

WILLIAM PEMBER REEVES, WRITING THE FORTUNATE ISLES

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In all its phases, the career of William Pember Reeves was shaped by overlapping social and cultural identities. From his childhood as an English migrant in New Zealand being groomed to join the colonial ruling class, to his advocacy of Greek independence and chairmanship of the Anglo-Hellenic League in his last decades, Reeves illustrates the kind of mobility across social as well as national and geographical borders that calls for the use of the term 'transnational colonial' rather than 'expatriate.'¹ He has this in common with many Australasian writers at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This paper will focus on how he 'wrote New Zealand,' particularly after his move to London in 1896 as Agent-General.

The expression 'transnational colonial,' coined by Ken Gelder in relation to popular fiction (Gelder 1), conveys the cultural hybridity of the late nineteenth century Australasian abroad without imposing a rigidly 'centre/margins' structure of imperial power relations. The term 'transnational' stresses the existence of two-way or multiple exchanges of influences and ideas between colonial and metropolitan writers, publishers, readers, and markets. Such an approach to colonial/imperial cultural relationships has been developed by postcolonial critics and historians such as John Ball in *Imagining London: Postcolonial Fiction and the Transnational Metropolis* (2004), Angela Woollacott in *To Try Her Fortune in London* (2001), and Andrew Hassam, in *Through Australian Eyes: Colonial Perceptions of Imperial Britain* (2000). Similarly, in their excellent study of late colonial writing, *Maoriland: New Zealand Literature 1872-1914*, Jane Stafford and Mark Williams argue that 'empire was an internationalising force in ways not often recognised. Nor was all the traffic of ideas from centre to periphery' (15).

While the white settler colonies had distinctive identities and were regarded as emerging nations, they were still firmly bound by legal, political and economic ties. Writers and artists from the antipodes moved freely as British citizens travelling the circuits of Empire. Studies of Australasians travelling or living in London have stressed the plurality of cultural identity for colonial and British subjects, and the effect of displacement on the construction of cultural identity. Ros Pesman, for instance, reminds us that

... for a century and a half, at least, European Australians claimed two homes, that of birth, family and friends, of memory and family history, and that of domicile. Despite the *cri de coeur* of constructors and the critics of the cultural cringe, few colonists felt any conflict between their loyalty to the old land and to the new. (Pesman 4)

As I have argued elsewhere, and as many cultural historians have acknowledged, much twentieth-century discussion of national identity fails to convey the full range of colonial,

imperial, and British cultural identities and affiliation, a multiplicity which in the 1890s could be taken for granted.² Multiple identities or cultural affiliations could be carried simultaneously or selectively emphasised according to circumstances and context (Hassam 25-27; Pesman 17; Tasker 3, 16-17; Woollacott 9-10). Through public engagement with political and social as well as literary networks and institutions in the late nineteenth century, across both hemispheres, Reeves and other 'British Australasians' performed as transnational colonials, simultaneously citizens of New Zealand, Australasia, London, Britain, the British Empire, the Dominions, and the English-speaking world.

Like his contemporary in Australian politics, Alfred Deakin, Reeves was a colonial nationalist insisting on the autonomy of his own colony, but with a vision of the future in which the British Empire would continue to exist as 'a more meaningful and democratic institution' (Rickard 111). Ruth Feingold in 2007 summarised debates around Australian national identity, noting that with some exceptions, 'most historians agree that both Australians and New Zealanders of this period simultaneously subscribed to both a colonial nationalism and an imperialism almost religious in its intensity' (Feingold 64). By the time Reeves became involved with colonial and imperial affairs, the Imperial Federation League of the 1880s had long disbanded. However many Liberal Imperial federationists in London as well as in the colonies favoured a new Imperial government within which the former British colonies would have both representation and decision-making powers (Sinclair, *WPR* 296-98).

Reeves was far from unusual among New Zealand political thinkers in claiming a stake for the colonies and dominions in a reconfigured British Empire; as well as the movements for forms of imperial federation, there was 'in the white settler cultures of Australia and New Zealand, alongside attitudes of deference, ... an optimistic expectation that the British Empire might evolve into an equal and progressive world community' (Stafford and Williams 15). At the same time, a variety of attitudes towards nation and empire were held, with republicans and anglophiles on both sides of the Tasman; it was entirely possible for one person to hold apparently contradictory views, as reflected in the description in a British periodical of William Pember Reeves as a 'Radical Imperialist' (*National Review* 589). His career and writings present an array of cultural, political and social ideas and affiliations that speak to the complexity of both his individual experience and his public performance as an Australasian abroad.

Terms expressing national identity clearly did mean something, however, since people in England in the 1890s commonly identified as being Australians (not just 'New South Wales' or 'Victorian') and New Zealanders.³ In this paper, I argue that William Pember Reeves performed as a New Zealander even more strongly and consciously *because* he lived in England and was interested in the structures and relationships between parts of the British Empire.

In an interview in 1905, after describing his childhood in New Zealand reading about England, Reeves reflected upon his expatriate status:

... I have for the last ten years lived in London with my eyes turned half the time to the Antipodes. Thus all my life I have been, as it were, looking across the sea. Without ceasing to be a New Zealander I have also become an Englishman. Yet in talking over affairs with English friends our point of view seems almost always not quite the same. On the other hand I do not look at things quite as I should if I had never left New Zealand. It is a detached kind of position. (*Mainly About People*, 19 July 1905, quoted Sinclair, *WPR* 278)

William Pember Reeves at times described himself as living in exile, despite clearly thriving in his role of representing New Zealand at the hub of an empire to which he also felt strong loyalty. He was sent to England on a three-year appointment at first, with the prospect of extensions to the position but no intention of staying permanently. As it turned out, he stayed in England after giving up his last government appointment in 1908, taking new positions of responsibility at the London School of Economics and the Bank of New Zealand, both based in London. His first and only return visit to New Zealand was not until 1925, thirty years after leaving, on Bank business. The sense of exile that Reeves occasionally expressed was not strong enough to make him return to New Zealand without a good professional reason to do so. For him, being a well-travelled Briton with more than one ‘home’ was not simply a position of detachment – it enabled him to write from a perspective that bridged readerships by drawing on a variety of cultural affiliations and contexts.

Life and career

There have been few studies of William Pember Reeves since the mid-twentieth century.⁴ Within New Zealand, his political career and historical writings were thoroughly researched and written up in the 1950s and 1960s, chiefly by biographer, historian and poet Keith Sinclair. One of the very few sustained accounts of his career outside reference works is a 2008 article about him in a special issue of *Kōtare* on Literary Biography. Here, Tim McKenzie identifies Reeves’s most lasting achievement as his influential history of New Zealand, *The Long White Cloud* (1898), and adds that he ‘would be a minor figure in the literary history of New Zealand were it not for his meteoric political career’ (40). However, Reeves appears in the *Kōtare* volume on poets rather than its previous issue on prose writers, suggesting that by 2008 he was just as well remembered for a few widely-anthologised poems, ‘The Passing of the Forest,’ ‘The Colonist in his Garden’ and ‘New Zealand.’ William Pember Reeves wrote constantly and prolifically, both in his professional duties and in his semi-private capacity as an educated and cultivated ‘man of letters.’ Sometimes, it would be difficult to draw the line between the two spheres of activity. Even his more ‘serious’ poetry tended to be in narrative rather than lyric mode. He produced several volumes of verse (light, serious and ‘occasional’) and, particularly after he had taken up residence in London, he wrote dozens of speeches and lectures (some of which were published), articles for periodicals, and letters to the press, mostly on the subject of New Zealand. I will return to his literary career after outlining the background that shaped his work, both in New Zealand and England.

William Pember Reeves’s education and early training were upper middle-class colonial. Born of recently-migrated English parents in Canterbury, New Zealand, he later said of himself, ‘Always a bookworm, I knew more about England at the age of 12 than about my

own New Zealand' (Sinclair, *WPR* 27). He was a star pupil and scholarship-winner at Christ's College in Canterbury, but not particularly popular. He was reputedly disliked for his 'smartness' and bullied by some of the wealthy squatters' sons (Sinclair, *DNZB* 1). He travelled to England in 1874 to study law at Oxford but after staying with his maternal uncle, Edward Pember Q.C., in whose footsteps he was supposed to follow, and visiting Paris, he suffered some kind of breakdown. He returned to New Zealand, to regain his health as a cadet on a sheep station, and then to qualify in 1880 as a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of New Zealand. Rather than practising law, he took to legal reporting and various forms of journalism and politics. Between 1885 and 1891 he was the editor of two newspapers owned by his father, the weekly *Canterbury Times* and then the *Lyttelton Times* (Christchurch), positions intended to support his political aspirations, and which he gave up once his political career took him to Wellington.

Most striking to his contemporaries in New Zealand was his combination of political radicalism with intellectual attainment and a gentlemanly bearing. Socially, William Pember Reeves was quite well connected, with 'old blood' and the Q.C. uncle on his mother's side, but his father was a self-made, middle-class entrepreneur, whose migration to New Zealand was at least partly a chance to start afresh after business failures in England. William Reeves senior, 'an energetic and spirited colonist,' was proprietor of the *Lyttelton Times* for thirty years, governor of Canterbury College and director of one shipping and two insurance companies, as well as elected member of the Legislative Council (*Cyclopedia of NZ*). Despite achieving such prominence in Canterbury life, he was financially careless, and died in debt in 1891.



Group portrait photograph of politicians in New Zealand's first Liberal Cabinet, published in *The New Zealand Observer* in 1929, with the caption: 'THE BIRTH OF LIBERALISM, 24th JANUARY, 1891. - NEW ZEALAND'S FIRST LIBERAL CABINET.' Pictured are, standing: Hon R J Seddon (Public Works), Hon A J Cadman (Mines), Hon John MacKenzie (Lands), Hon J G Ward (Postmaster-General),

Hon W P Reeves (Labour); and seated: Sir Patrick Buckley (Attorney-General), Right Hon John Ballance (Premier). Photograph taken in 1891 by an unidentified photographer. Date: [ca Jan 1891]. Source: Natlib NZ

William Pember Reeves was first elected to the New Zealand Parliament in 1887 as an independent member for the seat of St. Albans in Christchurch. He was soon recruited by the Liberals, who supported the interests of labour. When the Liberals were re-elected under John Ballance in 1890, he was given the portfolio of Education, followed by Justice, and then the newly created Ministry for Labour, in which he had the opportunity to give practical, legislative and bureaucratic shape to ideas about social reform which he had been studying for years.

It is worth mentioning that Reeves was given the nickname ‘Undesirable Bill’ by a gleeful press gallery, as a result of one piece of legislation he proposed but that was not passed. The ‘Undesirable Immigrants Act’ would have excluded the Chinese, the crippled, or people with less than £20 in property. It was consistent with the prejudice against Asians displayed in *State Experiments* (1902), where he described the Chinese as ‘dirty, miserly, ignorant, a shirker of social duty, and a danger to public health’ (Child, I 354). But it was not consistent with the socialist paternal programs of social reform that he conducted in other areas, such as the introduction of the old age pension, and the many pieces of legislation designed to establish and regulate working conditions in a number of industries.

This is not the place for a full analysis of Reeves’s political achievements, but it is worth noting that he was himself the author of many of the early accounts of New Zealand’s history and governance, including his own term as Minister in the years between 1890 and 1894. In those four years, the Ballance government, with Reeves as a major instigator and developer of policy and legislation, introduced many innovations and reforms, leading the world in some areas (female suffrage, compulsory arbitration and conciliation). It was those four years which saw Reeves at the height of his powers and influence in his home colony, and which provided much of the material for his later work in England, where he was regarded as an experienced practitioner in social reforms and colonial policies that many of his London associates had only theorised about.

Reeves was committed to socialism and sweeping legislative reforms from the mid 1880s. Despite referring to the extensive holdings of pastoralists as a ‘social pest,’ he did not advocate class warfare or revolution as did a few of his contemporaries in Australia or the Social Democratic Federation in England. Rather, he followed the more moderate (and genteel) line of ‘social reform by [gradual] development’ as developed by the Fabians in the 1880s and 90s.⁵

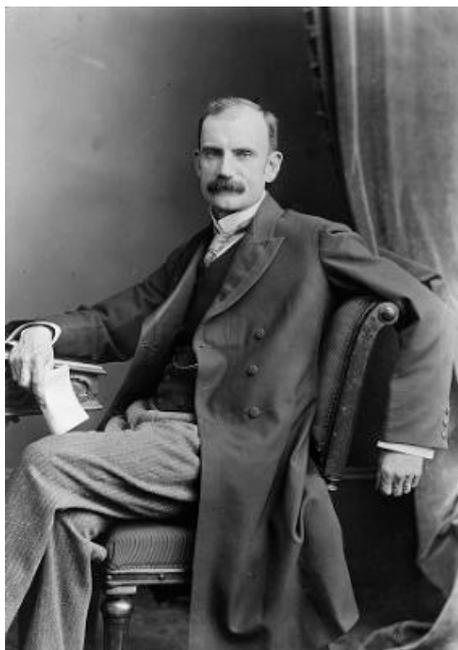
Reeves’s socialism was shared by the woman he married in 1885, Maud (Magdalen) Robison, the daughter of a banker who had moved from Mudgee, NSW, to Christchurch. Later in life, at least, she would prove to have more radical views on sexual morality and marriage.⁶ Maud worked as ‘lady editor’ at the *Canterbury Times* after their marriage, while she studied for a Bachelor of Arts at Canterbury University. She reluctantly gave up her studies when her husband was appointed to Cabinet in 1891 and they moved to Wellington, where there was no university (Fry, *NZDNB*). She was enlisted to the cause of women’s suffrage by Ellen Ballance, the wife of the Premier, and helped to organise the Women’s

Section of the Liberal party in New Zealand. When the vote for women in New Zealand was won in September 1893, Maud vigorously encouraged women to register on the electoral rolls—not least because an election was following two months later, in the course of which she campaigned on her husband’s behalf.

A sketch from the Press Gallery in 1892 remarked on Reeves’s ‘meteoric’ rise to power, commenting patronisingly: ‘it seems but yesterday since he was a profoundly nervous, blushing, and distressingly self-conscious parliamentary neophyte, who coyly disburdened himself of shrinking little sarcasms in the House, and blushed to find them heard.’ The sketch also gives an account of Reeves’s personal style that is echoed in most biographical accounts, and which seems to point to the weak point in his professional armour:

Of his genuine cleverness, his capacity for hard and sustained intellectual toil no one can have the slightest doubt. In all that regards education he is head and shoulders above his fellow Ministers. He has the brain to conceive, the energy and knowledge necessary to carry out difficult affairs, and he has some pluck. But he has not tact, and he does not inspire affection or even personal enthusiasm. Those most closely associated with him in politics admire his head but do not praise his heart. (‘Sketched from the Gallery’ 5).

Frequently described as brilliant but chilly, William Pember Reeves was not always comfortable in colonial political circles. Keith Sinclair asserted that in the 1880s ‘any New Zealand intellectual suffered from loneliness as an occupational disease, but an educated middle class socialist was doubly isolated from his countrymen’ (Sinclair, *WPR* 237). His daughter Amber would later say that he had ‘complete integrity’ but ‘was too thin-skinned for a politician’ (Fry 96); it certainly seems that his career passed through phases in which his intellectual and professional skills were recognised, but his personal style made it difficult for



him to work effectively with others.⁷ After the death in 1895 of Ballance, who had been both mentor and ally, Reeves was clearly out of sympathy with the new leader, the more proletarian and boisterous Richard Seddon. Many years later, when writing his history of New Zealand, Reeves observed blandly that ‘Seddon was not encumbered with either theories or ideals’ (*The Long White Cloud* 301). The clash of personalities (and disagreements about financial policies) created tension; the chance to appoint Reeves to a prestigious and well-paid post in London allowed him to be distanced from New Zealand politics without loss of face for him or the party.⁸

Portrait of William Pember Reeves, possibly taken when he was elected to be a Member of Parliament in 1887.

William Pember Reeves was sent to London in 1896 as Agent-General, to officially represent the interests of the colony he had helped to shape through a slightly precocious career as a journalist, socialist, politician and legislator in the early 1890s. He is rarely mentioned in studies of

Australians in London (Alomes, Bennett & Pender, Bridge et al, Morton, and Pesman), as they tend only to include New Zealanders (such as Arthur H. Adams) who also spent time in Australia.⁹ Reeves went directly from Wellington to London. His visits to Australia were few and brief, and although his wife was Australian-born, his interest in Australian affairs was mostly theoretical. Given the nature of his new job, he was in effect a professional New Zealander.

In London, however, he found that he was not simply a New Zealander or a colonial, he was also an ‘antipodean,’ and not merely from an English point of view—there were networks and publications in which those from Australian and New Zealand cooperated. Soon after his arrival in 1896, Reeves became a Fellow of and regular speaker at the Royal Colonial Institute. He appeared regularly in the columns of the *British-Australasian* newspaper (which provided a focus for Anglo-Australasians in London, including politicians and businessmen as well as writers, artists and socialites).¹⁰ While working within these and other antipodean networks, he expressed chagrin at times about being regarded as an Australasian; in 1901 he felt it necessary to assert in print that New Zealand should not be regarded as a mere ‘offshoot or outlying province of Australia.’ In an article for the *Empire Review* about why New Zealand had not joined the Australian Commonwealth, he expressed exasperation about ‘the common misuse of that sprawling and unscientific word “Australasia,” which causes many a Briton to regard New Zealand as an Australian colony’ (Reeves, ‘The Attitude of New Zealand’ 111).

The three-year appointment was generally seen as a reward for services rendered to the country, but it was not something Reeves himself was initially keen to take up. It seems that Maud had a lot to do with arranging it, as she had spent time in London with Ballance’s wife Ellen, and enjoyed the social and political stimulation to be found there, particularly among suffragettes and Fabians. One of the attractions of the post for Reeves himself was that leaving politics would allow more time for his own writing and study (Sinclair, *WPR* 242). After several years of intense focus on practical aspects of social and political life, he would now be free to follow more literary interests.

Reeves’s appointment as Agent-General placed him in a very different role, and relationship to New Zealand. From designing and pushing legislation through Parliament, he changed his focus to being an advocate for his country in the centre of empire (there was as yet no ‘ambassador,’ since New Zealand was not yet an independent nation). His time was spent attending to business and commerce, immigration and tourism, promoting and defending the interests of New Zealand, writing frequently to the *Times* and making hundreds of after-dinner speeches and public appearances in the name of raising and shaping general knowledge about New Zealand among the British. His role as Agent-General was as much about public relations as politics or bureaucracy; he estimated in 1905 that he had spoken at 267 dinners and nearly as many luncheons in the nine years he had been in the job. He was good at it, but the results were not as enduring as his other work (Sinclair, *WPR* 306).

Because of his official position, Reeves felt he could not join the Fabian Society; he nonetheless published lectures and articles under their *aegis*, and, according to G.B. Shaw and others, contributed greatly to extending the scope of Fabian debates and discussions. In

1897, for instance, he gave a lecture for the Fabians on his favourite topic of compulsory industrial arbitration, an area in which New Zealand was recognised as being ahead of the older countries (Henry Asquith, quoted Sinclair, *WPR* 212; Lloyd *passim*). The lecture drew a crowd of five hundred. Being experienced in social reforms which were still largely theoretical to the Fabians in Britain, whom he had long admired, he came into their company with strong credentials and, as his biographer surmises, a sense of being at least their equal, on political and intellectual grounds.

Reeves had not been as keen to go to London as his wife was, and when the appointment was renewed after the first three years were up, suggested that it be only for one year, a pattern that Prime Minister Seddon continued even after Reeves had decided he would prefer longer terms. He was generally regarded as an extremely effective Agent-General and a credit to his colony, but did not always feel appreciated by his employer, the Prime Minister of New Zealand. He was mystified when in 1904 the job was significantly upgraded from Agent-General to New Zealand High Commissionership (a three year term, with a pay rise from £1500 to £2000 per annum plus travel allowance). He soon learned that Seddon, the Prime Minister who had bundled him off to England, had been contemplating the move himself, but changed his mind. His biographer portrays Reeves as simultaneously successful and disappointed through much of his time in England; more 'at home' culturally than he had been in Christchurch or even Wellington, but frustrated by his inability to actually achieve much in his new position.

According to Sinclair Reeves not only missed New Zealand, but missed politics, and by 1903 felt he had become a 'socialist on a shelf' (Sinclair, *WPR* 306). He contemplated standing for election in Britain, but could not quite afford it or find his way into the Labour party. Then, when Seddon suddenly died of heart failure in 1906, he contemplated returning to New Zealand to try for the leadership of the Liberal Party, but realised that he had been away too long, and that others, notably Joseph G. Ward, were now in a better position to lead. In his 'Memoirs' Reeves wrote simply: 'I was almost heartbroken when I had finally to renounce all hope of re-entering political life' (Sinclair, *WPR* 304), whether in New Zealand or England.

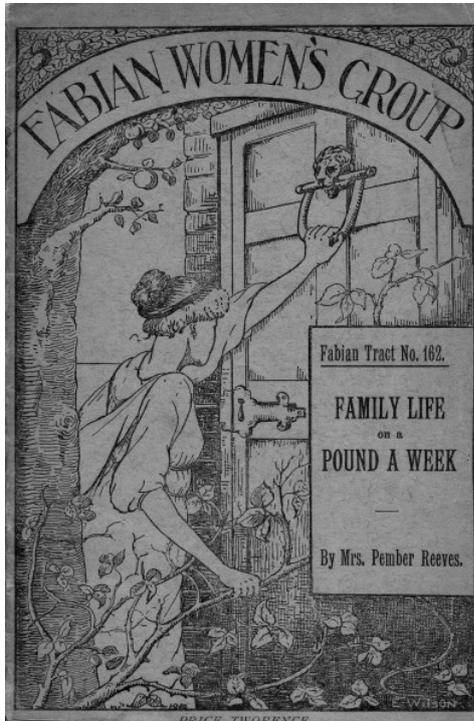
Maud Pember Reeves, Suffragette and Fabian.



By the time Reeves resigned in January 1909 'after eighteen years of public work in or for my Country' (and after some unpleasant political manoeuvring about his reappointment), he and his family were well established in London's Liberal elite. Maud was on the Executive of the Fabian Society, campaigning for female suffrage and equal rights for married women. Her Fabian pamphlet *Round About a Pound a Week* (1912) came out of a four-year study/project investigating the effects of a good diet on pregnant women in the Lambeth district. A pioneering piece of sociological research, it became a bestseller when it was re-published by George Bell (Sinclair, *WPR* 321). Their daughter Amber was doing brilliantly at Cambridge, achieving Double Honours in her Moral Sciences Tripos in 1908, and was also deeply involved with the Fabians, in particular with the Society's gadfly and agitator, H.G. Wells. Reeves was able to resign from the High Commissionership because he had been offered and accepted an appointment as Director of the London School of Economics and Political Science (established by the Fabians). He had

also developed considerable financial skills as Agent-General and was appointed in 1908 as director of the National Bank of New Zealand.

The Fabian Tract on which *Round About a Pound a Week* was based. Source: <http://www.persephonebooks.co.uk/round-about-a-pound-a-week.html>



While remaining interested in New Zealand affairs, Reeves had given up any thought of returning to political life either there or in Britain. His work for Imperial Federation failed to produce the results he and others in both Fabian and New Zealand circles had hoped for,¹¹ and he shifted his political attentions to the expansion and liberation of Greece, and his writing attentions to an autobiography (which was never completed).

From the time of his first visit to Greece and Crete, which Sinclair dates at ‘some time before 1905,’ Reeves took a strong interest in Greek affairs. Working with a small group of Greek sympathisers in London, Reeves founded and chaired the Anglo-Hellenic League to lobby the British government. He was a strong supporter of Eleftherios Venizelos, the Prime Minister whose work for the modernisation and expansion of Greece included joining the Allies in

World War I, against the wishes of the pro-German King (Sinclair, *WPR* 329). Despite his lifelong hatred of conflict (in the form of war and strikes), Reeves was prepared to support Greece’s efforts at imperial expansion, as he had New Zealand’s in the Pacific region, and to intervene in disputes between Greece and the Turks or Albanians. He predicted that the newly-formed Albania would become a hot-bed of feuds and foreign intrigues and advocated that Greece rather than Albania should have control over the region of Epirus (Sinclair, *WPR* 329). He accepted honours from the Greek government, which he would not accept from the British (being faintly anti-monarchist, despite his enthusiastic imperialism). ‘True to his democratic principles, he declined the honour of knighthood, and, like Mr. Alfred Deakin, means to remain plain Mr. Reeves to the end of his days’ (*Table Talk* 4). Sinclair suggests that, feeling fully at home in neither New Zealand or England, Reeves adopted a country: ‘a country of the mind, where the romantic could walk at ease; but also one which called on its citizens for action in causes that touched his deepest self in ways that his work had not done for years’ (Sinclair, *WPR* 328).

Literary Career

William Pember Reeves’s literary output was impressive in range as well as volume, including poetry, short stories, history, social theory, economics, natural history and travelogue, in a variety of media: periodicals, newspapers and pamphlets, as well as books. Most of these were published in England, although some of the poems in *New Zealand and Other Poems* (1898) may have been written earlier. His publications while working as a journalist and politician in Christchurch and Wellington were limited to three volumes of light verse (one edited, the other two co-authored) and a collection of articles on socialism

and capitalism. The move to London seems indeed to have opened the way for him to attempt more ambitious modes of authorship and publication. His writing was almost always grounded in his work as the representative of New Zealand, and his own identity as a citizen of both places.

In his essays and speeches, as well as in his published work, Reeves adopted a stance as a New Zealander *and* an educated man of the world, a transnational colonial well placed to address audiences in London as well as elsewhere from a position of knowledge and authority. In a public lecture given to the Royal Colonial Institute in 1896, Reeves asks rhetorically, ‘what is New Zealand like?’

Let me begin by telling what it is *not* like. It is not very like England. Heretical as that sounds, I think it is true. Neither in climate, outline, vegetation, nor colouring do the two countries much resemble each other. Nor, on the other hand, does New Zealand in the least recall Australia. (Reeves *Fortunate Isles* 6)

He clarifies this: ‘of course, standing in a garden near Christchurch with your feet on a sward of English grasses, with English roses blooming near, English oaks, elms, and ashes in leaf close by, with the English skylark trilling overhead, and English blackbirds stealing your English cherries, you might easily fancy yourself in England, or dreaming’ (6). The scene is one he would later evoke in a poem, ‘A Colonist in his Garden.’

But were you to walk out of the garden far enough to gain a view of the western horizon you would see, many miles across an utterly flat plain, a long high blue wall, and above the top of that another blue wall, and behind that a third barrier... capped or streaked with white snow. You would not need to be told that England shows no such mountain-walls as the Southern Alps.’ (6)

Observing grassy volcanic hills to the east, and the distinctive vegetation of the native forests, he occasionally throughout the lecture pauses to mark differences from Australia as well as England, and note points of comparison with Scotland, Holland, France—but he also gives detailed descriptions of the landscape and terrain without making such comparisons. Treating New Zealand as a tourist destination worthy of attention in its own right, not simply in relation to other places, is a stance that he would later carry over to the writing of its history.

Reeves had excelled in English and History at school, and early in his journalistic career had edited *Canterbury Rhymes* (1883), a collection, of poems from the Christchurch area by ‘sundry hands.’ A first edition had been published in 1866; it was revised and expanded by Reeves while working as a journalist on his father’s newspaper, the *Lyttelton Times*. This anthology was well received, and he went on to co-author two volumes, *Colonial Couplets* (1889) and *In Double Harness* (1891), with an engineer friend, G.P. Williams. Amusing and topical, containing a good deal of political satire as well as comic ballads and a few more serious poems (by Reeves), both books sold well (*Cyclopaedia* 44). Reeves also published a

couple of short stories, one in the *Canterbury Times* and another, 'A Helpless Spectator,' in a short-lived but ambitious periodical *Zealandia: A Monthly Magazine of New Zealand Literature by New Zealand Authors*, produced in Dunedin by William Freeman in 1889-90 (McKenzie 41).¹² Among the first literary publications in the fledgling colony, these efforts were seen as contributing to the foundation of a regional and national literature.

William Pember Reeves was not unusual in including poetry as well as politics and economics among his published writings. It was an established way for British men in public life to demonstrate their education and social class. Colonial administrators such as Reeves (or Henry Parkes, author of 'The Beauteous Terrorist,' a poem about the anarchist Sophia Perovskaia) were keen to establish and promote literary culture in the colonies, and to establish their credentials as young but maturing communities with strong connections back to European centres of culture and opinion.

During his time in England Reeves, as a kind of unofficial poet laureate drew on the facility for writing topical poems demonstrated in *Colonial Couplets* and *In Double Harness* to produce occasional verse for public purposes. In 1925, during a banquet in honour of the All Blacks at the Piccadilly Hotel (which was attended by the Prince of Wales, various dignitaries, and three hundred sportsmen who were permitted to wear lounge suits for the occasion), the rugby team was presented with a 'loving cup' inscribed with verses 'composed by the Hon. William Pember Reeves, which are intended to be given whenever the cup is used in functions in New Zealand.' While this was light verse, and a public event dedicated to celebrating the prowess of the colonial rugby team, it may well have carried a political sub-text. After the Prince of Wales gave the toast, the manager of the All Blacks replied, saying 'he hoped the time was coming when the Dominions would be taken into confidence and given a say in Rugby football. He suggested a sort of Rugby Imperial Conference' ('Grand Finale' 5). Even if it was slightly tongue-in-cheek, the manager's point about imperial/colonial power structures echoes the political ambitions of Reeves and others who had worked to give New Zealand more say in some form of Imperial Federation (Commonwealth).

Reeves also aspired to more serious, literary verse, and did well enough to acquire a reputation as one of New Zealand's first 'real' poets. The well-known 'A Colonist in His Garden' appears, together with 'The Passing of the Forest,' in the *Oxford Anthology of New Zealand Poetry in English* (1997) as among the earliest New Zealand verse. Reeves complained to one historian that he thought his reputation as a statesman had been overshadowed by his literary success (Scholefield 215); if so, it was a short term problem, as the poetry fell out of favour within a couple of decades. He suffered the deprecation of a later generation's reaction against the uncritical enthusiasm of their forebears for the 'first fruits' of New Zealand literature. The elevated style (at its best Wordsworthian or Tennysonian) which impressed or at least pleased colonial readers made his poetry the target of critics from mid-twentieth-century on.¹³ Stafford and Williams argue that the modernist and nationalist reactions against the Victorianism and imperialism of late colonial literature were stronger in New Zealand than in Australia, where there was more interest in constructing a 'local' nineteenth-century canon (13).

In 1898, he published *New Zealand and Other Poems*, including ‘The Passing of the Forest,’ a frequently-anthologised poem that was ‘for many years known to every school child’ in New Zealand (Sinclair, *The Liberal Government* 8), and ‘Nox Benigna,’ the only one of his poems that Allen Curnow could see any merit in:

Now ceases pain.
The myriad brittle straws that make life’s sheaf,
The needle-pricks more hard to bear than grief,
Are gone as dust is washed from oft’ the leaf
When comes the rain. (Reeves, *New Zealand* 13)

In general, the diction of Reeves’s poetry is more ornate, and the formal, but the hymn to ‘New Zealand’ sounds almost like a ballad in the mode of the Australian nationalist poets who were Reeves’s contemporaries:

Though young they are heirs of the ages,
Though few they are freemen and peers,
Plain workers – yet sure of the wages
Slow Destiny pays with the years.
Though least they and latest their nation,
Yet this they have won without sword,
That Woman with Man shall have station,
And Labour be lord. (Reeves, *New Zealand* 3)

This verse was quoted approvingly by Edith Searle Grossman in an essay in the *Westminster Review* on ‘The Woman’s Movement in New Zealand’ in 1908 (cited Stafford and Williams 189). Not all the early reviews were uncritical of Reeves’s poetry, particularly in London. A 1905 review of *New Zealand and Other Poems* (kept among his correspondence) damns with extremely faint praise: ‘The descriptive matter occupies the chief place. It is clear journalist’s work, with a verse occasionally lapsing into prose. Now and again there is a good phrase, a certain want of humour is visible. He has a keen eye and feeling for nature, and some fancy, but no quality of imagination or inner vision is obvious. His humorous pieces are rather heavy. He is a typical New Zealander’ (Reeves Fryer MS).

Although he published the occasional poem in a magazine (e.g. ‘A Colonist in His Garden,’ in the *Monthly Review* in 1905) it was twenty-seven years before Reeves published his next collection of poems, *The Passing of the Forest and Other Verse* (London, 1925). This volume included some revisions of earlier work, as well as some new poems reflecting his experiences of World War I, ‘A Colonist’ and (yes) the achievements of the 1924 Invincible All Black rugby team. While Reeves was a competent versifier, even critics sympathetic to his work describe it as being of more historical than literary interest.

His most influential writings were in history and politics, work for which he was prepared by practical experience as a journalist rather than the formal study of history. By 1890 Reeves

had published in New Zealand as an avowed socialist. The contents of the pamphlet *Some Historical Articles on Communism and Socialism* (1890) appeared first in the *Lyttelton Times* (of which he was then editor) under the pseudonym of ‘Pharos,’ on the advice of the newspaper’s directors. The real identity of the author soon became common knowledge. These articles, copies of which he sent to Sidney Webb (leader of the Fabians in England), showed that Reeves’s radicalism was more theoretically grounded and more wholesale than the ‘somewhat ambiguous liberalism’ of his father (Sinclair, *WPR* 103). With these early essays, Reeves demonstrated a breadth of reading and intellectual sophistication that was consolidated during his parliamentary career.

The thoroughness of the research that Reeves brought to his political work would later be praised by an American advocate of compulsory arbitration, Henry Dumarest Lloyd, who drew extensively on Reeves’s Parliamentary reports in his book *A Country Without Strikes* (1900). Reeves assured the New Zealand Parliament that he had ‘read all that has been written by the authorities on conciliation and arbitration, and found nothing new in them. They all seemed, he said, to have copied from each other.’ He went further, and investigated systems and experiments in many other countries (England, France, Germany, the Australian Colonies and the United States). According to Lloyd, ‘the speeches in which he reported the results of his studies to Parliament in introducing the bill which he framed, stand to-day as the best study which has been made of arbitration and conciliation’ (Lloyd 7).

Reeves’s standing as a scholar, success as a public speaker, regular contributions to periodicals concerned with social, political and economic subjects, and professional experience opened doors for him in publishing—he was invited to contribute chapters about New Zealand to historical and reference works, and in 1896 was commissioned by a British publisher, Horace Marshall, to write a history of New Zealand for their ‘Story of the Empire Series,’ for use in schools. This was quickly done, and prompted him to spend a summer vacation producing a much fuller version with the working title *The Fortunate Isles* (Sinclair, *WPR* 264–65), a phrase already used for his 1896 lecture on ‘Picturesque New Zealand.’ The new title was announced somewhat prematurely in the journal *Literature*, where the columnist (probably Arthur Patchett Martin, an ‘Australian *litterateur*’ who frequented the *British-Australasian* offices and Royal Colonial Institute, and regularly reviewed Australasian writing for *Literature*) also revealed that Mr Reeves, ‘who is widely known in other fields than those merely official, ... is the author of a poem, in epic form, telling of the first travels and discoveries in the Southern Pacific Ocean, of which, as yet, only fragments have been published’ (*Literature* 737). The purveyor of literary rumours refers euphemistically throughout to New Zealand as ‘the Southern Islands,’ in terms which echo the felicitously literary ‘Fortunate Isles.’

The phrase ‘the fortunate [or happy] isles’ was drawn from several ancient Greek historic and poetic sources, and popularised by Tennyson in ‘Ulysses’ (1833). Lord Acton wrote in 1862: ‘Poetry has always preserved the idea, that at some distant time or place, in the Western islands or the Arcadian region, an innocent and contented people, free from the corruption and restraint of civilised life, have realised the legends of the golden age’ (Acton 1). These ‘happy isles’ were reputed to exist far across the sea, idyllic, bounteous and warm.¹⁴ Importantly, they were sufficiently distant and exotic to be rhetorically transposed to the antipodes, where they offered an elegant classical vehicle for the vision of New Zealand as an

island paradise, distinguished from its convict-tainted neighbour, Australia. However, Reeves discovered that the title had already been used for a book about the Canary Islands (which in any case had a more historical claim to the title—and a warmer climate), and settled instead for one drawing on Maori rather than European tradition: *The Long White Cloud—Ao Tea Roa*.

According to Keith Sinclair, *The Long White Cloud*, as the first full-length history of New Zealand presented an intelligent, persuasive, and coherent interpretation of New Zealand's development 'which was almost universally accepted by his countrymen and scarcely questioned before the 1950s' (Sinclair, *WPR* 266).¹⁵ Peter Gibbons comments that it was the first account of New Zealand's history that did not constantly measure the colony by 'metropolitan standards,' quoting Reeves himself as saying simply 'It is my country' (Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction' 57). A fourth edition and significant update was undertaken by A.J. Harrop in 1950, and it was republished in 1973. The Introduction to the 1981 *Oxford History of New Zealand* recalls the 'collectivist optimism' of William Pember Reeves (Oliver viii) as reflecting the temper of the times in which it was written. The publication of the first full history of New Zealand established Reeves's authority, and despite his lack of formal academic training there seems to have been little criticism of his scholarship. A more pertinent objection might have been to the objectivity of his accounts of history in which he himself had been involved. Sinclair observes that while it was more accurate and balanced than anything previously published on the history of New Zealand, a good deal of it could be read as disguised autobiography (*WPR* 266).

Reeves's poetry may have dated quickly, but his prose was vivid and his command of rhetoric strong—as Schofield put it in 1940, later historians with access to more records, may have been able to correct details in his history, but 'none has approached him in the dramatic quality of his writing and the clarity of his prose' (215).

A less popular and more narrowly focused book which nonetheless reached a wide international readership and was read with great interest by social reformers in North America and Europe was Reeves's *State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand* (1902), a two-volume survey of social and economic developments in the Australasian colonies, which incorporated most of the substantial journal articles that he had published (Schofield 216). Without having spent much time in Australia, Reeves managed to produce 'a remarkably readable' account of the Australian colonies' legislation from books, articles and Parliamentary records (Child, vol I xviii). The title emphasises his claim for New Zealand's Liberal government of the 1890s as one of the world's most progressive. Yet the dominant tone throughout is quiet satisfaction, as can be seen in his account of 'The Progressive Movement in New Zealand. He contrasts the dramatic rise of Labour in N.S.W. politics as a separate political party with the role of Radical (working-class) politicians in his own party's transition to power in 1890:

Nothing could have been less theatrical than the entry of Labour into the New Zealand Parliament. To all appearances it merely meant that half-a-dozen quiet, attentive, business-like, well-mannered mechanics took their seats in the House of Representatives. The Labour members did not increase in numbers. Nor did

they supply the Progressives with a policy. But the organised support which they and their unions gave the Radical leaders made all the difference. The Progressive leaders [of whom he was one] already had a policy and now this was carried through Parliament in a thorough, almost uncompromising fashion. (Child, I 76-77)¹⁶

Topics covered in *State Experiments* include preferential voting, federation, ‘the land question,’ age pensions, liquor laws, ‘the exclusion of aliens and undesirables,’ and, of course, labour and arbitration laws, which were Reeves’s greatest source of pride.

The treatment in *State Experiments* of the women’s franchise also reflects his combination of radicalism and social conservatism. Reeves gives a succinct history of the introduction of women’s franchise in the colonies, pointing out that women in New Zealand and Australia had not had to face the vicious opposition their sisters in England would later encounter: ‘Women voters as a class are not specially singled out for ridicule or caricature. A few young gentlemen of Cambridge University, England, expended more stupid insolence on the sex in 1897 than the larrikins of three colonies have cared to display in eight years’ (Child, I 136). (He also suggests that, in practical terms, the invention of the bicycle did more to advance women’s independence.)

There would be a conservative account of the same Liberal government, *State Socialism in New Zealand*, published in 1910 by the American, J.T. Le Rossignol, and New Zealander, W. Downie Stewart, but according to Peter Gibbons it had less influence than Reeves’s work and ‘less style’ (Gibbons, ‘Climate’ 209).

Reeves continued to write and publish after his success with *The Long White Cloud*, contributing the New Zealand chapter for Longman’s *British Dominions* in 1911 (edited by economic historian William Ashley), publishing the occasional poem in a literary journal, and producing regular articles for journals such as *Studies in Economics and Political Science* (Sinclair, *WPR* 321). A.J. Harrop’s Preface to the fourth edition of *The Long White Cloud* (1950) quotes from a chapter Reeves contributed to *The Empire and the Century* in 1905. It is characteristically sober:

As yet the little nascent island race has done nothing in art and hardly anything in literature. In practical statesmanship its name is linked with some bold experiments, rumours of which have gone abroad and which are much disliked by the educated and wealthy classes everywhere. So far its contribution to the world’s intellectual stock has been nought. It seems, therefore, a daring, almost absurd, suggestion to hint that certain aspects of the New Zealand character show some signs of a likeness to the Greek. (Harrop 9)

He is, just as characteristically, ambitious in attempting to locate New Zealand as an antipodean counterpart to Greece, not simply through graceful classical allusions or

resemblances in climate, but as a modern country struggling for democracy against ‘old world’ forces:

The sunny mountainous islands themselves are Greek in contour and atmosphere. You may see there the outlines of the Cretan coast and the colouring of Corfu. And the people, subdivided by sea-straits and mountain ranges, have the local life, keen local jealousies, particularist politics and restless hypercritical interest in public affairs which history associates with the Greek democracies. (Harrop 9-10)

With these allusions, Reeves is not just praising the ‘new’ country by comparing it to the youthful phases of Western Civilisation (echoing Francis Adams’s aspirations for an ‘Athens of the South,’ in *The Australians*, 1893). He is also, very consciously, positioning himself as someone who knows both worlds, the old and the new, in order to explain and represent the new world to the old—and, given the authority lent to publications from London, to represent New Zealand to itself. It is also worth noting that he does not limit the comparison to ancient Greece; like Australian travellers who found in Italy a warmth and spirit that reminded them of home, (coming as they so often did via London), so did Reeves respond to Greece, which he visited several times.

One of the tributes published in New Zealand after Reeves’s death in 1932 lamented that he had not written more, wishing for ‘more “Long White Clouds” and “Passing of the Forest”,’ but acknowledging that it was probably his scholarly ‘fastidiousness’ that prevented him from attempting to update his studies of New Zealand history and society. Recalling his reputation for sharpness in the New Zealand Parliament, ‘Cyrano’ concludes:

...this irony and wit pointed his prose, and helped to make it the best for historical purposes that New Zealand has produced. It also helped to make him one of the best after-dinner speakers of his time in any company. I heard him once at a big dinner in London, and his was the speech of the evening. He was, I think, our best example of a brilliant and really cultivated mind grown in a pioneering society. (‘Cyrano’ 1)

Tim McKenzie, in his discussion of Reeves’s literary career in *Kōtare*, and historian/biographer Keith Sinclair both argue that Reeves took every opportunity as writer and public speaker to present New Zealand as a progressive and egalitarian society. The only point on which I would differ from Sinclair and McKenzie (and it is more a difference of emphasis than substance) is that this cultural work was done by Reeves not *despite* being ‘in exile,’ but precisely because of his position as a New Zealander in Britain. It is the productiveness, rather than the sense of lack, associated with the position of the ‘expatriate’ or transnational colonial that I wish to emphasize, despite the elegiac sense of exile sometimes expressed by those who occupied it.

William Pember Reeves in 1925. Source: Natlib NZ

Conclusion

William Pember Reeves, in disparate fields and disciplines, in genres, and for educated English language readers in a number of countries, spent a good deal of his adult life ‘writing the Fortunate Isles.’ Through his early colonial poetry, he demonstrated the existence of an educated literary element in his native New Zealand—both as a response to the natural environment there, and in the more instrumental sense of developing a new form of European or British culture in a colonial context.

From the time of his removal to London, his contributions to the periodical press (and speech-making) took an educational and informative bent, describing and selling New Zealand to British audiences as well as interesting himself in practical matters of commerce and governance. As a public speaker and journalist, and through his contributions to books about the British dominions, he explained the land of his birth to audiences and readers with whom he was able to adopt a stance of familiarity, assuming a shared understanding of Britishness as a transportable commodity, able to be carried from England to Wellington and recognised in the backblocks of New Zealand. As an historian he set out to chronicle the political and social history of his country from an insider’s perspective, and to inform those in the northern hemisphere about its place in the world.

As a socialist writer and Fabian in New Zealand, William Pember Reeves had taken progressive ideas about socialism and developed them in the crucible of a ‘new society’ in very much the way earlier English radicals (such as Thomas Arnold or Arthur Hugh Clough) might have hoped. As an agitator for both imperial federation and Greek independence during his years in London, he worked actively for ‘internationalism’ in politics (if not in economics). The way in which his political idealism led him to connect New Zealand with Greece in his later years highlights an aspect of his colonial / imperialist worldview that is strongly grounded in cosmopolitanism at the same time as it endorses more conventionally nationalist and imperialist affiliations.

Reeves’s blend of practical statesmanship and theoretical scholarship, and his location at the hub of empire, positioned him to develop and promote a vision of New Zealand beyond the interests of commerce and tourism—as an inherently civilised, albeit unsophisticated society in which rational collective goodwill could, with time and through the working of democratic government, prevail against the forces of greed and injustice that bedevilled the ‘old world.’ This ‘gentlemanly socialist’ vision runs through all his writings, whether poetic or economic, and is particularly explicit in those books in which he wrote most authoritatively about New Zealand, *The Long White Cloud* and *State Experiments*.

William Pember Reeves may have described his condition throughout his life as one of exile, of not fully inhabiting either a New Zealand or an English identity. However, the depth of his multiple cultural affiliations lent him the familiarity with environments and readerships to communicate this vision of New Zealand back to itself, to the British, and again (as we saw with *State Experiments*) beyond the British imperial circle to America and Europe. The move from New Zealand to London thus allowed him not only to write with the clarity of distance and the authority of being in the cultural metropolis, but also to liaise or mediate between the cultural positions of the colonial and the metropolitan. He was able to write the differences between New Zealand, Australia, England, and the rest of the world, as well as writing across them, with the freedom of the colonial transnational.

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¹ The chief problem with the term ‘expatriate’ is that it identifies one country as ‘home,’ and the other to be a dwelling place away from home. The term is problematic for travellers who left the colonies of their birth and/or upbringing to go ‘Home,’ with no clear ideas about whether and when they might return. The uncertainty about where home is, or should be, could be experienced more positively as the capacity to feel ‘at home’ in more than one place, a sensation actively relished by some Australasian travellers. Peter Morton spends several pages discussing problems around the term ‘expatriate’ (2011: 44–49); Alomes notes that for most (white) Australians, expatriation meant a return to the British Isles (1999: 2); others acknowledge the term’s difficulties for colonial Britons (eg Bennett & Pender 2) and trans-Tasmanian sojourners (Magner 369).

² It hardly needs to be said that this is a white settler perspective; Australian readers may expect that the greater respect afforded the Maori by New Zealand officialdom (and reflected in Reeves’s own accounts of his country) could have produced a greater sense of cultural diversity, but it was still possible for an American observer to write in 1900: ‘The New Zealanders have had several great advantages [in their social legislation]. They are a people of one race, and they are isolated. That they are united by race is an accident.’ (Lloyd 180). See also Woollacott 11–12.

³ However, there are different ways of approaching the idea of ‘national identity.’ It might be based on recognition of the self-governing colonies and dominions as having developed their own identities and characteristics, or it might be more self-consciously promoted as ‘radical nationalism’ with the potential to cut loose from empire. The latter has been too frequently assumed in the Australian context, thanks to the neglect of the middle-class masses in our cultural history of the period (Bird, Dixon & Lee xxii–xxxvi).

⁴ The entry on Reeves in the current online *DNZB* (*Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand*) is very good, but was written some time ago by Keith Sinclair, author of the main biography (1965). An earlier edition of the *DNZB* (1940) contained an entry by the editor, historian G.H. Scholefield, who had met and consulted Reeves.

⁵ His chief sources were Ferdinand Lasalle and the British Fabians, rather than Karl Marx (Sinclair, *DNZB*). The Fabian Society, founded in 1884, published *Fabian Essays*, edited by G.B. Shaw, in 1889; these were read and admired by Reeves and his wife Maud. Their son Fabian was born before they left New Zealand in 1895.

⁶ His sexual conservatism became evident in 1909, when his daughter Amber deliberately fell pregnant to her married lover, H.G. Wells, on principles of ‘free love’ which were espoused by some (but certainly not all) of the Fabians. Amber’s pregnancy provoked an interesting spectrum of responses from those around her: her mother was worried about her happiness, tried to break up the affair with Wells, and suggested an abortion (Fry 52); her father was distressed and furious: ‘Unlike Maud, he had not pretended to approve of the new morality,’ and he felt the scandal keenly (Sinclair, *WPR* 317). Beatrice Webb, leader among the Fabian set, and a late convert to the cause of female suffrage, described Amber as a ‘terrible little pagan’ and ‘an amazingly vital person and I suppose very clever’ (Fry 51). Amber married a long-standing admirer, Rivers Blanco White, before the birth of her child. She became the author of several novels about different types of ‘new women’ escaping from middle-class mores (*The Reward of Virtue* 1911 *A Lady and Her Husband* 1914, *Helen in Love* 1916) (Fry 60), as well as articles and books on economics and banking (*The Nationalisation of Banking* 1934, *The New Propaganda* [fascism] 1938, *Worry in Women* 1941, and *Ethics for Unbelievers* 1947), and a chapter on ‘The Role of Women in the World’s Work’ in Wells’s book *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind* (1931) (Fry 100, 105).

⁷ Much later, as Director of the London School of Economics, Reeves was an efficient and effective administrator, but, as a non-University man, felt somewhat out of his element and became notorious for his bad temper (Sinclair, *WPR* 327). He became more and more of a marginalised figure, particularly as ill health and grief for his son (killed in WWI) took their toll, and eventually had to be asked to resign by Sydney Webb, one of the leading Fabians who had appointed him to the position in the first place (Sinclair, *WPR* 334).

⁸ There were Agents-General in London for all the British colonies, including Canada, Nigeria, South Africa and each of the Australian colonies: NSW, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia (the Jamaican post was abolished in 1845). In the 1890s, the posts were filled by former politicians or businessmen with strong interests in their colonies; somewhat unusually, Reeves's predecessor (and former schoolmate) Sir Westby Perceval was subsequently appointed as Agent-General for Tasmania; despite only having spent thirteen years of his childhood in Tasmania, he was evidently appointed on the basis of his experience and extensive business connections in London. As Geoffrey Rice put it, 'after having his appointment renewed at the end of his first three-year term, and thoroughly enjoying his work, Perceval was stunned by the announcement in January 1896 that he was to be replaced forthwith by Reeves. Premier Richard Seddon simply wanted to remove the rather too-clever left-winger from his cabinet. Although Perceval told everyone that he would sooner hand over to his old friend than to anyone else, their friendship failed to survive this public humiliation. ...New Zealand's loss was Tasmania's gain: Perceval served as its Agent-General from 1896 to 1898' (Rice 1).

⁹ Angela Woollacott's *To Try Her Fortune in London* is an exception, as it includes a number of New Zealand women in discussions of Antipodean networks in London. Brigid Magner's essay on 'Trans-Tasman Literary Expatriates' in the *Companion to Australian Literature* (published in New York) is one of the few recent discussions of the traffic of people and ideas between Australia and New Zealand, as well as the northern hemisphere.

¹⁰ The *British Australasian* was a 'newspaper for colonists, merchants, shareholders, land selectors and emigrants' which had various titles between 1884 and 1924: the *British Australasian* (1884-1888); *British Australasian, Australian Times and Anglo-New Zealander* (1888-1892); *British Australasian, Australian Mail and Anglo-New Zealander* (1892); *British Australasian and Australian Mail* (1892-1893); *British Australasian and New Zealand Mail* (1893-1905); *British-Australasian* (1905-1924) (Sleight Appendix). These titles all address a readership that was at once colonial, imperial and transnational. They reflect a series of shifts in relationships and attitudes (as well as ownership and editorship of the paper), particularly with the dropping of 'Australasian' from the title of the *British Australian and New Zealander* (1924-1947) and of the word 'British' from its last change to *Australia and New Zealand Weekly* (1948-1965). The focus of this paper, however, is on the earlier period. 'British Australasian' was the favoured short title for the newspaper even before its formal adoption of that title in 1905.

¹¹ Reeves published his own scheme for creating an 'Imperial council,' which (along with others) was adopted in 1905 by the British Empire League. However, years of work finally resulted in a 'mere verbal change: the Colonial Conference was renamed the Imperial Conference' (Sinclair, *DNZB*).

¹² The only full-text on-line copy of this journal is in HathiTrust, and not available to Australian or New Zealand scholars.

¹³ Patrick Evans dismissed 'The Passing of the Forest' as a 'competent piece of insincerity' (McKenzie 45). Allen Curnow, who represented the modern voice of poetry in New Zealand for much of the twentieth century (as critic and editor as well as a poet himself), described 'The Passing of the Forest' as 'false' and 'inflated,' and the poem 'New Zealand' as 'windy bombast' (McKenzie 45).

¹⁴ Recognition of the reference, thanks to Tennyson's 'Ulysses,' among other contemporary allusions, would not have been limited to men who had received a 'grammar school' education in the classics. The late nineteenth-century reader, who lacked the inestimable benefit of access to *Wikipedia*, would not have needed to know that the islands referred to by Plutarch and other historical sources were generally regarded as referring to the Azores, Canary, Madeira and Cape Verde Islands off the coast of Europe and Africa.

¹⁵ *The Long White Cloud* went through two editions before being updated in 1924, just before his death, by Cecil J. Wray, because Reeves himself was unwilling to undertake the work, having been away from New Zealand during the later period that it covered.

¹⁶ To some extent New Zealand's history since white settlement could be seen as a 'state experiment,' primed to accept 'socialist' ideas. George Bernard Shaw, in a 'Comment' provided to preface *The Long White Cloud's* 1950 edition, suggested that New Zealand's immigrants were forced to rely on the Government for services, 'and were consequently forced into Fabian Socialism without dreaming of Socialism as such' (Harrop 13). In 1900, American social advocate Henry Dumarest Lloyd wrote of New Zealand: 'Its whole career has been a continuous experiment, from zoological to sociological, and it has been specially experimenting in business and politics for thirty years, ever since Sir Julius Vogel, in 1869, established the government in life insurance, which

it has made a great success against the competition of the principal private companies of Australia, Europe and America' (Lloyd 5).