Clancy of The Overflow
by   AB 'Banjo' Paterson

I had written him a letter which I had, for want of better
Knowledge, sent to where I met him down the Lachlan, years ago,
He was shearing when I knew him, so I sent the letter to him,
Just 'on spec' addressed as follows: 'Clancy of The Overflow'.

And an answer came directed in a writing unexpected,
(and I think the same was written with a thumbnail dipped in tar)
'Twas his shearing mate who wrote it, and verbatim I will quote it:
"Clancy's gone to Queensland droving, and we don't know where he are."

In my wild erratic fancy, visions came to me of Clancy
Gone a-droving 'down the Cooper' where the western drovers go
As the stock are slowly stringing, Clancy rides behind them singing,
For the drover's life has pleasures that the townfolk never know

And the bush hath friends to meet him, and their kindly voices greet him
In the murmur of the breezes and river on it's bars,
And he sees the vision splendid of the sunlit plains extended,
And at night the wondrous glory of the everlasting stars.

I am sitting in my dingy little office, where a stingy
Ray of sunlight struggles feebly down between the houses tall,
And the foetid air and gritty of the dusty, dirty city
Through the open window floating, spreads it's foulness over all.

And in place of lowing cattle, I can hear the fiendish rattle
Of the tramways and the buses making hurry down the street,
And the language uninviting of the gutter children fighting,
Comes fitfully and faintly through the ceaseless tramp of feet

And the hurrying people daunt me, and their pallid faces haunt me
As they shoulder one another in their rush and nervous haste,
With their eager eyes and greedy, and their stunted forms and weedy,
For townsfolk have no time to grow, they have no time to waste.

And I somehow rather fancy that I'd like to trade with Clancy,
Like to take a turn at droving where the seasons come and go,
While he faced the round eternal of the cashbook and the journal-
But I doubt he'd suit the office, Clancy, of 'The Overflow'.