

## FLOATING WORLDS: ÉMIGRÉ POETRY AND BRITISH CULTURE

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You are going out, Micawber, to this distant clime, to strengthen, not to weaken, the connexion between yourself and Albion.

—Mrs. Micawber to Mr. Micawber,  
Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*<sup>1</sup>

Towards the end of *David Copperfield* (1849–50), as he visits the Micawbers's emigrant ship, about to embark for Australia, Charles Dickens's protagonist muses on the "soil of England" inadvertently carried to the Antipodes on the boots of emigrant ploughmen, along with "samples of . . . soot" transported on the skin of blacksmiths.<sup>2</sup> Dirt and soot, embedded in clothing and bodily crevices, mark a notably working-class connection between homeland and colony, and point as well to the deeply engrained, residual traces one might expect to find, in one form or another, on all emigrants: the literal and figurative detritus of one's native land.<sup>3</sup>

In what follows, I look at traces of British culture in the poetry of Victorian emigrants, with a focus on poems composed and published on passenger ships *en route* from Britain to Australia. Like Victorian settler colonialism more generally, Victorian emigrant poetry was often intentionally imitative; British emigrants, historians have shown, were more likely to reproduce their own culture abroad than adapt to another. James Belich argues that a vast "cloning system" lay at the heart of nineteenth-century Anglophone settlerism, whereby legal and governmental institutions familiar to the British at home were reproduced abroad.<sup>4</sup> David Cannadine has demonstrated that even those colonies wishing to move toward more democratic and anti-hierarchical social structures still maintained "social and ceremonial cultures that were much more conservative and inegalitarian" and that linked them, structurally, back to Britain.<sup>5</sup> Poetry, I argue, played a necessary role in this work of cultural reproduction, even as it provided imaginative spaces for emigrants to reorient themselves spatially, as they traversed the globe, and politically, as they became colonial subjects. Dickens's

emigrant ploughmen carried with them not only English soil, but nostalgic relationships to British culture. That culture was accessed, replicated, and modified in part via poetry: the familiar rhythms, words, and sounds of home.<sup>6</sup>

The publications I examine here, compiled from newspapers printed aboard Victorian ships headed to the colonies, precede emigrant interactions with foreign lands or colonized others. Onboard for upwards of three months, British settlers to Australia occupied transitional, in-between spaces. In departing from their homeland, emigrants found themselves already “[not] exactly British,” as Elleke Boehmer writes of British settler colonials more generally.<sup>7</sup> Yet they were not quite colonialists either, and they could only anticipate the experiences that lay ahead. Some of the poems I read here imagine colonial encounters, but shipboard publications more often lead elsewhere: for example, to the ambivalences of geographic displacement, the anxieties of abandoning home for unknown futures abroad. Of course narratives of Victorian settlerism cannot be imagined outside British imperial history; in Saree Makdisi’s words, “Anglo settler-colonial experience[s] would not have been the same, or even possible, without the larger structure of British imperialism out of which it emerged.”<sup>8</sup> That said, my attention here remains on the ambivalences of Victorian emigrant identity, visible in the poetry of those in the process of becoming British colonialists. Though necessarily implicated in greater networks of imperial power, the individuals whose poems I read generally imagine themselves without authority, reflecting what the authors of *The Empire Writes Back* call “the backward-looking impotence of exile.”<sup>9</sup> Through parodic revisions of canonical British poems, emigrants discovered strategies for mediating such feelings of impotence, for exerting control over the in-between states of transition. Not simply a mode of cultural reproduction, then, emigrant poetry engages directly with the uneasy differences between core and periphery, European and emigrant.

My archive of emigrant poetry allows me to depart in two important ways from most recent work in Victorian colonial studies. First, the poems I discuss were written by individuals who under different circumstances wouldn’t have been likely to consider themselves literary—may never have written at all, and would not have published what they’d written if they had. Their poems by and large reflect a playful literary attitude, taking pleasure in works patently imitative and, at times, aesthetically awkward. Scholarship on the poetry of Victorian colonialism has for the most part gravitated toward canonical figures such as Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Alfred Tennyson, poets who

themselves never ventured beyond the European continent. There's much to be gained in widening that view, considering the place of poetry within the day to day of actual British emigration.<sup>10</sup>

Second, with rare exception the novel has occupied center stage in calibrating nineteenth-century British engagements with the world. Edward Said's claim at the opening of *Culture and Imperialism*—that the novel stands as “the aesthetic object whose connection to the expanding societies of Britain and France is particularly interesting to study”—reflects the field of Victorian colonial studies more broadly.<sup>11</sup> Scholars have recently begun to address global Anglophone poetry, but that work—by Jahan Ramazani, for example—has focused almost exclusively on the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, rather than looking back at nineteenth-century movements toward what might now be called transcultural thinking.<sup>12</sup> Victorian emigrants heading to Australia were themselves between continents and between cultures. The poetry they published *en route* to the colonies reflects their persistent engagement with both British poetic traditions and emerging diasporic, emigrant identities. Their work points as well to the ways poetry offered British emigrants vehicles for cultural mediation unavailable in prose writing: specifically, by echoing, revising, and parodying popular lyrics and songs recognizable to nearly all nineteenth-century British subjects.

#### I. NEWSPAPERS AT SEA

Emigration from Britain to the colonies in Australia picked up significantly after gold was discovered there in 1851. An 1852 essay in the British journal *Leisure Hour* notes that, until recently, “[t]hought recoiled from [Australia] as a vast natural jail, expressly adapted by its position at the antipodes . . . to receive the outcasts of society.” But, it continues, “[t]he lapse of a few years has wrought a wonderful change in popular sentiment. . . . A population of free immigrants has rapidly poured in, to occupy rich grass-lands, and fertile grain-soil, transferring thither our domestic habits, commercial enterprise, laws, institutions, language, literature, and religion.”<sup>13</sup> The result of determined social engineering on the part of colonial administrators, these immigrants were on average more literate than the British at home; even the men and women who benefited from assisted emigration tended to be selected from the upper working classes and were more likely to have had at least some education.<sup>14</sup> In 1861 the colony of Victoria could boast an 89 percent literacy rate among its European

men—numbers far higher than those of London or any other British colony. Women, who made up roughly two fifths of the population in 1861, were 78 percent literate.<sup>15</sup>

By the 1860s it was common for the ships carrying these emigrants to print newspapers. A writer for *Chambers's Journal* explains in 1867 that “in not a few of our large, long-voyaging clipper-ships, it is customary . . . to publish a weekly newspaper. Some person of talent among the passengers undertakes to edit it; its literary contributors are volunteers from all quarters of the ship . . . the captain generally favours it with quotations from his Log . . . and the medical officer promulgates in it his bulletins of health.”<sup>16</sup> Short works of serial fiction were not uncommon; and in many cases fully one third of the content, and sometimes more, was poetry.<sup>17</sup> Earlier emigrant ships had circulated newspapers as handwritten manuscripts.<sup>18</sup> As shipboard printing became more commonplace, subscriptions were taken out among passengers for bound editions, keepsakes for subscribers printed after ships reached their destination.<sup>19</sup>

Before they became keepsakes, however, the journals were important in framing the experience of emigration. Insofar as passengers at sea had few ways of knowing what was happening outside their ship—“cut off for the time from communication with the great world,” one contributor puts it in 1870—the ship journals offered emigrants local news, documenting the goings on of their isolated community: this “small world in which we are now moving,” writes one journal in 1860; “our own floating world,” writes another, “which, for the time being, is all the world to us.”<sup>20</sup> Drawing from the traditions of British periodical printing (including serialization, the mixing of genres, and the anonymity of contributors), the shipboard journals’ foremost duty, attested to in editorials and letters printed in their pages, seems to have been alleviating the monotony of ocean travel (the 1875 *Sobraon Occasional* “wishes to encourage the fine arts of sea-life—arts of killing time, of grumbling, of gossiping, of chaffing”).<sup>21</sup> In their negotiation of British literary traditions, however, emigrant ship compositions also contributed to the necessary work of locating passengers both physically and psychologically as they approached the colonial periphery.

We might imagine the emigrant ship as a community in transit, connected not only by a shared destination and the conditions of the journey, but also, for many on board, by common socioeconomic motivations for emigration. Benedict Anderson’s understanding of an imagined “national consciousness” coming into being “via print and paper” applies here in microcosm.<sup>22</sup> Ship newspapers linked

individuals on board by means of a shared, if imagined, *emigrant* consciousness, both reflecting and shaping the enthusiasms, hopes, dreams, and anxieties accompanying the move from home to abroad. The anonymity of most contributors lends to the newspapers' sense of shared purpose: less individual viewpoints, the essays, stories, and poems published on board reflect communal experiences. In most circumstances, we cannot know whether their authors were male or female, privileged or poor. And while the newspapers depict some of the more grueling elements of long ocean voyages—deaths at sea, violent storms, seasickness, contagious diseases, close quarters—they more commonly offer a brighter, idealized version of emigration.<sup>23</sup> By and large, that is to say, the ship newspapers project a *beau ideal* of life in transit, constructing versions of emigrant experience that might replace the otherwise alienating and painful realities of life at sea. When at their journeys' end passengers paid the subscription fee for a bound edition of the ship journal, they were getting not just a keepsake or a marker of their time at sea, but an important alternative to displacement, physical pain, and emotional trauma.

Poetry occupied an especially significant role in this process of reframing emigrant experience. Opening a ship journal from the 1850s or 60s, one might encounter a poem celebrating Florence Nightingale, a short lyric on seasickness, a gossipy work entitled “Sketches by Booze,” or a “Lament of the Single Ladies,” voicing the frustrations of women on board.<sup>24</sup> Predictably, one also finds passages from Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s “Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner,” and various other poems on sea travel, homesickness, and exploration.<sup>25</sup> One journal, *The Pioneer*, offers a log of the ship’s journey in tetrameter couplets:

The 16th of November at four o'clock  
We left the South West India Dock,  
The fog cleared off, and with the tide  
The Thames embraced his peerless bride.<sup>26</sup>

One may at first read these poems simply as entertaining filler, but recent scholarship on poetry and Victorian periodicals offers an alternative framework. Linda K. Hughes notes two important functions for poetry in the mainstream Victorian periodical press: first, poems “could enhance the cultural value and prestige of the periodical itself”; and second, they “could mediate the miscellaneousness and ephemerality” of the newspaper’s content.<sup>27</sup> Poetry, then, was vital to Victorian periodical culture in ways that modern reading practices have tended to obscure.

I propose three characteristics especially constitutive of Victorian emigrant poetry, and I examine each in turn in the sections that follow. First, poetry in ship newspapers regularly turned to a revisionary mode, rewriting well-known poems and poetic forms from the perspective of emigration and colonialism. Building on the rich British tradition of literary revision and parody, emigrant poets actively borrowed metrical forms and rewrote canonical lyrics, often in parodic registers. I follow Margaret A. Rose in taking a broad view of parody, a mode encompassing not only mockery but also loving imitation, sympathy with the original work.<sup>28</sup> Parody, as Carolyn Williams argues, “is a rhetoric of temporality, projecting the difference between a ‘before’ and an ‘after’ as part of its structure.”<sup>29</sup> For Victorian emigrants, *before* and *after* marked not only a temporal relationship between old and new, but differences between home and abroad, British and colonial, domestic and foreign. Poetic revision and parodic structure in the ship journals, that is, may be read as an index of shifting identifications, denoting the transition of those on board away from an easy or uncomplicated relationship to national traditions.

Second, emigrant poems often inhabit a structure of nostalgia (from the Greek, the longing to return home). Both “a sentiment of loss and displacement,” as Svetlana Boym suggests, as well as “a romance with one’s own fantasy,” nostalgia often inspires the emigrant’s turn to parody: parody, we might say, is a productive way of negotiating nostalgia.<sup>30</sup> The emigrant nostalgic casts herself forward, spatially and temporally, toward the colony, all the while glancing back, with mixed feelings, at what she’s left behind. Historians have described British emigrants alternately as having an “umbilical attachment” to their place of birth and, by the end of the nineteenth century, as developing various forms of “colonial nationalism[s],” resistance both to the British government and to imported British culture.<sup>31</sup> The nostalgic poems I read here may be imagined as a mid-point between these two historical models, demonstrating both imagined belonging to an originary (British) homeland *and* departure from that culture. Ship poetry, I argue, provided ways for emigrants to imagine colonial identities as neither umbilical nor fully independent: strategies for becoming colonial subjects without abandoning nostalgic attachments to home.

Lastly, Victorian emigrant poems express concern for the place of culture, and poetry especially, in the colonies. The British press, quick through the 1850s to encourage emigration among those “willing and skilled to work at useful employments,” also warned that “the colonies are still in a state in which the most robust in body make their way

best.”<sup>32</sup> When the English poet Richard Hengist Horne emigrated to Melbourne in 1852 to dig for gold, he publicly distanced himself from his identity as a poet, writing in a letter to the colony’s primary newspaper, “I never thought of coming out to Australia as a man of letters, but as one possessing active energies and a very varied experience. I did not wish to exercise any abstract thinking, nor to write either poetry or prose, but to *do* something. . . . This Colony does not desire literature, or the fine arts at present, and I do not desire to contribute to them.”<sup>33</sup> To emigrate in the mid-Victorian period, then, was to risk the loss of literary culture—which is to say, the loss of British culture altogether—and emigrant poems voice real concern about this possibility.

## II. PARODY AT SEA

I’ll begin with a mostly light-hearted parody, published in the *Rodney World* aboard the ship *Rodney* on her 1885 voyage from London to Melbourne.

Come into the boat, my lads,  
For the strong north wind has flown;  
Come into the boat, my lads,  
I sit on the thwart alone,  
And soon on the sea, we’ll be wafted abroad;  
Tho’ we pull, we shall never be blown.

For the good ship scarcely moves,  
And white sails flapping on high.  
The mate, he turns into the bunk he loves,  
For scarce there’s a cloud in the sky,  
He lays himself down in the bunk he loves,  
To have forty winks, or he’d die.

Come, lads of the *Rodney*, be not like girls.  
Come hither, your luncheon is done.  
The ship in the distance, like glimmer of pearls,  
Be our goal, and worthy a one.  
Come down, little Cohn, with your beautiful curls,  
And row in the blazing sun.<sup>34</sup>

Stuck at sea without wind to carry their sails, the young lads of the *Rodney* decide to row a smaller boat over to a nearby vessel, “the ship in the distance.” The goal is simply to break the monotony of the day. The ship in the distance glimmers, mirage-like: a worthy destination, if for no reason other than its proximity and the relief it offers from

mind-numbing, sleep-inducing tedium. But the sailors soon find themselves in trouble halfway between the two ships when a trade wind finally picks up, setting the *Rodney* on its way. For a horrifying moment it seems their ship will leave them behind, until finally it stops to wait for their return:

She is stopping, our ship, so sweet;  
She is waiting for us a-head;  
We never will own we're beat,  
Tho' we all will go early to bed.<sup>35</sup>

What might be lost to the modern reader, but would have been heard loud and clear in the nineteenth century, is this poem's playful rewriting of Tennyson's "Come into the Garden, Maud," one of the most celebrated lyrics of the period. Tennyson was among the most parodied of Victorian poets; Walter Hamilton's 1884 collection of *Parodies of the Works of English and American Authors* opens with a section on the poet laureate, whose every work seems to have inspired a parodic rewriting.<sup>36</sup> The original "Come into the Garden, Maud," part of Tennyson's 1855 long poem *Maud*, would have been recognized by most passengers as the model for the ship parody:

Come into the garden, Maud,  
For the black bat, night, has flown,  
Come into the garden, Maud,  
I am here at the gate alone;  
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,  
And the musk of the rose is blown.<sup>37</sup>

"Come into the Garden, Maud" was published regularly on its own as an isolated lyric. Within the larger context of *Maud's* narrative, the poem serves as the pinnacle of the speaker's delusional, likely imagined romance with his object of desire, Maud. The tone is bitter-sweet, apprehensive even, anticipating violence to come (the speaker and Maud's brother duel immediately after, resulting in the brother's death) and the collapse of the speaker's romantic fantasy. The differences between the playful, jocular "Come into the boat, my lads" and Tennyson's longing and ultimately tragic lyric are severe.

Those differences, of course, are part of what make the latter poem both humorous and interesting. We might, for example, notice the "woodbine spices . . . wafted abroad" in Tennyson's lyric that become in the ship poem the sailors themselves, "wafted abroad." The two poems' sonic and structural resonances foreground the differences in

their content: foreground, among other things, the differences between *Maud's* domestic, quintessentially English garden and the unforgiving sea of the emigrant ship. Consider the following two stanzas (Tennyson first, followed by the ship poem), which align an imagined romantic idyll—the hero's wished-for tryst with Maud—with the labor of the sailors in their small boat:

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet  
That whenever a March-wind sighs  
He sets the jewel-print of your feet  
In violets blue as your eyes,  
To the woody hollows in which we meet  
And the valleys of Paradise.<sup>38</sup>

In the sails of the ship there comes so sweet  
The faintest of trade wind sighs;  
While, in the boat, all wetting our feet,  
The water commences to rise—  
And bailing her out, in this tropical heat,  
Is certainly not Paradise.<sup>39</sup>

Tennyson's lines imagine a sympathetic relationship between Maud and the English landscape so profound that violets the color of Maud's eyes spring from paths she wanders. The ship poem highlights instead the sailors' dislocation from the natural world: their misfortune at being separated from the *Rodney* at just the moment a trade wind picks up, and stranded in a boat slowly filling with water.

"She is sailing, our ship!" cry the sailors, "'Tis clear / She'll leave us alone to our fate."<sup>40</sup> I want to suggest that the *Rodney*, the departing ship—ship of state, mother ship—stands for a version of imagined abandonment against which the poem's form struggles. Not only will the ship wait for her sailors to return ("She is stopping, our ship, so sweet; / She is waiting for us a-head"), those sailors will carry along with them the cultural structures of their homeland: aesthetic forms, like *Maud's* meter and rhyme patterns, whose iterations will maintain connections to the homes they've left behind. "Come into the boat, my lads" frames with a knowing, humorous style the traumatic separation between home and abroad, British culture and an unknown colonial life. Through parodic echo and emendation, the ship poem establishes a nostalgic relationship to Tennyson's original lyric, and suggests strategies for overcoming feelings of abandonment and isolation. Parodies of Tennyson published back home, such as those in Hamilton's 1884 collection, would necessarily have functioned in different registers,

given the absence of the specific context—the emigrant ship itself—to make sense of the parodic frame. That so many emigrants turned to parodic rewriting in the ship journals points both to the larger culture of Victorian parody, of which their poems were a part, and to the specific uses of parody within the context of emigration and colonization.

Another style of parodic imitation might be found in the *Fiery Star Gazette*, a journal printed in 1863 on a voyage from Cork (via London) to Brisbane. An imitation of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's 1855 *Hiawatha*, the *Fiery Star* poem makes explicit its connection to Longfellow in its title: "Lines After the Style of Hiawatha."

From the shores of dear old England,  
From the mighty town of London,  
Sailed forth our godly vessel,  
Sailed forth upon the ocean;  
To contend with storms and tempests,  
And in triumph bear us onwards  
To the distant Port of Brisbane—  
To the colony of Queensland.<sup>41</sup>

Though originally published across the Atlantic, *Hiawatha* had captured the mid-Victorian British imagination. According to *Chambers's Journal* in 1856, Longfellow was "the most popular poet living," and *Hiawatha*, "America's first written epic."<sup>42</sup> At least one British critic found Longfellow's meter especially suited to his theme—"In it, we hear, as it were, the swaying of trees, the whirr of wings, the pattering of leaves, the trickling of water"—but more delighted in its parodic iterability.<sup>43</sup> Not only in America and Britain, but in Australia too, parodies of *Hiawatha* proliferated. The *South Australian Register*, for example, notes that the poem "has created quite a furor amongst the satirical parodists," and reprints a San Francisco paper's metrical report on court proceedings:

In the Mayor's Court this morning,  
Monday morning, blue and blear-eyed,  
Blear-eyed soakers from the lock-up,  
Came like Falstaff's ragged army[.]<sup>44</sup>

Unlike this particular parody, however, which attaches Longfellow's trochaic tetrameter to material entirely dissociated from the original poem, the ship parody—"Lines After the Style of Hiawatha"—edges close enough to *Hiawatha* itself to raise the interpretive and political stakes of its publication.

*Hiawatha* concludes dramatically with the Native American chief retreating from earth by canoe as the white man, bearing Christianity, comes to usurp his power.<sup>45</sup> Longfellow strains to present the Europeans' arrival in North America as benign and even beneficent, to celebrate a moment that from other vantages reads as tragedy:

And the evening sun descending  
Set the clouds on fire with redness,  
Burned the broad sky, like a prairie,  
Left upon the level water  
One long track and trail of splendor,  
Down whose stream, as down a river,  
Westward, westward Hiawatha  
Sailed into the fiery sunset,  
Sailed into the purple vapors,  
Sailed into the dusk of evening.

And the people from the margin  
Watched him floating, rising, sinking,  
Till the birch canoe seemed lifted  
High into that sea of splendor,  
Till it sank into the vapors  
Like the new moon slowly, slowly  
Sinking in the purple distance.<sup>46</sup>

Hiawatha sails toward the descending sun, conscious of his people's eminent decline. His death participates in a larger Victorian narrative trope of dying Indians that, according to Kate Flint, "found resonances in a British readership well prepared to celebrate its capacity for compassion at the loss both of a specific people and of an unrecapturable version of preurban society."<sup>47</sup>

In borrowing both the *Hiawatha* form and the specific language of sailing toward a distant horizon (echoing even Longfellow's anaphoric "Sailed into" with his own "Sailed forth"), the poet on board the *Fiery Star* implicitly places his fellow passengers within a colonizing narrative, projecting their personal experiences of shipboard travel onto the map of European expansion:

Then arose the mighty east wind,  
Rushing, roaring, from the eastward,  
Raised on high, the surging billows,  
Blew the spray into our faces.  
Stowed, or reefed, was all our canvas,  
Close reefed was the mizzen-topsail,  
Still the ship was struggling onward—  
Onward to her destination.<sup>48</sup>

Like “Come into the boat, my lads,” the *Hiawatha* parody points back to a familiar, popular work, and entertains both affinities to and distinctions from that original work. The gesture back to home would have been doubly complex on board the *Fiery Star*, as the ship had been chartered by a priest, Father Patrick Dunne, to transport poor Irish families to Queensland in the aftermath of the great famine: “for the benefit of his poor, sorely-tried countrymen and countrywomen, many of whom were saved by his splendid exertions from the fearful effects of famine or the dreaded degradation of the poor-house.”<sup>49</sup> Other poems in the journal reflect an explicit Irish nationalism:

When Ireland's released from the yoke of Saxon,  
 Och! then will our hearts beat with glee;  
 .....  
 Och! Erin Machree,  
 It's dear ye're to me,  
 Thou small little isle of the sea.<sup>50</sup>

More accommodating to the British, an essay titled “Our Adopted Land” suggests that “one of the brightest features of the present emigration is the combination of the Celtic and the Anglo-Saxon races.” Irish emigrants, the essay goes on to say, will now work alongside the English to build the Queensland colony together: “[T]here will the dauntless spirit of the Celt find ample scope to vie in honest rivalry with the boundless enterprise of the Anglo-Saxon. Through their united energy will be ensured the prosperity of their adopted country.”<sup>51</sup>

The Irish at home, long accustomed to thinking themselves under the thumb of British imperialism, may well have identified in some respects with the colonized *Hiawatha* rather than the colonizing white man. A scathing 1856 *Irish Quarterly Review* essay, for example, described Longfellow's arriving colonists as “Iagoos” to *Hiawatha*'s Othello.<sup>52</sup> But *en route* to Australia, now colonists themselves, the Irish aboard the *Fiery Star* seem more easily to occupy the aggressor's role. *Hiawatha*'s death sail becomes, via revision and parody, the triumphant struggling of a people bound for a greater destiny. According to the *Fiery Star Gazette*, the emigrating Irish will now join the British in “defend[ing] the ruined hut against the aborigines of Australia.”<sup>53</sup>

Both “Come into the boat, my lads” and “Lines After the Style of *Hiawatha*,” then, work playfully to situate emigrant experiences both within a larger literary tradition and in relation to homelands left behind. That these poems would also have resonated politically among their shipboard readers—both explicitly, through their content, and

implicitly, through their formal echoing and revision—should, I hope, be clear. The ship poems work in one register to confront the monotony and dislocation induced by ship travel, but they also suggest a greater communal purpose, providing a venue for reflecting on passengers' shared experiences of emigration. "Here are a number of people, all of them perforce separated for a time from their ordinary circumstances," writes one contributor to the *Caldera Clippings*, published in 1877 on a trip from England to Cape Town. It will be beneficial, the essay continues, to "disconnect one's-self temporarily from one's natural prejudices and tastes, and to be ready to accept the general conditions of the moment . . . to forget one's-self, in short, and to think first of the general comfort of the little community."<sup>54</sup>

Many of the journals address head-on their political aspirations. A good number proclaim absolute removal from partisan viewpoints: for example, the *Sobraon Occasional*—sailing to Melbourne in 1875—"recognizes no law but that of its own spasmodic existence, which is that it should appear in public whenever it feels so disposed. It has no great cause at heart. It does not care what Party is in. It deals impartially with Tory, Liberal, and Radical."<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, the *Aconcagua Times*—sailing from Adelaide on a return trip to Plymouth in 1879—pointedly insists that on "our floating commonwealth," the journal's "principles will be strictly Conservative. It will support by its influence the government, the discipline, the good order of the organised society in which for six weeks we are here to live."<sup>56</sup> The journal of the *Argo*, a naval ship sailing from Portsmouth to Madras in late 1857—carrying the Left Wing 68th Light Infantry to support British forces in India after the rebellion earlier that year—declares that its "political opinions . . . are liberal—very liberal, and it will on all occasions, to the best of its ability, do all that lays in its power to forward the liberal interests of the country."<sup>57</sup> My point here has less to do with the specific politics of any one ship, and more with the fundamental idea that the ship journals would have been understood by their contributors and readers as political ventures, as having political value: more often than not, they were explicitly framed as such from the outset. Within this context, the shipboard revisions and parodies open themselves to a variety of political uses. Parody itself, as Williams argues, "can be—and often simultaneously is—both conservative and progressive, since it preserves the memory of past forms while turning away from them into its own, more highly valued, present."<sup>58</sup> When poems like "Come into the boat, my lads" and "Lines After . . . Hiawatha" look both behind and ahead, they acknowledge their literary and cultural

origins while writing their own present and future: constructing new identities for colonial life without fully abandoning the old.

### III. NOSTALGIA AT SEA

Like parody, nostalgia also works in divided temporal and spatial registers. As Nicholas Dames suggests, “a nostalgic looking-backward is . . . necessarily a looking-forward—a dilution and disconnection of the past in the service of an encroaching future.”<sup>59</sup> One contributor to the 1870 *Commissary Review* captures this nostalgic double gesture, noting that “[w]e, on board this vessel, going out to seek a new home, in a country to most of us unknown—going, some to seek a livelihood, others for the conservation of that boon good health—although our faces are turned toward the South, yet cherish the fond remembrance of our dear old English home.”<sup>60</sup> An 1866 lyric from an emigrant ship headed to Cape Town elegantly echoes those thoughts and feelings:

Far from that best of harbours, home,  
From all that's dear to me;  
Where'er I stray, where'er I roam,  
My thoughts are still of thee.<sup>61</sup>

The sentiments of this poem—no matter how far I go, my love, I think of you—appear consistently throughout the shipboard publications, their significance regularly augmented by way of metrical structure. With poetic forms such as the ballad, as Susan Stewart notes, “one carries over into writing an enormous weight of social and cultural resonance.”<sup>62</sup> The poet who thinks of his love “where'er [he] roam[s]” does so by way of common meter: alternating lines of iambic tetrameter and trimeter, a structure standard in both English hymnody and ballad poetry. His loving thoughts, then, are mediated by a metrical form that itself enacts a nostalgic looking-backward: to the songs of childhood, the sounds of home.

As poetic structures that would have been familiar to anyone growing up in nineteenth-century Britain, ballad meters especially communicated the sense of home and the new pain of distance from that home.<sup>63</sup> The following ballad, which imagines a fantastical “fairy land” only to be brought back harshly to the cold present of an emigrant ship, was published on an 1872 journey from Liverpool to Melbourne.

I stood in a land, a fairy land,  
Of fruit, and flower, and tree,  
Of sunny mount and sparkling fount,  
The flower of my heart with me.

I clasped her hand—a fair, soft hand,  
And gazed into eyes of blue,  
More deep and clear than the azure sphere,  
Than the light of heaven more true.

.....  
As I clasped the hand—a fair, soft hand,  
Of her I treasured most,  
I awoke, half mad, for I only had  
Fast hold of my cold bed-post.<sup>64</sup>

Unlike most ship poems, this lyric is signed by its author, Xaverius Thomas McNiven; the following month's issue posts an obituary notice for McNiven, who "suffered from what is supposed to have been bronchial decline . . . the damp climate of Ireland proving too much for him, he [had] determined, if the climate suited him, to reside permanently in Australia."<sup>65</sup> The dying McNiven's lyric reads as doubly desperate, straining toward a fantastical future with his beloved while at the same time nostalgic of a past, perhaps equally fantastical, when they were once together. The poem's ballad meter contributes to its pathos, gesturing toward the lost comforts of familiarity and home.

Among a subset of educated emigrants, complex metrical structures offered further layers of historical and cultural resonance. For example, an 1875 lyric published on board the *Sobraon* during a voyage from Plymouth to Melbourne frames nostalgia by way of elegiac couplets, the metrical form Ovid used in composing his poem of exile, the *Tristia*. Unlike the parodic poems discussed in the previous section, "A Dream" maintains a sincere, devotional relationship to Ovid's original work, offering an elegant and moving meditation on the author's beloved, left behind in England while he ventures out to Australia:

Was it a voice, or a dream, or a sigh of the wind through the gloaming  
Came to my soul in its pain, soothing the sorrow to sleep?  
Or was it thy spirit, my darling, over the blue waters roaming,  
Sought me, and found from afar, murmuring—"Love, do not weep"?

Why did you come to me, O my love; were you sleeping or waking?  
How did you find me so far over the sorrowful seas?  
Did your heart, in its loneliness, feel that my heart in its anguish, was  
breaking?  
Did the wings of some pitying dream waft you safe to me here  
on the breeze?<sup>66</sup>

Elegiac couplets—alternating lines of dactylic hexameter and pentameter—were written before Ovid, but primarily as epigrammatic witticisms; it was the Roman poet who opened up their expressive potential.<sup>67</sup> Exiled from Rome in the year 8 CE, he was sent to Tomis, an outpost colony on the peripheries of the Roman Empire where he spent his remaining years dwelling among those he called “barely civilized.”<sup>68</sup> As Peter Green argues, Ovid’s exile in Tomis “cut him off, not only from Rome, but virtually from all current civilized Graeco-Roman culture” and “rubbed the poet’s nose in the rough and philistine facts of frontier life.”<sup>69</sup> Ovid composed the first part of his *Tristia* while voyaging from Rome to Tomis. “Every word,” he informs his readers at the end of the poem’s first part, “was written during the anxious days / of my journey.”<sup>70</sup> English translations can only approximate the meter of the original elegiac couplets:

[These lines] were not written, as formerly, in my garden,  
 while I lounged on a favourite day-bed, but at sea,  
 in wintry light, rough-tossed by filthy weather, spindrift  
 spattering the paper as I write.<sup>71</sup>

Ovid works throughout the *Tristia* to make tangible the emotional and physical trials of his exile.

One begins to see why an educated British emigrant, feeling dislocated from his love, traveling by ship to the far reaches of empire, might settle on the elegiac couplet as an appropriate vehicle for expressing himself. Both Tomis and Australia represent, for ancient Rome and Victorian Britain respectively, the outermost limits of empire; both colonies impose a near-total isolation from home. More particularly, both Ovid and the ship poet are compelled to leave behind their loved ones, and find themselves cast off, alone, adrift. Though not British in origin, Ovid’s elegiac couplets represent for a European emigrant the larger compass of Western civilization: a cultural frame one might fear losing while voyaging to the antipodes. Much as Anderson understands ideas of both home and nationality as “less experienced” by exiles “than imagined, and imagined through a complex of mediations and representations,” poetic form becomes in the ship publications a mediator of cultural identification, a nostalgic structure through which *home* might be imagined.<sup>72</sup> As in the parodic structures of “Come into the boat, my lads” and “Lines After . . . Hiawatha,” this sort of formal echoing operates on both conservative and progressive registers, looking behind to the poet’s native England while also looking ahead, tentatively, to a new life beyond. The author

of “A Dream” remains haunted by his past, the voice that follows him out to sea; he tries by way of the poem to understand his relationship to the past, the present, and the future. The poem thus becomes a tool for mitigating nostalgic pain.<sup>73</sup>

The third and fourth stanzas of “A Dream” further clarify the poet’s nostalgic relationship to formal imitation, suggesting the ways metrical repetition might have been understood as a coping mechanism for traumatic loss and profound change:

I saw you not, dear, though I felt your presence around and about me,  
Like a girdle of infinite calm, and your voice for a moment I heard,  
Like the wail of a harp by the wind softly touched, thro’ the spell that  
enwound me,  
In a language that souls understand, or the sweet weary song of a  
bird.

And over my soul there swept a measureless, infinite longing  
To clasp you again to my heart, in spite of the years and of fate,  
And I turned from the blaze of the sun, and saw where the shadows  
were thronging,  
But you were not there—you were gone, and I wept, for I knew I  
must wait.<sup>74</sup>

Invoking the Romantic figure of an Aeolian harp, the poet feels an absent presence: fleeting, ephemeral, and yet unmistakable, like the bounds of Englishness that girdle round the Australian emigrant. The voice that follows him from shore, felt bodily and emotionally with “infinite longing,” structures his outbound journey, his venture into the unknown. Through its iteration, and the gradual changes in its echoing form, the emigrant poet inhabits a nostalgic structure so as to understand his own experience of difference and distance. Ovid’s elegiac couplets allow the *Sobraon* poet to recognize what it means to be displaced and yet still attached, an emigrant cast off and yet still a European deeply rooted in Western culture and tradition.

#### IV: CULTURE AT SEA

But what was to be the place of culture and tradition in the far reaches of British colonization? “Be men, be gentlemen,” exhorts one ship journal in 1870, “and let each one feel that the heritage of our England is a noble patrimony and one we will seek to hand down as the richest dowry untarnished to our children.”<sup>75</sup> “Emigrant!” writes another ship journal in 1862, “cultivate polite literature in order to be worthy of your future learned fraternity!”<sup>76</sup> According to the British

press, however, that literary heritage was not manifesting in a culture of colonial poetry. Francis Adams, writing in the *Fortnightly Review* in 1892, criticizes “Australia’s neglect of her ‘men of letters,’ and especially of her poets”: “the average Australian cares nothing for, and indeed knows nothing of” the foremost Australian poets of the day, “[Henry] Kendall, and [Charles] Harpur and [James Brunton] Stephens . . . the case for the hopeless illiterateness of the average Australian seems made out.”<sup>77</sup> Not only were colonial Australians, so it was said, uninterested in poetry; poets themselves found their labors at odds with the requirements of colonial life. An 1884 *Temple Bar* essay on Adam Lindsay Gordon, the most well-known midcentury Australian poet, suggests that Gordon may not have committed suicide at the age of only thirty six if not for his commitment to poetry: “It may be maintained that Gordon’s troubles sprang from his cultivation of the Muses; and here the average emigrant is not likely to follow his example.”<sup>78</sup>

*Fin-de-siècle* British critics mostly agreed on the derivative nature of Australian colonial poetry. But the *Westminster Review* points out with a mix of encouragement and patronization that “during the earlier stages of ‘nation-making,’ intellectual progress and development naturally remain in abeyance”; poetry, then, will come to Australia once it establishes itself on firmer political ground:

The fact that the Muse of the Antipodes has not yet wholly cut her leading-strings and abandoned an almost slavish imitation of English and American models, results from the circumstance that hitherto the mass of the inhabitants has been too busily engaged in “nation-making” to permit primarily of the enjoyment of those years of widely diffused liberal education indispensable to the creation of the literary taste and “atmosphere” of culture; and, secondarily, of that patient, studious development of the imaginative faculty, and of the cultivation of its “voice” in metrical expression which learned leisure and the existence of a literary class *in se* tends to foster.<sup>79</sup>

According to the *Westminster*, the Australian poetic impulse is, for the time being, doomed either to silence or to “slavish imitation” not only because of unsettling geographic and cultural displacement, but the absolute commitment—and subsequent loss of leisure time—required by the colonial enterprise. The poet Richard Hengist Horne, who spent nearly two decades in and around Melbourne, reflects on these views in an unpublished epic from 1866, *John Ferncliff: An Australian Narrative Poem*: “Here was reality, and no romance: / No words his practiced [hand?] could enhance.”<sup>80</sup> Both in Britain and in

the colonies themselves, Australia was characterized as a place of gritty realism (“no romance”), a place un conducive to the imaginative work of poetic composition.

The sixth issue of the *Superb Gazette*, published in 1882 during a journey from England to Melbourne, offers what might be read as a poetic meditation on this theme. “Lines: Composed on the death of a chaffinch, which flew on board while going down Channel, and died in lat. 42° S., long. 82° E.,” was written by one H. Alderton, and it mourns the death of a bird whose ill-fate landed it on board the ship as it sailed from the English shore.<sup>81</sup>

Poor little bird, how sad a fate,  
How sorrowful, how desolate;  
Far from green fields and pleasant lane,  
To perish on the mighty main;  
No loving mate or kindred near,  
But all so bleak, so cold, and drear.<sup>82</sup>

Though far from achieving the gravitas of Percy Shelley’s skylark (“Hail to thee, blithe spirit!”), Alderton’s chaffinch nonetheless takes on attributes of a Romantic songster.<sup>83</sup> Notice in the lines that follow how the diminutive bird’s song comes to signal first national belonging, and then the experience of captivity and exile:

Poor little bird, two months before,  
Sweetly thou sang on England’s shore,  
And hopping gaily all the day,  
How happy passed the time away,  
With sweet young mate to cheer the hours,  
In hawthorn hedge or shady bowers.  
But venturing upon the sea,  
You fell into captivity;  
And on a ship far outward bound,  
This luckless little bird was found;  
And torn from every earthly tie,  
Was caged to pine away and die.  
Week after week thy fragile form  
Endured the tempest and the storm;  
Week after week! oh, what an age,  
Within a narrow prison cage,  
With nought but bitterness and pain,  
An aching heart and throbbing brain.  
But Death at last, poor suffering bird,  
Thy sorrowful lamenting heard,  
And touched thee with his magic hand;

When nearer drew the distant land,  
When hope beat high in every breast,  
Thy weary spirit sank to rest.<sup>84</sup>

Alderton points to the English landscape—“green fields,” “pleasant lane,” “hawthorn hedge,” and “shady bowers”—with a nostalgia characteristic of emigrant writing. Within this space, the chaffinch sings with full-throated ease. Caught unwittingly aboard an emigrant ship, the poor bird suffers, pines away, and finally dies. Its “fragile form” cannot endure the loss of English landscape, the change of climate, and the experience of captivity aboard the ship.

Birds such as the chaffinch were regular freeloaders on emigrant vessels: “Sometimes,” notes an 1858 *Chambers’s Journal* essay, “birds seem to be induced by mere curiosity or love of mankind to put out from their native shore, and alight on ships at sea.”<sup>85</sup> The chaffinch as a species is native to Western Europe but was introduced to the British colonies through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. A *Penny Magazine* article from 1838 touts “those little songsters,” which are “prized as an object of the greatest value” throughout Europe.<sup>86</sup> A *Saturday Review* essay from 1907, however, explains that the introduction of European birds to New Zealand, including the chaffinch—brought over in large part to combat insects that were destroying crops there—completely backfired: “There is a hue and cry against them, and most farmers in the colony would now willingly banish them from the land if they could.”<sup>87</sup> The birds, apparently, ate more of the crops than the insects had.

I read in the death of this particular chaffinch a degree of skepticism about the culture of Australian colonialism. Though the passengers aboard express enthusiasm as they approach their new home—“hope beat high in every breast”—the chaffinch cannot bear the final mark of separation from its homeland, the arrival in the colony. Perhaps the bird’s “aching heart” and “throbbing brain” ought be experienced by any English native transplanted so far from home, “torn from every earthly tie.” Birdsong was understood throughout the nineteenth century as a figure for lyric poetry; the chaffinch poem suggests that lyric song, or even poetry more generally, will not readily thrive on foreign soil.<sup>88</sup> More than that, insofar as the lyric impulse in the Western tradition has been so consistently linked to self-consciousness and individual expression, the chaffinch’s death suggests an anxiety of lost individualism within the colonial context: the individual swept away, or imprisoned even, within the larger project of British colonialism.

The poor bird's "fragile form" (bodily form, poetic form) cannot bear the pressures of dislocation.

Both the anxieties implicit in Alderton's 1882 poem and the critiques of colonial "slavish imitation" from the *Westminster* ought to remind us of how poetic revision and parody shaped works such as "Come into the boat, my lads" and "Lines After . . . Hiawatha": poems that both foreground imitation and insist, with a wink and a smile, on difference. Emigrant ship poets embraced imitation strategically, to negotiate the emotional trials inherent to geographical and cultural change. The elegiac couplets of "A Dream" may similarly be called *imitative*, and yet their re-contextualizing of classical poetic tradition should, as I have suggested, be valued instead as a self-conscious, stylized work of replication, one with clear emotional value. In poems such as these we might locate a challenge to commonplace assumptions about colonial derivativeness such as those voiced by the British press at home. British emigrant poetry intentionally maintains the structure of a greater cultural replication (from core to periphery, home to abroad): to critique it on account of its derivativeness misses the point of its composition. Rather than turning a nose up at what may look, on first glance, like paler versions of canonical British poems, more may come from thinking expansively about the contexts in which emigrant poems were written, published, circulated, and read; and about the important differences between origin and copy, before and after, British and colonial.

In such a spirit, I'd like to recall the epigraph to this essay, Mrs. Micawber's insistence to her husband that "You are going out, Micawber, to this distant clime, to strengthen, not to weaken, the connexion between yourself and Albion." Dickens intuitively here some of what was at stake in the emigrant experience, the emotional necessity of keeping hold, firmly, of one's native land. Shipboard poetry actively shares Mrs. Micawber's straddling ambition, stepping forward to a colonial future while keeping one foot—figuratively, metrically—firmly set behind.

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#### NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield* (New York: Penguin, 1985), 879.

<sup>2</sup> Dickens, 882.

<sup>3</sup> Dickens's attention to dirt moving from within England out to the colonies reverses the more typical narrative of the period, which anxiously documented the "filth" brought from the colonies in to England. On the latter, see Joseph Childers, "Foreign Matter: Imperial Filth," in *Filth: Dirt, Disgust, and Modern Life*, ed. William A. Cohen and Ryan Johnson (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2005), 201–24.

<sup>4</sup> James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783–1939* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2009), 168.

<sup>5</sup> David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002), 27.

<sup>6</sup> Dror Wahrman proposes that only "the realms of language and culture" will make sense of the settler homogeneity Belich describes, and he encourages literary scholars to pursue work in those fields ("The Meaning of the Nineteenth Century: Reflections on James Belich's *Replenishing the Earth*," *Victorian Studies* 53 [2010]: 99). The present essay may be taken as one response to Wahrman's call.

<sup>7</sup> Elleke Boehmer, *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature: Migrant Metaphors*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2009), 111.

<sup>8</sup> Saree Makdisi, "Riding the Whirlwind of Settler Colonialism," *Victorian Studies* 53 (2010): 113.

<sup>9</sup> Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2009), 135.

<sup>10</sup> On the representation of British colonialism in canonical Victorian poetry, see especially Matthew Reynolds, *The Realms of Verse: English Poetry in a Time of Nation-Building* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2001).

<sup>11</sup> Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage, 1994), xii. Recent work in Oceanic Studies, especially in its nineteenth-century varieties, continues Said's investment in narrative—as suggested by a recent PMLA forum on the topic (May 2010). See also Hester Blum, *The View from the Masthead: Maritime Imagination and Antbellum American Sea Narratives* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2008); and Margaret Cohen, *The Novel and the Sea* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2010). Samuel Baker's *Written on the Water: British Romanticism and the Maritime Empire of Culture* (Charlottesville: Univ. of Virginia Press, 2010) addresses poetry's engagement with the sea, but from the perspective of Britain's canonical writers: William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lord Byron, and Matthew Arnold.

<sup>12</sup> "Globe-traversing influences, energies, and resistances," writes Jahan Ramazani, "have arguably styled and shaped poetry in English, from the modernist era to the present" (*A Transnational Poetics* [Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2009], 23). Important recent work on nineteenth-century Anglophone poetry in India begins to resituate the British canon. See Mary Ellis Gibson, *Indian Angles: English Verse in Colonial India from Jones to Tagore* (Athens, OH: Ohio Univ. Press, 2011); and Tricia Lootens, "Alien Homelands: Rudyard Kipling, Toru Dutt, and the Poetry of Empire," in *The Fin-de-Siècle Poem: English Literary Culture and the 1890s*, ed. Joseph Bristow (Athens, OH: Ohio Univ. Press, 2005), 285–310. No similar efforts, however, have yet been made for migrant poetry elsewhere in the British empire.

<sup>13</sup>“Australia. I—Its General Features and Resources,” *Leisure Hour* 1 (1852): 197–98.

<sup>14</sup>See Eric Richards, “Migrations: The Career of British White Australia,” in *Australia’s Empire*, ed. Deryck M. Schreuder and Stuart Ward (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2008): 165–66.

<sup>15</sup>See Geoffrey Serle, *The Golden Age: A history of the colony of Victoria 1851–1861* (1963; repr. Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne Univ. Press, 1977), 371, 382.

<sup>16</sup>“The Press at Sea,” *Chambers’s Journal of Popular Literature, Science and Arts* 188 (1867): 488.

<sup>17</sup>I draw these observations from more than sixty ship journals currently housed at the State Library of New South Wales (Sydney, Australia), the National Library of Australia (Canberra), the National Maritime Library (Greenwich, England), the British Library (London), and the library at the University of Cape Town (South Africa).

<sup>18</sup>See, for example, the *Nautical Magazine*, written aboard the ship *Equestrian* on its journey from England to India in 1849 (MS NWT/6, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich).

<sup>19</sup>These bound, keepsake editions are by and large the only journals that have survived.

<sup>20</sup>“What is Going On?” *Pioneer* 3 (10 December 1870; repr. Melbourne, 1871): 27; *Sobraon Mercury* (12 March 1860; repr. Bristol, 1860): 7; “Our First Number,” *Lightning Gazette* 1 (16 May 1857; Melbourne, 1857): n.p. Unless otherwise noted, all shipboard publications are anonymous; some articles and poems are untitled.

<sup>21</sup>*Sobraon Occasional* 1 (23 October 1875; repr. Melbourne, 1876): 1.

<sup>22</sup>Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised ed. (London: Verso, 1991), 44.

<sup>23</sup>On the conditions for emigrants at sea, see Don Charlwood, *The Long Farewell* (New York: Penguin, 1983), 105–31.

<sup>24</sup>See, respectively, “Florence Nightingale,” *James Baines Times* 6 (14 January 1856; repr. Birmingham, 1856): 2; “The Sea-Sick Man,” *Colonial Empire Argus* 1 (21 March 1862; repr. Sydney, 1862): 11; *Salmagundi* 1 (14 February 1863; repr. London, 1863): 2; “Lament of the Single Ladies,” *Lightning Gazette* 3 (22 September 1855): n.p.

<sup>25</sup>For Coleridge, see for example the *Lightning Gazette* 7 (20 October 1855): n.p.

<sup>26</sup>“Poetical Log of ‘The Queen of the Thames,’” *Pioneer* (26 November 1870): 2.

<sup>27</sup>Linda K. Hughes, “What the Wellesley Index Left Out: Why Poetry Matters to Periodical Studies,” *Victorian Periodicals Review* 40 (2007): 94, 99.

<sup>28</sup>See Margaret A. Rose, *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993), 45–46. Rose notes that the ambiguity of *para*, the root of *parody*, has allowed the term to mean “both a song sung ‘against’ or ‘in opposition’ to another and a song sung ‘beside’ or ‘near to’ another” (46). On the importance of poetic parodies within Victorian periodical publications, see Natalie M. Houston, “Newspaper Poems: Material Texts in the Public Sphere,” *Victorian Studies* 50 (2008): 233–42.

<sup>29</sup>Carolyn Williams, *Gilbert and Sullivan: Gender, Genre, Parody* (New York: Columbia, 2010), 9.

<sup>30</sup>Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), xiii.

<sup>31</sup>Marjory Harper, “British Migration and the Peopling of the Empire,” in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Nineteenth Century*, ed. Andrew Porter (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1999): 75, 86. Poetry’s role in Australian colonial nationalism is well documented in the spring 2002 special issue of *Victorian Poetry on Nineteenth-Century Australian Poetry*. See especially Barbara Garlick, “Colonial Canons: The Case of James Brunton Stephens,” *Victorian Poetry* 40 (2002): 55–70; and Christopher Lee, “An Uncultured Rhymer and His Cultural Critics: Henry Lawson, Class Politics, and Colonial Literature,” *Victorian Poetry* 40 (2002): 87–104.

<sup>32</sup> “The Homes of the South,” *Dublin University Magazine* 53 (1858): 302; “A Voice on Emigration to Australia,” *Chambers’s Edinburgh Journal* 483 (1853): 210.

<sup>33</sup> Richard Hengist Horne, “Public Works Before Fine Arts: To the Editor of the *Argus*,” *Argus* (31 January 1853): 5.

<sup>34</sup> “Come Into the Boat, My Lads,” *Rodney World* (25 July 1885; repr. Melbourne, 1885): 11.

<sup>35</sup> “Come Into the Boat, My Lads,” 11.

<sup>36</sup> See Walter Hamilton, *Parodies of the Works of English and American Authors* (London: Reeves and Turner, 1884).

<sup>37</sup> Alfred Tennyson, *Maud*, in *The Poems of Tennyson*, 3 vol., ed. Christopher Ricks (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1987), vol. 2, part 1, section 23, lines 850–55.

<sup>38</sup> Tennyson, *Maud*, part 1, section 23, lines 888–93.

<sup>39</sup> “Come Into the Boat, My Lads,” 11.

<sup>40</sup> “Come Into the Boat, My Lads,” 11.

<sup>41</sup> “Lines After the Style of Hiawatha,” *Fiery Star Gazette* (26 September 1863; repr. Queensland, 1863): n.p.

<sup>42</sup> Review of *The Song of Hiawatha*, *Chambers’s Journal* 105 (1856): 7.

<sup>43</sup> Review of *The Song of Hiawatha*, *Athenaeum* (1855): 1295.

<sup>44</sup> “Hiawatha Again,” *South Australian Register* (25 September 1856): 3.

<sup>45</sup> Hiawatha’s last words to his people are to heed the “words of wisdom” spoken by the “guests [he] leave[s] behind” (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Poems and Other Writings* [New York: Library of America, 2000], 278). On the ways Longfellow’s poem became a means for “subsuming the [Native American] aboriginal into . . . Anglo-Saxon nationality,” see Alan Trachtenberg, *Shades of Hiawatha: Staging Indians, Making Americans, 1880–1930* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004), 74.

<sup>46</sup> Longfellow, 278.

<sup>47</sup> Kate Flint, *The Transatlantic Indian, 1776–1930* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2009), 132.

<sup>48</sup> “Lines After the Style of Hiawatha,” n.p.

<sup>49</sup> James Francis Hogan, *The Irish in Australia*, Australian ed. (Melbourne, 1888), 163. Hogan notes that Father Patrick Dunne was responsible for transporting roughly 6,000 Irish to Australia between 1861 and 1864: “[A]ll of them who permanently settled in the colony, and avoided the curse of their race, strong drink, have prospered to a remarkable degree, and enjoyed the esteem and good-will of their fellow-colonists of other nationalities” (163).

<sup>50</sup> “Erin Machree,” *Fiery Star Gazette* (17 October 1863): n.p.

<sup>51</sup> “Our Adopted Land,” *Fiery Star Gazette* (24 October 1863): n.p.

<sup>52</sup> “Poetry Under a Cloud,” *Irish Quarterly Review* 6 (March 1856): 13.

<sup>53</sup> “Our Adopted Land,” n.p. David Fitzpatrick argues in *Oceans of Consolation: Personal Accounts of Irish Migration to Australia* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1994) that “perceptions of Irish politics . . . had doubtless been modified by departure from Ireland” (559); he suggests that, overall, working-class Irish emigrants demonstrated a “reticence concerning politics,” tending not to mention political goings on in letters home (607).

<sup>54</sup> “Killing Time,” *Caldera Clippings* (9 April 1877; repr. Pietermaritzburg, 1877): 12.

<sup>55</sup> *Sobraon Occasional* 1 (23 October 1875): 1.

<sup>56</sup> *The Aconagua Times* (2 August 1879; repr. London, 1879): 3. Ships returning to England from the colonies also printed journals on board, but their content was notably different than those on outbound journeys. As a contributor to the *Marco*

*Polo Observer*, en route from Melbourne to England in 1861, observes: "Careening on towards the goal where his golden dreams are to be realized, the emigrant is apt to clothe all he encounters with the bright hue of his own imaginings, and the attempt to amuse him would indeed be rude and ill-conceived that failed in its object. . . . How different are the feelings of the generality of passengers in the 'homeward-bound'" (2 March 1861; repr. Valparaiso, 1861): n.p.

<sup>57</sup> *Argo* (28 December 1857), MS ORB.40/714, British Library, London; Oriental Collections, no pagination.

<sup>58</sup> Williams, 7.

<sup>59</sup> Nicholas Dames, *Amnesiac Selves: Nostalgia, Forgetting, and British Fiction, 1810–1870* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2003), 236.

<sup>60</sup> "Home," *Commissary Review* (19 May 1870; repr. Sydney, 1870): 21.

<sup>61</sup> "The Sailor to His Love," *Illustrated Celtic Record* (October 1866; repr. Cape Town, 1866), BC 686, University of Cape Town Library, 6.

<sup>62</sup> Susan Stewart, *Poetry and the Fate of the Senses* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2002), 119.

<sup>63</sup> On the culture of Victorian popular ballad poetry, see J. S. Bratton, *The Victorian Popular Ballad* (London: Macmillan Press, 1975). On the association of Victorian ballad poetry with national sentiment, see my "On Cultural Neoformalism, Spasmodic Poetry, and the Victorian Ballad," *Victorian Poetry* 41 (2003): 590–96.

<sup>64</sup> Xaverius Thomas McNiven, "A Dream," *John o'Gaunt News* (6 April 1872; repr. Geelong, 1872): 37.

<sup>65</sup> William Inglis, *John o'Gaunt News* (4 May 1872): 53.

<sup>66</sup> "A Dream," *Sobraon Occasional* (11 December 1875): 40.

<sup>67</sup> See John William Mackail, *Latin Literature* (New York: Scribner's, 1895), 123–24. Formally speaking, the pentameter line of an elegiac couplet is not a strict pentameter, but rather—as James Wilson Bright notes in his 1910 study—a "so-called dactylic pentameter, which is . . . a special form of hexameter, lacking the thesis after the caesura and at the end of the line" (*Elements of English Versification* [Boston: Ginn and Company, 1910], 38).

<sup>68</sup> Ovid, *Ovid: The Poems of Exile*, trans. Peter Green (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2005), book 5, section 7, line 12. I owe Yopie Prins a debt of gratitude for pointing me to Ovid's elegiac couplets; Meredith Martin helped me untangle the peculiarities of the Victorian elegiac couplet.

<sup>69</sup> Peter Green, introduction to *Ovid: The Poems of Exile*, xxv.

<sup>70</sup> Ovid, *Ovid: The Poems of Exile*, book 1, section 2, lines 1–2.

<sup>71</sup> Ovid, *Ovid: The Poems of Exile*, book 1, section 2, lines 37–40.

<sup>72</sup> Anderson, "Exodus," *Critical Inquiry* 20 (1994): 319.

<sup>73</sup> In *Nostalgia in Transition, 1780–1917* (Charlottesville: Univ. of Virginia Press, 2007), Linda Austin frames Emily Brontë's poetry in similar terms: "[T]he poems ease homesickness by relaxing personal obsession and rerouting it through aesthetic categories of landscape" (30).

<sup>74</sup> "A Dream," 40.

<sup>75</sup> "Home," *Commissary Review*, 23.

<sup>76</sup> *Colonial Empire Argus* 4 (11 April 1862), 19.

<sup>77</sup> Francis Adams, "Two Australian Writers," *Fortnightly Review* 52 (1892): 352–53.

<sup>78</sup> Arthur Patchett Martin, "An Australian Poet," *Temple Bar* 70 (1884): 209.

<sup>79</sup> Oliphant Smeaton, "A Gallery of Australasian Singers," *Westminster Review* 144 (1895): 478–79.

<sup>80</sup> Richard Hengist Horne, *John Ferncliff: An Australian Narrative Poem*, ML MSS 2410/13, State Library of New South Wales, Sydney, 15.

<sup>81</sup> The point is roughly two thousand miles to the west-southwest of Perth.

<sup>82</sup> "Lines: Composed on the death of a chaffinch, which flew on board while going down Channel, and died in lat. 42° S., long. 82° E." *Superb Gazette* (2 June 1882; repr. Melbourne, 1882): 21.

<sup>83</sup> Percy Bysshe Shelley, "To A Skylark," in *Shelley's Poetry and Prose*, ed. Donald H. Reiman and Sharon B. Powers (New York: Norton, 1977), 226.

<sup>84</sup> "Lines: Composed on the death of a chaffinch," 21–22.

<sup>85</sup> "Visitants of Ships at Sea," *Chambers's Journal* 260 (1858): 410.

<sup>86</sup> "The Song of the Chaffinch on the Continent," *Penny Magazine* 7 (1838): 260.

<sup>87</sup> "English Birds in New Zealand," *Saturday Review* 104 (1907): 168.

<sup>88</sup> As Virginia Jackson suggests in *Dickinson's Misery* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2005), we might take for granted the nineteenth-century reading of birdsong, whereby "a bluebird's . . . or a nightingale's or a sky-lark's or a bobolink's or a darkling thrush's . . . tune would always already have been . . . a lyric poem" (27). Jackson writes specifically of Emily Dickinson, but the same would have been true for most educated readers in the nineteenth century.