

Ian Irvine

THE GREAT MOTHER (HERMES AND QUEEN VICTORIA)

With federation, which came on 1 January 1901, Australia became a nation, but its loyalty and many of its legal and cultural ties to Britain remained. The mother country still expected military support from its Commonwealth allies in any conflict.

Australia: Lonely Planet, pg.24

When Hermes willed the stamp
upon the colonies of an unconceived Australia
the convicts and miners, squatters and soldiers —
in fearing plural selves — Chinaman and Hollander,
Irishman and Koori — thought only of mother,
The Great Mother, Queen Victoria.

And thus we see Her Majesty
in all colours, dyes and shades of dyes,
The Ornate Mother, The Side-Reel Mother
What need of a world? What need
of an Identity? What need of stamps depicting
bushland or desert, wombat or kangaroo?
Mother England was
the World.

THE \$10 UTOPIA

"It is said that Ned Kelly dreamed of a republic in the North."

Let us play with
the idea of Utopia.

Thomas More in shorts
cranking up the barby
prodding crocodile steaks
his speech staccato studded with
quotes from Plato and Homer,
Augustine and the Romans,
talking ideal futures,
to the bored reviewer.
His new book, *Oztopia*:
New Pathways for a Mean-Spirited Nation
sits beside the chops and sausages, it's
stained by a single drop of tomato sauce.
"This is not a media event,
this is medicine for the soul of a nation!"
says Thomas, then
"Would you like more onion?"

The reviewer — sodden with wine —
stares
at the book's cover
The design?
A leadlight map,
a continent of peoples —
black folk and golden wattles
ghosted in the background.

In the future they'll commission a stamp,
the catalogue listing reads:
The \$10 Utopia

