A Select Bibliography

A Primary Sources

1 Unpublished
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B Secondary Sources

1 Books
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Select Bibliography

A **Primary Sources**

1 **Unpublished material.**

There are large numbers of Brady manuscripts – poems, short stories, letters – in the libraries, especially in the National and Mitchell. The National Library

collection has not been fully catalogued. Major items only can be listed. Although some of the short stories and poems which occur in unpublished manuscripts have been published in periodicals, by no means are the majority of them in this category. They are more accessible through these collections than in isolated periodicals.

i Biography

John Archibald: Life and Times of a Great Editor – an undated manuscript, although completed in the early 1940's. It consisted of 214 pages, with another 70 of collected impressions of Archibald written by nineteen of his colleagues. An Appendix has details of Archibald's will and the prize he bestowed upon Sydney. One copy is owned by Oscar Mendelsohn, the other by the Australian Journalists' Association, New South Wales Branch.

Odd Men Out – undated manuscript of biographies of twenty seven famous men, 1892 - 1950, 140 pp., in National Library.

Prime Ministers, Premiers and Politicians I have Known, covering the period 1904 – 1950, 236 pp., in National Library.

Some Big Australians, containing brief biographies of twenty-five Australians famous in various fields, 1936, 77 pp., in National Library.

ii Collections, notebooks, etc.

Australian Art and Letters, 1905 – 1950. A collection of written material, letters, newspaper cuttings and articles, in two volumes. Vol I – 1905 – 1927; vol. II – 1927 – 1950, in National Library

Australian Artists' Biographies, a collection of personal details, newspaper cuttings and letters obtained for a projected book, *Artists of Victoria,* to contain twenty-six biographies. 1911, in Mitchell Library.

Grafton and Clarence River, a collection of material compiled on his northern trip and when he was living at Grafton. Covers the period 1899 – 1903. 140 pp., in National Library.

Literary Notebook, a large volume begun in 1894 and extending to 1951, containing notes, news-cuttings, scribbled comments, photographs, which Brady had saved for future literary use. In National Library.

The Murray River, 1908 – 1950, collection of letters and newspaper cuttings, complete with Brady's comments, on water conservation, irrigation, and Murray River. In Mitchell Library.

My Blackfellow Book, short stories, articles, cuttings on aboriginal theme, 1950, in National Library.

Nautical Notes and Clippings, collected material on sea and sailors, for sue in poems, articles. Undated, in National Library.

Personalia, a collection of personnel and family papers, collated in 1951, in Mitchell Library.

The Simple Life, a collection of articles. Stories, and newspaper cuttings on outdoor life, undated, in National Library.

Utopias Ltd., collection of handwritten, typescript and printed material on collective settlements. Vol. I – 1902 – 1932, dealing with early cooperative settlements throughout the world; Vol. II – 1923 – 1933, dealing with Mallacoota Community Farm. In Mitchell Library.

Victor J. Daley, correspondence, papers and transactions, collated, with biographical notes, by Brady when he was secretary of a fund which raised money for Daley's tombstone and for a grant to his family. Covers the period 1898 – 1929, in Mitchell Library.

iii Drama

"Antonelli" – an Australian Photo-Drama in 5 reels, scenario for film, undated, in National Library.

"Fallen Leaves". A play set at Mallacoota and possibly adaptable to a film, in National Library.

"Life on a Rubber Plantation", typescript play set in Malaya, undated, in National Library.

iv Letters

Brady to Dr. James Booth, 1927 – 1936, 4 letters, in La Trobe Library.

Brady to A.H. Chisholm, 1935 – 1951, 24 letters, in possession A.H. Chisholm, Sydney.

Brady to Thomas Cooke, 1935 – 1952, 11 letters, in La Trobe Library.

Brady to Mrs. E. Ella (his cousin), 1939 – 1944, 7 letters, in possession of Mrs. Jack, Dee Why.

Brady to Miles Franklin, 1943 – 1945, 3 letters, in Mitchell Library.
Brady to Muir Holburn, 1944 – 1951, 49 letters, in Mitchell Library.

Brady to Oscar Mendelsohn, 1946 – 1951, 81 letters, in possession of Oscar Mendelsohn, Melbourne.

Brady to J.K. Moir, 1937 – 1951, 91 letters in La Trobe Library.

Brady to A.G. Stephens, 1901 – 1930, 3 letters in Mitchell Library.

v Political and philosophical.

The Red Objective, an incomplete manuscript planned to have some thirty chapters, undated, but worked on over many years. In National Library.
This book was planned as a major undertaking by Brady. It was to set out the complete history of the Labor Party in Australia, especially in New South Wales, from its inception. Much work was done on it, and individual chapters, sometimes in three drafts, appear in his papers.

A Religion of Humanity, written from 1929 to 1932, sets out Brady's religious and philosophical credo, almost totally socialistic. It is dedicated to Hugh Brady, first Protestant Bishop of Meath, and has an Introduction. 209 pp, in National Library.

vi Short stories.

A list among Brady's papers contains the names of 28 "short stories" and 38 "humorous stories" (Ms 206, Box 31). Some of these cannot be traced; a few have been published; many appear in the various collections of short stories listed below, sometimes more than once.

Beachcomber and Bushrangers, a collection of 34 stories, 1940 – 1942, 443 pp, in Mitchell Library.

The Gippslanders, 35 stories and sketches, 1947, in National Library.

Kangaroo Tales, a collection of 32 stories, 1894 – 1939, in National Library.

Knights of New Arcadia, 38 stories based on the adventures of the Poet and the Artist, undated, in National Library.

The Lotus Eaters (The Land of the Lotus), 26 short stories, many overlapping with *Knights of New Arcadia*, undated in National Library.

The Message Stick, collection of 44 essays and short stories, undated, in National Library.

vii Verse.

Some of the poems in these unpublished collections have been published in periodicals; most are unpublished.
Ballads and Chanties, 6o poems, undated, in Mitchell Library.

The Cat and the Fiddle, 62 poems, undated, in La Trobe Library.

Juvenilia, containing poems from 1888 to 1892 but collated by Brady 1946 – 1950, in Fryer Memorial Library.

Keel and Caravan, collected verse mentioned in several places, the manuscript of which was not sighted.

Native Notions, a collection of 24 light and nonsense poems, undated, in National Library.

Rhymes of Revolt, 52 revolutionary poems written 1890 – 1944, with a Foreword dated 1944, in National Library.

The Wandering Foot, 50 poems, undated but 1944 from external mention in letters, in National Library.

II Published material.

i. Books

a. Poetry

The Ways of Many Waters (Sydney, 1899).
The Earthen Floor (Grafton, 1902).
The Ways of Many Waters (Melbourne, 1909).
Bushland Ballads (Melbourne, 1910).
Bells and Hobbles (Melbourne, 1911).
The House of the Winds (London, 1919).
Wardens of the Seas, (Sydney, 1933).

b. Prose

Sydney Harbour, (Sydney, 1903)
Sydney: The Commercial Capital of the Commonwealth, (Sydney, 1904).
The King's Caravan (London, 1911).
Picturesque Port Phillip (Melbourne, 1911)>
River Rovers (Melbourne, 1911).
Tom Pagdin: Pirate (Sydney, 1911).
Australia Unlimited (Melbourne, 1918), issued in a one-volume and two-volume edition.
The Land of the Sun (London, 1924).
The Overlander: The Prince's Highway, (Melbourne, 1926).
Dr. Mannix: Archbishop of Melbourne (Melbourne, 1934).
Two Frontiers Sydney, 1944).

In addition to these titles, three books were written, principally by Brady, but using ideas from Leslie Rubins:

Depression and Its Cure: The Gold Measure Theory (Melbourne, 1933), with an introduction by Brady.
The Golden Key to Victory, Peace and Prosperity (Melbourne, 1942).
Dreams and Realities (Melbourne, 1944).

ii Serials.

"Rougemont Outdone" (in manuscript, entitled "The Cruise of the Gospel Truth"), *The Arrow,* 26.11.1898 to 14.1.1899.
"On the Wallaby", *The Arrow,* 11.2.1899 to 17.6.1899.
"A Juvenile World Walker", *The Arrow,* 24.6.1899 to 16.9.1899.
"War in the Transvaal" (also "The African War"), *The Arrow,* 21.10.1899 to 28.7.1900.
"War in China", *The Arrow,* 4.8.1900 to 20.10.1900.
"A Younger Quixote". *The Arrow,* 27.10.1900 to 23.2.1901.

iii Introductions, Forewords, etc.

Foreword (pp. 1 – 18) in E.H. Anderson, *The Economics and Finance of a New Order* (Melbourne, 1946).

Foreword to E. Harrington, *Boundary Bend and Other Ballads* (Melbourne, 1936).

Foreword, "Personal Impressions of Victor Daley and His Work" (pp. 11 – 14) in Muir Holburn and Marjorie Pizer (eds.), *Creeve Roe: Poetry by Victor Daley* (Sydney, 1947).

Foreworfd (pp. 7,8), dated February 1948, to H.H. Pearce, *The Song of Nature* (Melbourne, 1948).

iv Editorial Material.

Brady wrote regular editorial material as editor of various publications. There is too much of this to list, but it is available as follows:

The Arrow, 1896 – 1900
The Grip, 1901 – 1903
The Worker (Sydney), 1904 – 1905.
The Native Companion, 1907

v General Prose.

"Life's Highway" a series of reminiscences and autobiographical notes, extracts from which were published in *Southerly,* No. 4, 1952 to No. 4, 1955.

"Louis Esson: Memories and Impressions". L. Esson, *The Southern Cross and Other Plays* (Melbourne, 1946), pp. 215 – 217.

"The Voice of Australia", a biographical essay on Lawson in Cecil Mann (ed.), *The Stories of Henry Lawson,* Third Series (Sydney, 1964), pp. 488 – 505.

Major Contributions were made to:

Bank Notes, 1938 – 1941.
Focus, 1946 – 1948.
The Labor Call, 1930 – 1936.
Life Digest, 1945 – 1950.

A fairly exhaustive card-file has been made of Brady's contributions to various publications, including over a thousand poems. With such voluminous production, the names only are given of publications which have printed his work.

A.B.E. Weekly
The Age
All About Books
The Argus
The Arrow
Art in Australia
Art and Letters
Aussie
Australian Clothing Trades Journal
Australian Dramatic Annual
Australian Journal
Australia To-Day
Australian Pastoralist
Australian Workman
The Australasian
Australasian Stage Annual
Australasian Traveller
B.P. Magazine
Bairnsdale Advertiser
Bank Notes
Barrier Daily Truth
Beckett's Budget
Biblionews
Bird-O'-Freedom
Bohemia
Bookfellow
The Bulletin
The Centennial Magazine
Cerise and Blue
A Comment
Corroboree
Country Life Annual
Courier (Adelaide)
The Echo

Evening News
Farmer and Settler
The Field
Focus
Freeman's Journal
Golden North
Grip
Hassell's Australian Miscellany
Henslowe's Annual
Herald (Melbourne)
The Home
International Socialist
The Journalist
Kat Magazine
Labor Call
The Land
The Leader
Life Digest
Lilley's Magazine
The Listener In
Lone Hand
The Magnet (Eden)
Man
Meanjin
Midday Times
The Native Companion
New Idea
New Triad
Newspaper News
Our Annual
Our Swag
Pacific Islands Monthly
The Publicist
Punch Annual
Review of Reviews
The School Magazine
The Shop Assistant
The Sketcher
Smith's Weekly
Snowy River Mail
Southerly
Spectator
The Sun (Sydney)
Sunday Mail (Brisbane)
Sunday Sun (Sydney)
Sunday Times
Sydney Mail
Sydney Morning Herald
Table Talk
Telegraph (Hobart)
Telegraph (Sydney)
Tocsin
Tomorrow
Truth
The Union Voice
The Unemployed Gazette
Walkabout
Weekly Times
The Western Mail
Windsor and Richmond Gazette
Worker (Brisbane)
Worker (Sydney)

B Secondary Sources

1. Books

There are no books which throw much light on Brady's life, with the exception perhaps of Green's general survey, but those making passing reference to him and those of use in this biography are listed:

J. Barnes (ed.), *The Writer in Australia 1895 – 1964* (Melbourne, 1969).
M. Barton and O. Sitwell, *Sober Truth* (London, 1930).
G. Black, *The Origin and Growth of the Labor Movement in New South Wales* (Sydney, 1915).
R Boynton and M. Mack, *Introduction to the Short Story* (New York, 1965).
J. Le Gay Brereton, *Knocking Around*, (Sydney, 1930).
C. Brown, *Writing For Australia: A Nationalist Tradition in Australian Literature* (Melbourne, 1956).
E.W. Campbell, *History of the Australian Labour Movement: A Marxist Interpretation* (Sydney, 1945).
Z Cross, *An Introduction to the Study of Australian Literature* (Sydney, 1922).
A.H. Chisholm, *The Joy of the Earth* (Sydney, 1969).
R.H. Croll, *I Recall* (Melbourne, 1939).
G. Dutton (ed.), *The Literature of Australia* (Adelaide, 1964)
E. Dyson, *The Golden Shanty* (Sydney, 1963).
R.N. Ebbels, *The Australian Labor Movement 1850 – 1907* (Melbourne, 1960 (1965))
L. Esson, *Dead Timber and Other Plays* (London, 1920).
J.K. Ewers, *Creative Writing in Australia* (Melbourne, 1962.
P. Ford, *Cardinal Moran and the A.L.P.* (Melbourne, 1966).
Miles Franklin, *My Brilliant Career* (Edinburgh, 1901 (Sydney, 1965)).
Laughter, Not for a Cage (Sydney, 1956).
H.M. Green, *A History of Australian Literature* (Sydney, 1961 (1962)).
F.S. Greenop, *The History of Magazine Publishing in Australia* (Sydney, 1947).
Ada A Holman, *Memoirs of a Premier's Wife* (Sydney, 1948).
B. Hornadge, *The Yellow Peril* (Dubbo, 1971).
T. Inglis Moore, *Social Patterns in Australian Literature* (Sydney 1971).
A.W. Jose, *The Romantic Nineties* (Sydney, 1933).
E.H. Lane, *Dawn To Dusk* (Brisbane, 1939).
D.H. Lawrence, *Kangaroo* (London, 1923).
Bertha Lawson and J. Le Gay Brereton, *Henry Lawson by Mates* (Sydney, 1931).
N. Lindsay, *Creative Effort* London, 1924).
Saturdee, (Sydney, 1934 (1966)).
Bohemians of the Bulletin (Sydney, 1965)
F.T. Macartney, *A Historical Outline of Australian Literature* (Sydney, 1957).
E. McDonnell (Hugh Stone), *The Land of the Budgeriga* (Newcastle, 1936).
J. Masefield, *A Sailor's Garland* (London, 1906).
J. Miller (William Lane), *The Workingman's Paradise* (Sydney, 1892 (1948)).
Vance Palmer (ed.), *A.G. Stephens: His Life and Work* (Melbourne, 1941).
The Legend of the Nineties (Melbourne, 1954).
The Rainbow Bird and Other Stories (selected by A. Edwards) (Sydney, 1957 (1969)).
Denton Prout, *Henry Lawson: The Grey Dreamer* (Adelaide, 1963).
L. Rees, *Towards an Australian Drama* (Sydney, 1953).
C. Roderick, *An Introduction to Australian Fiction* (Sydney, 1950).
C. Semmler, *The Banjo of the Bush: The Work, Life and Times of A.B. Paterson* (Melbourne, 1966 (1967)).
(ed.) *Twentieth Century Australian Literary Criticism* (Melbourne, 1967).
W.G. Spence, *The History of the A.W.U.* (Sydney, 1961).

D. Stewart and Nancy Keesing (eds), *Australian Bush Ballads* (Sydney, 1955 (1968))
J.H. Sutcliffe, *A History of Trade Unionism in Australia* (Melbourne, 1921).
G.A. Taylor, *Those Were the Days* (Melbourne, 1918).
Kylie Tennant, *Australia: Her Story* (London, 1953).
C. Turnbull, *Australian Lives* (Melbourne, 1965).
R. Wynn and others, *The Late Cecil Rowlandson: Pioneer Publisher of Australian Novels* (Sydney, 1922).

II Articles, broadcasts.

H. Anderson, "E.J. Brady Checklist", *Biblionews,* Vol. 5 No. 9, August 1952.
Anonymous, "Offensively Australian", *The Bulletin,* 20.5.1936.
"E.J. Brady", *The Bulletin,* 30.7.1952.
B.S. Baxter Cook, "Memoirs of a Pressman", *The Bulletin*, 21.10.1959, and weekly till 16.12.1959.
B. Elliott, "A Century of Australian Literature", broadcast given on .B.C., 4.2.1951.
H.M. Green, "Brady", broadcast on A.B.C., 2.4.1942.
E. Harrington, "Brady", *All About Books,* 12.8.1935.
M. Holburn, "The Urgent Culture". *A Comment,* No. 22 April 1945, pp. 1-6.
W. Lawson, "Some Ballad Writers" *The Bulletin,* 1.6.1938.
J. McDonald, "Edwin J. Bardy – A Checklist", *Biblionews,* Vol. 5 No. 9. August 1952.
Furnley Maurice, "Encouraging Australian Writers" *The Publicist,* 1.7.1937.
O. Mendelsohn, "E.J. Brady, The Sage of Mallacoota", broadcast on A.B.C., 13.6.1954.
V. Palmer, 'E.J. Brady" a broadcast on A.B.C., 31.8.1952.
Katharine S. Prichard, "Brady", unpublished manuscript.
A.G. Stephens, "Newer Australian Verse Writers" *Review of Reviews,* 15.10.1899, pp504 – 512.
B. Stevens, "Some Australian Writers", *Daily Mail,* 30.8.1919.
C. Turnbull, "The Life and Times of E.J. Brady" *The Argus,* 26.7.1952.

III Letters.

E.J. Brady: Autograph Letters 1891 – 19154, a collection of 23 letters to Brady, interleaved with his comments and some biographical notes, in Mitchell Library.
Letters to Brady from Australian Writers. 1899 – 1922, a collection of 57 letters, Mitchell Library.
Letters to Brady from Australian Writers and Artists, a collection of 99 items, 1900 – 1946, in Oxley Memorial Library.
Letters of Mendelsohn to Brady, a collection of 47 letters, 1946 – 1951, owned by Oscar Mendelsohn, Melbourne.

1V Collected material.

Steve Ford's Scrapbook, a three-volume collection of newspaper cuttings, programmes, pictures, articles on Lawson, with some Brady, undated, Mitchell Library.
Newspaper Cuttings of E.J. Brady, a collection made by A.G. Stephens, 1920, in Mitchell Library.
Newscuttings, a collection of 15 obituaries of Brady from various newspapers, 1952, Mitchell Library.

John B. Webb. M.A.

Submitted to the University of Sydney in fulfilment of the
requirements of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Contents

PREFACE

The main collection of Brady's papers and manuscripts is in the National Library of Australia at Canberra. When this study was begun in 1969 the papers were randomly contained in fifty-five boxes. As this study progressed, the Library staff made some attempt to classify them so that the general contents of each box, and the folders within them, was known, but all the boxes were renumbered, so that folder numbers and box numbers no longer agree. The collection is not fully catalogued (a mammoth task), but main manuscripts are easily accessible, as are some subject groups such as the short stories or letters to artists and writers.

Various drafts of some manuscripts, such as Brady's history of the Labor Party (The Red Objective), are scattered throughout many boxes , usually in chapter form. The pages of some works are unnumbered, but close identification has been given where feasible.

Brady adopted the American spelling of "our" words – "or" (flavor, labor). This practice has been retained in the case of direct quotation; otherwise the change has been made to "our", with the exception of "Labor Party" and "Labor" movement.

Chapter One
Biographical account 1869 – 1912

"A wand'ring foot, the Celts contend.
Though yet a man grow old,
Will itch for roaming till the end:
Nor peace their sons shall hold
Whose fathers, where the rainbows bend
Have sought the Crock of Gold."

Brady, "The Wandering Foot"

Edwin James Brady was born at Carcoar, New South Wales on 7th August 1869, son of Edward and Hannah Brady. His family was a proud one with a long tradition in Northern Ireland and the United States. Brady later traced the family back to Hugh Brady, first Protestant Bishop of Meath in Ireland, who was instrumental in the establishment of Trinity College, Dublin; and beyond him to "certain chiefs of Thomand" who traced themselves back to Oilill Olum, a prominent figure who, esteemed as a poet, died in 234 A.D. In referring to his ancestry Brady remarked that "my pedigree has always been longer than my purse." [1]

On several occasions Brady outlined this ancestral history, [2] telling particularly of the character of his grandfather, Edmund, and of his "respected" father, Edward John, who fought in the Civil War and against Indians in the United States before he came to Australia to become a trooper in the Mounted Police Force, where he put his experience to good use in chasing criminals and bushrangers in central and western New South Wales.

Being born into such a family and to such a father had its difficulties. As the young Brady saw it:

> I arrived in the world of Life with a smile on my face and fists clenched – the smile because I saw at once that this Earth was a very beautiful and amusing place; the shut fist because I realised that I would have to fight, being a trooper's son (and only child) and Lawmen anything but popular in the Australian back blocks towards the end of the bushranging period.[3]

The smile and the clenched fist were often visible in the years of development, but the smile was notably absent when the family returned to Oberon after a short period at Condobolin. To a boy used to roaming the wide, sun-drenched paddocks with his dog, Oberon Public School came as a great shock. Edwin Brady ran away. But the inevitable return came and soon an insatiable appetite for reading was apparent. He had soon read Orr's Circle of the Sciences*, which, with an illustrated* History of the Bible *comprised the family library. Under the impetus of demand however, the size of the collection grew considerably. When his father rode regularly into Bathurst, he was enjoined to bring back candy and books.* The Arabian Nights, The Swiss Family Robinson, *Shakespeare and Campbell's poems were later recalled as favourites which were read "from the first streak of light" each morning.*

In 1880 the Brady family moved to Washington for two years, where the young boy became an object of great attention and curiosity at the local school. He argued with his schoolmates the merits of the political systems of the two countries and, no doubt swamped by superior numbers, became convinced of the virtues of republicanism.

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1 In his *Personalia,* p.1, in Mitchell Library

2 Principally *Two Frontiers* (Sydney 1944)

3 Autobiographical letter Brady to Carroll, 21.10.46, In Mitchell Library

Two of his report forms from this school, Grade Five, show he received full marks for Deportment and Scholarship – a performance which no doubt would have amazed some of his political opponents later on, had they been aware of it.

The educational environment of Washington proved thoroughly satisfactory to Brady who appreciated its tranquillity after "eleven or twelve years of almost-daily encounters in which blackened eyes and blooded noses figured, to say nothing bruises and abrasions."[1] But the temporary respite had to come to an end. Urged principally by the mother's homesick longing for Australia, the family returned in 1882, settling in Sydney and beginning Brady's long association with this favourite city. Although he often left it for Melbourne and other places, he retained a fondness for its busy streets, its harbour, and its commercial and cultural activity.

Brady, along with Roderic Quinn and Christopher Brennan, attended St. Francis' School in Haymarket in 1882, but the next year saw him at St. Mary's School, from where he passed the Civil Service Examination in October. Then Quinn and Brady went on to the Marist Brother school at Harrington Street while Brennan proceeded to Riverview.[2] Brother Wilbred Staunton greatly influenced Brady at this school, and influence recognised when River Rovers *was dedicated to "Brother Wilbred – a candid critic and a keen sportsman. Who imbued my youthful mind with a love of literature, and inspired my spirit with true Australian sentiment". From this school Brady passed the Junior Public Examination in 1884.*

Even at this early stage of Brady's development, there were signs of some of those facets of personality apparent in the mature man. In a series of reminiscence which was published in Southerly *after Brady'' death, considerable light was shed upon some of the influences which moulded him, as well as upon some of his preoccupations and beliefs. He stated that* Life's Highway *was not an autobiography in the usual sense, but a book of reminiscence and personal experience which he wished to record before his arrival "at the Universal Inn".[3] Although the manuscript had been earlier submitted to Angus and Roberston, the rejection slip was accompanied by the readers' reports, which described it as "full of interest" but "discursive and often disconnected" – both legitimate comments.[4]*

Brady attributed his emotional sensitivities to his Celtic Forebears and made much of certain experiences of childhood which left a lasting impression. In addition to the fear engendered by a terrible "Something" which lived at the bottom of the well, there was a traumatic experience of almost fatal proportions when the young child pulled a basin of boiling bread and milk over him. This left physical scars but also mental traces in the form of nervousness and a sense of impending doom which were never quite outgrown:

> I went down in to the Valley of Shadow and there I beheld stange new forms.
> When I read Edgar Allan Poe's "Ulalume" it all came back to me.
> By a route obscure and lonely

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[1] Brady to Carroll, 21.10.46, in Mitchell Library
[2] Walter Stone, *Biblionews*. Vol 11 No. 11, October, 1949
[3] From the Foreword written by Brady, when *Life's Highway* was in manuscript. It was reproduced as extracts in *Southerly* No. 4 1953 to No. 4 1955.
[4] Enclosure with a letter, Angus and Robertson to Brady, 1.6.1939, among Brady's papers in National Library.

> Haunted by ill angels only
>
> I journeyed on and on. One face among four is more present than others – the face of a man with a grey beard. Sometimes as he bent over, his beard brushed my cheek. After days had gone, days and nights of suggering for a child, it came that I was to die. Will you believe me that I knew that the time had come for me to die? Where is one room of all the rooms of my years that I remember best. In that room there is a table with a lamp burning, a couch and a bed. There are four people in the room – my father, my mother, the doctor and myself. My mother is kneeling; my father stands rigid, erect, outside the circle of lamplight. I sense his presence rather than see him there. Dr Eaton bends over the table. Very carefully he measuring something in a teaspoon, which he pours into my mouth, something that warms my lips… They all fade away and leave me on a strange road. I came again to that road fifty years later. It was the road going down into Chillagoe in Northern Queensland, through desert sandstone that reflects the burning heat of a tropical sun. In the country through which it winds stand strange monsters caarved out of solitary rocks, behemoths, mastodons – creatures of an unreal world. It is the haunted Land of Ulalume, which lies out of Space and out of Time. I know it well for I followed that grim road right to its Outward Border. All my life, as a consequence, I have suffered from a nervous apprehension, a recurring dread of impending calamity which requires some philosophy to overcome…[1]

The impressionable boy was greatly disturbed also by the orthodox religious ideas which were presented to him at an early age. The stage was set for confusion in this regard by the fact that his father came from a long line of Protestants, stretching back to the time or Henry the Eighth, while his mother came from an equally long line of Catholics. The doctrine of eternal damnation struck him suddenly and savagely, an effect heightened by a sense of personal guilt which occasioned a fear and dread lasting at least three years, destroying much of the joy natural to a growing country lad. He recalled making altars of sticks, modelled on pictures of Judaic pyres in *The History of the Bible*, upon which he sacrificed small birds, pledging life-long piety in exchange for absolution and for success in the hunt.

His guilt was further increased under the impact of co-educational experience in the small bush school, the turning to "certain fascinating chapters" of the Old Testament, which awakened carnal emotions, and Shakespeare"s "Venus and Adonis", all of which helped to introduce the neophyte to the world of sex-phantasy and experimentation – the very world of Hurtle Duffield. Brady hypothesised later that his guilt, in the rigid maternal morality of the world of his rearing, led to his early verse-writing as a method of sublimation.[2]

Brady's accounts of his childhood fears – his dreams of malevolent green-eyed cats, of night-flying, of night-mares in which long-barrelled Winchesters continually bent and faced him in moments of crisis – all provide material of great interest to the sexually-oriented psychoanalyst, but to the casual observer there is an air of mysticism as well as an extraordinary revelatory quality. While Brady does not profess to understand all the emotional strains of childhood, he is unusually coherent and suggestive in retelling and describing them.

He betrays a sensitive mind and a vivid pen in recalling some of the actual scenes of the countryside and people from these early times. They provide an interesting picture of a way of life since passed:

> *My first memory is that of being carried by my mother to visit an old couple who had a farm on Fish River Creek. Maurice and his wife are the most prominent of figures of infantile acquaintance. The woman wor a white cap. She was fat, and the string of black apron divided her into two spheres, which quivered and undulated as she went about her work.*

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[1] *Southerly* No. 4 1952, pp. 194 - 5

[2] Note appended to Brady's *Juvenilia* in Fryer Library

> *Their house was built of slabs, the cracks between them stopped up with mud. It was whitened outside with limewash and thatched with rushes like the cabins in the country of origin. On rafters of round bush poles, blackened by smoke from an open fire-place, hung sides of bacon and hams. A Fountain was suspended over the log fire by a hook and chain. On the stone hearth stood a camp over and a polished tin teapot with a long spout.*[1]

If the intensity of his early experiences led in due course to Brady's interest in psychology, so did his early relationships with people and with a variety of environments lead to an interest in society and sociological questions. The black tracker and other aborigines in the little bush towns made him aware of another culture, where legends clashed with the explanations given by the white man's scientific knowledge. The constant moving from Carcoar to Condobolin and Oberon, to Washington and Sydney, perhaps helps to explain the wanderlust which was so strong in the mature Brady that he was forever leaving in search of greener pastures. Perhaps, too, it would account for the restlessness of the man, who developed an attitude towards life's tasks which amounted almost to dilettantism. But it did not prevent his early reading and thinking. Poetry served as a kind of antidote to other influences. He could recite his mother's favourite poems, Campbell's "Exile of Erin" and "Hohenlinden" before he was "any age at all". Later, through Henry Lawson and Francis Adams, poetry was to increase his political awareness and exercise considerable persuasion over him.

Few of his early experiences, however, could compare with the emotion aroused in the young Brady when he went to the city with his father and first saw the sea. He had many times envisioned it through the eyes of Marryat, Melville, Defoe and John Masefield. It had always held a strange fascination for him. The vividness of this first sighting remained after sixty years:

> *There it was – the Sea!*
> *Out to the horizon, to the edge of the world, to the Beyond where other countries, islands and continents lay, it spread like a level blue plain – the Sea.*
> *I took a great gulp of the salty ocean wind and it went into my lungs and stayed there.*
> *I shut my eyes and saw the triremes, clippers, and Viking Ships, I saw Columbus, Drake, Paul Jones and Captain James Cook; corsairs, buccaneers, filibusters, pirates, men-of –war, India men, navigators, adventurers, all the brave figures of the sea story – here was their stamping-ground. Here at last was the wide-spreading scene of their romantic exploits!* [2]

The sea was to continue top hold a strange appeal for him throughout his life, becoming in many ways a symbol – of Nature, of the universal mystery of life, of a great unknowable, of a pattern forever changing yet ever changeless, a force benevolent yet malevolent. Later he could not rest unless in sight of it.

But travelling Life's Highway involved passing along through the plains and forests of time, and the youthful Brady soon began to find his metier as an observant and idealistic young man. At fifteen, rather tired of formal schooling, impatient to earn a living and make his own way in the world, he readily acceded when his father suggested he leave school to act as chainman with a civil engineer at thirty shillings a week. Here he began in earnest to learn of Life. His firm was working on the sewerage line from Bellevue Hill to Ben Buckler. He had to be lowered by winch down shafts in a bucket, with one leg in and the other steadying the contraption against the sides of the shaft to prevent rotation during descent. Accidents were common, but "if you were hurt or killed it was your own fault". He often assisted in

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[1] *Southerly* No. 4 1952, pp 192 - 3
[2] *Southerly* No. 1 1953, p 26

patching up victims of carelessness – their own or somebody else's – before they were conveyed by wagonette to St. Vincent's Hospital. Nor did an outbreak of typhoid help conditions!

In writing of his early experiences, Brady was ever anxious to set the scene for his readers, who by then lived in a time apart. Realising the close connection between a man and his social conditions, he usually attempted to give a correct sense of perspective:

> *The invention of the internal combustion machine may be regarded as a turning point in human progress. I am writing here of a world three decades prior to that invention, when steam had hardly come into its own, when a sailing-vessel from Liverpool to Port Jackson made a fast passage if it took no longer than ninety days; when Australian towns were lit by kerosene lamps, or not at all; when most bush roads were rutted tracks, along which bullock drays and horse teams toiled through mud or dust; when coaches were still occasionally held up by bushrangers, and few conveniences or comforts of the present day were known to settlers. Then the wind blows inshore its salty smell revives one memory picture; the odour of horse sweat and leather calls up another.*[1]

After twelve months of this rigorous but educative experience, Brady decided, with the paternal blessing, that this kind of work was far better if one could direct others to do the dirtiest jobs and so he returned to school with the intention of qualifying to become a civil engineer. He studied Latin, French, and Algebra, as well as the subjects he had preciously taken, with Lyon Weiss of the Modern High School in Liverpool Street, and Father Kelly of St. Aloysius' Jesuit Day School – so successfully that he matriculated. But he went little further; with the exception of evening lectures at Sydney University in Philosophy and English, and shorthand at the School of Arts, his scholastic education ended there.

Leaving the University without graduating, Brady was "compelled to pick up the wage-slave's burden again" and secured a job as timekeeper on the Sydney wharves for Dalgety and Company at a pound a week and a shilling an hour overtime. It was a very strenuous time for him, but he learned a great deal, especially about the sights and sounds and smells of ships and sailormen – knowledge that he soon embodied in verse:

> *You can dunnage casks o'tallow; you can handle hides and horn;*
> *You can carry frozen mutton; you can lumber sacks o'corn;*
> *But the queerest kind o'cargo that you've got to haul an' pull*
> *Is Australia's "staple product" – is her God-abandoned wool.*
> *For it's greasy an' it's stinkin, an' them awkward ugly bales*
> *Must be jammed as close as herrings in a ship afore she sails.*

To which the authentic language of the Australian worker supplies the refrain:

> *So you yakker, yakker, yakker,*
> *For the drop o' beer an' bacca.*
> *For to earn you bloomin' clobber an' the bit o' tuck you eat.*
> *When you're layin' on the screw,*
> *With the boss a-cursin' you.*
> *An' the sweat runs like a river, an' you're chokin' with the heat.*

While "Hides and Tallow" recreates the smells of the wharves, "The loading of the Pride" reproduced the urgency and romance of the competition between ships'

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[1] *Southerly, No. 1 1953, p 27*

masters to be first to the London market with the cargo, as well as the dangers of undue haste:

> "*Re-a-rally! Ri-a-rally! Stand from under! Mind the slings!*
> *Hang it! Use yer hook, you duffer! Can't you catch her as she swings?*
> *'Tarnal fool! He's gone and missed it! H'ist away there, quick as y' can!*
> *Why the blazing Son of Thunder*
> *Couldn't he have stood from under?*
> *Leg's broke! Can't move! Look sharp! Fetch along a basket – and a man!"*

But the life of the sea is not all work, according to the young Brady's vision. There is the romance of the sea's tradition ("The Ways of Many Waters"), its chanties and rhythms ("Lost and Given Over"), its tragedy ("The passing of Parker") and the beauty of the sea:

> *And the sun streaks dim on the water's rim.*
> *With the heaving miles before,*
> *And the still stars beam on the swirling stream*
> *As she heels, hull down, once more.*
> . . . . . .
> *By the gull's white breast on the rising crest*
> *Of the far, unfathomed sea;*
> *By the roll and dip of a royal ship,*
> *By a thousand things that be;*
>
> *By the girls we love, by the God above,*
> *By the surge, and the surf, and the wind,*
> *By the sun and air, and the death we dare,*
> *Is the charm of the chains that bind.*[1]

Still with Dalgety, Brady moved after twelve months to Town's Bond store where he had more leisure for both reading and scribbling, "as no one was ever strictly sober after ten o'clock in the forenoon". He began to feel more like a man. He patronised the Public Library every spare moment, reading scientific, philosophic and general literature.

There must have been many things in this position which grated against Brady's increasing sensitivity. In a short story, written many years later, he provides a vivid description of the store, particularly the multitude of rats which over-ran the place. Wryly he refers to it as "an assembly and distribution centre for those hateful creatures", packed, as it was, with "English ales, China teas, American tobaccos, French perfumes, Portuguese wines, cigars from Manilla, jute from Calcutta" – all brought in sailing vessels from the ports of the Seven Seas.

From the Bond store the young clerk went to learn the Day Book and Journal in the merchandise department of Dalgety's Bent Street store and was shortly placed in charge of that section. He was now earning two pounds a week and he and his fellows regarded themselves as "the crème de la crème of the commercial class". They dressed to suit. "Our tall collars were immaculately white; no mundane mud ever adhered for long to soles of our aristocratic shoes" Brady recalled. And during this time, leisure hours continued to be devoted to reading in philosophy, politics and sociology – Kant, Spencer, Schopenhauer, Mill and Marx receiving special attention.

These years from 1884 to 1889 saw the beginnings of literary production. One authority quotes Brady as stating that had begun to write even earlier, exchanging poems for cakes with his mother.[2] Certainly he wrote early verse on religious theme, especially Biblical, his *Juvenilia* containing long ballads about

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[1] "They Have Bound Us" *The Ways of Many Waters* (Sydney, 1899)
[2] James McDonald, "Edwin Brady – a Checklist", *Biblionews,* August 1952.

Moses and Abraham as well as least one long poem of about a thousand lines on Spanish and Moorish themes – "Zayda – a Tale of the Alhambra". Short stories, character sketches and articles were also produced.

1890 was a momentous year for Brady. The Maritime Strike being in progress, Dalgety and Co., in common with many other firms at the time, were sweating in their employees as special constables to help police the stores and warehouses long the waterfront where wool shorn by non-union labour was beginning to arrive.[3] Wwhen Brady refused this assignment as a matter of principle, regarding it as a form of treason against the workers whom he saw actively trying to better their working conditions and wages, he was instantly dismissed. Although his ire was aroused, he could still see his employer's point of view, recognising that he must have appeared as "an unsuspecting rebel, chafing, choking down thoughts, convictions, sympathise that were demanding expression" but this knowledge did not prevent his resentment. As well as the monetary loss, there was the lostt of status in his own and other eyes; but it was the breaching of principle which grieved him most. This he resented with all his "youthful heart and mind and soul".[1]

This period was a watershed in Brady's career in that it began his induction into the arena of active political and social questions. It also later led him into political journalism and into a particular bias in the field of general journalism when he served as contributor and editor. It meant the beginning of associations with me who were to be in constant communication with him for the rest of his life. Less tangibly, it helped to crystallise the idealism which the mature Brady embodied – an idealism which merged into utopianism under the influence of the religious ideas inherited from his parental home. Ultimately too, it led to the cynicism and disillusionment which helped him give the impression of always having a chip on his shoulder, of always being against the government, and of harbouring a bitterness which no amount of patronage or success could wholly obscure or remove.

Stirred by events, Brady sought means of rendering assistance to what he regarded as the underprivileged class. In short time he had taken three significant steps – joined the Australian Socialist League and become its Secretary, become a member of the Labor Electoral League (later the Australian Labor Party) and editor of its first official newspaper, *The Australian Workman,* and had organised The Clerical and Merchantile Workers' Association, the first union for clerical workers and warehousemen.[2]

The Australian Socialist League had been formed in May 1887 by William McNamara and A.M. Pilter.[3] It distributed the works of Marx, Hyndman and other socialists and became the centre of weekly debates and lectures. Among its early members were W. Higgs and W.M. Hughes, one becoming later a Labor member of Parliament and the other, of course, Prime Minister. Prior to Brady's enrolment, McNamara had served as both Secretary and President before his transfer to Melbourne. During Brady's secretary-ship he admitted to membership W.A. Holman, a staunch friend later to become Premier of New South Wales.

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[3] E.H. Lane, *Dawn to Dusk* (Brisbane, 1939) gives a vivid picture of the tensions aroused by this event. Robin Gollan, *Radicall and Working Class Politics,* gives details of the appointment by the unions of pickets on four hour shifts, of the increase of the Police by the Government from 559 men to 3952, of the decision to create special constables and of the enmity and distrust these moves engendered. A union offer to supply them was rejected.

[1] "The Pre-ninety Period"' *The Red Objective.* This Brady manuscript, which is fragmentary and has several different titles (among them *The History of the A.L.P.*) was written by him in the 1930's to give an account of the development of the Labor Movement in Australia. As the only outline of the incomplete manuscript, which was to have had thirty chapters, uses this title, it will be adhered to. The manuscript is in the National Library.

[2] In a letter to Walter Stone, 23.11.1949, Brady wrote that he had some assistance from Blackwell and the Strike Committee in organising this union. The first meeting was convened by Brady in the Temperance Hall in Pitt St. with the positions of Secretary and Organiser filled by him during its brief existence. In an undated article, "The Writers' Union" in National Library, Brady wrote: "The psychology if its failure was mainly laid in class pride and fear, timidity of the brain-workers of the period". George Black, Bob Guthrie and Rod. Quinn were among foundation members. Brady later belonged to the Melbourne Press Band and the Australian Journalists' Association where he was "sometimes in arrears and never in attendance".

[3] Documents concerned with its foundation are reproduced in R.N. Ebbels, *The Australian Labor Movement 1850 – 1907* (Melbourne 1960 (1965)).

The regular Sunday night lectures and debates of the Socialist League provided a platform for political aspirants. As well as this public speaking, Brady took his turn at the Socialists' Sunday afternoon stint of speaking in the Domain. This was a task also shared by William Lane's brother, Ernest, who later wrote of the strong friendship formed between them:

> We were both young (21 years of age), overflowing with enthusiasm and ideals of human emancipation and brotherhood. Brady, with a charming and magnetic personality, attracted me and I cherished an almost idolatriness for him which left a lasting impression.[1]

The two roomed together for a while in a back street in Wooloomooloo where they "quoted poetry to each other and dreamt wonderful dreams of the future triumph of the workers over their age-long oppressors." Lane also told hoe Brady's family and social circle repudiated and ostracised him because os his socialist leanings and connections. He was unable to mention religion or politics in his home without a disagreeable conflict, the result being a self0inflicted mental isolation except for the companionship of those friends who shared his beliefs and opinions. For a time at least, though, life was "a Sahara in which the oases were few and far apart".

Shortly after joining the socialists Brady also joined the Labor Electoral League, soon to become the Political Labor League and then the Australian Labor Party. Just as his claim to have "led" the first Australian Socialist movement is a characteristic Brady exaggeration, so was his claim, made many times later on, to have been one of the "founders" of the Labor Party. Certainly however, Brady was one of the early members – along with George Black, W.G. Higgs and W.M. Hughes. He belonged, as did others, to both organisations simultaneously. The relationship which existed between them is not always clear, not is it important for consideration here, but Ford has disentangled some of the complexitities.[2]

As well as being propelled into political fields by the events of 1890, Brady found this year eventful in another field. He married Marion Cecilia Walsh at Paddington 30th October, beginning a union which lasted in spirit only until April of the following year when, according to Brady, a child was born of whom he was not the father. A private enquiry agent was engaged, the result being a legal divorce in 1894. Before the final separation however, there was a civil suit in which Brady alleged his wife had attacked him with an umbrella. Evidently his pride was hurt more that his person, for the magistrate dismissed the case.[3]

After leaving Dalgety, Brady had tried to support himself solely by his literary output but was having a lean time of it, there being an economic recession at the time. His fortunes improved in 1891 when his literary and political interests coalesced for the first time. He was offered the editorship of the official Labor paper *The Australian Workman.* This paper had evolved from a motion by C. Hart in June 1890 for the establishment of a "workman's paper" and in December Hart became its manager and later chairman of the board of directors. W.G. Higgs served briefly as its first editor before Brady took over from him 5th September 1891.[1]

This position Brady held until the end of the year, or shortly after, when a political battle developed in the Labor Party over a fiscal issue. Brady backed a section of the paper's management which was mainly Protectionist but this proved unwise. Labor members with Henry George affections, headed by A. Sinclair, hurriedly decided on an editorial change and Brady lost his position. He also claimed that George Black wanted the editorial columns to use against John Norton who was assailing him in "Truth". George Edwards, the manager of the paper, supported Black and prevented the composing

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[1] *Dawn to Dusk*. Pp 28 – 9. The 'lasting impression" led to a life-long friendship, as the two corresponded regularly thereafter.

[2] P. Ford, *Cardinal Moran and the A.L.P.* (Melbourne, 1966), especially Chapter seven.

[3] *The Australian Workman,* 2.4.1892

[1] Brady was still Secretary of the Socialist League when he became editor. It was not until the 1925 Conference that dual membership of this nature was forbidden.

room from setting up Brady's copy. Black's triumph was short-lived however, for the paper which "Truth" scornfully referred to as a "quasi-Labor League organ" was wound up, the last issue being 17 November 1894. Brady managed to save something from the affair, in addition to the experience, by being engaged to supply "Truth" with weekly copy at ten shillings a column, supplementing his earnings by other writings, but "the New South Wales press was not notoriously radical" and he had a rather lean time.[2]

Although this experience helped the process of Brady's gradual disillusionment with political activity and his "almost religions loyalty to the Labor Cause", it produced a larger acquaintanceship with political and journalistic figures. One of these was a young lady, Creo Stanley, who belonged to the Socialist League. On one occasion Brady had the necessity, as Secretary, to request her to take the chair at a coming meeting, gallantly concluding:

> *If you decide to accede to our request you will receive the honour and admiration which as Socialists we must naturally feel for our first lady comrade who takes such an active part in our propaganda.*[3]

He signed the letter "Yours respectfully and fraternally" but it was doubtful whether he had brotherhood in mind. \the day after his divorce was finalised he made her Mrs. Creo Brady.

This second voyage into matrimony lasted only a short time before the couple separated. Having only Brady's account of the reasons for the separation, which he gave as irregular behaviour on his wife's part, judgment on the matter needs to be suspended, but as a Catholic, his wife refused to give him a divorce and he remained legally married to her until her death in 1942. Perhaps it was of Creo he was thinking when he wrote a short poem:

I loved for what I thought you were,
And not for what you be –

My Soul was but a voyager

Upon a shallow sea.

It is not well that one should make
His goddess out of clay,
From dreams unreal soon to wake
And face the real day.

The Star that I, fool, dreamed you'd be
Is clouded in the blue:
The bitter knowledge comes to me,
That you are – only <u>you</u>[1]

As a member of the West Sydney branch of the Labor Electoral League (along with a close friend, J.C. Watson, destined to become the first Labor Prime Minister), Brady was nominated for preselection, along with twelve others. Depending on its size, each branch could nominate up to four members. Brady, coming fifth in the poll, missed out on nomination, partly because he lacked the strong union backing of the candidates who were successful. George Black, J.D. Fitzgerald, Andrew Kelly and Thomas Davies were subsequently elected to Parliament from this branch.

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[2] "Lights of Labor", *The Red Objective.*
[3] Letter Brady to Creo Stanley, 24.3.1891 in National Library
[1] "Only You", *The Bulletin* 1.4.1909

J.D. Fitsgerald and S.A. Rosa had represented a "moderate" group in the Australian Socialist League while Brady was more militant and further left in his views. Following Fitzgerald's success both within the League and at preselection and election, Brady and some other left wing members resigned from the Socialist League.[2] Brady however, considered the fight worthwhile.

He wrote:

> *The A.S.L. went into the fight with a will. They stiffened the campaign and seared the moderates at the Trades Hall, who endeavoured to have them repudiated…Never, I believe, in the history of such things was greater activity displayed from any centre.* [3]

Brady and other more militant members had acted as catalysts in the political arena. Ford somewhat reduces the scale of this version of the part played by the Socialist League while Brady was Secretary, but still regarded it as a new and important force in the history of the Labor movement:

> *In the insecurity and instability of the strike aftermath and unemployment, as in the earlier excitement and tension of the strike, it stood out with its novelty of programme, passion, drive and utopian confidence. Its novelty, colour and assurance made it a point of concentration and rally and its talented and youthful leaders were unusually well-equipped to contribute the maximum in publicity and propaganda.*[1]

His withdrawal from the Socialist League did nothing to curb Brady's love for and faith in socialist principles. He kept this faith and trust to the end of his days, although it was often tried by public and private events in subsequent years.

Brady continued to eke out a meagre living by writing poetry (his first poem of many for *The Bulletin* was 23rd May 1891), as a dramatic reporter for John Norton's *Truth* and as a writer of feature articles for the *Sunday Times*. He also contributed to *The Bird-O'-Freedom* and the *Freeman's Journal*. In his unpublished biography of J.F. Archibald, Brady recounts how W.H. Traill, former Managing-Director and Editor-in-chief of *The Bulletin* was elected in 1889 to represent South Sydney. Later on, after sitting in two parliamentary sessions, and after trying his hand at pig and poultry farming, Traill became editor of *Truth* and promptly fired him and John Norton – Brady going on to the *Sunday Times* at more money. Soon after, however, Norton returned to *Truth* where he "howled, snarled and barked so well that he died worth a quarter of a million or so".[2]

Brady's interests were lively and wide-ranging throughout his life – perhaps too much so for his own good – and this width is beginning to be visible at this time. In addition to his political activities, he wrote verse and prose of all kinds as well as engaging in quite extensive cultural activities (meetings, concerts and plays). He wrote to the Government Astronomer to get details of the planet Mars for scientific articles he was writing, evidencing his marked interest in science topics. He was introduced by the Hon. J.D. Fitzgerald, M.L.A.[3] to M. Kowalski, who was a well-known overseas conductor and composer, and who wanted to set to music some Brady Lyrics. In fact, over the years, quite a number of Brady's poems were set to music by Kowalski, Alfred Hill, Horace Keats and others. Perhaps the best know of these is "There's Something at the Yardarm" made popular on record by Peter Dawson. Brady also tried his hand, at this stage, at writing an oratorio in conjunction with Kowalski, but when the conductor was recalled overseas the project lapsed.[3]

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[2] E.H. Lane regarded the resignation philosophically. "Disillusionment and disappointment are the inescapable lot of all who set out with brave ideals, and, of course, Brady and I encountered them." *Dawn to Dusk,* p. 32

[3] "1891 Elections and Organisation Follow Unrest" *The Red Objective.*

[1] Ford, pp 95 -6

[2] "The Voice of Australia", C. Mann (ed.) *The Stories of Henry Lawson:* Third series (Sydney, 1964) p. 54.

[3] Letter Fitzgerald to Brady, 24.3.1892, in Mitchell Library

[3] "Musicians I have Met", *Focus*, September 1947. Tells the story of the oratorio "The Birth of Music", the main characters of which were Jubal the Dreamer, Naamah, his sister and Tubal Cain the artificer.

Brady's acquaintances and friends included the majore figures of his day, not only political, but also literary and artistic: A.G. Taylor (first editor of *Truth* and the *Spectator),* John Norton, King O'Malley, Edmund Barton, Dan Green, E.W. O'Sullivan, J.C. Williamson, W. Holman, W.M. Hughes, Nt Gould (later to work with Brady on *The Arrow*), David McKee Wright, Lawson, Quinn, George Gordon McCrae and his con Hugh, John Farrell, Brunton Stephens, A.G. Stephens, J.F. Archilbald, Victor Daley, A.B. Pterson and Barcroft Boake. There were many others too, especially in the literary field – Joh Le Gay Brereton, F.J. Dwyer, James Ryan, Edmund Fisher, Ure Smith and Mary Gilmore, Marie J. Pitt and Ethel Turner. Some of these he lightly sketched in *Life's Highway*: for example, P.J. Holdsworth, "whose shiny pot hat and black frock coat, on the lapel of which a carnation perennially flowered, were a feature of the nine 0'clock trams leaving Woollaahra for the city"; or Ernest Favenc "a portly, dignified old gentleman, an optimist regarding 'waste spaces' of far-bac country which he was instrumental in opening up"[1] Brady recalled that the "most interesting" figures in the public life of the 1890's were William Lane, John Norton, W.M. Hughes and J.T. Lang of whom he wrote: "They may differ in personality, but they are each possessed or possess the quality of audacity to a marked degree."[2]

Out of these acquaintances and friendships there came many stories, a rather poignant one concerning James Dwyer, an Australian who achieved considerable success as a short story writer for popular journals in America. He kept two secretaries busy with dictated material when on holidays in Sydney, where he met Brady:

> Dwyer had a good yarn about Jimmy Ryan .. 'Narranghi Boori'. After things came right with James Francis Dwyer, he moved up to a luxurious flat on Broadway. His nose was in the MS one evening when a negro janitor announced a visitor. 'What's his name?' asked the perspiring author, lifting one eye from his copy. 'De gentleman gib no name, sah; but he opine dat he come from Australia, sah, an' know you out dere.' 'Show him in, then' said Dwyer. To his surprise in walked Jimmy Ryan, jauntily, with his crook-handled cane and all the dignity that accompanied him wherever he went. 'Well,' said Dwyer, telling the tale, 'I was knocked; I was delighted to see an old mate and at the same time stunned by the unexpected arrival. Involuntarily, as I stood up to shake hands I shouted, 'Good God, Jimmy, how did you raise the fare?' Ryan stopped dead, turned as red in the face as an Indian major whose coloured servant has trodden on his rheumatic foot, glared at me with indignant scorn, and hissed out… 'That's a damn nice welcome from one Australian to another! You're no mate of mine, Dwyer, and you can go to hell!' Before I recovered from the double shock Jimmy was gone. I dashed to the lift and shouted down the elevator, 'Come back, Jim, and don't be a fool.' But Jimmy was gone. I had robbed myself of a good talk about Australia, which I was hungry for just then.'[3]

Brady's ability to draw a verbal portrait of his acquaintances was considerable. On the biographical details which "Grant Hervey" supplied to him, Brady wrote in part:

> A genius with a kink would be the best description of this striking but ill-fated personality. He was a handsome egotist with a low-set ear. His vanity overwhelmed him, forced him to seek the spotlight regardless of consequences.
> *He wrote swinging verses full of fire and force. He was no mean orator and an engaging conversationalist…*

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[1] *Southerly* No. 1 1954, p. 54
[2] "The Pre-Ninety Period", *The Red Objective*
[3] *Southerly* No. 1, 1954, p. 53

He was heavy, portentous, bearded and looked like a Syrian priest run to flesh… He had a sardonic, unscrupulous talent.[4]

In 1895 Brady sent a collection of his verses to England by way of his friend, Nat Gould. Gould apologised for his failure to have them published in book form in England. He wrote to Brady to the effect that Routledge's considered poetry did not sell sufficiently well and advised him to try his hand at a novel.[1] In a further letter, Gould advised Brady[2] not to send short stories either, but had a promise from the published to look at a novel. But the offer was not followed up, and another opportunity knocked in vain. Gould discouraged Brady from going to London as conditions for aspiring writers were very difficult at that time. It is useless to surmise what effect would have ensued if Brady had had a novel successfully published at this stage of his literary career.

Actually Brady did not need Gould's advice about staying in Australia as he was never anxious to go overseas, despite the stringencies he faced in Australian publishing and journalism, mainly because of a firmly grounded belief that writers should support their own country. He considered indigenous literature an important aspect of national development and could be produced only by close contact with the physical and social milieu. And because of the democratic nature of the Australian society, its idealism and its sense of newness, he considered it could provide a culture in many ways superior to the somewhat outworn scene in Europe. Commenting on Percy Spence's attempts to break into the London market as an illustrator, Brady stated that "Murky Britain, hectic Europe or clamorous America are well enough for gaining lf laurels but in the end out native eucalyptus proves a fairer tree".[3]

But despite this nationalistic idealism, he was becoming descouraged with life in general – with his literary output, his political activities and with city life in particular, with its hurry and bustle. In consequence in 1895 he bought a ten acre farm at Bosley Park, out of Liverpool, to which he moved, living in a slab hut until he could build himself a more substantial dwelling. It might well be that the element of escapism which was a constituent of th mature Brady was operating at this time, but he found that this change was not the answer to his restlessness of spirit. He felt too far remove in one sense from the city (especially for the purpose of conducting any business) yet not far enough removed to gain any resuscitation of the spirit or mind which he was later to obtain at Mallacoota. The move was, in short, not a good one. A sense of doubt about the translation of a city man into a kind of city-country limbo was expressed in a verse written a little later for *The Bulletin,* the last stanz of which suggests:

…The moral plain, most pertinent it seems;
Let city men keep city ways, and not indulge in dreams!
A ledger <u>is</u> a ledger, aye, a farm's for farming, and
There's trouble on ten-acre blocks for clerks in Cumberland![4]

Brady returned to Annandale, although he was much aware of the disadvantages of suburban existence. "Cities have only a transient appeal for me. Always lure of Bush and call of Sea have drawn me from noisy streets, regimented buildings and stereotyped crowds."[1]

It was at this time (1896) that Brady was editing *The Arrow*. This general literary, social and sporting magazine had begun life as *The Dead Bird*, later changed its name to *Bird-o'-Freedom* and then to *The Arrow*. The return therefore meant a re-entry into the cultural life of the city. Lawson and Quinn visited him regularly for a Friday evening "symposium" where literature was discussed and latest

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4 Brady's *Autographl Letters 1891 – 1915,* in Mitchell Library.
1 Brady's *Autograph Letters 1891 – 1915* in Mitchell Library
2 Gould to Brady, 5.9.1895. in Mitchell Library
3 Brady's *Autograph Letters 1891 – 1918* in Mitchell Library
4 "Jackson's Fame", *The Bulletin,* 15.4.1909
1 *Life's Highway, Southerly,* No. 4 1954. P 280

compositions of the three considered. Brady composed the title poem of *The Ways of Many Waters* and many other verses, songs and sea chanties under these conditions, but through them all ran a note of regret.

Writing sixty-eight extra columns of prose and jingle for *The Arrow* to keep himself well in advance, Brady departed on a month's walking tour down the south coast with black-and-white artist, Arthur Frederics – a tour which he later wrote about in a series of articles in *The Arrow.* On this trip Brady's very-Australian humour was exercised at the expense of the new-chum Frederics. Brady persuaded him to boil a native pear in a billycan, assuring him that it was a "great native delicacy". After several hours, Frederics discovered that native pears are wooden.[2] Brady also avows that he convinced Frederics, who had illustrated Jerome K. Jerome's *Three Men in a Boat* and who owned the dog that figured in the story, that dogs in this country "have contributed greatly to exploration, settlement, cures and social legislation" as well as rescuing lost travellers and enriching bookmakers. Brady justified this characteristic exaggeration by stating that "The English don't always beat us at cricket and why should their dogs assume superior airs."[3]

The city life soon began to tell upon Brady's sensibilities. His inner vision was not in itself sufficiently strong to sustain him; regret and escapism some through in many of the verses written at this time and collected in *The Ways of Many Waters.* He felt frustrated, confined as he was to a suburban cottage with a cramped back-yard, repressed and conventionalised, for there was always a certain amount of Bohemianism and flamboyance in the Brady other beheld. He found only partial relief in "imaginative excursions into wide open spaces, in imaginary voyages and buccaneering raids". In an endeavour to secure relief he went to Mullet Creek on the Hawkesbury, where he established a camp. Again, some of the verses in *The Ways of Many Waters,* composed here, betray this relief in their sweeping vision, strong sense of historical tradition, quest for distant fields, all manifest in a constant restlessness of spirit and body:

Because of a painted Fancy
That is neither old nor new,
The path of the further distance
It seemeth for aye more true:
For this have the Dreamers wandered
Forlorn, on a golden quest,
Their sails in the sunset dipping
Aslant to the reddened West:

For this have the Rovers journeyed,
Subtle and strange though it seem,
Spelled by the shade of a shadow,
Lured by the loot of a dream/
And so doth the Great Fleet gather,
The fleet of a thousand sail,
With a long-oared galley leading
And a liner at the tail.

There is a strong element of G. Stanley Hall's racial recapitulation theory in Brady's work and it is apparent in "The Ways of Many Waters". Racial memory is a theory that intrigues him; in fact he carried out much of the research into his family background to find evidence of this, asking "Did I come into life with a racial tribal family or paternal-maternal 'something' in my subconscious self that inspired me to write in metre, a medium of which…I know nothing?"[1]

The camp at Mullet Creek was established to enable Brady's creative talent to flower to full bloom; a Great Book was to be written in congenial surroundings. But the attraction of fish and oysters, peripatetic visitors and constant swagmen who came

[2] "Memories of Art Men", *Focus*, April 1947, p9
[3] Brady's personal note on Frederics in *Autograph Letters 1891 – 1918, in Mithcell Library*
[1] "Personalia" p2, in Mitchell Library

over the railway bridge at night, to arrive coincidentally at meal time, proved too strong.[2] Verse was written but little else. Brady was exhibiting behaviour which was to become more apparent as his life progressed. He would work at an activity which interested him, in a flurry of exuberance and then, tiring of this, would either neglect it, half-heartedly carrying on, or strike out on some other task which he would pursue with the same short-term but lively enthusiasm. Marital difficulties, lack of expected and longed-for success in political fields, economic troubles, all these no doubt contributed, but there seemed to be a basic personality trait which precluded long sustained effort on a task without deviations from it. It was not really until the production of *Australian Unlimited* in 1918 that he proved he could really sustain himself under the regimen of a difficult task, and this example of perseverance is practically the only one, with the exception perhaps of *Two Frontiers* much later. *The Bulletin* carried a photograph about the time of the Mullet Creek adventure of the handsome, young, red-bearded Brady, gave a brief outline of his career, referring to his contribution to literature by stating that "Already he had made at least a small mark, and, if fortune favours, he may make a big one."[3] But fortune's favours are not easily won and for Brady that fickle lady continued to prove elusive. In spite of the beautiful environment of the camp, the sudden release from routine left a gap which no amount of black bream with oyster sauce could fill. With the Great Book still unwritten he returned to Sydney in 1898 to find evidence of a vast stirring in the cultural scene:

> *Artists were beginning to attract buyers for Australian pictures, authors were anticipating publication – even poets were expecting to find acceptance. A.G. Stephens launched the first numbers of The Bookfellow. George Taylor organised 'The Supper Club', Angus and Robertson had scored success with books by Lawson and Paterson. The Bulletin was preparing to issue a volume of Ogilvie's verses under the title of Fair Girls and Grey Horses. Books by Steele Rudd, Tom Collins, Roderic Quinn, E.J. Brady and other Bulletin men were to follow; an Augustan Age of Australian Culture had surely arrived.*[1]

Inspired by all this activity Brady set out to improve his own writing technique. He was convinced that he had "stultified" his prose by "careless journalism", so h sat down to remedy deliberately this deficiency. He worked on the manuscript of *Knights of New Arcadia*, based on his walking tour with Frederics. It was to be illustrated by J.H. Leonard.[2]

The first book of collected verse, *The Ways of Many Waters,* was published in 1899 by *The Bulletin* and was generally well-received. Reviewers praised its vividness of expression, its ability to re-create the sounds and smells of the sea and the wharves, its strong melodic sense and the "considerable art" which went in to the verses' presentation of the chosen aspects of life, but were also almost unanimous that Brady had not reached the highest flights of poetry. A.G. Stephens summed up Brady's achievement in verse to that point when he wrote of him: "Poetically, he does not stand on a very high plain; but he has his own niche as a writer of ballads on sea

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[2] Miles Franklin painted a vivid picture of these unemployed men in *My Brilliant Career*, when she was in charge of the issue of supplies to them at Caddagat.

[3] 16.10.1897

[1] "Life's Highway", *Southerly*. No. 4 1954, p.282.

[2] The Manuscript was later revised but has never been published, although extracts were printed in various periodicals as short articles. The Manuscript is in the National Library.

subjects, and his work is full of graphic force".[3] Several reviewers tempered their approval by suggesting that there was strong evidence of influence by Rudyard Kipling, whose stirring verses were very popular at the time, often reprinted and commonly recited, but Brady denied this influence. There is nothing more than superficial similarity – a robustness and vitality occasioned partly by the masculine themes and partly by the vigour and freshness of the rhythms. A reviewer in *Truth* rightly pointed out that both Kipling and Brady had given "excellent specimens of good journalese verse" which he expected would appeal to the multitude but not to the hypercritical. [4]

For a time Brady returned to Bossley Park but his domestic affairs were passing through a crisis. Visits from Victor Daley and Bertram Stevens brightened the western horizon and meetings in the city with Archibald, Lawson and Holman added light, but a break had to be made and Brady set out in a waggon for Queensland, leaving his "citadel of dreams" and crily recalling Burns' comment about plans of mice and men.[5] This trip, begun in September 1899 took the disillusioned romantic to Townsville and lasted well into the following year. It is described in humourous detail in *King's Caravan*[6] but importantly provided him with an introduction to the north which later led to another travel book, led to his buying an interest in a newspaper and supplied contacts which were extremely useful to him in the compilation of *Australia Unlimited.* The larder was kept supplied meanwhile, from verses and articles written during periods of rest from travelling, and sent back to Sydney or contributed to local journals, such as the Grafton *Grip.*[7]

One such poem reflected his restlessness and indecision and his attempts to come to terms with himself:

Here, and part of me –
White and resplendent –
Standeth a Soul of me,
Proudly ascendant.

There and a part of me,
Dark and escending,
Crawleth a soul of me,
Black and offending.

Which is the Soul of me?
Good? Or of Evil?
What is the Soul of me,
God? Or the Devil?

Each is the Soul of thee,
Ever and Ever,
Part and the Whole of thee.

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[3] "Newer Australian Verse Writers", *Review of Reviews,* 15.10.1899
[4] Untitled review, *Truth,* 7.5.1899
[5] "Life's Highway", *Southerly*, No. 4 1952, p 285. He later sold the property to his son, Ted, for 75 pounds.
[6] London, 1911
[7] His first poem to this paper was sent from Queensland and printed in the issue of 11.6.1900

Ever and Ever. [1]

Thoroughly impressed by the rich flats and thriving agricultural production, the sugar-cane and tropical fruit of the north, Brady went back to Grafton and in August 1901 became a part-owner (with Miss Susan Penrose) and editor of *The Grip,* a dual role he played until July 1903. This newspaper was well established (having been founded July 1888) but his journalistic and literary flair soon widened its appeal and its circulation in the Grafton district. He invited A.G. Stephens to mention the change of ownership in his columns, stating his intention of "infusing a certain literary tone" into the paper.[2] It most likely was Stephens who put in the journal a paragraph which included:

> *Every poet should make up his mind to save the moneys he would otherwise lavish on cigars, and champagne, and fried fish and other luxuries, and invest the sum in a journal of his own. He would then be able to print what he darned will pleased and snap his fingers at cold-eyed editors. But setting aside this view of the matter, Mr. Brady is not only a poet of no mean order, but also a clever, capable and industrious journalist, and an honourable man, and should make a success of The Grip. The Bulletin whishes him all sorts of luck.*[3]

Most of the verse of this period is overly-sentimental and backward-looking, as "To-morrow Morn", but some has a lyrical quality in its expression of the poet's love of nature and the solace which a close contact with nature brings, although, as "O'Meara's Well" shows, man's relationships with nature are not always easy and harmonious. Contributions were still being made, especially to *The Bulletin*, and this same love of nature is apparent in these:

When a heavy surf is droning
In the twilight on the bar;
When our Mother Sea is crooning
Her quaint cradle song afar,

When the wild black swans are lining
To some still, remote lagoon;
And above the headland shining
Hangs a quiet, crescent moon;

When the panoply and splendor
Of the tropic sunset dies,
Then my Fancy turns to tender
Dreams beneath the queenly skies.[1]

Although not very good verse, it was well-received in the Grafton district where Brady brought a touch of the glamour and sophistication of the city.

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1 "Ego", later collected in *The Earthen Floor* (Grafton, 1902).
2 Brady to A.G. Stephens. 16.7.1901, in Stephens' *Papers,* vol 1, in Mitchell Library. Brady took over the paper 10 August 1901 but actually began to reorganise it several weeks earlier.
3 20.7.1901
1 "Twilight", *The Bulletin*, 31.5.1902

Most locals regarded themselves as privileged to have their editor a man who was published in the Sydney prese and who had a book of verse to his name. A visiting concert artist sand Brady's "Star and Spire" at a local function and he received adulation not good for his ego or his literary talents, limited as they were.

Not all the locals however, were impressed by Brady's charm and journalistic achievements. In an editorial Brady referred to local opposition against *The Grip* (he continually stirred up the local council) and some local advertisers began to withhold their patronage. Brady cited the large amount of city and state advertising he was carrying, pointed out that the boycott had failed to achieve its aim and made some rather vulgar comments about his detractors. Now was his popularity increased when he went into partnership in a photographic studio with Norma Dally (whose sister he had been courting) and saw the enterprise get in to financial difficulties quite quickly. And a court case, in which Brady was fined five shillings for poling a man in the back with an umbrella at the local picture show brought unfavourable publicity. "The cheapest five shillings' worth I have had for some time" wrote Brady when reporting it.[2] But in spite of these difficulties he did have considerable support. He gave a brief summary of his journalistic career, of his literary friendships, comparing himself with the editor in Lawson's "Cambaroora Star" and stating:

> *You can always enjoy the satisfaction of knowing that the general good sense of your community is with you and although they may differ from you on minor points, still in the end they agree. This idea is good for a newspaper man to hold – especially if he be a radical with aspirations towards reform. It often makes amends to him for loss of business and sometimes sweetens his life. It prevents him from becoming little through the influences of littleness of surroundings. It spurs him to his daily toil.*[1]

In addition to urging the local community to greater support of worthwhile civic and cultural activities (improved concert attendance, support of local drama and discussion groups, some of whom Brady addressed), he agitated for a water supply, a sewerage treatment scheme and better roads. He had the capacity to work into his editorial writings personal experiences which gave the ring of authenticity to the whole. For example, he told of his experience with a gold mine, when a man called Henderson brought him a bag of auriferous quartz specimens. Brady agreed to buy food and equipment for a half-share in the mine, while Henderson did the actual mining. Ruefully he recalled that there "never was a mine with such a voracious appetite" and soon withdrew, poorer but wiser.[2]

The old restlessness, which had captivated Brady on so many previous occasions, began to make its presence felt again. Soon the paper carried the announcement that the partnership between Brady and Susan Penrose was dissolved, owing to the pressing nature of his city business, and after selling his interest to his partner for 220

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[2] *The Grip,* 9.1.1902

[1] "The Editor's Easy Chair", *The Grip, 20.3.1902*

[2] "A general Yarn About Mines and District", *The Grip,* 25.11.1901

pounds, he left Grafton. He had gained valuable experience, had increase his confidence in his own abilities, but had again demonstrated that perseverance was not his strongest personal trait. Deciding to turn his journalistic experience to good use, along with his wide-ranging commercial, political and literary contacts, he set up the Commonwealth Press Agency in Elizabeth Street, Sydney to sell advertising space in city and country newspapers and to provide a Sydney Letter of current metropolitan news to those country papers which would accept it in return for advertising space.[3] In this capacity, Brady supplied publicity for political parties, for advertising campaigns (such as for surplus dried fruit) and advertised sporting and social events. Although this activity kept him very busy, he was still always on the look out for other avenues of finance. He proposed publishing an *Australian Annual Sporting Review and Calendar* to collect records and sporting results, but this project bore no fruit. Eustace Tracey stated in friendship that if all Brady's schemes had born fruit, he would have been an extremely wealthy man instead of the indigent he usually was.[4] But even so, it is true to say that these years were some of the best for Brady, as he recalls:

> *The office of the C.P.A. (E.J. Brady sole proprietor) is in full swing. Poets, artists, canvassers journalists, politicians come and go. I wear a silk hat and a frock coat for business reasons. I have a pleasant home at Watson's Bay, a host of good friends and a fair number of commercial supporters. Life is entirely interesting. I am building up! Making a fair average income, writing verses at the weekend, sea bathing on Sunday morning in a secluded rock pool just under the Hornby light with friendly fellows from the Bay and an occasional acquaintance from uptown.*[1]

The Press Agency's income was soon supplemented, furthermore, by six pounds weekly which Brady received as editor of the Labor paper *The Worker,* from August 1904. There was a kind of poetic justice in this event for as Black had earlier succeeded Brady as editor of *The Australian Workman*, so now Brady followed him to *The Worker*. The appointment was made by Hector Lamond, Secretary of the Board of Control, and was terminable upon four weeks' notice from either side. Perhaps remembering the previous experience with Bray, Lamond stated that no new departure from policy could be made without approval of the Board of Control or the Manager.[2]

Brady accepted the position gratefully on economic grounds, also grateful to be back in what he regarded as the centre of things, but privately confessed he did not want the position. His objection was that *The Worker* at that time was regarded mainly as a shearers' paper, most members paying their subscription and leaving the paper unopened at country post offices. Metropolitan circulation was almost nil. He summed up his opinion of it by stating that "as a political weapon for Labor it seemed

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[3] The agency was registered 224.6.1903. It had been begun by a young man whom A.C. Rowlandson spoke of as "that brilliant but irresponsible young Australian, the late W.B. Melville, (who) left one fine morning to pursue elusive fortune in South Africa". R. Wynn and others, *The Late Alfred Cecil Rowlandson: Pioneer Publisher of Australian Novels* (Sydney 1922), p. 15. Melville generously gave Brady a list of all his advertising contacts in city and country newspapers.

[4] During an interview with the writer, Melbourne, May 1969. Tracey worked with Brady for many years and later proved a very firm friend when conditions for Brady were difficult.

[1] Handwritten foreword to *Sydney Harbour*, 1937, in Mitchell Library

[2] Lamond to brady, 15.9.1904, in National Library

to be about as effective as a blackfellow's spear".[3] But he took the position, coaxed by Don MacDonnell (later Chief Secretary in the Holman Government) and Jack Meehan (M.L.A. for Bourke), and as Lamond was glad to see the last of Black, with whom he frequently fought, and pleased to see Brady, with whom he had got along well with in the past, the new editor was permitted to keep his Press Agency going. Needless to say, his acceptance did not enamour him of Black, who had been editor since May, 1900 and whose parting shots included one at literature in general and Lawson in particular. Black alleged that most of Lawson's stories were not original but had been going the rounds of the bush for years before Lawson wrote them down. He stated that Favenc, Warung, Dyson, Chambers, Swan and "fifty others" wrote such bush yarns before Lawson "quite broke the shell".

Brady found, as Black had found before him, that Lamond was not an easy person to work with, and suggested after a few months that Lamond be made Managing Editor (so that he could fight with himself) and Brady agreed to supply the paper with editorial matter. After about a year in office Brady stepped down. The proposed plan was implemented but Lamond found the dual role more onerous. After a couple of interim editors, the position was taken and filled with distinction for many years by H.E. Boote. After Brady's resignation (at the end of September 1905) he received three pounds a week for four columns.

The Bulletin noticed the resignation by two brief paragraphs, one of which stated that "during his control he considerably brightened the paper; but as the Board of Control is chiefly Scotch the rupture was inevitable."[4] One of his last tasks was to serve as organising secretary to a fund to provide for the widow and family of his old friend, Victor Dayley. A theatre performance (with a programme cover designed by Norman Lindsay), donations and various activities led to sufficient money to set up a tombstone over the grave and to provide 300 pounds for the family, which ahd been left almost penniless.[1]

Brady's departure from Sydney for Melbourne, where he set up another press agency, was noticed in *The Worker* and in *The Socialist*.[2] The grand farewell was attended by "sixty brother scribes and bards". The departure from *The Worker* meant that, for the time at least, his direct involvement in politics had ceased, although his interest remained. He was disillusioned by the in-fighting which so often attended political events, informing one friend that New South Wales politics were "mere bubbling mud".[3] But he still kept contact with his numerous political friends. Perhaps it can be said that this withdrawal was yet another instance of his dilettantism and general lack of perseverance, but it can also be argues that he was genuinely interested in the public relations work of his agency and may have considered his assistance to people by this means was more real. He did well in the journalistic field but preferred actual writing to the added administrative tasks which editorship imposed upon him. No doubt there was an element of restlessness behind this decision, too. The grass was always greener in Melbourne when he was in Sydney and vice versa. His daughter claimed that he made more from publicity than from all his literary works, and this

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3 "Early Lights of Labor", *The Red Objective*
4 14.10.1905
1 The subscription lists are in Mitchell Library
2 *The Worker,* 29.11.1906; *The Socialist*, 8.12.1906
3 Letter Brady to Fred Johns, 12.2.1913, in Mitchell Library.

was probably true. She had been trained in advertising but when she questioned him to find out on what principles he ran his agency, he made only the "vaguest" reply. "He said his method (which he had evolved himself) was based on Homer's *Odyssey,* the differential calculus, the Book of Job and the history of Henry Ford."[4]

The Commonwealth Press Agency in Melbourne[5] had not been function very long when Brady extended his operations to assume the editorship of yet another periodical – this time *The Native Companion*, a monthly literary journal which ahd previously been under the firm hand of Bertram Stevens. In this new position, Brady's chief claim to fame was his discovery of Katherine Mansfield, whose contributions he at first suspected, thinking them far too mature for the young person whose work they purported to be. However a letter from H.D. Beauchamp, Katherine's father,[6] assured Brady they were genuine. He printed her "Vignettes", "Silhouettes" and "In a Café" before the magazine's demise. It grieved him to have to return an unpublished Mansfield manuscript when the magazine ceased publication after December 1907.

Brady obtained quite a few contributions from well-know writers for this journal, including some good humorous verse from Thomas E. Spencer, author of *How McDougall Topped the Score,* from Quinn, Bedford, Esson, Frank Morton, "Kodak", "Furnley Murice", Edward Dyson, Helen Jerome and Marie Forrest, but a reply he received in answer to his request to Ethel Turner is rather amusing, That well-established author wrote:

> *But am I not a little expensive for the* Native Companion *– even if suitable. Frankly I never write a story under six guineas in Australia and twelve in England. Thank you for the pleasant finish to your letter. On my part I can say that I have long known and enjoyed your work.*[1]

In his capacity as editor of *The Native Companion* Brady also came in contact for the first time with the remarkable Katharine Susannah Prichard, beginning another long friendship. Let Miss Prichard tell of the encounter:

> *It was a glorious moment when I received a not from the editor of* The Native Companion to say he liked the short story written by me, and could I call and see him about it. I did call. The magazine had just been published. Brady was the most dazzling editor I'd ever imagined. Lank gingery gold hair falling over his forehead, and a golden beard cut to a point. His eyes flashed green and blue lightnings as he talked, and his long legs sprawled under the office table. I must have looked very demure and governessy in my early twenties, wearing a full-skirted dress, all black, in mourning for my father. But Brady's charm and his compliments about the story made me feel a genius of the first water.[2]

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[4] Moya Brady, "E.J. Brady as an Advertising Man", *Steve Ford's Scrapbook* Vol. 3, p.101, In Mithcell Library.

[5] It was in Elizabeth Street, next to Lothian's, a happy fact for Brady that helped him gain a foothold in *The Native Companion*

[6] H.D. Beauchamp to Brady, 10.10.1907, in Mitchell Library. She was sixteen at the time.

[1] Ether Turner to Brady, 7.6.1907, in Mitchell Library

[2] "Brady", an unpublished article by Miss Prichard kindly lent to me by the author shortly before her death.

As well as editing *The Native Companion*, operating his press agency and acting as an accredited advertising representative for *Truth* in the Australian states,[3] Brady continued a busy social life. He was among a number of writers, poets and artists who met regularly at the current centre of Melbourne's Bohemian life. R.H. Croll gives a detailed picture of Fasoli's small Italian restaurant where the famous and would-be famous gathered to eat, drink and yearn. Croll also tells of the memorable night when the gathering drank to welcome the first Brady number of *The Native Companion*, July 1907.[4]

Brady himself has recalled some of the regular visitors to Fasoli's.[5] Strauss, co-partner with Brady and Lothian in the business side of *The Native Companion*, Randolph Bedford ("bold and boiterous"), William Moore (author of a two-volume review of Australian art and artists), John Shirlow, "Alex Sass" (Alex William, who did the cover designs for *The Native Companion*), Hal Gye, Percy Lindsay, C.J. Dennis, Web Gilbert, G.G. McRae, Edward Dyson, Louis Esson, Blamire Young, Ernest O'Ferral, Frank Wilmot and Robert Croll rubbed shoulders first at Lonsdale Street, then at King Street, discussing what was latest in literary and artistic production, grumbling about the continual poverty of writers and proposing ways of creating a community which would appreciate their creative talents.

But in spite of the moral and practical support of the Fasoli's crowd, the inevitable happened and *The Native Companion* joined the graveyard already littered with countless similar small magazines which had dared to spring forth in an inhospitable and "barbarian" Australian society.[1] When the magazine ceased publication, Brady disappeared from Fasoli's and Melbourne. There was great speculation as to his whereabouts. Miss Prichard tells now it was rumoured that he had committed suicide and "the Bohemian fraternity in Melbourne, of whom he was a luminary, mourned the loss of his wit and geniality".[2] But Brady was not dead. He and a companion or two were "celebrating". Although he had a reputation as a drinker, he rarely drank to excess. He stated that his life had been 80% teetotal, 15% moderately "wet" and 5% "very wet". This has been confirmed by the close friends consulted.[3] This particular bout ended in a hiking trip through East Gippsland and the country around Mallacoota with a coach and boat trip home to Sydney and Melbourne. The beauty of the Mallacoota region impressed him tremendously and he had visions of making his home there. "We had, by happy accident, found an Australian Arcadia where Virgin

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3 Letter Norton to Brady, 14.9.1907, in National Library

4 R.H. Croll, *I recall* (Melbourne, 1939)
"Let Us To Fasoli's" *Focus,* August 1947, pp 16-18

1 Brady later regretted the demise of the magazine. He wrote to Oscar Mendelsohn, 6.5.1947, that it was "doubling its circulation every months when Strauss and Lothian gave it up, for reasons still somewhat obscure.. I had offers to carry on, but liked none of them well enough, and my family could *not* stand Melbourne winters, so I let it go and was sorry afterwards."

2 "Brady" manuscript. See Footnote to p. 27

3 Brady to J.K. Moir, 10.12.1937, in La Trobe Library. The same opinion was expressed by Mendelsohn and Tracey.

Nature abided, an Arcadia yet innocent of progress, still undisturbed by despoiling hands".[4] The influence of this paradise was to be profound and long lasting.

His wanderlust still unsatisfied, Brady arranged with the management of *The Lone Hand* magazine to sponsor a trip in an open boat down the Murray from Albury to Lake Alexandrina. The account of this adventure appeared as a serial in the magazine and was later published as *River Rovers.*

But Mallacoota began to exercise it strange fascination over him. In 1909 he set up camp there to write the story of his wagon trip to Townsville in 1899 and so *King's Caravan* was born. The twelve months spent in the idyllic surroundings of sea and lake, mountains and bush, had mean Brady's complete capture. He determined to make his permanent home there as soon as possible, but a temporary return to the city was necessary. Lothian, with whom Brady had been in partnership in *The Native Companion*, had agreed to publish another edition of *The Ways of Many Waters,* commissioning Alex Sass to design the cover. However, the printer reversed the colours in the design, inadvertently producing in the first couple of hundred copies a blue pirate cavorting on a red sea. Brady's reaction to this sacrilege can be well imagined!

A brief bout of illness coincided with the publication of a small volume of verse, *Bushland Ballads, The Bulletin* remarking that "it was hard luck for the gifted author 'go down' just as his many friends and admirers were congratulating him on having added a notable contribution to Australia's growing list of literary good things."[5] The "notable contribution" was very flattering to Brady, considering that this tiny suede-covered volume contained only six poems, none of which was really "notable"

Many attempts were made to gain extra income. He acted as agent in Australian for William Dall, a New Zealand inventor of a patent voting machine, but under test the machine failed and even Brady's political friends could not gain him a further hearing. He collected biographical data from Victorian writers and artists with the intention of publishing a book on the topic, but no success attended this effort. These statements, containing information on G.G. McRae, Ada Cross, Bernard O'Dowd and others are among Brady's papers in Mitchell Library. Other publications considered were a collected verse submitted to A.C. Rowlandson and a collection of short stories submitted later to the same publisher but wanting whar Rowlandson considered the elements of successful sale.[1] Political friendships were drawn on with a plan to write articles encouraging tourism in New South Wales[3] and in Australia as a whole,[4] each scheme involving Brady's appointment as a chief of an information bureau.

But if these ventures were unsuccessful, Brady did have considerable success with publication in 1911. *River Rovers, The King's Caravan* and *Bells and Hobbles* all were placed on the market at this time. It is certain that the release of these in one

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4 *Dreams and Realities* (Melbourne, 1944), p.121

5 10.11.1910

1 The book of verse was *Pike and Pannikin* and the other *On the Stockyard Fence.* In later years, some of the contents of these two books were included in subsequent collections, but with the exception of a few of the poems were never published in book form.

3 Brady to W.A. Holman, 23.6.1911, in National Library.

4 Brady to Senator Findley, 21.6.1911, in National Library.

year brought Brady's name to the public notice, but the returns from his books by no means brought financial security. It did enable him however, to take a short holiday and in 1912 he visited the Dutch East Indies and the Malay States. Even this was a limited vacation for he wanted to get material for articles and to gain perspective against which to make decisions about the particular aspects of Australia he was to include in the projected *Australia Unlimited.* Not only did this open his eyes to the fact of the huge number of indigent people close to this country, but the very proximity of these countries made a shattering impression on him. He began afresh to campaign to wake his fellow Australians to the dangers of an Asian invasion, which he regarded as inevitable, but found no comforting response. He likened his lack of succes to the initial failure of his ancestor, a senior contemporary of Shakespeare and member of the Irish Privy Council to which Edmund Spenser was once clerk, to establish Trinity College in Dublin.[5] But although his ancestor's efforts were ultimately successful, Brady's were not, and in spite of warnings in prose and verse, the Japanese assaults in the Pacific were largely unprepared for.

After his Asian journey Brady returned to Melbourne, living at Mordialloc and then Mentone. Enheartened by his recent publications, enlivened by the intellectual challenge and physical refreshment of his overseas voyage, he decided to put his considerable journalistic and publicist talents to good use in the preparation of a book which would embrace the historical, geographical and industrial aspects of Australia. It would serve not only as a comprehensive statement of Australia's achievement but also set out her scenic beauties in such a manner to assist both tourists and settlers. This task was to occupy almost all Brady's time for the next six years, and although it caused him considerable anguish, argument and despair, it was to prove the most profitable of all his published works.

It was on a visit to see his mother, who lived at Woollahra, that he first heard news of the outbreak of war. The account of his strange involvement in the reception of this news once again illustrates his familiarity with the political figures of his day:

> *Mr. Hughes was standing in the vestibule of the Hotel Metropole in Sydney on a memorable Sunday forenoon in August of 1914 – a small, anxious figure, suggesting loneliness and unease. I had come in from Woollahra with my son, whom I had collected after booking our return passage to Melbourne. Mr. Hughes told me he was waiting for his Secretary, Allan Box, who had gone to newspaper offices to glean news from later cablegrams. Mr. Box returned with very definite overseas information from London – the war gong had struck, the combatants were in the ring!*
> *As I sit here seventeen years later reviewing the Australian Labor Movement, the figure of that drooping little man in the vestibule arises again in the vision of my recollection.*[1]

Realising that the war would bring many changes to Australian, and anxious that nothing should interrupt his preparation of *Australia Unlimited*, Brady decided to return to his haven in Mallacoota. Her he made his permanent home, and even though he left it on occasion for the city's lights, attractions and business, it was to Mallacoota that he returned for solace and regeneration henceforth.

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[5] *Personalia,* p.5, in Mitchell Library.
[1] "Landslides", *The Red Objective*

Up to this point in his life Brady had shown himself to be a vital person, relishing action; idealistic, always "riding towards the rainbow to find the crock of gold"; industrious, yet lacking in the perseverance to bring industry through to a successful conclusion; sentimental; possessed of a strong sense of humour, of the farcical and ridiculous; flamboyant and always eager to make an impression; and especially a lover of Nature in all her moods and of the high Blue Mountains country of his birth as well as the calm lakes and hills of the Mallacoota coastline. But though *Life's Highway* accentuates these characteristics, it presents an idealised and romanticised view of the man. It gives little insight into the militant unionist who accepted dismissal rather than act as policeman of his fellow-workers, not into the man hwo had spells of hard drinking and an eye for the ladies. Nor does it really illumine the writer often tempted to yield to discouragement when on his last shilling as Brady sometimes was. It does shed light on his associates and on a way of life in many respects vastly from the present. Vivid portraits of pioneers emerge, such as that of Brady's own grandfather who died at eighty-three, refusing clerical attention or intercession between "himself and God" (and Brady slyly notes that the old man gave himself precedence in the equation). It recreates a world of troopers and bushrangers, the hostilities and boring rigidities of the little bush school with its scratching slate-pencils and droning voices, as well as the ascetic flavour of caraway-seed cake and elderberry wine in a Wesleyan parlour. It tells of bullock drays and horse-drawn travel over rutted roads, vying in memory with ancient city trams and empty suburbs, such as the wide, empty expanse between Bellevue Hill and Bondi where the only dweller was Howard the Hangman who sought solitude "for social reasons". And in all this telling there is the typical Brady sardonic comment upon the System and the Authorities who often proved inhospitable to new ideas and against who Brady harboured an interminable grudge:

> Against me, as I found in due course, I had a System which has hamstrung the development of Australia. It is the hopeless hidebound system of obstruction. It exists solely for the purpose of putting obstacles in the way of progress. It appeared at Farm Cove a hundred and fifty years ago and developed into a creature with a hide like an armadillo and the brain of a water buffalo. It suffers from opthalmia, jitters, chronic lethargy and an inferior complex. It subsists mainly on sealing wax and hot air. It has a miasmatic breath and two tragical fangs, one charged with the slow poison of indifference and the other with the active venom of opposition. Like other living fossils it seems indigenous to Australia.[1]

But in looking at Brady's life even to this stage, his irrepressible vitality, idealism, patriotism and romanticism shine through. A quotation from *Life's Highway* with its catch-cry of optimism in this country makes an adequate conclusion to this section:

> *Youth, in a land that is yet the Benjamin of Nations, can build a might fabric of Progress and Culture. This generation is as good as the last; a coming generation will be as good, and better, than this. Immortal is the Tree of Life. It is evergreen, like our Australian foliage. It will forever put forth new growth. Its roots are bedded in the dust of death, but its branches are reaching for the stars.*[2]

This faith in the basic of the Australian people and in the potentialities of this land was always a force to be reckoned with in Brady's attitudes and activities.

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1 *Southerly,* No. 4 1955, p.200
2 *Southerly,* No. 4 1955, p.201

Chapter Two – Biographical account 1913 – 1952

"Yea, pilgrims of unrest, we toil
The desert and the snow,
Each pining for the wine and oil
That somewhere surely flow;
Each seeking for a secret spoil,
Far hid where none may go."

Brady, "The Wandering Foot".

At Mallacoota, on a green knoll set back from the waterfront among the gums and casuarinas, with extensive views over the most beautiful of inlets and the deep blue ocean from which Brady's spirit derived so much solace, in calm and in storm, a temporary camp was established to house the young family. Some little distance away a tent was pitched to serve as Brady's "study" and it was here that his writing was done, often by the light of a kerosene lamp. After a time, the temporary camp was replaced by a fibro house, "mainly one room sixty feet by twenty with a wide verandah". It was called "Raheen" ("a small hill") after the original Brady property on the shores of Loch Dug in County Clare.[1]

The grandiose schemes which were ever germinating in Brady's fertile mind were constantly coming in for investigation and, where possible, implementation. He was in touch with the Department of External Affairs in 1913 about the establishment of a commercial farming venture on the banks of the Adelaide River in the Northern Territory, seeking the rights of subdivision and a government subsidy, but an official letter stated this to be impossible under the existing Land Ordinances.[2]

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1 Brady to Muir Holburn, 26.4.1946, in Mitchell Library.
2 Department External Affairs to Brady, 8.3.1913, in National Library.

Upon this refusal, Brady again sought a more definite statement from the Victorian Government about his earlier proposal for himself and a group of financial backers to be given timber concessions around the Mallacoota district and for the construction of a jetty and other port facilities. In this negotiation Brady had co-operated with Allen Taylor and Company through the Hon. F. Hagelthorne. Minister of Works in the Victorian Government and through direct approaches to the Premier, W.A. Watt.[3] This scheme came close enough to fruition for engineers from the Department of Works to make surveys of the engineering requirements and of the costs, but an adverse report of the chief engineer damned the enterprise. The Government was reluctant to spend the necessary money either at Mallacoota or the alternative Gabo, but agreed to grant a timber concession and to pay half the cost of a wharf at Boat Harbour, Mallacoota, with local producers having the right to use it for the shipment of their agricultural products.[3] Neither Brady nor his supporters was willing (or able) to find such an amount of capital and yet another of his schemes died. At the invitation of the Secretary, Australasian Institute of Engineers, Brady had added his report to the official ones to be forwarded to the Prime Minister, an incident which he recounted to the local newspaper editor with some pride.[4]

Brady was also interested in irrigating farm land with the waters of Lake Cargellico, but receiving little encouragement (this, to him, usually meant a financial subsidy), his interest in this project soon lapsed.

His work on *Australia Unlimited* necessitated a fair degree of travelling. He visited Western Australia and Tasmania to make enquiries from the respective governments, securing contracts from them for inclusion of their material in the tourist and agricultural propaganda of this volume. At the time, he was receiving fifty pounds a month from George Robinson, who was publishing the volume, but as he had to pay considerable expenses from these earnings, his financial plight was not really relieved. In answer to a letter requesting a donation for the Socialist League he wrote: "One day, (after I have established a few more capitalistic enterprises), I shall send a more liberal donation to the Socialist fund." He concluded this messages with "Regards to Ross and all the chosen, including that persistent, consistent and insistent propagandist, Bernard O'Dowd.[1]

While employed on correcting the proofs of the new book, Brady tried to make his family and himself as comfortable as possible, but all new materials for building had to be shipped around the coast to Eden and then brought by cutter to Mallacoota itself. A wharf was built, a boatshed added and cultivation of the land closest to the lake helped in the battle for economic survival. The original plan had been to a temporary stay but the lure of the countryside proved too strong. When the camp became a house the seal was set. Firstly fifteen acres had been purchased, then an additional one hundred and five, then an adjoining three hundred and sixty and later eight hundred and sixty as a family investment. The house incidentally much added to, stood at Mallacoota until 1970.

There was an occasional dribble of royalties to eke out the publisher's retainer. For example a statement in June 1914 stated that one hundred and forty copies of *River Rovers* had been sold during the previous year and sevenpence each for author's royalties meant, after deductions, a munificent cheque for Brady of three pounds, two shillings and threepence. None of his books earned him very much, except perhaps for *Australia Unlimited*. The same year the royalties on *Bells and Hobbles* brought him just over a pound. Casual contributions of poetry and prose to various periodicals added something to the family ex-chequer, but usually payment was meagre. *The Bulletin* paid him three guineas for four poems.[2]

Some of his projects did make enough money to keep him above the borderline of solvency, however. One such transaction in 1914 was an option he secured, acting on his own behalf and that of a personal friend, John Trefle, Victorian Minister for Lands, on "Nungatta"' a local property of eleven thousand acres. When the owner died the couple looked like losing their investment, but after strenuous efforts on Brady's part there was a small profit for Trefle's widow and himself.

Friends had always meant a great deal to Brady, and even at Mallacoota he was not out of touch with them. He invited J.C. Watson to visit him there, stating in inimitable Brady style that "At last my

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[3] Brady to W.A. Watt, 7.11.1913, in National Library
[3] Brady to Allen Taylor and Co., 14.3.1914, in National Library
[4] Brady to Editor, Twofold Bay *Magnet*, 7.11.1916, in National Library
[1] Brady to Miss A Summers, 10.12.1913, in National Library
[2] "Chanty of Greenshoes", "While the World Goes Round". "The Call" and "Old Romances".

general experience is worth drawing on, and I'm not a bad fellow when you tell me what a fine fellow I am", but their meeting had to wait until Brady next visited Melbourne. And he continued to use his friends, for when the West Australian Government was somewhat reluctant to put up the necessary finance for that state's inclusion in *Australia Unlimited,* Brady wrote to his friend, W.A. Holman, then Premier of New South Wales, urging him to sue his influence as one Labor Premier to another.[3] A further letter, to Hon. James Cameron, M.L.A., asked him to make representations to have the lower reaches of the Genoa River cleared so that trade in the district could be facilitated.[4] It was of course coincidental that shortly after this Brady commissioned a solicitor to purchase a launch for him to operate as a trader and tourist boat proprietor on the Mallacoota Inlet into which the river flowed.

There were occasionally differences of opinion with the local farmers. He took one of these to court in April 1915 because of rumours spread about his supposed bankruptcy. Actually a cheque had been mutilated in the post and was returned by the bank. His ire was aroused when it was noised aboard, in small town fashion, that there were insufficient funds to meet the cheque (which was often true) and a defamation case resulted. This, as the earlier court case against his former wife, was indicative of a certain pettiness in Brady which did little to endear him to his fellow citizens, no matter how much they liked the fame of his presence in Mallacoota.

Occasional trips to Melbourne to see the publishers of *Australia Unlimited* were not always happy affairs. Tempers became very heated on one such visit early in 1916 and on his return, Brady wrote to the manager of the publisher's shop, G.R. Campbell,[1] that he would not enter his shop again and all future dealings would have to be by correspondence owing to the discourtesy of the staff. Things soon cooled down, as Brady did not hold a grudge for long, and there were only smiles on his next visit. There was a volatile aspect of Brady's nature, perhaps derived from Celtish forebears, which tended to make him flare up under provocation, but his equilibrium was soon recovered usually. This quality was no doubt allied to the flamboyance which he evidenced to his colleagues, more than fulfilling the temperamental expectations associated both with the arts and gingery-red hair (to which occasionaly a ginger beard was added).

Brady's preoccupation with his writings did not prevent a fatherly concern with his young family. In July 1910 he had organised a petition of local residents to the Minister of Education for the establishment of a full-time school at Mallacoota "to serve the interests of local children who are growing up practically without education". The only schooling available was in a third-time state school three miles away. This petition had no effect, for his children were still walking this distance to school when he wrote to the local teacher six years later.[2] Although the "Sage of Mallacoota" (as his friends jovially called him) wrote to Cameron to apply pressure upon the Department of Education,[3] his children were past the schooling stage before any benefit to the district was achieved.

Part of Brady's love for the Mallacoota district was no doubt due to an acute awareness of his surroundings. This was evident in the city but here in the fastness of East Gippsland he was fascinated by the region's topography, geology, flora and fauna as well as by its history and prehistory. He was interested in the diestict's original aboriginal population, collecting many specimens of stone axes, spearheads and grinding-stones, of which he gave freely to his friends. He wrote to a correspondent who shared his anthropological interest that "we ploughed out an aboriginal midden here last week and I have secured one very good stone tomahawk and some flints for you."[1] He also mentioned the native skulls and bones which came to light from the same source. Such was his interest in these previous

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3 Brady to W.A. Holman, 3.4.1914, in National Library

4 Brady to Hon. James Cameron, M.L.A., 29.5.1915, in National Library

1 Brady to Campbell, 18.1.1916, in National Library

2 Brady to Baker, 23.11.1916, in National Library. He asked the teacher not to give his children too strenuous physical activity after their long walk and added; "Permit me to say that I regard you as a competent and earnest preceptor and that you are bringing the children along well and laying a foundation on which on may build firmly in the future, mayhap." Brady and his neighbours offered to present a school-site to the department for a closer school (Brady to Minister of Education, 17.7.1914, in National Library.

3 Brady to Hon. James Cameron, 17.7.1916 in National Library.

1 Brady to Hare, 40.10.1916, in National Library.

inhabitants of Gippsland that he made a collection over the years of newspaper material and notes for a book on the topic.[2]

His interest in the district was also very much apparent in his concern for its economic potentialities. He was ever alert to ways of making money from the land. He gained an oyster lease in 1916 and in the same year wrote to the Department of Munitions to enquire about the value of grass-tree gum, having heard rumours that it was an essential element in the manufacture of explosives. He was given the names of private buyers but it is not know if he actually sold any of this material, which is readily available in that area.

After a brief skirmish with several of his neighbours, who resented his illegal use of the foreshore land in front if his property and organised a petition to have it opened to public access, Brady's labours on *Australia Unlimited* reached completion. This had been a task which occupied him longer than any other, either before or thereafter. Relieved at seeing the end of six years' work he wrote to Prior of *The Bulletin:*

> *I am coming at long last to the end of* Australia Unlimited *and will be free for a time at least to write what a derned well like. I have bottled up hogsheads of journalistic copy. If my name is not anathema in the* Bulletin *office, I shall be wanting to make a few preachments through the columns of your valued journal, respected Sir.*[3]

He still made the occasional trip to Melbourne ("at best a decayed mining village") but confessed to Nettie Palmer that he was still not getting along very well with George Robertson, whom he regarded as unbusinesslike. He complaines to Nettie that "all publishers are avaricious asses. Probably the result of an asinine Public which doesn't know brass from gold."[4]

But in spite of visits to Sydney and Melbourne, Brady's heart was now in the Mallacoota district. He became Honorary Organiser of the Australian East Coast Railway League which sought a direct line to take local produce to Sydney. He considered expanding his leasehold land to go into partnership with Maitland, one of the agents who had helped him sell space in *Australia Unlimited,* but Maitland withdrew.

Meanwhile, Brady's interest in literature continued, with regular correspondence with many literary figures, some of whom discussed a favourite theme of his –hardships of the Australian writer. Esson summed up the position:

> *But writing for money, in a systematic way, is a trade rather than an art. Literature, as literature, seldom makes much money for the writer. The best writers usually have the hardest struggle. They are simply not catering to the fickle taste of an immediate public. There is no mystery about it. It is very simple. Still, the conditions in Australia are disgraceful. Nothing is done for the unattached writer, the freelance, the only writer who is free, and therefore the only one who ever makes any contribution to Australian literature. The pressmen are as stupid as the professors. What can be done for the only writers who matter, Lawson, Quinn, Palmer McCrae etc? We need at least one good magazine and one good review. Our newspapers are the crudest on earth, cheap news-sheets whose only policy is propaganda of ignorance. These conditions make Australia difficult, far more difficult than it need be.*[1]

So difficult, in fact, was Brady finding conditions that he looked about for further ways of supplementing his income. He began to write again for *The Bulletin* in 1922 after a long break. The first poem of his return was "The Swede" and brought a congratulatory telegram form Henry Lawson[2] and other heartening responses. Quinn wrote that he was delighted to see Brady writing verse again –

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[2] *My Blackfellow Book* was the tentative title to this collected material which is now in the National Library

[3] Brady to Prior, 8.5.1917, in National Library.

[4] Brady to Nettie Palmer, 5.6.1918, in National Library

[1] Louis Esson to Brady, 19.1.1921, in Mitchell Library.

[2] This telegram is amongst Brady's letters in Mitchell Library.

> "Fine stuff, as good as you ever did. You did a great wrong in ever muting your song. David McKee Wright also welcomes your re-appearance".[3]

But verse alone would not support him, so Brady signed an agreement with three friends, Stubbs, Sweetland and Roberts, forming a company to make films- The Australian Film Publicity Proprietary.[4] The head office of this company was in Melbourne from where it planned to make publicity films for industry, for state governments and tourist bureaus. It was not a success. Brady used his talents to write a scenario for "Antonelli", a film to help Italian migration to Australia, which he hoped would be financed partly by the Italian residents of the Queensland canefields and the Italian consulate, but usual difficulties ensued in regard to finance and the project was abandoned.

The interest in films, unsuccessful as it was, did bring Brady some publicity. Oscar Mendelsohn wrote, wanting to get into one of Brady's films as an actor. A local journal noted that "Edwin J. Brady intends following up film production in Sydney. We wish him success and hope ere long to see a future whose story will have as the setting the beautiful Mallacoota that he knows so well."[4]

Brady also investigated the possibility of making money from the sale of salt,[5] from seeds of medicinal plants which he and Mendelsohn were to grow in small experimental plots and experiment with export markets to France and the United States.[6] He nominated himself for the position of Superintendent of Immigration which became vacant in 1922.[7] None of these enterprises bore fruit or passed beyond the pipe-dream stage.

As well as the verse he was writing, Brady had published in *The Bulletin* early in 1922 several articles aimed at the bumbling bureaucracy which he had come up against in his efforts to settle at Mallacoota. In the first of these, the heavy-handedness of officialdom operated when Brady's English settler, Brown, took up a land-grant in the Gippsland area and applied for permission to feel a tree from a government reserve to ger bark for his fowlhouse roof. The way in which the encouragement of closer settlement and decentralisation can be militated against a too-strict exercise of centralised power makes interesting reading.[1] This was soon followed by another attack on the pomposity of officialdom in "The Tragedy of Jones", who was not very well received by the official whom he had gone to consult. "Blending majesty with sacerdotal iciness, the hierarch of that particular bastion allowed himself to utter the cabalistic formula; What do you wantr?"[2] Several articles in the same year on a similar theme and a brie biographical article on politician John Briggs[3] signalled to his readers that Brady was still interested in community and political affairs. And this was further demonstrated when he persuaded a group of Victorian politicians to visit Mallacoota to hear his views on the development of the district.[4] Nothing really concrete came out of that visit, but the very fact that it was made demonstrated the regard in which Brady was held in Victorian political circles. The next year found him doing publicity for the Bruce-page coalition government and for the National Union, but it could not be said that any real security had been gained.

Another trip to Queensland, partly financed by the Queensland Government, resulted in the publication of *The Land of the Sun.* but even with this limited success it was becoming more and more apparent that the promise of the energetic and idealistic young poet of the 1890's was fast being dispersed in the desert of forlorn hopes; he was developing into a rather importunate and shiftless dabbler in many things. He was ever ready to help others with advice or in more concrete ways b ut lacked the singleness of purpose which along could bring him the success he yearned for and perhaps deserved. He was far too which to display a truculence which was directed at anyone with whom he disagreed. For example he displayed an unusual degree of pomposity and conceit in his dealings with a surveyor acting for him and a neighbour, evidencing a growing bitterness with life, a frustration with his

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3 Quinn to Brady, 12.9.1922, in Mitchell Library.
4 11.2.1921. The agreement is among Brady's papers in National Library.
4 *Corroboree,* January, 1922, p.1.
5 Mendelsohn to Brady, 19.4.1921, in National Library.
6 Mendelsohn to Brady, 6.8.1921, in National Library.
7 Prime Minister's Dept. to Brady, 8.3.1922, in National Library, stated Brady's application would be considered.
1 "Brown and a Sheet of Bark". *The Bulletin*, 6.3.1922
2 29.6.1922
3 "John Briggs – Saviour of His Country", *The Bulleting,* 16.11.1922
4 A.E. Lind to Brady, 9.2.1923, in National Library.

inability to produce what he considered himself capable of producing. His editorial and journalistic bent was striving, in a degree, against the aesthetic and creative aspects of his nature; he was in danger of falling between two stools. While his love of nature and solitude were factors which in one sense enhanced his creative effort, in another they militated against his achievement by taking him away from the mainstream of events and intellectual life which were, of course, in the city. It was thus a vast relief to his family when in 1924 he signed a contract with *The Bulletin*, negotiating sole rights to his literary services for a period of twelve months at seven pounds a week. In gratitude he wrote to Prior, recalling old times and stating: "We were all children of *The Bulletin*, and proud of our literary heritage".[5] This arrangement not only gave him a much-needed relief, if only temporary, from poverty, but provided him with a stability which, whether he knew it or not, he needed equally urgently. As well it provided a sense of consecutiveness in his literary output. But it cannot be said that he made the most of this opportunity, for during that year only about a dozen poems and a short critical article appeared in *The Bulletin* above Brady's name, and so far as can be ascertained, nothing else. It was significant that the contract was not renewed the following year.

In 1925 Brady wrote to the Prime Minister, the Hon S.M. Bruce[1] to interest the Government in sponsoring a volume on North Australia, similar to *The Land of the Sun,* which had brought favourable publicity to Queensland. A refusal led Brady to confide to a friend that as the Bruce Government did not seem interested in national development, he looked forward to Labor's return to office as "Australia's only chance".[2] An attempt the following year to promote a companion volume to *Australia Unlimited* to be called *Industrial Australia* by the formation of "E.J. Brady Publications, Pty. Ltd." Was equally unsuccessful, although a start was made upon a manuscript. A more successful venture at this time (1926) was the modest *The Overlander: The Princes Highway,* containing general historical and geographical information as well as some valuable sidelights into the pioneering families of the Gippsland region.

In commemoration of Authors' Week, 1927, Brady gave an address over the radio station 3AR in which he referred to an article in *The Age* which had called him "Australia's most optimistic writer" (in many respects he must have been). In this speech he made some comparisons between the flowering culture in Australia and in Ancient Greece (how Norman Lindsay would have approved!) and while pointing out the recognition given by the rest of the world to Australia's production in the fields of primary and secondary industry, called for a similar recognition both at home and abroad, for literature and the other arts.[3] He used a similar theme for an address at Glen Iris State School the same year. Whatever his faults, Brady had a well-developed nationalistic pride and took every opportunity to express it and inculcate it in others. This pride in indigenous literature was further increased when he was elected a member of the Society of Australian Authors in 1928.

Among the politicians whom Brady had met in Melbourne was John Curtin, who impressed him as a man of exceptional intelligence and strength of character. The two met again and over drinks discussed the political conditions then existing. Brady, in fact, extended himself beyond his capacity and ruefully recalled that he came away with a profound respect for his companion's drinking prowess and a "very high opinion of him personally". Brady forecast that Curtin would become Prime Minister, to which that politician responded with an enigmatic smile. The two met several times after this, each time Brady being impressed with the other's earnestness. Later he considered that Australia ill-repaid the debt it owed Curtin for his leadership in the crisis years when "the destiny of this country rested on his shoulders". Among Brady's positive qualities was an ability to get along well with people from diverse backgrounds and to see the strengths in the personality of others.

With the approach of the depression, Brady needed all the strength that he could find within himself. Using produce from his farm to supplement his literary earnings, he was still finding that his returns were continually diminishing. Consignments of beans sent to the markets were dumped. He wired his agents to give them free to the unemployed but was told that this was impossible; when his intentions became known however, many people interested in alleviating the hardships which were occurring got in touch with him. He lost, by his own estimate, over a thousand pounds before he stopped consignments and produced only enough for his family and for local sale. But one effect off this

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[5] Brady to Prior, 30.11.1923, in National Library.

[1] Brady to S.M. Bruce, 17.3.1925, in National Library.

[2] Brady to W. Yandle, 27.9.1927, in National Library

[3] Delivered 12.9.1927, this address is in manuscript in La Trobe Library. An account of this address appeared in *The Age,* 13.9.1927

restriction was to give him added insight and sympathy for the other victims of depression and economic distress. It was this sympathy which led to his writing of *The Religion of Humanity*, in which he endeavoured to relate the principles of Christianity to the tenets of Socialism, foreseeing that the application of these principles in the social structure would result in a society vastly better than the existing one. This sympathy also led him to give practical support to the founding of a co-operative farming venture to assist some of Melbourne's unemployed.[1] This increased insight into and understanding of human problems was probably enhanced by the death of his mother, for whom he wrote some not very good obituary verses.[2]

In a further attempt to improve his standing and financial status, Brady to his friend in Canberra, E.G. Theodore,[3] offering to set up a Labor Press Agency there to handle all the publicity for the Labor Movement, but institutions, as individuals, were finding finance difficult to obtain and the offer was gracefully declined. Brady, with his flair for the vivid presentation of ideas, his social interests and his journalistic and political background and contacts was good at this type of work. His knowledge of the development of the party, much of it first hand, would have been invaluable. He was, in fact, working during this time on a monumental history of the Australian Labor Party which he had tentatively entitled *The Red Objective* and had been enlisting the assistance of his Labor colleagues to fill in information where needed. J.T. Lang was one who wrote expressing willingness to supply information on Labor's early days.[4] This history was never completed, but there are many pages of manuscript and notes for it, usually unnumbered, scattered throughout the various boxes of his papers in the National Library.

Where disappointments occurred, there was sometimes a balancing recompense. One of these was his appointment as a Justice of the Peace and Honorary Magistrate in January 1930 – an event which made him rather proud of himself and boosted his flagging morale temporarily. But it was not long before his blameless status as a Justice was somewhat sullied by a letter from the Lands Department accusing his of cultivating eight acres not covered by his lease. He was given the option of surrendering his lease of paying an extra four pounds annually to include the right to cultivate this particular area.[5] This pin-pricking attitude of authority was not designed to appease a man who was deciding that life was passing him by. He pledged himself to become more active in attacking the kind of society which encourages such pettiness. He became the correspondent at Mallacoota for *The Argus*; but more importantly, he began to write, under the pseudonym of "Scrutator", for the official journal of the Victorian Branch of the Australian Labor Party, *The Labor Call.* His first article to this periodical[1] was the forerunner of a great many contributions including leaders, principal articles, letters and verses, some particularly militant, which extended well into 1936. This activity necessitated residence in Melbourne, so leaving his family in Mallacoota he lived in Carlton, Heyington and Parkdale for the next few years.

As well as his weekly contribution to *The Labor Call*, Brady wrote for many Labor and Socialist publications such as *The Labor Daily, The Socialisation Call, The Union Voice,* for many of the daily newspapers at odd intervals – *The Argus, Age, Herald, Midday Times, The World's News, Sydney Morning Herald* and for weeklies such as *The Weekly Times* and *The Bulletin.*

In 1933, when his financial affairs were at extremely low ebb, he began an association with a Polish Jew, Lazar Rubenstein, who commonly used the name of Leslie Rubins. Brady "ghosted" a book on economics for Rubins – *Depression and Its Cure* – and wrote an Introduction to it.[2] This association was in many ways a life-saver for

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1 See Chapter Four.
2 Among his papers in Mitchell Library.
3 Brady to Theodore, 18.7.1929, in National Library.
4 J.T.Lang to Brady, 5.8.1929, in National Library.
5 21.7.1930, in National Library
1 "Better to Bury Caesar Than to Praise Him"' 11.12.1930; The first verse was "Unfurl the Flag", 5.2.1931
2 Leslie Rubins, *Depression and Its Cure – The Gold Measure Theory,* published by the author and undated. Brady's Introduction is dated only March 1933.

Brady, as for a time he was on a regular weekly retainer from Rubins. He wrote to Norma back at Mallacoota:

> *The Rubins association is a great relief from other associations, such as Burch, and may lead to stability in time. He has put me on to a possibility – buying waste wool for some of his Pollack friends. I don't know how to go about it yet but am willing to learn. General biz is dead, but these Jew chaps are making money. I am useful to them and may cash in. Anyhow I work 16 hours a day and hoe for the best, while prepared for the worst.*[3]

While "prepared for the worst" Brady continually explored other avenues of making money. On Rubins' recommendation he bought three hundred shares in a West Australian gold mine and sold them at a slight profit. He entered into an agreement to establish a periodical to be called *Money Talks*, and although the agreement remains among his papers, the project, like so many others, was still-born.

Biography had not come, to this point, squarely within focus of Brady's attention, but in 1933 and 1934 he worked with a young female assistant to complete a biography of Dr. Mannix, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne. The result, which was published in 1934, was both unspectacular and uninspiring in short a mere pot boiler which was bough by some of the faithful because of its subject, but which had little literary merit.

The *Labor Call* articles continued weekly throughout the early 1930's and in language often extravagant but always witty, vivid and pungent, urged readers towards solidarity, collectivism, altruism and the socialist version of the Labor platform.

In 1935, remembering his modest success with fold mining shares, Brady once more became interested in gold as a raw product. He entered into partnership with two men, McMillan and Brown, in "The Rose of the East" mine at Wingan, near the Thurra River. He had samples of the ore of this mine assayed and although the assayer's report was encouraging, the syndicate was advised to wait until the price of gold rose to ensure the mine was economically viable. It is not clear, from the surviving documents, whether Brady became impatient and sold out his share to his partners or whether the claim just petered out. One thing is certain though; he did not make his fortune from it.

An enterprise more in keeping with Brady's talents commenced at this time. In conjunction with three members of a Melbourne family, Lionel, Pat and Gerald Stanley, Brady formed the Pelsart Publishing Company with an office in Little Collins Street and a capital of a thousand pounds. The Stanley family put up the money, Brady's responsibility being to supply the literary work for a retainer and a quarter share of any profits. Fairly secure on eight pounds a week, he set out to do publicity and general writing with several major schemes in mind. An Abridged version of *Australia Unlimited* was commenced; a book to celebrate the Sesquicentenary of New South Wales, to be published in conjunction with *The Bulletin* was planned as well as another to publicise the Wool Industry, one for the Tasmanian Government and an Australian Family Biography, for which prominent families would pay fifteen pounds for a page entry, was mooted.

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[3] Undated letter to Norma in National Library. Burch was associated with the Mallacoota Co-operative Farm (See Chapter Four).

The scheme began well. A start was made on the abridged *Australia Unlimited* and the Tasmanian volume. The Stanley brothers secured a five hundred pound contract from the Tasmanian Government and then, according to Brady, imposed some new conditions and the client withdrew. Brady was furious. As a result of this and other contretemps the working capital was frittered away. Commercial ineptness on the part of Brady's partners as well as a failure to understand the field of publishing on the part of all concerned seems to have been the cause of the company's collapse,[1] but it was becoming more and more obvious that Brady was going into such money-making activities without a thorough investigation and without a down-to-earth appraisal of the chance of success. Failure was too frequent. Perhaps it was that his idealistic and romantic outlook swayed what should have been a more realistic assessment of his chances. However Pelsart supplied Brady with a living for a time, and even this was some recompense for the loss of the pot of gold which had existed in the figments of his imagination only.

As evidence of an outlook which was more realistic when no financial interest was involved, Brady publicly advocated the purchase in 1936 of a thousand fighter planes to prepare for the Japanese invasion which he regarded as inevitable. Even before his Malay States visit in 1912 he had been preaching, with vision and vehemence, that the Asian question was one which Australia had to face. He had given warning of this during his days on *The Worker*, especially when the Japanese captured Port Arthur.[2] He had also contributed a long poem to *The Bulletin* deploring the missed opportunities – the failure of Australia to cultivate the inland and populate the northern section of this vast continent or to mine its mineral wealth. He decried the tolerance of Australians towards absentee landlords and the national preoccupation with racing and other sports instead of a practical concern with the business of developing the country:

> *Now slant-eyed cynics in the North, with Asiatic guile,*
> *Thumb lovingly a whetted sword, and speak of Peace the while,*
> *With High Ambition wedded to the Asian mode astute,*
> *They've marked a map in Japanese: 'This Continent to Loot".*[1]

Another poem, in slightly lighter vein, surmised that if the Asians did conquer Australia they would certainly treat their artists and writers more respectfully than Australians themselves had done:

> *I try to face the prospect*
> *As bravely as I can*
> *Of rich Oshima Daley*
> *Be-mourned by all Japan,*
> *Or bound in silk kimona*
> *A fair Louise Mack-San.*[2]

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[1] In a letter to Arthur Stubbs, 22.1.1938, in National Library, Brady placed the whole blame for failure on this partners. He was reluctant to admit his own deficiencies. He told a similar story to his daughter, Moya, in a letter, 15.4.1937, in Mitchell Library

[2] "Australia's Peril", *The Worker,* 7.1.1905

[1] "A Continent to Loot", *The Bulletin, 27.5.1909*

[2] "Pro Patria", *The Bulletin,* 17.2.1910.

Still another looked into the future to see the last Australian – last member of a people dispossessed of their land through apathy.[3] Had Brady's warnings been taken seriously, Australian might have entered the war with Japan better equipped to defend herself. As it was, he was branded as an alarmist and his warnings were ignored. Whatever his shortcomings as a man of letters or as a journalist, he was never deficient as a patriotic Australian. He did not deny, he told the Fellowship of Australian Writers in Sydney in 1936, the description which A.G. Stephens had given him as being "offensively Australian", a label stolen from another context but equally apt.[4]

While contributing to *The Labor Call*, Brady was always hopeful of ultimately being offered its editorial chair, but finally all hope of this happening was extinguished in 1936. His disappointment at this reverse and his worry over the difficulties and failure of the Mallacoota settlement made this a bitter time for him. But it is to his credit that his ambition in this regard was not selfish or purely personal. Referring to the editorial disappointment as deep, he saw the lost chance as unfortunate because it would have allowed him, he told Norma, "to help the mass and those who still depend on me".[1] Then, as if in culmination of the failures and afflictions of 1936 his beloved Norma, who had borne him six children, died. He wrote to a relative: "No tribute that I have paid or can ever pay to her memory would be adequate to her sincerity, her courage, her rare human qualities."[2] His first reaction was to try to sell Mallacoota but a tentative sale to Leslie Rubins fell through. He was refused again and again offers to do publicity for the Broken Hill Proprietary[3] and for the Labor Party.[4] To make matters worse his bank manager at Eden was urging a reduction in his overdraft, sundry creditors were becoming impatient and he was being threatened with legal action over the non-payment of Norma's hospital and funeral bills. Finally he begged and borrowed enough money to pay to most pressing bills and resolved to make a new start in life after a trial which would have broken a lesser man. He confessed to a son: "It is not pleasant being broke at 68 and having to make a new start, but it will be done now, regardless of aught else."[5]

The inner resources which had kept Brady going – his faith in human nature, in the basic goodness of life – were never more evident than at this time. He had for years treasured and stored manuscripts, letters and early editions of Australian writers, meaning always to sort and catalogue them when time was found. He was a real bower-bird when it came to this type of accumulation and had many boxes and cases filled with this valuable material. Now he sold this – solid and tangible evidence of past friendships and achievements – for very low prices, mainly through J.K. Moir, in Melbourne but also through others who approached him, including Harry Chaplin and Tyrrell. Early Lawson, Daley, Quinn, Brennan and early paintings and drawings were disposed of cheaply, only a small part thus far reaching public libraries. He expressed his bitterness often to his correspondents, especially Moir, Mendelsohn and Holburn. He condemned the slowness of returns for literary effort, calling Australia "The Land

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3 "The Last Australian", *The Bulleting,* 23.9.1909

4 Reported in *The Labor Call,* 14.5.1936. At this function also, W. Moore told of Brady's "discovery" of Katherine Mansfield.

1 Undated letter to Norma in National Library

2 Brady to E. Ella, 6.6.1939, in collection of Mrs. Jack.

3 Essington Lewis to Brady, 5.4.1937, 23.4.1937, in National Library

4 Brady to John Curtin, 11.4.1937, In National Library.

5 Brady to his son Hugh, 20.4.1937, in National Library.

of Lots of Time"[6] and decrying once again the preoccupation of the country's inhabitants with "sport and social vanities" and warning that "we haven't ever developed national serious-mindedness for which in the end we must pay"[7] – a theme still being sung, as in Donald Horne's *The Lucky Country.* As if to highlight this point he received at this time a letter from the publishers of Burke's *Landed Gentry* requesting details of his family for inclusion (at a fee, of course). He spoke disparagingly of "Sir Barnard's Stud Book".

In a rational and strong-willed manner Brady sat down to take stock of himself and determine the reasons for his failure. Always of a scientific bent and fairly well-read in psychology, he now attempted to use this knowledge to advantage. His suggested lines of treatment make interesting reading. He determined to concern himself in the future with certain areas of personal achievement:

1. *Cultivation of will-power.*
2. *Complete abstention from alcohol.*
3. *Physical Health.*
4. *Mental clarity and correct reasoning.*
5. *Sex-control.*
6. *Toleration – belief in good.*
7. *Constant occupation.*
8. *Sublimation in <u>service</u> and artistic and cultural effort.*
9. *Effort, patient effort, to co-ordinate ideas and express them.*
10. *The Right Books.*
11. *The elimination of all ideas of Violence, Retribution or Revenge upon individuals or Society.*
12. *Avoidance of morbid or despairing thoughts – the Clean Slate – Hope, Courage, Faith and a new beginning.*
    These with God's Blessing and every adventitious aid possible will lead to complete regeneration, happiness, tranquillity, harmony and possibly a literary success.
    'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do'. 'Let him that is without sin cast the first stone'.[1]

Such soul-searching, although no doubt a healthy exercise psychologically, did not of itself resolve Brady's continual financial problem. *Australia Unlimited* had been the only volume to make him any real money and as he confessed to a relative, his father had said that he possessed a genius for getting rid of money.[2] That sum had long since disappeared. But he kept on writing – verse, articles, short stories for general magazines and newspapers such as the *Herald,*[3] *Age, Argus, Country Life Annual, Walkabout, Weekly Times* and *Smith's weekly;* for smaller magazines as P.R. Stephensen's *The Publicist:* and for union papers such as *The Tramway Record, The Clothing Trades Journal* and *The Shop Assistant.* He continued to sell off his books and manuscripts, five volumes of Lawson's early works, complete with persoanl notes and letters from Henry, going to J.K. Moir in 1938 for five pounds. Rather like the fox in Aesop's fable he was coming to the conclusion that material possessions were not very worthwhile anyhow. "Nothing counts except expression, and so I have no regrets over personal losses and only desire personal gains in the way of sufficiency of silver to procure food and clothing and the means to go on writing books".[4] When he became a member of The Bread and Cheese Club, of which Moir was President, he sent some verses especially written for the occasion which concluded:

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6 Brady to J.K. Moir, 26.11.1937, in La Trobe Library.
7 Brady to J.K. Moir, 26.11.1938, in La Trobe Library
1 Untitled notes, dated only 1937, among microfilmed letters of Brady's in Mitchell Library.
2 Brady to Eliza Ella, 29.4.1940, owned by Mrs. G. Jack.
3 He became to the *Herald* correspondent at Mallacoota, September, 1939, keeping the paper informed of unusual shipping movements and local events.
4 Brady to J.K. Moir, 27.6.1938, in La Trobe Library

Then fill the kind fraternal horn!
The homely loaf with cheese adorn!
And for a royal season
Let Culture be our common goal,
Forgathered here to feast of Soul
And pleasant flow of Reason![1]

Some of the old short stories and verses were collected into two manuscripts, *Beachcombers and Bushrangers* and *Knights of Arcadia,* and hopefully sent off to London but both came back with polite notes of rejection. These manuscripts are still in the National Library. Equally polite were the rejections when political friends were tried, for the approaching tensions in Europe were already casting a shadow. As he himself said to one politician: "Australia even more than Britain now demands strength and courage. We are now entering into a struggle – a titanic struggle it must be – not only to preserve but to extend Democracy.[2] He confessed to Moir that Chamberlain had sold out the Empire and foresaw a distinct deterioration of the situation long before it occurred, both in Europe and in regard to Japan's entry into the conflict.[3]

After some unsuccessful overtures to go to New Zealand to turn out propaganda for the Labor cause there,[4] Brady applied for a vacant post on the committee which administered the Commonwealth Literary Fund. This, along with an application to benefit from the fund, was refused, but the next year he was awarded a Literary Fellowship (worth 150 pounds in 1941). He used this to commence the writing of *Two Frontiers*, a book for which he had done a great deal of research into family history. He also joined the Australia-Soviet Friendship League, visiting their club rooms on his visits to Melbourne. He made use of their library, too, to begin a spate of reading Russian fiction, in which he had long been interested.

This event seems to have broken a drought for Brady for the next year, 10th June, he married again – a New Zealander named Florence Bourke. Best man at the wedding was well-known naturalist and historian A.H. Chisholm. He tells the rather droll story of Brady's casual intention to marry at a Registry Office but when a fellow fisherman struck up a conversation, the couple were married in church, with the fisherman-minister officiating. This match meant a great deal to Brady, who had become increasingly lonely since Norma's death. Florrie, as he called her, shared his literary interests as well as being adept at painting scenes in oils on scarves and handkerchiefs which were sold to tourists when the couple later returned to Mallacoota. He informed his relatives that "neither of us is of a social disposition and we are both entirely interested in Art and literature and thought, books and culture generally. We also like to live close to nature".[5]

Angus and Robertson rejected the *Two Frontiers* manuscript, the Chief Reader's report praising its straightforward style and "pleasant stream of anecdote" but criticised its "lack of balance and proportion" and the direction of the reader's interest form the subject of the biography".[1] Brady regained the book and sent it to another publisher, Frank Johnson, who after much delay and with a great deal of acerbity from Brady finally published it in 1944.[2] Brady wanted it to appear while there were so many American soldiers in the country but it missed this deadline owing to difficulties with paper, with the printing and one suspects, owing to the publisher's negligence.

Although Leslie Rubins had made himself unpopular with Brady for his failure to fulfil a promise to buy the land at Mallacoota, the two began working together again. Brady wrote another book on economic theory for Rubins, appearing in the credits as "editor". This was *The Golden Key to Victory*

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1 The rough draft of these verses is in Mitchell Library.
2 Brady to Senator R. Keane, 28.9.1938, in National Library
3 Brady to J.K. Moir, 27.10.1938 and 27.3.1939, in La Trobe Library.
4 Brady to Hon. M.J. Savage, Prime Minister of New Zealand, 14.2.1939, in National Library
5 Brady to El Ella, 14.8.1944, in possession of Mrs. G. Jack.
1 Angus and Robertson to Brady, 5.11.1942, in National Library
2 Johnson paid Brady only sixty-one pounds, ten shillings and sixpence for his profit from this book, an amount which Brady challenged.

Peace and Prosperity; it neither opened a door for Brady nor caused a ripple when thrown into the pool of public indifference.

Of more importance was another volume which appeared in 1944 – *Dreams and Realities.*[3] This book was in two parts – one written wholly by Brady and setting out the kind of life lived by the Tobins, a pioneer family settling in the Gippsland region; the second written by the authors together but mainly by Brady with the aid of Rubins' economic ideas, showed how a co-operative settlement "could be planned and guided on higher planes of production, with increased rewards and greater measures of comfort and security than Australians have hitherto enjoyed".[4] During the writing, Rubins paid him weekly with additional payment for other casual work. Brady told Rubins that he had made his section "as lightly realistic as it could be made for inclusion in a book with a serious purpose".

In 1944 Brady again gained a Commonwealth Literary Fund Fellowship, using it to write a biography of J.F. Archibald, a task he had earlier begun and laid aside. The Fund however, gave no aid in publication, especially as it was still war-time. Brady submitted the completed manuscript to Johnson, who agreed to publish it, but after countless promises and excuses Brady despaired. He took legal action to regain the manuscript and although submitted elsewhere, it was never published.

While working on these books, Brady had been living mainly in Melbourne, but he was once again fast tiring of city life. He told Moir that he was always fed up with Melbourne – "too backward, too slow, too scared and too damned cold, climatically and mentally", so he returned to Mallacoota. Further warmth came into his life with the birth of a daughter when Brady was 77! Delighted, the parents called her Edna June to keep the E.J.B. initials which had been preserved for four generations; the poet added the distinction of a "Natal Song" which concluded:

The land I love is their and thine,
And – be it late or soon –
I pray its boundless gifts will fall
By right of birth upon them all,
And <u>You</u> my Edna June.

Although pretty banal verse, some allowances must be made for the seventy seven year old father.

Ever a keen letter writer (and duplicates were kept in their hundreds, even to the ordering of supplies and provisions), Brady carried on a remarkably wide and energetic correspondence. He wrote to James Devaney, who was editing a Catholic periodical in Brisbane, to Robert Close, Darcy Niland, Muir Holburn, Ernest Lane, J.K. Moir, Oscar Mendelsohn, Eustace Tracey and Allan Queale – to most of these continuously and at length. He also wrote to Percy Cerutty, who sent his *Essentials of Good Health* and wrote: "Am caught up in the culd of the physical, the old Greek conception: *Mens sana in corpore sano.* You always did have it! Some of us have to acquire it![1]

Occasionally special tasks were given to Brady. He received ten guineas for writing a Foreword to a book on economic theory written by a young Australian whom he had never met, happy to endorse a book whose theories he considered ran parallel to his own.[2] He also wrote and Introduction and gave much helpful advice when Muir Holburn and Marjorie Pizer collected the militant verse of V.J. Daley ("Creeve Roe"). "Victor was my closest and most understanding friend in life, and his work has not yet been appraised at its true literary value, here and abroad" Brady wrote.[3] But another venture at this time was less well received. He had written a poem, "Australia Remembers", as a tribute to those killed in the war. A friend, Arthur Stubbs, set this in a folder, planned to attach the biography of a particular soldier who had not returned, and attempted to sell this memento to the bereaved family.

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3 York Press, Melbourne, 1944.
4 From the foreword to *Dreams and Realities*
1 Percy Cerutty to Brady, 5.6.1949, in National Library
2 E.H. Anderson, *The Economics and Finance of a New Order* (Melbourne, 1946). Letter from Anderson to Brady, 3.6.1946, in National Library
3 Brady to Muir Holburn, 11.12.1945, in Mitchell Library.

Although the project had the approval of several councils it aroused some misgivings and after the Returned Servicemen's League stated it opposition and after unfavourable publicity from some newspapers the project was quietly dropped.[4]

Brady was becoming increasingly disenchanted with *The Bulletin*. He not only disliked its official policy in the mid-forties, which he had rather obtusely seen as going downhill from the point of Archibald's departure and going politically right each year, but he did not like its encouragement of the more modern and extreme form of poetry. Amusingly, he regarded the black shirt often worn by Cecil Mann to its office as "the outward and visible sign of inward Fascist convictions"[5] and generalised from this to the paper as a whole. This attitude was not ameliorated when Douglas Stewart reduced the payment for his verse by relegating it to the "Aboriginalities" page or rejected it altogether. But Brady swallowed his pride, perhaps muted his conscience, and continued to contribute. "Damn their politics and gor'bless their cash say I!" he wrote to his wife.[1]

Brady had long been friendly with Oscar Mendelsohn, Melbourne property owner, bon-vivant and litterateur, and in 1946 he asked Brady to contribute to a literary magazine he was editing. *Focus* had originally been called *View* and Brady contributed to it regularly until it ceased publication after the issue of May 1948 under threat of a libel action.[2] Brady's contributions were mainly prose for which Mendelsohn, somewhat of a patron of the arts, paid handsomely, even making creditors happy by advancing money to the impecunious Brady when bills became more than usually pressing. After June 1947 Brady was listed as Contributing Editor but the editorial work was always done solely by Mendelsohn.[3] Brady was still writing occasional verse as well as the prose articles, for he told Holburn that when he was stirred up, as he had been by the birth of his young daughter, he went about "*thinking* in rhyme", an event which frightened him in case it became "chronic". During this year and the next Holburn and Mendelsohn were a great comfort to him, both psychologically and materially. Not only did they encourage him to work but both attempted to interest publishers I n his writings. He threatened to leave Australia for the United States where he could have had dual citizenship but this was merely an escape valve fore the depression caused by his failing health and chronic financial situation.[4]

Holburn negotiated, unsuccessfully as it turned out, with Angus and Robertson over *The Cat and the Fiddle* (light verse), *The Gippslanders* (short stories), *Life's Highway* (early reminiscences) and *The Message Stick* (essays and humorous stories).[5] Any chance of acceptance there happened to be was destroyed by the shortage of paper and printing supplies which then existed – a time when the whole publishing trade and market was depressed. But Mendelsohn had more fortune, securing a Commonwealth Literary Fund pension of 150 pounds annually for Brady. These two men (and a third, Eustace Tracey, who not only took many Brady articles for his magazine, *Life Digest*, but also supplied him with paper, ink and money0 did much to alleviated the growing incapacity of a bitter and testy old man. A glimmer of amusement was brought to all when a contributor to the *Midday Times* deplored the choice of William McKell as Governor General designate and instead proposed Brady for the position in recognition of his long and selfless service to Australian letters.[6]

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4 *Smith's weekly,* 12.10.1946

5 Brady to Muir Holburn, 12.6.1945, in Mitchell Library.

1 Brady to Florrie, 1.6.1946, in National Library

2 A threat of a Supreme Court action with a Writ of 10,000 pounds for libel was issued by Carol Brown over some material written by Allan Ashbolt. Mendelsohn to Brady, 6.5.1947, in National Library.

3 Mendelsohn to Brady, 6.5.1947, in National Library.

4 Brady to J.K. Moir, 2.2.1947, in La Trobe Library.

5 Holburn to Angus and Robertson, 13.4.1947, in Mitchell Library

6 26.3.1947. The letter was signed "Scott Vandeleur, Melbourne". It is not impossible that this was written by Brady himself. It is not altogether out of character and it seems a remarkable coincidence that "Scott Vandeleur" was the mane ot a distant relative of his who was interested in co-operative settlements. He is mentioned in Chapter Four.

One more attempt was made by Brady to have published a special Victory edition of *Australia Unlimited*. He enlisted the aid of his friends in seeking government sponsorship but they were not able to carry the day. Even though Arthur Calwell was in favour of the scheme, "Dedman and Chifley would not see the light".[1] The last hope of further fame and money from his work was gone. But he was stilla ctive in his contributions, *Twentieth Century* publishing his fairly long review of Chisholm's fook on C.J. Dennis.[2] He gave freely of his knowledge and experience to young writers and poets who sought him out, contributing a Foreword to a book of verse by Harry Pearce.[3] He also tried to interest Mendelsohn in starting a new magazine using the *Catholic Quarterly* or the *Communist Review* as a model but catering for a much wider readership, perhaps calling it *The Nationalist Australian Quarterly*.[4] He also urged him to start an *Atomic Age Monthly* to keep people abreast of current developments in scientific fields.[5] Neither of these suggestions tempted Mendelsohn beyond his level of refusal.

The *Archibald* manuscript, which Brady had wrested from Johnson to submit to Melbourne University Press came back with the suggestion that "considerable amendment may be necessary to those pages which purport to sketch the general politics and social background of the period" and again from another publisher who stated that Archibald's time had "neither the humour nor the importance with which Mr. Brady seeks to invest it". So another battle was lost, a fact not surprising when one reads the manuscript and sets achievement against its intention. Brady had neither the strength nor the inclination to begin rewriting the biography as his age was telling on him in increasing measure. He was not eighty and a life of mental and physical toil was taking its toll. He was suffering from an inoperable hernia, chronic bronchitis and a weakened heart. His dwelling was ineffective in keeping out the chill southern winds which blew straight up from the Antarctic. He had no life insurance, having usrrendered his only policy in the stringencies of the depression and was constantly haunted by the fear of dying without making adequate provisions for his wife and young daughter. This spectre, he claimed, prevented any "final expressions of creative art" of which he might have been a little longer capable, but he was not completely forgotten in his mental and material distress. Two separate committees, mindful of his eightieth year, began subscription lists for him; one organised by Eustace Tracey and the other by Mendelsohn ("There *must* be a God – otherwise how can one account for Oscar Mendelsohn"). Together these lists brought in three hundred pounds, a circumstance that almost certainly prolonged Brady's life as well as raising his spirits considerably. The money was used to renovate his home and pay some outstanding accounts.

All of Brady's books were out of print except *Two Frontiers* so he had no income from them, and the small Literary Fund pension was inadequate. Even this was reduced when at Mendelsohn's insistence he obtained the Old Age pension. The Literary Fund Committee had rejected a suggestion that an autographed edition of Brady's collected works be prepared and suggested instead an anthology of selected verse, asking Mendelsohn to make the selection, but the practical situation made this impossible.[1] It was too late.

At the age of eighty-one Brady confessed that life was still a mystery to him but he affirmed his joy at having lived. To the end he was very much interested in world affairs, particularly in the cultural. He gave support for a memorial to Roderic Quinn and sent messages upon request to organisations which contacted him, such as the Australian Peace Council and the Australian-Soviet Friendship League. He never forsook the dream of a better society in which workers and under-privileged people would be granted more of the material and cultural comforts of life. He expressed sympathy with Hardy when *Power Without Glory* caused a furore in the press. He was invited by Dorothea McKellar to join the Sydney branch of P.E.N. but gracefully declined. He accepted with pleasure however, when the Fellowship of Australian Writers elected him to Honorary Life Member "as a token of our respect and appreciation of the contribution you have made to Australian letters over a lengthy period".[2] The only other such members at this time were Louis Lavater and Bernard O'Dowd.

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1 Brady to Muir Holburn, 22.4.1947, in Mitchell Library.
2 "'The Bloke" and Some Other Bards". No. 1 1947, pp 26-31.
3 *Songs of Nature and Other Poems* (Melbourne, 1948)
4 Brady to Mendelsohn, 10.10.1948, owned by Mendelsohn.
5 Brady to Mendelsohn, 30.6.1949. owned by Mendelsohn.
1 H.S. Temby, Sec. C.L.F., to Mendelsohn, 7.10.1949, in Mendelsohn collection.
2 Secretary, F.A.W. to Brady, 3.11.1951, in National Library.

Even at the end of effective life Brady was concerned about the shape and quality of the future society. He feared another world war but retained a strong faith in a future where culture would be put before commerce, exhibiting that optimism which he had retained to the end "if a pessimist, I would commit suicide", he once said). He had faith that the spirit of man, but its very nature, would survive every eventuality:

> A New World, a World of Reason and Decency may be born in a whirlwind of blood and fire. I believe it <u>will</u> be born out of the final agony, but that is merely a matter of faith.[3]

Brady died (22nd August 1952) in the faith, not of conventional religion, but of socialism. He refused burial by a priest and his wishes were adhered to, against some opposition, when he was laid to rest in the midst of the tall trees which surround the secluded cemetery at Mallacoota.

Chapter Three
Political views and their expression.

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[3] Brady to Muir Holburn, 27.4.1949, in Mitchell Library.

"They have jeered him for his virtue, they have spurned him for his worth,
He hath eaten husks of sorrow, with the lowly of the earth.
They have paid him well with anger and rewarded all his pain,
With a garret or a gibbet, with a dungeon and a chain,
Still he led that men might follow, marching bleeding in the van,
Toiling on for aye and ever, toiling on, the Martyr Man."

Brady, "The Martyr Man"

Brady's interest in politics was practically a life-time one and his connection with politics in Australia was long and often stormy and filled with personal bitterness and disappointment. But his early interest had been a rather casual affair. On his visit to the United States in 1880-82 he constantly argued with young Americans about political issues, vigorously defending the Australian system of government against attack. Some of the American ideas influenced him, at least temporarily, for he confessed that "from the age of fifteen I spent most of my spare time trying to convert my associates here to republicanism".[1] But while attending Sydney University and in addition reading politics and philosophy he deepened his interest both in theoretical issues and in the literature of social problems. Some of Lawson's poetry in particular affected him deeply. He was only nineteen when he began to read his work:

> *I was secretly swatting Karl Marx at the time and I veritably believe that* 'Faces in the Street' *impelled me as much as* Das Kapital *to join and subsequently lead the first Australian Socialist movement.*[2]

Ernest Lane, recalling the days when he roomed with Brady in Woolloomooloo, referred to "Faces In the Street" as a revolutionary poem that thrilled every rebel in Australia, making its author "a vital force in the fierce battle of life which was to rage fiercer than ever".[3] He also tells how he and Brady looked to poetry for their "revolutionaries". Listing Burns, Byron, Whitman, William Morris, Swinburne's earlier poems and Shelley, Lane recalls how they "devoured their revolutionary thoughts and aspirations and felt comradeship with all the great ones of the earth".

Brady's burgeoning political and literary interest was further stimulated by contact in 1889 with Ernest Blackwell, editor of *The Centennial Magazine* and a mile socialist. Blackwell printed one of Brady's earliest prose contributions – "The Clerk and the Capitalist".[4] In this article Brady takes the example of a typical Australian worker of the period, one Edgar Appleton Smith, and follows his career through four stages; firstly as an office boy and junior clerk with a firm of merchants in the city at twenty-five

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1 Brady to Carroll, 21.10.1946, in Mitchell Library.
2 *Archibald* manuscript, p. 117
3 *Dawn to Dusk*, p. 21.
4 September 1890, pp. 93-96

pounds a year; secondly as a franchised citizen in the same monotonous position, being paid one hundred pounds yearly and being vaguely aware of economic injustice as it directly affects him; thirdly as a married man on a salary of a hundred and fifty pounds, paying off a home, financially strained in his weekly commitments. The fourth stage of Smith's occupational progress comes abruptly and harshly. Through no fault of his own, at his employer's whim, he is dismissed, placing his very existence in jeopardy. After much grovelling he is re-employed, but spends the rest of his life with no real security, no real freedom and no union to look after his interest and prevent his victimisation. On this framework, Brady makes out a rather conventional argument for socialism. He deplores the existence of monopolies and the type of society which allows them to exist, makes a spirited plea for unionism as one of the necessary defences of the employee, and pointedly puts the first argument, one of many to follow, for socialism, evidencing a faith in this political doctrine which was to be his guiding star for the rest of his life.

When this dabbling in politics was changed to active participation by membership in the Australian Socialist League and the Labor Electoral League, Brady underwent some of the initiations usually reserved for budding politicians. He recalls:

> My first appearance on a public platform – which I ascend with the feeling of the condemned – was to deliver a carefully considered discourse on 'Australian Federation and the Labor Question', given in West's Academy, Leigh House, Castlereagh St. on Sunday March 1, 1891. The only notable thing about my own virgin effort is that it preceded the actual federation of the colonies by ten years.

Having based his arguments for federation on Plato's *Republic*, Brady looked back forty years later to see this as a rather dubious course of action but continued:

> *I would still stand by my youthful statement that 'it is the socialists who are endeavouring to put into practical application the doctrine of Jesus the Saviour of Men'. But I did not then, nor do I now, class myself as a Christian Socialist.*[1]

This relationship between socialist beliefs and basic Christian doctrine, considered a close and vital one by Brady, became one of the chief planks in his personal political and philosophical platform.

Brady's membership in the Socialist and Labor parties provided two influences – sometimes overlapping, sometimes separate – upon his early political thought. In addition he was involved in the Trades and Labor Council which served mainly as a forum for the unions and which had, as early as 1874, successfully sponsored a worker representative in Parliament.[2] The Socialist League had sometimes shared activities with the Trades and Labor Council. Brady in fact, had represented the League, with other Socialists and Labor Council delegates, at the welcome home (March 1891) to J.D. Fitzgerald, who had represented the Strike Committee in England. He had been in other joint delegations of the two bodies also – to the Prime Minister,[3] to Sir George Grey[4] and to Lord Jersey.[5] But the League had its internal problems, as Brady wrote: "One group was constructively collectivist, the other was influenced by Anarchist philosophy. Ultimately the latter group was ejected from membership."[6] And he also recalled the angry discussions, quarrels, expulsions, secessions and overheated debates which were so much a part of the political scene.

With this background, it is not surprising to find Brady a life-long Labor supporter although his decision to join the Labor Party was not wholly an individual one. The Socialist League made an official decision to support the Political Labor League and

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1 Untitled manuscript in Brady's papers in National Library (Box 53), undated but written about 1930.
2 Angus Cameron. See Ford, p. 53
3 *Daily Telegraph*, 7.5.1891
4 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9.4.1891
5 *Daily Telegraph,* 7.5.1891
6 "Organisation Follows Unrest", *The Red Objective*

Brady, along with others, joined. "We formed a compact militant outside left wing whose influence strengthened and inspired the Army of Labor."[1] In his dual capacity then as a member of the Socialist League and the Labor Party, Brady has unique opportunities to observe and to participate in the Major social and political events of the day. One of these was a meeting on the Maritime Strike, held at Ernest Blackwell's house at North Sydney, where the Queensland delegates were conferring. Even though a prominent politician H.H. Champion, had referred to the strikers as "an army of lions led by asses", to Brady the strike leaders seemed to "radiate strength and sincerity". So impressed, indeed was he, that he resolved to do all in his power to help. "I wanted them to win. I hoped they would win, and deep within me was born a desire to help if I could".[2] It is true to say that this strong element of altruism and philanthropy remained with Brady throughout his life. There was always a genuine concern for the plight of the average man, the worker, the widow, the underprivileged;
This desire to "help if I could" was never ever far below the surface. If polemic and wrangling, disgust and cynicism obscured it briefly it soon reappeared. The *humanity* of the man did much to offset the shiftlessness and tentativeness so often apparent in the execution of his good intentions.

As editor of *The Australian Workman, The Arrow, The Grip* and *The Worker* and as a principal contributor to political and union journals, especially *TheLabor Call*, as a foundation member of the Socialist and Labor parties and an active member of the Socialisation leagues of the 1930's, Brady developed and expressed the ideas which, taken collectively, can be described as his political creed. These ideas are expressed more systematically and usually in more detail in many unpublished manuscripts, especially *The Red Objective* and *Religion of Humanity,* and in the voluminous correspondence which he carried on throughout his life with his political friends as well as his literary associates. Fairly late in life, he wrote:

> On the walls of my workroom here at Mallacoota are three possessions – a reprint photograph of Karl Marx, a snapshot of Nikoli Lenin and a secular picture of Jesus of Nazareth. Marx arouses in me a feeling of distant but profound respect; Lenin I look upon with fraternal admiration; but the third picture affects me with an emotion I cannot explain. My instinct tells me that I am in the presence of the great comrades of the Cause.
> *My reason asserts that there is a community of interest shared by these three and not yet fully perceived by Mankind; that Marx, Lenin and Christ were impelled by the same motive and the motive came from I know not where. I do not care what the Scribes and the Parisees say about Marx, any more than the Christian regards what they say about Christ……Marx was no mystic but he had the mind of a prophet……The communication of this third great Socialist was an inspired message to Humanity. Inspiration is one phase of human consciousness that baulks definition.*[3]

Brady based his political beliefs, before looking at the ways in which he saw these principles being implemented in social, political and legal reforms, must take into account this strange mixture of religious and political (specifically socialistic) ideals. In a series of articles in 1910 Brady attempted to define his view of socialism and to explain his preoccupation with it. This statement of credo revealed a socialistic fervour which doubtless replaced the Roman Catholic religion from which he had been early estranged. He saw the symbol of socialism, the red flag, coming to finish what the Cross had begun:

> *If the churches were any longer militant and Christian they would drape their altars with the red flag of Socialism, they would bear it aloft in their processions, make it a feature of their ceremonies……If the Master were here to-day ye would still find him a Socialist, still*

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1 "Early Lights of Labor", *The Red Objective*
2 "The Pre-ninety Period", *The Red Objective.* Miles Franklin, like Brady, recognised "The wheels of social mechanism needed re-adjusting – things were awry". (*My Brilliant Career* (Edinburgh, 1901 (Sydney, 1965)), p 35).
3 "On the way to Political Power", *The Red Objective*

> *fulminating against the Rich and the Pharisee, still demanding justice for the poor, still paying the last with the first, still proclaiming the Brotherhood of Man.*[1]

Viewed in this light, socialism was more than just a political theory for Brady. To him, it was the universal panacea. It was to usher in the millennium if applied to the social and economic problems of mankind. It was the only possible cure for personal difficulties and for the maladies of a sick world because "it stands for the future physical and moral welfare of the Human Race". Acknowledging that it might not fill a man's purse to adopt socialism, he yet saw it filling the mind and expanding the heart in altruism and true Christianity.

His detailed and highly emotional analysis of the reasons for his espousal of socialist dogma reveals several unusual features. Pointing out what he considers to be inescapable weaknesses of the existing capitalistic structure, he yet views the socialistic alternative through a halo of rose-coloured light. For example he subscribes to socialist principles because "competitive civilisation is inherently vulgar and cruel, while socialistic civilisation would be artistic and humane" – surely a hypothesis untenable in theory and certainly not support by any examples from socialist countries then existing. He many be on firmer theoretical ground, certainly he has more company, in seeing Darwinian theory applying to development other than the biological – in fact to societies – so that advanced forms develop out of more elementary ones. And by an examination of the ills of the contemporary society, of that form of individualistic capitalism which exists in Australia, Brady points to the economic hardship, the unemployment, the difficult working conditions, bad living conditions, low wages, poverty and lack of security for a large portion of the population – in short a society where the "have-nots" exceeded the "haves". He hypothesises that just as society has reached its existing state from less complex forms, so it will continue to evolve; and the further stage in this evolution will mean a more equitable distribution of the fruits of production, with all sharing in the common wealth. This amelioration must come about, both because of weaknesses inherent in capitalism and the basic advantages of socialism. Capitalism's weakness is due to a basic premise that exists in spite of its splendid organisation – the exploitation of labour, so that "the comfort, security and well-being of the Many at present are made subject to that of the Few."

Of course it is possible to make and justify such criticisms, but instead of giving capitalism real credit for its achievements, or instead of looking for ways to overcome its weaknesses while still maintaining its productive efficiency, Brady wants to see it thrown out in toto. He is in grave danger of throwing out the baby with the bathwater, as the old saying goes.

Further, Brady sees capitalism ("individual ownership and competitive production for profits") unemployment, waste, financial panics, human misery, immorality, crime and evils untold" whereas collective ownership would abolish most of these unnecessary wrongs, minimise others, and "advance the material, intellectual and spiritual standards of the human race". He also denigrates capitalism for its involvements in the brutalities of way and blames it for the inequalities which lead the children of the rich to gain a more advantageous education than the children of the poor. One cannot help being reminded of Roosevelt's definition of a radical as a man with both feet planted firmly in the air. No good purpose is served by a wholesale condemnation of a system because of some weaknesses. It is difficult to substantiate the view (indeed Brady does not really try) that a socialistic society, had Australia been one, would not have had similar weaknesses, would not have been involved in way, and would have had any more equality of education than already provided under the Education Act of 1880 which made education, in New South Wales at least, free, secular and compulsory.

It is evident that when Brady thus attempts to explain his political credo he displays a large degree of ingenuousness and political naivety, superficiality in his criticisms and vague hypothesising about possible achievements of an idealistic, largely untried social alternative. But theoretically at least he is on sounder ground when he supports the economic aspects of the socialist or communist doctrine "As I see it, the economic difference between Socialism and Communism is the difference between one side of the blade of a table knife and the other"[1]), because it seems to him to have a greater affinity with the

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[1] "Why I An a Socialist", *The International Socialist, 27.8.1910. Other articles in the same series appeared in 1.10.1910 and 8.10.1910.*

[1] "Scrutator Explains", *The Labor Call,* 23.7.1931

basic philosophy of Christian ethics which is the ultimate yardstick of his social criticism. While this yardstick may be a fine measure on the general level one can run into difficulties when applying it to specific aspects of society. He calls Lady Astor as Witness to his view that socialism is really a religion:

> *Is it any wonder that Lady Astor, after seeing Collectivism in being, and hearing the firm convictions of the workers and peasants, could only keep repeating – 'It is a religion!' Yes, socialism is a religion……You cannot make men honest by an Act of Parliament, but by an economic act, which removes the cause of dishonesty, you can. You cannot make men and women good by a political code, but by a social code, which holds the causes of evil in check, you can, at least, make them infinitely better. Long before I became associated with the propaganda, I perceived in socialism a living plant, beside which the lip religions of my youth appeared as withered leaves.*[2]

Time and time again Brady reverts to the religious nature of socialism, which he also refers to as :the religion of humanity". He quotes from the Bible to support this view (for example, from Matthew where Jesus gave certain edicts on labour and reqard) and to verify his conclusions that "Communism and Christianity are one and the same teaching". He cites the fact that the early Christians shared their belongings (Acts, chapters 4 and 5) and concludes that "Communism may therefore be accepted as a widespread revival of the Spirit of the early Christians". Any move towards socialism, therefore (which in, in his view, a move towards the objectives of the Labor Platform) was a step towards the reinstatement of the philosophy which the churches espoused but failed to put into practice. This trend therefore involved not only social and economic changes but also intellectual and moral ones. One "Scrutator" article in 1932 carried the bold headline: "State Election Saturday: The Voice of Labor is the Voice of God".[1] Brady urged, at every opportunity, a return to God and Christian principles as the only solution to men's troubles and in his own eyes and by his criteria he was more "religious" than the clerics themselves:

> *The idea of God it is highest expression is the idea of Good, the inspiration to righteousness, to peace and goodwill among men, to toleration, liberty of expression, cleanliness, order, progress, reciprocity, intellectual development, whatever is precious and permanent in social evolution.*[2]

And these noble sentiments were strongly endorsed by a religious periodical which considered that Brady had "struck a keynote" and concluded that man does indeed need to progress "to a far higher and wider conception both of Divinity and Humanity" and noted with approval the voices "within the churches and without them calling us up to the heights".[3]

But it should not be thought from all this that Brady was espousing the cause of organised religion. In fact just the opposite was true. He regarded that form of religion propagated by the churches as useless to man. He had early rejected both the Roman Catholicism of his mother and the Protestantism of his father, humanist, but never an orthodox religionist (or an atheist). Especially did he refute the churches' apathy and neglect of the effects of the economic hardships of the depression of the 1930's. He could be scathing on the subject, stating on one occasion that "I met a bishop once who might have been a Christian under more fortunate circumstances".[4] Long before the depression however he had used his pen to draw attention to the churches' neglect of the poor. Back in the 1890's he wrote verses about it:

> The Christ of the Cross, has he suffered in vain?
> *Was Calvary bought at the price of his pain,*
> *That Judas might sell it again, as he sold*
> *That Merciful Man for the sake of the gold*
> *We worship to-day in the Church and the street;*

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[2] "Psychology of Socialism", *The Red Objective.* Brady uses the terms "Socialism", "Communism" and "Collectivism" interchangeably, and equates these with the Labor doctrine in its pure form, when speaking or writing of its early socialistic aims and ideals.

[1] *The Labor Call,* 12.5.1932

[2] "The Way of Escape", *The Labor Call,* 30.3.1933.

[3] Unsigned article, "Getting Back to God", *The Commonweal,* 1.5.1933

[4] "What is Christianity?", *The Labor Call,* 10.9.1931

And hate one another, because it is meet
That the sweltering masses in penury toil
For the children of Judas to gloat on their spoil,
Forever and ever in silence and tears;
Like dumb driven cattle,
Like lash-driven cattle,
The workers toil on thro' the night of the years.[5]

The Christian gospel embodying the Golden Rule and the idea that "all men shall labour in harmony for the food of all" he accepted. But he saw neither capitalism nor the "decadent" churches fulfilling this ideal, nor attempting to do so. The only hope then was the socialism of the Labor Party:

> *This has nothing whatever to do with churchism Bring it down to economic finalities and you will find it expressed in the Socialistic Objective of the Australian Labor Platform – Christianity in essence, applied Christianity, practical Christianity and the one thing on that platform which will inspire the people and make this Commonwealth a happy and prosperous dwelling-place for a hundred millions – with the resources of nature and knowledge behind them and entirely free to worship any god, or none, as they please ... And if the Labor Movement, the Communist Movement and the Socialist Movement are not inspired by truly Christian intention, then I have misread religion, history and economics.*[1]

In fact, in making an examination along these lines, he concludes that socialism (communism) had a stronger Christian and philosophical ethic than most orthodox religions. Writing his conclusions about the moral effect of communism in 1931, Brady begins with the unequivocal statement that he is not a member of the Communist Party but seeing the progress made in Russia in reforming society he has a deep admiration for its good effects. "The seven deadly sins are pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth. Five of these at least are being practically combated by the Russian system".[2] He finds the collectivist structure being introduced into Russia vastly preferable to the competitive society where "thievery in a thousand forms is inherent". He considers that the relationship between producer and consumer under the old system immoral: "Between producer and consumer a mot demoralising series of robberies takes place, legalised to some extent, but still immoral and contrary to the teachings of true religion".

With the benefit of hindsight from the 1970's we might well question Brady's conclusions in regard to moral reformation and perhaps to collectivisation but from his viewpoint, with the Czarist despotism "buttressed by the Church, applauded by the Church, upheld by the Church" there was perhaps good reason for his optimism. But in placing his trust in communism to solve all the problems of society, Brady exhibits and ingenuous view both of communism and of modern society. He held this view however, throughout his life although he never joined the Communist Party. He gave his reasons for this refusal in an article in *The Union Voice.* He affirmed his agreement with a Darwinian, evolving kind of Christianity but rejected the orthodox version. "If I were a believing Christian, I would have to become a Communist…There would be no alternative in the mind of any sincere and reasoning person."[3] This is why he did not regard himself as a Christian Socialist. This why,

too, he attacked the tendency of the established church to decry Labor Party principles. He vehemently attacked this tendency in a front-page article in 1931. He saw this anti-Labor campaign as "abhorrent" and as "inconsistent and unseemly"[1] Reminding his readers that Jesus saw the multitude and had

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5 "The Birth of the Morn", *The Australian Workman,* 7.3.1891

1 "What is Christianity", *Labor Call,* 10.9.1931

2 "The Moral Effects of Communism", *The Labor Call,*12.2.1931

3 "Why I am Not A Communist: A Literary Laborite's Viewpoint", *The Union Voice*, 4.4.1931

1 "Priestly Politicians Who Attack the Workers : Wolves in Sheep's Clothing", *Labor Call* 5.3.1931. Earlier, Brady had approved a speech by Cardinal Moran because it "indicated to thinking laymen that the future attitude of the Church of Rome towards Labor and democratic progress will be conciliatory and progressive., *The Grip,* 21.5.1903

compassion on them, he charges the churches with lack of compassion. His vision includes the red flag being carried in the van by a working-man, following in the spirit of the Carpenter of Nazareth. But this was not always acceptable to Brady's readers, and he often wrote further articles explaining points brought out by correspondents in the columns of the *Labor Call*. Occasionally he did this by writing a letter to the editor himself,[2]

Two Brady characteristics which manifest themselves in more of these articles are a tendency to tell much of the story by headings and the use of an extravagance of language which makes the charge of propagandist easier to sustain. Writing of the war and its aftermath of economic depression for instance, an article blazons forth under the headings: "Blood Bath and Aftermath: The Curse of Cain: Can Hoover Cure the World?" and within this the language of the slogan:

> *Civilisation emerged from the dreadful blood-bath of 1914018 mutilated and groaning beneath a burden which the militarists, Monarchists, Capitalists, Moneylenders and Armament Kings laid upon its shoulders. That burden is the fruit of parricide, a crushing War Debt – Cain's Curse – which the nations find at last they cannot bear.*[3]

Such extravagance did little to aid the cool-headed analysis of conditions which Brady urged his readers to make. And in spite of the exuberance there is sometimes a cold-bloodedness, an irrationality about the articles he wrote. This was apparent in several calls for unity within the ranks of the Labor Party. Calling for re-emphasis of socialist principles within the party – the party which was seen as "the hope of the world", Brady wrote:

> *The time has come for the promotion of a straight-out Socialist Labor Party, and the sooner we get to that job the better. The Labor Press and probably a majority of the people are of a Socialist thought. The politicians must be forced into line or forced out altogether. It is of no consequence if a few heads fall into the basket in the process.*[4]

On another occasion, writing of this need for unity, he offered to throw his hat high in the air if he could see "Jack Lang and Jim Scullin and Ted Theodore on a public platform, shaking hands",[5]

The excess of emotion in much of his political writing Brady excused by pointing out that it was due to the Celt in him. "You get to the core of the Celtic character through the emotion rather than reason" he stated, but at times the emotional nature of his appeal leads one to question his sincerity. There is a pretentiousness and self-opinionatedness about this summary of Brady's socialistic credo but at the same time it gives an idea of the scope of his reading on the topic:

> Having a Heart and Mind, I can approach the subject of Socialism from a thousand points of view and by each and every one of them find justification for my convictions.. I am a militant Socialist because I want justice, liberty and fraternity among men. I am a Christian Socialist inasmuch as I desire to see established 'the Kingdom of God on earth". I am an industrial Socialist because I know that Labor produces all wealth, and the Socialism is based on economic certainty. I am a William Morris Socialist because art is something more than affectation, Marxian Socialist because true Science is truth, a Fabian Socialist because Socialism means enlightenment; a Bernard Shaw Socialist because style appeals to my literary instincts; an H.G. Wells Socialist inasmuch as I possess imagination, an Ibsen Socialist because I can see that the pillars of Society are unstable, a Bebel and Liebknecht Socialist because I love organisation and success; I am a Harry Holland and Rob Ross Socialist because I am a class-conscious Australian too. I am also an English-Irish, Scotch, American, French, Italian, Russian, Spanish and Japanese Socialist because I have no quarrel with the workers of these and other countries who will all, one day when I have gone down in the World's dust, stand together as brothers – united, in the Federation of the Human Race.[1]

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2 "Scrutator Explains", 23.7.1931
3 *Labor Call*, 16.7.1931
4 "The Doctrines of Force", *Labor Call,* 3.9.1931
5 "Captains Courageous: Lang and the Conference: Unity Now", *Labor Call, 25.6.1931*
1 "Why I Am a Socialist", *The International Socialist,* 27.8. 1910

While this type of proclamation (and there is much more of it), sounds like political electioneering, Brady's sincerity was borne out by his consistent attempts to put these ideals into practice. His undertaking of voluntary work in the Socialist and Labor Parties, his secretaryship, lecturing, speaking in the Domain, his writing and his revolutionary verse all point towards his sincerity in this regard. But this sincerity is somewhat shadowed by views expressed privately to Ross, then editor of The Socialist, *that the link between Socialism and Christianity might be only temporary. Professing himself to Ross as "a rationalist of agnostic temperament", Brady states it to be wise to dissociate the two propagandas for the time being. "If your try to cram atheism down the people's necks* along with the Socialist medicine *they will probably refuse both…So, comrade mine, agree with me that it is discreet at least, to keep the platforms separate."[2] This may have been a mere attempt to impress Ross as on all other occasions Brady espoused his version of Christianity as the principle behind the socialistic doctrine; and perhaps some orthodox Christians would regard this as having atheistic overtones. He considered the benevolent aspects of Christianity, Buddhism and Confucianism could be moulded into a new socialistic religion – a "religion of humanity – in which science, religion and philosophy would enable a "wisely just welding of spiritual and social altruism into common practice", with the aim of increasing the world's sum total of good through better organisation. The only recognisable godhead in this new age would be the Principle of Goodness";*

> By good personal deed, by good national deed and finally by good inter-racial deed the coming-to-be of a higher humanity is assured. The reconstruction of society on lines of equal opportunity is a first means to the end – progressive improvement, physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual will result.[1]

The manifestation os this new socialism would be a utopian society –one in which the fullest individual development would be possible. But this development was possible only in a social context. "Without the assistance of his fellows, man as an individual cannot save his Soul".[2] He needs the opportunity for altruism. Peace, forgiveness, simplicity and brotherhood would rule there. Since most human suffering was of human creation, and therefore preventible, it would be overcome by better planning, better organisation and living and better individual behaviour. Drugs and alcohol would not be needed as ways of escape in such a society. As each man's needs were to be met, crime would be minimised, if not eliminated, and this would be aided by genetic improvement through medical examinations before marriage. While many teachers from Aristotle on had emphasised the necessity for the individual to subjugate matter for the betterment of self, the new emphasis would be on the subjugation of matter for the mass of the people might lead to a levelling of talent, a submergence of individual genius, he saw such fear and desire for individual excellence as egotism. True genius could only come when a man lived not for himself but for others. The new society which Labor would create would ensure fullest individual expression – "Equal rights to natural opportunities". The "glittering aspirations of youth" would no longer be contained behind the bars of poverty and in the chains of lack, for society would guarantee the right of talent to be expressed for the common good. In short, he envisaged the scheme now functioning in the U.S.S.R. where young people talented in music, art, ballet, are enrolled in special schools from an early age where they are given a general curriculum and intensive specialist tuition in the art or skill being developed. The emphasis is not upon the development of the talent for individual glory but upon its use for the advantage of society. Talent is a social benefit, not a mere personal possession. The cultural fields are given attention comparable with the scientific and technological and this is the way Brady envisaged the society organised by socialist principles in this country. It was an essential part of his platform that conditions as they then existed for writers, poets and painters were against the ultimate national interest; that such expression must be within a more distinct social frame – the betterment of humanity as a whole.

It was plain to Brady too, that the greatest societies of the past had been great because of their human and cultural achievements, not because of merely material progress. So the Golden Age of Greece lives on in the minds of men while, on contrast, the Babylonian Empire, for all its splendour, contributed less to modern civilisation and culture and was therefore less great. Therefore it was obvious to him that if the Labor Movement was to live up to its highest ideals it must cater for man's physical considerations; but as well it was most important that it make provision for cultural and spiritual progress along with material achievement, if any lasting benefit was to be gained. Brady

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[2] Brady to Bob Ross, 18.8.1919, in National Library.

[1] *The Religion of Humanity* manuscript, p 21

[2] "Humanity", *The Australian Workman*, 10.10.1891

recalled, with much rhetoric, that so many of the cultural "greats" of the past – men like Omar, Aristotle, Jesus, Spinoza – were humble workers as well as great men. It was not to the hereditary princes of the world that we owe gratitude for gems of intellect and culture but to works who "sprang from the loins of the people, and while receiving but scanty renumeration and grudging recognition from established opulence, enriched humanity with the priceless heritage of genius"[1]

Recognising man's fear that greater power for work, He instanced the number of writers who were already socialists and invited others to give full consideration to the socialist platform, not for the material benefits which were likely to occur but for the idealistic and unselfish reasons given. In an emotional and rhetorical call to action he invited them to assist:

> Come and aid us in our work! Lay upon the altar of nationality, of freedom, of justice, the bright flowers of your intellect, even as we are laying the modest flowerets of our thoughts and efforts. Let us together build up a fabric of beauty and power which will shine among the monuments of Time, even as the name of Socrates shone above the dull names of the merchants of Athens![2]

As socialism had long been sympathetic towards culture, so he attempted to persuade the cultural section of the Australian society that the ideals and goals of their art were compatible with these wider aims and were thus worthy of their support and sympathy.

It is apparent that none of these ideas is really original nor is there anything especially controversial about the theoretical framework. Looking back however, from the point of view of an affluent society (in the main, and certainly in comparison with Brady's) it is easy to scorn them. Certainly social welfare is much further advanced now that it then was. And there is in some sense a greater political sophistication among nations to-day in the light of some of the experiences which have taken place in societies where a relatively pure form of socialism has been attempted. And it must be remembered that these ideas were reactionary, written as they were in the main, in a country in the depths of a recession and by a man to whom personal hardship was no stranger. Nor was this blending of science and humanism and religion by any means confined to Brady. There was a strong element of idealism in the society. Ministers discussed it from the pulpit. Newspaper editors wrote about it. Poets such as Francis Adams and Lawson sang of it. Politicians gave public speeches on the topic; W.M. Hughes and J.C. Watson were two.[3] *Series of articles were written in periodicals*[4] *and there is every reason to believe that it was a popular topic of discussion and argument in public and private. This vision of the ideal society comprised part of what Inglis Moore calls "The Great Australian Dream".*[5] *To the early promise of "Australia Felix" and Wentowroth's concept of a great new democratic nation and the view of a people "eager, and noble, and equal, and free" as seen by Charles Harpur*[6] *was added the utopianism of William Lane, the republicanism of Dunmore Lang and* The Bulletin *, the egalitarianism of Furphy and the democratic humanism of Lawson, O'Dowd, Mary Gilmore and countless minor poets. This was leavened by concepts of liberty, equality, fraternity from the French Revolution, by More's* Utopia *and the socialist teachings of Bellamy, Marx, Henry George, Tom Mann and Gronlund and the propagation of their ideas through the* Tocsin, *the* Boomerang, *the* Worker *and the* Barrier Truth,*which published* Rigby's Romance *in serial form where it served as a socialist text.*[1]

> The democratic activities and political progressiveness of townsmen, economic buoyancy, the religion of socialism, and an indigenous nationalist literature; all of these, then, served as determinants of a Utopian Dream. The force which fused them, however, was the major impulse of nationalism.[2]

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1 "Labor in Relation to Culture", *The Worker,* 6.5.1905, p.9.

2 "Labor in Relation to Culture", *The Worker,* 6.5.1905, p.9.

3 Watson, the first Labor Prime Minister, gave an address in 1904 to the Unitarian Church on Christian Socialism.

4 A series ran in *The Worker* in February and March 1905 written by Rev. Percy Dearmer, M.A. entitled" Christian Socialism: Practical Christianity". Brady himself addressed the Christian-Unitarian Church in Melbourne on at least one occasion. His address was printed in The Labor Call, 14.9.1933.

5 T. Inglis Moore, *Social Patterns in Australian Literature* (Sydney, 1971), Chapter XI.

6 "The Emigrant's Vision", *Poems* (Melbourne, 1883), p. 199.

1 R.G. Howarth (quoting Dr. Lloyd Ross) in "Foreword to New Edition" of Tom Collins (Joseph Furphy), *Rigby's Romance* (Sydney, 1946 ed, first published 1921), p. vii.

2 T. Inglis Moore, p. 284

Brady's social and political doctrine embodied these ideas; it was his very strong national sense and patriotism which gave them force as a personal creed for him, motivating his political activities and his writings and giving force and direction to his humanitarian and philanthropic impulses.

Perhaps as a necessary corollary of his socialistic views of Christianity, there was a strong element of anti-orthodoxy and anti-clericalism in Brady, particularly in the early stages of his political thought. So an early poem in Truth *questions the very existence of a God who could allow such sufferings and misery to exist as followed from the social inequalities of the day. After ironically quoting the plaintive "God is good" of the people as they are afflicted with various sufferings, he continues:*

> Oh, thou God, if God thou be'st, leave awhile thy realms of light;
> Come and see thy Creatures groping in the shadows of the night.
> Listen to the young ones wailing, watch their weary, aching sires
> With the grimy, sweat-stained faces stooping over furnace fires.
> Ere the sceptic passes from thee and thy flattered ear no more
> Hears the hymn of adulation swelling up from shore to shore,
> Oh thou God, if God thou be'st, leave awhile thy realms of light,
> In this age of dying systems, come and manifest Thy might
> Lest the world by Thought corrupted question much of Thine and Thee-
> And, instead of "God is gracious", whisper boldly "Liberty!".[3]

This must have been pretty heady reading to those who sought out Truth*. It was one thing to address the downtrodden and urge them to rebel; it was one thing to address the employers and urge them to wake up or have a revolution on their hands; but it was something else again to deliver an ultimatum to the Deity Himself, even to question his very existence. The blow was somewhat softened by Brady's use of the small-lettered "thee" and "thou" when referring to God at the beginning of the poem, while in the final address "Thee" and "Thy" are more respectfully used.*

Abuses of the clergy came in for attack – those "parsons who pose as both holy and just" and, in spite of upbraiding sinners, "will choir-maidens ruin to satisfy lust". He anathematised the hypocrisy of a minister who was charged with the setting up of a bogus building society to fleece the public to whom he preached probity and honesty on Sundays. He used his doggerel to give the accusation greater sting:

> I'm a pillar of the pulpit and my reason – I'll be frank –
> Is because I am the Chairman of a bogus building bank,
> For I read my little Bible, and I know that when I fail
> I can prove a reputation what will keep me out of gaol.[1]

Another tale of the same period told of a bishop who owned a ship called "The Gospel" and who made an agreement with the captain of "The Raven". The two ships were engaged in blackbirding – running kidnapped natives to the cities where they were sold as slaves. The pact ensured that "one should take the bodies – the other save the souls:".[2] These however, were extreme cases. In more general terms, Brady's main charge against orthodox, organised religion was that it preached words unfulfilled by practice and this of course was hypocrisy, which he detested as strongly as McCrae in "The Vision"[3] He charged the clergy as a body with apathy about the plight of the people; that this was anti-Christian in that it did not fulfil the command of Christ Jesus whose example and precept was to bind up the wounds of the poor. Nor had he any qualms about using Biblical references and quotations to slate the clergy:

These custodians of the Kingdom's gates, on whose heads the oil of sacerdotal unction has been officially poured, are choosing queer company on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, where a certain man – called Demos – has fallen among thieves. Like the Levite and the priest of old, they pass him by.[4]

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[3] "The Dying Age", *Truth,* 21.2.1892
[1] "Brother Snuffledust", *Bird-O'-Freedom,* 24.9.1892.
[2] "Blackbirding", *Bird-O'-Freedom,* 8.12.1894
[3] *The Bulletin*, 13.6.1907.
[4] "Priestly Politicians", *The Labor Call,* 5.7.1931, p. 1.

While this was, in effect, an anti-clerical attitude, it derived from an eagerness to achieve a more direct and practical sympathy with the worker in his plight which he considered religion should give and socialism would give. He was not objecting to the principle of religion but to failures in its practice brought about by a misconception of its essence and by human neglect, a neglect encouraged by the existing social system which judged on words and appearances rather than on practical achievements.

The effect of man's malfeasance and neglect, both religious and social, was often rendered vivid by the trick of contrasting what is and what might have been. For example the birth of the Australian continent, in all its beauty, contrasts with the use to which man has put it:

The moment came! and like to Love, thous rose at last
From sapphire seas, from pulseless sleep unknown and past,
Thou rose from where they lovely limbs had ages lain,
And woke – to hear the clanking of a convict's chain![5]

Man indeed has clearly not lived up to the highest ideals propounded by the founder of Christianity. Obviously he needed new guidelines for behaviour and a new spirit of willingness to put Christian ideals into more practical, demonstrable form. For Brady, socialism alone could supply both the spirit and the means of social and individual betterment. As he wrote in a front page article in The Labor Call:

> The emancipation of civilisation from the chains of wage slavery is our immediate mission. That selfish incentive can be changed to altruistic methods, we do not doubt. A life devoted to the service of Socialism is a life given to highest ideals. In this service students become teachers. Their Gospel is one of goodwill. It is a gospel of love and logic combined – reasonable, truthful and just.[1]

An essential instrument in this process of social amelioration was the community of spirit of common men, the solidarity of those who earned their living by the sale of their labour to others. The best expression of this spirit was unionism; it was the only means of defence against exploitation and hardship. Not only had Brady established a union (for warehousemen and clerical workers) but he wrote about the principles of unionism, its necessities and advantages, on many occasions. He believed that every person had a right and a duty to join a union because the basic concept of unionism, like that of socialism as a whole, is basically altruistic:

> One is no longer the miserable Ego, the selfish every-day sum of a narrowed existence, but a part of a supreme organism which is moving on to the silver-starred portals of a glowing Dream. No man can be truly contented until he ceases to live self alone. No nation, no race, can ever be truly happy until the individuals of which it is constituted exist each for all and all for each.[2]

He gathered points of view on this topic from many sources. He began a series on "The Rise and Progress of Trades-Unionism in New South Wales" in The Australian Workman,*[3] but the paper ceased publication before it developed past the first instalment. One extract from Tom Mann which Brady republished stated that the function of a union was to be more than just a wage-regulating machine; it should be for working-man the most valuable of all institutions for gathering knowledge, for imparting information and for discussion of matters connected with Labor which require constant attention and upon which the success of the cause depends.[4]*

In his History of the A.W.U.[5] *W.G. Spence outlined the development of the union movement in response to the difficult conditions experienced particularly by the shearers and the miners of the 1870's and 1880's and the ready identification of workers with it; elsewhere he wrote:*

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5 "Australia's Awakening", *Truth*, 13.3.1892
1 "Blood Bath and Aftermath", 16.7.1931. p. 1.
2 "Humanity", *The Australian Workman,* 10.10.1891, p.1.
3 19.12.1891, p. 3.
4 "Value of a Trade Union". *The Australian Workman,* 5.9.1891, p. 2
5 Sydney, 1911, (1961)

> Unionism came to the bushmen as a religion.. It had in it that feeling of mateship which he understood already, and which always characterises the action of one 'white man' to another. Unionism extended the idea, so that a man's character was gauged by whether he stood true to Union rules of 'scabbed' it on his fellows. The man who never went back on his Union is honoured to-day as no other is honoured or respected. The man who fell once may be forgiven, but he is not fully trusted.[1]

The title of "mate" (or "comrade" as the socialists preferred) was synonymous with that of "brother". It is not hard to see then why Brady viewed a strong and active trade union movement as the most essential and effective weapon which the workers as a group could develop. He fully supported the association of mateship with its political ideal as portrayed by William Lane in his novel, The Workingman's Paradise.[2] *And part of the bond which united Brady, Quinn, Daley and Lawson was this shared belief in the unity of workers to present a solid front to the threats of exploiting employers. The unselfishness and self-sacrifice which mateship included, so well presented by Paterson's ballad, "How Gilbert Died", was completely in accord with Brady's conviction that a higher morality, whether regarded as social or religious, is necessary for the improvement of society. "The whole secret of the curse which lies at the root of all human misery is intense Egotism", he wrote. If the employers and those controlling the wealth and production of the nation would not voluntarily improve the conditions of their employees, then each man must submerge his individual well-being in the collective welfare and present a united front, through the unions, to force a more moral and Christian response from those in power. Similarly, planning of the economy and the distribution of production must be regulated for the food of society as a whole, not for the purpose of accumulating wealth for a favoured few. Unionism was an essential plank in the platform of both Labor and Socialism and Brady used every opportunity to urge the workers of the world to unite.*

In the 1880's and 1890's a great deal of racialism was evident in the periodicals and newspapers. The Bulletin *for instance, carried stories and topical paragraphs which showed Asiatics, aborigines and Kanakas in an unfavourable light, often introducing them only as the butts of humour or sarcasm. The need to protect Australia from the inroads of the Chinese, whose very industriousness made them a threat to the established social order, was stressed in editorials, articles and cartoons.[3] It is not surprising then to find this racial prejudice appearing in Brady's work, too. It is fair to say however, that even though he wrote many articles and verses on the necessity to keep Australia white, to keep out the Chinese and Japanese as well as the Syrian hawker and the Kanaka labourer, it is not merely on the colour of the skin that this exclusion is sought, but for economic reasons and for causes related to health and living conditions. It was a social prejudice but not really a racial one.*

On the one hand Brady deplores a policy which will allow natives (or any underprivileged class or race) to be exploited. He quotes a newspaper item which pointed out that aborigines are best controlled by flogging and finds this abhorrent in the extreme, especially as officialdom often turned a blind eye to the practice. There is little finesse but much point in the jingle which protests this practical but unhuman custom. Detailing how a native was tied to a tree with raw-hide "for the honour and the glory of Her Gracious Majesty" he then describes how he is beaten "till the heathen's back was broken and he perished in his guile". Then, with heavy-handed sarcasm, he tells how the supporters of this cruelty rejoice; it's "whoop for law and order, and the Empire and the Queen". He roundly condemns the Christian preachers who are silent before such treatment and leave the unfortunate to die while the perpetrators of this crime "howl for Magna Charta, and the flag we proudly fly".[1] Man's inhumanity to man indeed deserves such a protest.

One the one hand there is this kind of protest against oppression (and there are other clear instance of his strong feelings in favour of fair treatment for coloured peoples), but on the other there are many instances of prejudice. There are many jingles and paragraphs against the Chinese particularly. Edward Dyson might present them in his fiction as artful, deceitful and ever-anxious to take advantage of others, but Brady shows them as leprous, filthy in habits and living conditions and totally immoral. The Chinese might be religious in that they offered up prayers for the politicians who voted to allow

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1 W.G.. Spence, *Australia's Awakening* (Sydney, 1909), p. 78.

2 John Miller (William Lane), *The Workingman's Paradise: An Australian Labour Novel* (Sydney, 1892 (1948)).

3 B. Hornadge, *The Yellow Peril* (Dubbo, 1971) has collected many examples.

1 "Correcting the Native", *Bird-O'-Freedom,* 29.7.1893.

cheap labour into the country,[2] but the fact remains that they are presented as a source of opium, of fan-tan and other malicious forms of gambling and of prostitution in the ghettos they have formed in Sydney. So very early in his journalistic career Brady tells of a visit to "Chow-Town" accompanied by a policeman, and pulls out all the emotional stops:

> Presently we found ourselves treading the mazes of 'The Rocks'. Hereabouts the houses, balconyless, yardless, airless, comfortless and gaping in iniquity are packed and jammed together in narrow London-like lanes. Outside they appear dark, gloomy and forbidding; inside they are gay enough after a fashion and full of life that liveth and dreadeth to die. At the doors of these rockeries STAND SHAMELESS WOMEN who, with bare heads and arms akimbo freely invite the male passerby to accept the hot hospitality of vice.[3]

Going on to talk of the opium dens, pak-a-pu and fantan joints where mariners go with money and clothes and depart clad in the Evening News *or the* Echo, *he deplores the fact that good Australians are being "driven to the wall by the cheap dirty Syrian and Chow".[4] Brady was still campaigning for "Australia-for the Australians" in* The Labor Call *in the 1930's and in a* Bulletin *poem as late as 1947 protested how the voice of people such as himself is muted and warnings about the dangers of an open immigration policy are ignored. The poet in this verse shouted day and night "Get busy while the chance is/To make Australia white" but the result was "They buried him in quicklime/ And went on just the same." He instanced the negro question in America as an example of the kind of problem we would be inviting by such an open policy.*

> *The lesson that we, as Australians, are invited by the anti-color authorities to learn from the negro question in America, which has caused one great war and numberless troubles and anxieties for our American cousins, is that there must be no tampering with the color question, and whether in deference to the views of England we exclude Asiatics and the black race by a language test, or absolutely exclude them by law directly, there must be no possibility of them entering our Commonwealth.[1]*

Such directness is leavened at times with humour. The State Minister for Works urged that all new vessels of his department should have aboriginal names to preserve them as a recompense for the white man's taking away of their land. Humorously Brady suggests some tongue twisters ("Murrowolaroi" for a government punt; "Minyagoyigilla" ("Why weepest thou?") for a mud dredge) and comments:

> *In the history of the world's politics the eternal fitness of things has never been so well-expressed as in the large and liberal ideas of Mr. O'Sullivan, Minister for Culture and Works for the State of New South Wales. God Save the King![2]*

An examination of the editorials of *The Worker* during the editorship of Brady shows a wealth of subject matter and a vigour of style and approach so characteristic of the man. Housing for the working-man, closer settlement of the country to develop it and make more land available for those willing to work it, irrigation, cheaper rents, wage justice and countless other topics came in for discussion, each examined from the viewpoint of what is best for the common man, for the

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2 "The Coloured Curse", *Bird-O'-Freedom,* 1.10.1892
3 "Chow-Town", *Bird-O'-Freedom,* 23.3.1893
4 "The Asiatic Curse", *The Grip,* 30.9.1901
1 "Black Labor and Its Exclusion", *The Grip,* 24.10.1901
2 "O"Sullivan, The Nigger's Friend", *The Grip,* 13.1.1902

furtherance of the cause of Labor and for the manifestation of the socialistic and religious tenets which formed his credo. No punches are pulled in the process as the tone of this extract from an editorial shows:

> Since the last issue of The Worker appeared, Premier George Reid has put up the shutters of the Commonwealth law factory and joyously retired for a six or eight months' money-making vacation of full Government pay. During the recess, we are given to understand, Mr. Reid will devote himself to his legal practice in Sydney. The Worker devoutly hopes in the interest of Australian democracy that the Federal Premier, by accident, will find his practice so lucrative that he will decide to commit political hari-kiri at the end of the recess. [3]

In similarly colourful terms the Curruthers' Government is described by Brady as "composed of six lawyers and an accident"[4] and any politician who appears to put political machinations in place of the furthering of the interest of their constituents are generally lashed by his forceful tongue. George Reid, Henry Parkes and Dibbs all came in for their share of attention in an attempt to reveal what Brady considered to be hypocrisy or humbug. For example, foreseeing that the elections of 1895 would probably mean the cessation of public life for at least one of the trio, Brady wrote some verses, owing much to "Macbeth", in *The Sunday Times:*

First Witch –
Whilst the fire is burning, burning,
Round the steamy cauldron turning,
Steps and dances ever learning,
Dibbs and Reid and Hi.
……

Third Witch –
Keep the fire a-burning, burning,
Each has known the weary yearning,
For the spoils of public earning,
Reid and Parkes and I.
……

Chorus All –
Bubble, bubble, toil and trouble,
Boil, old cauldron, boil and bubble,
Bills and promises to stew,
Witches, we of age uncertain,
Howl and dance before the curtain,
Dam, Shickawgo, boo, boo-hoo!

The whole is entitled "When Shall We Three Meet Again?" and the accompanying illustration shows the three stout figures, clad in long, flowing robes, dancing around the boiling cauldron aptly labelled "Parliament".[1]

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[3] "In Recess", *The Worker,* 24.12.1904
[4] "Plastering the Wooden Leg", *The Worker*, 29.7.1905
[1] *The Sunday Times*, 21.7.1895

In his taking a popular news item and writing a jingle about it, Brady was following a custom made popular by *The Bulletin.* The practice was in line of descent in Australia from Robert Lowe's satirical verse (and William Forster's) in the *Atlas* in the 1840's, especially in their attacks upon Governor Gipps, Harpur, Kendall and Daley all wrote political satires and jingles and in *The Bulletin,* the art reached a fair degree of sophistication and impact. Brady's political verses usually showed the effects of hurried composition but they generally contained a sting which struck their designed target and left a barb embedded. They were usually humorous, but succeeded in deriding politicians, no matter to what party they belonged. Parkes, who had pretensions to being a scholar and a poet, was quick to make political capital when an item mentioned that George Reid had no knowledge of books or of English literature. Brady disliked Parkes even more than he did Reid and for once sided with the stouter politician. In heavy-handed ridicule, he wrote, in part:

> *So he hasn't read the ditty of the froggy on the loggy*
> *By the namby-pamby Parksey, put in metre weak and groggy,*
> *Or the startling tale of Stella on the mountaintop so high;*
> *Or the jagged Janey jingle by the Federation "Hi".*
> *Or that wicked, greedy Reidy who, to collar all the fame,*
> *Went playing with the Premiers at the Federation game.*
> *What a naughty, haughty fellow, he should spanked soundly be,*
> *Till he says his little lessons to his grandpa, "Eneree.*[2]

But it was not only politicians of the opposing party, which he derided, who came in for comment. The continual divisiveness of the Labor Party was satirised in the "The Political Crisis"[1] and the tendency of Labor candidates to forget their principles once elected to office was treated in jingle. Perhaps there was a bitter taste in Brady's mouth at his own defeat in the political arena or perhaps he was exercising what is coming to be recognised as a an Australian national habit, but all politicians were regarded cynically as men of expediency and hypocrites because of their political activities alone. This sardonic view of the political scene and its inhavitants contains elements which Professor Inglis Moore has examined. After recounting a story in which a Queensland waitress shows a complete lack of awe in the presence of a bishop, he comments:

> *The irreverence represents the Australian democrat insisting on his (or her) equality with all classes. It also represents, perhaps the convict mocking at the authorities of the system, the worker asserting his independence, the radical critical of the upper or wealthier classes, the Irishman with a chip on his shoulder defying the authorities, the realist reducing the pretensions of the might, and the bushman employing his own new scale of values in a new environment remote from the hierarchies of the old world.*[2]

Almost all of these elements are discernible in varying degree in Brady's personality and in his approach to his task as critic of the political scene. Certainly there is little idealism in his discussions of politicians and their efforts, although there were considerable achievements being made, such as Federation, industrial progress and

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2 "H.P.", *The Sunday Times, 10.2.1895*

1 *Bird-O'-Freedom,* 24.12.1892

2 *Social Patterns in Australian Literature* (Sydney, 1971), p 178

the female franchise which he himself had espoused on many occasions as an embodiment of the egalitarian principles in which he so firmly believed.

In the written expression of his political views, Brady often appealed to the principles of his cause and to the patriotism which he saw particularly inherent in the members of a young nation at a time when real nationalism was just making its presence felt and a sense of national identity was emerging, partly as a result of Australia's increasing involvement in world affairs and partly as a products of a national literature following upon Lawson, the bush balladists and the popular weeks production of *The Bulletin*. While it is a common view that Australian nationhood dates from the time when its soldiers first bore arms overseas, one must agree with Professor Greenwood when he writes of the period 1901-1914:

> *Australia had become a nation before its soldiers set foot on the beaches of Gallipoli ever if full awareness waited on the future. A developing national consciousness, seeking distinct forms of self-expression, and a social regenerative movement, utopian in impulse, inventive in means, equalitarian in conviction, gave shape and individuality to the period.*[3]

When the Government was stirring up patriotism by sponsoring a retrospective examination of the beginnings of land settlement as part of the Centenary celebrations, *The Bulletin*, in its centenary issue, argued that Australian history began not at Sydney Cove with Phillip but at Eureka with Lalor. Brady agreed with this, writing "The Flag of the South" as a commemoration of the Eureka Stockade. So popular did it become that it was set to music by a musician of the day, J.J. Bogle, and published in sheet-music form and, complete with music, in *Truth.*[1] It was the forerunner of quite a large number of his poems which were sung as ballads:

The flag of the South, when young Freedom has spread
Her fetterless wings o'er the homes we have made,
It shall burst from its folds where the 'rebels' lie dead
In their graves by the dust of Eureka Stockade.
So we march on, march on, like the heroes gone,
In the land where our children are growing;
Till its five stars shall gleam by the wild mountain stream
Where the winds of the wide West are blowing.

With his verses and prose writings about the sea, so obviously Australian in setting, language and character, Brady added a new dimension to our national identity. The concept of the Australian bush with its harshness, its mystery and its uniqueness of spirit was observably Australian; but now Australians could link this aspect with the sea and its ports which, as far as industry was concerned, demonstrated the interdependence of these national aspects. Unless the products of the bush could be sent to world markets their full benefit was never achieved. And the same ethos of mateship, industry, hardship and even romance were discernible here as well as in the bush; and as Australians, its workers were contributing to national prosperity along with those who produced the golden fleece.

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[3] G. Greenwood (ed.) *Australia: A Social and Political History* (Sydney, 1955) pp. 253-4
[1] 31.1.1892

If his pen could, by ridicule and satire, aid this process of achievement and national well-being, Brady was only too pleased to oblige. The range of subjects on which he expressed himself was enormous. An item in the news mentioned the fact that the Government was setting aside a special area for noxious trades, to assist the rest of the community to remain free of pollution. "The Owl" helpfully suggested many noxious trades for inclusion, at the same time providing a catalogue of some of the ills which afflicted his society. He suggested that the banker who lived on the cash of others, the insurance company dodging payment of legitimate claims, M.L.A's, temperance preachers, door-to-door book and sewing machine salesmen, grog-sellers, totes, promoters, syndicates sharps and many others – most still sounding surprisingly modern although this was written in 1892 – be declared noxious and separated from "clean" society. The whole list reads like a Gilbert and Sullivan catalogue song, but below the surface is a real concern, belying the levity and drawing attention to some undesirable facets of society.

Much of this topical verse is mere doggerel or jingle, making now claims whatever to being poetry, but it has, almost without exception, wit, bite, vigour and an obviously facile quality, this last characteristic borne out by its very quantity. Several pieces appeared in every issue of the *Bird-O'-Freedom, The Arrow, The worker* and *The Grip* for many years. And always there is the blatant irreverence, humour and good spirits. When Governor Duff was named as patron of the Zoo Brady sang, in part:

> *The tiger he wagged his tail for joy, the platypus dived with glee,*
> *The peacock whistled a royal stave and the ostrich climbed a tree.*
> *The elephant sang 'God Save the Queen' and "the British Grenadiers',*
> *To show his respect for royaltee, the crocodile flapped his ears.*[1]

No topical, especially political, event was free from this kind of attention, John Norton's court cases, General Booth's financial problems, George Reid's difficulties (he was often depicted as a lizard which changed colour daily), parliamentary practices and any public figure or occurrence was likely to be "sent up" – usually with an underlying serious purpose which made it seem all worthwhile, as well as good fun.

Although in favour of female franchise, Brady was strongly opposed to the movement then known as the "new woman" movement – a primitive forerunner of the Women's Liberation movement of our times. Extremely interested in the stability of society with a strong foundation on the basic family unit, he often wrote against the trend to take woman out of the home and allow here to work. He was old-fashioned, even then, in believing that her main contribution, in fact her sole contribution, was to be made in the home. He deplored women's smoking, wearing of unusual clothes (such as bloomers), bicycle riding and riding horse-back any other way than side-saddle. He looked ahead from the 1890's to 1929 to perceive a woman-dominated society with the ladies amusing themselves fighting and gossiping and unable to cope with a leisure gained by freedom from the home. Perhaps this is another example where the individual's freedom is recognised in principle only; coloured people and women were to be free only in theory!

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[1] "Duff at the Zoo", *Bird-O'-Freedom, 24.6.1893*

In a further attempt to improve the lot of the common man Brady campaigned in his various periodicals for a review of the law and legal practices. Perhaps because of his own experiences with the law, perhaps for more idealistic reasons, he wished to correct the tragic situations where the poor were deprived of justice by the high fees charged by lawyers. Making a plea in one light-hearted verse for a revision of the law to remove old-fashioned injustices, he is visited by a ghost who is able to solve every problem put to him – except one. When the poet asks when the laws of the land are to be reformed there is an unexpected response, for 'his spectral head dissolved in air, and then his arms and chest;/ And as I finished he had fled; he gave the query best!"[2] On another occasion, after describing the law in many unusual terms (A will-o'-the wispy, risky, crispy dummy of wigs and jaw"; "A twistable, gristable, irresistible thing with a holt in its maw") Brady concludes: "Oh! An excellent thing is the law, my friends, and excellent thing – to avoid!"[3]

Often Brady essayed to analyse his society in an attempt to better it. He saw one of the functions of the politician, the poet and the journalist was to make society more cohesive by warning against the dangerous divisive forces within it. In one verse he examines the different backgrounds, overt wants and likes, occupations and interests of the drinkers at a particular hotel. He attempts to show that the poet, being more observant than average men and more sensitive to people can reach out and help those whose moral inclinations and interests run counter to those of the majority. Migrant discontent because of non-assimilation forms the subject of "Ananias Australian" and that man is decried who attempts to be regarded as an Australian citizen while still regarding England as "home".[1] It is obvious that Brady favours a pluralistic society, one bound by common aims and ideals although expressed in a variety of ways; but one with a common body of attitudes such as altruism and mateship and a general concern for individual welfare. His interest in such social questions makes his light verse a catalogue of contemporary mores and events.

Brady's socialistic dogma placed great stress upon economic issues. They were central to his view of a society based upon equality and altruism. Although he never claimed to be an economist he contributed a considerable number of editorials and articles to the various journals on the topic. He claimed to have read Gresham, Keynes, Morgenthau, Vargas and "many other authorities on banking, finance, currency and exchange" and fully subscribed to the Marx-Fabian school of political economics. This acceptance of Marxian economic theory was an early development and remained the chief guideline for his economic discussions throughout the years. As early as 1891 he wrote in an editorial in *The Australian Workman*:

> *Those of us who have accepted the theories of the Marx-Fabian school of political economists, for example, say that the co-operative system of wealth production is about to succeed the competitive, and that individual ownership will, in the near future, be superseded by state ownership of the means of production and the machinery of industrial civilisation; that the selling labour for wages shall cease, and that there will be an end to rings, trusts,*

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2 "It Was a Spook", *The Sunday Times,* 3.3.1895

3 "The Law", *The Worker,* 25.2.1905. Another *Worker* poem (26.11.1904) presented a droll piece on the law in the vein of Coleridge's "The Ancient Mariner", calling it "The Ancient Litigant".

1 *The Bulletin*, 229.7.1909

> *monopolies, syndicates, corners, combinations, over-population and unemployment.*[2]

He saw the existing profit system as unconcerned with societal needs, as merely individualistic in an anti-social sense and therefore an "unmoral" force. Although presenting the Labor party-line in the *Workman* and the *Worker*, Brady seems to have given more attention to economic issues than the official platform suggested. Particularly in his "Scrutator" writings in the 1930's he emphasised them.

It will be recalled that Brady "Ghosted" two books on economic theory for Leslie Rubinstein as well as part of *Dreams and Realities.* It is not possible to say that he adopted Rubinstein's economic theories in their entirety, although it is likely But certainly his newspaper contributions show that he went all the way with Marxian economic theories, even to the espousal of the concept of complete nationalisation of the means of credit and exchange. Foreseeing the industrial uses of nuclear energy, he realised that controls of greatly increased capacities of production must be in hands where they would be used for the good of society as a whole, not retained for private profit alone.[3]

The Depression and its aftermath of suffering and insolvency seemed to verify all that the Marxists had written, or so Brady thought. Writing of this period he stated:

> *That unusual dislocation of industry, which has taken place during the last four years proves that the present system of production, distribution and exchange has ceased to function adequately to civilised requirements. As a result, we have endured commercial losses, financial failures and widespread unemployment on a colossal scale. These miseries and evils have attracted the attention of all thinking people to a problem which Society must solve – or perish.* [1]

Brady's solution was, as was his solution to most other problems, in co-operation – this time applied to finance and industry. The utopianism and idealism of his whole political philosophy spilled over into economic realms. Co-operative control of finance, meaning in this case State control of the banks and other financial institutions, was seen as "the one and only permanent remedy". This could only be achieved by a more rigid adherence of the Labor Party to its socialistic and original aims; by these means it would achieve "more in the next four years than in the last forty years", wrote Brady in 1931.[2] This nationalisation of the banks would be a beginning: "That is the Great First Step for the Feet of Aust5ralian Labor! The Initial Forward Movement towards Economic Emancipation"[3] And to prove his sincerity he joined one of the many Socialisation units which the Labor Party established to work towards this end. Again, he was motivated by the thought of the contrast between what Australia then was, and what she might be under more altruistic government and more socialistic controls.[4]

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[2] "Economic Change", 26.9.1891
[3] His foreword to Anderson, p.5
[1] Introduction to Rubins: *Depression and Its Cure.*
[2] "A World Wide Depression: Australia's Remedy", *The Labor Call,* 9.7.1931
[3] "A Good Year for Labor: March On", *The Labor Call,* 8.1.1931.
[4] Foreword to *Dreams and Realities.*

It is difficult, when looking at Brady's writings on political and economic matters, to know how many of these ideas are expressions of his own thoughts and how much is written merely because it was official policy and he was writing in a party periodical. He attempted to elucidate this question in a letter to *The Labor Call*:

> *Comrades, be assured that what I write in this journal is written of mine own inward convictions and desires for expression. I do not claim to be infallible.. What some people apparently fail to realise is the Industrial Civilisation has entered a phase when either the complete subjection of the working-class or its absolute supremacy must result…Personally, I am convinced that the theory of proletarian dictatorship, under a collectivist form of ownership, is logical, ultimate and just; but I am by no means certain of the method whereby it can be achieved…I have my own idiosyncrasies – one of which may be a curious conviction that if the daily bread of mankind is assured, the cultural or spiritual bread of mankind will also be assured, and for all future time…I remain a sort of Christian-Agnostic-Laborite.*[5]

In addition there is the evidence of his ideas and opinions on this topic as he expressed them in his letters to friends and in his manuscripts.

There is no doubt that Brady saw the Labor movement as the best and perhaps only means of achieving economic and spiritual liberation of the masses from the traditional class-structured, capitalistic domination in which they found themselves. While hoping that this amelioration would come about by evolutionary and educational means and as a result of successes at democratically controlled elections, in his less guarded moments his did not rule out the possibility of force and revolution if all other methods failed. But he had also leaned that revolution and anarchy were not the effective answer – men's hearts and minds had to be changed, and he placed his hope in indoctrination and political processes. Referring to a militant poem, "The Vision of Anarchy" which he wrote in 1890, he confided to Muir Holburn that it was "crude and ferocious" and continued:

> *Why I escaped the hangman round that time I don't know. Maybe there <u>is</u> a God and if so, he must be a Bolshevik. After witnessing a double execution at Darlinghust gaol, I damped down the revolutionary fires that were consuming my young heart, sub-edited myself and gave anarchy a wide berth.*[1]

In spite of his diatribes against the established powers and his rabble-rousing, some this at least, being due to his own sheet ebullience, there is no real evidence that he advocated force in any foreseeable circumstance, although he did cite the events of the 1930's in Italy, Germany, Poland and Russia as evidence that in some societies force alone was the solution. His main concern was to avert the "dehumanisation" of the people, many of whom were little better than slaves in their necessity for complete obedience to sometimes-unreasonable masters, where Brady considered should be lords of their own circumstances. His scientific knowledge, as well as his visionary sense, informed him that the resources of the world were sufficient for all its inhabitants provided they were efficiently distributed. And so he asked readers of Anderson's book to consolidate their knowledge and consider seriously his arguments

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5 "Scrutator in Explanation", *The Labor Call*, 31.8.1933.

1 Brady to Muir and Marjorie Holburn, 21.8.1944, in Mitchell Library.

at at time "when nervous urge for acquisition, for power, for money, for all the more selfish, but less important gains of human existence are affecting nations and individuals alike".

To give Brady his due, amid the hurley-burley of slogan and propaganda, the in-fighting and back-scratching, he saw through the material benefits Labor policies would bring the workers, beyond the practical and urgent vista of food, employment and financial stability to the vision of a spirit relieved from oppression and restriction. He put it quite simple in and article in *The Worker*:

> *The scope of this great humanitarian renaissance is not the providing of food and clothing and dwelling alone. It is for the sake of the soul of man as well as for his bodily food that the social-democrat labors and suffers – not all in vain. To offer opportunity for genius; to foster the arts; to place upon the sensitive border of poetry a crown of laurel innocent of thorns; to be the Maecenas of science and philosophy – these are to me as much the obligations of the movement towards humanity as the providing for everyday human wants and requirements.*[2]

This is the vision of an idealist, a statesman, a philanthropist, a humanist and above all a patriot. That he worked towards this ideal and helped further it, perhaps not very spectacularly but with vision and perseverance, is to Brady's credit.

In many ways his vision of a socialistic utopia of Labor was similar to William Lane's, whose early editorial in *The Worker's* predecessor, *The Hummer,* proclaimed that socialism was mateship. "I am sure," Lane wrote, "that Socialism – true Socialism – will destroy tyranny and make men what they should be – mates."[1] Sharing Lane's vision but lacking his fervour, his dynamism, singleness os purpose and directness of action, Brady yet contributed in some measure to Labor's advancement. Through his writing, lecturing, and constant propagating of Labor theories he aided its progress from what he himself described as the "Era of the Martyrs" to the "Epoch of the Conquerors".

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[2] "Labor in Relation to Culture". *The Worker*, 6.5.1905

[1] 16.1.19892. It was quoted with approval by R.J. Cassidy in his "Notable *Worker* Contributors" in a special supplement, 4.2.1942. It was also included in a letter, Brady to Cassidy, 1.8.1911, in National Library.

Chapter Four – Utopian theories and co-operative experiments

"Beneath the waving willow, where golden gudgeons cast
Dim shadows underneath them as white clouds drifted past,
There came to me a vision … For that, through all my days
In gratitude, in homage, what gods may be, I praise."

Brady, "Inspiration"

There was always an idealist-utopian-romantic element in Brady's thought; it accounted for the romanticism in his poetry, for his involvement in socialistic activities, for his emphasis on nature as a benevolent environment and force and for his interest in theoretical solutions to the economic problems of his society. He often attempted to analyse the source of this utopianism, surmising at one stage that it had its origins way back in ancestral tribal activities; memory of these occurs in every society and in some form is recapitulated in its experiences. This theory of racial recapitulation agrees with the theories of G. Stanley Hall and Jung. For Brady this concept meant that the sharing of food-gathering and distribution which was once tribal custom should be re-instated if the basic function of society is to be restored and made to operate harmoniously. The fact that the early Christians under Peter adhered to the practice of pooling their resources and sharing them according to individual needs as part of their teaching of "other-worldism" reinforced his views but left him undecided as to whether collectivism (which he equates with utopianism) is a product of man's innate gregarious instincts or "born of the Higher Spirit". Whatever its source however, it was a dominant preoccupation of Brady throughout his life; he thought and wrote much about it, examined attempts to put it into practice and was himself associated with one such experiment. For him, the sharing of food and clothing and the commonality of land and housing meant a society living in "equality, liberty and peace".[1]

As a Catholic early in life, Brady always betrayed a special interest in the monastic organisations of the church which were largely communal in regard to property, labour and ideals, yet he could never reconcile these practices with the paradoxical

[1] *Utopias Ltd.*, an unpublished work in two volumes of Brady's writings, letters and newspaper cuttings on utopian theories and experiments, collated in 1950 but containing material from the previous century onwards. It is held by the Mitchell Library.

Papal opposition to Utopian Christianity (Anabaptisms) in Bohemia and other parts of Europe. In the field of religion, he considered the Quakers came closest to his ideal in this regard, likening William Lane to a Quaker or a Mormon rather than a socialist, though he considered Lane "always lacked the racial tolerance displayed by the Society of Friends." But in his rejection of orthodox religion, Brady yet retained what he regarded as its basic ideals, and among these he regarded collectivism as an essential.

Long before he had read Marx and Engels, Bellamy, Owen and Morris, he had read and pondered More's *Utopia*. He regarded More's society as "rational and humane" (two important criteria for Brady) and considered his book "one of the most noticeable books in literature", adding significantly that "it is not too much to say that it has been the fictional parent of much social experiment".[2] There is a strong possibility that Brady, having read More initially early in life, was preoccupied with the utopian ideal before the events of the Maritime Strike propelled him into active membership of the Socialist and Labor movements.

In pursuit of this interest, Brady had made a study of early attempts at the establishment of co-operative societies, his researches on several of these being summarised in *Utopias Ltd.*. He considered the settlement of Mission and Caraccioli in Madagascar in the seventeenth century came very close to success in putting the collectivist ideal into practice, before tribal attacks wiped it out. He was also impressed by the Jewish experiments, the communal settlement at Civat Hain impressing him and emphasising the importance of the religious aspect in the evolution of the ideal. Closer to home, he had visited the New Italy settlement, established on co-operative lines between Grafton and Lismore, when on his wagon trip to Townsville in 1899, and again in 1902 and 1903 when he lived at Grafton. He saw a practical demonstration of the feasibility of the concept here among Italian migrants.

Always interested in the country of his ancestry, he had made a detailed study also of an early communal settlement in Eire, where at Ralahine, Colonel John Scott-Vandaleur, a relative of the family, as a reaction against social unrest caused by poor conditions and low wages and influenced by the writings of Robert Owen and William Thompson, decided to turn his six-hundred acre property into a co-operative. Robert Owen himself visited this practical experiment. Brady went to the trouble of securing a copy of the Rules of the Ralahine Agricultural and Manufacturing Co-operative Society to study, concluding that they were admirably suited to further the desired establishment.[1] Unfortunately, Vandaleur gambled himself into debt and fled to America in 1833, whereupon the fledgling venture collapsed.

In all of these cases, Brady concluded that the basic concept was sound but that circumstances external to the experiment had caused failure. He saw the basic ideal not only as untarnished but still basically untried. His case for this viewpoint was further strengthened when he made a close examination of a failure much closer to him – that of William Lane's "New Australia" settlement in Paraguay. Brady had met Lane in 1891. He found him to have been influenced by Gronlund, Bellamy, Morris and the Fabians rather than by Marx. Also, Lane had studied Owen and

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[2] *Utopias Ltd.*, p.3
[1] *Utopias Ltd.*, pp. 19-21.

Thompson and knew about the Ralahine experiment. He had a great admiration for Francis Adams' verses, admired Olive Shreiner and Flaubert. Brady was impressed:

> *I looked upon him as a selfless, dyed-in-the-wool revolutionary at first; but I was destined to change my opinion within two or three years. At the time of our first meeting, William Lane was the accepted 'spiritual leader' of the Australian Labor Movement. He was a visionary; he had this utopian complex; he had knowledge, culture and persuasive gifts of tongue and pen – and he could sway men and enthuse women. Militant leaders of unionism were prepared to follow him anywhere. Moderates held his opinions in high esteem and wished to implement his ideas, peacefully.*[2]

Brady was friendly with the whole Lane family, having a life-long correspondence with Ernest. His friendship with William became rather strained however, when he did his best to persuade Creo Stanley, in whom Brady was romantically interested (and whom he later married) to go to Paraguay. Not accepting a negative answer, Lane pestered her, sometimes late at night. Brady ruefully wrote later that he wished she *had* joined Lane's movement (or married William Holman, who was one of her admirers). He tried to dissuade Lane from leaving Australia, not because he was opposed to the idea of the settlement, but because he considered it would have much more chance of success here in Australia. As Brady wrote in the *Sunday Times*, it was "based on impossibility, raised on difficulty and would be completed in disaster"[1] Lane, however, was not convinced and the result is history – a history well told in Gavin Souter's *A Peculiar People.* Without the benefit of this objective account of the settlement, Brady put his finger on the reasons for failure:

> *Reading over the literature of the Association today, one is struck by the note of childishness, of juvenile faith and trust which run through it. One can see that it is the output of an enthusiasm which sets aside the hard realities of human life. It depends upon the continued goodwill of the individual. It does not take into consideration the fact that a community reared in a system of compulsion and command must still be regimented if it is to hold together……*
> *Many such utopias have failed – not because human nature is incapable of adapting itself to communal conditions, but for reason of the fact that in any social form, <u>control</u> or <u>direction</u> is necessary. The first duty of the community is to provide a way of life. The second to ensure that process, once established, is not interrupted by individual action or desire……*
> *Mateship is a very vague and unreliable sentiment on which to build a new world. Carried away by its poetic phrases, people will weep tears of love and benevolence. When it comes to putting themselves aside for others, they snarl like the caveman who clubbed his neighbour for stealing a bone.*[2]

Although this is an obvious over-simplification of the problems of the situation, so much so that it is ironical that his own experiences should show that he had not learned much from Lane's failure. In all his theorising, he came close to the basic

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[2] *Utopias Ltd.*, p. 5.
[1] 16.7.1893
[2] *Utopias Ltd.*, p.13.

> weakness of the co-operative system, but lacked the clarity of perception and practicality to put past failures to work to ensure success for himself.

Soon after Brady discovered the paradise of Mallacoota, he began to circulate amongst his friends the idea that it would be an ideal place in which the creative processes could find expression; he suggested informally the setting up of a co-operative literary and artistic centre, much to Hugh McCrae's amusement.[3] Nothing came of this, but many years later he became associated in a very real way with a co-operative scheme which had its genesis in an article written by Leslie Burch in *The Labor Call* early in 1932. A Victorian socialist and friend, Will Craig, drew Brady's attention to the article, knowing of his great interest in the subject, but this act was entirely unnecessary, as Brady had written for this Labor journal for many years and always read it. As a result of this article Brady contacted Burch, agreeing to assist the scheme by making land available from his holdings at Mallacoota and lending his full moral and practical support. In attempting to analyse his motives, Brady later wrote:

> *Although I believed that man would never reach that Himalayan height of virtue where he would answer a crack on the jaw by turning the other jaw to his enemy; although I realised that on the social highway there was a Utopian failure for every milestone, the conditions of 1932-3 so weighed upon me that I lent myself to a Community Farm Scheme, wherein a little knot of enthusiasts fondly dreamed might be found a solution to the Unemployment Problem.*[4]

He pondered the unemployment figures and realised that towards the end of 1932, of a Victorian population of 1,800,000 over 604,000 were receiving state assistance, at a time when savage punishments were being meted out by the courts for anyone found collecting assistance unless qualified by unemployment. He had himself experienced the effects of financial rigour, even though in his case the products of his farm cushioned the impact.

It appears to be a case of oversimplification of Brady's motives to accept this word, written with the advantages of hindsight. Undoubtedly he was concerned with unemployment, his whole life showing his concern or the workers in his society, and he points out that as a member of the "old Bush" he never turned away a wanderer from his door, though many strayed from Sydney to Melbourne routes in search of work or succour. He was, as has been demonstrated, captivated by the co-operative concept and the possibility of putting his socialistic and collectivistic ideals into practice. But there is no doubt also, that some of his motives were less noble. He had a flamboyant side to his character, readily seizing any occasion to make a grand gesture. The publicity would do a "noted author" in his position only good. He enjoyed the experience of philanthropy. In addition, he had more land than he needed, the local Lands Department representative was always keeping an eye on him to see that the conditions of his lease were observed and this meant the time-consuming task of controlling rabbits and noxious weeds such as the prolific blackberry. It is not unreasonable to assume, then, that Brady offered his services with a mixture of unselfishness and completely understandable self-interest. Further, he had just been reading Elbert Hubbard's "Roycroft"scheme where a rural printery

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[3] See page… (367 original ms)

[4] *Utopias Ltd.*, p.22.

and cultural centre had been established. He had been discussing this centre with Craig when Burch's letter arrived.

Leslie Burch was a designer and builder of Northcote and Benalla (and Brady thought that he had once been an Anglican clergyman), a delegate to the central committee of the Australian Labor arty and a member of the Central Unemployed Committee. His original plan for the relief of the unemployed had envisaged Kinglake near Melbourne, as a likely area of settlement, but he readily acceded to Brady's suggestion for the use of the Mallacoota sire, his only reservation being about the transport because of the distance from Melbourne.[1]

Brady immediately began to use his political friendships to get the scheme under way. He wrote to Tom Tunnecliffe, who was Chief Secretary and Acting Premier as well as his friend, asking for his support and arranging a meeting between him and Burch. Brady himself went to Melbourne from Mallacoota to form a committee "to supervise and direct the scheme".

Although giving tacit approval of the principle, the Government did not five the plan any great practical support or encouragement. Burch wrote to Brady concerning an interview he had had with Bailey, the Minister for Lands, who wished to accept the land offered but stated his intention of making it available to general application, to to those selected by the committee. Further, Bailey was quoted in the Melbourne *Age* as claiming to be the author of the scheme and its main moving force,[1] while Brady cried "plagiarism" to all who would listen.

Brady's position in regard to the co-operative settlement was made clear in a letter to Tunnecliffe which made four main points:

1. While he expected no personal advantage from the scheme, he was, Brady wrote, "in sympathy with the idea of Community Farming as one way to relieve unemployment".
2. Brady was prepared to "allocate and alienate" nine hundred acres to the group "for the purpose of a Co-operative holding, free of control or outside interference and as their own collectivist possession <u>in perpetuum.</u>"
3. In addition, Brady was willing to make a loan to the groups of an area of twenty-four acres (later increased to sixty) of ready-cleared land upon which to grow vegetables and subsistence crops while the larger area was being brought under control, together with the necessary tools and equipment, and to grant access and cutting rights to any timber needed for buildings or fencing.
4. The group could, at all times, be assured of Brady's support provided it adhered to Collectivist principles in which it proposed "to base its activities and efforts".[2] Brady also pointed out to Tunnecliffe that the Government could best help by giving its approval, by providing sustenance to the group's members until they became self-supporting and by lending plant and equipment for clearing the land for building. He also arranged for Allan Taylor and Co., owners of the coastal freighter "Glenreagh", to ship out the

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[1] Burch expressed this doubt to Brady in a letter, 27.2.1932, in Mitchell Library.

[1] 5.3.1932

[2] 24.3.1932, in Mitchell Library

timber which the group would cut. He pledged himself also to rally what support he could from other political friends and allies.

When the Government received an unfavourable report from a Lands Department inspector whom it had sent to examine the area of the proposed settlement, and when a few fringe followers of the scheme wanted to by-pass the Government altogether, the acceptance of the proposal hung in the balance. The wily Burch however, bought a copy of Tunnecliffe's book, *Successful Socialism,* and quoted to its author certain relevant passages, including one which said that "each new triumph of collectivism is another nail I n the coffin of individualism". However, the reigning party was soon replaced and in a letter to the new Premier of Victoria, Sir Stanley Argyle,[3] and to the new Minister for Lands and Forests,[4] Burch re-summarised the whole scheme, pointing out that although initially only a few families would be involved, it was hoped ultimately to settle thirty or forty families on the area.

Meanwhile Brady was still enlisting support. He gained encouragement from Earle Page[5] and from E.G. Theodore, to whom Brady averred: " I am very serious about this community farming idea, and trust that you will take an interest in it and give it whatever assistance you can".[6] He also wrote letters to newspaper editors (many of whom he knew personally) enlisting their editorial support, made radio broadcasts,[1] and to neutralise the unfavourable report of the Lands Department inspector, hired an agronomist with certified qualifications to make an independent (and favourable) report on the production capacity of the land. In addition he organised a petition of the neighbouring farmers and townspeople at Mallacoota to state that they regarded the project with approval, that they had proof of the productivity of the soil, and that they would welcome the newcomers.

The upshot of all this activity was that the Unemployment Association of the city of Brighton gave support, the Government agreed to grant sustenance to the settlers as requested, the Victorian State Relief Committee supplied work clothes and foodstuff (450lbs flour, 40lbs tea, 50lbs oatmeal, 112lbs sultanas and 44 tins jam) and the initial party left Melbourne for Mallacoota on 8th August, 1932. This party consisted of six men, specially selected because of their previous experience on the land, whose families were to follow later when accommodation had been constructed. By the end of the next month there were fifteen men on the Mallacoota Community Farm engaged in planting vegetables and fodder, cutting timber for palings and sleepers, building shelters for their families and clearing the scrub to enable large-scale cultivation of crops. Each man had been approved by the selection committee in Melbourne after filling the required Application Form, had agreed to abide by the decisions of a two-thirds majority of settlers, accepted probationary membership for six months with a ballot at the end of this period to ensure permanence, and had signed the Articles of Association of the Co-operative.[2]

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3 17.3.1932, in Mitchell Library
4 20.5.1932, in Mitchell Library
5 Page to Brady, 19.7.1932, in Mitchell Library
6 Brady to Theodore, 11.7.1932, in Mitchell Library
1 "This wonderful Age", broadcast over 3KZ, 22.5.1932 and reported in *The Labor Call*, 16.6.1932. Stressing the mateship in such a scheme, he invited the support of his listeners
2 See appendices for copies of these.

Burch lived at Mallacoota from the arrival of the original group and was in charge throughout, with the title of Executive Officer. His job was to put into practice the general principles laid down by the organising committee back in Melbourne, of which Brady was the chief member. Its planning had been quite thorough, even to the adoption of a theory of Infant Education – a scheme for an activity school along the lines of John Dewey's theories, proposed by Dorothy J. Alexander of Armadale, Victoria.[3] Daylight saving was introduced to give an extra hour of possible working time for the farmers.[4]

The workers in the co-operative were allocated to various groups according to their previous experience – Transport and Mechanical Group, Field Group, Gardens and Horticulture, Building and Cookery Groups – each of which had to make a weekly report of plans, progress and difficulties to the Executive Officer who in turn reported back to the regular meetings of members and who submitted a monthly report to the committee in Melbourne.

The Mallacoota Community Farm, in spite of the special letterhead on the stationery Brady had designed for it, had a short life, yet not a particularly merry one. After the initial activities of August, only a couple of months elapsed until the first resignations in October. By the end of October six members had resigned. Each man who left was interviewed by Burch and where possible by the Melbourne Committee. Burch's monthly report for October lists some of the reasons given for the men's discontent.

Some of the men claimed the tasks set them were impossible. They accused the Organising Committee in Melbourne of failing to supply enough seed to plant to make the community self-sufficient in the foreseeable future. They saw no prospect whatever of a dividend being paid for at least twelve months. They deemed the land unsatisfactory for much of it had to be cleared of blackberries and scrub before cultivation could be undertaken.

Secondly, several men resigned because they felt that once initial resignations had begun, they would increase in number and so lead to the automatic failure of the project.

Having included these statements in the report which he sent to the Melbourne Committee,[1] Burch commented that his interviews with these men "brings the conviction that these are merely specious excuses, brought forward to cloak their true motives". He considered that the real reasons for the resignations were lack of moral courage and understanding of the principles of the scheme, gullibility on the part of those who believed the stories circulated by the first men to resign, and the fact that the men missed their families more than they had expected, yet lacked the effort to supply the accommodation necessary to bring them there. Although he agreed there had been a shortage of seed, Burch maintained that this was not a pressing difficulty, as good itself was plentiful. He also pointed out that Brady had lent the group a large quantity of equipment – a blacksmith's shop, separators, incubators, churns, saws and much machinery and thus there was no real equipment shortage.

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[3] The outline of this scheme is in *Utopias Ltd.*, Vol. 2, in Mitchell Library

[4] Burch to Brady, 3.11.1932, in Mitchell Library.

[1] 31.10.1932, in *Utopias Ltd*., Vol 2.

In regard to the clash of personalities mentioned as reason for resignation, there is some ground to suspect that part of this was Burch's own fault. He had earlier written to Brady[2] that he suspected a plot to depose him had been hatched during his brief absence in Melbourne. Illicit "borrowings" from the stores by a couple of men was to Burch "sabotage" and when Cameron used Brady's truck without Burch's permission the resultant furore caused Cameron to attempt inciting the men to walk out; he was unable, however, to muster sufficient support and the storm blew over. Furthermore Burch died not get along well with Brady's family at Mallacoota House. Mrs. Luckin's, Brady's daughter, sold fruit from the orchard rather than let the farmers of the co-operative have it, let her cows eat the settlers' garden, refused to sell them milk and so on.[3] While Burch was not popular there with the family, the men whom he regarded as "saboteurs" were well received and he imagined much slander being spoken behind his back. All-in-all, the personality clashes seemed to cause most dissatisfaction and the greatest interference with the community's smooth operation.

By the end of November two more had resigned, further weakening the over-extended labour resources. These were depleted still more by the fact that some of the employees of the farm took outside work, such as potato-digging or pea-picking at three shillings a bag to get extra money; they thought this should be their own while Burch considered that it should go into common funds

The internal problems of the community continued unabated. The men were not allowed to buy tobacco on their sustenance tickets from the local store, causing grumbling and complaint. When a store-keeper did supply this he was black-listed for three months. The local farmers, who called the settlement "Little Russia", were sympathetic towards it, but Mr. And Mrs. Luckins disputed ownership of the produce from the cleared land which Brady had offered the group as a temporary measure until the larger areas were cleared and proved productive. This caused constant bickering and ill-feeling.

The community affairs staggered along in this parlous state until March 1933 when Burch resigned and the scheme collapsed completely. Burch wrote to Brady, more in sorrow that defeat:

> *In view of the adverse position of the establishment, which is largely to the lack of manpower, and lack of agricultural experience in remaining members, I have decided, after consultation with Comrade Smyth, to recommend that the Mallacoota Community Farm insofar as this location is concerned, be wound forthwith. It is with regret that I hereby tender my resignation as \executive Officer. I remain convinced that our ideal is capable of achievement, but drastic revision of methods of selection and procedure will have to be made before undertaking any further experiment, which I am determined to do and which I hope for your continued support and co-operation.*[1]

At the same time Burch surrendered to Brady the leases which the group had taken over from him at an annual rental.

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[2] Burch to Brady, 29.12.1932
[3] Burch to Brady, 29.12.1932, in National Library
[1] Burch to Brady, 9.3.1933, in Mitchell Library.

Brady's reaction was bitter, as perhaps could be foretold. This was an affront of fortune both to his theories and his pride. In a reply to a letter from three men who had resigned from the co-operative, Brady wrote:

> *The reports and statements which I have received from various sources compel me to conclude that the scheme is a failure, but as to what or to whom the blame, if any, is to be attributed, I confess, in view of the contradictory nature of these reports and statements (and my absence from the seat of the troubles) I am unable to determine.*[2]

These three men had earlier complained that Burch did not do his share of physical labour and protested against Burch's plea that "outside" earnings should be contributed to the common purse.[3] However it was originally, planned that Burch was merely to launch the venture and that another socialist, Harry Cameron, was to take over its administration while Burch returned to Melbourne to assist in the enrolment and organisation of more recruits. It was never intended that Butch was to be an ordinary member; his enthusiasm led him to stay on to give the little settlement the best chance of success, but to no avail. He no doubt strongly agreed with Brady in his letter to the three ment when he said it was a matter of "profound regret" to him, as to the other participants, that "some measure of success did not result from out personal sacrifices and endeavours".

Brady further grumbled that the areas leased by the co-operative had shown a rapid growth of blackberries and rabbits which he was bound by law to eradicate, and that his borrowed equipment and his fences had been left in a state of neglect. This thought, whether true or not, exacerbated his own disappointment and disillusionment that his ideal had not proved capable of practical achievement in this instance. He blamed Burch" "Pity of it all was that like other intellectuals, he lacked the force and determination without which leadership is not lasting".[1] But Burch had never claimed to be an intellectual; nor were his sincerity and enthusiasm ever in doubt. Perhaps he did lack qualities of leadership, being rather too suspicious of his own men, but he did his best; perhaps the deficiency was Brady's for not ensuring that Burch returned to Melbourne as planned and that Cameron replaced him.

Brady also hit out at the men, castigating them as a "ham-fisted crowd that would have done better under a bucko mate of the sailing-ship type"[2] and above all, made immoderate statements to the newspaper representative who interviewed him. He was quoted in the *Melbourne Herald*[3] and in the *Sunday Sun and Guardian* as stating that while he agreed with Upton Sinclair on the desirability of a peaceful solution to all social problems, he was convinced that Australia' economic problems could be solved only by "either Fascist control with machine-guns or Communist control with machine-guns and rifles".[4] He pointed out, more moderately, to the *Argus* that as well as leaving him with a fine crop of rabbits and blackberries, he had received "another

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2 Brady to Lee, Ross and Newby, 13.3.1933, in Mitchell Library.
3 Burch to Brady, 24.2.1933, in Mitchell Library
1 Brady's comments in *Utopias Ltd., Vol 2, p.23.*
2 Ibid
3 19.6.1933
4 18.6.1933

disappointment to add to my accumulated disillusionments",[5] especially as only four men remained on the farm at the end, of the sixteen who had enrolled as members. He added rather scornfully that none of the men had worked as hade as the voluntary, isolated Gippsland settlers, meaning probably, himself.

It was well for Brady, on looking back upon the experiment, to write:

> *I was in the position that the scheme was originally Burch's not mine. The Committee in Melbourne looked to him to carry the thing through. All his letters to me were read at our weekly meetings and the members could form their own conclusions…*
> *They examined and cross-examined all those who had left where they could make contact with them. They came before the Committee with varying statements…*[5]

But one cannot help feeling that Brady Would have been the first to step in to claim responsibility if the scheme had been a success and to bask in the plaudits and praise. It was true that the scheme was originally Burch's, but Brady helped plan its form; he had been familiar with similar schemes, including Lane's, and knew of the pitfalls they encountered; and he *believed* in the project as a working, practical expression of one of his basic ideals. His was the motive power which got the scheme under way; his were the contacts which ensured for it the limited Government support it had; his was the land, the equipment, and his was the ultimate risk, not matter how much he afterwards disclaimed it. There is no reason to suggest that, had Brady personally taken over the control of the farm instead of directing things from Melbourne, any greater success would have ensued. It was distinctly possible that Burch was more practical and lever-headed than Brady would have proved. It was useless, too, for Brady to complain about the standard and the qualifications of the men, for he helped the Brighton Unemployment Relief Committee draw up their criteria and carry out the selection.

In short the experiment failed, but it was still worth trying. Remoteness from cities was part of the reason for failure, but the human element seems to have been the prime factor. It is not easy for men of diverse backgrounds to live together in harmony, nor is it easy for men used to a social system which emphasises personal ownership and competitive motivations to work within the framework of a collective and co-operative idealism. Perhaps if it had received more official assistance, with larger numbers invited to participate, and if it had been given a trained and proven leader of men, its chances of success might have been enhanced. As it was, it added one more example to that long list of co-operative experiments which have failed.

No matter what excuses Brady made publicly and no matter what faith he still overtly retained in the cp-operative settlement as a practical application of collectivist and socialistic principles, he must have had private doubts. He wrote to a friend on the staff of the Brisbane *Worker:*

> *I did my level damnedest to make the Mallacoota scheme a success and it just about beggared me. I have got to admit that the management down there*

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[5] 17.6.1933
[5] *Utopias Ltd.,* Vol. 2, p.39.

> *proved bad. I was up to my neck in the political morass here at the time and could not give it my personal supervision. But even if I had, I doubt if it could have been converted into a success. I had a good strong sympathetic socialist committee which also did its best. My conclusions are that these utopian schemes within the Capitalist system are not possible.*[1]

If it proved nothing else, the Mallacoota Community Farm experiment proved that Brady had sufficient faith and belief in his convictions – in the theoretical principles of collective socialism – to believe in their practical application. He was, in the good Australian phrase, willing to "have a go". His courage deserves some credit; his intention to help the unemployed deserves a great deal of credit. It provided one more item of evidence that Brady was humanitarian in outlook and sympathetic in practice.

Chapter Five – Brady's verse.

"The bardic mantle that I wear
Is not meseems, a fabric rare;
But there are threads among its seams

[1] Brady to John S. Hanlon, 24.1.1934, in National Library.

Of high resolve and noble dreams."

Brady, "For Marjorie".

Brady has left six volumes of collected verse, from *The Ways of Many Waters,* published in 1899 to *Wardens of the Seas,* 1933. In addition there is a vast quantity of other metrical writing – topical jingles, political doggerel, humorous and nonsense verse as well as satirical and serious, including some which in intention and achievement can rightly be regarded as serious poetry. Some of this verse has been published in periodicals, especially *The Bulletin*, *The Arrow, The Grip* and *The Worker.* While much exists only in one or other of the collections which are in manuscript or typescript in the Brady papers in the various libraries, especially the National Library. It is necessary to look at this body of verses as poetry, but in addition it is germane to consider the light this material sheds on Brady's interests and concerns, his manner of thinking about important issues such as social, political and philosophical questions. The greater part of this material was produced in the twenty years from 1890, but there are examples extending through the 1940's and even a few into the early 1950's. In this mass of material, there is considerable unevenness of quality, as would no doubt be expected, for while some are the result of studied effort, others were churned out in quantity with speed and obvious reckless abandon, especially in *The Arrow.* They are never uninteresting however, for the show his intellectual and sometimes practical involvement in so many vital issues of his day.

Given Brady's idealism and his concern for his fellow-men, it is to be expected that much verse would deal with man as a vital being, as a worker in city and country, as a member of a society joined together in a communion of spirit through mateship and social and political, as well as religious principles of similar and deeper nature. And given the reasons for his entry into political concerns, it is not unexpected that society should be viewed as class-stratified – an entity pluralistic rather than monolithic. Particularly in the early verse therefore, there are many examples of militancy and strong revolutionary spirit. The earliest poems in *Truth* and *The Bulletin* were of this kind, a type so common as almost to suggest a genre. But even before this, he had written militant verses for *The Australian Workman* proclaiming the inadequacy of

orthodox religion to bring justice to the worker, setting down the conditions of their penury and hardship and urging them to consolidate as a means of gaining a better life. There is a sense of quiescent but stirring power as improvement is foreshadowed and the ruling elements warned:

In the byways foul and filthy – in the dark abodes of crime –
Revengeful Fate is counting out the gathered sands of time.
In the hovels of the helots – in the narrow dirty slums –
An army lay in waiting for the beating of the drums.
Sleeping still,
Feasting still,
Will ye never, never waken till the beating of the drums?[1]

But in spite of their difficulties, the workers are given some hope of better things to look forward to while the needed changes are brought about:

Courage! my comrades, their legions are shaken,
The daylight is coming, the eagles awaken,
Let us on in the tremulous breath of the dawn,
On thro' the silence of highways forsaken,
We will march to the silvery gates of the morn.[1]

Some of these poems considering man as worker are addressed to the workers themselves, while others convey a warning to the employers who must carry the greater part of the blame for the existing conditions. Usually the imagery is purely revolutionary, the tone often Biblical in its similarity to patriarchal threats of doom to the unrepentant, and often there is reference to topical events. So "From the South to the North" assures the northern shearers that their fellow-workers in the south gave them their full support and sympathy, its influence being extended, as was often the case, by its being printed in three different papers.[2] This particular poem showed, as did many others, an almost naive belief in the view that because the workers' case was a just one, it would triumph over injustice, whatever its nature or source. It embodied the theme of mateship, already strong in the social milieu and being made more explicitly by Lawson's frequent references to it. As Brady saw the situation: "If we're true to one another, Truth and Justice must prevail". This slogan was to carry hope and comfort to the striking shearers who were urged to "leave the tyrants' sheep unshorn". The thoughts expressed in these poems were supported by Brady's addresses in the Domain on Sunday afternoons, by speeches to women's clubs and other organisations and by other political activities.

With this kind of background from *The Australian Workman* it was not surprising when Brady's first *Bulletin* poem lashed the capitalist employer in an attempt to arouse some measure of conscience in him to alleviate the workers' plight before violent action became necessary. Oversimplifying complex economic issues, he saw

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1 "The Beating of the Drums". *The Australian Workman,* 4.4.1891.
1 "The Birth of the Morn", *The Australian Workman*, 7.3.1891.
2 *The Australian Workman,* 2.5. 1891; *Truth*, 3.5.1891; *The Worker* (Queensland), 18.4.1891.

a conscious effort by the ruling class as a necessary step to ushering in the "new" society – the Utopian world of equality and full provision for wants. As was often the case, his plea is weakened by oversimplification and overstatement, along with an excess of sentimentality and an artificiality of poetic effect, but there is still an urgency and vitality about the verse which must have struck home:

For you, my lord, the millions toil, for you the spinners spin;
For you the workers delve and sweat, for you their daughters sin.
For you, my lord, the mother leaves her own to waste and pine,
That yours may live to feast and fat and drink the mellow wine.
……
Oh, potent lord! Oh, mighty lord! Oh, lord of earth and sky!
When shall your power and presence fade, when shall your kingdom die?
When the earth is rent and shaken,
When the sons of men awaken,
When the souls of men are strong;
When the hearts of men are true,
When the death of olden wrong
Ushers in the golden new.[3]

This contrast of the old with the new – the evil present or past with the Utopian new which would overcome all mankind's deficiencies – was a common theme in Brady's verse. One of his earliest poems in *Truth* took this motif as its title, quoting Whittier's "Upspringing from the ruined Old I saw the New".[1] An essential part of this "new" is a takeover of political power by Labor. Henry Lawson ("Joe Swallow") was writing verses on a similar theme at this time, as were others, and although it is not demonstrable, it is conceivable that their verses contributed in some measure to the success of Labor in the elections of 1891. Brady wrote of this victory: "Let the fiat flash forth on the wind-wooing wires / The slumbers of Labor are over at last".[2]

It was a vast disappointment for Brady however, when he learned that having a Labor government did not automatically mean an amelioration of bad conditions. He inside view of the internal wranglings of the party and the surrender by some of its members of their principles in an effort to remain in office, hastened this disillusionment. Following the paean of "The Triumph of Labor" of June 1891 was the return by October the same year of the old themes of oppression and reform, nothing how anxious faces among the workers still waited for knowledge and evidence of justice and peace; but "the mill-wheel turns the faster, and the furnace keeps it red, / Till our faith is tired and shaken, and the hope in us is dead".[3] Over the next two decades in particular, these themes of Labor were sounded in infinite variation. Brady purported to have sought no reward from these poems, for he was not paid for most of them (with the possible exception of those in *The Bulletin,* for this was Archibald's policy). But he had no illusions about the seriousness of the struggle, knowing well the strength of the forces arrayed against the workers; he urged them, nevertheless, to support the Labor cause against all odds, until "the earth's enraptured face / Smiles beneath a golden future and a god-like human race".[4]

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3 "The Wage Lord", *The Bulletin,* 23.5.1891
1 "The Old and the New", *Truth*, 7.6.1891 and *The Worker,* 14.1.1905
2 "The Triumph of Labor", *Truth,* 28.6.1891.
3 "The Toilers", *The Australian Workman,* 31.10.1891.
4 "The Songs of Freedom", *Truth,* 3.1.1892

There are many occasions where this same theme is taken in its general form and examined more closely by reference to particular cases of hardship. For example in "The Worker's Wife", a long narrative, attention is given to the plight of a young married couple and their struggle to earn a living in an inhospitable environment. The husband strikes for better conditions, but the resultant starvation of the family makes a strong case for unionism and solidarity of workers to prevent individual victimisation. But Brady's weakness in this kind of poem is his over-sentimentalising of the situation, which is poignant enough to speak for itself, and a self-conscious labouring of the point ("Can you read it, men and brothers, with a calm unmoistened eye?")[5] But even though the families of workers gain his sympathy, it is the men themselves who merit most attention. The difficult life of the ship's stoker, for instance, is deplorable with its "frizzle, frizzle, frizzle," in the heat until "you faints beside the bunkers and they drags you to the air".[6] Yet all seamen have their particular difficulties to contend with, as the ill-treated crew in "Curse of Ages"[7] who finally refuse duty with the result that the ship, under full sail, is sunk by a sudden squall. No punches are pulled in this revelation of hardships, where the only redeeming feature is the blind courage of the worker. Take the twenty men whose ship, deserted by rats at Plymouth, is over-insured by its owners, filled with cargo and sent out to meet her fate:

> *They fell about her slimy deck: they clung to what they could;*
> *Amid the crack of falling spars, the wrack of riven wood,*
> *They crowded like rats – that would not drown for one-and-six a day –*
> *They died to swell a bank account that night of Table Bay.*
>
> *Aye, twenty things of bloated shape that sought a resting place,*
> *And three shipowners shaking hands by God's own holy grace:*
> *Aye, twenty things of clammy kind that, very shortly, stank,*
> *And three well-scented Englishmen with money in the bank.*[1]

The sad tale of the conditions of seamen and stevedores is told in many a poem in hard-hitting language and in the dialect of the mariners who "yakker, yakker, yakker / For the drop o' beer and bacca".[2] Nor will any great change come about until there is less hypocrisy on the part of the owners (hypocrisy as blatant as in "The Hiram Brown"[3]) or those who appeal to the workers' patriotism alone and expect them to slave because of it alone: "It's a re-a-ri-a-rally an' another tier of bales / For the glory of the Empire, an' the good of News South Wales".[4] Nor will improvement come without a change in the callousness of the ruling classes towards accidents, which are regarded as expensive interruptions to work, as in "The Winch",[5] and towards inadequate machinery or inefficient safety and work routines.

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5 "The Worker's Wife", *Truth,* 17.1.1892.
6 "Stoking on the Line", *Truth,* 28.8.1892
7 "Curse of Ages", *Bird-O;-Freedom,* 15.9.1894
1 "A Tale of Twenty Men", *The House of the Winds.*
2 "Laying on the Screw". *The Ways of Many Waters*
3 "The Hiram Brown", ibid.
4 "Laying on the Screw".
5 "The Winch", *The Bulletin,* 23.4.1925

If the city workers, the stevedores and seamen, the factory hands and clerks have their difficulties in maintaining their dignity as men, so do also the workers in the country. The shearers, the settlers in isolated places, they who "face the raging summer and pray the cooling change",[6] the migrants settling in a new country against great hardships,[7] the small-town dwellers and farmers have penury of soul as well as of body to contend with. But the country has distinct compensations. As in "Clancy of the Overflow", the country could by a mere escape from the city on occasion, but others loved it for what it was. The contrasting characteristics of the two environments are brought out in "Knights of Chance", which opens:

> *Men do not live in cities. Between the narrow ways*
> *They walk as meek-faced merchants, dissembling all their days.*
> *Ours are the open places; ours are the Plain and Sky;*
> *The clean, deep-hearted Ranges, the Hills – which cannot lie.*[8]

But wherever he lived and worked, the Australian workingman had a strong advocate in Brady. The assumption is usually made that he is economically depressed (which was more often than not true) and that he and all his colleagues put forth their total energies to fulfil the demands of an unreasonable and harsh employer, which was not doubt less true. Although there was much wrong to be remedied, the most pressing need was seen as more money to meet many commitments, rather than more money as an end in itself, which "Give Us Gold" practically suggests.[1]

While both Brady and Lawson sang of man as friend, with mateship being propounded in both prose and verse, Brady also considers man as martyr. As Jesus, the supreme martyr, came to lead man out of his entanglements, so modern man needed a new saviour. This was to be found in an awakened social consciousness, in class solidarity, in ordered economics, in altruistic commercial operations and very importantly, in the advances brought about by increased knowledge and application of the methods and findings of science. Mateship would ease man's burden for the present: these other more permanent solutions would take longer to implement. So in "I've Got Bad News"[2] the sailor considers it his duty to notify the next of kin of his mate's death in an accident. This is a responsibility which he would rather shirk, but the code of mateship places the onus upon him and he accepts, albeit with great reluctance. Likewise when Parker is fatally injured in a brawl with Russian sailors, his mate even offers himself, in his mind, as a replacement in the dead man's family; the action is quite unselfish, but an innate shyness causes him to refrain in actuality.[3]

But in addition to the mateship, which can be commemorated in thought, in action, in talk and in beer, there is a wider kinship among men. There is a "skein" in which each ahs a place and purpose:

> *Now two have met, now two have met,*
> *Who may not meet again –*
> *Two grains of sand, two blades of grass,*

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6 "Outposts", *Bells and Hobbles.*
7 "The Blackball Line", *The Bulletin,* 23.4.1925
8 "Knights of Chance", *The Earthen Floor.*
1 "Give Us Gold", *Truth,* 1.10.1893
2 *The Ways of Many Waters*
3 "The Passing of Parker", ibid

Two threads within the skein –
Beside the Great Gray Water.[4]

For men, this shared existence means toil, while for women, as this poem and "The Rover of Sallee" make plain, destiny decrees that she wait, bear and suffer – a fate which can be redeemed, at least in part, by bravery and love, for every act of suffering has it precursor, which fact brings a sense of community in its broadest and deepest meaning:

How can your hearts be craven"
How can your courage fail
When twice then thousand heroes
Sail with you when you sail?[5]

This query is addressed to sailors, but is applicable to all men and women. And if "The Earthen Floor" expounds the view that "triumph in the world's strife / Is ever to the Strong", love is a redeeming force under all hardships, be it the love of a knight for a maid, as in "Once Upon a Time"[1] or a more spiritual, selfless love in "Dross and Gold".[2]

In the attention he gives to the common man, Brady stresses the importance of gaining a sense of perspective – a sense which leads man to meditate upon the past and the contribution it makes to his present existence: to look forward also to the future, to the vision of a more ideal world which will provide man both with a goal and a yardstick with which to measure progress. "Cape Inscription 1616"[3] and "The Ways of Many Waters" are two poems which stress this attempt to put the present into perspective, but there are many others. Nowhere does Brady show the importance of vision as a quality of man in clearer view than in his discussion of the part science is to play in the framing of man's life. Always alive tot scientific advances, he yet sees that unleashed scientific and technological forces can destroy something essential in the human environment, if not man himself. Man's aim should be to strike a balance wherein scientific knowledge would improve aspects of living, giving man more control over his environment, making him economically self-sufficient and providing all the necessities of life, yet allowing him to retain his basic contact with nature and the earth. While science has the capacity to remove man's difficulties, it can also remove his pleasures from everyday life, as "The Modern Scientist"[4] rather aptly shows when scientists tamper with life's staples – bread, butter and water; it must use its powers judiciously and strike a bargain with nature. Failure to achieve this balance can be dangerous, as our modern pollution-conscious world is discovering. Brady's vision foresaw this evil also, warning against the pollution which would arise from the indiscriminate burning of coal, a Caliban of man's creating:

And his mantle, like a pall, sables cities; and the thrall

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4 "The Great Grey Water", *The Ways of Many Waters*
5 "A Ballad of the Flag", ibid.
1 *The Earthen Floor*
2 Ibid.
3 *The Bulletin,* 23.10.1924
4 *The Bird-O'-Freedom,* 2.4.1895.

Of his burden heavy lies
On the blackened, barren fields; and his iron presence shields
The expanse of the skies.[5]

Furthermore, exercising that recommended vision, Brady foresaw the end of steam and its succession by atomic power as the main source of industrial energy – and this in 1909 in a poem light-heartedly signed "E.J. Brady, Victoria, 1950 A.D."[6] By finding "how to draw direct its energy from matter" a certain Smith discovered a "cheap and noiseless force" which did away with the coal-driven engine. Another forecast, computer selection of dating couples, has already come true but another, it is hoped, does not come to pass. This one has an anthropologist looking back from the year 2018 when aboriginals, more fitted than others for nomadic existence, survive an atomic way while the white population perish.[7]

In addition to this use of verse for topical, political purposes and to using it for drawing emphasis to some of the salient features of man in the industrialised world as Brady saw him, there is a much wider approach to the function of verse. There is a great deal of verse, and some poetry, concerning itself with man's environment and with his relationships to it – to Nature in its broadest sense. One aspect of this environment which especially interested Brady was the sea and some of his best poems are written about it, both as natural phenomenon and as a symbol of an irresistible force, a great unknowable. So the sailors can understand life and death and burial at sea, for death follows life as surely as night follows day; this they can understand, but they have distinct reservations about the meaning of the sea itself – "But, ah! The Great Gray Water!".

The sea exercises a strange fascination over the men who sail on her broad bosom. Her siren voice calls men as plainly now as it did in the time of the caveman, the Greek, the Roman and "Norse and Ersemen red":

By my siren voice a-tune,
Sweet as honey, salt as brine,
As the spring tides and the moon
In a mystic wedlock shine;
By a seaward written rune
Ye are mine, aye, ye are mine![1]

Yet, if it attracts men, it is also a progenital and cleansing force and we are urged to let the thought, engendered by meditation on the sea, bear us on to greater knowledge. Such a process has therapeutic qualities as has the sea itself, which Brady refers to as "This bosom of a world distraught, whose cleansing waters sweep / Around the continents and isles in constant spring and neap".[2] But above all the sea is *alive* – it has personality which is ever-varying, complex and on the whole, benevolent. It has a

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5 "Caliban", *The Bulletin,* 3.6.1909

6 "Steam-Obit 1912 – an Epitaph", *The Bulletin,* 28.10.1909. His selection of 1950 as a date-line was not very far off. The world's first full-size power station began operation at Calder Hall in 1956. Power from the atom was, of course, released earlier. The first atom bomb was exploded in Los Alamos, July 1945.

7 "The Conquest of Colour", *Focus,* June 1946.

1 "Siren", *Wardens of the Seas.*

2 "Sea Thought", *Wardens of the Seas.*

companionship which the sky and the stars, the clouds, the sun, moon and wind.

It has mother qualities, for when the surf drones on the bar "our Mother Sea is crooning / Her quaint cradle song afar"[3] while are other times she betrays the human qualities of relentlessness and jealousy.[4]

The sea, too, has its humour, as "The Whaler's Pig" and "A Capstan Chanty" make plain, but pathos usually predominates over this quality, whether it is the misfortune of a stevedore with a broken back, fatally injured while trying to raise enough money to bring an aged "mudder" over from Norway,[5] the dangling corpse of a mutineer in "There's Something at the Yardarm" or the rotting hulks of ships, retired from active service to decay away in the harbour, or sunken in the ocean depths "By a viscid seaweed slimed, by a hoar frost whitely rimed"[6] Then there is the ultimate pathos of the lone sailor tortured by the pitiless sea after being shipwrecked on a sandbank in the Indian Ocean. In an intensely moving poem the mariner gives an account of his misfortune, writing it in blood and consigning it to the sea in a bottle, questioning the justice of a fate which leaves him last to die:

One yet survives ...Just God, the thirst
That tears my veins to-day ...
The last! the last! ...
Why <u>last</u>, not <u>first</u>?
...And why not yesterday?

And as if to publicise the results of the unfair encounter, the sea conveys his final message to a sympathetic audience who *think* they understand; but "only those who know and care', who actually fight the sea for her treasure, can actually know the reality, the "inner Truth, red-written there".[1]

There is too, a supernatural element about the sea, as all sailors know. It may be the witch wife weaving the white wool of the fog, drifting it over the sea to ensnare the poor mariner, or the reward given for kindness expressed, which enables a sailor to touch the eyes of a Finnish shipmate "where the death-films spread" and behold the whole scope of human endeavour on the sea, from the first "fire-scooped bole" through triremes, beaked Punic barges, "mat-sailed junks" up to the latest battleship.[2] Or it may be evidenced through the ghosts which guard the buried treasure of old pirates, ghosts which make seamen unwilling to approach certain areas, such as Coffin Key.[3] At times this supernatural element merges naturally into the historical perspective which the sea provides. "A Ballad of the Flag", "The Seven Sisters", "Sea Thought" and "The Beach" all convey this historical sense against which modern problems and events shrink into more manageable proportions. This is more than a mere reminiscence of past glories but is a characteristic mental attitude engendered by the very nature of the sea, by its power and infinitude.

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3 "Twilight", *The Earthen Floor.*
4 "What the Bottle Said" *The Ways of Many Waters.*
5 "The For'ard Hold", ibid.
6 "The Dead Ships". *The Earthen Floor.*
1 "What the Bottle Said", *The Ways of Many Waters.*
2 "The Ways of Many Waters".
3 "Coffin Key, *The Bulletin,* 12.3.1925.

So important is the sea to man, that he has no choice but to come to terms with it.

His relationship may be an impartial one, purely passive, hostile or amorous, but it must be achieved in some form and in some measure. There is a need for incessant watchfulness as "Wardens of the Seas" makes plain, but it is doubtful if the relationship can ever be really secure, as "Crossing In" points out. Even the bravest and most knowledgeable captain must be ever mindful of the wreck of those who have gone before:

> *Brave little man! He earns right well*
> *His children's food and clothes –*
> *For God, He makes bar-harbours, and*
> *'Tis only God who <u>knows</u>.*[4]

Neither is it the active seaman alone who establishes this relationship with the sea. The old grey-beard dreaming on the shores of Twofold Bay sees again the dark hulls of "greasy whalers" and watches the west winds drive "Like drunken shepherds, their helpless herded flocks / Of white-capped waves in anger on hungry shoreward rocks".[1] Likewise the grizzled skipper in his villa on the shores of Sydney Harbour gets his vicarious pleasure from visualising the far ports from which incoming ships arrive and even the habitual drunkard is sobered at the thought of his return to his mistress, the sea.

Above all, the sea offers a challenge to man, a challenge taken up in full measure by the Swede from the Gippsland lakes, proud of his indomitable tradition ("Three waves will drown a Dago, but / Three hundred leave a Swede").[2] He took pride in accepting the fury of the sea and he won through by sheer courage, for courage and love are the only forces which can conquer the sea, as the story of Fletcher's love also makes clear.[3]

Through all these verses about the sea and seamen, stevedores and ships, there appear the traditional rhythms and chanties of the sea with their characteristic refrains and working choruses. "Where have you been all the day, Billy Boy?" is answered in variations of the original theme, reflecting the common hardships and evocative of the vitality and gusto of the men themselves:

> *Taking my shivering trick at the wheel,*
> *Froze that stiff I c'd hardly feel,*
> *A-watching the greybeards all forlorn,*
> *That roll from the Crozets round the Horn:*
> *Taking the slack from a bucko mate*
> *That showed his teeth at the Golden Gate*
> *And bared his gums as we crossed the Line.*
> *(He ought to be clove from skull to chine),*
> *An ugly gun in his ugly paw;*
> *Paying out for a crack on the jaw!*

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4 "Crossing In" *Wardens of the Seas*
1 "Twofold Bay", *Wardens of the Seas.*
2 "The Swede", *The Bulletin,* 27.4.1922
3 "The Cutter, 'Wongrabelle'", *The House of the Winds.*

And <u>that's</u> where I've been all the day, aha![3]

And when the question is repeated in slightly different form, the ship's captain is delineated as seed by his men – Binnacle Brown, a veritable Captain Ahab who "holds the Bible fast in his fins / And beats the devil for all our sins". These are the poems which are usually included in anthologies – poems with the chanty rhythm, such as "Lost and Given Over" with its opening lines of "A mermaid's not a human thing, / An' courtin' such is folly"; or "The Loading of the Pride" with its "Re-a-rally! Ri-a-rally!"; or the Bunyanesque "McFee of Aberdeen" who'll "take her out and bring her home, or sink her, will McFee". These are the poems that earned John Masefield's approval and praise,[4] but Douglas Stewart found them less authentic that Brady's bush verse, perhaps because he knew that Brady had never served at sea while he had much first-hand experience of the bush. There is no doubt however, that his experiences on the wharves made him thoroughly familiar with seamen, their manner of speech, there interests and habits as well as their main duties and activities. Stewart complains that "his salt-water ballads, which rarely tell a story and mostly consist of the conventional rollicking farewells to imaginary ladies" are artificial, but there are many ballads which *do* tell a story – "The Swede" and "The Cutter 'Wongrabelle'" to cite two. Stewart is right however, in saying that there re some poems which would fit his description, but these are interested in re-creating the sounds of the sea and its traditional rhythms and flavour, rather than purporting to be ballads of the narrative variety.[1]

In reality the sea, the countryside and the city are inter-related in men's experience. "The Wool Roads", published in the *Sydney Mail* with illustrative photographs of wool teams supplied by Brady, gives a contrast between the city and the country, points out how much more aware of nature is the country dweller, but both depend, particularly in the case of wool, on the sea to accept the land's produce and carry it to world markets. There is really no interruption in this activity – merely pauses:

For, when the sheds are sleeping
Beneath a cloudless sky,
And Night, star-sandalled, wandered
Her velvet ways on high:
After, and coldly keeping
Lone vigil on the plain,
The teams stood dimly waiting
To take the roads again.

And when the teams are successful in carrying "our golden booty / Along the wool roads free" they make for the one destination – "towards the waiting sea".[2] If Mallacoota played into the hands of Brady's interest in the sea, it also gave him ample opportunity to appreciate the wonders of nature in the country – a wonder transmitted to the reader in "Knights of Chance" which proclaims freedom from the trammels of the city, with its meek-faced merchants "dissembling all their days" and raises a catchcry of rejoicing in the purity and freshness of the country: "Ours are the open

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3 "Billy Boy", *The Bulletin,* 2.11.1938
4 See page 236 **********
1 Douglas Stewart and Nancy Keesing (eds.) *Australian Bush Ballads* (Sydney, 1955 (1968), p. vii.
2 "The Wool Roads", *The Sydney Mail,* 9.12.1903

places; ours are the plain and the sky; / The clean, deep-hearted ranges, the hills which cannot lie!"[3] This proposition is heartily acceded to by many other poems – "Bells and Hobbles", "Riverine" and "The Lost Brigade" among them. This purity of the country serves a cathartic and therapeutic, even an escapist, purpose for it restores the jaded spirit made weak by too-long intervals away from nature:

> '*Will your city give nepenthe?' cries the Spirit of the West –*
> *'Will its markets fill the chalice of the longings in your breast?*
> *Is the traffic in its thunder*
> *Like that still and quiet wonder*
> *Of the moon above the mulga where the weary riders rest?'*[4]

There is a lyricism about Brady's poems of the countryside which shows his deep love for it in its many moods, from the earliest morning when "pale swamp-mists slowly rise / To white-winged clouds of mystery", through the full day when "Night's lingering coolness flies at length, and o-er the maize and cane / The sun, despotic overlord, triumphant reigns again!"[1] After the creatures of the bush and the farmers of the land have fulfilled their daily routines the bush night with its possums, owls and phalangers begins to close in; "like a curtain through the trees, by Nubian fingers drawn, / Dusk closes in".[2] This lyricism conceals the most unifying force for Brady – the love of Nature in all her manifestations. A lover is seen in terms of the natural world in "Love and Death":

> *Night is in her hair and through its maze*
> *White stars like diamonds blaze.*
> *Her cheeks are Day; and all Earth's glory*
> *Flames on her lips' sunrise.*[3]

This love of nature is alloyed with personal experience in many poems, giving an intimacy and directness wholly refreshing. So when an earlier lo9ve is recalled among the orchards, magpies and scented blooms of Castle Hill, the memory is almost wholly idealistic except for the plight of the panting hare who hears the "dappled death" which stalks him when "in summertime the thorn / With white defiance scents the morn".[4] A similar vividness and romanticism attends the passage of a coach along the high Blue Mountains roads of Brady's boyhood, bringing views of civilisation to lonely workers on the fringes of the towns:

> *A lonely shepherd heard the clash*
> *Of wheels on pebbles, and a splash*
> *Of midnight hoofs that slip and thrash*
> *A crossing deep;*
> *Then sogging forth, with sudden clank,*
> *Spite streaming breast or dripping flank,*
> *They halt where lifts the further bank*

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3 *The Earthen Floor.*
4 "Where the Saltbush Grows", *Bells and Hobbles.*
1 "Northern Morning". *Bells and Hobbles.*
2 "Night in the Bush", ibid.
3 *Our Swag,* 22.12.1905
4 "In Cumberland", *The Bulletin,* 9.3.1922

Its rampart steep.[5]

Particularly do the poems written at Mallacoota about the surrounding country reflect a mood of unalloyed joy. Here he found, as did his Maoris in "A South Sea Odyssey", "the sacred island" of his dreams. Here he sang of the "blue daylit hills of Nadgee" where, beside the solid bastion of Howe and the "crystal lakes the cygnets know", the broad sunbars stream down the gullies' sides and light the mountain steeps".[6] He loved the wild-life which abounds in the bush, especially the kangaroos which are still to be seen there, although now they come out every evening to eat the grass off the fairways of the local golf-course. He saw them in more romantic setting as his mind turned to see all the native species still with their innate shyness and beauty:

To shadowed pools, where silver musk
Spilled subtle incense in the dusk;
With thudding footfall, fearful, drew
The timid, thirsting kangaroo.[1]

Also he appreciated the fact that the sensitive could be alerted to imminent weather changes when the swans flew in high at sundown or the whimbrel on the sandspits were noisier than usual as the "muffled roll of unquiet waters" drummed on the bar. As the weather worsened, the bush, the lake, the sky felt the impact and the sea's pounding boomed eerily from nearby peaks:

In savage sport, in slimy greed,
A snarling surge, since morn,
The kelp and sponge and coloured weed
From rock and reef is torn,
And strewn it on the sands, whose white
Hands sweep it in disdain
Upon receding tides at night
Back to the sea again.[2]

This awareness of Nature's beauties led him often to question the source of its strange effect upon him, its ability to move him to express himself poetically. Remembering his ancestry, he asks: "Whence came my poignant vision, unbidden and unsought? / Has, in this lonely covert, a Druid's spell been wrought?"[3] There is an element which goes beyond an idealisation of natural beauty into true fantasy. It goes beyond the more romantic aspects to be seen in "Down in Honolulu" or "Otahai". The poet is the brave "knight of royal mein / With burnished glaive and casque of gold" who searches for the Castle of Proud Dreams.[4] He is also the lover sipping wine in an

5 "Old Colonial Days", *The Bulletin,* 8.12.1923
6 "Mallacoota Bar". *The Bulletin,* 1.6.1922
1 "Nocturne", *The Bulletin,* 23.4.1930.
2 "The Gale", *The Bulletin,* 25.6.1925.
3 "My Feet In Dreams Have Wandered", *The Bulletin,* 18.12.1940
4 "Once Upon a Time", *The Earthen Floor.*

orchid-bedecked cave with his beloved while "wild rock-lilies wanton dare / The court of roving bees" and myrtle loads the air with "virgin fragrancies".[5] One feels a strong identification of the poet also, with the McCrae-like medieval narrative ballad – a poem surprisingly Chaucerian in tone. The knight hilled in the Crusades on a "red, relentless plain, at sunset" is mourned formally by his Lady Alice, who bows her head formally to fate's decree and almost immediately marries a "puissant lord"; but the humble maid who really loved him dies of a broken heart. If the poem has, in goo medieval style, a moral, it is that we should look before our feet for the fulfilment of our desires rather than in far-off realms.[6] Such imaginative dreaming as is found in this poem is quite acceptable to Brady, for "Poet, Child and Woman / Still sail the ship 'Romance'"[7]

In the last assessment, however, whether the poet sings about man the worker, man the martyr or man the dreamer, all the material structure of the earth, sea and sky, all men and their problems pass away; only the spirit and the mind remain. It may be true, as "Sic Itur Ad Astra" avers, that men live to die and die to live and "all the Earth / Is bound in endless chains of Life and Death and Birth", but the products of man's creativity, of his spirit, remain. "No death is here! Immortal life – the life of Mind, / Eternal and unchanged, remains for aye behind".[1] And at least Brady's spirit concerned itself throughout his life-time which much philosophising, especially in verse; a preoccupation with the transience of human existence always evident. Yet Time is regarded as a palliative, ridding man of accumulated sorrows and hardships resulting from a life of care. It is not figurative old man with a scythe, but rather a young housemaid, "clear-eyed, with cheeks abloom" who sweeps away all sorrow and strife.[2]

When examining the problem of suffering, Brady shows some ambivalence in his attitude. While he worked, guided by his idealism, to alleviate the suffering of mankind, yet in his theorising he reaches the conclusion that since suffering is a cathartic, if not a therapeutic process, man should not complain about enduring it. So when an enquiry is made in "The Lesson" about the reasons for suffering, the reply would suggest that it can, through painting and sculpture and music, constitute a form of worship:

> *And from the tall Parnassus, fell a sweet Voice*
> *Guiding me:*
> *'In the Transept of my Temple.*
> *Be pigments…*
> *At the Pillars of my Temple,*
> *Lie mallets …*
> *On the Altar of my Temple,*
> *A Lyre*!
>
> *Master! I mourned, it is so written,*
> *But…we suffer…*

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5 "Wine Song", ibid.

6 "On Tapestry", *The Bulletin,* 14.7.1910. The earlier "To Chloe in Australia", *Centennial Magazine,* August, 1900, had its full share of wood-nymphs, naiads and other Arcadian inhabitants and gods.

7 "The Ship 'Romance'", *The House of the Winds.*

1 *The Earthen Floor.*

2 "Time", *The Earthen Floor.*

And from the High Calvary fell a sad Voice
Chiding me:
"Have I not also suffered?[3]

It is the suffering in and of the mind, rather than physical suffering, which is to be feared most. So the seaman blinded by a knife suffers emotionally, feeling acute deprivation from participation in the enjoyments of ships and the sea. His mental suffering is heightened by a sense of victimisation, that he is being penalised beyond what is meted out to even the lowliest criminal. He cries: "Blind! blind! oh, my God, as a crawling mole! and never again to see - / A star in the sky of the meanest thief, but a starless Night for me.."[4] In this case, the only recourse is a union with his beloved nature by burial from a clipper ship "under the roll".

Death too, has a quite prominent place in Brady's philosophising. It is the great leveller, obviously inescapable. "Of all the living host that pains / To live, not one the life remains / That all lives cherish", is the law propounded when looking at the transience of all natural phenomena and contrasting the beauty and grandeur of freshness and growth[1] with the starkness of age and death. The cyclical nature of this existence is further stressed in the humorous poem, "The Whaler's Pig", where the hypocritical and greedy pig fattens himself on whale blubber, ultimately to feed the man; but the process does not end there, for we are reminded: "First whale, then pig, then man. Some day / The worm will make it square."[2] This question of death is discussed by a body of poems in *The Earthen Floor* entitled "The House of Death". The first if these is "The Quiet City" where a kind of suspended animation predominates – a world wherein there is a lack of definition of place and time, situated as it is "By the shore of the Shoreless River that turns to a Tideless Sea". Visiting this city "In the year of Ever-Never, in the time of Night-and-Day" the poet and his lover muse on its meaning, yet under the lady's constant questioning he can only answer in half-truths, revealing no real knowledge. Fittingly the conversation ends in a respectful silence, with both meditating on the poet's remark that while he cannot answer fully, there is consolation in the fact that "The River rolls *backward* not ever, but onward at last to the Sea". It must be remembered though that this poem first appeared in *The Bulletin* in 1898, almost certainly being written immediately before publication as Brady was struggling hard at the time to make ends meet, and reflects the stage of agnosticism through which he is passing. His progression from a strong faith in religion in his youth (noticeable in his Juvenilia in the 1880's) was replaced by his doubts arising from enquiries into socialism and Darwinian evolutionary theory. It was further supplemented subsequently by the rationalist-humanist strain of philosophy he often expounds to his correspondents.

In his consideration of death, too, Brady betrays a strong element of fatalism. At times his mottos seems to be "eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die", but more frequently there are obvious reservations that this attitude is not the solution, merely and anodyne:

On with the feast! We are alone.

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3 Ibid.
4 "His Lights Are Out". *The Earthen Floor.*
1 "The Dead Tree", *Bells and Hobbles.*
2 *The Ways of Many Waters*

This drink is strong. The guests have flown;
'Tis late! How now? My love, no doubt,
Is drunk. What's this – the lights are out!
Ah! Found at last. Awake! Awake!
Have I not sold all for thy sake?
Have I not ... My God! Her breath
Is charnel; and her name is – Death.[3]

In assuming this to be a genuine attitude of Brady's it might be argued that this is reading too much of his personality into the poetry, but it is undeniable that there is a strong personal element in his writing, when his work as a whole is examined. Its sentiments and ideas follow closely the beliefs and opinions so often expressed in correspondence and by his activities throughout his life. It is true to say that his verse reflects his character to a remarkable degree – perhaps it is too subjective to rise above the emotionalism and propaganda with which he was often concerned. Not can it avoid betraying the doubts about his real nature, which he often expressed to friends, particularly to Mendelsohn and Holburn. The restlessness of a man constantly on the move, and perhaps his dilettantism, arise from a deep-seated agnosticism and scepticism which the later rationalism never quite conceals or displaces. For hi "the path of the further distance / It seemeth for aye more true" and it is easy to feel that he, as the Dreamers, has wandered "forlorn, on a golden quest".[1]

The twin emotions of restlessness and regret are very evident in his activities and in his verse. His "Comrades" states the case that travelling can be a means of sharing ("Ours the World shall be for sharing")[2] while "The Bushland Call" presents man town between the desire to travel and the wish to remain with loved ones. This was often experienced by Brady, as for long periods he left Mallacoota for the city, leaving Norma and the young family to fend for themselves. Truly he can say then: "In bitter joy, in pleasant woe / The wanderlust doth find me"; and even question the wisdom of certain human relationships, asking "Were is not best while Love is young ' To break the chain enthralling?" Ascribing this restlessness to his Celtic inheritance, he pleads:

A wand'ring foot, the Celts contend,
Though yet a man grows old,
Will itch for roaming to the end:
Nor peace their sons shall hold
Whose fathers, where the rainbows bend
Have sought the Crock of Gold.[3]

The sense of unease was likewise acerbated by the regret and yearning which resulted from the continual gap between aspiration and achievement. "Star and Spire" becomes thus a public confession of his impotence as he ruefully sings of "this sorrowful lesson" – that "On Earth stand the Spires of our yearning: / The Stars of our dreams are remote".[4] The same emotions are apparent in "Ego" with its contrapuntal

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3 "Dust and Shade", *The Earthen Floor.*
1 "The Ways of Many Waters".
2 *Bells and Hobbles.*
3 "The Wandering Foot", *Wardens of the Seas.*
4 *The Earthen Floor*

doubts. It is significant too, that the final poem in *The Earthen Floor*, a volume dedicated to Norma, should deal with incompleteness and yearning for fulfilment by a rebel whom God has created ("Thine the hand that, un-impassioned, / Halved the rebel soul of me".). The poem deals with the search for his complementary "Half-Soul strong" which he seemed to find in his liaison with Norma, who bore him six children. Through the whole of this volume runs a note of regret – for "bygone days", "braver days", "fairer maids and kinder men" from times which were "surely better then". "In Thule" "Nocturne" and "Shadows" are full of this sense, symbolised by the three ghosts which appear in another poem.[5] As in "Sea Thought" these emotions of regret can be only *allayed* by love's dallying, not wholly removed, but the conclusion is reached that the whole process of life is worthwhile provided that "Love and Truth remain".[6] And this Truth is not something to be sought externally, but is one of the few facts "Clear-scribed upon the scroll / Of Life" and is to be found "in man's own soul".[1]

His own saga of the search for Truth is hinted at by Brady in two long poems written fifteen years apart. In the first of these, a ballad of some seventy lines, in reply to a child's questions about death, the poet recounts a life-long search for the meaning of living, each particular creed supplying a different, unsatisfying solution until in frustration he realises: "My doubts were in no wise lessened, and my hunger in no wise fed / By tales of their rites and symbols, whose Spirit had asked for Bread". He turns from religion to reason, but finds there no solace – only a terrible vision of universal suffering and inevitable death. When all seems lost he picks up a small key in the shape of a cross, concluding, in his release:

> *This is the Ballad of Seeking. Nor Prophet or Priest am I*
> *Who march with the Living Legion and know in my heart I die,*
> *Child, this is mine only message uttered and scribed apart –*
> *Some Key of the Door is given to each, by his inward heart.*[2]

It is characteristic of Brady that the poem does not end by referring the child to a particular creed or religion, not to his universal panacea of socialism; but the solution from the individual search and answer seems more genuine and more satisfying, to this reader, at least.

Fifteen years later however, Brady is not so sure. The lyrical and sensuous poem, "The Fortunate Isles", deals symbolically with a voyage to the "Port of Peace" where the "Straits of Time eternal / To Eternity outrun". Visions of blessedness and joy well up in the voyager's mind – all the satisfying aspects of earth in idealised form ("Cobwebs pearled by dews of morning, / Wings of butterflies asheen"); but the anticlimax comes eventually to inform us that living and loving, working and practising tolerance are the best ways open to men at this present stage of intellectual and spiritual development.[3] There is more than an element of mysticism in this poem, a quality taken further in a few others, notable in the case of "Knut Olsen's Weird" with its pagan and Biblical overtones and its message of the relentlessness of

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5 "Three Ghosts"
6 "Sea Thought", *Wardens of the Seas*.
1 "Assessment", *The Sydney Morning Herald,* 25.7.1931
1 "The Door", *The Bulletin,* 11.8.1910.
3 "The Fortunate Isles", *The Bulletin,* 16.7.1925.

overpowering grief; also in the "Lament of the Fields" in which the very earth revolts against the callousness of men and love and peace are again preached as the only ultimate saviours.[4]

But it is not be thought from this view of Brady's mental strivings in verse that his themes were always serious and grave. Knowing of the light heartedness of the man, his ready wit and abundant vitality, humorous verse should naturally be expected, and in fact is found in considerable measure, ranging from accounts of the tall tales so beloved of countrymen to the whimsical and childlike personification of animals and the creation of strange new creatures akin to those found under Hugh McCrae's editorship in *The New Triad.*[1] "The Coachman's Yarn" is a good example of the embodiment of the tall tales which have come to form part of the folk-lore of the Australian bush. This particular coachman tells of the cold in "Nimitybell" in 1883 – so cold was it that "It froze the blankets, it froze the fleas, / It froze the sap in the blinkin' trees". A curlew in *this* winter had nit beak frozen to his feet. Even the sounds of the bush froze, for when a log was dragged to the fire and burnt, the sounds of the cross-cut saw could be distinctly heard as it thawed! Even the flaming wick of a candle froze and burned down a house when it finally thawed out![2]

Much of the earlier humorous verse, written for the *Bird-O'-Freedom* and *The Arrow* contains broad, obvious wit, atrocious puns and schoolboy witticisms (such as the name of a ship – the "Ellen Blazes") but there are many occasions when his sense of fun finds a higher plane, is whimsical, artistic and attractive. In good Australian style he is interested in the effects of drink, some of the lighter poems making reference to intoxication in an adolescent manner, to its delights and stupidities. He would take a newspaper item, comment upon it jocularly, weaving into it unusual features until the result is pure fun. So when an item commented upon two rams which had strayed into a householder's yard, Brady compares them with monsters he has seen in his cups:

> *They'd saucer eyes and horns ten feet*
> *In length, and when the bleat,*
> *Their mouths in order to complete*
> *Our terror,*
> *Were opened up until we saw*
> *Their livers large and red and raw.*
> *We'll swear this fact is free from flaw*
> *Or error ……*[3]

There are countless examples of this kind of levity in *The Arrow*, some better and many worse!

Another aspect of his technique with humour consisted of his custom of taking something reasonably important to most people and poking fun at it in a good-

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4 *The Bulletin,* 12.11.1925.

1 Editor (with E Watt) from August 1927 – July 1928. The Chouse, Cark, Blurb and other mythical animals appeared in illustrated poems. See J. Webb, *Hugh McCrae, O.B.E., unpublished M.A. thesis, Sydney University.*

2 *The Bulletin,* 20.4.1922

3 "He-Ha-Ha!" *Bird-O'-Freedom,* 4.2.1893

humoured manner; so doctors, lawyers, dentists, clergymen, even editors are jocularly "sent up":

The devil felt poorly, and strange, sirs, to tell
The devil he shivered, although it was hell;
In Tophet there shivered damn quacks b y the score.
And doctors and surgeons were there in galore,
But not one could cure him, though all were agreed,
The Monarch of Darkness was sickly indeed.[4]

Even his own proclivity towards political and topical doggerel, with its propaganda against depression, unemployment and poverty, is lampooned. He takes society's sanctions about the need for cleanliness and constant washing of body and clothes and urges the workers to unite against this further example of capitalist tyranny and oppression, proclaiming, in part:

Sons of Labor wake to glory, up like men to do or die,
Days of dark oppression goad ye: at your feet your chains shall lie.
Break your shackles now or never, lift on high the bloody shirt;
On for gore and grog and glory, strike for anarchy and dirt![1]

Similarly, the poet's habit of running away to country seclusion (Mallacoota?) is lightly satirised in the account of the fellow who "feasted when he felt inclined" and "O'er work and worry ne'er repined". Like Brady he died unconverted:

And so, his days in peace when past.
He met a pagan end at last
Serenely unconverted.
And in the Bush, his bardic dust,
To buttercups and such I trust
Is suitably diverted.[2]

Many topics come in for similarly light-hearted treatment. Divorce, the new woman, new-chum jackeroos, bush-vermin (the iniquitous tick is "a small acrostic / Our clever men can't read")[3] and countless other subjects are grist for the facile mill of his pen. But perhaps he is happiest when writing about animals in an Edward Lear manner. A collection was made of these animal poems in *Native Notions,* but as far as can be ascertained it was never submitted to a publisher, which is a pity, for there are some good examples of light, whimsical verse. One cannot read them without thinking of Norman Lindsay's *The magic Pudding* with its human-animals.

The native birds and animals in *Native Notions* are endowed with the characteristics of men, but moreover usually have some moral human defect such as greed, over-acquisitiveness, fussiness or rudeness. So the greedy emu breaks into a general store and consumes a wondrously-varied assortment of articles:

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4 "Monte Carlo", *Bird-O'-Freedom, i7.1.1893*
1 "The Anti-Soap Brigade" *Bird-O'-Freedom,* 4.11.1893
2 "A Dusky Bard", *Native Notions* manuscript.
3 "The Cursed Tick", *The Arrow,* 15.8.1896

Adown his long, dishonest throat,
He sank an axe, an anecdote,
An auger and an overcoat –
Rapacious bird!

And then a jar of vinegar,
A case of stuff that cures catarrh,
A gallon of the best Three-Star,
He drank, I've heard.[4]

Needless to say, the emu comes to a sudden, nasty end, thus providing a moral about greed and dishonesty. Similarly anti-social behaviour is exhibited by the bower-bird, who arises when the bell-bird's chimes are heard and "shows by working overtime, / The union he despises".[1] There is a quaintness of ideas and expression in some of these animal verses, evident particularly in the tale of the porcupine who was flooded out of his home on the Condamine and who "humped his swag on the Barcoo track", only to be eaten by an omnivorous pelican. This incautious bird paid dearly for his indiscretion, and after confessing his crime to the Friar-bird ""dropped and died on his young wife's breast". The tongue-in-cheek moral propounded by the poet reminds one of the mottoes once used in children's writing books early this century:

The Clouds will gather, the Rain will fall –
The Moral, of course, 'tis plain to us all –
<u>Wear flannel in Winter across the chest</u>
<u>And never absorb what you can't digest!</u>[2]

All of these poems have a distinctly Australian character of flavour, whether it be about bower-birds, goannas, emus or porcupines Brady is writing. They are Australian in their treatment of life, even when the language employed is half-heartedly disguised. For example the kookaburra who mocks the poverty and misfortune of a swagman is punished, but oddly the tale is told in a kind of mock Middle English:

Lest ye be lyke ribald jackasse sitting slyly on hys lymbe,
Laugh ye not at others' hardships, while in range, goode friends, lyke hym.[3]

The battle between the three Wombateers and the turnips, the mythical iguanaroo, the patent baby whose india-rubber bones were fastened with copper rivets and the Esquimo who lived on "walrus roast and blubber on toast" and who had "<u>plenty</u> of ice in his tea" are presented to the reader in verses alive and witty, using the rhythms of childhood skipping-ropes and nursery rhymes and often the repetitive refrains of folk verse and ballad:

Three old women they went a-sailing

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4 "The Emu and the Grocer", *Native Notions.*
1 "The Bower Bird", *Native Notions.*
2 "The Pelican and the Porcupine", *The Native Companion,* 1.8.1907
3 "Ye Jackasse", *Native Notions.*

Over the Stormy Sea.
Hoodle-doodle-diddle-dum!
With two black cats to do the baling –
And one to make the tea.
Hoodle-doodle-diddle-dum!

They steered their boat with a puppu-dog's tail,
Hoodle-doodle-diddle-dum!
With a petticoat tied on a broom for a sail,
Hoodle-doodle-diddle-dum!
Hoodle-doodle-diddledum dee![4]

Considering the fact that many of Brady's verses have elements of his own experience obvious within them – place names, actual events of his boyhood and youth, his journalistic experiences and emotional crises (for example the disappointments of his early marriages), his travels to Malaya and Queensland particularly, as well as his settling at Mallacoota, it is surprising to find so little trace of war. A trip along the western road to Bathurst evokes nostalgic recollections of boyhood and yet goes beyond this to arouse thoughts in him of previous travellers, of bearded diggers, of Macquarie, his wife and "warlike guard and retinue". In his imagination he hears "the clank of iron chains" of the convict gangs who "With sneering lips and leering eyes – gray ghosts of buried crime" build a way for new and more honest feet to tread.[1] Yet having lived through two major wars and several minor ones, exposed to casualty figures and ration books, war news and propaganda, there is almost no mention of way or any place where Brady acknowledges its existence except in *The Arrow* serials. "Call to Arms" is a rather stirring exception in verse, querying whether the contemporary generation can equal the men of the 1914-18 conflict in integrity and valour, to have the answer given: "By the old tradition, we will live – or die"; he receives assurance from it.[2] The only other instance of note is a poignant lyric regretting the burial of slain soldiers in foreign lands:

And, when returning Springtimes hold
A captive bush in chains of gold;
When, droning in the crested trees,
One hears the working song of bees,
And, rose and amethyst, the Morn
On dewy wings is hillward borne,
I would that he might nearer lie
Beneath his own Shoalhaven sky.[3]

True, a querulous poem, "Man" declaims against slavery in any form and deplores those times when a nation's youth is doomed for slaughter, when "Hell's bells insanely chime / A Devil's Mass" and "Moloch's fiery altars glow / With lethal steel".[4] But it seems that a man with a social conscience so well-developed as

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4 "Hoodle-Doodle", ibid.
1 "The Western Road", *Bells and Hobbles.*
2 "Call to Arms (1940)", *The Bulletin,* 28.8.1940
3 "A Grave in France", *The Bulletin,* 27.4.1922
4 "Man", *Rhymes of Revolt* manuscript.

> Brady's might have used his art in adding his plea for peace and his urgings against the follies of war.

Brady's verses often show many signs of needing further polish and refinement. However most of the manuscripts show a fair amount of change and alteration to individual words. rarely did he alter the basic rhythm – in fact, he made too much of it, bending and distorting the word-order to conform to the metre. When his forst book of verse appeared in 1899, a reviewer commented that "the trail of Stephens is conspicuous by its absence" but this was not strictly true. Stephens did assis Brady in many of the verses which went into *The Bulletin,* often querying individual words and particularly checking punctuation, which was not Brady's strong point. A proof copy of the title poem from this first book is among Stephen's collection of newscuttings of Brady's verses.[1] Stephen's comments are in the characteristic violet ink ("What's a ketos?") and Brady's alterations appear in red in his usual neat writing. The final stanza, in which only one small change occurred, has not been reproduced.

In general then, it can be stated that Brady covered an immense range of verse forms and topics in his contributions. While he wrote within the bush ballad tradition of the 1890's, along with Lawson and Paterson, he more often went outside it. His sea-chanties have no real equivalent in Australian verse, neither before or since. His political and topical verses are of a standard existing among those of *The Bulletin*, *Truth* and other journals of his day; his lyrics are sometimes highly evocative and always vivid, while his light humorous verse has an imaginative fancy somewhat rare in Australia. All his verse however, has a stiffness about it – a roughness of artificial rhyme and imposed form, with a little delicacy of either emotion or expression, but these are the characteristics of a primitive – a Grandma Moses – and there exist likewise, compensating factors. There is a sincerity, a freshness, a genuine quality which recreates the emotional qualities of the bush particularly, but of the Australian scene as a whole. His verses are in many cases sociological comments or documents, giving an account, often touching, of some aspects of society which have since been improved upon. The vigour of language is always apparent, from the earlier sea verse when dialect was used (a use decried by Archibald[2] and later by Slessor[3]) to the more acceptable "literary" language of the majority of the verse. The general tendency is towards wordiness rather than compression although there are some instances of the latter quality, such as in the epigrams he wrote but never published,[4] and in the topical doggerel. Sentimentality was often apparent, but more usually romanticism and idealism of a high order were observable.

Writing on the achievements of Henry Lawson, A.G. Stephens stated:

> *Lawson's shortcomings are obvious enough. His mental scope is narrow; he is comparatively uncultured; he iterates the same notes, and rarely improves his thought by elaboration; he wants harmony and variety of metre; his work*

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[1] In the Mitchell Library.

[2] Archibald to Brady, 7.2.1895. in Mitchell Library.

[3] K. Slessor, "Dialect", *The Bulletin,* 8.1.1920 deplored its use, denying the men *thought* in dialect and stating that poetry's interest is with men's thoughts, not actual utterances.

[4] A page of Epigrams by Brady appeared in his Literary Notebook (pp. 211, 212) in National Library. As examples might be cited "Drink is sworn foe of discretion"; "Politics are the amusement of the vulgar"; "Virtue is a waste of energy"; "Analysis is the death of all poetry".

> *is burdened with many weak lines and careless tags. But how graphic he is, how natural, how true, how strong![5]*

And on another occasion he writes:

> *The appeal ... is less that of a poet, however rough, than that of a racy rhymester, vigorous in vernacular. Many of the pieces included, though probably earning their place in ephemeral newspaper columns, have no claim to be set on permanent record ...[6]*

Both these comments could apply equally well to Brady. True, he was more cultured than Lawson in the sense that his reading was far wider and deeper, but with the exception of some of the best sea verse and a few of the ballads, the great body of his verse was journalistic rather than poetic. But as Stephens also remarked, the "national sue of poetry is to sing, to chant, to represent, to reinforce and heighten and lead onward the current of national life"[1] and there is no doubt that Brady, as well as many of his contemporary *Bulletin* writers, did this.

While is would be obviously improper to claim Brady as a major poet, he represents the picture of an extremely versatile and moderately proficient minor poet, one of the many hills among which Neilson and Paterson, Lawson and Brennan stood out as peaks. While John Masefield could list his omission from his anthology and mention him as the man "whose *Ways of Many Waters* contain the best poems yet written about the merchant sailor and the man-of-war's man",[2] his niche in Australian Literature must be secure, but one tends to agree with Douglas Stewart that his bush poems are better. Whatever the judgment, however, the man's vitality, versatility and vision must be recognised and applauded and his creative achievement in verse acknowledged with moderate warmth.

Good Old Times", "Boiled Jackeroo", "Mercies of the Gods" and "Mightier Than the Sword". In fact this last tale has affinities with "John Pye" in its examination of the problems of a man beset by an alcoholic thirst to the detriment of his business, in this case that of running a small-town newspaper.[1] Brady's sympathy for the country-dweller, especially the woman, is always evident, sometimes leading him to over-sentimentality, as in this story.

But the plots are not confined to the country. His stories, like his own experience, cover both city and country. Buttenshaw and his dog Measles are characters from the wharves on which Brady worked in the 1890's;[2] Biddy Airly was an Irish woman about whom Brady learned while delving into his ancestry;[3] Mr. Bell attempts to persuade him to smuggle drugs into Australia from Java[4] and "For His Wife's Sake" deals with tourist travelling on a cruise-liner in mid-Pacific.[5] Another story, written for a more sophisticated magazine and readership, for *The Australian Stage Annual,*[6] attempts the kind of verbal swordplay for which Brady admired Shaw, reproducing the conversation between a young man and his girl at a tiring play (the reaction of the nearby audience is not recorded!). Brady's young man, in hinting that he has a bitter story to tell but has taken a vow to remain silent, offers a challenge to feminine curiosity, which is not to be denied. It is yet another instance of psychological interest

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5 "Henry Lawson's Poems", *The Bulletin,* 15.2.1896, Red Page.
6 "Lawson's Latest Book – A Temporary Adjustment", *The Bulletin,* 12.1.1901, The Red Page.
1 *The Bulletin,* 29.1.1930, p.49.
2 Foreword to *A Sailor's Garland* (London, 1906)
1 "Mightier Than the Sword", *Land of the Lotus* manuscript.
2 "Buttenshaw and His Dod, Measles", *Kangaroo Tales* manuscript.
3 "Biddy Airly". Ibid.
4 "The Mysterious Mr. Bell", *Weekly Times,* 17.12.1938.
5 *The Sunday Times,* 22.12.1895
6 January, 1900. "A Prologue in Passion".

appearing in his work; in this case however, his attempt at slick dialogue does not succeed – it sounds stilted and pedantic.

Brady is more at home among sailors, bushmen, simple men and women, and with children, for whom he often showed a deep understanding and sympathy. This is apparent in the mawkish "Night in Sunlight",[7] one of the stories in the Poet and Artist series where Brady does not control his over-sentimentality; yet others in the same series are bright and full of the dry humour of the quiet bushmen who figure in them, as the tired trooped who partakes of "stewed rabbit" with two campers in the closed pigeon season.[8] The bush capacity to "bend" the law, particularly in the early days, is well recognised by Brady; yet it is the humanity of people that concerns him primarily, not their morality to the degree of their obedience of disobedience to laws which are made primarily for city folk.

Another story from the same series concerns the horse which the poet and the artist used in their trip down the Illawarra coast south of Sydney. "Jeremiah" was so named because of his "exceeding mournfulness" and he looked the part completely when one day he refused to go any further:

> *'He has jibbed,' exclaimed the poet solemnly. 'Go to his head!' The poet alighted. The countenanced of Jeremiah was inscrutable – like the ruins of Baalbec. He stood in the middle of the road, motionless as monumental bronze. The artist seized a rein and called upon him in the holy name of dury to advance. Jeremiah was deaf to the appeal. His conscience slumbered. He had lapsed into original sin.*
> *The poet flattered and chastened him alternately, while the artist, growing excited, picked up his hoofs, tapped them with stones, poured water into his ears, fired off a rifle under his nose, hurled reproaches and insults at him, tickled him, pulled his tail, sawed his fetlocks with a rope and failing to elicit the slightest response, proceeded in wrath to build a fire under him.*
> *"Stay", cried the poet as his companion was applying a match to the dry leaves. 'It is of no avail: I can perceive by his attitude that he would be canonised for a roasted martyr rather than succumb. Get up. Calm yourself and we will wait till the pangs of hunger weaken his resolution: hunger and time have moved the world; time and hunger will move Jeremiah.'*
> *They refreshed themselves from the jar and the poet, producing a volume of Meredith, read aloud. As the sentences became more and more involved a change came over the aspect of the rebel. His ears twitched, he shifted uneasily, stamped his hoofs and yawned. The poet read on. In the middle of the Preface which seemed to be all on sentence he uttered an indignant neigh and started off at a quick trot which he kept up for seven miles without a pause. Thenceforth when Jeremiah jibbed, they found Meredith invaluable. The poet never read him under any other circumstances, but before they had spent six months on the road he had competed six periods embodying quite three chapters.*[1]

The outrageous statements in this tale and the gently satiric approach to it, the exaggeration and wryness and the sting in the tail of the last sentence who a kind of writing Hugh McCrae would approve. It exhibits a fine control of humour, a bitter-sweetness which leaves the reader chuckling and wishing that Brady had employed this skill more frequently.

Although the short story is not the medium for developing character it can quite properly be the means of revealing it at any point or in response to particular circumstances. So Brady reveals the nature of the mysterious man who knows a little about Australia and uses this knowledge to ingratiate himself with an Australian tourist[2] and of the ex-convict who had been confined in a solitary cell for so long that he had to adopt a strange device to preserve his sanity. The perseverance expressed by the man was a source of wonderment to the author of "Solitary":

> 'Look 'ere, boss,' he exclaimed after another pause. You can't see yer 'and before yer eyes. You loses track of time; you don't know whether it's day of night. You think it's years. You see 'orrid things and when you scream out

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7 *Land of the Lotus.*
8 "The Good Old Times", ibid.
1 "Jeremiah – and the English Classics", *The Worker,* 24.6.1905
2 "The Mysterious Mr. Bell".

you only get more punishment. The ---------- there, they've got no pity on you! They keep a man in them cells till he goes mad – mad I tell you, stark, starin, rampin', roarin' mad.'

'It does not seem to have sent you mad, then?'

'No,' he murmured, 'but it would have done if I 'and't struck on something to keep my mind off thinking, and sort of got the dark out of me eyes.'

'What was that?'

'Why, I got hold a pin somehow, and while I was in there I used to stand in the middle of the sell – some of 'em keeps feelin' their way around the walls all the time, till they gets giddy and falls down – an' I used to get the pin out of me jumper, where I 'ad it 'id, and throw it down on the floor. They I would go down on me 'ands and knees and grope about till I found it. I've done that for hours at a time, an' it kept me from going mad – stark, starin', rampin', roarin' mad.'

He puffed away at his pipe vigorously, while he sat on his hams looking at the fire, holding a bit of bark in his fingers, from which he kept tearing little pieces and throwing them into the fire.[1]

Similar stoicism with which Brady was obviously familiar is recounted in "Mercies of the Gods" where a settler whose house, sheds and crops have been totally destroyed by fire can still express gratitude for the saving of his wife and children from the flames; their survival is the motivation and possibility for rebuilding.

As a descendant from an Irish heritage of which he was extremely proud, Brady could write with verve and humour about the reactions of an Irish-Australian farmer under circumstances of hardship and distress. Although there is a caricaturing of an Irish stereotype in "The impiety of Hooley", there is still the saving grace of sympathy and amusement. Michael has been farming his small plot in the face of fire and drought, but the last straw comes when floods begin to wash away the crop of cabbages, which is his only chance of even partial solvency. He finds it difficult not to blame his distress upon an "act of God":

Mick's rage and grief were are once terrible and heartrending. With clenched fists he turned his face to the sky – a dull lowering sheet of lead with a million perforations through which the rain was pouring.

'By God.' Said he, 'Ye may be a just God, but ye're not a merciful God or ye'd never thry to murther a poor hard-wurrkin' man by a dirty thrick like this!!!'

There was a box-tree opposite the old man's door on the other side of the garden fence. Just as he had got the impious words out of his moth a blinding flash of lightning hit the tree and sent limbs, branches and great skelps of the trunk flying in all directions. Down went Hooley on his knees like an automaton.

'I beg your pardon, God' cried Mick, his whole manner entirely changed.

"Arrah, God, I beg yer pardon. Spile the whole the damn cabbages if yer want to but spare a poor ould man'.

That was the first and the last occasion on which Michael was guilty of impiety![2]

Reactions of people to less dramatic and more usual conditions interested Brady, with his involvement in political and sociological matters. He was keenly aware of the tendency of people who were disadvantaged socially and economically to attempt to better themselves. An ironic but sympathetic treatment of this theme tells of a beautiful girl born in poor circumstances ("The beautiful flower which

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1 "Solitary", *Land of the Lotus.*

2 "The Impiety of Hooley", *The Arrow,* 23.1.1897

grows on an ugly dunghill is necessarily brief-lived").[1] The story of her attempts to break out of the squalor in which she found herself is told in "A Belle of Sooner's" – its universality being hinted by Brady's refusal to call it "*The Belle"*. This universality, and even impersonality of the lower-class individual, is further attained by referring to the heroine (or anti-heroine) by the number of her house, so that she is No. 31 and her suitor is No. 26. The drab uniformity of the cottages in the lane bored Lena to tears and she was receptive when "One summer's evening when Sooner's was panting for air beneath a smoke-palled sheet of ugliness that masqueraded as a sky, No. 26 cam over to talk to No. 31". The tawdry nature of the ensuing courtship, the girl's bored, reluctant acceptance of the last century Albert Steptoe provide as interesting social comment on the period, especially since her new house, like twenty-two others in the street, had a front garden precisely ten feet by three, a tiled verandah and a porcelain doorknocker. Seeing the motivation of the young girl, the reader is not surprised at the ensuing clandestine meeting with a richer man before the sardonic conclusion, pregnant with meaning for the average Australian – "The Belle of Sooner's had drifted to the private bar".

With his interest in people – their motivations and their reactions to various circumstances – Brady writes many stories which attempt to elucidate aspects of human behaviour. The feelings of a man pursued by a femme fatale on board ship, the reactions of a quiet country family when a city-bred superstitious aunt comes to stay, the mental machinations of a creative but lazy farmer who would rather work on his inventions than his fields, all provide subjects for his examination. When reading the stories he wrote, especially those published between 1894 and 1905, one feels that he is happier with the situation which involves ordinary people, or those with eccentric foibles, but which is highly charged with pathos and humour. He can draw, with sure swift strokes, the swagman who wages war on those arch-fiends of the bush, the crows who have killed his sheep. The masterful way in which the very atmosphere and dust of the bush is created, the blanched bones and dusty fleece of the dead sheep with the crows sitting on a bleached, exposed rib and cawing morbidly are scenes familiar to most Australians of the inland. He can enlist sympathy also for his subjects, so that when the owner of the dead sheep baits a fish-hook and catches a crow one is not appalled at this cruelty but mentally applauds while the unfortunate's brother crows behave in a way characteristic of their species and familiar to most rural observers.[2] Likewise he can sketch the two young humorists who shear a man's long-haired horse, the country man who can tell maize from sorghum at a mile but cannot see to cross city streets, as well as the stevedoring bully who was soundly beaten by the smaller and more agile Spider Magee.

Knowing of Brady's difficulties in politics, literature and life in general, of the hardships he experienced in many aspects of existence, it is not surprising to find him coming out, time and time again, on the side of the under-dog, the under-privileged, the inadequate. He leads the reader to rejoice at the fall of the bully, Buttenshaw, and at the discomfiture of the "flashjack" who is outwitted in horse-trading by the quiet German farmer who had for years been the butt of local jokers. The fury of the callow yough is well depicted when he returns to complain that the hose he bought is nearly blind. Complacently the old farmer states the he told him that several times:

> *Jack Dobie gasped.*
> *'You mean to tell me that you told me – that – that horse was blind?'*
> *"Yah, four or five times I say to you, "He vos a goot horse, Chack, but choost now he does not look well!"*
> *A light gradually dawned on Dobie. Peter stood before him with a bland smile on his face – a bland triumphant smile.*
> *Suddenly Dobie whirled his horse around. 'Done!' he yelled; 'Done like a damned dinner! And by a --------- German, too!' he added, driving in the spurs viciously. Peter stood by the fence, watching the cloud of dust as it rose along the track.*
> *"Yah,' he said to himself, 'he vos a goot horse, but he did not look well!'*
> *Then we went inside, chuckling.*[1]

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[1] "A Belle of Sooner's". *The Arrow,* 24.12.1897

[1] "A Horse Deal", *Kangaroo Tales.*

This interest in human behaviour, particularly in the mental realm, reaches its height when attempts are made to analyse the processes of thought which are involved in a particular action. It must be kept in mind however, that the psychology which Brady studied and showed deep interest I n was an infantile science in the 1890's when many of these stories were written. Two examples of attempted analysis are "The Remarkable Confession of Martin Creswick"[2] and "Tasso's Discovery: A Psychological Romance".[3] Brady shows some grasp of psychological principles in his examination of the case of a man who suffers from amnesia for seven years. Three murders are committed during this period and his reactions on regaining his memory and finding about his own involvement are plumbed, although not very comprehensively. His confession, found after his suicide, brings a measure of unity to what has been three disjointed incidents. When considered in its period, it is an unusual theme and its treatment once again shows Brady's concern with psychic phenomena.

The second of the two stories attempts to examine the psychological processes involved in dreams, exemplifying how vivid happenings in life can carry over into one's dreams and how the opposite is true- that dreams can be so realistic that they can constitute part of this existence. But as an example of the short story form it has too many of the deficiencies which Brady should have worked to remedy had his interest been more than passing one. It has a slow start, a rather anticlimactic ending, too much verbiage, descriptive detail and comment, an excess of authorial intrusion and a style far more discursive than the compressed, suggestive manner of the better short stories. As redeeming features it posses an ironic levity of approach which some readers would find appealing, a sensuous, journalistic language and a vividness and immediacy which Brady later found in the short stories of Katherine Mansfield.

As with so many of his other fields of activity, Brady shows a promise in his early short stories which one would expect to flower into a considerable and satisfying proficiency. But this was not to be. Occasioned no doubt by the pressures of earning a living, there was a lack of sufficient discipline to bring about the needed improvement. The goal of perfection, attained at the cost of vast attention to detail and an exceedingly strong desire to excel in the particular field is never sufficiently strong in him. His is the classical case of the versatile man who spreads his talents so widely that in any one area of achievement they remain fairly thin, with initial promise unfulfilled.

There are a few later short stories, but these show little advance on the early ones. Later attention is given more to articles and essays, especially to the political writing necessary on account of his connection with political journals. At a time when the short stories in *The Bulletin* were helping to forge a view of Australia as a unique and separate country which had and would continue to lead and existence apart from Britain, Brady's stories could have aided this process. Because they were published in journals more obscure than the popular *Bulletin,* their contribution in this regard would have been minimal. It is not know definitely whether Brady ever submitted his short stories to *The Bulletin.* Certainly there is now no record of submission, no rejection slips (and he kept many of these in his papers) and no mention anywhere of his contributions to Archibald's paper except through verse and the occasional article. This is a pity, for good editing might have made a good short story writer of him. Along with Dyson, Lawson, Palmer and others he could have contributed to the development of the Australian image his concern with the national character, his sympathy with the people of the bush, his interest in the life of the everyday working man and woman and their reactions to contemporary happenings. His is a fertile imagination, a very live sense of humour and a farcical streak along with an interest in invention and science; but if these qualities lead to too few short stories of any import, they are at the same time channelled into another literary form – that of the humorous and imaginative serial of interest to adults and older children alike, employing characters so much larger than life that he can handle them effectively, giving full play to the imaginative fertility which had necessarily to be subdued in other literary forms.

The Wide World Magazine, August 1898, carried this Introduction to a story:

> We now commence what may truly be described as the most amazing story a man ever lived to tell. In all annals of geographical science there is practically but one case that can be compared for a moment with M. De Rougemont's – but in that instance the man returned to civilisation a hopeless idiot, having

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[2] *The Bird-O-Freedom,* 21.12.1895
[3] Ibid, 19.12.1894

> lost his reason years before amidst his appalling surroundings. Quite apart from the world-wide interest of M. D Rougemont's narrative of adventure, it will be obvious that after thirty years' experience as a cannibal chief in the wilds of unexplored Australia, his contribution to science will be simple above all price. He has already appeared before such eminent geographical experts as Dr. F. Scott-Keltie, and Dr. High R. Mill, who have heard his story and checked it by means of their unrivalled collection of latest reports, charts, and works of travel. These well-known experts are quite satisfied that not only is M. De Rougemont's narrative perfectly accurate, but that it is of the very highest scientific value. We also have much pleasure in announcing that arrangements are being made for M. De Rougemont to read an important paper before that great scientific body, The British Association for the Advancement of Science, at their next congress, which will be held in September at Bristol. The narrative is taken down verbatim from M. D. Rougemont's lips, and apart from all outside authorities and experts, we have absolutely satisfied ourselves as to M. D. Rougemont's accuracy in every particular

There followed in the next few monthly issues a series of fantastic tales of supposedly authentic adventures which this gentleman had in Australia – tales of cannibalism, of weird rites, of heroic deeds and strange aboriginal characters. It was not until De Rougemont wrote of exploring an island of wombats that naturalists became suspicious. "I knew that wombats haunted the islands in countless thousands, because I had seen them rising in clouds every evening at sunset", wrote the noted traveller.

In the edition of the magazine of the following April, the *Wide World* editors prefaced De Rougemont's episode with a different introduction:

> *The Wide World is a Magazine started with the avowed intention of publishing true stories of actual experiences and avoiding fiction. "The Adventures of Louis D. Rougemont" were commenced under the belief that they were the true account of the life of the author. It now turns out that it is not possible for him to have been thirty years among the savages as stated. His story was told in these offices over a period of several months, during which time he never contradicted himself once. But, after what has transpired, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not publish it as a true narrative, but only as it is given to us by the author, leaving it to the members of the public to believe as much or as little as they please. It is admitted that portions of the story are founded on his experiences. In any case, the story is so crowded with vivid, graphic and consistent details, that it marks the author, if not a speaker of the truth, at least as a master of fiction who has had no equal in our language since Defoe; so that, even if the story is an invention, it is one which cannot fail to excite the deepest interest, and we are sure that our readers would be keenly disappointed if they were not allowed the opportunity of hearing the extraordinary developments and termination of the narrative. We may conclude, in the witty lines of the World:*
>
> *Truth is stranger than fiction,*
> *But De Rougemont is stranger than both.*[1]

After many enquiries, occasioned by letters to the press, it was revealed that D. Rougemont was really a Swiss, Grin, who had been a footman to Fanny Kemble, the Shakespearian actress, and butler to Lady Robinson, and had been to Australia for a few years in the 1870's. In a rather dour ending to a discussion of the man, Osbert Sitwell states: "After his exposure, he fled to Suchy, and oblivion descended on him from the day he was seen there, sitting is a cafe, apparently wrapped in gloomy contemplation."[2]

The thought of so many English readers (and especially the august members of the British scientific hierarchy) being deceived by such tales was a cause of great mirth to Brady – a mirth which could not

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1 The series concluded, after ten episodes, in May 1899.
2 M. Barton and O. Sitwell, *Sober Truth* (London, 1930), p.280

be contained. As a result, he wrote a broadly farcical serial in *The Arrow* in the latter part of 1898 to outdo the Swiss rogue. "Rougemont Outdone!" certainly achieved this aim. It had no pretensions to literary merit, but its vigour, humour and broadly-based imaginative conclusions must have kept its readers both enthralled and amused. In sheer ridicule of the travel genre popularised by Defoe, Butler and Swift and carried to extreme lengths by current periodicals such as *Wide World Magazine,* it was unexcelled in its day; but in addition, the fantastic meanderings of the narrator, his mother, father and a native servant who also appeared in other serials by Brady, provided a means whereby he could comment caustically upon the Australian character, human nature in general, "civilisation" and various aspects of social and scientific development. The whole tale is too outrageous to have any chance of being believed, even by the most unsophisticated reader, but still exercises a strange fascination. The serial is written with a sly, sardonic wit and stylistic devices reminiscent of Mark Twain at times, of Swift on other occasions, while much of it is pure, unadulterated and uninhibited individualistic Brady.

The device with which Brady begins "Rougemont Outdone!" is not very effective and in addition is unnecessary. To pretend to get editorial approval in the manner used is childish, yet even this artificial device contains it sly comment, for the editor refuses to admit his initially, thinking he might be "a lady contributor with a little thing of (her) own". Having gained editorial approval the writer launches his story, heavy-handedly lampooning the contemporary demand the Australian stories should have Australian settings, lashings of local colour and familiar themes, probably by this means having a sly dig at *The Bulletin*, with its nationalistic emphasis. Then it is obvious that this local colour is perverted, for the Australian's love of the tall story is immediately evident. His father is introduced as the head of the permanent military forces at Forbes, with the title of Governor-General (this was before Federation) and when the deep snow there melted under the efforts of the municipal hot-water carts, the resultant torrents carry the whole house down to the sea vie the Yarra River. The eight episodes which follow contain wildest fantasy, yet draw the reader into a suspension of reality and countless farcical and highly improbably adventures. The narrator (his father calls him Septimus Titus), the Governor-General and his wife, and Cumbo the aborigine are rather sketchily portrayed; but gradually over the length of the serial a reasonably-rounded picture of the principal figure, the Governor-General, emerges. The original purpose of outdoing D. Rougemont is never lost.

Human foibles are always pointed out, as well as physical peculiarities. So when a fearsome flying boa-constrictor is sighted it is seen to have the physical build of the New South Wales Premier to which comparison the editor adds in parenthesis, "seems incredible". The boa-constrictor's mouth was so huge that it was obvious to the travellers that he "carried on business on the wholesale principle".[1] In his attempts to capture the monster and to dispose of it afterwards, the Governor-General shows himself to be a man of courage, initiative, a capacity for great attention to detail, and has a propensity for making money from many most unusual ways. He displays inventiveness, resourcefulness and stoicism – qualities inherent in Australians, we are led to believe, and ones rightly regarded as national characteristics. As the son-narrator says of his father's enterprise: "He would have opened up a retail sand-paper emporium in the Central Sahara if he got there."

But if a sardonic humour, a tendency towards the telling of tall tales and an unusual vitality and willingness to try new experiences, especially those concerned with making money, are factors in the make-up of the average Australian, as exemplified by the Governor-General, so also is the exercise of the pioneering assets of resourcefulness and initiative, the ability to improvise in the face of emergencies created by a breakdown of plant or equipment. It is remarkable the way the Governor-General uses electricity filched from a passing cloud (using a conductor made of good Australian barbed-wire) to power his boat "The Gospel Truth" and to kill a sea-serpent; how he uses a passing albatross to pull his canoe over the ocean; and using a still hastily compiled from pieces of wash-boiler, how he produces both fresh water and, with the addition of maize, some whisky at the rate of a gallon and a half a day – a truly enterprising citizen! One gains the impression that Brady is both praising this inventive characteristic of Australians and at the same time suggesting that perhaps it is made too much of. Surely, in the forms he had it take, he is outdoing De Rougemont!

Brady uses his often-demonstrated interest in science and technology both to enliven the narrative and to poke fun at the pretensions of scientists as a group. He gives meticulous attention to latitude and longitude, to speed (which he wrongly quotes in knots per hour) and to the then-current preoccupation with Darwinian theories of evolution and natural selection by discovering an island inhabited by

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[1] *The Arrow,* 21.11.1898, p.4

Missing Links, upright creatures halfway between a gorilla and a negro in appearance and having short tails which they attempt, in an embarrassed manner, to hide. Many sly references are made to the habitual claims of scientists to employ scientific methods of thought and analysis, attention to detail, objectivity and intelligent hypothesising. One such instance occurs when the Governor-General is in danger of being cast into the sea "a thousand leagues" from the nearest land, Antarctica. He calculates that he can swim the distance, using scientific methods of changing his stroke, employing strategically-placed rest periods and so on, but decides against it when he considers how cold it will be upon landing on Antarctica with no way of keeping his matches dry!

Chapter Six – Prose Writings

a) Fiction
b) Non-fiction

"But in *real* life, my readers, where the *real* people live,
There is much to be forgotten, and the rest we might forgive."
Brady, "Dan's Romance".

Brady's breadth of interest is evident from the quantity and range of verse, though admittedly his achievement is not of high standard, even when compared with his contemporaries. To this achievement, however, must be added his prose writings, which are in themselves considerable, even if his editorially and articles in political journals are omitted. There are many short stories, some published in *Truth, The Arrow* and *The Grip* but many still unpublished and existing in manuscript among his collections in the libraries. In addition there are several long serials which appeared in *The Arrow*, one of which was republished in book form by A.C. Rowlandson. The non-fiction consists of several biographies (as well as the auto-biographical *Life's Highway*), and a large body of what may be called geographical or travel writing. This includes accounts of journeys as well as more general publicity writing for specific areas of the country, culminating in quantity, if not in time, in the gigantic *Australia Unlimited,* a work which surveyed Australian development up to 1918. In addition to these large quantities of prose, there are many articles on

geographical, historical, literary and personal themes contributed to general magazines such as *Bank Notes* and *Life Digest.* In these sections as in the previous, the very versatility of the man, the catholicity of interest and the volume of work achieved is more noteworthy than any one outstanding feature of it. It is only fair to say however, that Brady shows sufficient skill in his prose to make one regret that he did not give more careful attention to his formal writing and less regard to the day-to-day exigencies of journalism. There are several occasions when he rises above the mediocre, leading one to deplore the lack of a singleness of purpose which might have strengthened his achievement, even at the expense of the width of his writing.

a) **Fiction.**

An undated short story, the manuscript of which is in the National Library, contains many of Brady's characteristic elements. In "A Woman's Reason" are crystallised towards women, both as individuals and members of society, and towards scientific and sociological methods of analysis. The interest in science is apparent from the beginning with reference of Dr. Goodenough, who had practised medicine in Clarencetown for twenty years. The doctor had produced a paper elaborating his theory that the nearer to Capricorn one lived, the more unconventional the behaviour of which one was capable. In his "Love and Liver in Relation to Temperature", a title gently satirical of some exotic research themes, Brady suggests there lies the only possible explanation for the behaviour of the subjects of the story. Deeply interested in the determinants of behaviour, Brady wryly asserts as the story unfolds that usual norms of activity do not necessarily explain the way women behave, especially those women of romantic temperament. There is the typical Brady understatement and the insight into human emotions:

> *Ann, from any angle of view, was attractive. A select circle of make friends compared her with Cleopatra. Female friends sometimes wished Ann and the asp might come into nearer relationship.*

Neat turns of phrase occur and recur, for Brady's wit and high spirits are never far below the surface, even when he has cause for depression. Speaking of Ann's parents he mentions that "to their accumulated possessions they had added pretensions to superior birth" – a revealing comment upon a particular type of socially-mobile family. In fact, Brady shows keen awareness of social status and class consciousness, assuming wealth, tradition, occupation and social attitudes to be determinants of class, but hints strongly that some people claim more personal determinants to gain a status undeserved.

Self-conscious elements sometimes mar the narrative's free-flowing, for Brady feels intensely but lacks the creative integrity to ensure the freedom of the work as a piece of art. So he intrudes: "To the reader these details may appear trivial. To the inhabitants of Clarencetown – curiously divided into classes on the basis of ownership and occupation – they were of utmost importance".

Brady's wry, dry humour shines through frequently in this as in other stories' in fact he rarely manages to contain it wholly, it being part of his general irrepressibility. He often speaks of his wish to be a humorist, but this overt intention sometimes makes the humour he writes forced, artificial and immature. It is best when it comes through

naturally and with bite, as in the unpretentious topical verse where it avoids the heavy-handedness of many of the short stories. Even so, some instances are not without interest. To the possibility of marriage between Ann and her suitor, her grandfather raised no objections. "The weight of his tombstone was sufficient in itself to prevent his voice being heard". But the other father was opposed to the match; in neatly contracted ideas his disposition and character are delineated: "In appearance he resembled an owl more than an eagle. But his mind soared. It was an ambitious mind. The pinions of its hopes rose to supernal heights where his daughter was concerned". Pa Webster opposed the match partly because the boy's forebears were hotel-owners and partly because they were notorious for their bad table manners. Such things are vitally important for some people, hints Brady.

Where emotions are vivid, tending towards violence, there Brady's is most at home in portraying them. The interplay of the relationship between Marcella and Ann is examined quite searchingly, the gulf between the real feelings of the two and their outward display to friends being made apparent. "Marcella had laid on the altars of Ann's anxiety that most specious of all votive offerings – the sympathy of a woman friend". Using his journalistic skills to add colour and create atmosphere, Brady makes interesting parallels, such as that between the fish dripping melted and the commercial traveller dripping perspiration. The unpredictability and mystery of womanhood are demonstrated following the failure of the tryst when Ann marries, not Stephen, but Zebulon.

This is not an important short story, not is it a particularly effective one, but it illustrates in a short space Brady's strengths and weaknesses in this genre. His keen observation, dry wit, vivid portrayal of emotion and his control of his medium work towards a considerable achievement; but he shows a tendency to use stereotypes rather than characters, to be satisfied with a plot not well polished and has the habit of employing wordiness when sparseness and compression are more legitimate characteristics of the language of the short story. When the good features of his art out-weigh the poor, as they do in some instances, he produces stories which make us regret that he did not put more zeal into this practice, but when it is realised that most of the stories are from the period of his employment on *The Sunday Times, The Worker, The Arrow* and *The Grip,* it is easy to understand how the day-to-day exigencies of journalism made such attention difficult. There is no evidence of any later attempt to rework the stories. In excess of thirty have been found, many still in manuscript form; one must conclude that a lack of interest in the form, a lack of pride in craftsmanship, or a lick of perseverance was responsible for this neglect. A brief, pregnant and meaningful opening does much to set a short story on the road to success and some his stories do being well:

> *She was tired of it. So tired that she no longer cared. So tired that while he was away in the out-paddocks ploughing, or ring-barking or rounding up cattle, she would sit in the house for hours brooding.*[1]

Or:

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[1] "Gone Back", *The Sunday Times,* 6.6.1895

> *In her fancy, every now and then, the low ceiling seemed to crush her down. She forgot how long she had lain there, looking at its varnished boards.*[2]

Sometimes they have a gentle sarcasm typical of the sardonic tone of some Brady's writing on the subject of literature in Australia:

> *Now Bill and Jim were mates. In the literature of this country it would be a difficult matter to find mates who were not Bill and Jim, but that doesn't matter.*[3]

And at times this cynical note creeps into the general writing:

> *Sooner's Alley graded between the poor-but-respectable and damned-and-don't-care. Life in Sooner's was turgid but picturesque. The pavement had robed the roadway of thirty inches on either side, and the roadway was just wide enough for two loaded vehicles to pass one another – with judicious blasphemy.*[4]

These examples show that Brady can begin in a way that catches the reader's attention, draws him in towards the action to follow and suggests a mood, an evocation of atmosphere. Most have definitive Australian flavour, for despite Brady's pride in his Celtic ancestry, he is Australian through and through; most of his stories are as national as Dyson's Lawson's or Steele Rudd's.

There are many times however, when the openings of his stories carry excess weight, where detailed description and expository material replace compression and suggestion, both so essential in the short story writer's art. This can be seen in a good story, "The Healing of John Pye", an effective story in many ways but one which begins:

> *The trees on John Pye's selection grew thick if girth and high. Some of them had been seedlings when Sir Joseph Banks and Dr. Solander stepped ashore from the "Endeavour" to gather wild flowers at Botany Bay. Others were probably 'grown up' when Marlborough was only a boy. In either case it did not matter to John Pye, who put an edge on his axe which a Viking might have envied and sallied forth one balmy September morning to 'do for' an ancient bluegum trunk that ante-dated the burning of Moscow but interfered with the building of the stockyard fence. Antiquity being an abstraction that entered not into the calculations of John Pye, that commonplace selector had saw and cut the tree almost through before noon.*[1]

Brady shows here a nicely balanced sense of antithesis (a favourite device of his) between the important event of Moscow's destruction and Pye's stockyard fence, but the attention given to the establishment of a sense of antiquity is really wasted. True, Pye is later trapped by a branch of the big tree, but antiquity has nothing to do with it

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2 "Those Who Wait" *The Worker,* 15.12.1904.
3 "In a Hurry", *The Arrow,* 24.4.1897.
4 "A Belle of Sooner's", *The Arrow,* 24.12.1897.
1 "The Healing of John Pye", *The Worker,* 4.2.1905

(or with anything else in the tale subsequently). While this kind of verbosity can add interest to a general newspaper article or a political editorial, or even to a humorous serial, it detracts from the force of a short story.

Brady's stories usually have a plot which is adequate and at times extremely appropriate for this form He has a liking for the informal yarn, the often humorous event in the life of the people of the outback and can create the atmosphere of isolation and hardship which are Lawson's forte. But he is also keen on the "vignette" – a word he often uses in a subtitle – which he describes as a scene "frozen" for examination by a sensitive observer to throw light on the microcosm from which it is taken. There are times when his plot is melodramatic, as are particularly some of the *Arrow* stories (such as "The Snake and the Woman" where a love-crazed doctor uses his knowledge of snakes to dispose of a rival[2]).

This tendency towards the melodramatic treatment is seen also in "The Healing of John Pye', already mentioned. Pye's moments of misery stretch into hours when he is trapped by a fallen branch. His wrigglings and wrenchings, the grating of the broken bones and the digging up of the ground by agony-driven fingers are told with all the journalist's loving attention to sordid details. Contrast heightens the effect as the trapped man, whining to God, "held like a beetle pinned to a sheet of paper", biting chips and leaves as he struggles, suffers in a world of beauty, surrounded as he is by flowers, trees, parrots and fleecy clouds – all evidence of a peaceful universe. The descriptions are removed from the purely naturalistic with the designation of the sun as the eye of God. Suggestion leads to a widening of the significance of the event, to a questioning of the place of suffering in human destiny, to a query about the part played in the human drama by God. And after the detailed account referred to, in further contrast of method, the blunt "He was unconscious when his white-faced wife and terror-stricken boy found him" produces a sense of shock and foreshadows the overt urgency and drama to come. The agony previously had been all in John Pye's mind – now it is widened. This is good, dramatic, sensuous writing, but perhaps too wordy with its descriptions and stereotyped phrases for the short story form. The melodramatic ending yet conveys effectively that the bush, with its isolation and subdued terror, can be extremely dramatic, both in its nature and its sudden, unforseen effects. The weird climax of murder and suicide are believable in their savagery and terror because of the everpresence of innate mystery of the natural world.

In spite o its weaknesses – weaknesses of excess rather than neglect – "The Healing of John Pye" does hold the reader. It does give a slice of life which is Australian in its portrayal of an isolated and hazardous life and the stoicism and hardihood of those who pursue it. It throws light on human personality, especially on the dissolute doctor whose laxness and indulgence lead not only to his own death but to that of his patient also. Is this a macabre inversion of the concept of mateship? Not only do mates depend upon each other for survival in the country but the weakness, the tragic flaw in one individual, directly and indirectly affects many others. Perhaps the ironic title with its "healing" could be understood to reflect a nihilistic philosophical viewpoint, but it is doubtful if Brady was making any deep metaphysical statement considering that the tale was published in *The Worker*. Aspects of bush life and the complexities and tragedies of human behaviour were almost certainly the main

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[2] 4.4.1896

emphases in his mind while writing it. As Vance Palmer points out,[1] one of the most difficult aspects of short story writing is deciding upon the focus of the plot. Perhaps an author more experienced than Brady would have written this story from the view-point of the decaying professional man whose ruin by alcohol has such tragic effects upon others. Each man is, in effect, his brother's keeper. However, as it stands, Brady has produced a story which is gripping and entertaining and conceivably succeeded in evoking sympathy for those who lead the pioneer life from its city readers and arousing a kindred feeling amongst those already living in similar circumstances in the bush.

Many of Brady's short stories have entertaining plots drawn from events associated with country life – evident in "The Tragedy of the Long-Horned Steer", "The Good Old Times", "Boiled Jackeroo", "Mercies of the Gods" and "Mightier Than the Sword".

[1] "Writing a Story", Appendix 11 in Vance Palmer, *The Rainbow Bird and other Stories* selected by A. Edwards, (Sydney, 1957 (1969)). Palmer discusses the difficulty he had with "Mathieson's Wife" until he narrated it from the point of view of the boy, not the parson.

There are many sly references to religion and to those who believe in it, beside the name of the houseboat ("The Gospel Truth") and its figurehead "representing Ananias as a youth on the way to Sunday School". The very whale which swallowed Jonah is slain (they find Jonah's shirt with his laundry-mark on it) and the Governor-General's wife, an example of misled religionist, sings Moody and Sankey hymns as she floats ashore on a barrel. There is word-play about the spirit when she refers to the spirit of the presumed-dead Cumbo, while her husband refers to the product of his still with equal reverence. Some of the word-play is topical, for a current typhoid and bubonic plague scare would have given point to the old man's order when, on seeing an approaching typhoon, he prepared carbolic to disinfect the ship.

Another of Brady's favourite targets comes in for attack when the adventurers are cast upon an island inhabited by New Women. The captures heroes are given a choice of marriage or death. The way in which the Governor-General solves this personal impasse, using his existing marriage as a pivot, is quite amusing. The solutions involves compromise, perhaps more accurately stated in this instance as mutual blackmail, as the only method by which harmony in marriage can be maintained. The Women's Liberation movement is not a new idea, one gathers from Brady.

It is when Brady comes to his main, ingenious unravelling of plot that he is in the field closest to his heart – poetry and literature in general. Landing on an island inhabited solely by poets, a tribe quite pathetic in its impoverishment, the party fears for its mental health, as well as for its physical well-being. The inhabitants of the island express all the worst features of Australian poets, but here these faults are so much more obvious to all:

> 'Ah', said the stranger, 'Life in these southern lands is indeed sad. Our days are passed beneath raging suns, which boil and roast our brains; our throats are consumed by raging thirsts. We cannot quench our raging thirsts without cash! To obtain cash we must toil! Toil! Most dreadful, most horrible of human punishments. See the hairy, hopeless shearer, the noblest of God's creatures, is compelled to work for a boss. See the swagsman, second as a heroic figure only to the shearer – see him…'
> *'I've seen him,' said the old man curtly. 'They used to hang around my selection up at Forbes, begging and stealing tucker…'*
> *'Let me read you a little thing of mine about a dying swagsman and the overland telegraph wire!'*
> *'No you don't!' cried the old man, getting up and tearing up a young sapling for a club. 'I've heard it too many times before…'*
> *'But,' said the poet, 'there is an overland telegraph wire, and there are swagsen –'*
> *'I know," interrupted the old man, ' but they obscure the whole landscape of Australian literature; they occupy the complete menu-card. I've had swagsman roast, swagsman boiled, swagsman cold and swagsman fried, swagsman curried and swagsman on toast until I've gone completely homicidal on the subject. I'd kill a man for mentioning swagsman to me,' glowered my parent, 'and I'd eat him raw if he added the overland telegraph wire to the injury!'*[1]

The poet goes on to say that there are a hundred and twenty-five accredited poets on that island and they all write about the swagman. Much to the old man's discomfiture, the poets approach, but are interrupted by forty war-canoes filled with critics, come to attack the island and its inhabitants. The adventurers shin up coconut palms to watch the fun. Some of the critics are armed with clubs, some with dictionaries and some with steel-tipped pens when they poison by holding in their mouths. The poets defend themselves as well as they are able with their manuscripts, "most of which were heavy enough to send a man to sleep if they hit him." The fighting is the most savage ever seen, but the valiant poets are eventually completely routed.

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[1] 31.12.1898, p.4

> *The critics gathered up the dead, wounded and suicided and then ensued one of the biggest al-fresco dinners you ever imagined. They had poet grilled, roasted, fried and on the shell. I noticed that they washed them down with copious draughts of ink, and while the meal was digesting, they sat round over-paunched and talked literature ...I noticed that while they were turning the poets into corpuscles they went on a good deal about 'psychological impulse', 'purity of emotion', 'true genius', 'genuine art' and things of that sort, and one of the Critics, who had evidently eaten more poet than he had capacities to hold, said the only true poetry was that which contained emotion plus fancy, minus hereditary bachfulness.'*[1]

It is impossible to say what effect this highly individualistic writing had on Brady's contemporaries, or even if they noticed it at all. It is fast-moving, satirical, energetic and entertaining writing, provocative to the degree that it would turn a reader's attention to his society and lead him to consider its strengths and weaknesses. But above all it is good fun, even if not literature in its higher sense; and the result was that Brady was encouraged by this beginning to produce more of the same type of work. In the next couple of years five more serials ensued, one of these running to forty-one episodes. The one which followed "Rougemont Outdone!" however is less fantastic, more believable and more "literary". It tells of the adventures of the writer and his servant Cumbo as they wander about Australia meeting strange men and women, especially in the outback regions. In its evocation of the bush way of life, in its protrayal of bush people and in its rambling form it has a flavour similar to *Such Is Life,* although Furphy's book was not published until 1903 (it was written earlier) and Brady's "On the Wallaby" saw publication from February to June 1899.

The same biting comments on current practices in Australian writing are soon evident, but lose some of their effect through the artificial device Brady employs to begin the serial. As in "Rougemont" he cannot just launch into the narrative, letting the characters introduce themselves, but as a product of his literary self-consciousness he must arrange a more formal and less effective introduction. So an arrangement intended to make the adventures recounted by an Australian pioneer, looses effect because of its artificiality; but the heavy-handed Brady satire is obvious from the commencement with further allusions to literature's preoccupation with swagmen, saltbush, damper and the Overland Telegraph Line:

> The Hen Editor laughed sarcastically. 'It's easy to see,' he observed, 'that you haven't read much. If you had, you would have know that when a swagsman comes to a water-hole there is nothing left except some mud and the bones of swagsmen who have been there before him, and have laid them down and died of thirst in doleful numbers.'
> 'But.' I ventured, 'how do they live?'
> 'They don't live,' he said; 'They all die, and the crows pick 'em clean. They die at various prices from seven and six a column to as high as thirty bob, and a trifle extra for the crows!'[2]

Brady was not naive and it is interesting to note that this type of comment would have no force unless he was sure that his readers would recognise the strength of the current practice upon which he was commenting. Here was they other extreme from the transplanting of English gardens, season, people and animals from the mid-nineteenth century. If Paterson, Lawson and The Bulletin *were out to create an Australian Tradition in literature and to develop a distinctively Australian consciousness, then the current of Brady's thought would suggest very strongly that by the end of the century the position had been reached that some reaction against it, some moderation of it was in order. In a sense this was a necessary step and a direct*

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[1] 7.1.1899, p.4. This last reference to a critic was meant to refer to an article written by A.G. Stephens (*The Bulletin*, 3.12.1898) in which he stated that each poet could be summed up as. E.G. Daley = intellectual emotion plus fancy; Kendall = intellectual emotion plus imagination; Lawson = emotion; Ogilvie = emotion plus fancy, and so on.

[2] 11.2.1899, p.4.

precursor of the more universal and international flavour of the young poets soon to emerge – Fitzgerald, Slessor and others.

If it is correct to regard Brady as a kind of Australian Grandma Moses in the field of verse, so he has many of the primitive's characteristics in these prose serials. As he and Cumbo hump their swags throughout the country, they regard with ever-fresh eyes the typical (and abnormal) countrymen they meet, the conditions of the life which is their lot, and the wider questions which arise about the purpose of life itself, why it takes the forms it does, and why men undergo such vicissitudes, both natural and man-made. The love of animals, particularly dogs and horses, is itself an attributed he shares with countless Australians and he must be considered along with Norman Lindsay in his ability to picture dogs and their characteristics, as his word-pictures of Brutus and Leichhardt attest. While Brutus is all bluster and cowardice, Leichhardt is an animal of spirit, even though permanently schizophrenic with his two tempers – "one mild and refined, the other treacherous and vulgar". The stirring description of the fight between these two reminds the reader of Lawson's famous "loaded dog". The scientific terms used in this account add to its mock-seriousness and again show Brady's interest in science. He terminates his account of this fight by stating: "It was a scene of whirling chaos, such as must have been present in the heavens on a somewhat larger scale when the moon was trying to break away from the earth in the early dawn of history before we got responsible government in Australia".[1] His accounts of horses show his affection for them also, and as does Narrabeen, they often assume human characteristics in their behaviour and motivations.

But it is in the bush-dwellers themselves that Brady shows most interest. They have a fortitude and stoicism which he much admires. These characteristics he sees embodied in a code of action by which they live, an adherence tips the scale in favour of full acceptance by one's peers. Excellence within this code of behaviour is the basis of heroism, even for the bush-girl, as Mary Ann demonstrated by controlling her bolting horse. The code is built up in Brady's writings to reveal its requirements of strength, determination, initiative, unselfishness, perseverance – those qualities which, when attained, make one a good mate. Deviations from this standard are cause for regret but also for amusement and Brady derives much of the humour in his serials from such deviations.

Set in the economic depression of the late 1890's when the Government was offering work to the unemployed (and "the permanently unemployed were getting out of the city to avoid it") "On the Wallaby" good-humouredly sets its author and Cumbo in this category and they leave the city, owing their landlady three month's rent. To avoid "hurting her feelings" they depart by night, thus beginning a remarkable series of incidents and adventures. The code of the country is broken by a shopkeeper whose mendacity they attempt to punish, but the "shrinkproof" shirts they swindle from his are used to pull out tree-stumps when stretched between them and sprinkled with water! So much for country tall tales! There are several thrusts at greed and at unionism, which can be a variant of this sin. So when the two travellers are employed by Ezekiah Grumble, an ideal boss who feeds his workers on beef, turkey, bacon and eggs, apple and cherry pie, and pays them well, they grumble about the food on principle: "It doesn't do to be satisfied – a workingman must stick up for his rights if he wants to get along in the country." Ezekiah, a man with an obsession, is sketched

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[1] 1.4.1899, p.4.

sympathetically, for men with eccentricities are not rare in the country. In fact, one of the bush's good qualities is its tolerance of eccentricities, providing they do not harm one's fellow-men. In this case, Ezekiah has very fixed ideas on how to make rain, trying to convert all comers to his doctrine:

> 'Con-cushion makes the clouds explode,' said Mr. Grumble, dogmatically pressing the knuckles of his right hand on the palm of his left. 'con-cushion does, and when the cloud explodes what 'happens? Why, the rain comes down ker-wollop, soakin' the ground, and makin' the crops grow. No I tell ye, there's the sky chock full o' water waitin' to be tapped, and what does out Parleymint do? What does it do?' he demanded.[1]

While the bush tolerates eccentricities, loves tall tales and treats practical jokers with benign amusement, there are find lines drawn as limits of such behaviour and brady was interested in these. When two practical jokers set out to harass old John Gormley, they come very close to crossing this limit of tolerance and approach the nether reaches of cruelty. The incident is described sympathetically, with tension heightened by a vivid account of a severe electrical storm as the two hide parts of an aboriginal skeleton in Gormley's house. One can imagine his reaction in finding a skull on the plate where his leg of lamb previously lay, and after several similar shocks the poor wretch, fancying himself in danger of the judgment, flees to his neighbour's. Even when they are tormented, the characters of the bush are worth of compassion and respect. Simple as they may be in some ways, there is a genuineness and probity about them which, the author hints, could well be emulated by the city-dweller.

As well as an insight into bush people, Brady has also a feeling for the country landscape and atmosphere as perspicacious as Furphy's of Rudd's. It is not the continually harsh and barren landscape of so much of Lawson's work, but there is a time and place where plenty is to be found, where a fulfilment and refreshment of the soul and spirit result. Such a state is reached by Brady at the end of "On the Wallaby" and the lyricism which it arouses in him cannot be contained.[2] The view of the bush as a therapeutic and cathartic force is new to Brady and his appreciation of it rests on his deepest philosophical beliefs. In spite of his agnosticism, here is a pantheistic and even a religious Brady, certainly a sincere one, and if the passing years left a gloss of materialism and atheism, this deep will of inner resource which allowed him to find comfort in the natural creation never left him completely.

Ad in the previous serial, Brady uses "On the Walalby" to convey social comment. Although a staunch unionist, he had several thrusts at unionism, especially at its over-zealous application ("It is the correct thing for every working man to get all he can out of an employer, especially when he has him at a disadvantage"). Social snobbery is deplored and ironically viewed against the background of the new egalitarianism. Especially are the artificial graces of the "remittance man' cause for amusement and pity, and when the author attempts to imitate one, putting on a lofty attitude and exaggerated speech, the rough farmer responds appropriately: "Well, I'm struck. If it ain't the most paralysin' thing that ever stepped over the ranges." Further point is given to these elements of the social mores by contrast with Cumbo's society. He

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[1] 25.2.1899, p.4.
[2] 17.6.1899

offers to return to the homestead and bring the object of the author's affection with a club, to which the lovelorn retorts that it might have done well in sandstone times but "it won't fit with these days of bloomer and women's rights and lady barristers." In fact, a wide spectrum of human relationships is examined, especially when two girls simultaneously are the objects of his affection.

Between the characteristic Brady understatement and the overstatement of the bush there are many variations in narrative style. The goose captured because it has wandered from its owner's farm is "mercifully bled" before reaching the travellers' cooking-pot; a patch of trousers torn out by a dog is "as big as a suburban allotment"; a very obese lady had a "surcingle" strapped round her middle "for fear she would breach in two at her narrowest part"; all these exemplify Brady's keen observation and dry wit in communication of the fact that so much of life is basically droll and humorous and the telling of it cannot ignore the fact. Whether the two travellers are in peril clambering down a cliff-face, stealing a sucking-pig or sleeping in a boiling-down shed "breathing through their feet", there is a vividness and an earthiness which extracts the maximum interest from the account. In general, "On the Wallaby" is more entertaining and better written then its predecessor although it must be remembered that it was written for a general readership and in conditions which permitted no revision, no lengthy consideration of apposite words but required constant weekly production from a writer with other responsibilities and further, from a writer who had to be his own editor. It deals mainly with unsophisticated characters yet does not write down to its audience. Its purpose is to entertain and in good measure this is what it does.

The next serial sets out to do the same – to entertain the reader, but it is markedly different from "On the Wallaby". "A Juvenile World Walker" sets out the adventures of three young city boys as they trek through the Australian countryside living on their wits. Entertaining and beguiling as they are, it is soon obvious that they are really only three young confidence men. Their tale is told to the editor of The Arrow[1] *complete with spelling errors, faults in grammar and juvenile mispronunciations. Although some of these are undoubtedly humorous they soon become tedious in the extreme and detract from any force they tale might have. Its chief interest might well be to the student of language interested in the boyhood slang of the period. It is surprising to find there modern slang terms such as "rort", "guyver", "cooshy" having their present meanings. There are many coined words, such as the rather appropriate "sanctimonimaniacs", and broad humour always, especially when the larrikins "board" in a tomb in the old Devonshire Street Cemetery before they go world-walking.*

> The cove that the grave belonged to was a deacon or somehink in a church, an' Charley he shifted 'im in with an ole lady what has been renowned for piety an' good works, so 'er inscription sed, an' the deacon an' the ole woman they got along all right enough together.[1]

The obvious comparison with this sort of writing is with Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer *or* Huckleberry Finn. *Yet Twin has enough literary sensitivity to use this kind of*

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[1] 24.6.1899 to 15.9.1899

[1] 24.6.1899, p.4.

writing sparingly in proportion to the whole book, while Brady does not. Twain's boys speak rougher, less lucid dialect, but recognising that its continual use can be wearing, he sets it amongst more orthodox passages, but Brady exercises no such discretion and the serial suffers as a result; it is not until Brady's last serial, "A Younger Quixote", that he uses dialect with restraint and moderation. With all its faults however, the "Juvenile World Walkers" has its entertaining moments, building up a picture of the three enterprising young rascals who, for all their cunning, make many of the mistakes usually made by the new-chum in the bush (such as making tea from salt water). Country people are again revealed as unsophisticated but shrewd, idealist and severely practical. The most that can be said of this serial is that it filled the space in Brady's magazine, not doubt caused some amusement among those readers who took the trouble to wrestle with its tortuous language, but it is not really worth discussion or preservation. One character worthy of mention is Carbine, a horse who lived on Bathurst burrs, prickly pear and Scotch thistles and who was so thin that observers concluded he was "only walking around to avoid funeral expenses".

The next serial, remarkable chiefly for its length of forty episodes (with an extra bridging instalment to the next serial) is variously entitled "War in the Transvaal" or "The South African War". Australia's first real involvement in a war (the Soudan Contingent had returned, much to the Bulletin's *amusement, mainly with accidental and self-inflicted wounds? Was in the Boer conflict and it drew much attention from the press. This was a topical serial, therefore, and on a controversial subject. Again is evidenced Brady's fertile imagination, his dry humour, the many sly innuendoes aimed at all kinds of people institutions and human foibles in general. As before, the narrator is accompanied by the faithful Cumbo, whose mutilation of the English language is hard to endure but who is necessary to the long, fragmentary and spasmodic plot. There is little overall coherence in the serial; the general effect is almost surrealistic in its constantly changing fortunes, its zany, fast-moving events, many of then straining the reader's credulity, and the bantering lightness of its tone and commentary. Was is fought "on an extended Christian scale" and described with vividness, vigour and humour, along with an ironic analysis made of the frailties and gullibility of humans.*

There is in this story and acknowledgment of the beginnings of the fierce pride of the Australian soldier in his ability as a fighting man. The Australian War Correspondent talks to the English general, accepting his congratulations on the task being performed by the Australians:

> "We've got a country out there, Sir, calculated to produce the finest soldiers on earth. We can put cavalry in the field which can walk around the best regiments … I've seen them at football matches, and at fights, and I've met them on the ranges and on the plains, pretty well everywhere from the Murrumbidgee to the Tweed, and hang me it I ever yet met a true-born Australian who was a coward![1]

This is pretty ardent patriotism, even jingoism, and there are many more instances of Brady's fierce pride in the Australian man who could hold his own in any field of endeavour. In fact there is some parody of this attitude too, with a definite

[1] 24.3.1900

caricaturing of the Australian horseman as a type, a caricature which could only get its force from a general acceptance of the existence of such a stereotype. In the African bush the writer sees a long, lean stranger approaching on horseback. His speech breathes the very air of the outback in its tone and content as the rider calms the plunging beast by a deft twist of the reins in his hand.

> He's one of our boys, I said to myself; one of our Australian boys just come over. He has been sent out with despatches to Ladysmith and he has got through. By his cut, he's a Barwon boy – they'd get through anywhere.
> 'I say!' I shouted, as he drew near, 'How was the country around Walgett when you left?'
> He reined up, threw himself out of the saddle, and came over to me. There was a surprised and pleased look all over his face.
> 'Walgett!' he said. 'Was you ever there?'
> 'Yes,' I said, 'it's a nice cool place in the summer, isn't it?'
> 'Did you know a cove named Brown?' he asked, 'kep' a store?'
> 'Yes,' I said. 'I've heard of him. The name is not common but I've heard it.'
> 'Well,' he said, hanging his horse's bridle over the paling fence and pulling out his pipe for a smoke. 'Joe Brown's married to a sister of mine. Got any tebakker?'
> 'How do you like the Transvaal?' I asked.
> 'It don't seem much good for sheep,' he replied, 'but I crossed some likely cattle country yisterday – I kem through with some mail. They wanted a cove to talk some mail through, so I took it.[2]

This kangaroo shooter had brought with him the full flavour of the Australian bush – its sparseness, ruthlessness, aridity and standards of judgment – but above all its absolute uniqueness.

De Rougemont is resurrected towards the end of this fanciful serial to help the two escape to China where another war is covered and equally preposterous adventures occur. No such deus ex machina is really needed as no attempt is made to keep the serials within the bounds of believable action.

These two "war" serials ("War in the Transvaal" and "War in China") follow the usual Brady ideologies, containing thrusts at religion's preaching without practice, at the new woman (lectures on Women's Rights were deadlier than dum-dum bullets for the Boers), at migrants, at families unduly proud of their traditions, at war and war correspondents, at poets and writers who use hackneyed words and phrases and at many would-be-serious aspects of man and society. The touch is often deft, but heavy irony is not rare. The irrepressibility of the man shines through every instalment. He enjoys writing whether the readers enjoy the result or not.

Brady's serials reach their chronological and literary culmination in "A Younger Quixote", later published by A.C. Rowlandson as Tom Pagdin, Pirate, *in his New South Wales Bookstall series where it was illustrated by Lionel Lindsay.[1] In many ways this narrative is an Australian counterpart of* Tom Sawyer, *which had been published or* Huckleberry Finn *(1884). Both Train's and Brady's heroes run away*

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[2] 30.12.1899

[1] *The Arrow,* 27.10.1900 to 23.2.1901. *Tom Pagdin* was published in 1912

from home as the result of parental trouble; both observe a murder; both rejoin their families as heroes. Just as Tom and Huck are the typical American boys of their day, so Tom Pagdin and Dave are typical Australian boys of the turn of the century, with their love of life, their ingenuousness and ingenuity. Tom particularly contains an admixture of good and not-so-good. He has the resourcefulness typical of the bush, whether he is attaching a coot with his catapult, foraging for food in the north coast scrub, devising a plan to capture criminals, or justifying himself to an irate farmer while worming his way into the affections of the farmer's wife. A model of inventiveness and initiative, he is amoral rather than immoral. In addition, he has resources of leadership, which lie dormant until necessity calls them forth. Weakling enough to run away from the studded belt of his cantankerous father, who is not only against the government but against all mankind; weak enough to reveal his fear when Dave pinches his leg and pretends it to be snake-bite; yet he is resourceful enough to be a fount of strength and unerring leadership when the younger lad is trapped under bushes after witnessing a murder and the burial of the proceeds of a bank robbery. He is conciliatory when he offends hie mate, thoroughly irrepressible when hungry or when deprivation and hardship could be expected to dampen the ardour of the two "pirates'. He soon resumes his native goodwill after witnessing the murder, for "care cannot dwell long at the door of youth and health". These qualities are enhanced by an innate romanticism. After finding some old clothing near a deserted hut Tom concludes, since the clothing was female, that it must have belonged to a fair captive of the pirates who once inhabited the hut:

> 'It was one of the beautiful captives they took out of an Indiaman. She fell in love with the captain of the pirates an' follered him through thick and thin. All the most beautiful captives did. Then, when he was hard put, she saved the ship. Then the ship got wrecked, an' 'e swum ashore with 'is arm around her neck…'[2]

In spite of their virtues though, the two Australian boys have a distinct touch of clay around the feet, as perhaps have most Australian boys. Tom is an inveterate liar. He spins a tale to the farmer who catches him stealing his poultry, yet he is so glib and facile in his lying that he forgets the details of his lies and compounds the felony by constantly altering them. He puts on airs to a sickening degree when he finally leads to the capture of the criminals – in fact he is an outrageous skite, yet with all his airs his deficiencies show through. But he is an attractive character, exhibiting continual cheerfulness and a Cockney sense of perkiness and humour.

Brady shows a deft touch in his understanding of the relationship between Dave and Tom. After an initial state of armed neutrality the two develop an easy relationship analogous to the mateship of the adult world of the bush. They each contribute to the other's welfare. Ever a lover of practical jokes, Brady has Tom startle Dave who kicks and bites at the sudden chock. On being reprimanded and accused of fear, Dave threatens to go home whereat Tom suddenly turns conciliatory. The code of manhood with its stoicism in the face of fear is understood very well by both in their anxiety to preserve "face":

> 'No!' said Tom magnanimously. 'Don't go home; we'll cry quits; we was both in the wrong.'

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[2] 1.12.1900

> ‘I wasn’t in the wrong,’ persisted Dave. ‘You started it; I only hit when you did.’
> ‘Of course you was frightened,’ said Tom. ‘That’s why you did it.’
> ‘I was not frightened,’ protested Dave vigorously; ‘I was no more frightened – nor – nor – anything. Me frightened! You can’t frighten me as easy as that!’
> ‘All right,’ said Tom, ‘don’t let us say any more about it. Shake hands and we’ll make up.’
> They shook.
> ‘I won’t try to frighten you any more,’ said Tom generously, rubbing his shin where Dave had kicked him.[1]

Nor does Dave take offence when, in the course of planning, Tom let his know in no uncertain terms who is leader; but Dave is still rather sensitive to the charge of cowardice:

> *‘Well,’ retorted Dave, ‘I ain’t frightened or I wouldn’t be here.’*
> *‘No,’ replied Tom magnanimously, ‘I give you credit for what you deserve, but an ounce of discretion’s worth a pound o’ taller, as I heard the old school-master say, an’ you got no discretion to speak of.’*
> *‘Anyhow,’ replied Dave in self-defence, ‘ you’re older than me twelve months; but I ain’t funked any more than you ‘ave.’*
> *‘Ain’t I givin’ you credit for it?’ said Tom.*[2]

Their relationship soon has developed to such a degree that they can laugh at each other without enmity. They show the easy relationship and happy horseplay of Lindsay’s *Saturdee* or *Redheap,* although on the whole Brady’s boys are more pleasant and less boyishly vicious than Lindsay’s. But they have the same gusto for life and innate merriment, even though Brady’s are seen only in pairs while the parents to not appear, and Brady’s are never in the group situations of Lindsay’s/ Both writers attempt to plumb the small-town emotions as they are affected by events and as they affect the people within their ambit. The reactions in Tom Pagdin’s small town are interesting when its inhabitants discover firstly that the money is missing from the bank, and cast their suspicions freely, and secondly learn of the discovery and capture of the criminals and the revelation of the truth.

As in the other serials, there is no mistaking the Australian flavour in “The Younger Quixote”. With its north-coast setting, it is full of the national flora and fauna as well as the spirit of the Australian people. Flying-foxes, plovers, paddymelons, bandkcoots, possums and black swans leave no doubt as to the setting of the narrative. In fact one suspects again that Brady is ironic in his amplification of it; he ahs Tom attempting to imitate the bushman’s skill at making damper, with rather drastic results. After scraping the charcoal from the bottom, Dave was not too sure of its edibility for “there were streaks of dry flour, and streaks of wet dough, and what wasn’t powder or paste was old Silurian rock”. Tom attempts to disguise his shortcomings as a bushman-cook by telling Dave he was ‘too soft for this piratin’ game” and used <u>his</u> fussiness as an excuse for his own lack of appetite.

Although Brady’s prose in these serials is facile and humorous there are times when he raises the suspense with some find dramatic writing. Particularly is this true when he recounts the story of Frenchy, the murderer who escapes from the penal settlement on New Caledonia with three companions, only to suffer the tortures of starvation in an open boat. “From prisoners of men they had become prisoners of God”; and they resort to cannibalism in their distress.[1] There is the facility for attention to detail of the trained newspaper man, lyrical description, dramatic action and a genuine sympathy and humanism. If there is a prevailing feature of his writing in the short story and the serial it is a concern with understanding people as people – to comprehend their feelings and aspirations, their motivations and relationships. In this endeavour, it is evident that he is more at ease with country folk, perhaps because of their relative unsophistication, but one suspects also because he had greater admiration for the moral qualities of the countryman, whom he saw as nearer the Australian ideal than was the city-dweller. That there was a vogue in the 1890’s to write of the country was relevant.

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1 3.11.1900
2 24.11.1900

Again, as a *Bulletin* contributor and avid reader, he was subject to its influence and to that of his literary friends, particularly Lawson, Daley and Quinn. While it is not difficult to charge Brady with dilettantism in general, it is possible to use the serials in particular as evidence of shoddy workmanship and poor standards.

There is, even in the last serial, evidence of slovenly writing, faults in grammar (he was his own editor) and ample evidence of a lack of pride of craftsmanship. Even when it was republished by Rowlandson, no revisions were made to *Tom Pagdin,* each episode forming a chapter of the book. It is possible to argue that Brady has made an interesting contribution to the native novel of adventure and humour, aimed primarily at a youthful readership perhaps, but certainly an Australian one and with appeal to all ages. He displays a deep understanding of the local scene and does his share to employ that atmosphere and feeling in the field of literature, not spectacularly not perhaps particularly ably, but certainly with good intention, humbly, sympathetically and sincerely.

b. Non-fiction. Brady's non-fiction includes three biographies, several personal travel books and others which may be called loosely commercial or geographical. Very proud of his ancestry, he wrote in the q1930's an account of the main events in the life of his father. *Two Frontiers* however, was not published until 1944, much to his chagrin, for he saw its American content assuring a ready sale among the many American serviceman in Australia during the war. Although it has all ingredients for a gripping and vital narrative, it is overlaid with digression and too much detail, partly obscuring the account of the adventurous life which the senior Brady led from his birth in Ireland, through his adventures as a real "Mark Twain" (a marksman on a Mississippi steamboat) and as a fighter in the Indian Wars. It follows him through his whaling activities our of New Bedford, as a soldier in Lincoln's army in the Civil War and as a trooper in the New South Wales Police, pursuing bushrangers in the central west of the state.

In writing *Two Frontiers.* Brady had some records which his father had written about his adventures as well as voluminous notes on family history which he himself had collected as a result of his research in private and public archives. One of the distractions of the book is therefore the large amount of information it contains, irrelevant to the carrying forward of the biography or an understanding of the milieu in which his life was led. A ready example is the account of the exploits of so many bushrangers not really connected with the activities of Trooper Brady. There is insufficient editing of the family background material obtained by correspondence with existing branches of the family in Ireland and America. Furthermore, Brady succumbs very obviously to the temptation to intrude his own theories and beliefs into the narrative, losing the thread on many occasions. As a result of his interest in sociology he attempts to give a picture of the cultural environment of his subject, an environment that is of far more interest to the book's author than it was to the older Brady. It made no discernible difference to him that Clay and Daniel Webster, Longfellow and Whittier, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Emerson, Melville and Whitman were alive and writing, but the book uses them to help its own orientation. Edward John was not a literary man and such details, as they are used, are extraneous and superfluous. Nor do they assist in an understanding of the subject's mental state, for there is little attempt to plumb the emotions or intellectual development of the older man. The account is little more than an external narrative of events and places.

Yet there are many areas of interest within *Two Frontiers*, from its early anecdotal account of Irish customs and manners through many aspects of life in nineteenth century America with its Indian fights, civil war and hazardous occupations, to early Australiana with its soldiers and bushrangers. As one has come to expect from Brady, there is humour in anecdote and description. There are countless instances of man's heroism and hardihood (such as Glass's survival of a mauling by a bear) and of man's inhumanity to man (the Indian massacres, for instance). There are details of the endurance of working conditions which make one feel more respect for the gains won by unionism (the life led by seamen on whalers was arduous in the extreme). And in each situation, there is an unwritten code of behaviour which inexorably guides action and responses. The seaman who is closest to the required action must oblige or face ostracism or reprisal, as Dan recognised. *Two Frontiers* is an interesting social document, particularly of the American scene of it s period. Edward John found the American negro infinitely better off than the poor Irish peasants he had left behind, for the market value of a slave dropped considerably if he was ill-treated, and this gruesome fact in itself assured reasonable conditions for most. While deploring the trade in men Edward Brady yet saw their treatment on the whole better than Harriet Beecher Stowe had depicted it, for her book appeared while he was in the deep south.[1]

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[1] *Two Frontiers* (Sydney, 1944), P. 62.

All of this might suggest that *Two Frontiers* is a gripping book. In general terms it is. But is has so many defects that it could obviously have been made so much better with careful craftsmanship. The surplus family and political detail and rather too much social and historical background detract from the narrative's free play, thrilling as it is. There is also an annoying habit on the author's part of previewing what is to come – a damaging kind of authorial intrusion. So when Edward receives a draft which to pay his fare to American, we read:

> *He would make acquaintance with the grey sisters, Poverty and Pain. He would fare with Peril and have Hardship for a bedfellow; he would sit face to face with Black Death, and gamble with him for life in that New Orleans for which he thought he was sailing when he stowed away on that brig at Limerick. He would see red wounds opening on dusty battlefields. He would shoot the bison, lance the whale, hear the war-hoops of Indians, the crash of icebergs, challenging shouts of bushrangers; and live the free life that such men enjoyed when foundations of modern civilisation were being laid by courageous hands on two frontiers.*[1]

As it turns out, all this is true enough; but it is poor policy to show one's hand so early in the game; nor is this an isolated instance.

The fact that Brady is using his father's notes as well as other sources leads to confusion. There are places where these notes are quoted at length without any special indication, so there are times when one is not sure which of two is speaking. Obviously the publisher must share the responsibility for this state of affairs, and for the lack of directness when almost a whole chapter ("Bandits in Decline") is given to a general discussion of bushranging without any great relevance to the actual narrative. And while Brady's understatement, a purely personal characteristic evident in more of his writing, can be amusing, it can also become irritating as when he recounts the Indian practice of scalping their captives.

The function of a biography is to shed light on its subject, to set him in his period and to show what influences impinged upon him, as well as the results of this impact. A good biography should also entertain as well as inform. Looked at in this light, *Two Frontiers* is a limited success. Edward John Brady emerges as a man of action – a tough man in all senses of the word - who fights the battle of life to the full. But we do not see inside the man – to his feelings and motivations, nor his relationships with others except at the most superficial levels, even when the author has first-hand knowledge of the man as a member of his family. As a collection of incidents with the common denominator of a brave, tough man; as a social document giving a picture of a way of life long since passed, the book has interest and even value. But it reflects, in no small measure, all the strengths and weaknesses of Brady's prose. It bears the stamp of his personality and his journalistic tricks of detail and style too heavily and deeply. One is left regretting that a more disciplined control had not been exercised over its writing and publication.

Similar strengths and weaknesses are to be found in the unpublished manuscript, *John Archibald: Life and Times of a Great Editor,* written by Brady in the early 1940's as far as can be ascertained, for the volume itself is undated.[2] Several attempts have

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[1] P. 27

[2] Two copies of this manuscript have been located. One is owned by Oscar Mendelsohn, Melbourne, and the other was bought, compassionately, from Brady's widow by the New South Wales Branch of the Australian Journalists' Association.

been made to have it published, but it was regarded, quite rightly, as being too much about Brady and not enough about Archibald's life and achievement. Consisting of over two hundred pages, the biography contains Archibald's will in an Appendix and a further seventy pages of impressions of the editor collected by Brady from colleagues such as Norman Lindsay, Sir Lionel Lindsay, Roderic Quinn, Bertha Lawson, Joseph Furphy, Bernard O'Down, Marie J. Pitt and a dozen others – views which add considerably to the picture of Archibald.

Regarding Archibald as the "pioneer of this country's cultural expression", Brady states in the Foreword that "Without the opportunities that he created for us out of his unique editorial perception and native patriotism, our foundational literature might have been a pale imitative thing – bloodless and conventional." While this is true to a degree, it ignores the fact that Australian literature had already begun, in a small way with Harpur and to a larger degree with Kendall, to be Australian-oriented rather than looking towards England, but certainly Archibald gave the movement impetus and form through his policies. Having said this, Brady might reasonably have been expected to bring out in the biography, by clear argument and documented details, the validity of this claim and the manner in which it was accomplished, but it is valid to judge that he did not achieve this. As in *Two Frontiers* the author stands in his own light, presenting an interesting picture of the late 1880's and 90's and the early 1900's as Sydney saw them, but his work lacks the clarity and precision of a portrait and appreciation of Archibald good enough to be published and, Brady hoped, made into a film.[1]

As far as can be ascertained, the only source he drew upon, apart from his personal contacts with Archibald and his contemporaries, was the beginnings of Archibald's biography in *The Lone Hand*.[2] Reference is made quite justly to the sacrifices which the editor and his associates made in getting the *Bulletin* functioning as a lively, witty and influential journal. His importance is no longer really questioned. H.M. Green, T. Inglis Moore and S.E. Lee are three critics who agree with Brady's assessment.[3] In providing Australian writers and poets with a means of reaching their fellow-countrymen, in his sympathy and encouragement, moral and financial support, Archibald's contribution was very real. In recognising that *The Bulletin* served as a launching platform for many artists, Brady states that "the group which Archibald had fostered worked on in their appointed spheres of expression for the creation of a national sentiment, and the development of a national culture",[4] recounting some of those who went on from initial *Bulletin* publication to the production of their own books. Nor is it extravagant to claim that in this process Archibald played his part in the creation of some of the nation's folk-lore and national figures – Jack Dunn of Nevertire, Clancy of the Overflow, Bannerman and the Man from Snowy River. And it is probably true, as Brady avers, that the range and variety of expression which Archibald encouraged, in regard to the subject matter used, to the people who contributed, and to their treatment, is not yet fully appreciated. The famous column giving advice to those who first tentatively sent in their contributions,

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1 Brady to Johnson, 12.2.1944, in Mitchell Library.

2 July, 1907

3 H.M. Green, *A History of Australian Literature* (Sydney, 1961).
T Inglis Moore, "A.G. Stephens as Critic", *Prometheus* (1959)
S.E. Lee, "*The Bulletin* – J.F. Archibald and A.G. Stephens." In G. Dutton (ed.), *The Literature of Australia* (Adelaide, 1964).

4 P. 155

gave encouragement and assistance where it would do good, as well as entertaining readers. The circulation and reception of the journal no doubt warranted Brady's statement:

> *These singers and rhymers, and scores of other natural musicians, Archibald directed with his editorial baton: a maestro who knew how the great symphony of Australia should be presented. The sound of it, the sweet musical sound of it, set the hearts of the people dancing. They listened and approved a music which at last expressed the spirit of their native land.*[1]

In the biography Archibald's background is presented, but not with any great insight – his early apprenticeship on the Warrnambool *Examiner*, his progress to the Melbourne *Herald* and *Daily Telegraph,* to the *Evening News* in Sydney and his partnership with John Haynes which led to the formation of *The Bulletin* – all viewed from the point of the difficulties which faced an innovator at that time. All this has been written up elsewhere – in Archibald's "The Genesis of *The Bulletin*[2] and in various articles from time to time in the magazine itself by those who had participated in its development.[3] There is little new factual material here, but there are added personal sidelights up Archibald and his associates which help to build up a picture of the man. For instance, Archibald's compassion was demonstrated by his concern, on his return from London, for "the unspeakable, incredible callousness of the rich towards the poor" and he came back to office "impatient of all affectation and pretension" – a sentiment which led, Brady believes, to his "open-door" policy towards contributors. The innate friendliness of the man is well authenticated with the citing of George Mendell and others to give proof of Archibald's personal openness and approachability. He recounts also how his own verse received "a minimum of acceptances" until he wrote "The Loading of the Pride" and some other sea verses and sent them in:

> *I left them at the office for a week; then I climbed the stairs to his room. Prior to that he had given me the impression that he wanted me to cut my visits short. On this occasion he half-turned from a pile of screed before him and invited me to sit down, reluctantly detached himself from the manuscript he was reading and said, 'That was a damn good thing of yours. I'm going to use it, and I've added a few bob to the docket. You can collect as you go out.' I felt like a fellow who has swallowed his first whisky after a six months' pledge. The extra few shillings meant something to me, but Arch's praise was more. When he decreed a thing was good it was good, and we knew it.*
> *'Hold on,' he said as I rose, greatly increased in stature. 'Do you think you could write more of that sea stuff? Have you god much of it?'*
> *'An unlimited quantity, Mr. Archibald.' I replied modestly.*
> *After that it was a maximum of acceptances for sea verse.*[4]

And it was his sea verse which first established Brady's name, winning the approval of Masefield, Green and other critics, and constituting that part of his verse which will

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1 P. 65.
2 *The Lone Hand*, July 1907.
3 For example, H. Fletcher, "J.F. Archibald", *The Bulletin,* 13.4.1922
4 P. 158.

probably survive longest. Archibald's perception was, as Brady states, well recognised by his contemporaries.

Some well-documented stories are retold, usually with the added interest and authenticity which only a participant can give. Archibald's payment of twenty pounds to Lawson to a country trip was arranged through Brady as intermediary. But other anecdotes which throw light on the editor's personality are new. Few knew of Archibald's occasional solitariness, often expressed in dining alone and brooding over some public injustice, planning counter-measures (such as his anti-flogging and anti-hanging campaigns). Brady spoke to him on one such occasion, only to find him ruminating over the fact that he had earlier struck a dog that had barked at his heels. He was filled with remorse over the recollection. Brady quoted Macleod as saying: "Very few people knew Archibald, though thousands thought they did. He was all his life a hypochondriac, and as he grew older his infirmities grew greater."[1] It was his hypochondria, exacerbated by business worries and secret fears, that led to his confinement in Callan Park for a period, although Brady sheds no new light on this rather mysterious interlude in Archibald's life.

Brady makes some unsupported generalisations in the manuscript – a practice not in accordance with his newspaper training one would think. While it is well-known that Archibald disliked serials, Brady makes the statement that two contributors to *The Bulletin,* J.H.M. Abbott and "Price Warung", both dealt in short stories with the same theme as Marcus Clarke, and might have surpassed him had Archibald not been so averse to serial publication. This is a worthless, hypothetical observation and can neither be supported or denied. Similarly Brady states that Archibald "has no doubt influenced the work of Christine Stead, Beatrice Grimshaw, Miles Franklin, Ethel Pedley and Mrs. Aeneas Gunn."[2] This *may* be true, but there is no indication of how this occurred, nor any suggestion that Archibald edited them, gave them specific assistance or in any way persuaded them along literary lines.

As in the case of Brady's other works, in spite of glaring weaknesses there are some redeeming features. There is much background material which thrown light upon the society and times in which Archibald lived. It is interesting to read of the transport problems which existed in Sydney as far back as the turn of the century, with "puffing billies" queued up along Oxford Street "while passengers perched on the roofs of 'buses jeered and suburban fathers in stalled cars, purple with rage, shook their newspapers and cursed authorities."[3] And Sydney had considerable health problems too, with outbreaks of typhoid, smallpox and bubonic plague which necessitated a long-overdue clean-up by the authorities.[4]

There are many interesting glimpses of people of the time with whom Brady was closely associated – people like Livingstone Hopkins and Phil May, the two imported cartoonists who did much to assist the popularity of Archibald's paper; they were forever grateful for the cartooning possibilities of Henry Parkes who, "heavy and homely, with white beard and leonine mane, walked silk-hatted and frock-coated

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1 P. 200.
2 P. 113.
3 P. 33.
4 Eustace Tracey claimed that Brady invented the guard which was placed over the hawsers of boats anchored in harbour to prevent the entry of rats. The claim cannot be verified.

along a Sydney street, looking as wise as Socrates and responding, in what he considered the grand manner, to the salutations of the crowd."[1] There are many good anecdotes too, such as the one where a visitor told Parkes his new portrait was not life-like because his hand was in his own pocket. Or the one about Daley and Gray driving a hearse around town with a copy of the *Daily Telegraph* as guest of honour. And especially the tale of the two Bohemians (one of whom was Daley) who dressed up as Bishops when a congress of those worthies was in town. They went from pub to pub, dancing, singing and cavorting with barmaids, the result being that eventually every bishop who attended the congress had to establish a cast-iron alibi to the satisfaction of his superiors! There are many such tales, some more literary, as when Daley wrote a poem on the collar of Quinn's shirt, selling it, complete, to Archibald, without the owner's consent; of James Edmond's walking tour to Brisbane with an itinerary calculated so carefully that he had an hour to wait to catch the boat back to Sydney. All of this is good fun but when there unfolds a story or an item where accuracy is important, one tends to doubt. One of Archibald's fellow-workers on the *Herald* was George Walstab who, we are told, "is credited with having written a chapter of *For the Term of His Natural Life* for the *Australian Journal* when his friend Marcus Clarke was indisposed."[2] This is difficult to verify, for although this novel was first published as a serial in the *Australian Journal,* H.M. Green has a documented account that it was Clarke's first serial, *Heavy Odds* (originally *Long Odds*) to which Walstab contributed.[3] It might well be that Brady was trusting to hearsay or that his memory played him false, but he does not build up in his reader any great confidence in his attention to detail.

There are a few incidents which increase our knowledge of A.G. Stephens, with whom Brady had a slight difference of opinion. While editing Brady's "The Whaler's Pig" Stephens transferred the setting from the Sea of Okhotsk, called by whalemen the Okart Sea, to Baffin Bay, because he could not find it on the office map. Brady pretended to be (and probably was) outraged, but Stephens pacified him and returned it to its rightful place in *The Ways of Many Waters* which was then on the stocks. Brady adds: "I regret that icy coolness between us now, for Stephens was a good Australian and carried a warm heart under his egotism. He extended a great kindness to Furphy and brought that timid genius Shaw Neilson forward. He stood high above other literary critics in his time."[4]

Brady cites E. Morris Miller's naming of sixty poets who published books of verse in the Australian colonies before 1880, only four or five of whom will survive poetically. But from 1880 to 1935 over one hundred and forty appeared, of whom perhaps thirty will be remembered. From this distance, both these estimates would seem over-generous, but the point is well made that *The Bulletin* (and this was Archibald) was influential in the development of such verse and its preoccupations with national themes. In addition, when one considers the other *Bulletin* publications, the *Story Book,* the *Reciter, Melba's Gift Book* and the many publications of individual poets and authors (including Brady), taken all in all "they established John

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[1] P. 39.
[2] P. 27.
[3] *The History of Australian Literature,* p.224. Green cites S.S. Simmons who has gone into the matter in some detail in *Marcus Clarke and the Writing of "Long Odds,* (Melbourne, 1946).
[4] P. 153.

Archibald's right to be regarded as the father of modern Australian literature."[1]

Whatever Brady's own achievement, it owes much to Archibald's sympathy and encouragement. He always told Brady that "McFee of Aberdeen" was his best poem; when Brady stated that he preferred "Ice Virgins" Archibald replied that it was "too literary" for him. One can be sure that Archibald would not make a similar assessment of his biography as Brady wrote it. "If this country ever lifts itself from foggy lowlands dependency to clear national heights, he will stand out as an incarnation of its native spirit." This is a fair assessment of Archibald's contribution, but from the vantage-point of long association with him, Brady should have been able to tell more of Archibald as a man, explaining his motivations and throwing more light on his personal characteristics. In neglecting to do this the biography fails as an effective creative work. A saving grace is the addition of the reminiscences from Lindsay and others. Of these Norman Lindsay's is probably the best. When these too, are considered, and Brady can claim only the initiative which led him to collect them, there emerges an interesting picture of the time, some amusing and entertaining stories, a few glimpses of the man who is writing and some minor facets of the biography's subject, to whom much is owed but whose debt is still to be paid.[2]

The final example of biography is *Doctor Mannix: Archbishop of Melbourne,*[3] an undistinguished "pot-boiler" not sufficiently objective to be worth consideration, although Brady showed his awareness of the difficulty attached to biographies. Early in *Dr. Mannix,* Brady states that he has to check an increasing tendency which "threatened to convert me into an enthusiast rather than an historian." The fact that he did not check this tendency means that the book degenerates to the level of propaganda. He further states his intention of drawing a wide circle around his subject, the better to view him in context, but so wide is the circle and so filled with irrelevancies that the target runs the severe risk of not being hit at all. Brady has not clearly established the guidelines upon which he can justifiably present his biography and the work suffers as a result of an imprecision of effect, a diffusion of emphasis and constant digression. Surely it is not necessary to go back to St. Patrick in 432 A.D. to present an adequate portrait of a twentieth century man, yet this is part of the process which Brady refers to as "a stippling of appropriate colours", a preparation of the canvas before the actual portrait is begun, and this is in chapter three! Constant authorial intrusion, hyperbole, particularly in regard to the Irish (with no hint of their aggressiveness, prejudice or backwardness) and an outright failure to come to grips with the main problem of the book are evident. Facile judgments, such as the portrayal of the Catholic education system ad "the best", with no qualifying explanation of criteria, and an annoying style of writing which never quite hits the mark are apparent. For example, the chapter which tells of the outbreak of way begins:

> *Now the winter of social discontent is about to be made glorious by the gory sun of war. Now we reach a stage in the history of civilisation when the stout Falstaff of commerce places a sharpened sword in the hands of twentieth century youth, bidding or cajoling it to go forth and slay or be slain. Now doth Pandora open the box! Now shall the Financial Furies weave their final*

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[1] P. 111.

[2] A biography of Archibald is at present being written by Sylvia Lawson under the auspices of the Commonwealth Literary Fund and the Australian Journalists' Association.

[3] Melbourne, 1934. Published in the Library of National Biography (Dominion Series).

> *spells in order that the evil and destructive passions of humanity shall be free to work their unrestrained wickedness. Now shall be imposed upon the nations an obligation to share iniquity and participate in crime ... Were such thoughts in the mind of the Archbishop of Melbourne in the days of August 1914?*[1]

As a biography, *Dr. Mannix* has so many stylistic and artistic deficiencies that is must be judged an outright failure in its attempt to portray a strong-minded, controversial figure. It is probably true that Brady was working on other drafts at the time, most likely on *Wardens of the Seas* and his weekly articles for *The Labour Call.* Even so, there is no excuse for such slovenly workmanship, its publication giving more weight to the picture of him as a man without professional pride and perseverance – a mere dilettante in literature. Speaking of the development of biography in Australia, H.M. Green contrasts: "the excellence of the material and the mediocrity of its presentation; here, as in other departments of Australian literature, may be seen the influence of the journalistic method that is evident in all but the best of it."[2] Brady's example of biography contains many of the worst features of the journalistic method – its emotive prose, its diffusion and its verbosity.

If Brady's claim to either journalistic prowess of literary skill rested on this work alone, his standing would be unspectacular indeed but there is another body of writings, which might loosely be called geographical and commercial, which makes up quite a large part of Brady's prose output. In these he gives an account of certain parts of the country through which he has travelled, betraying the close observation of the journalist, which, together with his usual mixture of polemic and social criticism and comment, produces an interesting melange which informs, entertains and at times challenges the reader. He embodies geographical data and statistics, economic comment and analysis, historical background and antecedents in these works, along with literary and aesthetic ideas and emotions aroused by the experiences and places discussed.

Among the earliest writings on these topics are *Sydney Harbor*[3] and *Sydney: Commercial centre of the Commonwealth.*[4] These early books give a tourist guide to the harbour and its foreshores, its beauty spots and industries. They contain some good writing, but there is at times a superficiality of ideas and expression at variance with their general tone. He has most assurance when he speaks of an area where his personal contacts are evident, for example of the cave-dwellers at Watson's Bay, many of whom he knew. He has given evidence in these books too, of an eye for the quaint and amusing. When he discusses the duties of the Sydney Harbour Trust he includes extracts from its annual report, in the depths of which it lists the results of its scavenging activities:

> *The work carried out by the scavenging boat is shown by the following list of carcases, etc. removed and destroyed:*

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1 P. 50
2 *A History of Australian Literature,* p. 1270.
3 Sydney, 1903.
4 Sydney, 1904.

> *1975 rats; 784 cats; 968 dogs; 225 bags of meat; 236 bags of fish; 1150 fowls; 25 parrots; 19 sheep; 11 pigs; 1 bullock; 5 calves; 3 flying foxes; 2 goats; 5 hares; 2 sharks; 118 rabbits and 100 bags of chaff.*[1]

Who said pollution was a modern problem?

There are in both volumes some good lyric descriptions of beauty around the harbour and its bays and some vivid writing about some of the occupations of people connected with the harbour. Particularly is this true again when Brady has directly experienced these, as when he talks of the functions of the Bond Stores as staging points for all imports. The exotic atmosphere of sights, scents and sounds is realistically created, for the custom clerks have an interesting job by day, with special overtones at night:

> *But when Night, with moccasined feet stalks silently along the darkened wharves, when a sinister tide, floating suggestive objects upon its surface, crawls about the piles, and strange gasps and gurgles are heard in the water shadows, then the old Bond, half-hidden in the gloom, is full of mysteries and stories.*[2]

Everywhere in these descriptions, Brady's love of the natural and developed resources of the land and sea stands out, generalised in many instances to a romanticism and a patriotism which he employs as basic values in his personal platform. He has reconciled, in his own mind at least, the necessity for commercial development and the strong desirability of maintaining natural resources of beauty and cleanliness. He foreshadows effectively the ecological interest of our time. In preserving what is best of the past, too, bride is "modern", calling on his friend, Roderic Quinn to assist in this regard.[3]

A similar function to the books on Sydney Harbour was served for Melbourne by *Picturesque Port Phillip.*[4] The superficial chatter of Brady and his companions in a drive around the foreshores of Port Phillip spoils the effect of this book, but when he attempts to provide a guide for the coastal route between Sydney and Melbourne, the result is happier, if still modest in aim and execution. *The Overlander – The Prince's Highway*[5] traces the historical development of the region from its original discovery, using extracts from official records and from journals of early explorers and pioneers. Particularly interesting are the extracts from the journal of Angus McMillan, whose father arrived in Gippsland from the Isle of Skye in 1830. Brady's feeling for this area is obvious – his descriptions of the giant cedars and turpentines, the coastal figs and flames betraying that same love which Kendall felt, whose "Kiama" he quotes. While still containing essential tourist information, such as a directory of hotels and garages, this little book in its tone and evocative descriptions gives a sense of history and an atmosphere readily recognisable by anyone who has travelled its tortuous roads. It must be regarded as the best of the books in this group – well worthy of

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1 P. 18

2 Pp. 29, 30.

3 Quinn wrote a section entitled "The Old Rocks – A Sketch of Their History" for *Sydney: The Commercial Centre of the Commonwealth.*

4 Melbourne, undated, but 1912.

5 Melbourne, 1926.

rereading, even if only for its accounts of early travels by land or by sea in such steamers as "The Old Billy" ("King William the Fourth"), "Rapid" (whose custom belied its name) or "Norah Creina", which pitched and rolled their way down the coast, conveying pigs, calves, butter, bacon, raw hides and passengers, all in close proximity and providing everything necessary "to offend the olfactory nerves."

More personal and yet more discursive are three books detailing actual voyages and journeys undertaken by Brady when the innate restlessness of the man overcame the necessity to earn a staid living. As well as stressing the historical, geographic and economic points of importance, he binds these books together by his common interest in and sympathy for people and the manner in which the countryside impinges upon their lives. This sympathy gives him ample opportunity for his theorising about ways in which their lives can be improved, whether through greater cohesion (by unionism), more patriotism, greater and more efficient use of resources or by merely giving more thought to their functions. Occasionally, despite this over-riding seriousness, Brady's escapism comes through, as in his revelling in stewed duck, Murray cod grilled on the coals and billy tea while camped on the shores of the Murray, while "all Nature pulses, throbs, respirates freely around…"[1] Such periods of leisure and material contentment provide opportunity for soul-searching and philosophical musings on widely ranging issues. So, secure in his caravan on his north-ward trip, "isolated, apart, free, forgotten of the world and caring nothing for it" he can disparage the "strident vulgarity" of everyday life and the "bathos and banality" of commerce and consider the realities of life, the longings of the human heart for happiness, sympathy and love which find expression in music, poetry, art and which would be unaffected by the loss of all material comforts. It is in moments such as these that the anti-materialist Brady, the dreamer, Brady the romantic and idealist, is most evident. And in his contacts throughout his journeying he attempts to live these beliefs. There is an Arcadian faith in the therapeutic nature of the countryside which led to his retreat to Mallacoota, with the world "as a wonderful garden in which the soul moved in harmony with God."[2] There are many such instances where his proclaimed atheism and agnosticism are forgotten and a religious ethos, at times closely related to Pantheism, reigns instead. He is a good traveller in that he travels with a sense of history. There is a cathartic value in such travel. It revives, stimulates, equalises and gives a sense of perspective. And if one travels with the sensitivity of a poet, one gains most of all. Loudly he proclaims: "Philosophers I impeach you. Economists, I doubt you. Reformers, you I despise. Poets, I hail you!"

Although he can avoid the common tendency to romanticise the bushranger, recognising that outside fiction they were "mostly tawdry bandits who graduated from petty thefts of horses and cattle to highway robbery and murder", and had the admiration of Miles Franklin for this attitude,[3] he can yet be mawkishly sentimental in recalling childhood events and loves while crossing the Blue Mountains. Yet the strongest common thread of the feeling they evoke for the people of the country. Each volume abounds with characters drawn vividly and sympathetically by Brady's

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1 *River Rovers,* (Melbourne, 1911), p,19

2 *King's Caravan,* p. 76.

3 Miles Franklin wrote to Brady (16.9.1945, in National Library) agreeing with this attitude, especially in regard to Ned Kelly. "I am alienated by the attempts to make a hero our of him. He could have grubbed and felled and slaved in the bush as my forebears did". She wrote of the terror they inspired in bush settlers.

pen. Each contains vignettes of the Australian society of the early 1900's revealing a way of life, an approach to life, a code of values which constitute a considerable part of the Australian character as its steady growth towards independent nationhood revealed. Many country "types" abound in these books, but there are not mere stereotypes; rather they are real, fleshy, individual people who wrestle with a harsh environment, not always wining, but always displaying degrees of fortitude and independence wholly admirable. Many of these people seem larger than life on account of their eccentricity by city standards – an eccentricity which often establishes their name and their identity to a wide range of friends. So the reader meets Spare-me-days and Brummy, two heavy drinkers who are great mates, even though Brummy sings himself to sleep every night with seventeen verses of the same song. And Greenhide Jack, so named on account of his prowess with the stock-whip and his construction of many articles from cowhide, quite child-like in his self-sympathy when slight injured; and Ah Gum, and O'Grady the Irish settler and countless pioneering wives and mothers treated as understandingly as Lawson wrote of them. Some of these people are too outgoing, as the settler from whom Brady goes to get water, but who keeps him listening so long, to his mate's chagrin, that the bacon is ruined. And when his mate demurs, he is sent within earshot and the tea is cold. They wish him, as a pre-lunch deputation, on the relevant Minister against whose Parliamentary ineptitudes he holds forth.

But not all of Brady's bush people are hospitable and outgoing. One young man is engaged in skinning a sheep when the travellers approach;

> *"Good morning," I began pleasantly.*
> *The man favoured me with a reluctant nod.*
> *'How far is it to Morna?'*
> *He went on with his work, plying a very sharp knife with great dexterity.*
> *I repeated my question, loudly.*
> *'Dunno,' said the man, 'never bin there.'*
> *'Can I buy a loaf of bread here/'*
> *'Naw!'*
> *'Haven't you got any bread?'*
> *'Naw; ain't baked.'*
> *More knife play.*
> *'Can I get any bread at Morna?'*
> *'Dunno!'*
> *Slish-slash of knife over the hanging carcase.*
> *'Know if I can get any bread anywhere?'*
> *'Naw!'*
> *'Dry country, this.'*
> *Several scientific cuts which relieved the skin.*
> *'Dry country,' I repeated.*
> *'Dunno. Yairs.'*
> *'Say,' I cried, determined to drag him out somehow, 'did you read yesterday's papers?'*
> *'Naw. Don't get 'em.'*
> *'Then you didn't hear the news?'*
> *'Naw. What's that?'*

Knife still working rapidly.
'James the Second is dead.'
'Naw. What of?'
'Barcoo rot!' I announced, and left him cutting up the sheep.[1]

This is fine, compressed writing, displaying Brady's sense of humour as well as a quite remarkable control over his temper, although one does not argue too much with a man who has a sharp knife. Fortunately he meets few people so laconic. Usually he serves as a pleasant interruption in the farm routine wherever he arrives, visitors being much more rare then than in this age of the motor car.

There is pathos in the bush, exemplified by the two mates, one of whom played the accordion as soon as he recovers from his spree so that the sound of the music serves as a symbol of restoration and hope. There is ample evidence of resourcefulness, such as in the case of the man who grew cabbages for sale while every other person in the settlement grovelled for tin in an unyielding ground. And with the continual travelling and meeting people, Brady's assistant on the Queensland trip gradually builds up a personality which shows him to be a lively, rather eccentric young man, chosen for his ability to cook and to handle his fists. He betrays and unusual ability to gather stray eggs from nests, wandering poultry from farms passed, oranges growing near fences but "not sucking-pigs or sheep, unless hunger justified, and then only in remote places at night." He appears as a young man "with his own code of ethics, to which he adhered as far as possible", the only trouble being that his code differed markedly from the laws of the land. But Joe stands revealed as a love of tall tales and quaint phrases, keeping remarkable sang-froid in the face of danger (he clenched his teeth firmly on the stem of his pipe while informing one bully that he did not smoke). Possessor of an irrepressible sense of fun and an ability to cook and act as sounding-board for the conversation and ideas of the travelling writer. Again, with his delineation of Joe, Brady shows a sympathy with human weakness and a refusal to condemn human eccentricity. Rather he attempts to understand the behaviour, seeing it in terms of upbringing and environment. Such also was his reaction to the interesting, intelligent young man who turns out to be a prisoner from Bathurst Gaol, whom Brady considers in terms of "what particular devil led than man's feet into the paths of crime?" Similar treatment is accorded the "aged wight" with garrulous memories" he meets at Carcoar, who turns out to be an ex-convict. It is obvious where Brady's sympathies lie and as in his "Religion of Humanity" he endeavours to underline the social ills which lead to such diversions from the socially-accepted patterns of behaviour.

Whether it is the picture given of the photographer whose boat capsizes in "Hell's Gate", the cut-throat smuggler of illegally imported Chinese, of Murray Tommy who eats nothing but onions or of the cripple who lives in the hollow tree stump, there is always a vividness, a directness and a sympathy in Brady's treatment expressing his love for man and for the countryside. Only by contact with nature and through the trials and adversities of bush life is real manhood developed. Although there is no evidence that he read Rousseau, Brady shares his attitudes to nature. Rousseau believed that believed that Emil should be educated in just such circumstances, away from the artificialities of human society and in direct contact with the moods of nature, so that the senses might be rendered more receptive, more refined, and the

[1] *River Rovers,* p. 122.

intellect and the emotions rendered strong enough to cope with the world as man has made it. Resourcefulness, fortitude and inner happiness result from these contacts thought Rousseau, and it is just these virtues that Brady sees developed in the people of the Australian bush, these desirable qualities further enriched by a strong sense of humour.

Wry humour, sardonic and witty humour effervesce throughout these as the other writings. One can agree with Norman Lindsay when he states: "I am sometimes given to wonder whether humour will ever be given its status as a great art, for it is a supreme expression of the indomitable human spirit."[1] Brady's whole point of observation and comment is conditioned by his sense of humour. The account of goats which ingest certain towns, the practical jokes (as when he pretends to talk to members of the three sexes, "Men, women and bank clerks", when his mate is clad only in a pipe and a grin), the tall tales of so many kinds all bear evidence.

These three books employ a charry, discursive style characteristic of Brady and wholly suited to their subject matter. It can be rendered more taut if need be, as the tale of Nelly Mathieson shows.[2] But usually it fits the free and easy pace of travel by wagon and the easy-going nature of the people he meets. There is generally an openness and sincerity in keeping with the mood of the cush, but occasional overtones of artificiality are discernible, as when the Wollondilly River is heard "faintly purring, like a tigress to her cubs." There are many Biblical references and figures of speech, usually apt and expressing well the emotions aroused but occasionally showing a streak of Lindsayesque anti-orthodoxy, as when Palestine is referred to as "the centre point of that potent and might influence which has overshadowed the ages, radiated through time, and given to humanity sublime thoughts, high ideals, and debasing hypocricies."[3]

Although not particularly apt instruments for displaying literary familiarities, these books contain many literary references. Heine, Hariet Beecher Stowe, Whitman, Omar Khayam, Defoe, Marryat, Shelley, Daley, J.H.M. Abbott and many other writers, both European and Australian appear. *The Land of the Sun* begins each chapter with a few lines of verse from Homer, Keats, Byron or traditional sources. An avid reader from his boyhood, Brady has set ideas about desirable literary companions. On one occasion, dreaming of an extended tour around the Pacific, he mentally lists the books he would wish to accompany him. His list makes interesting reading: Massefield, Conrad, Stevenson, London, Fleming Wilson, W,W, Jacobs, Stacpoole along with the Bible, The Ramayana, Steele Rudd, Lawson, Daley Quinn, Keats, the *Decameron,* the Neo-Celtic school of writers as well ad "that ultra-inspired iconoclast" Shaw and back copies of *The Bulletin*. Swift and Rabelais are turned down, but to compensate, etchings and paintings by Shirlow, Lindsay, Long and Heysen, as well as sculptures by Web Gilbert are chosen. It it is true that one can tell a man's character by the books he reads, Brady's obviously has many facets. But one wonders if Brady was so familiar with so much wisdom, why he did not imbibe more deeply and make more of it his own. One suspects there may be more than a little intellectual snobbery here.

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[1] In his Introduction to his collection of Edward Dyson's short stories, *The Golden Shanty* (Sydney, 1963), p.x.

[2] *King's Caravan,* p.19.

[3] *King's Caravan*, p.28.

There are times when Brady is verbose and diffuse (but these are exceptions) and when he has periods of self-consciousness. He is athirst for first-hand knowledge and is at his best in his prose when he forgets himself and puts down in print the sights and sounds he observes and absorbs. Combining the poet's sensitivity with the journalist's eye for detail, he has produced some memorable passages. How clearly is the very atmosphere of sheep country evoked in this account:

> *The night was thick with dust and heavy with the smell of sheep. This odour seems to cling permanently in the wool districts, especially in drought times. One breathes and eats and has one's hourly being in an atmosphere of sheep. The water tastes of sheep, the food has a sheepy flavour, the conversation is nearly all sheep. One goes to sleep at night counting imaginary sheep leaping a mental stile, and wakes in the morning to a breakfast of fried mutton. The plains are dotted with woolly bodies, the bridges are always blocked with them. You drive through compact mobs of jumbucks on the roads – the inevitable sheep dogs in attendance; you see them bogged along the river-banks and embedded in the water-holes; you find strips of wool on the thornbushes and barbed-wire fences; bales of wool on the teams, on the trucks, on the barges ... The whole Cosmos is wrapped in a fleecy veil of greasy wool, which prevents one getting a proper perspective of politics or philosophy or the ordinary affairs of life.*[1]

With equal clarity the scents and sounds of an early morning breakfast cooked in a bush clearing on a stringy-bark fire are recalled, and while this aspect of his style can deteriorate into purple prose for its own sake (as in his depiction of sunset on the Murray[2]) it usually maintains a desirable degree of directness and simplicity; if a town is dull, it is so described, Yarrawonga being "blandly bovine".

An awareness of economic potential is a strong feature of Brady's observation and every region traversed is looked at from the point of view of its possible production of pinapples, lucerne, sugar, timber wool, beef or minerals. Equally obvious is his awareness of social conditions and problems, such as the employment of Kanaka labour, Chinese migration and the need for government assistance in certain areas of depression,. In short Brady shows himself a traveller with an enquiring mind, a strong intellect and a sensitive emotional response to the problems and possibilities of the areas through which he travels. The result is that his books are useful documents for the social historian.

The desirability of publicising Australian, both to its inhabitants and to prospective migrants in other countries was ever present in Brady's mind and his intentions are always visible in his writings. The romance of the explorers and bushrangers, the uniqueness of Australia's aborigines and its wild-life, the unusual features of topography and climate, its commercial, industrial and cultural possibilities are always pointed out, wherever his travels took him and whenever he wrote about them

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1 *River Rovers,* p.53.

2 In some notes for *King's Caravan* ("A Monetary and Culinary Memento", in Oxley Library, Brisbane) are records for food purchases for the journey in 1899. Bread was 3d a large loaf, tea 1/6 lb., cheese 9d lb., 5lb roast of beef was 1/3, ½ gal mild 6d, butter 10d lb and bacon 9d. Made to measure trousers were 25/-. Brady kept all accounts and collated them fifty years later.

in his tourist publications. This attitude culminate din the work which could be cited to disprove any charge of lack of perseverance on his part. The product of six years' arduous labour, *Australia Unlimited*[1] is in many ways the culmination of Brady's patriotism, flair for publicity, love of travel, and his journalistic skills. After visiting each of the Australian states (and their nearby neighbours, the Malay states and Java), after an intense effort of collating countless government reports and institutional and industrial brochures and publications, after much wrangling with the publisher who understandably wanted to keep the project within a budget and after violent arguments with Edward Vidler who assisted with the editorial supervision and the black and white plates, the mammoth work emerges, to be very well received. It was a new experience for Brady inasmuch as it made money for both publisher and writer, although not as much as he thought it should have if distribution and market had been more efficient. The eleven hundred or so pages of *Australia Unlimited* present an account of the general background of the Commonwealth's development, both historically and administratively, give a detailed examination of the main geographical and commercial features of each state as well as providing a record of the achievement of prominent families and individuals whose work in benevolent or patriotic fields, especially in the pastoral industry, makes them worthy of study. To help prospective settlers, an Appendix sets down the Crown Land Laws in each state. The whole volume (There was also a two-volume edition) is provided with an index and liberally illustrated with photographs of very high standard.

The tone of the volume reflects Brady's optimism and idealism, displaying his absolut3e faith in the remarkable potential of Australia. As well as pointing out the existing possession in regard to aspects of national development, he gives an account of how they have evolved, of current trends, and usually describes the possibilities for subsequent progress. As he wants the reader in the Introduction:

> *Readers may find the author's Australian to be unlike the Australian of pre-conception. They may conclude that his outlook is over-optimistic. But this optimism is no more than a reflection of the facts. It have travelled the country and studied it to the best of my ability, hoping to forecast the future from the efforts and achievements of the present, drawing conclusions from comparisons, endeavouring to b ring to the task judicial methods, in order to reach sound judgments.*
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> *Everywhere – prejudiced I believe by no oversanguine temperament – I found Wonder, Beauty, unequalled resource. Under the arid seeming of the plains I saw possibilities of marvellous tilth. Barren hills poured out a golden recompense in minerals. The whole continent was proved to be a vast storehouse of mainly undeveloped Wealth.*[2]

There is no doubt that, as discoveries in mineral wealth over the last few years have shown, this work stands as a monument to Brady's foresight, vision, optimism and his vast faith in the future of this country.

The list of contents in *Australia Unlimited* covers most of the important aspects of the nation and its way of life. A deft touch is the inclusion as a Frontispiece of Dorothea Mackella's well0know patriotic poem, "My County", with its uncanny re-creation of

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1 Melbourne, 1918.

2 P. 14.

the spirit of the land. As Brady points out, the problem with this types of voluminous publication is deciding what is to be left out. With his inclusions (historical, cultural and intellectual, geographical, commercial and industrial aspects) he has attained an adequate coverage, but he can be criticised for his neglect of the educational systems of the various states, particularly considering that one of the avowed purposes of the volume is to inform prospective immigrants what can be expected. True, Brady does express regret for the omission, but its absence seems unnecessary.

The personal reminiscences of the other books in this area are largely missing from *Australia Unlimited,* as is to be expected, but Brady's optimism shines through the journalistic record of settlement, exploration, political evolution and the development of a complex and individualistic civilisation. Compiled, as it was, from many official sources as well as personal and paid canvassing, its comprehensiveness is cause for praise and it is understandable that it soon became the standard reference work on Australia in schools, diplomatic offices and in government departments. Although badly dated after half a century, when looked at in its context it must be recognised as a remarkable administrative and journalistic achievement, as well, perhaps, as a literary one. The volume was well received by the public and critics, one reviewer summarising his opinion by stating that "Australia has seldom been better or more comprehensively illustrated,"[1] while most praised both its content and its highly creditable production.[2]

Later, when contemplating the production of a film of *Australia Unlimited,* he made clear that the writing of it had drawn him to the inescapable conclusion the Australia's national needs could be covered by four words: Immigration, Occupation, Expansion, Preparation – the increase of population through a programme of rapid expansion of immigration; the settlement of the vast, unoccupied inland areas of the country and the achievement of productivity from them; the expansion of all industries, primary and secondary, which would follow from increased efficiency and the achievement of the previous two needs; and the preparation of the nation both to take its place in world affairs as an independent entity and to defend itself against outside attack, particularly from Asian sources. Although the film never evolved (the enthusiasm of the man secured a following but the proposed company which was to make it went bankrupt) Brady's vision of the need for a controlled programme of national development in the manner described is further evidence of his vision, his social involvement and concern.

In this area of geographic and commercial prose, Brady, personal travels add a directness and freshness of observation which make his work effective in presenting a realistic picture of Australia to an audience whose view was restricted, for travel is not easy on account of the vast distances involved, undeveloped railways and poor roads. In fact, in one of the few personal experiences in *Australia Unlimited,* Brady gives an account of a trip by car over a mountain road in Victoria which can only be described as hair-raising.[3]

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1 *The Sydney Daily Telegraph,* 7.9.1918.
2 For example, *The Argus,* 2.8.1918
3 Pp. 350-351.

These writings won for Brady a wide following at a time when the Boer War and later World War 1 were stimulating an inwards searching of Australians which has developed into a strong sense of national identity. Australia was no longer to be regarded as a colony of Britain, or even a junior partner in the commonwealth of nations, but an independent country in its own right with its own character, decisions and future. Lawson, Rudd, Furphy and others had, along with *The Bulletin,* begun the process in the late nineteenth century and in helping to make Australians aware of their country, its uniqueness and inherent possibilities, Brady was furthering this development. The fact that his writings are not always in the literary vein was not a great disadvantage, for his travel accounts particularly, were read by those will little more than a sense of adventure and with no pretensions to literary knowledge. Referring to *King's Caravan* as a "chatty, discursive, rather journalistic record", a reviewer in the English magazine *The Athenaeum* saw value in the book in several ways:

> *It is useful for its matter-of-fact descriptions of the wide area of country covered; and again, it is interesting in its revelation of an essentially Australian view, not along of Australia but of life generally. The author's attitude of mind is typically and thoroughly Australian, It is a kindly, good-humoured attitude, characterised by a curious blend of utilitarian materialism, Utopian idealism, cynicism and naivete. Doubtless these things are largely climatic. The Utopian dreams of an era in which there will be no capitalists, and all men on an equal footing, will share and share alike in working for the common weal, are here blended with and corrected by healthy primitive appetites, simple tastes, an ironical sense of humour and a youthful keenness regarding the physical pleasure of life. It is an admirable presentation of the Australian temperament, wholesome and markedly free from the savage pessimism which has disfigured some of the best books Australia has given us.*[1]

These remarks can be applied equally well to all books discussed in this section. The opinions expressed form the core of a very perceptive review, especially remarkable when one considers the time and the place of its appearing. It is true to say that Brady's books give an Australian view of life. His optimism does shine through them all, displaying a hopeful, benevolent attitude towards life in general, in his case deeply rooted in his faith in socialism's capabilities to produce a better standard of living for all, and enriched by his romantic, idealistic bent. With his strong utopian tendencies, it is as if he is further reinforcing the view he expressed to William Lane before the Paraguay episode that the new society has more chance of success if established in this country. He might well have been saying that all the requirements for the new society were here, now; there is no need to go across the sea to achieve these high ideals, and Brady believed in this as firmly in the 1920's as he did in the 1880's. Yet he stresses continually the need for the application of the common virtues of hard work and sincere, intelligent effort to develop the available resources, both material and intellectual. Although a staunch unionist, he recognises in his works that the excesses of unionism must be curbed for the national good. His ironic sense of humour and his own experience of life serve to keep his feet on the ground when his idealism would encourage flights of fancy too remote from reality. To say that these things are climatic, as the reviewer does, is hard to sustain. Other countries

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[1] 11.11.1911, p.591. The review is unsigned.

have the same climatic conditions as Australia, yet their inhabitants have obviously different national temperaments. In Brady's case, such qualities are the result of his own background of course, but are mainly due to the attitude of mind which evolved within him as a result of his experience, his reading and his thinking about the problems of mankind. His strong desire to work positively for the betterment of Australia and its people arises from the philosophical position he has decided upon as the result of his own reasoning; strangely enough this group of books embodies this philosophy to a degree as least as great as his verse or his other writings. It is only in his editorials, where he attempts to distil the essence of his thinking on social and political topics that a clearer view of his position is apparent. In recognising Brady's credo and in associating it with the ethos which is typically Australian, the reviewer in *The Athenaeum* show himself a discerning and astute critic.

While they add little to any formal literary reputation which Brady Might have, these books demonstrate again the breadth of his outlook, his versatility, love of country and countryside, and above all, his concern for people. All commercial activity is regarded as a means to the improvement of the quality of life, not just an economic exercise. It must be regarded in its proper perspective where humanistic values predominate. On the whole it is an altruistic attitude and in both social and religious terms wholly commendable. It serves again to illustrate a character quite remarkable for vision, versatility and, above all, for humanity.

Chapter Seven – Brady as editor and journalist

"Keep faith, Sir Knight, for the longest road
Hath even an end at length;
Keep hearth, Sit Knight, for the sorest load
But trieth the strong man's strength."
Brady, "Crusader".

Brady's entry into journalism was by way of political journals, but after this initial experience he joined the staff of the Sydney *Truth* in 1893 and was assigned the job of dramatic critic, a task neither onerous or highbrow, considering the readership towards which the paper was aimed. This involved attendance at the Criterion, Tivoli, Lyceum and Her Majesty's theatres as well as Theatre Royal, the School of Arts, the Coogee Palace Aquarium, with occasional visits to other places, such as the Centenary Hall. At these centres of entertainment a varied collection of plays, tableaux, variety acts, comic operas and operettas was performed and general descriptions and reviews were duly reported in *Truth* in several columns – at first headed "Amusements" and then "Give Us Show". Under Brady's enthusiastic reporting it expanded into a section of three or four columns providing amusement, if not serious criticism, to the readers.

Brady was a sufficiently able newspaperman even then to turn a neat phrase in his account of the various performances. So Nellie Stewart in "The Mikado" was "a bright ray of comic opera sunshine and has raised the theatrical thermometer to financial heat" – a very necessary talent.[1] And when two male vocalists sang a sacred duet at the Tivoli in a Sunday evening performance, Brady began his review with: "Ho! Everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, ,buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" and then proceeded to rather pedestrian wordplay on the "Ho!"[2] And yet again, on another occasion when a Sunday evening performance at the Tivoli was viewed, the notice began:

> *Now in the days when Dibbs ruled with a rod of cast-iron over the land of New South Wales there arose a mighty singer named Rickards who filled the air with sweet sounds and choice phrase on every day of the week including the Lord's Day which is the Sabbath. He did these things at a house called the Tivoli which is situate in t he street called Castlereagh nigh over unto the thoroughfare known as King. Wherefore Dibbs the ruler being approached by the Scribes and Pharisees, who liked not that any should work on the Sabbath but themselves, rose up and ordered the man Rickards to clothe himself in sackcloth and ashes and sing not to the people on the Sabbath. And Rickards being a man who walked in the fear of the Lord and Dibbs did even as he was commanded, and sang no more on the Sabbath, neither did he sing on other days of the week. Wherefore the people cried unto him in a loud voice…*[3]

There are times when Brady's notices are serious in intent and tone. Some performances came in for several notices. For example, when Shakespeare's "Henry V" was being played at Her Majesty's Theatre, a review was written of the first appearance of the play and then a more general, follow-up notice was given the next week. While the first review praised the acting of George Rignold and his dramatically effective speeches, his exquisite pathos, his "rare, delicate touch" and his scholarly approach, the second gave more attention to the stage-graft and to the actual intentions of Shakespeare in the play. Brady makes the point that Shakespeare has depicted Henry V with such enthusiasm that it is no wonder that some regard him as his view of the ideal man. With this thesis however, Brady disagrees, considering that

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1 *Truth*, 10.10.1894.
2 *Truth,* 4.2.1894.
3 *Truth,* 27.5.1894.

the mind which gave the world the "brooding, meditative" Hamlet and the "passionate, romantic" Romeo "could hardly look upon the practical, fact-loving monarch as emblematic of all that was admirable in life." Recognising that the author of "Romeo" and "Hamlet" had a meditative and contemplative aspect to his character, Brady sees these two plays and "Love's Labour's Lost" stressing the importance of not going against the strong dictates of Nature but rather (like Rousseau) becoming familiar with her ways and living in harmony with them. Henry V is seen as the exponent of the "potent practicability which so permeates[1] Shakespeare's nature", that is , as his "ideal in the field of practical achievement". It is not claimed that Brady was a Shakespearian critic – he wrote of his plays only onb a couple of occasions – but it is useful to know that in addition to his humorous and superficial dramatic notices there were occasions when he endeavoured to think seriously about the work he viewed and tried to have his readers do likewise. But he was more at home in a light and frothy account of "Lady Windermere's Fan", with its witty dialogue, or a Gilbert and Sullivan comedy, or even an account of a lecture by Mrs. Annie Besant, a visiting Theosophist and disciple of Madam Blavatsky.

In *Truth* at the time when Brady's column appeared there was published "Pass the Scissors – An Original Pen and Ink Sketch of a Dramatic Critic", a mythical interview with a dramatic critic supposedly conducted by "Peter Amos". From the tone of the writing and from its style, by the content of the questions and answers, it was almost certainly written by Brady in a light mood and he was the critic who pretended to be interviewed. In reply to the question, "What is you best vein?" the answer is given that he likes to bring a light and humorous touch ("a rapier-like touch") to what he discusses. In reference to a particular custom of Brady's, the interviewer asks about the frequent Biblical references and quotations in his critiques, suggesting that perhaps this cheapens Holy Writ, to which the answer is given that actors, as a rule, are little acquainted with the Bible, and "the thing is done solely with a view to giving the profession an opportunity of now and then reading a portion of the sacred volume", adding that the dramatic critic should help in sowing the good seed, for "though some of it may fall on stony ground, yet he never knows when a seed may fall on good soil, and, fructifying, bring forth an hundred-fold. You remember the parable of the mustard-seed - - - Not going yet?" Brady reveals in his writings a good knowledge of the Bible and its importance as literature as well as a religious document, but he also shows, in this sketch as in others, his capacity to laugh at himself and his mannerism as they no doubt appear to others. His well-developed sneeze of humour accounted, in part, for the optimism which he usually displayed. While one could look at incidents and see the humour in them, pessimism could be excluded, no amtter hoe justified by circumstances.

With the exception of his contributions, editorial and otherwise, to political newspapers, Brady wrote mainly for *The Arrow* and *The Grip* on a regular basis. This chapter being concerned with his general (i.e. non- political) journalism, its intention is to examine his writings as a general contributor, as a columnist, and as an editor of each in turn, as well as for the later *The Native Companion.*

Before he became editor, and during the period of editorial supervision, Brady wrote many different columns for the two journals. The names of these columns changed quite often, but almost every issue of *The Arrow* and *The Grip* had a column of

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[1] *Truth,* 16.9.1894, 23.9.1894.

general, political, humorous, literary or topical items. In *The Arrow*, using the pseudonym mainly of "The Owl" but also of "Billie Badge" and "The Hen Editor", Brady variously called his column "Random Shots", "Straight Shots", "Straight Bolts", "Cross Bolts", "Bars and Breezes", "Words of Wisdom", "On the Stump" and "Hoots". Using the pseudonyms of "The Owl", "Nedi Wooli" and "The Local Joker", he contributed to *The Grip* columns called "Griplets", "Mustard and Cress", "Mixed Pickles". "The Editors Easy Chair", and on his return to Sydney from Grafton, "Sydney Day by Day".[1]

As well as keeping these columns going (and each day required ten or a dosen items, some of several paragraphs) Brady usually wrote one or more leading articles, especially in *The Grip*, for in some measure he saw this journal as providing guidance to the community in which it appeared. All these contributions show a man with a lively interest in a multitude of subjects, along with the sympathy for the common man that one learns to expect form his work, whether in prose or verse.

Brady's policy, in short , was at it appeared in a statement in *The Arrow* published when taking office:

> *The Arrow will be found replete with interesting reading matter to suit all classes of the community. It will deal fairly, yet trenchantly with all matters pertaining to sport, politics and the drama, and will also have something to say on the topics of the day ... Politically The Arrow will adopt an independent attitude, straight talk and home truths being conspicuous by their frequent appearance in its columns.*[2]

And in a subsequent statement the following week, there appeared a further addendum to this flag-flying:

> *Its promoters intend it to be humorous without being indecent, fearless, but not venomous; always reliable in the amtter of sport and a freelance on all questions affecting the public interest.*

In the next five years or so Brady put this policy into operation. A wide range of topical events came in for discussion, harangue and sarcasm, although political events did not occupy the place of importance here that they did in *The Australian Workman* or were to do in *The Worker* and *The Labor Call.* Current issues which affected the quality of the life of the common man were of special importance, as a study of Brady's writings in these periodicals shows.

Some of these issues were relevant only to Brady's own time and place. He agitated endlessly for the construction of the Grafton to Casino railway, for modern sanitation for Grafton, for expanded port facilities, for improved roads and for better facilities and amenities to cate for a growing tourist industry. Others were of wider contemporary importance. There was a tendency of the authorities to overload the ferries which plied Sydney Harbour. Not content with writing an editorial against the

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[1] Evidence is mainly internal, but Brady makes occasional references of his pseudonyms in letters (mainly to his family and Mendelsohn).

[2] *The Bird-O'-Freedom,* 22.2.1896, and 29.2.1896, p.5. in both cases. The paper became *The Arrow* the next week.

dangers of this practice, Brady composed and published an hypothetical news item about the sinking of a ferry with the loss of over three hundred men, women and children.[1] There were times when Brady was not content with half measures!

Another issue which was receiving much public attention at that time was Sunday observance. Brady used both editorials and more lighthearted means to put his views on this particular topic. He pointed out that for the workingman the Sabbath was the only day in which he could expect any relief from his labours, as most worked a six-day week, and if he wished to relax at home, to watch or to participate in sport, then strict laws which were originally passed to ensure church attendance should not be allowed to interfere with his freedom of choice.[2] Arguing that the liberties of Australians should be extended, not restricted, he made out a strong case for greater freedom, to which he referred at intervals over the years, sometimes humorously, sometimes seriously. In lighter vein an article told of how shooting enthusiasts, who were forbidden by law even to carry firearms on Sundays, used their ingenuity to evade the law. Remarking on the general love of sport amongst Australians, he tells how he was invited to go shooting (a favourite past-time of his) one sabbath with a young friend. When he demurred, mentioning the possible penalty, his young tempter remonstrated with him:

> *'Damn Acts of Parliament,' said the young man. 'I'll show you how to carry a gun without being copped.' He did. First he filled his pockets with cartridges; then he unhitched the breechloader, put the barrels down the legs of his trousers and the stock up his sleeve, and walked out of town past the police station with a hymn book in his hand. Certainly his carriage was a little stiff; but it was not stiffer than that of the ordinary pious young man on his way to Sunday School.*[3]

Brady used ridicule as a weapon on many occasions, but there was always a good humour about it which would prevent anyone taking offence.

Many of the issues on which Brady did take a stand however, are remarkably relevant today. The problem of society's attitude to unmarried mothers, of abortion, censorship and obscenity, increase in savage crime and methods of coping with it, drugs and alcohol, the problems associated with racism and immigration, capital punishment, conservation of natural resources, the protection of Australian authors, closer settlement and problems of decentralisation, tardy mail deliveries and unreliable government transport look like a collection from today's crucial issues. In one sense, the efforts of Brady and other reformers have not borne much fruit, as real solutions have not been found to any of these problems, but again, a newspaper's task is to draw public attention to issues, discuss the various sides of the question, perhaps suggest solutions, but rarely is its tole more practical than this. At least Brady showed his sense of responsibility by discussing these pertinent aspects of the turn-of-the-century society and it is of interest to see his position on each of them, as he expressed it through the columns of his journals.

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1 *The Arrow*, 4.4.1896
2 "Enforcing the Sabbath", *The Arrow,* 4.7.1896.
3 "Our Love of Sport", *The Arrow,* 5.3.1898. p.4.

Brady has strong views in the general field of women's rights. He had an abhorrence of abortion as a principle, whether on religious grounds or secular, but at the same time he expressed much sympathy for unmarried mothers. On one occasion a lady wrote a moving plea against the caging of animals at the zoo. Commenting upon this in an editorial, Brady suggested that the lady's sympathy was misplaced. He considered that society as a whole was less cruel to animals, which after all had ideal living conditions, were well-fed and had greater safety in their cages than in their natural habitat, than it was to unmarried mothers. A girl who, through love (he was ever the romantic), produced an unwanted child should not be ostracised but given care and understanding, if not sympathy. He pleaded that unmarried mothers were treated with less feeling than were the animals. Such girls, especially if they were working class people, were looked down upon by their fellows and by the rich members of society.[1]

Nevertheless, in spite of his sympathy, he could not agree that abortion was a morally acceptable solution to the problem. He cited several cases where illegal abortion had been committed and deplored the fact that it was usually the poor girl who received the publicity. He urged strict police action to stamp out the back-yard operator in the abortion trade, but advocated leniency for the girls driven to patronise such places. He called for a change in social attitudes towards the whole problem so that women would not be driven to such lengths to terminate pregnancy.[2] When a notorious abortionist was hanged for his crimes, Brady was quick to protest that capital punishment was not the answer to the problem, as the man's unholy trade still continued, in spite of the severity of punishment. In fact he opposed capital punishment as a legitimate or effective solution to any problem.[3]

A similar sympathy was extended to the men and women who through one circumstance or another were not able to continue in the spirit of the marriage covenant. In typical Brady fashion he wrote a light-hearted jingle on a contemporary divorce issue, the Federal Divorce Bill, in which he took the view that divorce was sometimes the only humanitarian recourse. This verse produced a reply from Archdeacon Moxon in which he took Brady to task for his attitudes. In a long reply of one-and-a-half columns, Brady presented a well-reasoned and generally respectful reply to the good Anglican, who likewise replied at length. Brady pointed out that the High Church of England and the Low Church could not agree about the morality of the topic's question. Stating his unwillingness to quote Scripture to an Archdeacon, Brady based his case on practical and humanitarian grounds. He claimed that it was against all morality for a defunct union to be perpetuated and that monogamy in this irrevocable sense was impossible – "It is repugnant to morality and destructive to happiness".[4] He further argued that even the practice of condoning divorce but refusing the innocent or the guilty party permission to remarry was a harsh and unjust attitude towards the problem of human relationships, which are so much a part of the cement of society. He pleaded for forgiveness for wrongs committed:

> *It has frequently occurred, and it is in accord surely with the idea of Divine forgiveness, that under more propitious circumstances, even offenders may be*

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1 "The Wild beasts". *The Grip,* 3.10.1901, p.2.
2 "The Unholy Trade", *The Bird-O'-Freedom*, 29.2.1896, p.2.
3 "Straight Shots", *The Arrow,* 2.5.1896, p.1.
4 "Divorce is Wrong", *The Grip,* 13.3.1902, p.2.

> *reclaimed, and the man or woman who was induced, perhaps, by marital unhappiness, to err, may turn over a new leaf in the Book of Life. Let us, in a Christian spirit, concede that there is something of good in every man and woman, and let our Laws and Religions be framed as far as possible in this noble and charitable belief! ...The spirit of modern Divorce Law, as I understand it, is the spirit of Him who said, 'Go and sin no more,' and the spirit also of the prayer which asks not to be led into temptation but delivered from evil. This, I deferentially and most earnestly hold to be true, for it is in the spirit rather than in the letter that the modern student of Ethics is led to look for Truth and Justice.*

Rejecting the "moral quarantine" which follows when a divorced person is unable to marry – an isolation which tends towards the breaking of the moral law – Brady continued:

> *The enlightened tendency of the Age is to better <u>all</u> the conditions of Humanity – to go forward rather than to recede. The evolution of the Marriage Laws, as well as the laws relating to commercial, economic and social conditions has been gradual; it has not come without opposition, but it <u>has</u> come, and the world is so much the better for it.*

He also pointed out that most worthwhile reform throughout history has met with opposition and that where an unjust law already exists, this is hardest of all to change. He added that those churches which have closest to dogma in the past are the ones who have lost most ground as the march of civilisation and science proceeds. In spite of an equally courteous reply, the churchman was not able to refute the practicality and humanity of Brady's viewpoint, mainly resting his case on the fact that the marriage covenant was the cement of society, and society as a whole was more important that individuals within it.[1]

In general then, Brady championed for women some of the rights which they have since achieved and though he never really approved of the "new" woman he realised that as society became technically more advanced, so women's role must change. Although a strong believer in the dictum that woman's place is in the home raising children, he saw that he native charm and femininity would triumph over any changes that arose:

> *As humanity in the bulk develops, alters, improves, so the new woman will evolve, still glorious, still radiant, still beautiful and more than ever the companion, ally and helpmate of her fellow-creature, Man.*[2]

Concern was expressed by Brady about the problems associated with an increase in crime at the turn of the century, especially amongst the younger members of the community. Making the statement that all kinds of crime had increased following the economic difficulties of the 1890's, especially burglary, theft and crimes of violence, Brady called for an increase in the number of police as well as for a thorough overhaul of the police organisation, methods and equipment and the adoption of scientific advances to increase the efficiency of crime prevention and detection.[1]

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1 *The Grip,* 20.3.1902
2 *The Grip,* 14.4.1902
1 *The Arrow*, 23.5.1896.

He deprecated however, the increase in severity of penalties for crimes committed under economic stress. In a savage personal attack upon a Judge Docket who had sentenced a thirteen year old boy, charged with common assault, to six months gaol and flogging of twenty-five lashes, Brady waxed sarcastic both at the severity of the sentence and at the Judge's conduct of the trial, alleging that the Judge had intimidated and bullied the jury, a practice this particular man had a reputation for. In a scathing editorial, Brady wrote, in part:

> *As a companion of the Emperor Nero and his court executioner he would be in his element. The position of Chief Inquisitor to the Spanish Government would have been congenial to his humane nature, and as Judge at the beginning of the last century when sometimes thirty or forty unfortunates were sentenced to death, he would have been a great success.*[2]

Such language bordered on the intemperate and seemed likely to leave him open to a charge of contempt of court, but there was no official reaction. This criticism, though strong, was destructive rather than constructive, but on other occasions Brady wrote about the ways of alleviating the conditions which he saw contributing to the commission of such crimes. Hypothesising that much of the trouble among the younger members of the community was caused by unsatisfactory provision of recreational facilities, he recommended the setting up of gymnasiums contributed to by the Government and controlled by authorities such as the Y.M.C.A. in which programmes of physical training and sport would benefit the young physically as well as keeping them occupied and out of trouble.[3] He deplored the conditions under which many young people lived, pointing out the desirability of a strong family unit as an essential ingredient in a healthy and peaceful society. He drew attention also to the dangers of alcohol and the probably outcome of addiction to it among youth. While not recommending prohibition, he strongly emphasised the need for temperance, pointing out that reformers would do better to ensure the purity and quality of the liquor sold, especially in country hotels, rather than engaging in a futile campaign to ban its use completely.[4] He allied these warnings against alcohol with similar dire predictions about the use of drugs, especially the opium which the Chinese used freely and which young people especially were sometimes keen to sample, for excitement.

As may be recalled, Brady often echoed the campaign of *The Bulletin* against the immigration into Australia of Asians (especially the Chinese), but also of other coloured people, mainly on economic grounds. But there was doubtless a measure of intolerance in the man which belied the wide sympathy he usually betrayed. This was evident when his patience was stretched to the limit by the overseas visitors who came to Australia dispensing gratuitous advice on a multitude of topics. There was some justification for Brady's indignation, for at the turn of the century many artists who had deteriorated in performance and who found conditions difficult in Europe and England made a "tour of the Colonies". As Brady forcefully put it, these "distinguished visitors" stretched their hosts' patience to the ultimate because they "partake of our hospitality, which is proverbial, accept our flattery, inhale our atmosphere, rake in our coin and then go eagerly hunting through Webster's Dictionary for words to abuse us" and added further that "they make fun of our fashions, deride our manners, belittle our resources and exhaust their wit and satire in the effort to make us ridiculous".[1] All this could be forgiven, stated Brady, if they would only spare us their "good advice". Having relieved his mind of these general points, he made specific barbed comments upon a contemporary example of such alien benevolence, remarking that a visiting British Socialist, Ben Tillett, had not been in the country more than twenty-four hours ("most of which time he had spent in bed") before he discovered the parlous conditions of Australian labour, and then proceeded to instruct Australians how to remedy these defects, though he had left far worse conditions and problems behind in England. The editorial conclusion was plain and unmistakable: "For a young country we have received just as much good advice and warnings as we have the strength to carry." One cannot help wondering whether Brady's sound objections would carry any more weight today in the face of the many visitors who seem to have inherited Tillet's characteristics. The stout nationalism and patriotism of Brady perhaps made him over-sensitive to such human weakness.

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2 "The Draconian Docker", *The Grip*, 30.12.1901, p.2.
3 "Our Neglected Youth", *The grip,* 7.4.1902.
4 "Drugging the Drunk", *The Arrow,* 31.10.1896.
1 "Tillettism: The Universal Panacea". *The Arrow,* 14.8.1897. p.4

As he did in some of his contemporary jingles and in his writings in political journals, in his general contributions to *The Arrow* and *The Grip* and in his editorials in these papers, Brady agitated for reforms to the legal system. He deplored the possibility, which he saw as a very real one, that there was one law for the poor and another for the rich. He deprecated the grasping attitude of some legal men, urging a stricter professional code upon them, and a revision of the legal code so that the spirit of the law would not be obscured by shortcomings in its letter. He deplored further the tendency of the Bench and lawyers to appear to band together against the ordinary citizen, seeming to present a united front against any criticism. With false ingenuousness he stated that they exemplified the solidarity of unionism, constituting, as they did, a "mutual protection society, a kind of legal banditti, bound together for the more successful plunder of the public."[2] He regarded seriously the possibility that poor people would submit to injustice rather than run the risk of heavy costs which almost always ensued if litigation was engaged in. He further associated lawyers with abuses in lending money, of inflated interest rates, and urged them to give more attention to the needy seeking money than to the rich client intent on gaining the last fraction of interest from his investment.[3] When a specific abuse came to light, he inveighed heavily against it, as in the case of the local Justice of the Peace at Grafton who won an illegal raffle. Brady quoted the law on the subject at length in *The Grip,* accusing the law of partiality because no action was taken. Eventually the man was fined.[4] While on the surface this was a legitimate use of journalistic influence, it showed a certain pettiness on Brady's part, which gave the impression of a man clutching at editorial straws to make capital out of other's minor weaknesses. His sense of wrongdoing could outweigh his sense of proportion until a petty incident was expanded beyond reason, leading to some unpopularity in the Grafton district.

To these issues which interested Brady in his journalistic endeavours could be added many others. He often wrote against the dangers of centralisation, urging an official policy of spreading industries and administration over the coastal and inland areas away from Sydney. He advocated settlement of sparse areas and the breaking up of the large holdings of arsenate landlords. He deplored the tied-house system whereby breweries had a monopoly of the supply of liquor at certain hotels; protested at slow deliveries by the postal department; urged a more thorough censorship by Customs of illicit photographs brought into Australia on French ships, and after a painful experience with a travelling dentist, advised stricter controls over the qualifications of those practising this profession. It is true to say that Brady exhibited a lively interest and concern in things national and local while editing *The Arrow* and *The Grip.*

When considered in total, these concerns of Brady's add up to a point of view where he is anxious, in the best sense of the word, about the lot of the average Australian and the image he presents to the world, as well as for his material and cultural welfare. In an age when a national identity began to mean something important to Australians, Brady played his part by constant reference to the Australian character. He wrote strongly against a tendency he called "The Great Australian Cadge". He derided the tendency of tramps to come upon his camp always at meal time and expect to be fed, supplied with tobacco and flour when his plight might be no better than their own.[1] He believed that this attitude was partly due to the welfare state

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2 "Cheap Law", *The Arrow*, 11.4.1896
3 "Financial Frauds". *The Grip,* 31.3.1902
4 "The Police and the Gaming Act", *The Grip,* 31.3.1902
1 *The Grip*, 27.3.1902.

which was developing in New South Wales, where the unemployed expected the community to support them, even though there might be work available.[2] It was not that he resented the public support extended, recognising it as necessary and humane in many cases, but he was afraid it concealed indolence and led to a softening of the national fibre – obviously a bad thing for Australia.

This love for Australia was a major concern with Brady at all times. His intense patriotism was almost jingoistic. In his introductory letter to the people of the north coast when he took over the editorship of *The Grip*, Brady wrote that his aim was the advancement of north coast interests and the improvement of its people, "closer settlement, equable land laws and encouragement of Agriculture, Dairying, Pastoral and general Commercial Industries". He wrote of the need for Patriotism as a binding force within the Australian society, seeing it as something above and beyond all the political issues and trends of the day. He further stated that "I am Australian to the backbone and spinal marrow and shall always respect and regard most the men and the parties whom I believe to be laboring in the true interests of this our free and glorious country."[3]

In many articles Brady deplored the unpatriotic gesture, the tendency of Australians to run down their country in speech and writing – action which he regarded as thoroughly reprehensible.[4] Perhaps his deeply-rooted utopianism gave him this attitude and his idealism and optimism saw that only by holding the concept of a better country and working towards the achievement of this ideal could real improvement be brought about; or perhaps his socialistic theories envisioned Australia as a workingman's paradise once the correct government was in power, and that this desirable end could be achieved only by inspiring the average man with idealistic and patriotic aims. Certainly the attitudes engendered by Lawson, Quinn and Paterson supported idealism and patriotism. Brady felt that this country had more than any other to give its citizens and that they should repay this with love and fidelity. This patriotism would not allow him to leave Australia, although he was sometimes in dire straits financially, even though he could have claimed American citizenship and expatriates tempted him to go abroad. Through all his writings, from the verse and comic serials to the best of his prose, this love of country shines resplendently. And it obvious from his journalism that he regarded the function of a journalist to be an important one in this process of cultivating and managing patriotic impulses along desired lines.

In a humorous article very early in his career Brady spoke about the qualifications and functions of journalists, whether amateur or professional. Beginning in Biblical style he stated that "Behold he is with us even unto the consummation of the world" and proceeded to speak of the short life and heavy demands of small magazines and the journalist whom they employ:

> *The born Pressman has a natural aptitude for lying; he has read, in a general way, a tremendous little about everything; he can remember dates; he possesses an iron constitution, a chilled steel conscience and a copper-plated inside. He must be able to work 23 hours 593/4 minutes out of the 24, drink,*

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[2] "The Unemployed Question: Our Great Australian Laze". *The Arrow,* 14.10.1899

[3] 10.8.1901, p.2.

[4] "The National Libel Mill and the Australian National Spirit", *The Worker,* 4.3.1905

> *ride, shoot, swim, swear, fight, sketch, talk, bow nicely to a woman, flatter a Cabinet Minister, drive an engine, sail a boat, pick a lock, obtain information from a policeman, tip the winner, carry on a conversation with a deaf-mute, go without a dinner and avoid getting a red nose. Unless a man has all these capacities and about a thousand others he will never make more than his salt as member of the Press.*[1]

Whether he was writing against the evils of capital punishment, the difficult working conditions of the Australian seaman or the need to substitute arbitration for the fighting in the Boer War, the necessity to have more news of the way and less censorship of it, Brady was exercising many of the skills which he saw as part of the journalist's stock-in-trade. Throughout all his writings ran an irrepressible humour and optimism – thoroughly blended with patriotism; this led to readable articles, if not always written in greatly – endearing "literary" style.

He became more literary in his editorial work with *The Native Companion*, On taking over its editor's chair from Bertram Stevens in 1907, Brady started a new series of the magazine and as was his custom, began with a literary manifesto (or rather, an artistic one):

> *The New Series of The Native Companion, enlarged, will be illustrated by Line Drawings. No Photos, no Half-tone Blocks will be used. This is a somewhat new departure in modern magazine publication. The Editor's idea is to give the Artist a chance. The artistic eye, which is the window of the aesthetic soul, perceives something more in a subject than the lines of a photographic instrument. It is that 'something more; which The Native Companion, in its own way, and in the fulness of time, hopes to develop, the publication has been put before the personality; the individuality of the contributor was subserved to the idiosyncrasy of the editor. As a result, the writer and the artist worked more to please the editor than to please themselves, to express that which is in them – nearest to the heart. In order to give a Voice to Australian Genius, which will be something more than the photographic repetition of our own literary policy, we have decided not to adopt a literary policy at all.*[1]

Of course, while such a statement no doubt appeared attractive to the prospective contributor, it was one impossible to sustain in practice. To have no policy was t print everything offered to the journal, and this of course, would plainly be impossible in terms of the production of a readable magazine of any literary merit whatsoever. But Brady meant that *The Native Companion* would not make a statement of policy which would prevent the free expression of ideas on important topics merely because they were against the personal policy of the editor – a different state of affairs. But here was merely another example of the Brady flamboyancy – the desire to achieve an effect without full concern for the implications of th4e activity. It was not really irresponsible of him; it was rather a display of what might be called journalistic flair – a quality the man often exhibited, especially when prospects ahead looked favourable, as they did at this time. He was sufficiently astute and masterful to feel that having his hand at the helm of even a modest magazine gave him a security and a sense of purpose which he so often lacked. Here was another chance to put into practice his ideals in regard to literature in Australia, to encourage indigenous writers and to have a platform for getting across to some Australians at least, his belief in his country's worth – a worth which could only be fully extended and achieved if his fellows managed to get their sense of values in correct order and work for social and cultural advance rather than display a preoccupation with materialism and recreation.

One of the strong planks in his platform in *The Native Companion* was an advocacy of some sort of protection or assistance for Australian writers. This was not a new topic. In the *Centennial Magazine*, to which Brady himself had contributed some of his earliest material, there appeared a series of articles on "The Status of Literature in Australia" by G.B. Barton.[2] This series looked at literature through the eyes of the Government, the publishers, the newspaper proprietors, and was followed by a reply from

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[1] "In Rags –Amateur Journalism in Australia: The Troubles of Newspaper Proprietors", *Bird-O'-Freedom,* 20.4.1895, p.5

[1] *The Native Companion,* 29.5.1907

[2] *Centennial Magazine,* Vol.11, No.1, August 1889, p.71.

C.T. Clarke – "The Sorrows of Australian Authors", setting out the difficulties under which they worked.[3]

Henry Lawson's "Song of Southern Writers"[4] had made a plea for assistance to Australian authors in the face of their many difficulties. Brady and Lawson, Quinn and Daley had often discussed this question in their frequent get-togethers and now Brady had the perfect platform from which to wield an influence for good on the general public and the Government to secure a release from the stringencies of literary life, a life usually accompanied by poverty and hardship. It is not surprising then to find that the first issue of *The Native Companion* edited by Brady contained some thoughts on this amtter. In a column named "The Midnight Oil" he wrote on "Protection for Authors";

> I want to set up a clamour on behalf of Australian writers that will echo from the Gulf to the Bight and bring results … As long as the cheap print of England and Germany and the United States is allowed to enter Australian ports duty free, there will be no room for any more printers, paper-makers, type-founders, machinists, book-binders and starvation will remain chronic with those who write and design … Book publishers must either print here or pay customs taxes like other importers.

He cited the Copyright Acts of Canada and the United States as evidence of their determination to protect their authors, publishers and printers and after inviting interested writers, artists and publishers to contact his magazine, Brady concluded: "Let us get up and sever the thongs that bind us with the sharp edge of a new Australian Copyright Act".[1]

A simultaneous campaign in *The Bookfellow* lent strength to Brady's words. Edward Dyson had written on the problems of the Australian author in this magazine earlier in the year and A.G. Stephens himself had written leaders on it and kept it before the public gaze throughout 1907.[2] It was heartening too, to read in Brady's second issue that the Protection movement was causing great interest. Optimistically he wrote: "The movement promises to become so strong and insistent that the inaesthetic politician will be compelled to give the matter favourable consideration."[3] He strongly hinted that the Universities were not doing nearly as much as they could in the field of stimulating an indigenous literature. "Are they wide, liberal, progressive and potent, or at they merely exclusive schools of a superior class, ruled by unimaginative academicians, absolutely out of sympathy with Australian ideals?" The tone of his question left no doubt in the reader's mind where Brady's conclusions lay.

In a manuscript among Brady's papers appears an article which an accompanying note states was published in 1910 and 1917, but which cannot be traced in its published form. In this article much is made of the exodus of Australian writers and artists to other countries because of conditions pertaining locally. In strong terms Brady stated:

> Every Australian writer and artist that I have known in twenty years' association has been fervidly patriotic, profoundly anxious to see Australia take her place among the great nations of the earth. Yet our writers and artists have left and are leaving Australia by nearly every out-bound steamer – starved out! A state of affairs such as this is little short of a national calamity.

Stating that he had received three letters from such involuntary exiles in one mail (all wished to return and enquired if conditions had improved), Brady denied that Australia was either too small ot too new to attain cultural eminence. He recalled how people thought of Russia as Tolstoy, not the Czar, and of the united States in terms of Whitman. Decrying the Australian worship of athletes rather than artists,

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3 Vol.11, No4, pp.300-305.

4 *The Bulletin*, 28.5.1892

1 *The Native Companion*, 1.8.1907, p.49.

2 "The Australian Author", *The Bookfellow,* 10.1.1907. Stephens wrote a leader on this topic 31.1.1907 and most issues made some reference to it.

3 *The Native Companion*, 1.9.1907, p.51.

he referred to the current immigration programme for English farm workers, stating that it would take many such people to replace Lambert, Minns, Mahoney, Roberts, Lindsay, Longstaff, Dyson, Dorrington, Becke, Ogilvie and Louise Mack. Urging a policy of Protection he wanted to know: "Why freetrade in sonnets and protection for socks?"[1]

As well as urging a system of protection in this manner, Brady must have informally suggested other means of alleviating the plight of writers and artists. He proposed a plan to some of his friends whereby a colony of artists and writers would be established at Mallacoota, providing congenial working conditions for a community of people with common goals and relative freedom from city pressures. This was not a concrete plan, but mere kite-flying. But he soon discovered that not all creative people agreed with this escapism or segregation, some believing that the struggle for existence brings out the sensitivity and temperament needed for real creativity. Hugh McCrae was one of these, writing to A.G. Stephens about the proposal, exhibiting the whimsical satire for which he is rightly known and treating the whole suggestions in a serio-comic manner:

> *O but I must tell you of E.J. Brady's latest madness(?). He proposes starting a sort of Elbert Hubbard farm for 'literary incapables' (not his title) down Mallacoota way. Private printing press, five pounds a week all round, work not indispensable, free sunsets and none of the cruel distractions ordinary honest men have to face such as rent, firing, butcher's bills, complaining wives and squalling children. God knows how he wants to work it. But there is heaps of room for satire. Esson is his fellow-lunatic and actually blames The Bulletin for not supplying Q* (Quinn?) *with three quid every Saturday whether he works for it or not. What a race of Spartans we would raise on idiotic methods of this sort. Every poet his verandah post. Can't you see the Brady-Esson Sanatorium for Decayed Dreamers? Beer spouting from Government bores everywhere, sandwiches (?), air-fans and silk wrappers. Bayldon on an eiderdown communing with the soul of Caley; Quinn supported on the laps of two angels, Norman Lilley handing bananas round with words of praise and encouragement. McLeod roasting at the stake with bleeding hot guineas dropping out of him…*

McCrae went on to suggest Mallacoota Melodrama Farm with characters provided (villain, heroine, hero, comic etc.) each in separate houses, with the student spending a week with each. He illustrated this proposition with delightful pen-sketches and then concluded:

> We all seem to claim genius and growl at conditions and circumstances. It never occurs to us that the real reason of failure is often dependence on others (sich as Esson would like), consequent apathy, laziness, a too-good climate, fairly easy money and so on. We are Chattertons inside out, rich in surroundings, poor only in intellect.
>
> *Good God! A sermon to the Preacher!*
> *Yours, Hugh McCrae.*[1]

Although McCrae's response was all fun and there was much truth in his view that the conditions under which writers worked would not either make or break good literary production, there was a very favourable response to Brady's please that action be

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[1] "The Exodus of Brains", undated manuscript among Brady's papers in National Library.

[1] Hugh McCrae to A.G. Stephens, 6.10.1910 in Mitchell. The section quoted is from a long postscript to this letter which is in the Papers of A.G. Stephens, Vol.1. Dulcie Deamer wrote to Brady, giving her approval, but said it would have to be confined to men only, as women "in bulk" would cause the failure of the scheme.

taken to check the cheap improts and some relief be given to those working on the local scene. Even McCrae saw the necessity of this move when, as a result of these views, Brady drafter a memorial to the Prime Minister and Minister of the Australian Commonwealth on the Protection of Australian authors and artists in 1911, had it signed by Lawson, McCrae, Quinn, Fisher and others and submitted it to the Government. A duplicate of this is in Mitchell Library. It is addressed to the Labor Government, "Knowing that the objective of the Federal Labor Party sets forth the establishment of a free and enlightened community…" It states that under existing conditions the market is flooded with "cheap and frequently pernicious importations from Europe and America, thus helping to deprive Australian brain-workers, and others, of the means of livelihood" and "robbing the country of the probable fruits of genius, which might, under less cruel conditions contribute to her national honour and advancement." The memorial asked, as a first step, that the Government impose an import duty of 33 1/3% on foreign magazines and foreign novels to ensure that this class of literature is issued and printed in this country.

The memorial accomplished nothing. Perhaps it was unrealistic in its requests, but in addition, it was obvious to the Government that there was not unanimity of attitude and opinion even amongst the writers themselves. *The Bookfellow*, in an unsigned article which was almost certainly written by Stephens, slated the petition: "The style, as you see, is fustian; the matter is foolish."[2] The article was scathing on the language used in the petition and expressed the opinion that Australian writers were well-off in view of the ephemeral performance of many. It described the memorial as illogical and vague and slated its "execrable journalese". It took the memorial apart paragraphs by paragraph, criticising its content and style in some detail.

Brady had written that the position of the pioneers of culture in Australia has always been poor and that "it may truthfully be asserted that deprivation and semi-starvation have been their life-long reward." Stephens quoted this paragraph and them commented:

> Anybody who, attaching his signature to this paragraph, could think himself a 'pioneer of culture' clearly has msitaken hid calling. In what does his deprivation exist? What is he deprived of? He does not say. He may be deprived of the curse of Adam, or the boon of Eve, or of the prospect of Hades – in which cases, as in countless others, his lot might appear to many solid citizens not at all unenviable. But that is not what he means. He means that he is deprived of something worth having, not of something better lost. They who does he not say so? Because he does not understand, as a Write or an Artist, how to use the language in which he professes to be a Writer or an Artist.

Ther is much more of this in the same niggling tone. It is not known whether Stephens was approached about signing the memorial, but it is almost certain that he was not. Because hearing of it, he tried to obtain a copy from the Government, where he was met with a refusal on the grounds that it was not a public document. However he manager to gain access to a copy privately. It is ironical, in view of Stephens' remarks about those who would attach their signatures to such a document, that Archibald, Prior and Edmond all had signed it, along with the leading writers and painters of the day (including Lawson, Quinn, Daley, Mary Gilmore, Marie Pitt, Percy, Lionel and Norman Lindsay, Hal Gye, Aleck Sass, Will and Julian Ashton) – seventy seven signatures in all. Not having access to the copy submitted, Stephens could not have known this! One wonders at the story behind his omission, but he

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[2] *The Bookfellow*, Third Series, 1.6.1912, p.156.

concluded his diatribe by stating that his motive in commenting upon the document was "to drag the 'memorial' from its hidden pigeon-hole and to expose it in the light of day … to lessen any risk of Federal Ministerial folly."

A punctilious critic could legitimately criticise Brady's expression in the Memorial, just as Stephens' comments could be similarly treated. But Stephens made no attempt to answer Brady's assertions about the loss of writers and artists overseas. It was an event, whatever its details and its motivations, which reflected little credit on Stephens.

When no relief resulted from this activity by Brady on behalf of his fellow-writers, he did not cease to press for the ends he considered just and necessary. He became president of the Australian Authors' and Writers' Guild (Vance Palmer was Secretary) in 1916 and in this capacity wrote a letter to his friend, W.M. Hughes, asking for his support in the matter.[1] The attempts of the Guild however, were no more successful than others had been. Brady complained later, caustically, that "The Guild did nothing. I went home to Mallacoota and Vance Palmer went to the way. None of the others seemed sufficiently interested to keep the organisation going."[2] Or, as Palmer wrote about the situation to Brady: "Australian Writers and Artists won't hang together, or do any other damn thing unless you lead them to it with a halter."[3] Perhaps Stephens was right!

Brady continued to fight throughout the years, albeit in rather desultory fashion. But he was not alone in the fight by any means. Norman Lilley, who had signed his petition, and who ran a regular page in *The Worker*, wrote articles in support of Protection. He was quick to slate a proposal put forth in the Melbourne *Age* that the blocks of certain English magazines be sent regularly by mail for printing in Australia, thereby reducing the amount of work for local printers as well as writers. He urged the Labor movement to give strong support to the intellectual workers[1] in the community as well as to the industrial and manual.[1]

Randolph Bedford also made a plea for changes in the Copyright Act to give Australian writers more protection, again with no noticeable effect.[2] Brady referred to this article with approval when he wrote again on the topic, berating the popularity of Lawrence, the "unconvincing Galsworthy" and the "salacious-clever" Compton Mackenzie at what he considered to be the expense of indigenous fiction. "But as long as mob-psychology, controlled by a *colonial* press is as it is, as long as the bourgeois daily newspapers of Australia are permitted by public inaction to poison the young of Australia". He ranted, "so long will the native patriotic poetic thought and ideal be without honor in its own country."[3]

When in January 1922 *The Australian Journalist* published a "Proposed Federal Platform for Australian Authors", Brady support the idea enthusiastically. He pointed out that his children, who attended Mallacoota State School, brought home in their Victorian School Papers (their School Magazine), stories and articles mostly from foreign sources, "aimed at the destruction of Australian culture". He blamed the universities ("only Australian in name") for their lack of contribution to Australian literature and decried the fact that no poets or writers had been invited to the opening of the Federal Capital. In characteristic vein he deplored the fact that as a body they took this insult "lying down" and added: "and while they continue in that humble and apologetic position, all the fatted, glutted, foolish, feeble-minded claquers of this so-called democratic system, will put the hobnails into their recumbent and prostrate persons."[4]

This militancy was soon followed up by more. Urging his fellow to action, Brady stated that "When Poverty takes Resentment to spouse, the issue of that union is usually revolution" and wrote very feelingly about his personal experiences of lack and deprivation, giving "golden years" to "sordid

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1 Brady to W.M. Hughes, 11.8.1916, in National Library.
2 Brady's handwritten comments on a book of newspaper cuttings re the Guild in National Library.
3 Vance Palmer to Brady, dated only Nov. 28th, in National Library.
1 "No 'New Protection' For Writers or Artists", *The Worker,* 4.4.1912. The *Age* article was 28.12.1911.

2 "Imports of Foreign Fiction", *The Bulletin,* 15.9.1921. Red Page
3 "Australian Production – E.J. Brady Blows Off", undated manuscript among *Australian Arts and Letters* section of Brady's papers in National Library.
4 "Up Guards and At 'Em", *The Australian Journalist*, 15.2.1922, p.45.

commercial work" when he could have been serving his country better in a more creative capacity. He urged the intellectuals in the community to become more militant:

> *The must become a solid phalanx, penetrative, united, aggressive, prepared if necessary to capture governments and impose their Will, which is the Will of Righteousness and Divinity, upon this availing community; this young, unmoulded, unshaped, unled, unexpressed Australian Commonwealth.*[5]

A much more moderate tone was employed when he wrote to the President of the Australian Literary Society, Dr. James Booth. After assuring him of his support in any such campaign which would lead to benefits for Australian literature, he concluded; "In the final crystallisation of human values, the history of a nation's enduring achievements is measured mostly bu the contributions she has made to art, poetry and literature."[1] Australia was regarded as handicapped in this respect because her books could not enter the United States and Europe in any quantity while she herself was flooded with cheap imports of serials and magazines. Brady considered the termination of this state of affairs long overdue and once again urged that "the creative intellects of Australia should link up in fraternal association not only for their own protection against home and foreign exploitation but for the well-being and development of this Commonwealth."[2]

And so the battle for Protection went on. "Furnley Maurice" and Mary Gilmore were two more who wrote at intervals to the periodicals keeping the issue alive and urging similar action.[3] When asked to write a short statement for Australian Authors' Week, Brady wrote on this topic.[4]

There was a glimmer of light within the gloom when newspapers in 1936 spoke of the Government's intention of setting up a Parliamentary Committee to supervise a Federal scheme for assisting Australian literature. In haste, Brady wrote to Menzies, Hughes, Gullet, Sculllin, Curtin, Essington Lewis, Kent-Hughes and Senator Don Cameron offering his services to this end, but his offer came to nothing.

In the early 1940's Brady wrote several articles for *Bohemia* on the sad plight of national writers, but still affirming his faith in their ultimate amelioration.[5] yet he was fast becoming discouraged. All his journalistic endeavours in this regard, all those of his companions, had availed nothing. Miles Franklin wrote to him, pledging support but adding a cautionary comment:

> *We do not want this fellowship where a few of the lesser writers can get drunk. We want a stirring trade-union like the Authors' Society of London. That, till his death, depended on Thring, the great lawyer who was stupendous for the writers, always and everywhere. Not being a write himself his ego did not get in the way. A writer can be president perhaps, but there wants to be a strong man who is not a writer, who would need vision, love of country and understanding of what writers mean to this country. A tax on knowledge and the best from overseas would not help us ... Nor would a quota help us. All the writers of bogus Westerns would sell in thousands and provide the quota. The Government stroke won't save us either. All the Government and Universities cannot make one writer. If they will or can realise the importance of writers to a nation, they could help open and maintain conditions to aid them, but that is all. I think the co-operative printing business is the best bet.*[6]

In spite of such common sense, the position was not resolved, much to Brady's chagrin, nor has it been, even yet. A Manager of a local publishing group recently stated that an estimate eighty per cent of the

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5 "Be Militant", *The Australian Journalist,* 15.15.1922, p.109.
1 Brady to Dr. James Booth, 7.3.1927, in National Library.
2 "The Time is Ripe" manuscript in *Australian Arts and Letters* in National Library
3 Furnley Maruice, "Encouraging Australian Poetry", *The Bulletin,* 19.5.1927.
4 "The Week and After", *The Herald*, (Melbourne), 10.9.1927.
5 "Let My People Go", *Bohemia*, February 1940; "Battle Axes to Grind", March 1940.
6 Miles Franklin to Brady, 16.9.1945, in National Library.

total turnover in Australian publishing was controlled by overseas interests.[1] And a recent survey has shown very low earnings for Australian writers – less than people who receive a Social Services pension. The Australian Society of Authors survey showed that over half of their respondents earned less than then dollars weekly by their writing. The President of the Society, Dal Stivens, is quoted as saying: "Australia is having its culture on the cheap, from writers, painters and musicians. If Australia wants a native literature, it will have to be subsidised."[2]

In spite of all his efforts and urgings, Brady had accomplished very little in this sphere. It is to his credit however, that he tried hard and long to achieve better conditions for others as well as himself. This interest, which really blossomed out of his work on *The Native Companion*, had carried over into many other places, including a magazine with which he was involved in the 1940's – *Focus.* Brady was a regular contributor to this publication, which was run by his friend, Oscar Mendelsohn, and from June 1947 was listed as a contributing editor. However this amounted to little more than the use of hos name for publicity purposes, for he had little editorial responsibility with the magazine. He wrote only one editorial for it, unsigned, but referred to in correspondence.[3] This was a vicious and spiteful response to an alleged attack upon *Focus* by *The Bulletin*. He referred to *The Bulletin* as "once a popular Republican journal and a champion of causes that it now poisonously decries, contemns and opposes" and stated that it "runs in very bad company, a company in which the names of Dr. Goebells and General Franco can be listed…" The article added nothing to the prestige of either *Focus,* Brady or Mendelsohn.

But if his appreciation of the manner in which *The Bulletin* had developed since Archibald's day was not very great, he continued to express warm approval of Australian achievement in various literary and scientific fields. He had always done this in his literary work and through his journalism, continually pointing out that real national achievement was in intellectual and cultural fields, not in sport or materialistic accomplishments. He had great appreciation for, and expressed this through articles in *FocusI,* the work of little-known men such as Professor gilbert Murray, Gratfon Elliot Smith, Gordon Childe, Sir Colin Mackenzie – little-known in comparison with Donald Bradman or other sporting heroes. Of Gilbert Murray Brady wrote: "As a life-long advocate of peace, of the arbitrament of reason rather than brute force among the world's nations, his has been a name held in international respect."[4] Referring to these men and to Lawrence Hargrave Brady added that while unknown to the majority of their countrymen, they are much more important than "the Tichborne claimant, the Kelly Gang, or even the owners of Melbourne Cup winners."

Literary issues of the day were always grist for Brady's mill. When Hartley Grattan stated Australia's need of "an authoritative critic" Brady heartily agreed, but cautioned that he would need, as part of his qualifications, Ned Kelly armour, an Alsatian dog and a gun for defence from other critics and writers, who were penniless.[1] He also attempted to surmise why there was such a high mortality rate for Australia's little magazines, concluding that an endemic disease carried by the horse on race-tracks was the cause;[2] he sincerely believed that Australians would rather spend money on racing and drinking than on cultural activities and the present situation has not greatly changed. Ever he considered his country's welfare in his contricutions.

Brady continued to write for *Focus* as a contributor and to give general advice to Mendelsohn through regular correspondence until the magazine ceased publication in May 1946. Its demise was unfortunate for it served a useful purpose, as Brady had earlier remarked:

> *I have come to the conclusion that the promise contained in its present contents entitles it to a firm establishment In this barbarian country we have so few periodicals appealing to the human intelligence, so few publications devoted to anything except the further debasement of the public mind, that a magazine with some decent leanings deserves to survive.*[3]

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1 "Australian Publisher Hits at Controls from Overseas", *Sydney Morning Herald,* 16.5.1969, p.7.
2 "Authors' Low Earnings Show in New Survey", *Sydney Morning Herald,* 1.10.1969. p.5.
3 Untitled editorial, July 1947. The letter referring to Brady's authorship is Oscar Mendelsohn to Brady 14.7.1947 in National Library.
4 "Some Great Australiana: The Second Period", *Focus*, December 1947, p.25.
1 "Australian Literature: The Hartley Grattan Solution", *Focus*, October, 1947, pp.9-10.
2 "Australian 'Little' Magazines", *Focus*, April 1948, p.7.
3 Letter from Brady published in *Focus,* December-January 1946-47 issue, p.39.

But *Focus*, in spite of its deservings, died; with it went Brady's last close connection with magazines. Further contributions were made to various publications. But Brady's journalistic and literary career was well and truly over by this time; failing health left him with no real regrets about its demise. He remained bitter till the end however, about the community's attitudes to writers. Deploring their general financial lack, he wrote to Muir Holburn in 1949; "Did you ever reflect that after all Jesus only spent a few hours on the cross? Whereas the average creative artist is nailed to it for a lifetime!"[4] A literary life had indeed taken its toll and a poignancy remained.

CHAPTER EIGHT – LITERARY ASSOCIATES

[4] Brady to Muir Holburn, 27.4.1949, in Mitchell Library.

“Courage! My comrades, their legions are shaken,
The daylight is coming, the eagles awaken;
Let us on in the tremulous breath of the dawn,
On thro’ the silence of highways forsaken,
We will march to the silvery gates of the morn.”
Brady, “The Birth of the Morn.”