

# 1870s: Bret Harte and *Euchre in the bush*

*But the hands that were played  
By that heathen Chinee,  
And the points that he made,  
Were quite frightful to see,—  
Till at last he put down a right bower,  
Which the same Nye had dealt unto me.  
Then I looked up at Nye,  
And he gazed upon me;  
And he rose with a sigh,  
And said, ‘Can this be?  
We are ruined by Chinese cheap labor’—  
And he went for that heathen Chinee.  
In the scene that ensued  
I did not take a hand,  
But the floor it was strewed  
Like the leaves on the strand  
With the cards that Ah Sin had been hiding,  
In the game ‘he did not understand.’  
In his sleeves, which were long,  
He had twenty-four jacks,—  
Which was coming it strong,  
Yet I state but the facts;  
And we found on his nails, which were taper,  
What is frequent in tapers,—that’s wax.  
Which is why I remark,  
And my language is plain,  
That for ways that are dark  
And for tricks that are vain, The heathen  
Chinee is peculiar,—  
Which the same I am free to maintain.*  
—Bret Harte, ‘The Heathen Chinee’, 1870.<sup>1</sup>

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*... And to the busy concourse here the States  
have sent a part,/The land of gulches that  
has been immortalised by Harte;/The land  
where long from mining camps the blue  
smoke upward curled,/The land that gave the  
‘Partner’ true and ‘M’liss’ unto the world.*

—Henry Lawson, ‘Eureka (A Fragment)’, 1889.<sup>2</sup>

One of the most charming paintings in the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery is a small, crudely rendered narrative piece entitled *Euchre in the bush* (c. 1867) (see Fig. 2.01 on page 209). We know that this specific card game and this specific setting is the painting’s subject, because the artist, one Joseph Colin Johnson (1848–1904; later to be known as J. C. F., or ‘Alphabetical’, Johnson), has written the title into the painting, in careful black lettering, in the middle of the canvas. The artist’s signature, written at an artistic angle and underlined, appears in the right hand corner; if the signature were not there, no artistic evidence would exist to link this particular Johnson to this image, since he was not known for any other paintings. The specificity of details in the scene depicted has always led viewers to assume that the artist was seeking to illustrate a story, a story that was, by virtue of these details, recognisably taking place during the years of the gold rush in Australia.

Seated around a simple table inside a miner’s hut (so identified by the shovels placed against the left wall) are three men: in the middle (and

in the dead centre of the canvas) a bearded white miner, wearing the high-crowned hat and red plaid shirt and vest often identified as 'Yankee' garb in the Australian goldfields.<sup>3</sup> On the left is a Chinese man with pigtail and in traditional clothing (the pigtail appears here as a braid around the top of his head); and on the right, a black man in stockman's outfit and with white sideburns that mark him as aged. In each of their hands are playing cards; on the table next to the white miner a Four of Clubs is prominently displayed next to his pipe, while the Chinese and the black man have stacks of downturned cards next to them on the table. At their feet in the foreground of the picture are various objects, rendered in detail to set the scene in the Australian bush during the late nineteenth century: a bullwhip, an overturned hat, two sticks and a disk somehow associated with the Chinese man have all been carefully included by the artist. On the right edge in the painting, next to a fireplace, is a basin with billy can and cup—again, signifying the activities of a miner or a bushman. The back wall holds a lone cup hanging on a nail, as well as two sinister looking knives held in place vertically by a horizontal piece of wood. This is not a comfortable middle-class home in which a woman tends the domestic hearth, but a rougher cabin where men settle temporarily. The view out the cabin, seen through a door behind the black man, presents a generic landscape, with a small hut in the distance. The artist's hand is not skilled—he has no grasp of perspectival rendering and struggles with colour and shading—but his efforts to delineate each item so meticulously speak to the importance of the details in conveying the story he so obviously wants to tell.

What is the story he wants to tell? Who is this untrained artist, so intent on telling this particular story in this image? Johnson, it turns out, was a well-enough known figure to have an entry in the *ADB*.<sup>4</sup> He also appears in *The*

*Oxford companion to Australian literature*.<sup>5</sup>

Joseph Colin Johnson was born in Adelaide in 1848, the son of a Roman Catholic migrant family (he added the third name Francis later in life, for reasons known only to him). When Johnson's father abandoned the family in 1864, young Joseph 'went bush', beginning the kind of itinerant and adventurous career typical of so many young men in Australian frontier society. Ambitious, educated and romantic—one critic described him as 'disputatious and showy',<sup>6</sup> and another wrote that he 'was a flamboyant figure given to energetic physical activities such as long distance travel and swimming exploits'<sup>7</sup>—Johnson tried his hand at a variety of occupations, from journalism to mining to politics.

In the 1870s he worked as a journalist for the Adelaide newspaper *The South Australian Register* (1839–1900), and in the 1880s was editor of *Adelaide Punch* (1868–1884). The latter position allowed him to carry on the kind of writing that he had begun earlier, when he compiled his so-called 'campfire yarns'. These short stories, often written in Johnson's version of Australian bush dialect and filled with eccentric bush characters, were ostensibly based on his own experiences in the mining towns and rural settlements throughout the Victorian and South Australian colonies. Often he published these yarns personally; many of them, such as 'The Wallaby Track' of 1872, were written in verse form. One of his best known stories was 'Moses and Me', a sentimental tale about the narrator's horse with vivid descriptions of the goldfields of Mount Browne in New South Wales, where Johnson had himself prospected in 1880.<sup>8</sup> *The ADB* described these stories as 'ordinary in style', but stated that 'they anticipated Lawson and others in depicting bush life'.<sup>9</sup> Henry Lawson (1867–1922), the most revered of early Australian writers, will have a role to play later in this story.

Mention of Johnson's tenure as an editor of *Adelaide Punch* highlights that Australia had by the 1850s already developed an industry in illustrated journals and newspapers. Sydney, Adelaide and Hobart had established printers and illustrated publications by the 1840s, but Melbourne was able to support more of these endeavours than any other Australian city. There, in 1850, the *Illustrated Australian Magazine* (1850–1852) became the first Australian journal to feature black-and-white illustrations as a regular feature of the publication. The most successful of these weekly publications was the *Melbourne Punch*, which began in 1855 and remained a popular fixture in Victorian homes until 1925. While so many other pictorial journals failed for lack of sufficient patronage to support the high costs of printing illustrations—including the *Illustrated Sydney News* (1853–1855)—this ambitious version of the London *Punch* managed to keep an audience because it attracted and paid the best writers and the best artists to produce its abundant illustrations. It was also the first publication to replace wood-engraving with zinc etching—an example of the editors' awareness of the importance of adopting the most modern printing technologies.<sup>10</sup>

In these early days of the Australian illustrated press, many of the most sought-after artists arrived from abroad. *Melbourne Punch*'s first official artist was Nicholas Chevalier (1828–1902), a well-trained European artist who came to Melbourne from London in 1855, already adept in oil painting as well as printmaking.<sup>11</sup> Chevalier and other Europeans were employed regularly by *Punch* and created by the 1860s a fanciful yet polished illustrative style that appealed to an educated popular audience for whom the illustrations sold the journal. Melbourne was also the home of many weekly or monthly illustrated supplements to the daily newspapers, most notably the *Australasian Sketcher*

(1873–1889), the monthly companion to the weekly *Australasian* (1864–1946) of the daily Melbourne paper, *The Argus* (1848–1957). Editors early discovered that illustrations were sought-after commodities and could increase enormously the always tenuous circulation figures of colonial publications.<sup>12</sup>

While the *Adelaide Punch* included caricatures, cartoons and illustrative vignettes similar to those in the London and Melbourne publications that inspired the humour magazine, J. C. F. Johnson while editor did not seem to have made any illustrations himself, nor did he personally illustrate any of his other publications. His 1881 edition of 'Moses and Me' was illustrated by H. J. Woodhouse (active 1868–1884) and Arthur Esam (c. 1850–1919), both of whom were relatively skilled illustrators of the time.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, Johnson himself at one point stated:

Had I the skill of H. J. Johnstone I would be glad to put this scene on canvas for my readers, for it was well worthy of the brush of our truest Australian artist. As, however, my artistic flights do not usually soar higher than a big brush and a pot of whitewash for my back fence, I'll try a monotint painting in printer's ink.<sup>14</sup>

Johnson is referring here to Henry James Johnstone (1835–1907), a British-born artist, who by the 1870s had established himself as a landscape painter, particularly of billabong scenes in South Australia. He was especially popular in America in the 1880s.<sup>15</sup>

Johnson had a practical side as well. He lectured prodigiously about mining and mining enterprise, and his book *Practical mining* (Adelaide, 1889) sold more than 10,000 copies. His *Getting gold: A practical treatise for prospectors, miners and students*, first published in the 1890s, was a standard work, in its sixth edition and still in print in the 1920s. In 1884, Johnson became a Member of

Parliament for the seat of Onkaparinga, South Australia, where he continued his efforts to improve mining legislation and, significantly, travelled in the early 1890s to America as part of a commission into improved mining techniques. In his 1897 London edition of *Getting gold*, Johnson presented America as at the forefront of mining technology, at one point referring to the United States as ‘the wonderland of the world, America’.<sup>16</sup>

Throughout his political career he continued his literary endeavours, compiling and publishing his short stories under the title *An Austral Christmas* in 1889. Apparently bored with political life, he retired from parliament in 1896. Johnson remained committed to his own nationalist causes, including a campaign to raise a monument to commemorate the South Australian bushmen. Johnson’s efforts were instrumental to the erection of an enormous commemorative statue in front of Government House in Adelaide in 1904, the same year that he died after a fall down stairs at his mother’s house.

As far as anyone can discern, his small painting in Ballarat with its quaint title and primitive style was Johnson’s only foray into the visual arts. This fact is all the more intriguing when one learns that he created at least three pictorial versions of this same theme.<sup>17</sup> The image’s iconography—the three races playing euchre at a table in the bush landscape of the Australian goldfields, each figure defined by costume and activity, and with the implements of mining and the bush life so distinctly delineated—clearly suggests a specific literary source that must have had significance for Johnson, the ardent Australian nationalist so involved in the romanticising of this period in his country’s history.

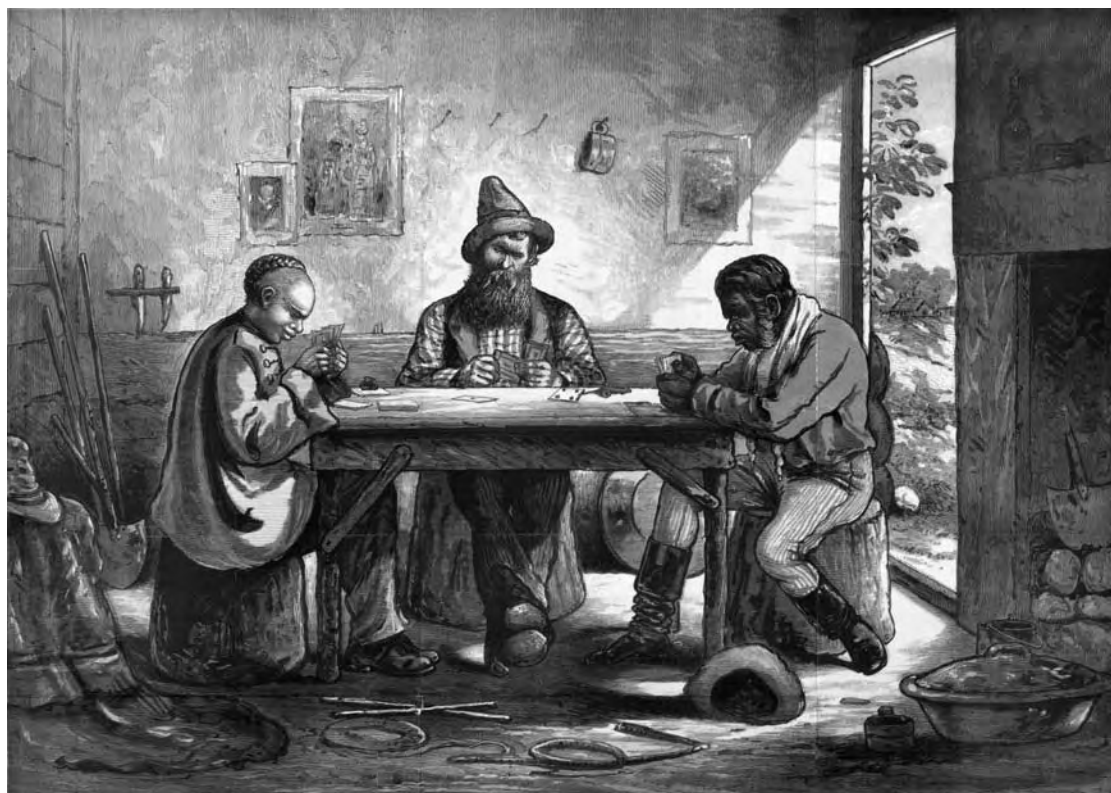
That source becomes apparent when one turns to the most widely circulated version of Johnson’s artwork. The *Australasian Sketcher* issued in its 1876 Christmas issue a printed

colour supplement. The main feature of the supplement, reproduced in what was for the time an advanced colour wood-engraving technique, was an artistically improved version of Johnson’s own *Euchre in the bush*. One of the *Sketcher*’s artists corrected the perspectival deficiencies of Johnson’s original work, added some pictures to the back wall and generally enhanced Johnson’s clumsy composition, but the figures seated around the table and the objects in the foreground are precisely as Johnson had conceived them in his Ballarat painting.

Because of his association with *Adelaide Punch* and with the Adelaide newspaper *The Register*, Johnson had a following or some connections within the Melbourne journalistic community that made it possible for him to persuade the *Sketcher*’s publishers to give his image such a prominent and popular venue for display. The publication also gave him the opportunity to describe the image’s narrative to the public, for here the coloured plate was accompanied by explanatory text:

Our plate depicts a scene not infrequent at some of the out-of-the-way gold-fields in this, or either of the other colonies, and especially in Queensland, where the three races shown are found living closely mixed together. It is a bright Saturday afternoon, and Jack, the black packer, ‘Harry, my friend’, the digger, and Ah Sin, the Chinese fossicker, have met to while away an hour or two at a game of ‘cut-throat euchre’, for a pennyweight a corner. On the present occasion fortune has smiled on Ah Sin. It was his deal and he has ‘taken it up’. He is ‘all but’. The digger is only four, and the aboriginal has not ‘turned his cards’, or, in other words, has not made a point. The Chinaman has taken the first trick on suit and led the ace of trumps. The European has the kind, say, and a small one. Jack holds the queen. But it is no service, for Ah Sin, as his complacent smile seems to indicate,

**Fig. 2.02 J. C. F. Johnson,**  
*A game of euchre.*  
 Wood-engraving, in  
*Australasian Sketcher*,  
 Melbourne, December 25,  
 1876. National Library of  
 Australia, Canberra.



has ‘left bower’ and two small ones in reserve. He is sure of the point wanting to bring him through triumphant, and he already enjoys the pleasure of victory. The incident recalls the lines of Bret Harte’s best-known poem—

‘Which we had a small game,  
 And Ah Sin took a hand;  
 It was euchre. The same  
 He did not understand:  
 But he smiled as he sat by the table,  
 With the smile that was child-like  
 and bland.’

But it may be that there is a meaning in the picture besides the plain matter-of-fact one that appears on the surface. The three races have been for some time playing a game for life on this continent. The aboriginal race have very nearly played their last card, and the game is henceforth between the whites and their

yellow-skinned competitors. John Chinaman holds his own remarkably well, and in some parts, as in North Queensland, scores one point after another. The immense extent of Chinese immigration to that region some time back was viewed with alarm, and the thought expressed in Bret Harte’s poem, ‘we’re ruined by Chinese cheap labour’, was present to the minds of large numbers of the colonists. But although that colony has seen fit to adopt measures intended to act as a restriction on this influx, the alarm appears to have practically died out, and there is no reason to doubt that the two races may work on amicably together and aid in the development of an immense territory, where ‘there’s room enough for all.’<sup>18</sup>

Given the direction of Johnson’s literary aspirations and his own experiences in the ethnically diverse goldfields of Australia, it is no surprise that the inspiration for his one piece of

visual art, as well as for his own 'camp yarns', was his American contemporary, the hugely popular writer Bret Harte (1836–1902). Harte had become in the 1870s the most highly paid author in America,<sup>19</sup> gaining that position through his wildly successful stories based upon his own memories of the California mining towns of the 1850s and the colourful characters who inhabited them.

The poem that Johnson quotes as inspiration for his image's theme, 'The Heathen Chinee', was first published in 1870 in the San Francisco journal *Overland* (1868–1875, 1883–1935), a monthly publication which hoped to emulate, for a California audience, the format of the East Coast's prestigious *Atlantic Monthly* (1857– ).<sup>20</sup> Harte was involved in *Overland's* publication from its beginnings. With this bit of colourful regional doggerel—originally entitled 'Plain Language from Truthful James', 'Truthful' being the narrator of the poem and one of Harte's stock characters—Harte became an international celebrity, as if 'in a single night'.<sup>21</sup> The most recent bibliography of Harte's works lists five pages of reprints and publications for this single verse.<sup>22</sup> As the advertising annotations announce at the back of an early London edition of 'The Heathen Chinee', the poem represented '[a]n entirely new style of humour. Since the publication of these poems in this country extracts from them have been copied and re-copied in every newspaper throughout the country, giving the public an infinity of delight'.<sup>23</sup>

This overwhelming popularity brought some predictable discomfort not only to Harte, but to his literary contemporaries. The New York journal *Galaxy* (1866–1878)—described on its title page as 'An Illustrated Magazine of Entertaining Reading'—expressed the ambivalence with which Harte's literary celebrity was met. Discussing not only Harte's poetic prominence, but that of John Hay

(1838–1905), another serious writer who gained a national audience for his uncharacteristically sentimental *Little breeches*, the magazine noted, with some dismay, how widespread was the reception and the reproduction of their works:

They are copied and gravely approved by English reviews of the first class. They are read on benefit nights at the theatres, and recited in good faith at Sunday-school picnics. They are pinned up on the walls of gin-shops, and carried furtively in the portemonnaies of Doctors of Divinity. No poem of its length in the language has furnished such a store of quotations to the newspapers as Mr. Harte's ballad of 'Ah Sin.' It is not too much to say that it has sensibly modified the colloquial speech of the day. Among that large class who take their ideas, and especially their liveliness, ready made from the press, the 'Heathen Chinee' has had no rest for a single hour since it appeared in the pages of the 'Overland Monthly'.<sup>24</sup>

The article went on to say that as 'the recreations of cultivated men',<sup>25</sup> such amusing ditties were acceptable; but when they were taken up by the public as real literary achievement, they could have nothing but a demeaning effect on literary culture. That the verse was so widely disseminated through popular editions, newspapers and illustrated journals made uneasy those still intent in the mid-nineteenth century on maintaining a line between high art and popular culture. As Harte's biographer Stewart put it: '[T]he remarks of Truthful James swept beyond the comparatively narrow circle of polite readers, and like a popular song or a vaudeville joke became the property of the man in the street; picture and word of mouth carried it even to the illiterate.'<sup>26</sup> Harte's popularity, then, was worldwide and immediate; his fame and the imitation of his

style serve as dramatic evidence of the transformation of Western culture caused by the development of mass communications in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>27</sup>

Not only did Harte receive enormous attention in the American and English press; but as early as 1871, the Melbourne publisher George Robertson put out an Australian edition of his poems, which included 'That Heathen Chinee', along with several others of Harte's 'In Dialect' works. In paperback and conveniently pocket-sized, the Robertson edition would have been readily available to avid readers like J. C. F. Johnson. Clearly Johnson modelled his own stories, such as 'Jimmy the Chum' and 'Christmas on Carringa'<sup>28</sup>, with his awkward attempts at Australian vernacular speech and his multicultural characters, on Harte's stories and poems. The popular literary affinities between Harte and Johnson are manifest: both construct images of themselves as itinerant adventurers in gold-rich frontier societies on the peripheries of Western culture who were retrospectively nurturing a nostalgic picture of an era already past.

Harte considered Dickens as one of his main literary inspirations and was, as were most American literary aspirants of the nineteenth century, enamoured of all British authors. His own style of writing nonetheless presented a new humorous genre that had little to do with British models of high literary style, or even with more popular forms of British storytelling. This newly dubbed 'Pacific Slope' style, filled with characters brought together in the cultural melting pot of gold-rush society, was what appealed to an Australian such as Johnson. In his book *Gold seeking*, David Goodman cites Bret Harte as a central inspiration for Australian writers' 'sentimental' depiction of the period.<sup>29</sup> Goodman quotes none other than Marcus Clarke (1846–1881), author of the first significant Australian novel *His natural life* (1874), who in an 1871 review

of Harte's 'Luck of the Roaring Camp' (1870) praised the characters as realistic and familiar: 'We have met them, or men like them, at Ballarat, Bendigo, or Wood's Point.'<sup>30</sup>

A few years later, Harte's style and characters would inspire Henry Lawson as well. Australia's best-known author, Lawson freely admitted that Bret Harte was his major literary model.<sup>31</sup> In one of his best known poems, 'Eureka' (1889), about the famous moment of armed rebellion on the Victorian goldfields in which many American miners participated, Lawson paid homage to his literary hero and his homeland.<sup>32</sup> In their drive to develop a national cultural identity, Australians such as Lawson expressed a cultural connection to America, and most specifically, looked to the American West for those attitudes and cultural models that were shared between their Pacific cultures. Bret Harte's popular verses and colourful characters were irresistible examples to a people who had since the gold rushes of the 1850s experienced similar cultural transformations and an influx of many ethnicities.

Despite a content that today represents blatant racism, filled with cultural stereotypes that would (especially in the case of Harte's 'Chinee') endure well into the twentieth century both in Australia and the United States, Johnson's and Harte's works expressed as well the fascination and excitement that the unprecedented ethnic mixing in these frontier societies had generated. Never before in modern history had there been such massive movement of peoples of such cultural diversity as occurred from the 1850s through the 1870s in California and in Australia. Ethnocentric defensiveness and nationalistic xenophobia, which in some cases led to violent racial intolerance, was an unfortunate if inevitable product of this cultural displacement.

Harte apparently was chagrined throughout his life that enormous fame arrived because of his poem about the 'Heathen Chinee' and

particularly lamented that his line about 'Chinese cheap labor' was taken up with such alacrity as a statement in support of government attempts to ban Asian immigration into America. Such debates were then taking place in California and in Washington, DC.<sup>33</sup> He was appalled to see the poem quoted by anti-immigration congressmen in congressional debates; one congressman from Ohio even reprinted the last lines of the poem on the cover of the publication of his speech proposing immigration bans.<sup>34</sup> Mark Twain, at one time Harte's close friend and colleague, summed up Harte's dismay at the inaccurate appropriation of his silly little poem: 'Critics have ignored the occasion of its publication while elaborating its opportune appearance, and have been content to account for its popularity without explaining the poet's dislike of that popularity.'<sup>35</sup> Ironically, Twain and Harte's only collaboration would be a play based loosely on 'The Heathen Chinee', hoping to cash in on the poem's popularity. It was this play, entitled *Ah Sin* (1877), 'one of the most spectacular flops in the history of American theater', that ended their friendship.<sup>36</sup>

More lamentably in terms of the popular imagination, the comical figure of Ah Sin, deviously clever in his contrived ignorance of white man's ways, dressed in blue pajama-like clothing and always with traditional 'coolie' pigtail, long fingernails and 'childlike' smile, established the cultural stereotype of 'otherness' for Chinese which many Australians and Americans of the era wanted to maintain.<sup>37</sup> This stereotype was most clearly delineated and dispersed through the visual renderings that accompanied or were inspired by Harte's poem, in a variety of popular forms and in several countries. The images were as important as the literary narrative that inspired them, establishing in the popular imagination the accepted physical appearance of this 'otherness'.<sup>38</sup>

That people wanted to see what these strangers looked like—whether in exaggerated drawn likenesses or in more 'factual' depictions—can explain why so many early photographs and drawings depict the Chinese in the goldfields; they were one of the most numerous and the most exotic of the national groups to come to California and Australia. They consequently highlighted for the nineteenth-century viewer the extraordinary transformations caused by the gold discoveries.

One of the only extant photographic images from the Victorian goldfields in the 1850s depicts an overloaded coach of Chinese immigrants heading for the diggings. Chinese working in the fields or visiting Melbourne were also a common subject in the Australian illustrated press.<sup>39</sup> In California, Isaac Wallace Baker's daguerreotype of a Chinese man, holding his pigtail, is one of the most reproduced images from the daguerreotype era in California.<sup>40</sup> In the 1860s, none other than Eadweard Muybridge produced a series of photographs that he entitled *The heathen Chinee*, documenting in part the Chinese workers who built the Central Pacific Railroad line from California through the Sierra Mountains to the meeting point at Promontory, Utah.<sup>41</sup> The Chinese are present in the earliest depictions of these chaotic gold-rush societies, from an image of the celebrations for California's admission into the Union,<sup>42</sup> to an on-site drawing of the Black Hill mines at Ballarat in 1857.<sup>43</sup> They also appear, either as the main topic or as peripheral figures, in many of the prints and drawings of the famous chroniclers of goldfield life, J. D. Borthwick in California, and S. T. Gill in Australia.<sup>44</sup>

The 'colourful' Chinese offered enticing opportunities for the visual chroniclers of the gold-rush story, but they were not the only 'others' to provide anecdotal artistic flavour. That the Australian Johnson chose, along with the Chinese figure, to include in his pictorial



version of *Euchre in the bush* a black man—which had no part in Harte’s poem—gets to the heart of his metaphorical ambitions for this image. As Johnson makes clear in his description for the *Sketcher*, the figure represents ‘the aboriginal race’ who ‘have very nearly played their last card’—an allusion to the widely held belief, both in America and in Australia, that the indigenous races would inevitably die out with the advance of Western ‘civilisation’ into their lands.<sup>45</sup>

Johnson sees his little image, then, so carefully delineated and eventually reproduced for mass circulation, as a symbolic rendering of his most ardent concern, a ‘game for life on this continent’, one which he felt was a competition by the 1870s between the Asians and the white race alone. In the end, his hopeful statement, ‘that the two races may work on amicably together and aid in the development of an immense territory, where “there’s room enough for all”’, is his plea for ethnic harmony and the Australian idea of ‘giving everyone a go’.<sup>46</sup> Here Johnson also expressed affinity with Bret Harte’s own attitudes, at least about the persecution in California of the Chinese.<sup>47</sup> That his rendering of Ah Sin portrays him at a moment of calm, and without emphasis on the length of his pigtail, evokes a less aggressive attitude to the Chinese immigrant than the more lurid or comical images on sheet music and in magazines that followed Harte’s publication of his poem in *Overland*.

The cultural manifestations of racial politics during the late nineteenth century is not the main focus of this study. What makes this comparison so striking—that the Australian Johnson was directly inspired by the American Bret Harte—is the evidence it provides of the easy accessibility by the 1870s of cultural and aesthetic exchange between the Pacific Slope communities of America and Australia.<sup>48</sup> Harte’s Californian depictions and Johnson’s earnestly Australian image of

*Euchre in the bush* share a stylistic attitude determined by the similarities in their geographical and cultural locations, similarities that they knew about because of regular and prolonged interaction and continued exchange of portable images and texts. This interaction and exchange, moreover, took place on a popular level, whereby images and texts were dispersed and absorbed by the masses—the newly mobile, multicultural, masses that the discoveries of gold on two continents had engendered. The connections were widespread and eclectic: the same volume of *Overland Monthly* that was first to print Harte’s ‘Plain Language from Truthful James’ included as well an article on sheep-farming in Australia by John Manning and another entitled ‘Life in the bush’ by John Hayes.<sup>49</sup> Manning had also written an article on gold-digging in Australia in the September 1869 issue of *Overland*, in which he expresses, with bemused irony and self-deprecation, the simplistic reasoning behind their early searches for gold:

To the best of my recollection, I think we reasoned this way: California was a new country; that was clear, for nobody had before ever heard of it. Australia was, also, a new country. Gold was found in California; therefore, there must be gold in Australia.<sup>50</sup>

In San Francisco, Australia and Australians had also made an impact by this time on the cultural life and aesthetic psyche of this new metropolis. Before the appearance of *Overland*, Harte himself provided vivid evidence of the popular level of exchange that was already taking place between the two countries. On the first page of his first newspaper, *The Californian* (1864–68), editor Harte published his humorous poem, ‘The Ballad of the Emeu,’<sup>51</sup> reference to the ostrich-like bird of the Australian outback that had arrived as a zoo specimen in California by the

1860s.<sup>52</sup> Interestingly, and not for the only time, the Australian contribution to cultural exchange was in this case an animal—in its own way, like magazines, sheet music and posters, another kind of portable object for popular consumption. As will become increasingly evident in the last decades of the nineteenth century, Australia's greatest aesthetic, one could even say iconographic, contribution to popular culture centred, as it still does, on its unique flora and fauna.

By the 1870s in San Francisco, the oddities of Australian wildlife had already achieved notoriety at the city's leading amusement park, Woodward's Gardens—no doubt the source of Harte's knowledge of the emu. On the grounds of his own estate in the Mission District, Robert Woodward (1824–1879),

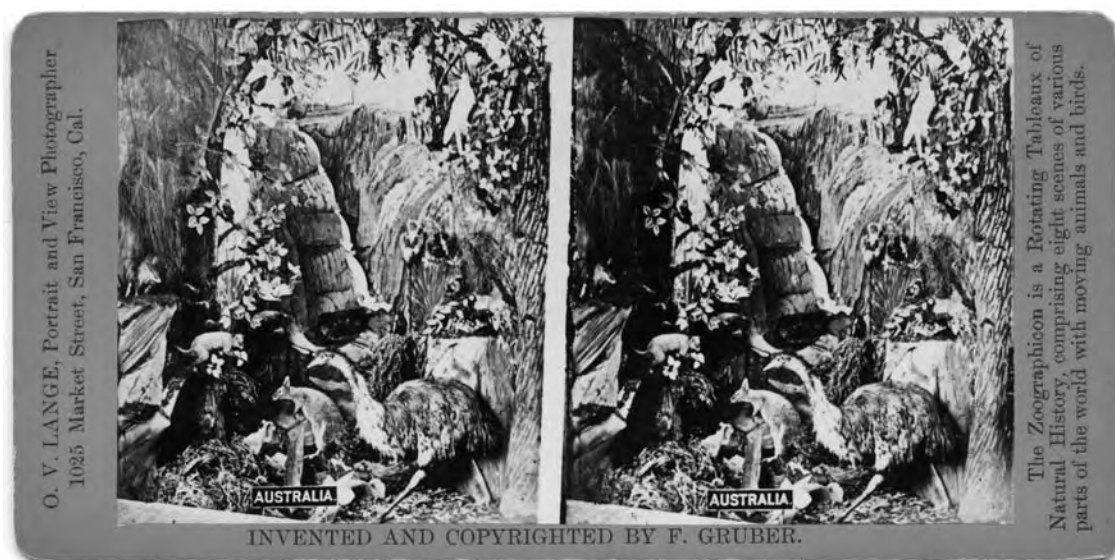
who had made his fortune during the gold rush by providing decent accommodation and dining for San Franciscans, opened in 1868 his 'private pleasure park', with educational as well as entertaining exhibits and presentations.<sup>53</sup> The grounds included live animals, but were most prolific in examples of the taxidermist's art. As the 1878 guidebook to the gardens explains, one of the major exhibits was 'The Zoögraphicon, or, Rotating Tableaux of Natural History. Invented by F. Gruber'. This moving diorama displayed the wonders of the exotic parts of the world, filled with painted scenery and stuffed animals.

The description of the 'Australia' section demonstrates not only the depth of Woodward's educational aims, but the increasingly elaborate efforts taken to appeal to the



**Fig. 2.03** Anonymous, *Emu in Woodward's Gardens*, 1874. Photograph. San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

**Fig. 2.04** Woodward's Gardens diorama. Stereograph. Courtesy of the California History Room, California State Library, Sacramento, California.



public's desire to be visually entertained and stimulated:

AUSTRALIA./ Presents a view of distant mountains. A waterfall rushes down the rocks. The blue gum trees and the cassuarina [*sic*] are prominent. A kangaroo jumps across the scene. Over rocky cliffs climbs the native cat. The platypus, echidna [*sic*] and Australian opossum are plainly visible. On a tree to the right a sulphur-crested cockatoo bows to his mates. A tree opposite seems to be the rendezvous of flocks of bright parrots. Under the tree a bowerbird is constructing his wonderful nest. The emeu [*sic*] attracts attention in the foreground. Magnificent rifle and regent birds swing in the branches, while the curious kingfisher, called 'laughing jackass', is in the act of descending to a fern tree to fight a large crow-shrike. Even the bee-eater, the pardalote finch and the showy pitta are present.<sup>54</sup>

Woodward's Gardens was wildly popular while it existed, disseminating through its brochures and its advertising posters images of exotic wildlife and entertaining performances that delighted generations of San Franciscans.

Harte was not the only one who would have learned about Australian 'exotica' from this beloved venue. The masses that experienced these tableaux became increasingly sophisticated in their need for visual tools to explain their ever-expanding modern world.

Harte's 'Ballad of the Emeu' was not his only Australian reference at this time. The second issue of his newspaper *The Californian* included, on page four, a small anecdotal article, 'A wife in need is a friend, indeed', which referred to a humorous incident in Australia,<sup>55</sup> and one of the stories Harte published in the newspaper that year, from 'Miss M.E. Braddon's New Novel' entitled *Only a clod*, centred on a character described as an 'Australian merchant'. One of his better-received plays, *Two men of Sandy Bar* (1876), includes as main characters not only a Chinese laundryman but an Australian convict.<sup>56</sup> Harte in San Francisco was particularly attuned to popular attitudes and cultural fads. These references offer proof that as early as the mid-1850s, and certainly by the 1860s, Australians and Californians were well-known to each other and were sharing—if only subliminally aware of it—a Pacific Slope culture. Members

of both cultures were participating in the construction of new societies dependent for the most part on the exchange of popular information through portable and reproducible texts and imagery.

Given this awareness of each other and accessibility to popular forms of communication, it is not surprising that Bret Harte's unprecedented celebrity, generated by a poem about a Californian cultural condition, should have served as a model for aspiring Australian author and artist J. C. F. Johnson. Not only were there popular editions of Harte's 'Heathen Chinees' published and distributed by Australian publishers and readily available even in the remotest goldfields, but it is also possible that Johnson, along with many in the newly burgeoning populations in California and Australia, may have seen other printed visual images depicting Harte's poem that would have influenced his own artistic iconography.

As a popular poem, his 'Heathen Chinees' received numerous visual interpretations in the international press and publications. Harte's poem served as the narrative reference for at least one ambitious Californian oil painting—Rufus Wright's *The card players* (1882).<sup>57</sup> Such examples of high art were unlikely the source of Johnson's iconography, since oil paintings, and the venues in which to view them, were available to so few in these frontier societies. One popular form of imagery by which such narrative poems could gain visual form was the touring panorama, so beloved of the showman-artists on the goldfields. Indeed, the inveterate itinerant Augustus Baker Peirce wrote that while making a panorama for Bernard Holtermann called *The mirror of Australia*, he had included an illustration of 'Bret Harte's celebrated poem, The Heathen Chinees, which was to be rolled off as I repeated the stanzas'.<sup>58</sup> While such entertainments were frequent, the most likely and pervasive images to serve as

inspiration for an author like Johnson were reproductions: printed, portable images widely circulated, distributed in Californian mining camps as well as in the Australian bush.

By the 1870s, reproduced images from a variety of sources were everywhere, consumed immediately by literate and illiterate alike. At least three sets of lithographic reproductions illustrating the 'Heathen Chinees' appeared almost immediately after its publication, both as a separate set of illustrated cards and in illustrated editions of Harte's poems published in books, journals and newspapers in America and in England. The 'official' illustrator for Harte's stories published by Fields, Osgood & Co. in Boston was Sol Eytinge (1833–1905), one of the most prolific draughtsmen of the day, who would later be an important illustrator of Dickens' works.<sup>59</sup> Eytinge also created popular depictions for John Hay's *Little breeches*, another potboiler of the era that gained considerable popularity. The illustrator produced as well an early iconic image of the frontiersman, Seth Kinman—a favourite figure of Bret Harte's.<sup>60</sup> Eytinge's illustrations for the 'Heathen Chinees' also appeared in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, probably the most widely read of the many American illustrated journals to reprint Harte's poem.<sup>61</sup>

In every set of illustrations, with some stylistic variations, the image of Ah Sin emphasises his supposed deviousness through a focus on his demeanour and on the details of his exotic dress, solidifying the prototypical image of the Chinese man in Western culture. But the depiction of the scene while playing cards around the table—the scene that most specifically inspired Johnson's Australian version—differs widely in terms of the visual interpretation of the level of violence that ensued in the next scene.

The set of lithographed cards produced in 1870 by the Western News Company of Chicago—referred to by Harte's biographer



**Fig. 2.05 Joseph Hull,**  
illustration for Bret  
Harte's *The heathen  
Chinee: Plain language  
from Truthful James.*  
Lithograph, no. 4 of 9  
illustrated cards. The  
Western News Co.,  
Chicago, 1870. Courtesy  
of The Huntington Library,  
San Marino, California.

George Stewart as 'unauthorized'<sup>62</sup>—are particularly interesting, for they appear to have been published as supplements or inserts to a newspaper. In format at least, these cards seem to be a forerunner to one of the most popular forms of mass-circulation imagery that emerged in the late nineteenth century: baseball, cigarette and other kinds of trading cards that could be collected as a series. It has also been suggested that the cards were produced in such a format so that they could be framed individually, but the fact that they were produced sequentially, and by a newspaper, supports the assertion that they were meant to

be collected over time and with the purchase of several issues of a newspaper.

These 'Heathen Chinee' cards sold in the thousands. When displayed in the window of a New York shop, they caused crowds to form outside on the sidewalk, where people laughed and guffawed at the sight of the comedic illustrations.<sup>63</sup> The 'artist'—or more correctly, the image-maker—is identified as Joseph Hull. Hull uses a style that is decidedly vernacular in its caricatured humour, as if these images prefigure the kind of pictorial role that the newspaper comics would soon fill in American newspapers, or as illustrations in popular magazines such as *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* already did.<sup>64</sup>

As examples of the most mass-produced and therefore most pervasive form of image-making made possible by new print technology, these cards deserve a close reading—not for their aesthetic qualities, but for the cultural attitudes conveyed and consumed in the guise of comedic interpretation. In card no. 1, 'Truthful James' is seen as a tattered-looking, beak-nosed man with a floppy hat either rising or about to sit down on a chair, and from which a speech bubble appears (in some versions) to announce 'The Heathen Chinee!!'<sup>65</sup> At the top of the page under the title 'Plain Language from Truthful James' is printed the first verse of the poem itself. The second card introduces 'Ah Sin', with exaggeratedly 'crossed' Asian eyes, a long pigtail, long fingernails and in Chinese dress. No. 3 depicts Bill Nye, a caricature of the Anglo-Irish California miner, as with Truthful James in beak-nosed profile, but carrying a pick-axe and smoking a pipe.

Card no. 4 depicts the image most closely associated to Johnson's Australian version of *Euchre in the bush*: the three men introduced in the previous illustrations are now seated around a table and holding cards; Truthful James looks unhappy, Bill Nye puffs away on his pipe and concentrates on his cards (the



verse on the card indicates that Bill Nye has aces up his sleeve, but the picture does not emphasise this detail), while Ah Sin smiles inscrutably—or, as Harte's verse states, '[w]ith the smile that was child-like and bland'. His pigtail dangles prominently behind him. In card no. 5, Ah Sin smiles as he plays his hand on the table, and Truthful James 'blows his hat', hair standing on end in the best cartoon style while Bill Nye looks at the Chinese man's cards. In no. 6, with Harte's phrase 'We are ruined by cheap Chinese labor' written across the bottom of the card, Bill Nye stands and points accusingly at Ah Sin; and Truthful James stands in agitation. By card no. 7, only one line from the poem, 'And he went for that heathen Chinee', suffices to explain the action. Bill Nye throws the table at Ah Sin, while kicking him, Truthful James is out of the frame, cards are flying, and the pigtail is high in the air.

The next card's scene is the most violent of any of the pictorial renditions of the poem by Harte's contemporaries and exaggerates the intention of the verse itself. Beginning with the line 'In the scene that ensued ...', the artist introduces an entire mob of miners who, with bottles in hand and shooting off pistols and tossing boots, throw Ah Sin in the air, while the narrator, hair still on end to denote fright and extreme action, hovers on all fours next to an overturned chair. The effect of the image is riotous action by white miners against the single figure of the Chinese player—a more vociferous vision, for the sake of sensationalist popular consumption, than Harte's poem ever intended, and the image which most upset Harte himself. The final card, no. 9, shows a saddened narrator, now with his hat back on his head, recounting the last verse of the poem, which ends: 'The heathen Chinee is peculiar—Which the same I am free to maintain.'

The other illustrations of this poem in books, magazines and newspapers of the

1870s, in Australia and England as well as in America, were less crude and caricature-like, and none of them delineate mob action against the Chinese card-player. The iconography of Ah Sin nonetheless remains constant. Johnson's image of *Euchre in the bush* emphasises the same visual details in his rendition of the Asian playing cards with two men of the Australian outback, albeit without the melodramatic bursts of violent attack or exaggeration of cultural difference.

While it is now difficult to substantiate that these specific illustrations arrived in Australia, it is possible that they were available and seen by Australian crowds, given the steady stream of illustrated journals, newspapers and other reproduced material that was known to have reached Australian shores by ship from the western coast of America in the 20 years since the gold discoveries. The Hull cards were discussed in a British newspaper in 1871, indicating that they had at least reached Britain, making it all the more likely that they would have ended up at some point in the Australian colonies.<sup>66</sup> Further, as the current holdings in the State Library of New South Wales in Sydney substantiate, *Overland Monthly*, the journal published in San Francisco with which Bret Harte was so intimately involved and in which the poem first appeared, was held in some library collections in Australia from the beginning of its publication in 1869, and was probably sold in bookshops and newsagencies there and elsewhere from that time.

The exchange of publications and imagery between these far-flung settlements was by this time regular and had become part of the fabric of frontier life. Historians today such as David Goodman continue to express astonishment at the pervasiveness of the level of popular exchange between these cultures:

The two societies were well aware of each other. Many miners were to visit both places, and the

metropolitan press kept each other informed of the dramatic developments in the other. We should not underestimate the extent to which in the mid-nineteenth century there was already a steady commerce of ideas and products around the world—even in outposts like Australia and California ... [t]o attempt to understand these societies outside the context of this commerce and communication, this heightened and informed sense of national difference, is to run the risk of misunderstanding the cultural expressions we find in them. Even the provincial presses of the two societies seemed somehow to keep in touch. The Victorian *Warrnambool Examiner*, for example, ran a story in 1858 about the poisoning of a family in Grass Valley, California, citing as its sources the *Marysville Express* and the *Grass Valley Telegraph*—neither of them major urban newspapers.<sup>67</sup>

One of the most popular venues for this kind of exchange was the mechanics' institutes, working-mens' educational venues that were an essential part of gold-rush societies in California and in Australia. The Mechanics' Institute Library in Ballarat, the most populous of the Victorian goldfield towns, was founded in 1857 (the San Francisco Mechanics' Institute was founded in 1854). The library of that institute is still operating as a members' library. It still carries many of the complete sets of its earliest holdings, including a run of *Harper's* from 1850, *Godey's Lady's Book* from 1871 and the *Atlantic Monthly* from the 1880s.<sup>68</sup> In these publications and in Australian ones available at the institutes, the most trivial of popular news was exchanged and reported upon with a matter-of-factness that suggests a shared mundanity. Melbourne's *Australasian* of 5 December 1868, in an article about fish in Massachusetts, refers to the *Atlantic Monthly* as being readily available in the city at that time and known to the *Australasian's* readers.<sup>69</sup> The same issue contains what was

a regular column entitled 'Theatrical gossip from England, New York, San Francisco, and Calcutta'.<sup>70</sup> Such publications, along with the many pictorial journals from London and those already published in Australia, included some of the illustrations of Harte's and other Californian writers' works. Since these illustrations were portable and easily reproduced, they were easily transported and distributed, and fulfilled the settlers' hunger for visual stimulation, no matter what their class or social status. Egalitarianism—the most fundamental tenet of Australian life—functioned in the visual realm as it did in all other aspects of antipodean society.

Even more significantly for the popular dispersal of both words and images, the text of such a popular verse as 'The Heathen Chinees' was quickly set to music. By the end of 1870, at least three different tunes to Harte's lyrics had appeared, presented in a variety of formats.<sup>71</sup> From the 1840s, sheet music usually included a lithographed or engraved illustration on the cover, images that then would have appeared on thousands of piano stands and would have been viewed in music shop windows and general stores throughout the world. This worldwide dispersal of illustrated sheet music provides yet another form by which Australia and California shared popular imagery that expressed contemporary sentiment and cultural connection.

Sheet music covers supply snippets of imagery in a printed format that was ubiquitous (if ephemeral, because of constant use), presenting a plethora of aesthetic styles and the full array of visual commentary on contemporary events. These images provide some of the earliest examples of the subliminal consumption by the masses of popular art and iconic visual information. Sheet music's illustrated covers contribute significantly to the beginnings of an image-based popular culture in these frontier societies. Unlike the Hull illustrated cards—

which seem to have few if any precedents and cannot now be firmly established as having been in any Australian collections—the lithographed covers of these musical versions of the ‘Heathen Chinees’ were available in Australia at that time, and could have been known to J. C. F. Johnson and others involved in popular entertainment and mass publishing ventures.

The illustrations selected to describe ‘The Heathen Chinees’ on these sheet music covers were either exaggeratedly comical<sup>72</sup> or racist and violent—as one writer states, ‘the cover to *The heathen Chinees musical album* vividly depicts the punishment meted out to Ah Sin’ by focusing on the Chinese man’s queue.<sup>73</sup> They consequently offer an interesting framework against which to consider Johnson’s choice of a moment of calm and harmony for his depiction of the three races playing cards together and with no emphasis on a visible pigtail (see Fig. 2.06 on page 210). Other covers were less caricatured, but just as telling about mid-nineteenth-century vernacular print styles.

The sheet music for *The heathen Chinees* produced by Oliver Ditson & Co. in Boston was exemplary of the poem’s most pervasive visual iconography. The cover included a lithograph by an unknown artist and was printed by J. H. Bufford (1810–1870). Bufford was one of the leading figures in the production of lithographed sheet music in America throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>74</sup> The unknown artist’s style was recognisably illustrative and within the more realistic, less sentimental, tradition of action drawings of the 1870s. The image focuses on the moment when Bill Nye grabs Ah Sin by the neck, an overturned stool in the corner of the picture frame indicating aggressive action. Cards come spilling out of Ah Sin’s voluminous sleeve and the illustrator places great emphasis on the well-established markers of Chinese otherness, long claw-like fingernails and sinuous pigtail. Within the frame of the lithographed illustration, as a

caption, is that infamous section of the poem, referring to ‘Chinese cheap labor’.

This version of the poem set to music was included in an album of six songs of Bret Harte’s poems, with music by F. Boott. An illustrated cover sheet by the same artist and in the same format introduced each song within the album.<sup>75</sup> Oliver Ditson (1811–1888), the publisher of this musical series, was from the 1840s and well into the twentieth century one of the most prolific publishers of sheet music in America, with an enormous network of

**Fig. 2.07** Anonymous, cover, ‘*The Heathen Chinees*’, words by Bret Harte, music by F. B. Lithograph. Oliver Ditson, Boston, c. 1870. Courtesy of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.





agents throughout the country and, eventually, the world. Ditson's publications were distributed in Australia as early as the 1850s,<sup>76</sup> and by the 1870s, the company's sheet music and music albums were routinely available in the antipodes. The album of six Bret Harte poems set to music, with their vividly realistic illustrations, were among those purchased throughout the country.

The fevered movement of people and ideas engendered by the gold rushes that began in California and Australia 20 years before Harte's fame and Johnson's painting offered an unprecedented opportunity for the publication and dissemination of transportable entertainments, of which sheet music was one of the most efficient and functional. While illustrated sheet music publication was already in the 1840s a well-established industry in the English-speaking world, the events surrounding the discovery of gold in these distant (yet English-speaking) places precipitated the production of quantities of illustrated sheet music covers, in England, America and Australia.<sup>77</sup> As pictorial rendering of the popular sentiments expressed in the music and lyrics, sheet music's images often related to these events in the most sentimental, moralistic or comical way. *California; or, the feast of gold*, published in London in 1849, includes on the cover a crudely made woodcut depicting among the mob thronging to the river banks a Black, a Chinese, a Scotsman and what appears to be an American Indian, all digging for gold, while the Man in the Moon laughs at their folly.<sup>78</sup> A much more ambitious lithographed illustration accompanied *The good time's come at last*, an early tune published by the London company Leoni Lee & Coxhead, described as 'Music Sellers to Her Majesty Queen Victoria'.<sup>79</sup> Signed as designed and lithographed by G. E. Madeley, the cover shows, in a style reminiscent of the British caricaturist George Cruikshank, a motley procession of men encir-

cling the floridly ornamental title text. The men are seen departing happily for the mines with picks and shovels, and returning loaded down with ingots. The lyrics of the song end with the phrase, 'Everybody's running after gold, gold, gold ...', the most common catchcry of the 1850s.

One of the most extraordinary sheet music pieces coming out of London—a veritable 'Musical Bouquet', as the cover announces it—confirms that California and Australia were linked in the popular imagination almost as soon as the antipodean gold discoveries were made public. *Pull away cheerily! The gold digger's song* appeared in 1853 and included a detailed cover illustration of men (and, curiously, small children, who also figure in the lyrics) engaged in mining a stream with various kinds of sluicing equipment. The background depicts many bent-over figures panning for gold in a rocky landscape.<sup>80</sup> The cover's text continues to explain that this rollicking tune was 'written and sung by Harry Lee Carter, in his entertainment of "The Two Lands of Gold"', alluding to Carter's stage performance which debuted in London on 11 April 1853. The tune, the cover states, was '[A]lso Sung by George Henry Russell, in Mr. Payne's Popular Entertainment, "A Night in the Lands of Gold."/Music composed by Henry Russell'.

*Pull away cheerily!* speaks to the widespread sharing not only of popular imagery but also stage entertainment in the mid-nineteenth century by those English-speaking countries most directly affected by the rush for gold. The explanatory text accompanying a reprint of this sheet music cover provides a vivid description of the nature of such performances:

London, April 11, 1853: the first performance takes place at the Royal Marionette Theatre of a new musical and panoramic entertainment, *The Two Lands of Gold; or, The Australian*

and *Californian Directory for 1853*. The stage becomes a digger's tent, with native birds surrounding a 'conspicuous' kangaroo. Carter sang to his own accompaniment as the dioramic views (some after 'oil sketches made expressly for this entertainment by Mr. Catlin, the great American traveller') are shown by opening a curtain at the back of the tent.

Part I—'To New York and across the Rocky Mountains, by the Great Salt Lake and the Colony of Mormons, to Saint Francisco, California'—includes an 'Encounter with the Grisly Bear in the Sierra Nevada, or Snowy Mountains.'

To Part II—Australia—belongs *Pull Away Cheerily!* An advertisement in *The Times*, May 4, 1853, says of it: 'Published this day ... Quaintly rhymed to a pretty tune, and sung with great spirit by Mr. Carter ... 'The Musical Bouquet cover is a later edition, by an artist unknown to us and probably lithographed by Chas. Sheard, a music printer. A cover of remarkable fidelity to the words of the song.

The music is by Henry Russell (1812–1900), who composed over 800 songs, including *Oh! Woodman, Spare That Tree!*, *The Maniac*, *Mighty Niagara* and *The Gambler*. He had entertained in America in the 1830's; 'half American', he called himself and said his own style of descriptive song came from listening to Henry Clay orate. While playing the organ in Rochester, Russell discovered that sacred music played quickly gave popular airs when, 'quite by accident', he turned *Old Hundred* into his *Ole Dan Tucker*. He travelled with Catlin, beyond the Missouri, hoping, while Catlin painted the Indians, to record their songs—a plan given up with the first sound of what he called 'hideous noises.'

Russell was a great propagandist for America. He even gave away free passages to California and Australia during his own entertainments.<sup>81</sup>

Such an extravagant performance exem-

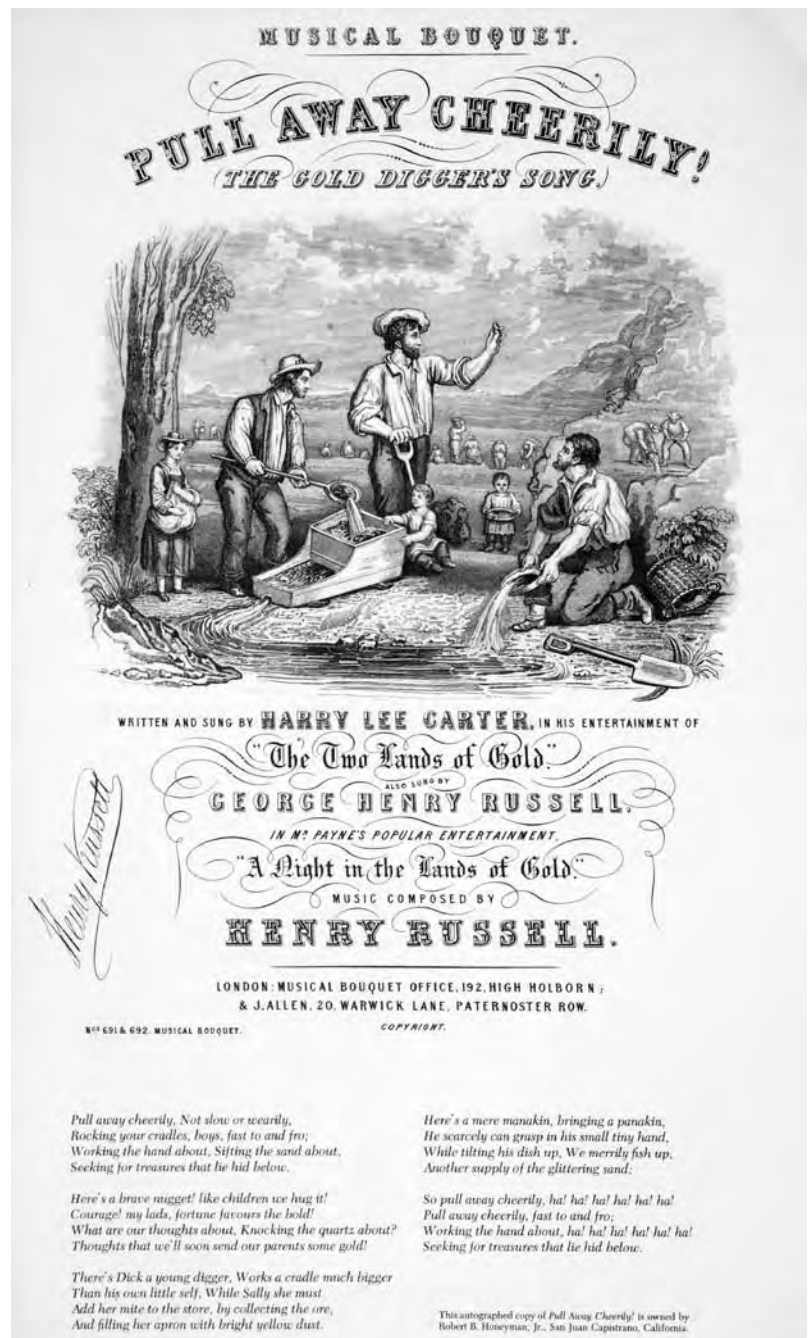
plifies an enthusiastic, opportunistic showmanship that would be appreciated by any game-show host or popular entertainer today. While the cover text indicates that Harry Lee Carter wrote the lyrics of *Pull away cheerily!*, the song itself was composed by Henry Russell for his friend Carter's production of *The two lands of gold*, and also performed by Russell in his own stage-work, *A night in the lands of gold*.<sup>82</sup>

Henry Russell (1812–1900) was the most popular composer of his day in Britain and in America (he was the creator, among many others, of *Cheer boys cheer!*, still sung today). He contributed personally to an avid exchange of British and American musical and visual sources. While his connections to Australia were not as direct and immediate as his associations with America, Russell's songs were certainly known in the Australian colonies through his sheet music, many of which included illustrations by American artists.<sup>83</sup>

Russell's preference for American artists to embellish his music was not by the 1850s an unusual attitude. American music publishing, along with British firms, experienced a 'golden age' of illustration from the 1840s into the 1870s,<sup>84</sup> during which artists as talented as Winslow Homer (1836–1910) and Fitz Hugh Lane (1804–1865) applied their skills to the design of these lithographic covers.<sup>85</sup> Not only was the artistic quality high, but 'staggering quantities' of sheet music were produced, responding to every conceivable narrative and commenting on every kind of contemporary event.<sup>86</sup>

American publishers, like their British counterparts, took advantage of the exciting, if to many people terrifying, events in California as a subject that would appeal to the masses who now bought music. As early as 1849, songs such as *California as it is*, using comical lyrics to warn of the gold-seekers' possible fate, began to appear at music publishers in

**Fig. 2.08** Anonymous, cover, *Musical Bouquet*./ *PULL AWAY CHEERILY! THE GOLD DIGGER'S SONG*./written and sung by Harry Lee Carter, in his entertainment of 'The Two Lands of Gold'. Also Sung by George Henry Russell, in Mr. Payne's Popular Entertainment, 'A Night in the Lands of Gold.'/Music composed by Henry Russell. Wood-engraving. Musical Bouquet Office, London, 1853. Reproduced in *California sheet music covers*, The Book Club of California Keepsake Series, 1959. Courtesy of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.



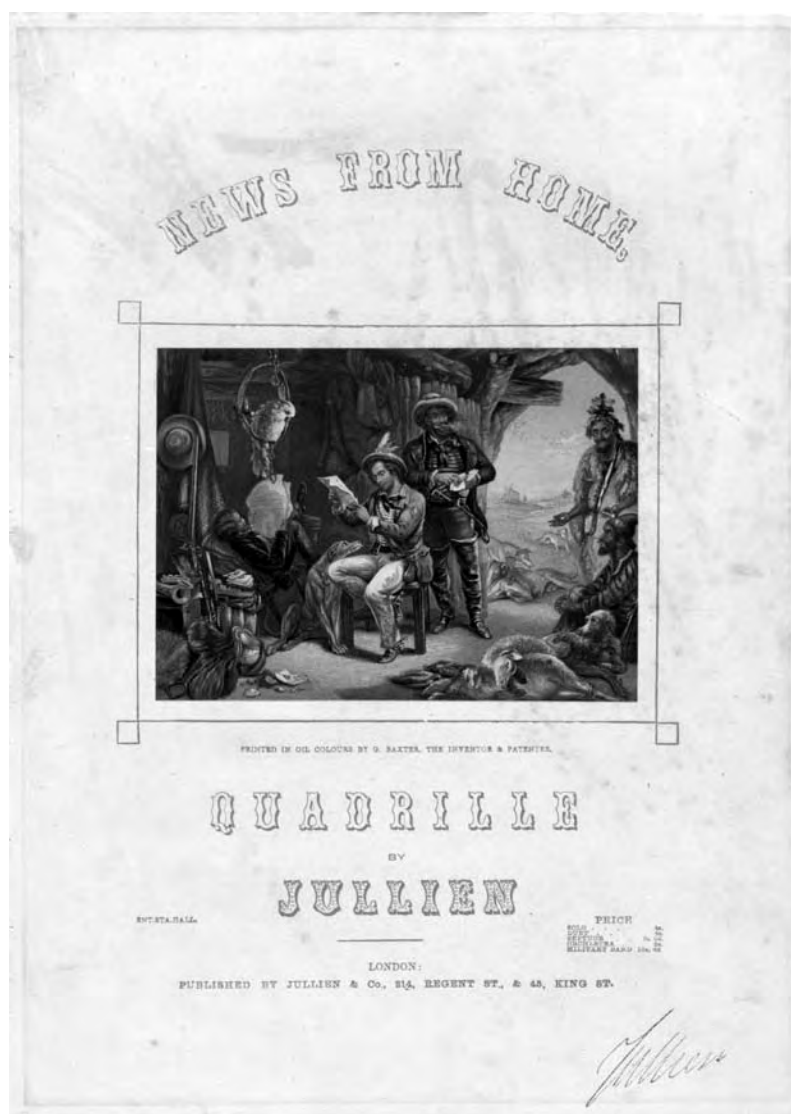
New York, written by tunesmiths who had never set foot in the American West.<sup>87</sup> In 1853 Oliver Ditson published *He died in California* by I. B. Woodbury, again with sentimental words about dying along the trail to the mines, never to see one's family again.<sup>88</sup> Interestingly, despite the fact that by this time elaborately

illustrated covers were usually employed to increase the value of the sheet music,<sup>89</sup> these songs had simple decorative covers, as if the writers were reluctant to visualise these tragic ends in distant locations.

Any hesitancy on the part of American publishers to imagine these dramatic events

in new lands was short-lived. By 1853, the Philadelphia firm of Lee & Walker brought out *The age of gold—directions on how to get it; with notes (ad lib) by a Director to California*, printed by Peter S. Duval from artwork by a Philadelphia drawing teacher named Matthew S. Schmitz.<sup>90</sup> Similar in design to *The good time's come at last*, with a circular procession of figures carrying mining gear and climbing into the rocks, this amusing illustration has the figures disappear into the clouds, while on the left a cornucopia-like sea-serpent, straddled by a pipe-smoking man, belches forth gold medallions, some portraying active scenes of the adventures awaiting those setting out to find gold. A caption at the bottom of the page quotes Shakespeare: 'Put money in thy purse.' Such elaborate narrative images bespeak the significance of this visual form in conveying popular sentiment to the masses newly on the move across the country and across the oceans. Australia was as caught up in these musical entertainments as Californians. An article as early as June 1849 in the *Hobart Daily Courier* talks of the enormous amount of music about gold and California that arrived by ship and then entered the repertoire at Hobart performances.<sup>91</sup>

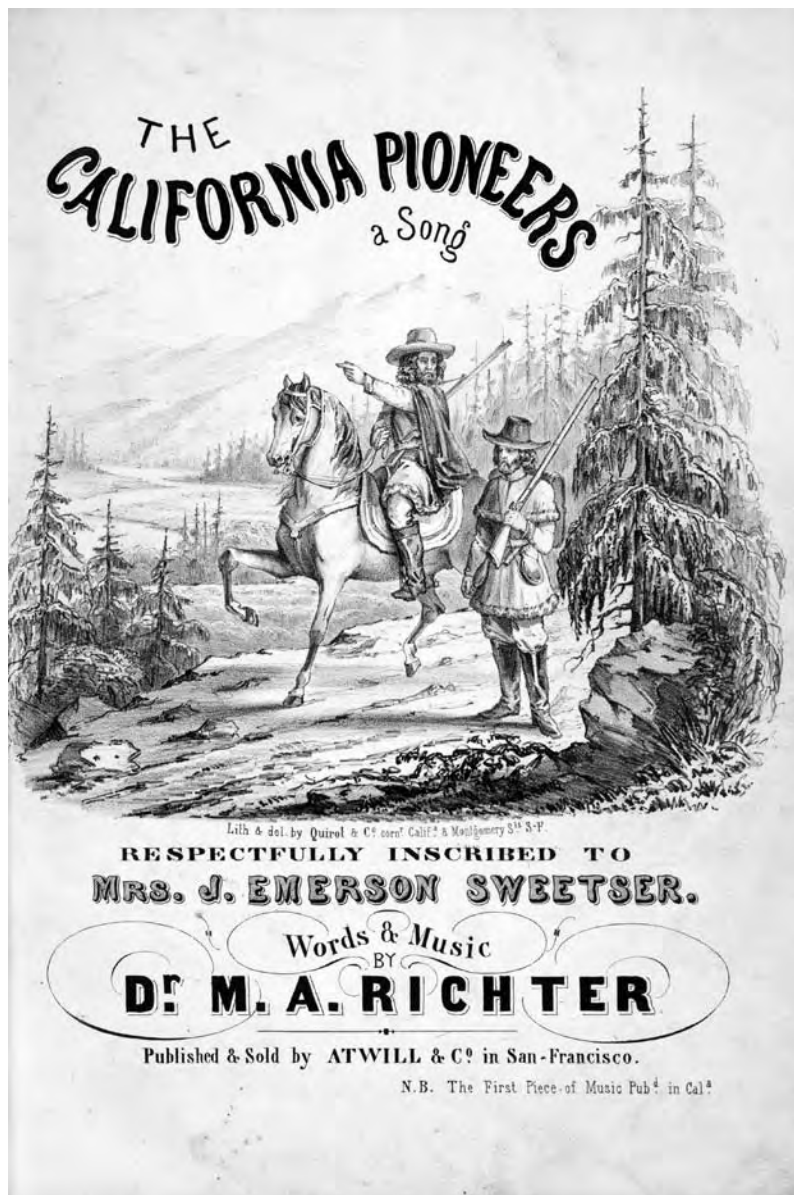
Because they were reproduced in portable formats in large quantities and were in such demand, sheet music prompted publishing companies everywhere to attain from an early date astonishingly sophisticated levels of printing technique. An article in the British journal *The Photographic News*, in a discussion of landscape art in Australia, mentions that lithography arrived in that country in 1834, at which time 'the first sheet of music was printed in Sydney'.<sup>92</sup> The National Library of Australia in Canberra contains, in its 200,000-piece collection of sheet music,<sup>93</sup> a particularly well-preserved example from the gold-rush era called *News from home quadrille*, published in London



by Julien & Co. The cover includes a full-colour reproduction by George Baxter of an oil painting by Harden S. Melville entitled *The squatter's news from home* (1851).<sup>94</sup> The painting was completed in London by Melville after his journeys through Australia from 1842 to 1846; it is signed 'H. S. Melville/Australia', and the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra lists its date as 1850 to 1851.<sup>95</sup> The print and its inclusion on the cover of sheet music for a tune about yearning for home while far away, may have been inspired by the gold discoveries in Australia.

**Fig. 2.09 Harden S. Melville,** cover, *News from home quadrille* by Jullien. Baxter color print after oil painting by Melville. London: Jullien & Co., c. 1851. Music Collection, National Library of Australia, Canberra.





**Fig. 2.10** Quirot & Co., cover, *The California Pioneers: A song*. Lithograph. Atwill & Co., San Francisco, 1852. Courtesy of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Despite the appearance in the picture of an Australian cockatoo, a dead kangaroo on the floor and two ‘exotic’ albeit ethnographically inaccurate natives meant to represent Aboriginal people, the iconography of three ‘civilised’ white men trying to read the news from home in a bush cabin surrounded by an array of unfamiliar peoples, animals and objects mirrors similar images of miners in California’s rugged landscapes—and evokes much of the same feeling as Johnson’s *Euchre*

in the bush. The iconography of separation from home was shared between the two gold-rich and newly transient countries.<sup>96</sup>

Because the lithographic process made production of images so simple, illustrated music publishing spread immediately to the frontier itself; indeed, ‘[m]usic printing and publishing began in San Francisco almost as soon as the gold from the newly rich miners came to the city’ and illustrations accompanied the earliest pieces.<sup>97</sup> One of San Francisco’s first musical entrepreneurs, a publisher and tradesman from New York named Joseph F. Atwill (c. 1820–1893), was aware enough of the historical significance of his first forays into publishing there that he made sure his sheet music cover of *The California pioneers*, which he produced in 1852, included the phrase, ‘N.B. The First Piece of Music Pub’d in Cal’.<sup>98</sup> The music cover was festooned with a grand print by Quirot & Co., the leading lithographic firm in early San Francisco; Quirot was responsible for some of the most polished images coming out of the city during the gold period.<sup>99</sup>

What is most striking about the cover of *The California pioneers* is its romanticising of the Californian landscape. Quirot shows two mountain men, dressed in fur-lined jackets and high boots and holding hunting rifles. One is astride a fiery steed and points westward. The two figures are surrounded by rocks and evergreen ‘big trees’—a landscape motif that already denoted the western wilderness in the popular imagination. The words of the song speak of these adventurers—‘I love the man, the man with valor clad’—but the main thrust of the text rejoices in the idea of a sublime western American countryside: ‘I love this land, its sunny clime, its golden sand, its birds, their chime, its turfy vales, its flowry hills, its woodland dales, its crystal rills.’ The self-conscious attitude of conquest of the American West and the desire to champion the salubrity of the

Californian landscape was already in place within the popular consciousness by this date; and this visual trope was apparent immediately in sheet music imagery. Finally, this first piece of California music is dedicated to Mrs. J. Emerson Sweetser, the wife of a leading merchant of the city<sup>100</sup>—further indication of the small circles then constructing a cultural life in San Francisco and the important place that Atwill, as owner of a music shop and publisher of illustrated sheet music, occupied in this incipient society. Atwill, along with his successor Matthias Gray and several others, continued to produce increasingly elaborate illustrated music covers and song-books for the next 20 years.<sup>101</sup>

Many of these mass-produced sheets from San Francisco, often with distinctly ‘Pacific’ imagery and texts pertaining to events occurring on the western American coast, made their way to Australia, where they were performed, adapted and sometimes reprinted by Sydney and Melbourne publishers.<sup>102</sup> By the time Johnson in Australia was writing and performing in amateur theatrical productions,<sup>103</sup> and Bret Harte was basking in international celebrity far from California, the exchange of music, the interaction of performers and the sharing of imagery accompanying these events was thoroughly commonplace between San Francisco and the Australian colonies.

That images accompanied popular music and performers across the Pacific and between Californian and Australian societies, and that itinerancy was the means by which these images and these popular forms of entertainment were spread, is nowhere made clearer than in the fascinating and neglected story of Stephen C. Massett (1820–1898).<sup>104</sup> Among his many other accomplishments, Massett is universally credited with giving the first performance of any kind in San Francisco.<sup>105</sup> As one biographer put it, ‘Stephen Massett was the start of theatre in this State’.<sup>106</sup> An

Englishman by birth, like Henry Russell and many others Massett came to America as a young man, in 1837. He first worked in law offices in Buffalo, New York, and for merchants in New York City, all the while seeking the opportunity to launch a theatrical career. According to his picaresque memoirs, published as *‘Drifting about’, or what ‘Jeems Pipes of Pipesville’ saw-and-did* (1863), he frequented in New York City Joseph Atwill’s Music Saloon—the same Atwill who ended up in San Francisco producing the first piece of West Coast sheet music. At Atwill’s on Broadway, Massett met Henry Russell and all the other musical entertainers of the period. A meeting there with a theatre manager from Charleston, South Carolina, led to the start of his stage career down south. In Charleston Massett wrote his first hit tune, *When the moon on the lake is beaming*, and on the basis of its good press and sales in New York City, returned there to sing in an opera at the Olympic Theatre. Ever the vagabond and opportunist, Massett in 1843 set out on a tour of Malta and the Middle East, supporting himself by writing entertaining accounts of his journeys for William T. Porter’s popular weekly, *Spirit of the Times* (1837–1861), a newspaper which advertised itself as ‘[a] chronicle of the turf, agriculture, field sports, literature and the stage’.<sup>107</sup> At this time Massett began to use the *nom de plume* of ‘Jeems Pipes’, apparently an affectation based on the nickname of ‘Colonel Pipes’ bestowed upon him by favourable critics of his singing in New York.

Massett established peripatetic ways early, fuelled by a quest for adventure and new audiences for his versatile talents. As the writer for the WPA Theatre Project in the 1930s so eloquently expressed it, ‘[h]is sallies never seem to have been tempered with very great wisdom, but luck was perpetually hovering about—either in the box office or

in the person of some friendly sponsor'.<sup>108</sup> It is no surprise that a showman as energetic as Massett would have wholeheartedly jumped in to the biggest adventure of his time. He sailed from Baltimore for the California gold-fields on 13 January 1849.<sup>109</sup>

In gold-rush San Francisco, Massett's charming eccentricities found a welcoming audience; and despite subsequent wanderings and years spent in New York City at the end of his life, his writings indicate that he always maintained an affectionate attachment to all things Californian. While first working there as a notary public for a real estate agent, Massett re-established contact with Joseph Atwill at his music shop, and through friends found there he organised to present the city's first public entertainment. On 22 June 1849, borrowing the only piano in town, Massett performed three of his own songs as well as other popular tunes, then ended the evening with what was described as 'recitations and impersonations'—nineteenth-century stand-up comedy routines.<sup>110</sup> Every chronicler of the event points out that although the front seats in the hall were reserved for ladies, only four were in attendance—evidence of the rawness and lopsided masculinity of San Franciscan society in those early days. The evening was a financial success and encouraged Massett to continue his musical and acting pursuits. He spent time in Sacramento, where he worked as an auctioneer, a newspaper editor and as an actor, and in Hawaii, where he performed for King Kamehameha. By the end of 1853 Massett was again in San Francisco. At this time, he began to nurture more completely his theatrical identity of 'Jeems of Pipesville', Pipesville being the name he gave to a small piece of land he purchased in the sand dunes of lower San Francisco.<sup>111</sup> He built there—in the vicinity of present-day Second and Mission Streets—a tiny house in the middle of these dunes, from which he flew a flag

announcing its address as Pipesville.

Stories vary wildly about the nature of Massett's residence in Pipesville. Some accounts indicate that he retreated to Pipesville when melancholy overtook him; other articles emphasise an orgiastic lifestyle, with rollicking bachelor parties in his 'country seat'.<sup>112</sup> He became, in other words, a true San Francisco eccentric. Until his death in the 1890s, Massett alternated identities between his real name and his alter-ego of 'Jeems of Pipesville', in his writings and in his varied entertainments, remaining an enigmatic figure who managed somehow to establish connections to the socially prominent everywhere.

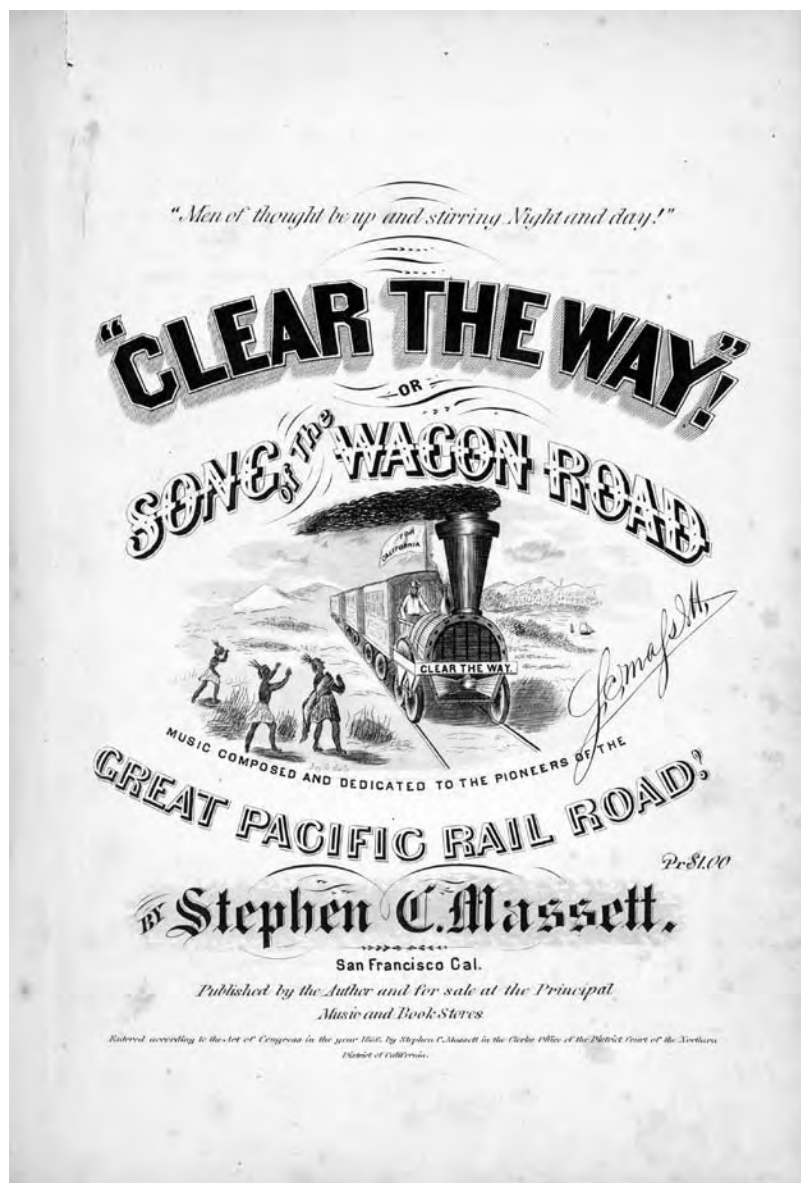
In California, Massett wrote and published many songs, sometimes providing his own illustrations for the sheet music cover as well. In 1856, caught up in the excitement generated by news of plans to build a transcontinental railroad (and apparently prompted by the need to raise money through a benefit concert after losing his funds in a bank collapse), he wrote '*Clear the way!*' or *Song of the wagon road*. He dedicated it to 'The Pioneers of the Great Pacific Rail Road!' Included on the cover was his own simplified drawing of an already well-established motif of progress on the frontier: a train cutting across the landscape, Indians looking on in agitation on one side and a view of San Francisco with the harbour on the other side. Massett may have copied the motif from a variety of printed images then in circulation. He may have seen, for example, a lithograph by the leading San Francisco printing firm of Britton & Rey entitled *What we want in California*. This lithography from 1855 depicts a very similar scene to promote the benefits of the arrival of the railroad in the state.<sup>113</sup> Britton & Rey provided the illustration for *Learning to walk*, one of Massett's later pieces of California-produced music, published in 1873 by Atwill's successor Matthias Gray. In his usual attempt to flatter potential patrons,

Massetts dedicated this tune to Mrs. Romualdo Pacheco, wife of the lieutenant-governor of California from 1871 to 1875, and stated that the tune was 'sung by Mad. Anna Bishop', the era's most popular singer, for whom Massett had already composed several songs. As one critic writes about this work, this 'sweetly sentimental song made publishing history with one of the handsomest lithographs in full colour on its cover ever done by the famous San Francisco lithographers'.<sup>114</sup>

Into the 1870s, Massett maintained his connections to the best California publishers and thereby the best illustrators for his music. Just as Bret Harte in his San Francisco days kept abreast of the most popular literary and artistic currents, Massett, ever the self-promoter, took every opportunity to cash in on topics of current interest, writing tunes that captured popular sentiment, whether romantic or rousing, and borrowing imagery for his illustrations from whatever sources were at hand. According to comments in his autobiography, *'Drifting about'*, he took much of his sheet music and other promotional literature with him on his many tours of 'the provinces'. Throughout his life, Massett established a pattern of itinerancy, touring with his music, posters and glowing testimonials. He would continue this pattern on his peregrinations around the world.

San Francisco considered Massett with some affection and gave him due recognition for his amusing performances as 'Jeems of Pipesville', as is evident from a note appearing in that most influential of early California publications, *Hutchings' Illustrated California Magazine*.<sup>115</sup> In 1857, the magazine included among its announcements of events in San Francisco the following note:

From the composer, Stephen C. Massett, we acknowledge the receipt of two pleasing pieces of music, one is entitled 'A Sabbath Scene', and



the other, 'I would not have thee young again' ... Mr. Massett is the author of several beautiful and favorite pieces, among others 'When the moon on the lake is beaming', 'The love knot', &c., &c. Moreover, to him is entitled the honor of giving the first musical entertainment in California. At that time we were delving among rocks, in the deep cañons of the mountains, and remember only, the ever welcome visits of the 'Placer Times' and 'California True Delta', each of which frequently contained some literary

**Fig. 2.11 Stephen C. Massett,** cover, *'Clear The Way! Or, Song of the wagon road; music composed and dedicated to the pioneers of the Great Pacific Rail Road!'* Lithograph. Published by the author, San Francisco, 1856. Courtesy of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.



gem from the fun-loving and fun-giving pen of Mr. M under the euphonious cognomen of 'Jeems Pipes.'

We see that Mr. M. is about to visit Australia and the East Indies; we bespeak for him a cordial welcome, and we hope it may be as profitable as it must be pleasant. Good luck attend him—Always.<sup>116</sup>

Frank Soulé, the well-known chronicler of early California, also wished Massett well, in a poem published in the newspaper *True Californian* on 15 September 1856. The second verse of his 'Lines to Stephen C. Massett, on His Departure for Australia' was predictably sentimental and optimistic about opportunities in the antipodes; it also demonstrates that Massett had quickly endeared himself to all manner of San Francisco society:

There's treasure in that land, Steve,  
Beyond the Ocean old;  
There may you float, and change  
each note  
Of music into gold.  
And warm hearts in that southern clime,  
And true hearts will you find,  
But none more faithful than a few  
Which you will leave behind.<sup>117</sup>

Massett's wanderlust led him this time, along with so many other American entertainers and artists, to Australia. As he later recounted, he travelled with all the accoutrements of his varied trades, from newspaper clippings to sheet music, brochures and posters to advertise his performances, as well as his melodeon, to play in venues where no piano was available. Massett himself wrote that, when he was off on such adventures, he had gone 'to itinerate'.<sup>118</sup> On board a French ship to the South Pacific, he wrote, 'I had with me—thinking it might be agreeable to the isolated stranger—a file of "New York Herald", and of the "Spirit of

the Times"'.<sup>119</sup> Both publications were, by no means coincidentally, ones for which Massett had written articles himself, and which had also produced lengthy and flattering reviews of Massett's earlier performances.

In every town where he played in Australia, Massett identified the main newspapers and established which one was considered the leading voice in terms of cultural reviews. In Melbourne, he wrote, 'the three leading journals here are the "Argus", "Herald", and "Age". A "Punch" also flourishes, very cleverly edited'. Massett also determined that: 'The Melbourne "Argus" bears the same resemblance in that community to the "Times" in London; and it seems to be a pretty well understood fact, [*sic*] that by its censure or praise the fate of a public performer is sealed.'<sup>120</sup>

Of greatest interest in Massett's entertaining book, along with the cartoon-like illustrations, is his description of his personal method for setting up his tour. He arrived in Melbourne on 10 December 1856 and was greeted there by two old California friends who worked in Melbourne in banking. They introduced him to George Loder (1818–1868), then the impresario for the popular singer Anna Bishop (1810–1884), also touring Australia at this time.<sup>121</sup> Massett let Loder know of his 'Monologue Entertainments', as he called them, and also proposed that he could provide many songs for Anna Bishop to perform—a fact that bore fruit for Australian audiences as it had done in America.<sup>122</sup> In his writing, he then provides fascinating insight into the nineteenth-century world of self-promotion in the days before tour managers and theatrical agents—or at least into the methods employed by those performers like 'Jeems of Pipesville' who were itinerant and eccentric enough to be outside the sphere of the more established touring companies. He describes the steps he took to prepare for his opening night:

The ‘posters’ were upon the walls, the shops and houses were strewn with programmes—the papers properly attended to—the ‘Hall’ taken—the ‘Erard’ (such a beauty) selected—the ticket ‘taker’ and ‘seller’ secured—the ‘free list’ duly cared for—and the fatal moment of my ‘first appearance’ before a colonial audience had arrived.<sup>123</sup>

He goes on to let the reader know that ‘[t]he next day *all* the papers came out in the most laudatory manner’. Massett himself, with some helpers, seems to have handled all of these promotional activities, including in some circumstances the design of the posters and the programs, although later on he mentions problems with the printing fonts selected by the printing company he used for his Sydney appearances.<sup>124</sup> He was always conscious of the competing entertainments and the advertisements that appeared for them; he wrote in Melbourne that the ‘walls of the city were covered with large posters of various performers’, most prominently Anna Bishop;<sup>125</sup> and in Ballarat, he found:

[l]arge transparencies were suspended from the front windows of each [hotel]: One announcing that the ‘Great American Tragedian, Mr. McKean Buchanan, would that night appear in his celebrated character of Hamlet’; the other, that the world-renowned Pablo Fauque would perform his daring feats upon the tight-rope; and the other, that the most perfect and faultless representation of the play of the Lady of Lyons would that night be given.<sup>126</sup>

In every location he visited throughout Australia—and later the world—Masset was alert to the cultural scene and to every opportunity to ingratiate himself with the local elites. His own posters, broadsides and sheet music mixed with the images that were already in circulation and on the walls throughout the colony.

Pieces of Massett’s own songs were published in Australia. The cover of an Australian edition of the sheet music for one of Massett’s most popular tunes, *Take back the ring, dear Jamie*, has a simple embossed decoration, with coloured touches added to the ornamental raised parts. What makes this piece so interesting is that it was printed in Sydney by J. R. Clarke. The cover also declares proudly that the music is ‘As sung by Madame Anna Bishop’, just as he advertised on so many of his California-published songs. The date of publication is believed to be some time between 1860 and 1864, but given that Massett was in Australia in 1857 at the same time as Anna Bishop was touring there, it is likely that Clarke would have published an Australian edition of the tune to coincide with their visits, to take advantage of a momentary rush of celebrity engagement.<sup>127</sup> Whether Massett himself arranged for the publication of his songs in Sydney is unclear, although his autobiography demonstrates that he made every effort to sell himself and his products wherever he travelled. Since he also brought along copies of his already-published works, pieces like *Clear the way!*, with its iconic image of frontier progress, would probably have had some circulation in the Australian colonies, at least on view for sale at some of Massett’s many concerts in the cities and small gold-mining settlements.

J. R. Clarke published another of Massett’s tunes, *My bud in heaven*, also presented as one of Anna Bishop’s songs.<sup>128</sup> This melody, with maudlin lyrics by one Spencer W. Cone, includes a more elaborate illustrated cover, with a reproduction that appears to be a bas-relief sculpture of a mother and child floating in space and surrounded by putti; the lettering is in colour and with ornate filigree ornamentation. Finally, Clarke produced sheet music of Massett’s most famous song, *When the moon on the lake is beaming*, with a cover image



**Fig. 2.12 Edmund Thomas**, cover for Massett, *When the moon on the lake is beaming*. Lithograph. J. R. Clarke, Sydney, c. 1860. Music Collection, National Library of Australia, Canberra.

by an accomplished local artist, Edmund Thomas (1827-1867), signed by Massett and touted as 'Sung with the most enthusiastic applause by Madame Anna Bishop, to whom it is respectfully dedicated by the composer'. This final piece of music, with its ambitious landscape image by Thomas, indicates that the illustration of sheet music was a well-established industry in Australia by the 1850s. The publisher Clarke continued to produce sheet music into the 1890s, including many, such as the clever rebus-like cover for Walter Rice's *Up in a balloon galop* (c.1869-73), that had coloured lithographs.<sup>129</sup> In Australia, as

in America, sheet music was being produced from the 1850s with an eye for aesthetic appeal and to meet the public's demand for visual illustration.

Clarke also advertised his firm on the cover of Massett's *My bud in heaven* as a 'Fine Art Repository'. Clarke's company had one of the best art-printing facilities in Sydney from the 1850s; and as his obituary stated, 'Mr. Clarke's knowledge of pictures, and especially of every class of engraving, was proverbial'.<sup>130</sup> In 1857 Clarke had published Walter G. Mason's *Australian picture pleasure book*; with 200 wood-engravings one of the most ambitious illustrated publications of the decade in Australia. Walter George Mason (1820-1866) came from a long line of English artists and engravers. His father Abraham 'took the family to the United States where he worked and taught Walter his craft'. In 1852, Walter arrived in Sydney, where he became one of the original owners of the *Illustrated Sydney News*. Mason has been called 'the father of illustrated journalism in this colony'.<sup>131</sup> His illustrations in the *Picture pleasure book* included, along with Australian landscape views and renderings of local oddities such as 'A petrified ham found in Barrack Square, Sydney', many excellent character portraits, including not only the discoverer of gold, E. H. Hargraves, but also the American performers Lola Montez, Edwin Booth and Emma Waller.

Since Mason's book was making a splash in the colonies when Massett was touring there, it is tempting to speculate that he may have seen Mason's illustrations, voracious as he was in his efforts to glean information and imagery wherever he could find it. Perhaps the two even met, since Mason shared an interest in theatre and performance with Massett and his American brethren. Mason also produced for Clarke several sheet music covers, such as the lithographed view of Sydney for *City*

of *Sydney polka* (1854). The image depicted includes the Commercial Bank in George Street, which Robyn Holmes writes was ‘the centre of activity for emerging music publishers and sellers such as Woolcott and Clarke’.<sup>132</sup>

Clarke’s music publishing company published Australian editions of Stephen Foster’s songs, including *Gentle Annie* (c. 1858–1864),<sup>133</sup> advertised as ‘Sung by The Christy Minstrels’, that most famous of American minstrel groups that toured Australia during the 1860s.<sup>134</sup> In terms of illustration, the images used on Clarke’s music often emphasised distinctly Australian views and landscapes. At the time Massett was in Sydney, Clarke published the instrumental work *Australian flowers* (1857) by Miska Hauser, a popular Viennese musician then touring in Australia.<sup>135</sup> The cover for this song included an illustration of the rockery in the botanical gardens, again by Edmond Thomas, who had made a localised landscape scene for Massett’s *When the moon on the lake is beaming*.<sup>136</sup> The same floral view appeared in the *Australian album*, another book of Sydney views published by Clarke in the same year.

By the 1870s, Australian publishers—just as American music publishers were doing—began to include tipped-in photographs on their sheet music covers. *The eucalypti waltzes* (1879) by Walter Cope and published by Clarke, included a small photographed scene depicting gum trees. While the image is pleasingly bucolic, there is none of the artistic ambition of the earlier lithographed covers and the photographer is not identified. Just as in America, the ‘golden age’ of illustrated sheet music had passed by the 1870s. Australian illustration also moved into different, and in many cases less artistic, directions, taking advantage of cheaper forms of printing technology. The evidence from these cover sheets by Clarke and other music publishers nonetheless verifies that in J. C. F. Johnson’s time,



**Fig. 2.13 Walter G. Mason,** *Comic sketch of Mrs Waller as Ophelia*, pl. 56 in *Australian Picture Pleasure Book*. Wood-engraving. J. R. Clarke, Sydney, 1857. National Library of Australia, Canberra.

a variety of illustrative sources was available to him and other Australians. Many of the images produced to sell sheet music were shared and dispersed both across the Pacific and to Europe. Massett’s music, and some of his artistic work, joined a veritable sea of imagery that drifted back and forth in printed form from San Francisco to the Australian colonies in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. In this most vernacular format people on both Pacific coasts learned of the most popular aesthetic styles and the most pervasive iconography of late nineteenth-century popular culture.

Massett left Australia, from Launceston in Tasmania, on 20 July 1857, never to return. He continued his peregrinations to India, then on to London, and back to New York by 1858. He visited San Francisco again in that year, and travelled as far as Japan on another touring trip. He was often in debt, and sometimes in trouble over debt. But he continued to produce music and accumulate

friends and influential patrons of all sorts. As late as May of 1897—the year before his death in New York City—he was still writing gossipy reminiscences to people like Los Angeles journalist and promoter *par excellence* B. C. Truman (1835–1916). Truman published them as ‘Chatty Letters from “Jeems Pipes of Pipesville”’ in his new newspaper of Southern California boosterism, *Greater Los Angeles*.<sup>137</sup> Along with his other travels, Massett apparently had been in Los Angeles in the 1860s or 1870s, and wrote about that visit:

How well I remember the orange groves of Mr. Wolfskill and Messrs. Rose and Wilson, and ... the lovely vale, beautiful orchards and gardens at Santa Anita, where the once-upon-a-time ‘Village Blacksmith’, ‘Lucky Baldwin’, flourished, and whose matrimonial squabbles and infelicities fill the eastern and western papers.<sup>138</sup>

That he was still reading all the newspapers and still writing to everyone of consequence marks Massett as the most modern of celebrity hounds, a nineteenth-century Louella Parsons. His ability to retain a widespread network of correspondents also points to the immense transformations in communication and mass media that had taken place in the late nineteenth century—transformations that helped create the image-based society at the heart of modernity itself and made possible the exchange of imagery between the Pacific cultures of California and Australia.

When Massett died in 1898, his obituary in the *New York Times* duly noted his fame ‘some time ago’ as ‘Jeems Pipes of Pipesville’.<sup>139</sup> Described as ‘an author, song writer, and entertainer’, the newspaper went on to state that he ‘wrote several books on his life and adventures, which were in style much like Mark Twain’s’. Comparing Massett to Mark Twain was perhaps simply a facile remark to

make, given that Twain was by that time at the height of his world fame, but it demonstrates a recognition on the part of the press of Massett’s contribution, along with Twain and Harte, to a Pacific Slope aesthetic that romanticised the earlier decades. The 1890s represented the peak of nostalgia for California’s gold-rush days.

In 1898, Twain had returned from his only tour of Australia—a tour precipitated by his need for money—where his lectures were enormously well-attended and he was followed by journalists everywhere. By this time, his friendship with Bret Harte was long over. In an interview while in Australia, Twain said of Harte, ‘I detest him, because I think his work is “shoddy” ... He has no heart, except his name, and I consider he has produced nothing that is genuine. He is artificial’.<sup>140</sup> Twain had published *Following the equator* in 1897, with accounts of his travels in Australia. In response to continual queries about his impressions of Australian life, Twain wrote that the ‘Australians did not seem to me to differ noticeably from Americans, either in dress, carriage, ways, pronunciation, inflections, or general appearance’.<sup>141</sup> This attitude did not at the time seem to disturb Australians unduly, nor did Americans find it a particularly odd opinion to voice; such cultural connections were accepted as a matter of fact.

Bret Harte, by 1898, was living a rather elegant life in London, far removed from his California days, and vociferously rejecting his Californian past as an uncivilised period in his life. Mrs Sherwood, a well-known doyenne of East Coast high society, recounted in her memoirs of 1897 her meetings with Harte: ‘He was pathetically pleased to get rid of California, which he hated’; she wrote that the author ‘gave me such an idea of the dreariness, absence of color, and degradation of a mining camp that I never read one of his immortal stories that I do not seem to taste that dust-laden air’.<sup>142</sup>

While his writing career and his fame receded sharply after the 1880s, Harte's old California stories continued to be published, some in illustrated editions. When he died in 1902, *Overland*—the journal Harte helped found and for whom he created a memorably Californian logo of grizzly bear and railroad—presented a 'special Bret Harte number', filled with reminiscences of Harte by old Californian writers such as Joaquin Miller (1841–1913).<sup>143</sup> The issue also contained yet another reprinting of 'The Heathen Chinees', this time illustrated by C. Merriam Peter in a nearly surreal style that, once again, exaggerates for comic effect Bill Nye's violence toward Ah Sin. By this date in California, attitudes about the Chinese had not improved much from those read into Harte's poem when it first appeared, even though the *Overland* editors did attempt to make some editorial comment by publishing in the same issue a facsimile of Harte's original manuscript of the poem. Aware of the myriad of racist readings attached to the poem, the editors may have wanted to demonstrate that Harte's original lines did not contain the infamous words, 'We're ruined by Chinese cheap labor!'<sup>144</sup>

As this later illustration of 'The Heathen Chinees' demonstrates, the real situation for the Chinese at the end of the nineteenth century, both in California and in Australia, was hindered by now-entrenched stereotypes that the illustrations to Harte's verse had done so much to imprint into the public mind. In the legislative sphere, their situation was more precarious than it had been in the mid-nineteenth century. In Australia, an 1888 ruling by the colonial government restricted Chinese immigration almost entirely. J. F. Archibald's influential publication *The Bulletin* also maintained a vehemently anti-Asian stance, expressed most overtly in its editorial cartoons (see Chapter 3). At the same time, the Chinese communities were still there, living in San

Francisco and in Melbourne in relatively sequestered sections of the cities.

While politicians, Australian and American, continued to fulminate against the arrival of Asians into their lands, artists and other image-makers by the 1890s began to turn their romanticised visions of 'The Celestials' in Chinatown into a popular artistic genre, in many ways elaborating on those earlier illustrative versions.<sup>145</sup> In 1898, when Stephen Massett died, photographer Arnold Genthe (1869–1942) produced some of his most memorable photographs of San Francisco's Chinatown and its inhabitants, and many popular California artists such as Theodore Wores (1859–1939) specialised in Chinese subjects.<sup>146</sup> Melbourne's Chinatown, with its elaborate entrance gate, also became a favoured motif for photographic views at the turn of the last century. When the Duke of York visited Australia for the celebrations accompanying Federation in 1901, stereoscopic photographs of The Chinese Arch on Swanston Street were reproduced repeatedly, demonstrating the inclusion of the Australian Chinese and their exotic architecture into the festivities.<sup>147</sup>

As for J. C. F. 'Alphabetical' Johnson, who had expressed both in writing and in his simple naive painting such heartfelt sentiments about the need for racial and ethnic harmony in colonial Australia, he had by 1898 retired from parliament and had the previous year completed his tour of mines in Britain and America. Aside from some articles about mining and editorials in conjunction with his campaigns for funds to support the Australian Natives' Association and the Australian soldiers sent to the Boer War, Johnson did not produce any more published works of literature, nor, as far as anyone knows, any more paintings. He did continue to be involved in theatrical and literary circles, and was on the board of the Public Library, Museum and Art

Gallery of South Australia. But the nationalist fervour that had sparked his one foray into artistic expression had, apparently, abated by this time.

Johnson was still alive in the 1890s, but he did not participate personally in one of the most significant breakthroughs in journalism and reproductive art that took place in that decade, a breakthrough that would have profound implications globally for the development of aesthetic modernism and popular culture. By mid-decade publishers of all stripes, including sheet music producers and art printers, were beginning to adopt a new technology that made it possible for the first time to integrate photographs and other illustrative forms seamlessly onto a page of text. As the cover for *The eucalypti waltzes* already reveals, the halftone photograph, whereby images were reproduced with tiny dots of ink, became the most pervasive form of image reproduction by the turn of the last century. Just as earlier innovations in printing techniques had made possible sophisticated reproductions in journals and in books, this 'half-tone revolution' would directly affect the subsequent directions in art, illustration and mass culture around the world. The impact was profound:

Halftone made it possible for turn-of-the-century page designers to create multimedia compositions with ease. Halftone freed journalists and advertisers to create meaning through juxtaposition and association by combining photographs not only with texts, but with other images like charcoal sketches, watercolors, and line drawings as well.<sup>148</sup>

The wood-engravings that had been central to the success of the illustrated journals since mid-century—the method by which Johnson's *Euchre in the bush* had reached a wide audience in the 1870s through the

*Australasian Sketcher*, the method used by itinerant performers such as Stephen Massett for sheet music illustrations and promotional material, and the method so often used by the many illustrators of Bret Harte's 'Heathen Chinees'—would now be nearly abandoned as a means of mass visual reproduction.

In these new societies of Australia and California, where reproducible images were by necessity the most pervasive means of promulgating aesthetic styles and dispersing visual icons, and where popular culture determined most significantly what people knew of the modern world, such a technological invention had even greater consequences for artistic attitudes than it did in the so-called 'home' cultures of England and the eastern United States. Aesthetic modernism, then, reached the settler cultures of Australia and California through mechanical reproduction, and in the forms of mass and popular culture. Itinerancy included not only the movement of people, but also the transport around the world of the machinery and technological know-how upon which so much of twentieth-century image-making would depend.

#### NOTES

1. Francis Bret Harte, 'Plain Language from Truthful James: Table Mountain, 1870', in Thomas R. Lounsbury (ed.), *Yale book of American verse*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1912.
2. Henry Lawson, 'Eureka (A Fragment)', quoted in Hilton Barton, 'Bret Harte and Henry Lawson: Democratic realists,' *The Realist*, Sydney, vol. xxvi, no. 26, Winter 1967, pp. 7–10.
3. On the importance of clothing as an identifying characteristic in the Australian goldfields, see Margaret Maynard, *Fashioned from penury: Dress as cultural practice in colonial Australia*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1994, pp. 168–70.
4. R. M. Gibbs, 'Johnson, Joseph Colin Francis (1848–1904)', *ADB*, vol. 9, 1983, pp 495–96.
5. *Oxford companion to Australian literature*, 2nd edn, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1994, p. 410.
6. *ADB*, vol. 9, p. 496.

7. Austin Dowling, registrar's notes, Ballarat Fine Art Gallery files, 1996.
8. See J. C. F. Johnson, *To Mount Browne and back, or, Moses and Me*, Advertiser Print, Adelaide, 1881.
9. ADB, vol. 9, p. 495.
10. *Australian encyclopedia*, vol. 7, p. 59.
11. See Melvin N. Day, *Nicholas Chevalier, artist: His life and work with special reference to his career in New Zealand and Australia*, Millwood, Wellington, New Zealand, 1981; and Day's entry in DAA, pp. 147–49.
12. One of the best histories of Australian illustration industries is Geoffrey Caban's *A fine line: A history of Australian commercial art*, Hale & Ironmonger, Sydney, 1983.
13. The National Library of Australia lists one work by H. J. Woodhouse, a wood-engraving of a cricket match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in 1858 (NLA PIC S3726 LOC 7011-F). Arthur Esam (b. 1850) produced several depictions of rural life, including coloured lithographs of activities on a cattle station produced for mass publication. See Esam's *Life on a cattle station*, from 'Pictorial Australian', c. 1880 (nla.pic-an8929083-v), on 'PictureAustralia', National Library of Australia, Canberra, viewed June 2005, <<http://www.nla.gov.au>>.
14. This quotation was included in notes made by Deirdre Chisholm, recorded 9 March 1996, in the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery Registrar's files.
15. Johnson's reverence for Johnstone's work was in keeping with contemporary sentiment in South Australia. Henry James Johnstone (1835–1907), British-born, came to Victoria for gold in 1853 and began to work as a photographer. By the 1870s, he had established himself as a landscape painter, particularly of billabong scenes in South Australia. By 1880, after many years of acclaim and a *bon vivant* lifestyle in Melbourne and Adelaide, he was reported to be in California, where he established and retained enthusiastic patronage for his Australian views. Even after moving to London, his works continued to sell well in America and he also maintained contacts with Australian sources. In 1883, his narrative painting *Off the track* was purchased by the Art Gallery of New South Wales. When it was reproduced as a chromolithograph in the *Illustrated Sydney News*, it gained tremendous circulation throughout Australia. As Candice Bruce and Frank Cusack assert in DAA, Johnstone's painting *Evening shadows, backwater at the Murray, South Australia* (1880), purchased by the National Gallery of South Australia from the *Melbourne international exhibition*, 'was (and has remained) one of the South Australian Gallery's most popular paintings'. See DAA, pp. 407–09.
16. J. C. F. Johnson, *Getting gold: A gold-mining handbook for practical men*, Charles Griffin, London, 1897, p. 4.
17. According to Deirdre Chisholm, who in 1996 owned the second version of *Euchre in the bush*, the other version was in the home of Johnson's mother in Mt Gambier, South Australia, at the time of his death in 1904. Chisholm purchased it from a Miss Megaw, whose father was the auctioneer for Mrs Johnson's estate. Registrar's notes, Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, 9 March 1996.
18. *Australasian Sketcher*, 23 December 1876, text to accompany the colour supplement of *Euchre in the bush*, 'Our coloured supplement: A game of euchre', under section 'Sketches with pencil', p. 150.
19. Gary Scharnhorst, *Bret Harte's California: Letters to the Springfield Republican and Christian Register, 1866–67*, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1990, p. 1.
20. George Stewart gives a thorough description of the editors' ambitions to be the Pacific version of the *Atlantic Monthly*, pointing out that Harte and the other editors even chose the emblem on the title page—a grizzly bear on a railroad track—in reference to the *Atlantic's* own emblem and layout. See Stewart, *Bret Harte: Argonaut and exile*, pp. 157–60.
21. Ina D. Coolbirth, 'Introduction', in Bret Harte, *The heathen Chinees: Plain language from Truthful James*, Book Club of California, San Francisco, 1934, p. iv; see also Stewart, *Bret Harte*, pp. 177–82: 'The success of this sixty-line poem is probably without parallel before or since. "The Luck" and its companion stories had reached about as far as a really literary production can', p. 179.
22. G. Scharnhorst, *Bret Harte: A bibliography*, Scarecrow Author Bibliographies, no. 95, The Scarecrow Press, Lanham, Maryland and London 1995, pp. 41–45; entry no. 151, 'Plain Language from Truthful James/ (Table Mountain, 1870)', *Overland Monthly*, no. 5, September 1870, pp. 287–88.
23. *That Heathen Chinees and other poems mostly humorous ... the music by Stephen Tucker*, John Camden Hotten, London, 1871.
24. *Galaxy*, vol. 12, November 1871, p. 635.
25. *ibid.*, p. 638.
26. Stewart, *Bret Harte*, p. 179.
27. Contemporary observers were prescient in their warnings about the effects of such imitation. *The*



- California Mail-Bag* in June of 1871 noted: 'The Washington Critic thinks that Bret Harte is eventually bound to be ruined and sunk into oblivion by the downward pull of his numerous imitators, or in other words, that the peculiar style of writing upon which his celebrity is based will be cheapened and brought into disrepute by the superabundance of the supply of an article identical in kind, and very little ... in quality.'
28. J. C. F. Johnson, 'Christmas on Carringa', Wigg & Son, Adelaide, 1873; and *An Austral Christmas*, 2nd edn, W. K. Thomas & Co., Printers, Grenfell Street, Adelaide, 1889. The title page for *An Austral Christmas* announces Johnson as 'Author of "A Fine Fortune", "Over the Island", "Moses & Me", etc.'
  29. Goodman, pp. 4, 7.
  30. *ibid.*, p. 7.
  31. 'An aunt gave him a volume of stories by Bret Harte which fascinated him and introduced him to a new world.' *Australian encyclopedia*, 1958, vol. 5, p. 263.
  32. Barton, pp. 7–10.
  33. Australian politicians looked upon the American restrictions of Asian immigration, particularly the enactment of the *Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882*, with approbation, but also with fear that these bans would cause a new flood of Chinese onto their shores. By the time of Australian Federation in 1901, the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* effectively began the 'White Australia' policy that would operate in Australia until the 1970s. See *Australian encyclopedia*, vol. 5, p. 79.
  34. See William Mungen, "The heathen Chinese": Speech of Hon. William Mungen, of Ohio, delivered in the House of Representatives, January 7, 1871', F. & J. Rivers & Geo. A. Bailey, Reporters and Printers of the Debates of Congress, Washington, DC, 1870.
  35. Quoted in William P. Fenn, *Ah Sin and his brethren in American literature*, College of Chinese Studies cooperating with California College in China, Peking, 1933, p. 47.
  36. See Scharnhorst, "'Ways that are dark": Appropriations of Bret Harte's "Plain Language from Truthful James"', *Nineteenth-century literature*, vol. 51, 1996–97, p. 393.
  37. See Fenn, *Ah Sin*, pp. ix–x; and Lewis H. Carlson and George A. Colborn (eds), *In their place: White America defines her minorities 1850–1950*, Wiley, New York, 1972, pp. 171–73.
  38. According to a 1955 article by Stuart W. Hyde, the Chinaman as comic figure in American melodrama, centred on his 'ridiculous-looking appearance', began to be a commonplace as early as the 1850s on the New York and even on the San Francisco stage. See Hyde's 'The Chinese stereotype in American melodrama', *California Historical Society Quarterly*, vol. 34, 1955, pp. 357–67.
  39. The photo is in the State Library of Victoria, viewed 1 March 2004, <<http://www.statelibrary.vic.gov.au/pictoria/b/0/8/doc/b08021.shtml>>.
  40. See Johnson and Eymann, pl. 39, p. 115.
  41. See Rebecca Solnit, *River of shadows: Eadweard Muybridge and the technological wild west*, Viking, New York, 2003, p. 166. For examples of Muybridge's images, and for in-depth description of the contribution of the Chinese in building the railroad, see Central Pacific Railroad Museum, viewed 15 April 2004, <<http://cpr.org/Museum/index.html>>.
  42. 'Grand Admission Celebration. Portsmouth Square Octr. 29, 1850', letter-sheet by C. J. Pollard, The Huntington Library (RB 48052 #137), reproduced in Blodgett, p. 104.
  43. Samuel Douglas Smith Huyghue, *The Black Hill Ballarat Sept. 1875*, State Library of Victoria (acc. no. H25190).
  44. See 'Chinese camp in the mines', from James Borthwick's *Three years in California*, William Blackwood, London, 1857; reproduced in Blodgett, p. 83; and Gill's lithograph, *John Alloo's Chinese Restaurant, main road, Ballaarat*, James G. Blundell & Co., Melbourne, 1855, National Library of Australia Picture Collection, viewed 17 April 2004.
  45. For concepts of 'the dying race' in Australia see Bernard Smith, *The spectre of Truganini*, ABC Broadcasting, Sydney, 1980; and Russel McGregor, *Imagined destinies: Aboriginal Australians and the doomed race theory*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1997. On the visualising of the 'vanishing race' idea amongst Native Americans, see Joseph K. Dixon, *The vanishing race: The last great Indian Council*, Doubleday, Page & Co., Garden City, 1914; and Robert L. McGrath, 'The endless trail of the *End of the trail*', *Journal of the West*, vol. 40, no. 4, Fall 2001, pp. 8–15.
  46. Such sentiment may also reflect the editorial stance of *The Argus* itself, rather than Johnson's own opinion.
  47. According to his biographer, Gary Scharnhorst, 'Harte was also a social liberal who roundly protested racial intolerance & persecution, his apparent ethnocentrism notwithstanding'. Scharnhorst also maintains that despite 'his tendency to echo racial

- cliches ... Harte was genuinely sympathetic to the plight of the local Chinese and African-Americans'. *Bret Harte's California*, p. 3.
48. By the 1870s, 'Pacific Slope' is the preferred term for the West Coast American region in eastern American and English publications. In the 1871 London edition of Harte's poems, the following text appears on the verso of the title page: 'These humorous verses come to us from California, where there are a great many Chinese emigrants. The Americans on the Pacific Slope are not remarkable for any particular dullness or want of smartness, but occasionally the Oriental is more than a match for them. His ancient tricks are a novelty to the New World. Euchre, the favourite American gambling game of cards here alluded to, is a variation of the old French game of écarté.' *That Heathen Chinees & other poems mostly humorous by F. Bret Harte, Author of 'The Luck of Roaring Camp' and 'Sensation Novels Condensed', the music by Stephen Tucker, composer of 'Beautiful isle of the sea.'*, John Camden Hotten, London, 1871.
  49. John Manning, 'Bold Dick Donohue', *Overland Monthly*, vol. 5, July–December 1870, pp. 147–52 and pp. 495–504.
  50. *Overland*, vol. 3, September 1869, p. 265.
  51. *Californian*, vol. 1, no. 1, 28 May 1864, p. 1.
  52. In G. R. Stewart, *Argonaut and exile*, p. 127. 'The Ballad of the emeu—that "Emeusing ballad," Inigo called it—was suggested by the kind kept on exhibition at a resort on the edge of the city.'
  53. For a contemporary description of Woodward's Gardens, see Charles B. Turrill, *California notes*, E. Bosqui & Co., San Francisco, 1876.
  54. F. Gruber, *Illustrated guide and catalogue of Woodward's Gardens*, Francis, Valentine, & Co., Book and Job Printers, 517 Clay Street, San Francisco, 1879, p. 65, Huntington Rare Book (RB 493901).
  55. *Californian*, 4 June 1864, p. 4.
  56. See Hyde, 'The Chinese stereotype', p. 361.
  57. Rufus Wright, *The card players*, 1882. Oil on canvas, Oakland Museum of California, Kahn Collection. See Janice T. Driesbach, *Art of the gold rush*, exhibition catalogue, Oakland Museum of California, University of California Press, 1998, pp. 114–15.
  58. Augustus Baker Peirce, *Knocking about: Being some adventures of Augustus Baker Peirce in Australia*, Mrs. Albert T. Leatherbee (ed.), with an introduction by Edwin Howard Brigham, MD, illustrated by the writer. Oxford University Press, London; Yale University Press, New Haven, 1924, pp. 132–33.
  59. See Frederic G. Kitton, *Dickens and his illustrators: Cruikshank, Seymour, Buss, 'Phiz', Cattermole, Leech, Doyle, Stanfield, Maclise, Tenniel, Frank Stone, Landseer, Palmer, Topham, Marcus Stone, and Luke Fildes*, George Redway, London, 1899, pp. 224–25. Eytinge also rates an entry in *Thieme-Becker*, which singles out his 'Negerdarstellungen' (images of Negroes) as particularly famous. See *Thieme-Becker, Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler*, Leipzig, 1915, vol. 11, p. 144.
  60. Eytinge's depiction of Seth Kinman, Californian frontiersman, appeared first on 3 June 1857 in *Leslie's Illustrated Weekly Newspaper* and is one of only two works by the artist in this magazine to be signed. As Budd Gambee states in his thesis on the cultural significance of the magazine: 'This picture provides the prototype of many similar figures by Eytinge, not only in *Leslie's* but in his later book illustrations, particularly Bret Harte's *The luck of Roaring Camp* and *The heathen Chinees*.' See also 'Budd Leslie Gambee, Jr, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, 1855–1860: Artistic and Technical Operations of a Pioneer Pictorial News Weekly in America', PhD thesis, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1963, p. 250.
  61. *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, supplement, 21 January 1871, p. 324.
  62. Stewart, ill. opp. p. 180. This set of images was apparently a source of great consternation to Harte, so much so that he brought suit against the paper. See also Scharnhorst, "Ways that are dark", pp. 381, 387–88.
  63. Stewart, p. 180.
  64. According to Wikipedia online, the very first newspaper comic strip was the German *Max und Moritz* in 1865. The first American newspaper comic strip was *The little bears* in William Randolph Hearst's *San Francisco Examiner* in 1893. See Wikipedia, viewed June 2005, <[http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comic\\_strip](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comic_strip)>. On the significance of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, see Gambee, p. 250.
  65. In an original set of the cards at The Huntington Library, complete with mailing envelope, this speech bubble appears, but is not found on any of the other copies of the cards in The Huntington's collection. Without the examination of the card by a conservation expert, it is impossible to tell if the bubble has been hand-written in pencil after publication or if it was printed into the original card. See The Huntington Library (RB 17012 and

RB 202490).

66. See Scharnhorst, “‘Ways that are dark’”, p. 381, quoting from *London Daily News*, 21 March 1871, p. 5, cols 1–2.
67. Goodman, pp. xxiii–xxiv.
68. See Ballarat Mechanics’ Institute, viewed 17 March 2008, <<http://www.library.org.au/index.html>>.
69. *The Australasian*, 5 December 1868, p. 710.
70. *ibid.*, p. 722.
71. ‘The Heathen Chinee’, words by Bret Harte, music by Chas. Tournier, S. Brainard’s Sons, Cleveland, 1870, illustration by Vallendar & Co., pl. 107 in Harry T. Peters, *California in stone*, Doubleday, New York, 1935; ‘The Heathen Chinee’; words by Bret Harte, music by F. B., Oliver Ditson & Co., 277 Washington St., Boston, lithography by J. H. Bufford’s Lith., 490 Washn St., Boston, 1870; ‘That Heathen Chinee’ & other poems mostly humorous by F. Bret Harte, author of ‘The Luck of Roaring Camp’ and ‘Sensation Novels Condensed’, the music by Stephen Tucker, composer of Beautiful isle of the sea, John Camden Hotten, 74 & 75, Piccadilly, London: 1871; *The ‘Heathen Chinee’ songster*, Beadle & Co., New York, 1871; *The ‘Heathen Chinee’ musical album: Containing 15 pieces of the most popular songs, mostly comic*, R. M. DeWitt Publisher, 33 Rose St. New York, music by Henry Tucker, 1871; another version with music by Matthias Keller, J. F. Loughlin, Boston, 1871.
72. See the Vallendar & Co. lithograph reproduced in Peters—although its smaller vignette also shows the iconography of pigtail flying from Bill Nye’s punch.
73. ‘In both *Leslie’s Weekly* and the *Musical Album*, significantly enough, Bill Nye targets Ah Sin’s queue, an ornament of honour and male pride; that is, Nye not only pummels Ah Sin, he figuratively emasculates him. In each case, these illustrations fill the gaps and silences in Harte’s poem by portraying overt violence against the Chinese.’ Scharnhorst, “‘Ways that are dark’”, p. 381.
74. See David Tatham, *The lure of the striped pig: The illustration of popular music in America 1820–1870*, Barre, Massachusetts, 1973, p. 25; and Nancy R. Davison, ‘The grand triumphal quick-step; or sheet music covers in America’, in John D. Morse (ed.), *Prints in and of America to 1850*, Winterthur Conference Report 1970, University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, 1970, pp. 264–68.
75. Tatham describes the technique as indicative of the end of the grandiloquent style of sheet music illustration of the 1850s and 1860s, pl. 60, pp. 148–49: Unknown artist, *Flynn of Virginia*, 1870. ‘[T]he lithographer of *Flynn* seeks direct, plain, and immediate communication with any and all viewers in the simple terms of his purposefully rough execution of a singularly unbeautiful subject’, p. 148.
76. Oliver Ditson & Co. was prominent enough to be the subject of at least two histories of the company. See William Arms Fisher, *Notes on music in old Boston*, Oliver Ditson Co., Boston, 1918; and Fisher, *One hundred and fifty years of music publishing in the United States*, Oliver Ditson Co., Boston, 1933.
77. For the most complete history of American music in this period, see Russell Sanjek, *American popular music and its business: The first four hundred years*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1988. The liveliest descriptions of the sheet music trade and its art can be found in Tatham (see note 64 above) and in the many works by renowned sheet music collector Lester Levy, especially his *Grace notes in American history: Popular sheet music from 1820 to 1900*, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1967.
78. ‘*California; or, the feast of gold*. A new comic song, written by Henry Valentine, sung by Messrs. Carrol, Warde, Martin, Mills, and all the principal comic singers, with thunders of applause’, R. MacDonald, 30, Great Sutton Street, Clerkenwell, London, in Clara E. Howard (ed.), *Three pioneer California gold rush songs*, private pub., Menlo Park, California, 1948; and reproduced in Blodgett, p. 81.
79. ‘*The good time’s come at last*’, or *the race to California*. A comic song, written to a Golden Measure. and dedicated to the Master of the Mint by One of the Golden Fleece’, Leoni Lee & Coxhead, London, (n.d.).
80. ‘Musical Bouquet./PULL AWAY CHEERILY! THE GOLD DIGGER’S SONG./written and sung by Harry Lee Carter, in his entertainment of “The Two Lands of Gold”. Also Sung by George Henry Russell, in Mr. Payne’s Popular Entertainment, “A Night in the Lands of Gold.”/Music composed by Henry Russell.’ Musical Bouquet Office, 192, High Holborn; & J. Allen, 20, Warwick Lane, Paternoster Row, London (copyright nos 691, 692) in *California sheet music covers*, The Book Club of California, Keepsake Series, 1959, sheet no. 3. Description by John and Mary Belle Swingle, Berkeley.
81. Swingle, sheet no. 3.
82. Harry Lee Carter produced a booklet called *The two lands of gold, or, the Australian and Californian directory for 1853*, which purported to serve as a guide for immigrants, but was actually a guide to

the panorama and stage show he produced, with illustrations painted (Carter claimed) 'on the spot' by Charles S. James, George Catlin, William Kelly and in Australia by Charles Robinson, 'an Australian Settler'. In the booklet he states that the music was composed by Henry Russell, with words by himself. The final page of the booklet is an advertisement for 'The original copyright songs, by Henry Russell, in Harry Lee Carter's New and highly successful Entertainment, entitled "The Two Lands of Gold"'. See Harry Lee Carter, *Two lands of gold*, with an amusing cover illustration by C. S. James, The Huntington Library.

83. In *The lure of the striped pig*, Tatham mentions Russell's preference for American illustrators: 'As the Songs of Henry Russell, the most popular composer and singer in America in the early 1840s, went through multiple editions here, publishers in his native Britain brought them out as well. In his case the American illustrations were more often adapted, perhaps because he had been so well served by Fitz Hugh Lane and Benjamin Champney.' See Tatham, p. 16. On Russell, see also Sanjek, *American popular music*; and also an excellent thesis by John Stephens, 'Henry Russell in America: Chutzpah and Huzzah', University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1975.
84. Tatham, p.11.
85. Some confusion surrounds Fitz Hugh Lane's name: 'In 2004, researchers in Gloucester found the 1831 letter he sent to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts requesting a name change, not to Fitz Hugh Lane but to Fitz Henry Lane. His petition was granted, but why he did it is still a mystery', Cape Anne Museum, viewed 3 March 2009, <[http://www.capeannhistoricalmuseum.org/fine%20art/fitz\\_hugh\\_lane.htm](http://www.capeannhistoricalmuseum.org/fine%20art/fitz_hugh_lane.htm)>. Most sources still refer to Lane as Fitz Hugh.
86. Lester Levy, *Picture the songs: Lithographs from the sheet music of nineteenth-century America*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1976, p. 1. Levy also makes note of the cultural significance of these images: 'Their inclusion in any history of American art has inherent value, for they represent the art form most readily and reasonably available to people of moderate means.'
87. 'California as it is; Comic song written by Thaddeus W. Meighan, and sung to over fifty thousand persons at American Museum and elsewhere by Pete Morris, The inimitable comic vocalist', Wm. Hall & Son, 239 Broadway, New York, 1849. The final verse, entitled 'MORAL', concludes: 'If you've enough to eat and drink and buy your Sunday clothes,/Don't listen to the gammon that from California blows,/But stay at home and thank your stars, for every hard earned cent,/And if the greenhorns go to dig why colly let 'em went,/If you go why you will see, the elephant, yes, sir ee,/And some little grains of gold that nor no bigger than a flea;/I've just come from California and if any here there be/Who is got that yellow fever they need only look at me,/And I think New York, will suit 'em yes exactly to a T'. In *Three pioneer California gold rush songs*, Huntington Library (RB288510).
88. *He died in California*, by I.B. Woodbury, publisher Oliver Ditson, Boston, 1853. The lyrics were all about missing a verdant, forested home and dying alone in a distant, and apparently hostile, country. Verse 4 is typical: 'Aye, a dream so wild had crossed him,/vision fair, and bright, but brief,/As the raging fever tossed him,-/ But now he sleeps in death;/Thus in distant Sacramento/Sadly died this lonely one,/ And no record, no memento,/Told his fate so sad and lone.'
89. '[A] music publisher could sell a printed march or song for ten to twenty-five cents more if the title page was attractively illustrated.' Levy, *Picture the songs*, p. 2.
90. Peter S. Duval and Matthew Schmitz. *The age of gold: Directions how to get it; with notes (ad lib) by a director to California*, lithograph, Lee & Walker, Philadelphia, c. 1853, in Levy, *Picture the songs*, pp. 106-07.
91. *Hobart Daily Courier*, 23 June 1849. As Monaghan describes it on page 44: 'Along with the California news from New York and London came a new commodity to be sold in the colonies. British publishers were sending bales of printed verses about the gold rush, some set to music. Australian bards immediately began writing their own ditties. Guests at Mrs. Mills' "First Rate" Devonshire House in Hobart played and sang *The age of gold*, *Put money in thy purse*, ... another, *The race to California*, was advertised as "a comic song written to a golden measure."'
92. *The Photographic News*, no. 47, vol. ii, 29 July 1859, p. 245.
93. On sheet music in Australia see Robyn Holmes and Ruth Lee Martin, *The collector's book of sheet music covers*, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 2001. The image on the cover of *News from home quadrille* is also reproduced in Verona Burgess's 'Picking up a tune: Researching the provenance of Australian traditional music', *NLA News*, vol. xii,

- no. 3, December 2001, p. 12, and in the 'Pictures Catalogue' online, National Library of Australia (nla.pic-an8930071).
94. Kerr lists the title as *The squatter's hut – news from home*; p. 527. George Baxter (1804–1867) was the inventor of a colour printing method made from blocks and plates, and using oil-based inks. Baxter prints, as a more elegant style of chromolithography, are now highly sought-after collectors' items. See James Cordingley, *Early colour printing and George Baxter: A monograph*, North-Western Polytechnic, London, 1949; Harold George Clarke, *The centenary Baxter book*, Sign of the Dove with the Griffin, Royal Leamington Spa, 1936; and C. T. Courtney Lewis, *The picture printer of the nineteenth century, George Baxter, 1804–1867*, S. Low, Marston & Co., London, 1911.
  95. On Melville, see DAA, p. 526–27, and Tim Bonyhady, *The colonial image: Australian painting 1800–1880*, Ellsyd Press, Chippendale, New South Wales, 1986, pp. 58–59.
  96. This iconography of separation, although already present in the gold-rush illustrations of the 1850s, became particularly pronounced once the 'nostalgic perspective', to use Jan Driesbach's term, comes to the fore 20 years after the fact of rugged goldmining conditions. Paintings such as Ernest Narjot's *The Forty-Niner* (1881) and *Miners: A moment at rest (gold rush camp)* (1882) reinforced this sentimental interpretation. See Driesbach, pp. 105–08; and Claire Perry, 'The golden dream', in her *Pacific arcadia: Images of California 1600–1915*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1999, pp. 50–58.
  97. Mary Kay Duggan, 'Music publishing and printing in San Francisco before the earthquake & fire of 1906', *The Kemble Occasional*, no. 24, Autumn 1980, p. 1.
  98. In *A collection of songs with words and music*, a bound volume at The Huntington Library (HEH RB 55565), the original cover page reads: 'The California Pioneers/A Song/Respectfully inscribed to Mrs. J. Emerson Sweetser./Words & Music by Dr. M.A. Richter/Published & Sold by ATWILL & Co. in San-Francisco./N.B. The First Piece of Music Pub'd. In Cal a.' On the last page of music it reads 'Copy right secured in the U.S. District Court of Calif<sup>a</sup> March 19, 1852'. Joseph F. Atwill was an important figure in the early cultural life of San Francisco; his music shop served as a meeting place for entertainers looking for work in the new city and his publishing ventures brought him in contact with businessmen, artists and musicians alike. See Frank Soulé, *et al.* (eds), *The annals of San Francisco*, D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1855, pp. 781–83; Levy, *Grace notes*, p. 52; R. Stevenson, 'California pioneer sheet music publishers and publications', *Inter-American Music Review*, vol. viii, no. 1, 1986, pp. 1–7; and Duggan, pp. 1–8.
  99. Little is known of Quirot, although he appears as the lithographer for many of the California letter-sheets sent home by the early miners, with images that provide some of the most iconic depictions of the first rush of events in 1849 and 1850. On the letter-sheets, see Baird's *California's pictorial letter sheets*. On Quirot and other early California lithographers, see the landmark study by Harry T. Peters, *California in stone*, Doubleday, New York, 1935.
  100. Stevenson, p. 1.
  101. Matthias Gray, who bought out Atwill's shop in 1860, became the leading San Francisco music publisher throughout the 1860s. As Duggan makes clear, Gray 'hired the finest engravers, lithographers, and woodcut artists in San Francisco for the covers of his sheet music', some of them in full colour and others with actual photographs pasted to the sheet. See Duggan, pp. 4–6. On Gray, see also *The Bay of San Francisco: The metropolis of the Pacific coast and its history*, vol. ii, Lewis Publishing Co., Chicago, 1892, p. 403.
  102. 'Far from being a distant and alien antipodean culture, the colonies rapidly imported the latest musical fashions, either directly from Europe or via the American circuit.' Holmes and Martin, p. 49.
  103. In notes at the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, collector Deirdre Chisholm states that in the 1870s, Johnson was 'heavily involved in amateur theatricals' (registrar's notes, consulted 17 February 2003); Johnson's biography states that he was known as a theatre critic as well. See ADB, vol. 9, p. 495.
  104. Despite Massett's contemporary fame as a beloved eccentric, his persistent acts of self-promotion and his very real contributions to popular music and theatrical performance in nineteenth-century America, his biography does not appear in *The new Grove dictionary of American music* (1986) nor in several other sources where one would expect him to be included. The best biographical sources are still Lawrence Estavan (ed.), *San Francisco theatre research*, vol. 1, WPA Project 8386, San Francisco, May 1938; and R. Stevenson, pp. 7–15. The latter work includes the music, with a reproduction of the covers, of his songs *Clear the way!* and *Learning to walk*.

105. A delightful recounting of this event can be found at The Virtual Museum of the City of San Francisco, viewed 18 November 2003, <<http://www.sfmuseum.org/hist/chron1.html>>.
106. *Biobooks presents Stephen C. Massett in 'The first California troubadour'*, prologue by Joseph A. Sullivan, Oakland, 9 September 1954.
107. William T. Porter founded the original *Spirit of the Times* in 1831 as a humorous weekly and 'sporting magazine' that became well-known for establishing a style known as 'Old Southwest Humor', an early example of 'local color' writing. Porter's version of the title continued until 1861, while he established another edition, with the same title, in 1856 along with publisher George Wilkes; this version ran for only two years, until 1858. See 'Spirit of the Southern Frontier', viewed 17 February 2004, <<http://writing2.richmond.edu/spirit/about.html>>.
108. Estavan, vol. 1, pp. 54–55.
109. Stevenson, p. 8.
110. *ibid.*
111. Several resources on Massett recount that 'Jeems of Pipesville' was born in 1843, after the journalist William T. Porter, having heard Massett sing at the Olympic Theatre dubbed him 'Colonel Pipes'; Massett then took up the name of 'Jeems Pipes' when writing correspondences for Porter's newspaper. See Estavan, vol. 1, p. 28.
112. An article in the *Evening Bulletin*, 6 June 1896, recounts how the actor Edwin Booth stayed there in dubious circumstances: 'With Charley Tippet, Stephen C. Massett and Dave Anderson, young Booth kept bachelor's hall at a place out on the Mission Road called Pipesville ... The orgies that took place in that tip-tilted dwelling can be better imagined than described, when the license of the times is taken into account'; quoted in Estavan's WPA Theatre Project 1938, vol. 1, p. 47. In the WPA Theatre Project volume on Edwin Booth, the editor notes that Booth and his companion David Anderson lived in 'a small house near that curious and fantastic place known as Pipesville' (vol. 4, first series, p. 92). A later article in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, 18 June 1916, describes 'Pipesville' more nostalgically, and states that it was 'in the district now bounded by Market, Seventh, Eighth and Mission streets'. This article is reprinted online, viewed 4 March 2004, <<http://www.zpub.com/sf50/sf/hgsto1.htm>>.
113. Reproduced in Kathleen Neils Conzen, 'Saga of families' in *The Oxford history of the American West*, New York, 1994, p. 322; and in Blodgett, p.99. Another version of the same iconography appears on one of the pictorial letter-sheets produced by Hutchings in his *The pictorial news letter, for the steamer golden age*, 20 April 1858, no. 3; reproduced in *A sampler of California's pictorial letter-sheets 1849–1869*, The Zamorano Club, Los Angeles, 1980.
114. R. Stevenson, pp. 9, 15.
115. On Hutchings, see Chapter 1, endnote no. 25.
116. *Hutchings' Illustrated California Magazine*, vol. 2, 1857, p. 191.
117. Printed in Massett's autobiography, 'Drifting about', p. 258.
118. *ibid.*, p. 365.
119. *ibid.*, p. 262.
120. *ibid.*, p. 267.
121. George Loder was another Englishman whose musical works and activities as a conductor and an impresario became better known in America and Australia than in England. He conducted the American premiere of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in May 1846 with the New York Philharmonic, and in 1852, was the conductor for the San Francisco Philharmonic Concert Orchestra. In 1856 he went to Australia as the tour manager for Madame Anna Bishop and in Melbourne worked as conductor with Lyster's opera troupe. After returning to London in 1860, he took a second trip to Australia, where he worked in Melbourne and Adelaide. After a long illness, he died in Adelaide on 15 July 1868 and is buried there. See *DNB*, vol. xxxiv, pp. 56–57; and several entries in George C. D. Odell, *Annals of the New York stage*, vol. v, New York, 1931.
122. 'Drifting about', p. 268.
123. *ibid.*
124. *ibid.*, p. 293.
125. *ibid.*, p. 271.
126. *ibid.*, p. 275. For a fascinating discussion of the importance of transparencies in Australian visual culture, see Anita Callaway's excellent study of popular sources of imagery, *Visual ephemera*.
127. Massett had already published *Take back the ring, dear Jamie* in Sacramento in 1854, and it was at that time advertised as a song for Anna Bishop, so Bishop had included it as part of her repertoire in America, when Massett had probably courted her favour. Interestingly, the song itself, with a lettered-only cover, was lithographed in Sacramento by B. F. Butler (1795–1858), who would later become an important lithographer in San Francisco. One of Butler's best works is the cover for *San Francisco quadrilles*

- (1852), published by Atwill & Co., which includes a view of San Francisco Bay, a view of miners in the goldfields and a depiction of the personification of California with a grizzly bear, now the emblem of the new state. See Mary Kay Duggan, 'Nineteenth century California sheet music', viewed 14 May 2005, <<http://www.sims.berkeley.edu/~mkduggan/art.html>>.
128. 'My bud in heaven' by Stephen Massett; as sung by Madame Anna Bishop; pianoforte accompaniment newly edited by C. E. Horsley', J. R. Clarke, Sydney. See National Library of Australia, Petherick Reading Room, Music Collection (MUS N mb 784.3061 M415); reproduced at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla/mus-an6056352>>.
  129. For a reproduction in colour of the cover of *Up in a balloon galop*, see the National Library of Australia, Digital Collections for Music (nla.mus-an22610669-s1-v).
  130. Clarke's obituary appeared, in identical words, in the *Sydney Evening News*, *Town and Country Journal*, *Illustrated Sydney News*, 13 July 1893, and in *The Freeman's Journal*, 22 July 1893. See National Library of Australia, 'Death of an old citizen: Mr Jacob Richard Clarke' (JAFp BIBLIO F 8319).
  131. See Kevin Quinlan's entry for Mason in *DAA*, pp. 520–21.
  132. Holmes and Martin, p. 54.
  133. 'Gentle Annie. Sung by The Christy Minstrels', J. R. Clarke, Sydney, c. 1858–64. Music Collection, National Library of Australia (nla.mus-an7853430-s1-v).
  134. According to an article about minstrelsy in Australia, this group visited in the 1860s and even inspired the forming of a NSW Christy Minstrels. 'Minstrelsy in Australia: A brief overview', viewed 19 March 2008, <<http://www.nugrape.net/minstrel.htm>>.
  135. 'Australian flowers; impromptu for the piano forte, by Miska Hauser. "Dedicated to Miss Aldis"', J. R. Clarke, Sydney, 1857. Music Collection, National Library of Australia (nla.mus-an24847299-s1-v).
  136. On Thomas, see *DAA*, pp. 788–90.
  137. 'Jeems Pipes of Pipesville', *Greater Los Angeles*, vol. ii, no. 8, 20 February 1898, p. 4; and 'Another chatty letter from "Jeems Pipes of Pipesville"', in the same publication, vol. ii, no. 21, 22 May 1897, p. 3. Truman introduced Massett's first letter with the following provocative note:  

A sweetly-scented letter came to the editor of GREATER LOS ANGELES a few days ago, with the coat-of-arms of the Windsor hotel in New York. It

was from Steve Massett, an old 49er, who was for many years the only recognized 'Beau' of the Pacific coast, and the first 46er who dared to wear a nail-keg hat in California. He was a handsome fellow of about twenty in those days, with ambrosial locks and an eagle eye, and he was a troubadour who could write his own beautiful verses and compose his own sweet music, and he was a most charming all-round fellow, who could play Gottschalk's Lullaby or Lost Hope and sing a song as tenderly as Harrison Millard.
138. *Greater Los Angeles*, 22 May 1897, p. 3.
  139. *New York Times*, 9 October 1898, p. 10, col. 2.
  140. *Argus*, 17 September 1895; viewed 29 March 2004, <<http://www.twainquotes.com>>.
  141. Mark Twain, *Following the equator*, American Publishing Company, Hartford, 1897, p. 129.
  142. See M. E. W. Sherwood, *An epistle to posterity: Being rambling recollections of many years of my life*, Harper, New York, 1897, p. 192.
  143. *Overland*, September 1902.
  144. Gary Scharnhorst discusses the *Overland* Bret Harte issue in his "Ways that are dark", p. 379.
  145. Claire Perry in *Pacific arcadia* discusses these artists and images as part of her chapter on 'Urban visions', pp. 182–88. For images of the Chinese in Australia, see 'Multicultural Australia', 'PictureAustralia', National Library of Australia, viewed 4 April 2004, <<http://www.pictureaustralia.org/index.html>>.
  146. On images of San Francisco's Chinatown, see Perry, pp. 184–88.
  147. In the Ron Blum Collection of Rose's Stereoscopic Views of Australia Federation Celebrations, 1901, Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia (nla.pic-an22482025).
  148. David Clayton Phillips, 'Art for Industry's Sake: Halftone Technology, Mass Photography and the Social Transformation of American Print Culture, 1880–1920', PhD thesis, chapter 4, section 11, Yale University, New Haven, 1996, viewed 14 April 2004, <<http://dphillips.web.wesleyan.edu/halftone/chap4.html#sec3>>.