the land—where they belonged. This, he suggested, would have the dual effect of alleviating the distress and extending the colony's producing power. The country was, after all, he implied, the real source of wealth, not the city. A free-trader, Patterson was certain that a reduction of the tariff would provide one solution to the crisis. Finally, he opposed the one man one vote movement, as the cause only of a lunatic fringe. Appealing to the voters, the Premier asked them to return members who would support one party or the other, and who would not adopt an independent role. Having experienced political instability for four years, Patterson realised that the source of each Ministry's weakness lay in the ministerial corner. Thus, he said, "it is of no use for you to send men to Parliament who are not of one party or the other." For the first time in ten years, Patterson realised, it was meaningful to talk in terms of two 'parties'.

in the House, and that stability would follow only when members were prepared to give their complete support to the Ministry or to the Opposition, without selling their vote to the highest bidder.

Turner, in his campaign, presented to the electors a two-fold argument. In the first place, he launched a strong attack on the Patterson Ministry, criticising the manner of its creation and the method of its administration. Patterson, he said, had been invited to form his Ministry only after several months' intrigue with Ministerials. Turner pointed out that this was proved by the fact that only two members of his cabinet had been elected the previous March as Oppositionists. Clearly, trickery and corruption lay behind Patterson's majority of three!

Then, said Turner, the Government's record was no more honourable. Of its nineteen months in office, eleven were spent in recess; because Gillies had not proved to be amenable as a Ministerial back-bencher, Patterson removed him by appointing him Agent-General; the Government's policy with regard to the bank crisis was inept, and when the House met, it abandoned income tax because some of its conservative supporters opposed the measure. The final straw came, said Turner, when Carter introduced a Budget that attempted to reverse twenty-five years' history and return to free-trade.

4. Age, 6 September 1894.
5. SIX of the eight Ministers in the Assembly had been elected as supporters of Shields: O'Loughlin, Richardson, Baker, McIntyre, McColl, Webb.
The obvious discontent throughout the colony which was 
reflected in Parliament induced Turner to move the no-
confidence motion that was responsible for the premature 
general election.

If returned as Premier, Turner said that he would 
continue to retrench by leaving unfilled vacancies in the 
civil service, by pruning excessive spending, and by reducing
municipal endowments to wealthy cities. He would revise the
tariff without making it any less protective, and he would
impose direct taxation "on a man's surplus of assets over
liabilities." He supported one man one vote, although he
did not believe it to be an appropriate time to introduce
such legislation; in the same way he supported the minimum
rate of wages in Government contracts.

Although their political and social policies were
almost diametrically opposed, and their interpretations of
the previous eighteen months were contradictory, Turner and
Patterson did share one attitude. Both believed that the
electors were confronted with a choice between them, and that
this question incorporated all others that candidates might
raise during the elections.

It was evident then, and is even more so now, that a
wide political gulf separated these two leaders. Patterson
was a free-trader who believed in plural voting and minimum
government intervention; he saw Victoria as essentially a

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6. Age, 6 September 1894.
primary producing country which was suffering from the depression as the inevitable consequence of the cancerous growth of industrialisation and urbanisation. Turner was a protectionist and a single voter who believed in the Government's obligation to provide certain minimal standards of welfare for its less privileged classes. He also believed that the colony's future was as closely linked with its secondary industries as with its primary, and that, as a consequence, protection was essential.

Almost all the 187 candidates placed themselves behind one or the other of these two leaders. The colony's 234,000 electors were asked to choose between the parties led, and the policies represented, by them. There was little overlapping: only rarely did a free-trader support Turner or a protectionist fellow Patterson.

Robert Murray Smith, for instance, for long the mainstay of the cause of free trade in Victoria, was contesting the 1894 election after an absence of eleven years from Parliament. He said that he welcomed the assistance the Premier was giving to free trade, and that, if returned, he would support Patterson, and would work to bring about the gradual reduction of duties until complete free-trade was confirmed. 7 Free trade, he maintained was the "rightful cause of the Victorian working man." 8 Like Patterson, he

7. Age, 14 September 1894.
8. Ibid.
opposed one man one vote, and denied legislate a minimum rate of wages, as with the workings of supply and demand.

Similarly, the political and social ideas of Frank Madden conformed to what could almost be described as the conservative model. Madden believed that the issue at stake in the election was crystal clear. Was Victoria, he asked, to continue to enjoy the sound government of Patterson, or was it to jeopardise its future by entrusting itself to a Ministry "dependent for its existence on the Trades Hall - a state of things which had produced a species of anarchy in N.S.W. and Queensland." Madden's policy to cope with the deficit was to abolish the municipal subsidy, reduce the extent of education being provided by the State, and decrease tariff duties gradually until free trade was reached. He did not believe that fresh taxation was necessary, but if it was, he favored a property tax.

In the Western District electorate of Ripon and Hampden, squatter F.E. Austin was another who committed himself to support the Government. He claimed that there was general support for Patterson because he was providing "good government". Austin opposed high tariff duties because

10. F.E. Austin was a pastoralist who owned at least 28,000 acres in the Western District. He entered Parliament in 1892 and was a member for eight years, during which time he supported the conservatives.
they "hampere[d] trade, and were of no use to the workingman." He also opposed the income tax and believed that in the past Victorians had come to lean too heavily on the government—they must now learn to support themselves, he said.

There was, thus, amongst the candidates a clearly defined group which espoused conservative political and social policies and which unanimously accepted the Patterson Ministry as best representing their interests. They were either free-traders, or else they wanted a marked reduction of the tariff; they preferred retrenchment to new taxation, although many had been forced by years of deficit to give their reluctant assent to temporary taxation. They believed that the government's role in society was limited, and that it certainly had neither the right nor the obligation to legalize minimum wages. Politically, the significant feature of this conservative group was that they supported the same ministry, and were not distributed randomly through the House as had been the case during the days of Coalition Governments.

At the other extreme of the political spectrum were some twenty or so radical candidates who opposed the conservatives at every point, and who stood pledged to support Turner. One of the leading spokesmen for this radical group was G.W. Prendergast, a prominent trade unionist who had

11. *Age*, 7 September 1894.
12. G.W. Prendergast was a long-time member of the Trades Hall Council, and a one-time president, and member of the Printers Union. He had previously contested the 1892 election and also an 1893 by-election.
contested the 1892 election as P.P.L. candidate for East Melbourne.

He announced himself as a candidate of the newly reconstructed Labor and Liberal Party and, as such, a supporter of one-man-one-vote, women's suffrage, a tax on unimproved land values, an income tax on income over £200, a high Protective tariff, and a minimum rate of wages. He strongly opposed the Patterson government and their proposal to reduce members' numbers and salaries, which he interpreted as a conservative blow at working class political rights.

Discussing the general political situation, Freerberg said that he was glad to see that the Liberal Party had decided to use its majority to rule the country and to abandon the policy of coalition governments: furthermore, he felt that every honest Liberal must surely share his attitude.

Another important spokesman for this group was G. Sangster, president of the Trades Hall Council, and secretary of the Seamen's Union. In his election address he stated that he was "going to the poll in the Liberal interest" because he felt that the workers ought to be more fairly represented in the House than they had been in the past.

Included in his platform were one-man-one-vote, tax on unimproved land values, income tax on incomes over £200,  

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establishment of a State Bank, and opposition to free trade. Finally, he said, he believed it to be the Government's duty to provide work for the unemployed and a living for the destitute. 15

These radical Labor candidates formed a readily identifiable, self-conscious group which contested the election on a common platform that stemmed from a common framework of beliefs and attitudes. They all believed that Turner's government would be in their best interests, and they were all ardent protectionists and believers in the obligations of the state to safeguard its under-privileged members.

Between the extremes represented by the conservatives and the radical Labor candidates there was a third group - Turner's non-labor supporters, who comprised about half the total number of candidates. With less specifically working class concerns than the Labor candidates, these liberals were nonetheless in direct conflict with the conservatives on several issues.

One of the most celebrated members of this liberal group was Sir Graham Berry, by this time nearing the end of a parliamentary career that had begun thirty-five years before. Berry had no mercy on the Patterson Ministry, and attacked its budget bitterly. There was general disgust with the Budget, he said, and this had precipitated the general election. He accused the Ministry and their conservative followers of

15. Age, 11 September 1894.
launching an attack on protection, either directly, or in the
rise of an attack on prohibitive duties. Berry favored
one-man-one-vote, a minimum rate of wages, an income tax, and
resented attempts to reduce the size of the House or the
salaries of members. He also objected to the conservatives' attacks on the labor members. Of them, he said,

He did not know anything which they had advocated
which he did not also advocate, and he was proud
to have their aid in the work of legislation.
With them he believed that industry and protection
would lay the foundation of the real future of the
country. 16

The most important member of this group was Alfred
Deakin, who had come to identify himself with the other
liberals in the House only within the past six months. Until
then, he had believed that party labels were meaningless when
applied to Victorian politics, and that the divisions inside
the House between Ministerialists and Oppositionists bore
little relationship to liberal-conservative divisions between
individual members. Consequently, when Deakin spoke of him-
self as a "straight out apologist for the Liberal Party," 17
it is clear that he believed that the word "liberal" had some
special meaning. He opposed the Patterson government because
it had abandoned the income tax, and had failed to introduce
any direct taxation, which he called "the watchword of the
Liberal Party."

16. Age, 8 September 1894.
17. Age, 10 September 1894.
That Deakin believed there had been a complete change in the political situation during the past few years is further supported by a statement he made to a meeting of the country members of the new Parliament soon after the election. Deakin addressed the meeting\(^{18}\) in an effort to dissuade the country members from forming a separate organisation. He argued that the House was divided between the liberals and the conservatives, and that the formation of a third party would split Parliament into sections, and prevent the liberals from maintaining control of the House. In 1889, Deakin had believed a coalition to be the appropriate form of government for a colony lacking live issues; by 1894, he believed that the colony's needs were such that a return to party government was essential.

Finally, there were three other liberal opponents of the Patterson government whose views are significant. In the Western District electorate of Polworth, a farmer, T. Baker, decided to oppose squatter and entrenched member C.L. Forrest "because of the strong feeling against Patterson throughout the country."\(^{19}\) In previous years, members were opposed for personal or local reasons, but, in 1894, the struggle waged in Parliament between Ministry and Opposition was also taking place in most of the electorates. Baker's positive proposals included protection, one-man-one-vote and minimum wage in

\(^{18}\) Argus, 5 October 1894.

\(^{19}\) Age, 8 September 1894.
government contracts. He also remarked incidentally that he did not propose buying his way into Parliament by providing free drinks for his supporters.

In Geelong, Henry Bourne Higgins, and at Bogong, Isaac Isaacs, were contesting the election, both supporting Turner. They agreed that Patterson had achieved nothing as Premier because he was prepared to amend any of his proposals to retain power. What was needed primarily was direct taxation, which Turner could be relied upon to introduce. Politically, their policies agreed with those of most other members of the 'party'.

Thus, it is possible to classify most candidates for election under one of three broad headings. They were either conservative Ministerialists, liberal Oppositionists or radicals who might also be called labor supporters. While it may have been possible to categorise candidates at the previous elections in the same way, the 1894 election had two unique features. In the first place, the divisions between the conservatives and the liberals were much sharper than previously, and men were much less able to avoid committing themselves to one or other position. Secondly, the liberal-conservative division corresponded almost exactly with the Opposition-Ministerial division, so that it was no longer possible for a government to be formed containing some liberals and some conservatives, as had been the case with every ministry since

20. For an account of both speeches, see Age, 7 September 1894.
1931. Because the economic crisis had raised new problems and had demanded fresh answers, the old political divisions had faded, and new ones were created.
B. The Organisations

The sharp division between Ministerialists and Oppositionists was manifest not only in the policies of the two groups of candidates; it also found expression in the formation of several electoral organisations, which co-ordinated the liberal and conservative campaigns. We have noticed that, in previous elections, there was a large number of organisations either nominating candidates, or endorsing those already in the field. A constant feature of these organisations was their diversity, as they ranged from farmers' associations to the "Bible in State Schools League". Because of their rather narrow range of interest these electoral committees embraced only a small proportion of the candidates. In 1892, for instance, although they were the most important organisations involved in the election, the National Association and P.P.L. combined claimed the loyalties of only about fifty-five candidates.

Of crucial importance to an understanding of the 1894 election is the role played by these organisations formed in response to the demands of a society tired of political and economic instability. Just as the candidates had focused their attention on a few issues, and classified themselves as supporters of one or other of two leaders, likewise a similar development had occurred amongst the organisations. Their number was reduced, their range of concern was broadened, and they became much more closely identified with either the
liberal or conservative parties in Parliament. The organisation of former years were seen as no longer relevant, and, in their place, several new ones were formed.

The first of these new organisations, the Triple Reform League, was founded by a group of Goulburn Valley farmers led by John West, in August 1894. In an early manifesto the League proclaimed:

Misgovernment has gone so far in this colony that our most enterprising citizens are looking wistfully to distant lands... There is current a distrust of Victorian politicians. 21

In essence, the movement was a rural one. Its policy was based on the assumption that all national prosperity was derived from the mining and agricultural industries, and that the men engaged in these industries were the country's real producers. One of Victoria's main problems, thought West, lay in what he described as 'over government'. The system by which this colony was governed, he thought, was much too elaborate, and had to be reduced. 22

Thus, the first of his reforms concerned Parliament. First, he said, reduce the cost and extent of government. Then, reduce the tariff, to give the producers some financial relief; finally, he urged a more general financial reform:

22. *Argus*, 1 September 1894.
Finally, we need financial reform in the keeping of accounts; we must appoint a financial committee, and place the trust funds under a non-political body. 23

These three reforms espoused by the League had already been supported by a number of members of the Assembly. For instance, complaints about over-governing had been made by Madden, and the large body of conservatives all wanted tariff reductions. The League was thus an organised response, outside Parliament, to the same challenges that had been recognised by conservative members like Wrixon and Carter.

In its beginning, the League's aim was a purely educative one - to spread the gospel of reform without actually soilng its hands in the work of political organisations. And although the League originated among the rural areas of the colony, West said that attempts were being made to foster its growth in Melbourne, "in a supreme effort to right the ship of state." 24

These attempts were made public several days after the dissolution of Parliament, when a meeting was convened in Melbourne to form a branch of the League. 25 The chairman, Alex McCracken, a wealthy brewer, reminded his audience of the old saying, "unity is strength," and warned them of the dangers inherent in fighting the election with their forces

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23. Argus, 1 September 1894.
24. Ibid.
25. Argus, 4 September 1894.
divided. Why should not, he asked, these men with similar policies, fight the coming election together? For such a purpose, the Melbourne Triple Reform League was established, and a twelve-man committee appointed.

The League had now lost its political chastity, but in the act had brought about a measure of unity amongst some of Melbourne's most prosperous citizens, and had drawn the lines of conflict more strongly than ever. Symbolising this, McCracken himself threw down the gage, and challenged Deakin in his Essendon constituency. 26

Within a couple of days, however, it became evident that McCracken's warning about unity was not being heeded. Feeling that the necessities of the situation required urgent solution, a second group of Melbourne business men met and formed a Financial Reform League, modelled on a similar institution in Britain which, it was claimed, "had been drawing attention to needless expenditure for thirty years." 27

The platform of this League was rather narrower than that of the Triple Reform League and concentrated on reforms in the Government's financial policy. It called for a reduction in the number of members and in the cost of

26. In the course of the contest, McCracken, besides employing the standard practices, tried to split the Liberal ranks by "helping out" with the deposit of a third candidate, William Morris, who had been the P.L.U. candidate in 1892.
27. Age, 7 September 1894.
Parliament, a reduction in the municipal subsidies and in the cost of education, and finally, the establishment of a Parliamentary committee to control public accounts and to fund the existing debt.

The secretary of the Financial Reform League was G.D. Meudell, who had been so prominent in 1891/2 in the National Association and in the Young Victorian Patriotic League. At an election meeting in Geelong, he said that he believed that the national ledger would be best balanced by introducing further economies into the administration. All taxation, he said, diminished industry, although if it were to become absolutely necessary to impose a tax, then it would best be an income tax.

Again there is the conservative preference for retrenchment combined with the dislike of income taxation. Meudell's case is especially interesting because as an organiser of conservative associations in 1892, he provides an obvious connection between them and the Central Reform Committee.

The next step in the political organisation of the conservatives occurred three days later when the Triple Reform League approved a scheme "providing for the union of several political organisations with kindred aims." A meeting was convened to form a Central Reform Committee combining the two reform leagues. Included on the Committee there were a

29. *Arg*., 10 September 1894.
number of conservative politicians such as Sargood, Service and Frank Madden, as well as the members of the two component leagues.

The aim of this central committee was stated to be the election of members who would support,

(1) A reduction of the tariff to duties not exceeding 25% as a maximum, with all agricultural and mining essentials to enter free.

(2) The further retrenchment of public finances, and of the cost of government, including in the latter the further reform of spending departments of the civil service, and a reduction in the number and payment of members of Parliament.

From the first, the Central Reform Committee was an electoral organisation which aimed to secure the election of members who favored their platform. This preliminary meeting also planned their campaign. They would hire central rooms, with copies of the electoral rolls to supply information. They would also provide speakers, canvassers, and give any other assistance to support those candidates,

whose views are in accordance with the principles laid down, and to endeavour, as far as possible, by friendly action, to avoid the splitting of votes and the possible loss of seats by candidates of the same side standing in opposition to each other.

30. Age, 10 September 1894.
The committee was also prepared to provide a fund for carrying out its objects, and also to enable John West to undertake a tour through the country constituencies, to impress upon the electors the necessity of united action.

The main preoccupation of the Central Reform Committee was to ensure the election of acceptable candidates, by making certain that no vote-splitting took place. These men saw the election very much in terms of a conflict between two political groups. In this respect, they resembled the National Association of 1892; but they differed from the Association because their views were much more representative, and their opponents were no longer restricted just to the Trades Hall men, but included advocates of protection and income taxation.

Immediately the committee was established, it began to publicise its existence and its activities. Circulars were sent to "all newspapers, mercantile, commercial and industrial firms," 31 many of whom assured support, and sent subscriptions. A second meeting of the committee increased its membership from 13 to 46, and resolved to meet daily until after the elections.

Very shortly afterwards, a letter was submitted for approval, to be sent to the chairman of all the committees supporting those candidates "pledged to the Reform platform."

The important section of the letter from the secretary read:

I am instructed to place myself in communication with you, and ascertain whether we can render any assistance in your electorate, as my committee have at their disposal the services of a number of energetic workers and speakers; and they are prepared to use every influence to return Reform candidates and arouse public opinion to a stronger sense of the urgency of tariff reduction and financial reorganisation. 32

Two days later, the secretary drafted yet another circular, aimed at that economic and social group which the committee instinctively recognised as their source of support, financial as well as electoral. This circular, addressed to the "mercantile, financial and industrial firms in the city and suburbs" read:

In furtherance of the recent circulars, to enable the committee to ensure that the full Reform vote is recorded, I ask you to let us know the names and addresses of friends on electoral rolls in seventeen suburbs.

The committee desire to impress upon you the great importance of this matter, and will be obliged by an immediate reply, in order that they may take the necessary steps. 33

At the same meeting, the secretary reported that lists were being drawn up, of all voters in the Melbourne constituency who lived in the suburbs, "with a view to sending notice to all such voters with the easiest means of recording votes." 34 The committee was obviously giving full support to its colleague the Treasurer, G.D. Carter, who was being opposed in his Melbourne electorate for the first time since 1886.

32. Argus, 12 September 1894.
33. Argus, 14 September 1894.
34. Ibid.
To assist Carter further in his candidacy, an extra sub-committee was appointed to assist the executive, in their task of combing through the rolls, to identify those non-resident electors with a residence in Melbourne and to call on them personally, asking them to vote for the Reform candidates. 35

The Central Committee then tried to forge stronger links between themselves and the various candidates. This they did, by asking the committee of each endorsed candidate to send two representatives to the daily meeting of the central executive.

So enthusiastic were the members of the Committee that a proposal was made to extend its life beyond the election. The intensive, and extensive, political organisation necessary for a successful election campaign made many members realise the benefits that would accrue from a permanent political association or club.

Thus, a draft scheme for a Reform Club was considered and accepted by the Committee; 36 it was to be modelled on a similar club in England, which was used to maintain political interest between elections, and to train future politicians by organising debates. A provisional committee was appointed to receive nominations and subscriptions for the Club.

The fortnight's work by the Committee was concluded by the publication of its electoral manifesto on the eve of the election, complete with a list of forty-four endorsed candidates.

35. ARGUS, 16 September 1894.
36. ARGUS, 14 September 1894.
Believing that men of many varying shades of opinion are agreed upon the prime necessities of the situation, the Central Reform Committee has set itself to place a practical policy before the electors and urge its being passed upon candidates seeking their suffrages.

The committee has endeavoured to focus public opinion and supply electors of their own way of thinking with guidance as to the selection of those most likely to promote the desired end. Unless men who agree about objects can co-operate in the choice of instruments, a solid minority of Prohibitionists, Trades Hall Socialists, and political spend thrifts will prevail against the common sense of the community. 37

Of the forty-four candidates listed, all except two were supporters of the Patterson Ministry. Of them, twenty-two were returned, all except one 38 as supporters of Patterson and opponents of Turner's new Ministry. Included amongst the endorsed candidates, there were four members of Patterson's cabinet.

And so, while the formal links between the extra-Parliamentary conservative organisation and the Parliamentary Ministerialists were still fairly slight, there were considerable informal and implicit ones. Indeed, given the lack of unity within the parliamentary conservative party at large, one would be surprised to see closer ties between it and extra-parliamentary groups. The one would normally result from the other.

37. Age, 13 September 1894.
38. The exception was J.K. McKenzie, grazier member for Anglesey.
In the first place, it is clear that the political ideology of the Central Reform Committee coincided very closely with that of those members whom we have labelled "conservative". The complaints about over-government, an excessive number of members, and the demands for freer trade had all been voiced before by men who had by 1894 come to sit together in the House. Thus, there was at least a potential or implicit link between the Committee, which was purely an electoral organisation, and the Parliamentary "party". Furthermore, the Committee not only contained the various conservative organisations formed in 1894, but it also included men prominent in conservative circles during each of the three previous elections. Alfred Rowan, who had been a member of the Coalition Committee in 1886, and its chairman in 1892, was a member of the Committee; so too was G.D. Beudell, a leading member of the National Association in 1892. Likewise, James McDougall, who had been a member of the Coalition Committee in 1886, joined the Central Reform Committee. The Central Reform Committee was thus the product of a change in the nature of Victorian politics: a change which occurred when the conservatives were forced to focus their attention on fairly basic questions. When they did so focus their attention, the conservatives, who had previously adopted varied attitudes to the questions raised, merged, and supported positions that were the antitheses of those endorsed by the liberals.
Although the Central Reform Committee represented the amalgamation of several organisations working in the conservative interest, there was one which remained outside its orbit, namely the Free Trade Democratic Association. The oldest of the four groups engaging in the election, the Free Trade Democratic Association gradually increased the tempo of its activities during 1893/4, in response to the growing feeling of discontent with Protection. They were not prepared to combine with the Central Reform Committee, one suspects, because they felt them to be insufficiently zealous in the cause of free-trade. After all, the Central Reform Committee’s platform demanded only the reduction of duties to 25%, whereas the free-traders wanted this movement extended to result in complete free-trade. Thus it was that the Free Trade Democratic Association contested the 1894 election separately from the Central Reform Committee, although they tended to reinforce each other.

The meeting of the free-traders in late August, attended by representatives of the town and country branches, to determine a political programme for the party, was chaired by Robert Murray Smith, who, it will be remembered, also chaired the inaugural meeting of the Central Reform Committee.

The main plank in the free-traders’ platform was, of course, the introduction of free trade, by the gradual reduction of duties. Protection, it was argued at the

37. Argus, 29 August 1894.
meeting, was an unjust and mischievous system to the prosperity of the people. The evidence claim lay all around, in the unemployment, and the depression, which it was felt, stemmed directly from the perverse protective tariff. Besides a return to free trade, the Association demanded a financial reform along the lines already suggested by the Central Reformers, and also a reform of the system of Local Government. Here again, their platform was similar to that of the other, conservative bodies. They believed that there had occurred too much centralisation of authority in the colony and that this trend could best be reversed by giving to local governing authorities greatly augmented powers and responsibilities.

Ten days later, the Free-Traders' central committee announced that they had opened an office in Collins Street, and that they were in close contact with their sixty branches. 40

Apart from this the activities of the free-traders are shrouded in mystery, suggesting perhaps a lack of activity rather than any desire or need for secrecy. On election day they issued a list of forty-two endorsed candidates, 41 of whom twenty-six were also endorsed by the Central Reform Committee. Thus, despite the fact that the two conservative organisations maintained separate identities, they were in fact supporting the one cause and, in general, the one group

40. Argus, 8 September 1884.
41. Argus, 12 September 1884.
of candidates. Only in a couple of instances did they endorse different candidates in the one constituency, probably for reasons of personal differences. In Melbourne, for instance, the free-traders endorsed J. McWhae, whereas the Central Reform Committee supported the Treasurer, Carter. As well, in the electorates of Rodney, Prahran, Horsham and Gumbower, different candidates were endorsed.

In general then, one could say that the two conservative electoral organisations tended to support either the same candidates, or else, at least the same sorts of candidates.

Finally, to demonstrate further the relative solidarity of the conservatives, the attitude of the Argus towards the two organisations might be noted. The conservatives' main organ said of the Triple Reform League, when it became vocal, Politics seem essentially a struggle between the ins and the outs. The formation of the Triple Reform League is thus significant, for the citizens who formed this league are not aspirants for office, or even for Parliamentary seats; they merely seek the public good. 42

Its historic attitude to free trade, as well as its traditional rivalry with the Age, made it inevitable that the Argus would support with all its might the cause of the Free Trade Democratic Association. It argued repeatedly in its columns that since protection had managed to stifle the colony's commercial and industrial life, the time had come

42. Argus, 29 August 1894.
to introduce a new policy. Urging voters to return only those candidates who favoured completely free trade, the Argus wrote,

The fall in prices makes it imperative that our productive interests be assisted without delay by the one and only method in the power of the state. 43

Again, there is evident this same emphasis on the "productive interests" of the colony, implying, of course, that these were the agricultural and mining interests. That, it was argued, was the source of the real wealth of the colony. Consequently, the whole economy ought to be geared to support these industries, and not the artificially sustained manufacturing ones, which could flourish only with the aid of inflated prices.

The platforms of these two organisations were quite obviously similar. Likewise, organisationally, they tended to support each other. Of the thirty-three members returned to support Patterson, five were unopposed and so required no endorsement. Of the remaining twenty-eight, ten were endorsed by both organisations, three by the Central Reform Committee, and six by the free-traders only. Thus, only nine of Patterson's supporters were not in some way indebted to one or both conservative organisations. This was very different from the situation in 1892 when only a handful of conservative members had been supported by the National Association.

43. Argus, 17 September 1894.
While it is relatively simple to these organisations were more ambitious, it is more difficult to assess their effectiveness. Forty-four candidates endorsed by the Central Reform Committee, only thirteen were returned, and the free-traders endorsed forty-five, being successful only sixteen times. In all, of the nineteen candidates successfully endorsed, only five were new to the House, suggesting perhaps that others, having won at least one election before, may have succeeded without assistance.

Nevertheless, even if it could be demonstrated that these organisations had little effect on the outcome of the election, their importance would not be altered. Their importance lies in the fact that they demonstrate the new state of Victorian politics. For the first time in a decade, conservatives outside Parliament combined to protect interests they believed challenged, and to support one of the two 'parties' inside Parliament whose views coincided with their own.

The challenge issued by the conservatives was immediately answered by their liberal opponents. With an entirely different set of answers to the questions posed by the conservatives, the liberals met organisation with organisation.

While the Legislative Assembly was actually debating the no-confidence motion which preceded the dissolution of
Parliament, the Protectionist, Liberal sponsored a mass meeting. The thousands before them the motion

That this meeting considers that the present government has outlived its usefulness, and strongly urges on all members of the Legislative Assembly the necessity of supporting the want of confidence. 44

Addressed by three members of the House, Vale, 45 Bromley 46 and Hancock - there were apologies from another four, Bennett, Williams, Isaac and Peacock - the meeting agreed that all liberals in the House might waive their personal differences and unite to throw the government out of office. Again there is this insistence that those with basically similar political views ought to ignore what had separated them in the past, and combine to counter the conservative challenge. The speakers urged all liberals to support at the next election only those candidates who favored direct taxation of land values, absentee landowners and incomes.

Then, after Parliament had been dissolved, a committee meeting of the League decided,

44. Age, 23 August 1894.
45. R.T. Vale was a Ballarat bookseller, who represented Ballarat West intermittently 1886-1902. He voted fairly consistently with the House's radicals.
46. W.H. Bromley was a japanner and decorative artist, prominent on the Trades Hall Council, and member for Carlton for many years after 1892.
That as soon as the candidates are announced, a manifest be issued to the Liberal protectionists of the country, requesting them to stand true to their colours, and support the candidates selected by the League. 47

The League clearly stood for union of the various liberal groups in the colony, and was opposed to any form of coalition government, just as they had been when founded in early 1893. Created in response to the signs of organisation among the free-traders, the League stood four-square on a policy of protection and opposition to the Patterson Ministry, and aimed to return to Parliament a solid majority of liberals who might then be able to form a Ministry which was not dependent on the conservatives for support.

The Age, too, emphasised strongly the need for unity within the liberal camp. Its interpretation of the past few years was that during that time, liberals had been disarmed by coalition governments, but that now they must retrace their steps, and bring the two parties face to face on several direct issues. 48 The electors must be careful to distinguish between genuine liberals and those who stood for election merely in liberal guise. These latter were the sort of men, like Baker and McColl, who had been prepared to co-operate with the conservatives, "under the enervating influence of place and pay." The Age had no objection to the Labor men, who, it claimed,

47. Age, 1 September 1894.
48. Age, 4 September 1894.
are simply Liberals with a special as well as a
general mission, just as other Liberals have
undertaken the prosecution of the temperance or
other progressive movements. 49

As long as they were careful not to split the liberal vote,
there was no objection to their activities at all. Mean-
while, concluded the Age, "The watchword should be: union and
a solid Liberal vote."

Once the actual election was upon them, the Protection-
ist, Liberal and Federation League retired from the scene,
giving way to the Protectionist Association of Victoria, which
specialised in the in-fighting of an election.

Early in September the council of the Protectionist
Association met to discuss the political situation. They
decided to meet twice weekly, and hoped that within a fort-
night they could issue an election manifesto, with a list of
candidates pledged to support Protection. 50 Eleven days
later, they decided to publish a list of sixty-eight candidates,
"who have declared for Protection, and in whom the council
feels the principle is safe." 51 The council appealed "to
all true protectionists to be united on behalf of the
principle, to sink minor differences on this occasion."
From this point until the election the council met daily,

49. Age, 4 September 1894.
50. Age, 5 September 1894
51. Age, 14 September 1894.
concentrating their energies on those electorates "where the principles of protection are endangered by an excessive number of candidates." 52

In these electorates, they tried to ensure the retirement of one or more of these candidates, so as to have a straight fight between them. In Albert Park, for instance, Berry, Deakin and Fendergast met to decide upon the Protectionist candidate for that constituency. As a result of their decision several candidates retired from the contest, and Meadows was endorsed. 53

Finally, on the eve of the election, when they had been unable to persuade certain "liberal" candidates to withdraw, the Council appealed directly to voters to consider the possibility of liberal votes being split, and so to rally around Deakin, T. Smith and J. Winter, who were all engaging in a three-sided contest. The council urged voters to disown so-called liberal candidates, who by pushing themselves forward at this crisis are regarded as false to liberal principles. 54

The final stroke in the campaign comprised a circular to be sent to all parts of Victoria, urging liberals to unite.

Those who are in favour of becoming the bearers of wood and drawers of water vote free-trade, and those against, protection. 55

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52. Age, 15 September 1894.
53. Ageus, 17 September 1894.
54. Age, 19 September 1894.
55. Ibid.
The Protectionist Association met with considerably greater success than did either of its conservative rivals. For the seventy-nine seats that were contested, they endorsed sixty-eight candidates, of whom forty-three were successful. Of the forty-three members so returned, all except one was to support the new Turner Ministry. 56 It is not permissible, of course, to use these figures to assert the Protectionists' high degree of political sophistication: it is probable that in the absence of the Association, the result would have been scarcely different. The fact, however, that there was an organisation, and that it endorsed candidates in most electorates, is significant. Likewise, the fact that its candidates were never endorsed by the rival organisation, and that there was such a high degree of cohesion between these candidates when returned: these are the factors which point unmistakably to the change that has occurred in the colony's political life. Only nine of Turner's sixty-two supporters had not been endorsed by the Protectionist Association, and only one of Patterson's thirty-three had received its blessing.

The strong though informal ties that we noticed linking the conservatives inside and outside Parliament are just as evident in the case of the liberals. Like the conservatives, the liberals tended to identify allegiance to a set of principles with support for one of the Parliamentary

56. The exception was W.T. Webb, member of Patterson's cabinet.
parties. Rallying to the cause of high tariffs, the Protectionist Association tried to warn the electorate that its principles were being undermined; it tried to make the Protectionists' votes most effective by eliminating superfluous candidates and, in doing so, supported candidates who would in turn support Turner's opposition.

The fourth organisation to participate in the 1894 general election was that which Australian historians have termed in the past to emphasise, the United Labor and Liberal Party. Formed, as was the now defunct P.P.L., at the suggestion of a number of prominent members of the Melbourne Trades Hall Council, the party's constitution was ratified by that body in July 1894, just eight months before the next election was scheduled. (See Appendix VI) The constitution adopted in July 1894 assumed a slightly more radical position than that of the P.P.L., although the differences were not great. The main additions were the plea for a state bank of

57. At a T.H.C. Meeting, the Parliamentary Committee reported that a conference be held, "to devise some method of political action." Represented at the conference were to be all societies affiliated with the T.H.C., T. & L. Councils of Bendigo, Ballarat, Geelong and Horsham, Miners' Association, Shearers' Union, 8-Hours Movement, Democratic Club, Women's Suffrage Society, Protection, Liberal and Federation League, P.P.L. branches.

T.H.C. Minutes, 25 May 1894.
issue and the adoption of a minimum set of government works. As well, the platform of general principle,

That it is the duty of the government to work for its own unemployed people, provision for the destitute.

Despite this, the reformed party was, in general, less radical than the P.P.L. This change can be detected even in the title, which associated the labor party with the general liberal groups, in the same way as the extract, quoted earlier from the Age, did. They were much more willing even than in 1892, to be identified as supporters of the cause of "true liberalism". Liberals who had been, in 1892, opposed by the P.P.L. on the grounds that they were not particularly concerned with working class problems were, two years later, endorsed alongside of sitting labor men.

Liberals such as Berry, Deakin, Tucker and Best, who had been unsuccessfully opposed by P.P.L. candidates were, in 1894, endorsed by the United Labor and Liberal Party. One result of this policy was that whereas in 1892, the P.P.L. endorsed thirty-six candidates of whom eleven were successful, in 1894, they endorsed only eighteen, but were successful with sixteen of them. Obviously, the reason for their greater success in the later election was that they selected candidates who were most likely to win.
There were probably two reasons for the Labor party's changed attitude to those urban radicals who were not specifically connected with the working class movement. First, the sudden dissolution of Parliament, and the short time allowed for the resultant election caught the newly formed party off-balance, so that it lacked the time to organise branches. Secondly, this election was regarded by many, especially those to whom protection was nearest and dearest, as a crisis. It was felt that the Patterson government and the Central Reform movement represented a serious threat to the system of protection which was still, one suspects, the labor party's main concern. They felt that the tariff policies favored by so many urban radical members coincided so closely with theirs, that there was little reason to oppose them, especially when such opposition may well have left the way open for a free-trader. They felt it to be more important to ensure the defeat of the conservative Ministry than to have one or two more directly labor members in the House.

One learns something of the Labor party's attitude from a meeting of the Trades Hall Council after the election. The president, George Sangster, who was also the newly elected member for Port Melbourne, said that he was most pleased to see that the Patterson Government was completely routed and that the Liberal Party had achieved such a great
victory. This was followed by a motion thanking the *Age* for its assistance to the Labor and Liberal cause.

Even though the Labor party had not seen itself as particularly unique or separate from the liberals in 1892, they certainly did not identify themselves so closely as in 1894. The reason for this difference lay probably in the changed political circumstances. Now that the Liberal party seemed to have reformed their ranks, in readiness for the formation of a Liberal government, the labor members saw no real reason for not joining with them, as the only differences in their policies were differences of emphasis.

The relationship between the United Labor and Liberal Party and the Protectionist Association was informal, but mutually supporting. Each of the 18 'labor' candidates was also endorsed by the Protectionists, and, of course, supported Turner. The labor candidates thus differed from the protectionists only by their more explicit concern for working class interests, and perhaps, by slightly more radical programmes, like the establishment of a state bank.

53. *Age*, 22 September 1894.

Two months later, the T.L.C. again expressed their appreciation of the Turner Government. A motion was carried "that the policy of the present Government, considering the serious difficulties with which they are confronted, is the only one capable of lifting the colony out of its present depression." The meeting also planned a mass meeting in support of Turner's Government.

T.L.C. Minutes, 23 November 1894.
These then were the four organisations which contested the 1894 election. They were not the only ones, but they were by far the most important. Unlike the previous two election campaigns, the religious and temperance issues were not mentioned - even by the Age. There were slightly less candidates than in previous years, and certainly fewer representatives of lost causes and lunatic fringes. Organisations such as the Bible in State Schools League, or the Scripture Education Society, which received some attention in the previous elections, seemed to have been caught napping by the snap-election, or else had been swamped by more pressing concerns resulting from the depression.

And so, on 20 September 1894, battle was joined between two groups of candidates. On the right were the Ministerialists, pledged to financial and tariff reform, supported by two organisations which combined the energies of those politically active conservatives who had, hitherto, tended to support rather scattered causes.

Opposed to them on the left, were supporters of George Turner - high tariff men, who wanted more direct taxation and, if anything, further government interference. To these men, the rigours of the depression demonstrated that yet more government intervention was required to restore society to equilibrium, whereas to the conservatives, it proved the necessity for less state action.
After the dust had settled, it was evident that the colony had voted overwhelmingly against Patterson, leaving him only thirty-three supporters, in a House of ninety-five. As many hoped, though few really believed, Turner, the new Premier by the illness of Berry, and the retreat from office by Deakin, was about to provide the first real leadership and sound government in at least seven years. During the five years of his Premiership, Turner was to lead Victoria gradually from the slough of insolvency to relative prosperity. Aided by naturally improving economic conditions, Turner was to display some awareness of the government’s financial requirements combined with the courage to ensure that they were met.

Out of the economic and political turmoil and instability of the period 1890-4, a leader had emerged, not richly endowed with messianic qualities, but of whom Deakin could say:

he had risen . . . by his trustworthiness and business capacity. His merit was an obvious earnestness and a lucidity which made the most complex propositions plain. His faculty of work was enormous, his love of detail great and his whole life devoted to work either in his business or politics. 59

The Ministry that Turner selected was notable for several reasons. It was the first one ever to contain a majority of men born in the colony, and whose loyalties were primarily to the colony. At least five, and possibly

eight had been born in Victoria. Secondly, it was composed of members who had voted consistently in the House throughout the previous four years. Of the ten cabinet members in the House, eight had been elected in 1899. Of these, all opposed the Coalition Ministry in 1890, all had supported first Munro and then Shiels, and all had consistently opposed Patterson. Of the other two, Vale had voted with the eight since his election in 1892, and Isaac had for a short time been a member of Patterson's Government. This contrasts markedly with the previous Ministries. Almost half of both Munro's and Patterson's cabinets were members who had crossed the floor to vote these men into power. Finally, it is a revealing demonstration that these men were solidly established members of the House and not time-servers, that seven of the ten were returned unopposed at the election.

After years of instability, Victoria had a Ministry which could expect to enjoy the sustained confidence of Parliament, and which possessed the necessary ability and integrity to provide the measures so urgently required. For the first time since the era of Coalitions, every member of the Government had demonstrated his loyalty to its principles for several years before it took office; thus for the first time since Berry's second Ministry Victoria was in the hands of a fully liberal government.

60. Of the Ministry, Turner, Isaacs, Peacock, Nest and Taverner certainly were born in Victoria, while Vale, Williams and Foster may have been.

61. This excludes, of course, the cabinet ministers in the Council.
"The rationale of the party-system depends on the alignment of opinion from right to left... The right is always the party sector associated with the interests of the upper or dominant classes, the left the sector expressive of the lower economic or social classes, and the centre that of the middle classes. Historically, this criterion seems acceptable. The conservative right has defended entrenched prerogatives, privileges and powers; the left has attacked them. The right has been more favourable to the aristocratic position, to the hierarchy of birth or of wealth; the left has fought for the equalisation of advantage or of opportunity, for the claims of the less advantaged. Defence and attack have met, under democratic conditions, not in the name of class but in the name of principle; but the opposing principles have broadly corresponded to the interests of the different classes."

Chapter 6.

Groups within the Legislative Assembly

Thus far we have seen that during the period under discussion the questions that comprised the fabric of Victorian politics changed. In 1889 and 1890, the issues on which candidates for election and members of the Assembly focussed their attention were essentially bread-and-butter ones: whether the farmers ought to be given the stock tax, how was the £1 billion surplus to be distributed, and where ought the new railway lines be built? During this last phase of the "boom", hardly one question was raised on which opinion could be aligned from left to right. In 1889 the stock tax, and in 1890 the railway bill, had provided the important divisions in the House, and these divisions cut directly across the Ministerial-Opposition division. This latter had, six years previously, blurred the Liberal-conservative split.

However, largely in response to the economic crisis and the resultant "hard times" of the early 90's, different sorts of questions were raised by 1893-4. Then the election was fought, and the House divided, on whether the Government ought to balance its budget through retrenchment or increased taxation, and, if the latter was necessary, whether an income tax was justifiable. The severity of the Depression caused a questioning and a re-thinking of problems hitherto accepted as solved; thus Protection was challenged.
Because the very foundations of society were shaken, and every class considered itself to be severely threatened, opinion on these new questions tended to align itself from left to right. The old political lines faded, and new ones were drawn. Deakin, as usual, appreciated what had occurred by 1894 when he protested against the formation of the country party, which, he believed, would prevent the effective operation of the renewed two-party system. ¹ He, it will be remembered, had been one of those responsible for the continuation of the coalition in 1890, on the grounds that there were no issues at stake to warrant its dissolution. Thus, let me emphasize, a new set of problems caused new issues to be raised which in turn dissolved old political groupings.

What remains, then, to complete this study of Victorian politics, is an analysis, in more detail, of the precise groups which formed, and re-formed, in the Legislative Assembly. It is necessary to see what groups voted consistently during the five years, and whether there are any obvious patterns of behaviour. In short, can we identify quantitatively the movements in Parliament we have hitherto discussed qualitatively?

To do this, two things are necessary. First, we must make a comparative analysis of the Legislative Assembly in 1889 and in 1894. In both years there was a Ministerial party of about sixty, and an Opposition of about thirty. If there

¹. See Chapter 5.
had been a real change in the composition of these two groups, then it would be reflected in an alteration in their economic and social position. Therefore, it is of the greatest importance to consider those who were members of the House continuously throughout this period. Again, if there was a meaningful change in their grouping, this would be most apparent amongst these fifty-seven members.

Amongst the sixty-two supporters of the Coalition Ministry in March 1889 there was no economic or occupational homogeneity, just as previously we have seen that there was no political homogeneity. Symbolising the diversity within the Ministerial party were the two leaders: wealthy, sixty-year-old, Scots-born merchant Duncan Gillies, representing the conservative Eastern Suburbs, and thirty-nine-year-old native-born barrister, Age journalist and intellectual, Alfred Deakin, representing the less prosperous Essendon and Flemington.

Supporting the Coalition were men like Samuel T. Staughton, a Melton grazier, who owned a considerable part of the city of Melbourne; F.T. Derham, member of the Chamber of Commerce and of the firm Swallow and Ariell; merchants like Charles Smith and George Downes Carter; and financial agents like Ephraim Zox. In addition, there was also Charles M. Officer, who owned 16,756 acres in the Wimmera, but had, since 1866, resided in his Toorak home "Ottawa", C.L. Forrest, a colon grazier; and J.W. Higlett, a Rochester grazier.
Giving allegiance to the Ministry through their loyalty to Deakin was a group of generally less established men—men such as George Langridge, a Clifton Hill auctioneer who represented Collingwood; Charles Andrews, a Hawthorn accountant representing Geelong; and gold fields representatives like McColl and Outtrim.

Except for the future labor representatives, and the most radical men in the House, Dr. Maloney, J. Woods and W. Trenwith, every member of the Opposition was in his origins, his occupation and his constituency, balanced by Ministerialists. Opposing the Coalition there were also graziers and large-scale farmers, such as McIntyre, Graves and Parfitt; gold fields representatives, like Williams, W.C. Smith and R. Richardson; prosperous business men, like Bent and Muir—almost a millionaire in 1889 as a result of his speculations; and representatives of working class electorates such as Bennett and F.T. Carter.

Thus, underlying the potential political disharmony amongst the Ministerialists in 1889—a disharmony effectively dulled by the opiate of prosperity—was considerable economic diversity. Representatives of Western District and gold fields constituencies, of Toorak and Collingwood sat on the same side of the House, and resisted the opposition of an equally diverse collection of squatters and boot makers, of merchants and manufacturers. The significance of this, however, is seen only by a comparison with the divisions five years later. (See Appendix VIII.)
When the Sixteenth Parliament met after the 1894 election, the House was divided in exactly the same proportions as in 1889 — sixty-two supporting Turner, and thirty-three opposing him. But whereas in the days of the Coalition it was impossible to detect a significant difference between the two groups, by 1894 this was no longer the case.

Included amongst Turner's sixty-two supporters were the representatives of every working class electorate in the colony, with only two exceptions. He was supported by all except six of Melbourne's members, these six representing conservative electorates such as Brighton, East Melbourne and Eastern Suburbs, the Ballarat members, all Bendigo representatives except one, and the two Geelong members. Thus Turner was supported overwhelmingly by working class and generally by urban voters. In all, this amounted to thirty-six fellows. The balance of his supporters afford a less marked contrast with Patterson. They were mainly professional men, farmers, auctioneers and there were a few squatters.

Providing Patterson with his main support, there were ten squatters, five merchants and three solicitors, and a heterogeneous group who represented mainly the large grazing and farming electorates. (See Appendix VII.)

Broadly, then, and with, of course, some overlapping, the 1894 Assembly was divided on economic-class lines.

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2. In Albert Park, J.G. White, and in Sandhurst, D.B. Lazarus, both free-traders, were elected.
Certainly, when compared with the 1869 divisions, the contrast between Ministerialists and Oppositionists in 1894 is striking. From being divided, essentially, on rather arbitrary personal or sectional lines the House changed, and new groups crystallised, and these reflected much more closely members' broad class interests. In general, it is possible to say that, in 1894, the wealthier groups in society preferred Patterson, and the poorer groups favoured Turner, and that, five years before, this was not so.

There was a total of 137 men who were members of the Victorian Legislative Assembly for some time during the five years 1889-94. Of the 137, there were fifty-seven who were returned in March 1889 and who were still members in September 1894. By analysing the movements of these men in the House during the period it is possible to understand more clearly and more precisely the earlier discussion. Amongst these fifty-seven members it is possible, initially, to distinguish four separate groups.

In the first group there were twelve members whose voting behaviour was identical over the whole period of five years. These men were returned to the House in March 1889 as opponents of the Coalition, and voted in favor of Munro's motion which displaced that government in October 1890. After the 1892 elections, they continued to support Shields, and all were amongst the forty-three who opposed Patterson's
motion of no confidence in January 1883. They consistently opposed the Patterson Ministry, and, at the 1884 elections, they were all returned as supporters of the Turner Ministry—four of them were, in fact, actually made Ministers.

The second group, consisting also of twelve members, was composed of men who crossed the floor only once. They were elected in 1880 as supporters of the Coalition, but, with the exception of Albert Harris, all crossed the floor by October 1882, to support Munro's motion of no confidence. Harris crossed some time after this, and, with the other eleven, was returned to the House as a supporter of the Shiels Ministry. From this point on they voted as did the twelve members of the previous group, remaining steadfast in their allegiance to Shiels and in their opposition to Patterson. All except two were returned in 1884 as supporters of Turner; the two exceptions did not contest the election.

It is worth noting, at this stage, that another four members of Turner's Ministry were supplied from this group.

This latter point deserves further emphasis. When Turner nominated his cabinet in September 1884 he included ten members of the Legislative Assembly. Of these ten, eight had been voting consistently for his group since at least 1880. The other two were not members of the Fourteenth Parliament elected in 1880. This is further evidence of the degree of political stability attained by 1884, for the three
previous cabinets had been composed largely of men whose
occupying the floor had destroyed their predecessors in office.
The men selected by Turner were, thus, not men whose support
he had secured by bribery.

Thus the Victorian Legislative Assembly contained a
solid core of twenty-four members, who, after October 1890,
gave their consistent support to an increasingly explicit
liberal political programme, and to a succession of leaders,
Munro, Shields, Berry and Turner. In 1890, when the question
of the Shipping Strike was raised, these members adopted a
common attitude. They criticised the Government strongly
for the reported statement of J.B. Patterson, who clearly took
the employers' side, and they defended the unionists' right
to strike. A.J. Peacock was one of the first members to
attack Patterson for his remarks, and he said that he hoped
"for the sake of the Government," that Patterson would be able
to disavow his reported statements. T. Smith said he found
it very difficult to remain neutral during the dispute, and
that

if he went on a platform, he intended to take
sides, and he did not care who knew what side
he would take. It would be the side of labour
as he understood it.

3. [See Chapter B.]
4. [...., Vol. 64, pp.1657-8.]
5. [ibid., p.1666.]
The following year, when Munro introduced his Constitution Act Amendment Bill, these twenty-four members demonstrated their "liberalism" by their support for the one-man-one-vote clause. The attitude of T. Smith to this question was typical of this whole section of Parliament. He affirmed that one-man-one-vote was the right thing for any democratic community to adopt,

All those who deserve a vote... should be placed as nearly on an equality as possible at the ballot box, because that is the only place where they are likely to be placed on an equality. 6

Then, in 1892-4, as the political lines were being drawn more indelibly, protection and income taxation became the touchstones of "liberalism". The "protection committee" that was appointed in June 1892 drew four of its eight members from this liberal core, for every one of the twenty-four was an ardent Protectionist. One observes, for example, T. Smith announcing, "If I am not a Protectionist, I am nothing." 7

Further, Andrews, speaking in the debate on the colony's fiscal system, in 1893, denied Wrixon's assertion that protection had been responsible for the depression.

He (Wrixon) must know that the evils we are suffering from now could not arise from the fiscal policy of the colony. 8

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7. _Pro._, 20 June 1892.
8. _Leg._, Vol. 61, p.1141.
In fact, he said, those who suffered most from the depression belonged to industries that did not enjoy protection. The colony would certainly be in a worse plight by abandoning its industries.

Therefore to talk to us of foregoing all industrial pursuits and turning the colony into a huge farm is preposterous. 10

In the 1893 Budget debate Trenwith explained why he supported the income tax. Its main advantage appeared to him to be that it bore on the section of the community most able to pay, that is on those with an income exceeding £300.

It is fair and equitable that those who are strongest should bear the largest share of the corporate burdens. 11

The third of the four distinct groups was, in all significant divisions, opposed to the first group. These 15 members were elected in 1890 as supporters of the Coalition, and they followed the Ministry into opposition. They opposed the Chief's Ministry, supported Patterson, and contested the 1894 election as Ministerialists.

Then the Strike question was raised in 1890, the members of this group adopted an attitude directly opposed to the Liberals'. Fox, for instance, said that, as the government would soon be obliged to borrow money from Britain, it was good that it had shown itself "prepared to maintain peace and order in any emergency." 12 Similarly, C.F. Taylor endorsed

10. [No source number provided]. Vol. 73, p.1559.
11. [No source number provided]. Vol. 72, p.763.
12. [No source number provided]. Vol. 64, p.1063.
Patterson's remarks in claiming that the strike was having a harmful effect because "men who wished to do an honest day's work for an honest wage were afraid to do so." 13

In 1891, this solid conservative bloc, to a man, opposed the one-man-one-vote clause of Munro's Bill. Levien could not understand why "the swagman and the unthinking ne'er-do-well in the country" should enjoy equal rights to "the honest farmers of the community." Further, he argued:

Every respectable citizen should have a vote for his manhood, and every man who has property should have a vote for his property as well. 14

Zox, supporting Wrixon's motion for the establishment of a Royal Commission into the Tariff, seemed also to attribute the depression, at least in part, to protection. This tariff system, he was prepared to suggest, had produced results of such a disastrous character to the commercial interests of this colony, that Victoria is retrogading while other colonies are progressing. 15

A whole network of conservative attitudes and prejudices was expressed by J. F. Levien in his contribution to the 1903 budget debate. Discussing the economic disasters experienced by the colony during the past three years he emphasized the following:

13. [Ref]., Vol. 64, pp. 1672-3.
15. [Ref]., Vol. 73, p. 1711.
All this is largely due to the outrageous and senseless protective policy adopted by the country and I think that the country now sees its error. 16

He continued his castigation of Carter's policy by attacking the income tax, which, he believed, would "undoubtedly have the effect of driving capital out of the colony." Then, having dismissed the necessity for extra taxation, he found the solution to the crisis in the Education Department. Why should those who, by their own endeavours and the thrift of their parents, had accumulated wealth, be taxed to educate the children of the less thrifty "more than is necessary." 17

Finally, there was a small group of seven members, and they acted throughout the period more or less consistently as a group, not, it would seem, because of a set of commonly held beliefs, but rather in response to political pressure. This group opposed the Coalition, continued to support Munro for a while, but, by January 1893, all had crossed the floor to support Patterson. In doing so, four of the seven gained ministerial office, and a fifth became Government Whip. All seven then contested the 1894 election as Ministerialists.

Although the seven members of this group supported the Patterson Ministry, only one of them, John McIntyre, could truly be labelled a conservative. The others seemed much more concerned with "place and pay". The opinions of

16. ..., Vol. 72, p. 765.
17. Ibid., p. 766.
O'Loghlen, for instance, were strongly radical, and he was an ardent Protectionist; none the less he was easily able to accept office under Patterson. Similarly, W.T. Carter was regarded as a turncoat by the labor party, and, although a P.P.L. member, he was opposed by the Labor and Liberal Party in 1894. Five of the six "independent" members of this group were defeated in that election.

Thus of the fifty-seven members whose membership extended continuously from 1889 to 1894, twenty-four formed a separate and identifiable group that voted as a bloc, and that supported distinctly liberal policies and ministries. It is important to realise that this bloc, which was so solidly united after 1890, had, in fact, been completely divided during the period of the Coalition. Basically, the reason for Gillies' fall lay in the fact that the liberals supporting him decided that they had more in common with their fellows across the floor. Another sixteen formed a second group within the Assembly that also voted consistently supporting conservative policies and ministries. A third group of six could best be regarded as liberal-opportunists, most of whom paid the price for their unreliability at the 1894 election.

Underlying the striking differences between the political programmes of the liberal and conservative groups were equally striking contrasts in their occupational backgrounds, and in their constituencies. Eight of the twenty-four liberals

---

1. At an election meeting for F. Stuart, one of the seven members of this group, the chairman lost control of the meeting, and a motion was passed accusing Stuart of being a traitor to the liberals who elected him, by his contemptible conduct in supporting Patterson. As a result of this, went the motion, it became "the duty of liberals to reject him." Age, 18 September 1894.
represented Melbourne working class electorates, and five more stood in the mining interests, while two more yet represented Geelong and Warrnambool; the remaining nine were farmers or farmers' representatives from eight scattered electorates. Amongst the twenty-four, there were five barristers, four auctioneers, three manufacturers, and several mining agents.

Amongst the sixteen conservatives there were six squatters from rural constituencies, four members from affluent Melbourne electorates, and several surveyors and merchants. It is significant that all eleven rural members of this group had, at some stage, belonged to the country party. Quite clearly the main support for the conservative party in Victorian politics during this period came from outside Melbourne and the mining areas. This was why their main emphasis was in reversing the trend towards industrialisation, and developing the colony as a country of primary producers.

There remain to be considered the eleven who were members throughout the period under review, but whose voting behaviour was rather irregular.

Alfred Deakin, last of the true liberals to forsake the increasingly conservative dominated coalition, is most easily treated. He, of course, supported the Coalition government, and when it was defeated he remained joint-leader of the Opposition. He was elected in 1892 as an opponent of Childers, and, although he resigned as co-leader, he remained a member
of the opposition until the beginning of the Third Session of the Fifteenth Parliament. Then he crossed the floor and was instrumental in bringing about the formation of the Turner Ministry, which he continued to support until his resignation from the House.

A second member in this category was Tommy Bent, who was a conservative opponent of the Coalition (he resigned its leadership in early 1889), but was not long in supporting its successor, the Turner Ministry. He was Speaker of the Fifteenth Parliament, and so did not vote. He contested the 1894 election as a Ministerial supporter but was defeated.

There were thus two members in this group who can be classified: Deakin as a liberal, and Bent as a conservative. Each crossed the floor only once, to join their political and social brethren. The other nine, however, did not fit into any pigeon-hole, save their own.

David Methven, a Brunswick contractor, provides a perfect example of the classic "independent". He was returned as a new member of the House in 1889, to support the Coalition. He remained loyal to the Ministry until October 1890, when he supported Turner's motion of no confidence. He then followed Turner and Shields until January 1893, when he crossed the floor a second time to help Patterson into office. His fidelity to the new government was unshakeable until 1894, when he again crossed the floor, to support Turner's challenge. He then contested the 1894 election as a Turner supporter. This
time, however, his doubtless confused electors decided to return instead two labor candidates, Berry and Rune Cook.

There were another three members who managed to cross the floor twice during the period, namely McCall, Kirton and Webb. These three were elected in 1890 as supporters of the Coalition, but they crossed the floor to support Munro's motion of no confidence. They continued to support Munro-Shiels until the first session of the Fifteenth Parliament, when they crossed again, to support Patterson. Two of them received Ministerial office in the process, and, as ministers themselves, were hardly able to desert the Government. One finds that all three contested the 1894 election as Ministerialists.

William McLellan was a Deakinite supporter of the Coalition who continued to support it even after its fall. By 1892, however, he had crossed the floor, and was returned then as a supporter of Shiels. He opposed Patterson's motion of no-confidence, but was, a few months later, seated on the Ministerialist benches, from whence he continued to support Patterson, and was returned in 1894 to his last Parliament as a supporter of the Government.

L.L. Smith was another whom it is difficult to categorise, and yet more difficult to explain. Notorious quack doctor and abortionist, he had been in and out of Parliament since 1859, was a supporter of O'Loghlen, opposed the coalition throughout the 80's, and then gave his support to the Munro-Shiels Ministry. For some reason or other, in 1893, he abandoned
his friends to support the Patterson Ministry, and contested the 1894 election as a Ministerial candidate.

Thus, an analysis of Victorian politics by reference to members' occupations and their constituencies verifies the conclusions previously drawn. In the Legislative Assembly in 1889 members fell into one of five categories. They were either liberal supporters of the coalition or liberal opponents, conservative supporters or opponents, or opportunists. What occurred during this five-year period was that the liberals from both sides united, causing the conservatives to unite as well, and leaving the residue to oscillate from one side to the other.

Furthermore, it is valid to discuss 1894 politics in terms of "parties", because the support for each of the two Parliamentary groups was derived from fairly distinct social and economic sources. From even this brief analysis it is clear that Turner depended for his support on the urban, working class and mining members, whereas Patterson relied on the merchant, grazier and generally rural class.
Chapter 7.

Conclusion

Between 1889 and 1894, when Victorian society was shaken to its foundations by a Depression which left no-one untouched, the colony's politics underwent a complete reformation. For during the eighties, when the colony seemed to he spiralling dizzyly ever upward towards utopia, politicians seemed concerned only with how to distribute the profits. Exhausted by the stalemate of the seventies, and then reassured by the prosperity of the eighties, they saw no objection to a Coalition as the problems of government had become mainly administrative. Friction between economic classes was eased because all were enjoying the boom. Thus, the main political issues during the late eighties were local or sectional ones: in 1889 and 1890, the stock tax party and the railway caucus provided the Government with its main opposition. During these years, as Ingham rightly pointed out, the terms "liberal party" and "conservative party" could not be applied to what groupings did exist, because none possessed any political or economic homogeneity.

By 1894, however, largely because of the Depression, this was no longer valid nomenclature. The effect of the Depression had been twofold: first, it presented the Government with an entirely new - or fundamentally different -
set of problems: secondly, it caused individuals inside and outside Parliament to challenge policies and ideas that had long been accepted as sacrosanct. The Government no longer controlled a surplus to be distributed, but rather had to devise means of meeting a large deficit. It had now to decide where to retrench, and whom to tax. Likewise, the crisis caused members like Wrixon, and reformers like West to question entrenched policies such as Protection. The problem of the deficit provides the key to the political instability of the period, because it was the failure of three successive Governments to cope with their financial losses that provided their opposition with perfect opportunities to vote them from office.

The effect of all this on the groupings within the House was far-reaching. Between 1890 and 1894, every liberal who had supported the Coalition abandoned it, in the belief that the best solution to the crisis would come from the combination of members with basically similar political ideas. Likewise the conservative opponents of the Coalition realised their affinity with the Gillies-Patterson group, and acted accordingly.

Not only did the Depression have this effect inside the House, but also, outside Parliament, groups were similarly affected. During the 1893 election contest a large number of electoral organisations was formed, each to concentrate on a specific moral, religious or political reform. Generally, they forged links with only a small number of candidates, who,
when elected, often sat on opposing sides of Parliament.
By 1894, however, the number of electoral organisations was
greatly reduced, and those that remained had branches
throughout the colony, and endorsed a large number of candi-
dates, who almost invariably voted together in the Assembly.

By 1894, then, the terms "liberal" and "conservative"
had become valid descriptions of the two parties. It is
doubtless true, as Ingham suggests, that almost all members of
the Victorian Assembly would have been regarded as "liberals"
in contemporary England. Nevertheless, it is no less true
that the two parties here were quite sharply divided, though
on different issues, just as they were in England. It has
been possible, for instance, to identify core groups which
invariably opposed each other for four years on a range of
issues, such as the strike, plural voting and the tariff.
The presence of these two identifiable and consistent groups
in the Assembly throws considerable light on the claims of
Ingham (see Chapter 1.) that

the Liberals and Conservatives - the two main
parties - were not divided by any fundamental
differences of opinion.

Not only did the two parties in 1894 think themselves divided,
but, for at least four years, they had acted as though there
were quite sharp points of difference between them: on all
significant divisions, they had been found on opposite sides
of the House.
Furthermore, the labor members were never in doubt that there was a considerable difference between the two parties. In New South Wales at this time, so little difference was there that the labor party was prepared to make a compact with either of them - "support in return for concessions". Thus the N.S.W. labor party derived its strength from holding a balance of power. By contrast, the Victorian party at no stage co-operated with the Patten group, even though they could have held a balance of power as in N.S.W. Only one labor member between 1890 and 1894 - W.T. Carter - ever voted with the conservative bloc on any major issue. To them, as to all who participated in the 1894 election, "liberal" and "conservative" were indeed accurate descriptions of the two groups struggling for the ascendancy, and, as labor members, they could never co-operate with the conservatives.

1. It will be remembered that W.T. Carter was not endorsed by the labor and Liberal party in 1894, and was defeated by J. Styles who did receive such endorsement.
## APPENDIX I

**Table of Victorian Ministries 1875-1899**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Ministry</th>
<th>Premier</th>
<th>Held Office From</th>
<th>Held Office To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Graham Berry</td>
<td>7th Aug. 1875</td>
<td>20 Oct. 1875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Sir James McCulloch</td>
<td>20 Oct. 1875</td>
<td>21 May 1877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Graham Berry</td>
<td>21 May 1877</td>
<td>5 March 1880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>James Service</td>
<td>5 March 1880</td>
<td>3 Aug. 1880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Graham Berry</td>
<td>3 Aug. 1880</td>
<td>9 July 1881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Sir Bryan O'Loghlen, Bart.</td>
<td>9 July 1881</td>
<td>8 March 1883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>James Service</td>
<td>8 March 1883</td>
<td>18 Feb. 1886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Duncan Gillies</td>
<td>18 Feb. 1886</td>
<td>5 Nov. 1890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>James Munro</td>
<td>5 Nov. 1890</td>
<td>16th Feb. 1892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>James Brown Patterson</td>
<td>23 Jan. 1893</td>
<td>27 Sept. 1894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Sir George Turner</td>
<td>27 Sept. 1894</td>
<td>5 Dec. 1899</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Federal unity of the colonies as the indispensable preliminary to the creation of a national sentiment and to effective action in Australian affairs. A united response to the Colonial Office request, the amendment of the instructions issued to Governor of colonies enjoying responsible Government is desirable.

2. Parliamentary reforms comprise the abolition of plural voting and alterations in the rules of procedure, which will prevent obstruction and ensure fair debate.

3. Our education system should be preserved and perfected by the addition of high schools preparatory to the university, and of schools for technical training.

4. Protection to all native industries, including agriculture, should be maintained, and, where deemed necessary, increased or extended. Duties which are not protective, and which hamper trade without materially enhancing the revenue should be abolished.

5. Agriculture should be encouraged by a progressive policy of irrigation, reduction of railway freights, improved conditions for the growth of present products, introduction of new products, opening up of new markets and the establishment of experimental farms and training schools. Conservation of forests should be increased, and cultivation of trees for mining timbers fostered.
6. Mining interests should prospecting system, the gold and coal fields, with new fields and of successful ores and tailings; also of large auriferous areas enterprise.

7. Local government should and supported by increased should be created to provide political districts. The number in each district should be determined by of the people.
Appendix III  
Platform of Victorian Farmers' Protection Association

Source. The Age, 7 Feb. 1889.

1. An ad valorem duty of 25% on all live stock and dead meat imported into the colony, and no allowance or drawback.

2. A duty of three shillings per cent on all imported cereals, peas, maize. 51. per ton on potatoes, two shillings per dozen on condensed milk, four pence per pound on butter, cheese, bacon, three pence per dozen eggs.

3. System of light railways and tramways to develop the resources of the country.

4. A national system of irrigation in which consumers were charged only for the water used.

5. Reduction in railway freights.

6. Bounty on exported wheat.

7. State bonuses to encourage viticulture, fruit-growing, etc.

Appendix IV

Platform of Trades Hall Council. Adopted

1. Maintenance and extension of protection to local industries.
2. Extension of the same principle to the farming and grazing interests by an adequate increase in the duties on imported cereals and stock.
3. Making public boards responsible to Parliament on all matters involving the expenditure of money.
4. Representation of labour on public boards, trusts and commissions of the peace.
6. Repealing or modifying the Civil Service Act and regulations under Railway Management Act especially in reference to age of employees.
7. Bill for compulsory indenture of Apprentices, and amendment of Masters and Apprentices Act to provide for greater compensation for neglect to teach apprentices and to facilitate recovery thereof.
8. Repeat of Masters and Servants Act to provide that breaches of agreement either by masters or servants may be punishable by fine or imprisonment, and for making agreements entered into, outside the colony, invalid.
9. Wages Lien Bill.
10. Eight Hours Legislation Bill.
11. Abolition of plural voting.
12. Proper inspection of factories, workshops, scaffold and appliances used in the construction or erection of buildings, machinery.


14. Uniform closing hours.

15. Extension of franchise to seamen.
Appendix V.

Platform of the Progressive Political Leage of Victoria,
June 1891.

1st. Electoral Reform.

(A) Abolition of plural voting. One general roll on the basis
    of manhood suffrage.
(B) Special provision for seamen and others following migratory
    occupations to record their votes at parliamentary elections.
(C) Extension of the hours of polling 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. to be
    uniform throughout the whole colony.
(D) Equal electoral districts on a population basis and single
    electorates.

2nd. Reform of the Labour Laws.

(A) Repeal of the 3 Geo. IV cap 129 and other acts relating to
    conspiracy in industrial disputes.
(B) A law enacting a maximum labor day of eight hours.
(C) The repeal of that portion of the Employers and Employees Act
    formerly known as the Master and Servants Act.
(D) Amendment of the Factories and Shops Act.
(E) Extension of the provisions of the Employers Liability Act
    to seamen.
(F) A mining act providing for proper ventilation and safety in
    gold, coal and other mines.
(G) All inspectors under any act of Parliament requiring
    practical knowledge to be appointed from workers in their
    respective trades and occupations.
(H) Prohibition of the importation of Chinese and coolie
    laborers and of laborers under contract.
(I) The establishment of a department of labour.
(J) The establishment of courts of conciliation for the settle-
    ment of disputes between employers and employees.

3rd. Social Reform.

(A) The application of the principle of the referendum to the
    opening of public libraries, museums and art galleries on
    Sundays.
(B) The application on the same principle to the closing public
    houses on Sundays.
(C) No more Crown lands to be alienated. The land and the
    material therein, being the common property of the people.
(D) A tax on land values, exclusive of improvements, sufficient
    to secure for the community the unearned increment.
(E) A cumulative tax on all incomes over £300 per annum.

4th. Federation.

Federation of all colonies on a democratic basis.
Appendix VI

Platform of the 'United Labor and Liberal Party of Victoria'
Adopted July 1894.

1. Constitutional
   (a) One adult, one vote.
   (b) Provision for the enfranchisement of seamen and other persons following migratory occupations, and for recording their votes at all elections.
   (c) The referendum to be applied for the settlement of vexed public questions.

2. Taxation
   (a) A progressive tax on town and country land values, exclusive of improvements.
   (b) A cumulative tax on all incomes over £200 per year; and a tax on absentees.
   (c) The maintenance and perfection of the policy of Protection.

3. Social Reform
   (a) The establishment of a state bank of issue.
   (b) A law enacting a maximum labor day of eight hours, wherever practicable.
   (c) The adoption of a minimum rate of wage in connection with all Government works.
   (d) The establishment of a Department of Industry.
   (e) The establishment by law of courts of conciliation and compulsory arbitration for the settlement of disputes between employers and employees.
   (f) The prohibition of the importation of Chinese and other Asiatic labor; and of workmen under contract.
   (g) That it is the duty of the Government to provide work for its own unemployed people, and make provision for the destitute.
4. **Federation**

To be consummated by a convention elected directly by the people to draw up a **Federal Constitution**, such Constitution to be eventually submitted to the people by means of the referendum for acceptance or rejection.
# Appendix VII

### 1889 Legislative Assembly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministerialists</th>
<th>61</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Those whose names are underlined crossed floor to support Munro's no-confidence motion, October 1890.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Deakin</th>
<th>Supporters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J. Munro</td>
<td>Albert Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Langridge</td>
<td>Collingwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Gardiner</td>
<td>Carlton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.J. Pearson</td>
<td>East Bourke Boroughs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Deakin</td>
<td>Essendon &amp; Flemington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.M. Clark</td>
<td>Footscray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.L. Tucker</td>
<td>Fitzroy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Russell</td>
<td>Ballarat East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.H. McCall</td>
<td>Sunbower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.R. Outtrim</td>
<td>Maryborough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Harris</td>
<td>Gippsland Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.P. Uren</td>
<td>Ripon &amp; Hampden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.L. Dow</td>
<td>Kara Kara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Davies</td>
<td>Grenville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Young</td>
<td>Grenville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Mclellan</td>
<td>Ararat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Andrews</td>
<td>Geelong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.H. Gordon</td>
<td>Castlemaine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Murray</td>
<td>Warrnambool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Licensed Surveyor

Auctioneer

Auctioneer

Historian

Barrister

Journalist

Gentleman

Timber Merchant

Legal Manager

Auctioneer

Storekeeper

Farmer

Journalist

Gentleman

Storekeeper

Gentleman

Accountant

Merchant

Gentleman
### Gillies' Supporters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Shackell</td>
<td>Rodney</td>
<td>Auctioneer, Cattle dealer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Anderson</td>
<td>Villiers &amp; Heytesbury West Gippsland</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.C. Groom</td>
<td>West Gippsland</td>
<td>Auctioneer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.R. Tuthill</td>
<td>Bogong</td>
<td>Solicitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Smith</td>
<td>Jolimont &amp; W. Richmond</td>
<td>Merchant &amp; Company Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.M. Officer</td>
<td>Dundas</td>
<td>Pastoralist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.M. Highett</td>
<td>Mandurang</td>
<td>Pastoralist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.E. Wrixon</td>
<td>Portland</td>
<td>Barrister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Gillies</td>
<td>Eastern Suburbs</td>
<td>Company Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.T. Derham</td>
<td>Port Melbourne</td>
<td>Manufacturer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. McLean</td>
<td>North Gippsland</td>
<td>Auctioneer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.H. Wheeler</td>
<td>Daylesford</td>
<td>Pastoralist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Ferguson</td>
<td>Ovens</td>
<td>Pastoralist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.L. Forrest</td>
<td>Polwarth</td>
<td>Grazier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.T. Staughton</td>
<td>Bourke West</td>
<td>Grazier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.F. Levien</td>
<td>Barwon</td>
<td>Pastoralist &amp; Company Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.W. Cameron</td>
<td>Evelyn</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Madden</td>
<td>Horsham</td>
<td>Surveyor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Rea</td>
<td>Dandenong &amp; Berwick</td>
<td>Shire Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.L. Lox</td>
<td>East Melbourne</td>
<td>Financial Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D. Carter</td>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Harris</td>
<td>South Yarra</td>
<td>Company Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.B. Patterson</td>
<td>Castlemaine</td>
<td>Auctioneer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.L. Dixon</td>
<td>Prahran</td>
<td>Auctioneer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Constituency</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>F.C. Mason</td>
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<td>Gentleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.W. Best</td>
<td>Fitzroy</td>
<td>Solicitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Armytage</td>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>Barrister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.J. Peacock</td>
<td>Clunes &amp; Allandale</td>
<td>Legal manager of mining companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Foster</td>
<td>East Gippsland</td>
<td>Mining Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.A. Dunn</td>
<td>East Ballarat</td>
<td>Mining Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Methven</td>
<td>East Bourke Boroughs</td>
<td>Contractor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.W. Kirton</td>
<td>West Ballarat</td>
<td>Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.T. Webb</td>
<td>Rodney</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Smith</td>
<td>Emerald Hill</td>
<td>Manufacturer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.J. Mountain</td>
<td>South Melbourne</td>
<td>Timber Storer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.H. Leonard</td>
<td>South Carlton</td>
<td>Solicitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Cheetham</td>
<td>Dunolly</td>
<td>Accountant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.E. Stewart</td>
<td>Talbot &amp; Avoca</td>
<td>Auctioneer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.B. Calvert</td>
<td>Kerang</td>
<td>Auctioneer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Duncan</td>
<td>Borung</td>
<td>Miller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.W. Craven</td>
<td>Benambra</td>
<td>Surveyor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.P. Taylor</td>
<td>Hawthorn</td>
<td>Barrister</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### A. Senior Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W.L. Smith</td>
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<td>Gentleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Munro</td>
<td>Geelong</td>
<td>Banker, Building Society Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Woods</td>
<td>Stawell</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.W. Hall</td>
<td>Shepparton &amp; Euroa</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Hunt</td>
<td>Anglesey</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Laurens</td>
<td>North Melbourne</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Bailes</td>
<td>Sandhurst</td>
<td>Retired Hotelkeeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.G. Duffy</td>
<td>Kilmore, Dalhousie &amp; Lancefield</td>
<td>Solicitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Shiels</td>
<td>Normanby</td>
<td>Barrister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.R. Williams</td>
<td>Eaglehawk</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Graham</td>
<td>Numurkah &amp; Nathalia</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. O'Loghlen</td>
<td>Port Fairy</td>
<td>Barrister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Young</td>
<td>Kyneton</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Bent</td>
<td>Brighton</td>
<td>Company Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Burrowes</td>
<td>Sandhurst</td>
<td>Mining Company Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.H. Graves</td>
<td>Delatite</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Mcntyre</td>
<td>Waldon</td>
<td>Pastoralist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.T. Smith</td>
<td>Hornington</td>
<td>Medical Practitioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Richardson</td>
<td>Creswick</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Baker</td>
<td>Lowan</td>
<td>Mining Company Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Murphy</td>
<td>Warrenheip</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Brook</td>
<td>Accountant</td>
<td>Benalla &amp; Yarrawonga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. E. Wilkinson</td>
<td>Solicitor</td>
<td>Bourke East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. S. Parfitt</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>Wangaratta &amp; Rutherglen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Butterly</td>
<td>Mining Investor</td>
<td>Windermere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Stuart</td>
<td>Manufacturer</td>
<td>East Melbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. T. Carter</td>
<td>Estate Agent</td>
<td>Williamstown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Turner</td>
<td>Solicitor</td>
<td>St. Kilda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. W. Tavener</td>
<td>Auctioneer</td>
<td>Donald &amp; Swan Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. C. Sterry</td>
<td>Mining Investor</td>
<td>South Sandhurst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. D. Beasley</td>
<td>Estate Agent</td>
<td>Collingwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. H. Bennett</td>
<td>Manufacturer</td>
<td>Richmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Maloney</td>
<td>Surgeon &amp; Physician</td>
<td>West Melbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. A. Trenwith</td>
<td>Bootmaker</td>
<td>Richmond</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1894 Legislative Assembly

| Ministerialists, i.e. Turner's supporters. Names underlined were members of new Ministry. |
|---|---|---|
| **A. Those who had opposed Coalition in 1889, and voted consistently since then.** |
| G. Turner | St. Kilda | Solicitor |
| J. W. Taverner | Donald & Swan Hill | Auctioneer |
| J. C. Duffy | Kilmore, Dalhousie, Lancefield | Solicitor |
| H. R. Williams | Eaglehawk | Gentleman |
| G. Graham | Numurkah & Nathalia | Farmer |
| F. A. Trenwith | Richmond | Bootmaker |
| W. Moloney | West Melbourne | Surgeon & Physician |
| G. H. Bennett | Richmond | Manufacturer |
| W. D. Beazley | Collingwood | Estate Agent |
| D. C. Sterry | South Sandhurst | Mining Investor |
| J. H. Graves | Delatite | Farmer |
| W. Shields | Normanby | Barrister |
| W. C. Smith | West Ballarat | Gentleman |

<p>| <strong>B. Those who supported Coalition, crossed floor in 1890, and voted solidly since then.</strong> |
|---|---|---|
| A. J. Peacock | Clunes &amp; Allandale | Legal Manager for Mining Companies |
| A. McLean | North Gippsland | Auctioneer |
| W. Foster | East Gippsland | Mining Agent |
| H. W. Best | Fitzroy | Solicitor |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.R. Outtrim</td>
<td>Maryborough</td>
<td>Auctioneer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.H. Wheeler</td>
<td>Daylesford</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Smith</td>
<td>Emerald Hill</td>
<td>Manufacturer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Murray</td>
<td>Warnambool</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.L. Tucker</td>
<td>Fitzroy</td>
<td>Landowner</td>
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</table>

**C. Former Coalition supporters who crossed after 1890**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Deakin</td>
<td>Woodend &amp; Flemington</td>
<td>Barrister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.C. Mason</td>
<td>South Gippsland</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Harris</td>
<td>Central Gippsland</td>
<td>Storekeeper</td>
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**D. First elected in 1892; supporters of Shiels-Berry-Turner throughout Fifteenth Parliament**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R.T. Vale</td>
<td>West Ballarat</td>
<td>Bookseller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir G. Berry</td>
<td>East Bourke Boroughs</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Jevre</td>
<td>South Carlton</td>
<td>Auctioneer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.R. Broseley</td>
<td>Carlton</td>
<td>Japanner &amp; decorative artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.J. Burton</td>
<td>Stawell</td>
<td>Miner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Winter</td>
<td>South Melbourne</td>
<td>Paper Ruler</td>
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<tr>
<td>S. Wilkins</td>
<td>Collingwood</td>
<td>Butcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Scott</td>
<td>Villiers &amp; Heytesbury</td>
<td>Surgeon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.W. Turner</td>
<td>West Gippsland</td>
<td>SVMiller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.W. Dyer</td>
<td>Borung</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Isaac Isaacs was elected to support Shiels, but crossed floor in January 1893, and then crossed back again a few months later.

J.C. McKenzie, a grazier from Anglesey, was elected to oppose Shiels, but he crossed the floor in 1894.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elected after March 1892, either at by-election or in 1894</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F. C. Gray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Styles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Hume Cook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Sangster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. W. Prendergast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Longmore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Hancock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. A. Hamilton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. A. McGregor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. B. Grose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Fink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. W. F. Rogers</td>
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<tr>
<td>R. Reid</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. B. Higgins</td>
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<tr>
<td>W. Curr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. J. Duggan</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Kerr</td>
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<tr>
<td>T. Baker</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. A. Isaac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. O. Williams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. C. Salmon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Anderson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
T. Kennedy  
R. O'Neill  
A. Downward  
J.T. Thomson

Benalla & Yarrawonga  
Mandurang  
Mornington  
Dundee

Farmer  
Auctioneer  
Grazier  
Grazier

II  
Oppositionists - 32

A. Supporters of Coalition, who voted solidly 1889-94 for conservative bloc

A.W. Craven  
J.B. Patterson  
G.O. Carter  
F.L. Zex  
F.H. Cameron  
J.F. Leven  
J.T. Staughton

Benambra  
Castlemaine  
Melbourne  
East Melbourne  
Evelyn  
Barwon  
Bourke West

Surveyor  
Auctioneer  
Merchant  
Financial Agent  
Farmer  
Pastoralist  
Grazier

B. Supporters of Coalition in 1889, who crossed to Liberals, and then back again

F.T. Webb  
J.G. McColl  
W. McElhaney

Rodney  
Gunbower  
Ararat

Farmer  
Legal Manager  
Gentleman

Both Webb and McColl held office under Patterson.
C. Opponents of Coalition who crossed to conservative side in 1892

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
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<tr>
<td>J. McIntyre</td>
<td>Maldon</td>
<td>Pastoralist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Murphy</td>
<td>Warrenheip</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
</tr>
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</table>

D. Elected in 1892 to oppose Shiels, supported Patterson solidly

<table>
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<th>Name</th>
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<th>Occupation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R. Harper</td>
<td>Bourke East</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
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<tr>
<td>E.H. Austin</td>
<td>Ripon and Hampden</td>
<td>Grazer</td>
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<tr>
<td>J.G. White</td>
<td>Albert Park</td>
<td>Contractor</td>
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</table>

E. Elected 1892 to support Shiels, crossed during 1892-3 to Patterson

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>Occupation</th>
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<tr>
<td>T. Langdon</td>
<td>Kerang</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Grattan</td>
<td>Shepparton &amp; Burca</td>
<td>Grazer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Rawson</td>
<td>Kyneton</td>
<td>Draper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Constituency</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Anderson</td>
<td>East Melbourne</td>
<td>Hotel-keeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Murray-Smith</td>
<td>Hawthorn</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.H. Moule</td>
<td>Brighton</td>
<td>Barrister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Madden</td>
<td>Eastern Suburbs</td>
<td>Solicitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.H. Chirnside</td>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>Pastoralist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Russell</td>
<td>Grenville</td>
<td>Grazier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Anderson</td>
<td>Kara Kara</td>
<td>Grazier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.H. Brake</td>
<td>Horsham</td>
<td>Storekeeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.T. Duffus</td>
<td>Port Fairy</td>
<td>Hotel-keeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.W.R. White</td>
<td>Rodney</td>
<td>Commission Agent</td>
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<tr>
<td>W.H. Irvine</td>
<td>Lowan</td>
<td>Barrister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Bowser</td>
<td>Wangaratta &amp; Rutherglen</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.B. Lazarus</td>
<td>Sandhurst</td>
<td>Mining Speculator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.T. McLeod</td>
<td>Portland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Appendix VIII

Analysis of 87 Members, 1889-94

Group 1. Opposed Coalition, supported Munro-Shiels, opposed Patterson, 12.

G. Turner  St. Kilda  Solicitor
G. W. Bennett  Richmond  Manufacturer
W. Maloney  West Melbourne  Surgeon
W. A. Trenwith  Richmond  Bootmaker
W. D. Beazley  Collingwood  Estate Agent
H. R. Williams  Eaglehawk  Gentleman
D. C. Sterry  Sandhurst South  Mining Investor
G. Graham  Rumurrah & Nathalia  Farmer
J. W. Taverner  Donald & Swan Hill  Auctioneer
W. Shiels  Normanby  Barrister
J. G. Duffy  Kilmorie, Dalhousie & Lancefield  Solicitor
J. H. Graves  Delatite  Agricultural Selector

Group 2. Supported Coalition, crossed floor 1890; then combined with group 1. 12.

W. E. Best  Fitzroy  Solicitor
A. L. Tucker  Fitzroy  Landowner
T. Smith  Emerald Hill  Manufacturer
A. C. Peacock  Clunes & Allandale  Legal manager for mining companies
A. N. Cuttriss  Maryborough  Auctioneer
B. Foster  East Gippsland  Mining Agent
C. Andrews  Geelong  Accountant
J. Murray  Warmnambool  Gentleman
H. Armitage  Grant  Barrister
J.H. Wheeler  Daylesford  Owns saw-mills
A. Harris  Central Gippsland  Store-keeper
A. McLean  North Gippsland  Auctioneer

Group S. Supported Coalition, opposed Munro-Shiels, supported Patterson - conservative core.  15.

E.L. Zox  East Melbourne  Financial Agent
C.J. Carter  Melbourne  Merchant
J. Harris  South Yarra  Gentleman, Company Director
W. Dixon  Prahran  Auctioneer
C.W. Taylor  Hawthorn  Barrister
E.M. Cameron  Evelyn  Farmer
J.F. Levien  Barwon  Pastoralist
S.T. Staughton  Bourke West  Grazier
C.L. Forrest  Polwarth  Grazier
J. Ferguson  Owens  Pastoralist
A.W. Craven  Benambra  Surveyor
E. Wadden  Horsham  Surveyor
J. Keys  Bandenong & Berwick  Shire Secretary
W. E. Corin  Castlemaine  Merchant
J. Patterson  Castlemaine  Auctioneer
Group 4. Opposed Coalition, supported Munro, but crossed floor in 1892 to support Patterson. Mainly Liberal-opportunist. 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W.T. Carter</td>
<td>Williamstown</td>
<td>Estate Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Stuart</td>
<td>East Melbourne</td>
<td>Manufacturer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Richardson</td>
<td>Creswick</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Baker</td>
<td>Lowan</td>
<td>Mine-owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. O'Loughlen</td>
<td>Port Fairy</td>
<td>Barrister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. McDintyre</td>
<td>Maldon</td>
<td>Grazier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Murphy</td>
<td>Warrenheip</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group 5.

(a) Members who crossed the floor only once, 1893-94.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Deakin</td>
<td>Essendon &amp; Flemington</td>
<td>Barrister</td>
<td>Early 1894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.M. Clark</td>
<td>Footscray</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Late 1893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.L. Smith</td>
<td>Mornington</td>
<td>Medical Practitioner</td>
<td>1893</td>
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</table>
(b) Members who crossed the floor twice, 1889-94.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Term</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J.H. McColl</td>
<td>Gumbower</td>
<td>Legal Manager</td>
<td>Oct. 1890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aug. 1892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.T. Webb</td>
<td>Rodney</td>
<td>Pastoralist Company Director</td>
<td>Oct. 1890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.W. Kirton</td>
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<td>Storekeeper</td>
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<td>Young</td>
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<td>W. McLellan</td>
<td>Ararat</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
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<td>June 1891</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Bailes</td>
<td>Sandhurst</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
<td>Jan. 1893</td>
</tr>
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<td>June 1893</td>
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(c) Members who crossed the floor three times, 1889-94.

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Term</th>
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<tr>
<td>D. Methven</td>
<td>East Bourke</td>
<td>Contractor</td>
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<td>Boroughs</td>
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<td>July 1894</td>
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<td>J.M. Dunn</td>
<td>Ballarat</td>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>Oct. 1890</td>
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<td>East</td>
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<td>Jan. 1893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>July 1894</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix IX  Members of Ministries, 1890-94.

Gillies-Deakin Ministry, 1889

Premier, Treasurer, Minister of Railways, Minister of Mines  ... Duncan Gillies
Chief Secretary, Minister of Water Supply  ... Alfred Deakin
Attorney-General  ... H.J. Wrixon
Minister of Justice  ... Henry Cuthbert
Minister of Public Instruction  ... C.H. Pearson
Minister of Defence  ... Sir J. Lorimer
Minister of Trade & Customs  ... J.B. Patterson
Minister of Lands & Agriculture  ... J.L. Dow
Minister of Public Works  ... D.M. Davies
Postmaster General  ... F.T. Derham

Munro Ministry, 1890

Premier & Treasurer  ... Hon. James Munro
Attorney General & Minister of Railways  ... William Shields
Chief Secretary, Minister of Trade & Customs, Health  ... G.D. Langridge
Minister of Defence, Public Instruction  ... F.T. Sargood
Minister of Lands & Agriculture  ... Allan McLean
Postmaster General  ... J.G. Duffy
Minister of Public Works  ... J.H. Wheeler
Minister of Justice  ... J.M. Davies
Minister of Mines  ... A.R. Cuttrim
Minister of Water Supply  ... George Graham
Ministers Without Office  ...  (Simon Fraser  
                          (C.J. Han  
                          (Frank Stuart  
                          (A.J. Peacock

Shields Ministry, 1892

Premier & Attorney-General ...  Hon. William Shields
Treasurer ...  Sir Graham Berry
Chief Secretary, President Board of Land & Works, Minister of Lands ...  Allan McLean
Minister of Railways ...  J.H. Wheeler
Minister of Mines & Vice-President of Board of Land & Works ...  A.R. Cattrell
Minister of Water Supply, Agriculture, Public Works, Vice-President of Board of Land & Works ...  George Graham
Minister of Customs, Minister of Health, Solicitor-General ...  George Turner
Minister of Public Instruction (subsequently Postmaster General) ...  A.J. Peacock
Minister of Defence ...  George Davis
Postmaster General ...  W.A. Seal
Ministers Without Office ...  (J. Cavan Duffy  
                          (Frederick Brown

Patterson Ministry, 1893

Premier, Chief Secretary, Minister of Railways ...  Hon. J.B. Patterson
Attorney-General ...  Sir B. O'Loughlen
Solicitor-General ...  L.A. Isaacs  
                    (resigned May 1893)
Treasurer ...  G. Downes Carter
Minister of Customs and of Public Instruction .. James Campbell
President of Board of Land & Works, Minister of Lands .. John McIntyre
Minister of Defence and of Health .. Robert Reid
Minister of Mines and of Water Supply .. J.H. McColl
Postmaster General .. Agar Wynne
Minister of Public Works and of Agriculture, Vice-President of Board of Land and Works .. W.T. Webb
Vice-President of Board of Land and Works .. Richard Baker
Ministers Without Office ..
  ( Richard Richardson
  J.H. Abbott
  S.W. Cooke

Turner Ministry, 1894

Premier & Treasurer .. George Turner
Attorney-General .. I.A. Isaac
Minister of Defence and Vice-President of Board of Land and Works .. F.T. Sargeood
Chief Secretary and Minister of Public Instruction .. A.J. Peacock
Postmaster General .. J.G. Duffy
President of Board of Land & Works & Commissioner of Crown Lands & Survey, Commissioner of Trade & Customs .. R.W. Best
Solicitor-General, Minister of Health .. Henry Cuthbert
Minister of Railways .. H.R. Williams
Minister of Mines, Water Supply .. Henry Foster
Commissioner of Public Works, Vice-President of Board of Land & Works, Minister of Agriculture  J.W. Taverner

Ministers without Office  S.W. Cooke
  A.T. Vale
  W. McCulloch
  A. McLean
  J.M. Pratt
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