

# Australia's Peril

## (The Warning)

### Henry Lawson

1905

We must suffer, husband and father, we must suffer, daughter and son,  
For the wrong we have taken part in and the wrong that we have seen done.  
Let the bride of frivolous fashion, and of ease, be ashamed and dumb,  
For I tell you the nations shall rule us who have let their children come!

How shall Australia escape it - we in the South and alone  
Who have taken the sword for no right of England and none of our own?  
(Can we bring back the husbands and fathers, can we bring the lovers and sons?  
From the Dead to the homes we have ruined with the fire of our murdering guns?)

Who shall aid and protect us when the blood-streaked dawn we meet?  
Will England, the hated of nations, whose existence depends on her fleet?  
Who, because of the deer-parks and game-runs where her wheat-fields and pastures  
should be,  
Must bring food for her herded thousands and shepherd it over the sea?

The beak of the British Octopus, or the Bosses within our reach  
Who spend the hot days on the Mountains or summer at Manly Beach!  
The thousands of paltry swindlers who are fathoms beneath our scorn -  
Or the army of brave sons grown from the children who should have been born!

The wealth you have won has been wasted on trips to the English Rome,  
On costly costumes from Paris, and titles and gewgaws from "home".  
Shall a knighthood frighten Asia when she comes with the hate of hell?  
Will the motor-launch race the torpedo, or the motor-car outspeed the shell?

Keep the wealth you have won from the cities, spend the wealth you have won on the  
land,  
Save the floods that run into the ocean - save the floods that sink into the sand!  
Make farms fit to live on, build workshops and technical schools for your sons;  
Keep the wealth of the land in Australia - make your own cloth, machines, and guns!

Clear out the Calico Jimmy, the nigger, the Chow, and his pals;  
Be your foreword for years: Irrigation. Make a network of lakes and canals!  
See that your daughters have children, and see that Australia is home,  
And so be prepared, a strong nation, for the storm that most surely must come.