renown. The President of the Moorabbin Shire welcomed the party, dwelling on the fact that Mr. Bent had long been a resident of the district and a Moorabbin councillor and also on the development of the district as a farming community and a seaside resort (the word "beach" was then little used) for Melbourne residents. Bent in reply mentioned the subject of fares and hinted darkly that when he had got rid of a few abuses "including a number of free railway passes now issued he would give the general public an opportunity to travel cheaper".

Then the official party of about 200 proceeded to Bloxidge's Bridge Hotel where tables bearing "every delicacy in season" were laid in a large marquee. And there the speeches flowed. The audience was apparently very interested in the subject of Sunday travel. Mr. Attenborough's (of Dingley) speech in support of it was received with cheers. Mr. Keys (of Brighton and Cheltenham) expressed satisfaction that the Railways Construction Bill then before Parliament contained a scheme for the extension of the line to Hastings and Mornington. Four other members of Parliament spoke and then Sir John O'Shannassy. He talked of his long experience in Parliament and of his association with the Moorabbin district. He had at one time held a government lease of 40,000 acres where he had grazed cattle; in fact, he might be regarded as "the first inhabitant of the district". (here Mr. Hamilton interrupted, "I was here before that," but apparently Sir John did not pause to dispute the point.) Some of the land he had found worthless now brought £20-30 an acre. And so on through the speeches of Mr. Bray and Mr. Gregory, expressing delight at the prospect of advancement which the railway brought and their faith in the future of the district and of Australia generally. Sir John and Mr. Gregory both made reference to something of more than local importance: their wish that the Australian colonies would come to see that their interests were one and that before long they would be one nation instead of six states. It was the shadow of the future; twenty years later federation came.

(Information from Mr. T. Sheehy of the Latrobe Library)

TWO OLD ADVERTISEMENTS. - In 1879 a hotel wasn't just a hotel. It might also be a store, or so it was with the Exchange Hotel at Cheltenham. In a wordy newspaper advertisement of the day the proprietor, J.D.Morris claims to have "one of the best selections of Millinery ever offered.....His "beautiful hats will make the wearers more charming than those witnessed on the Grand Stand on Melbourne Cup Day." On the same page the paper itself advertises Christmas gifts - writing desks, inkstands, albums, children's books. But only one of these would be acceptable from Santa Claus today.