barbaric and tragic passions and activities in a robust and primitive environment, and that in later generations many a pundit and pedagogue has tried to break or ban poets whose work today is embalmed in dominies' text-books and become the critics' measuring stick to exclude and condemn the concern of even later poets with scenes and themes, locutions and localities too raw and new for the anaemic or unadventurous.

Australia will be expressed:

> She speaks in the surge of age-old song
> from creek-bed firelight half-night long,
> and, the camp all still, in a glint of spears
> and the dream that is hers of a million years.

Jindyism, so long as it does not serve the menacing politics of isolationism or sovereign-state nationalism, is a focus for a fresh contribution to world literature, working from a new core outward to international recognition. That is Jindyworobak's justification. From attention to Australian themes has come its influence and original flavour.

In any case the battle is almost won for Australian writers to be as Australian as their inner urge dictates. Signs are that the noisiest "practising Australians," now that profit and renown can be won that way, will be those who so lately, in criticising or lecturing on Australian literature, denied its existence, or deprecated its quality, ridiculed its aspirations and derided its "drum-beaters."

'Twas ever thus, Jindyworobaks! 'Twas ever thus!

MILES FRANKLIN.

SALUTE TO JINDYWOROBAK.

The Jindyworobak Club has been in existence ten years; during that time it has achieved an impressive list of publications.

The fact of its survival alone would make it remarkable in a country notorious for the speedy decay of mushroom national movements and literary cults, but survival is not enough to prove significance. "Movements" can go on existing long after they have ceased to move; and literary cliques continue to publish long after their publications have either value or life.

Why then has Jindyworobak not only survived but thriven?

Its avowed aim when it was first founded was "the linking up of Australian white culture with its own environment."

The puzzled observer from other lands might ask: why should it be necessary to form a society with such aims in a community which had been developing in its environment for 149 years? That had produced an indigenous Literature—small but authentic Whose painters had learned to re-create its landscape in terms of its own light and colour; and whose people had long ago asserted their right to their own form of political democracy?

Why, in 1937, should the literary heirs of Henry Lawson, Joseph Furphy, "Banjo" Paterson, Miles Franklin, Katharine Prichard, Louis Esson, Bernard O'Dowd, have considered it necessary to make an explicit re-statement of something that had been implicit in the living Australian tradition from the first? Why should it be necessary to emphasise what all other national cultures have always taken for granted?

But it was necessary. Those of us who had grown to maturity in Australia between the two World Wars, did so in an atmosphere of spiritual colonialism. Whatever the reason for this regression from the strong spirit of national self-consciousness that produced the literary and political outburst in the '90's, the fact was that all the cultural influences conditioning the Australian mind in the '20's and early 1930's were tainted with the pernicious anaemia of chronic expatriatism.

The Australian writer was faced with a solid wall of prejudice from publishers and public alike, and met with deep-seated distrust from academic critics who had cut their critical stencils from a pattern that had served well in other lands and times. Of course writers had kept writing, an occasional publisher occasionally brought out an Australian book in small editions, and a rare critic still more occasionally reviewed it. But, all the time underneath something was going on. Our unique physical environment, our geographical isolation, the challenge of a new hemisphere, the rumours of old civilisations crumbling; all these had their effect. So, when Jindyworobak erupted in 1937, I feel it was a small fiery symbol of what was going on within the nation as a whole. And its significance was—not that it said anything new, or revealed any secrets but that it made articulate what for many Australians were inarticulate stirrings that needed concrete expressions to give them power.

There can be no going back in any living culture. But every culture must carry within it the riches of its past to draw nourishment from it and be fertilised again by the interaction of past and present.

For me, "Jindyworobak" has always carried that significance. Through its turning to the strange old continent in which we—the youngest white people—were developing—it gave us a new awareness. Its beliefs were an aesthetic application of the discoveries of modern anthropology and psychology, of sociologists seeking the secret of modern man's rootlessness and of the break-up of the modern communities' culture-patterns. It made explicit what great artists had always known—namely that great art never set out to be "universal." It was "universal" by accident: because the artist—whatever the medium in which he created—was first of all so completely one with his own small community that its problems mirrored the whole world in microcosm; so deeply rooted in his own soil that, imaginatively, all people shared with him the wonder of growth or the tragedy of death.

The early Australian writers knew it and expressed it in evolving their work: the evolving Australian people felt it in their growing pains; but their salty homespun wisdom was in danger of being smothered, under a spate of importations—both cultural and political—with which the garrison-mentality of our pseudo-intellectuals sought to bolster their spiritual homelessness.

This was not an atmosphere in which the writer could flourish; it intensified the problems which had faced Australian writers from the beginning: the problem of translating an unpatterned and formless life-in-the-making in terms of old rich and polished traditions of English Literature; of depicting backgrounds that possessed nothing of conventional romantic beauty to which their eyes or imaginations felt attracted of interpreting in conventional literary terms a country with no literary conventions. Only a few dared attempt the task of interpreting a people in the making with all the crudities of creation still upon them—an unfinished people in an uncharted country and in the 1920's and '30's all the scientific achievements that brought nations into closer contact, conspired with our spiritual expatriatism to defeat our indigenous culture.

Ten years after the formation of the Jindyorobak movement we are seeing a resurgence of that awareness of our own time and place for which "Jindy" has always

fought. The Australian scene, the Australian idiom, Australian problems are assuming significance—not only for the artist—but for his audience. History has re-oriented us and event is proving true in 1947 what in 1937 seemed only the impassioned crying in the wilderness of a new forerunner.

DYMPHNA CUSACK.