

[Page 37 - The Steel Boom Comes to Sydney, 1899](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 39](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1985/6/1

works, and we are likely to offer a bonus to shipbuilding, and why should not an industry such as we are considering not be encouraged. It is admitted by all that industries of this nature are badly needed in Sydney at the present juncture." But spin-off industries did not come. SOURCE OF ALL PROSPERITY Sydney's Great Public Demonstration in Honour of Henry M. Whitney, President of the Dominion Iron and Steel Company. Long before the strains of the band had ceased the ancient hall was crammed to the very buttresses, and beyond and above rolled a perfect sea of expectant faces. Mingled with the subdued voices that sounded like the murmur of a quiet surge upon a rock-bound shore, one could imagine the echoes of tones long since "passed away • the eloquence of days of yore. Gone, gone, with the dust, for are we not beginning a new life? But the calm of the assembly was soon destined to break into a tempest. At the appearance of Mr. Whitney... a shout like the shout of a storm arose, and white handkerchiefs waved in the air like curling foam on the crest of the waves. Truly, it was a brilliant function, and the personification of all that was best and noblest in the town. The church, the law, medicine, commerce, art, mining, agriculture, and army and navy, were all splendidly represented.... Behind Mr. Whitney and the mayor, at the rear of the platform, arose the legend: "Sydney Welcomes Henry M. Whitney," beneath which was ingeniously draped the American and Canadian ensigns, a design that was repeated upon a more modest scale upon every wall. On the southern wall, a motto in brilliant lettering read, "Iron Development is the Gauge of National Prosperity," and on the northern, "Canada Should by all Means Encourage Iron Production." Knots of evergreens were disposed tastefully about, and tiers of flowers depended from the galleries and the edge of the platform and the gallery itself looked like a fairy garden. (Mayor Crowe offered a speech of welcome to Whitney, including:) Long before the mineral resources of Cape Breton attracted your attention as affording an inviting and promising field for large investments, your fame had been wafted to our shores, and we knew somewhat of you as a successful financier and promoter of great enterprises, as a man of sound judgment, vast energy and broad views.... It is not too much to expect that, as the outcome of it, this part of Canada, by reason of its mineral wealth, commanding position and other advantages, will within a few years become the seat of (37)