

Ballarat Courier

15<sup>th</sup> March 1890

### **ROLLING UP THE SWAG**

It is very gratifying to me to meet so many persons young and old, rich and poor, who wish me a pleasant tour. They nearly all, I note, say that "it will be a fine holiday for you," but when they say that I am apt to call to mind a picture I once saw of a large party packed in a furniture van going to the Derby. A horse running at liberty in an adjoining field is looking over the hedge at the other horse in the shafts hauling the van along, and says he: "You many call that a holiday, but I don't!" I will certainly have a change of scene, change of persons, and change of work, but, nevertheless, I am not going away with the slightest expectation of having much of a holiday while I am away from Ballarat. I feel assured that every day will bring its work to me and keep me busy enough, and in the hurry-scurry of catching boats and trains I will many a time wish for a real holiday in Ballarat up at the gardens, or in that abode which my friends are pleased to term "Touchstone Tower," and which with regret I have placed in the hands of Messrs Chas. Walker and Co. to be offered for sale on next Thursday, at twelve o'clock. Mr Chas. Walker has the reputation of nearly always effecting a sale; but though I am sure that the sale will better enable me to effect my object, I almost wish that he will not be able to effect his object, for I fear that when I come back I will not be able to get a home with so many advantages and in such a healthy locality. But the work I have taken in hand must be done at any cost of personal predilections, and so, for several reasons, I must be content to sell off, and trust to chance for a house when I come back. "One thing a time, and that done well," is a favourite motto of mine; and so I mean to try it in the case of my extended tour. In relation to that tour, I have many commissions - some very strange ones. Numbers of working men and artisans have told me what to say about their various occupations, if I should be asked in the old country. It appears to me that if these men wrote me each a simple, moderate, authenticated letter in reference to his occupation, occasions might arise in England, or elsewhere, in which such letters might be produced, and have great interest to the workers, who could take them for what they were worth. I certainly do not wish to disparage the country in which I have spent nearly three-quarters of my life, but I as certainly will do nothing to encourage the dumping of paupers in the land of my adoption, and which I know will be all the more endeared to me by my absence. Such letter, therefore, from workers, stating plain unvarnished fact from each man's special point of view and personal experience, would certainly do no harm if they did no good. Anyhow, I will be very glad to take charge of any such letters from either male or female employers; and if such occasion serves, I will promise to make use of them as well as I can, and if so, they will see the result in The Courier from week to week in reporting progress, and possibly further details in the book that I will probably publish when I return to the place that I know best, and love better than any other place on God's beautiful earth, and mingle once more with the men, women, and children who know me, and

who have for me some regard, when I will again be able (in the words of Tom Moore) to

Feel how the best charms of nature improve

When we see them reflected from looks that we love.

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### **IT STILL MOVES**

I strikes me that I will see rather stirring time in my tour. I think it very possible that I will see a general election in Great Britain. Certainly, I will see a number of grate labor strikes, unless indeed the proposed international labor conference in Berlin, tends to make the toilers struggle along uncomplainingly, pending results.

.....Tom then writes regarding political matters overseas.

I thought I would include the following though.....

### **THE MOVING WHEEL PROBLEM.**

Last week I wrote a short "Cornerism" on the problem as to whether the top of a travelling wheel moves faster than the bottom part or not. Since then I have received a letter from a very responsible gentleman, who says that most certainly the top of the wheel travels fastest, and perhaps I many also state that the editor of the Courier has drawn my attention to diagrams and printed matter, arguing to the same effect. I must say that I am not yet quite convinced on this matter, which, I suppose, argues softening the brain on my part. My Grant street correspondent says – "Take, for an instance, a wheel 7 feet in diameter, and run it on a plane surface for one revolution. It will reach 22 feet – that is, the bottom of the wheel – but, in the meantime, the circumference has one revolution of 22 feet, consequently, the top of the wheel has travelled twice as fast as the bottom. Now, if you doubt this, just take a string, tie it to the head of a pin, stick the pin to the head in the circumference of an apple, or anything that is round, roll it on a plane surface for one revolution, then measure the distance it has reached and the length of the string." To make it plainer to me, my good friend says in a P.S.: - "What I have stated in the forgoing may or may not be perfectly correct. Supposing there was a wheel – a stationary one; then in that case the top would travel more than twice as fast as the bottom one. But supposing the bottom wheel was running in the same direction as the one that was running on it, in that case the top of the wheel would still run faster, and in proportion to the speed the under one was running. This would not be so if the wheel was running on the axle in the first case, but will alter it in the other cases, and would make the top of the wheel go faster than the bottom through running on its axle." I must confess that even this lucid explanation has not unmuddled my brain on the moving wheel problem. No doubt, many of my friends will grasp the whole thing at a glance, but I can't, and I have got myself into that state of mind that I really dread to think whether the top of the wheel goes faster than the bottom or the bottom of the wheel goes slower than the top. Perhaps it is that I am rather flurried now making preparations

for my voyage; but if my Grant street friend will have a little patience with me, I may try to think it out on the Ormuz; and if I find that the top of that fine ship goes faster than the bottom, or anything to that effect, I will feel that I have weight lifted off my brain, and I will be very happy to tell my friend all about it per first mail.

### **THE SHAKESPEARE STATUE.**

Talking of the Ormuz reminds me that the day she will sail (the 28<sup>th</sup> March), and when so many of us will be heaving up our immortal souls, as it were, in sea-sickness, the people of Ballarat, with an eye to Shakespeare and the Shakespeare statue, will have an opportunity of enjoying the performance of "Hamlet" in the Academy of Music. Mr T.R. Treloar, the well-known amateur (and hon secretary to the Shakespeare statue committee), has organised this performance, and he himself will enact the part of the melancholy Dane, and not for the first time, for his many friends are wont to speak of his success in that part. This cast, I am informed on good authority, comprises all the best available talent, and all are carefully drilled in their parts. Miss Juno has been specially engaged to play the Queen, a part she performed to Walter Montgomery's "Hamlet." Miss Vallins will play Ophelia, and I am sure she will take the cue from Nature. Mr Treloar does not pretend to get up Shakespeare's masterpiece in the elaborate way that Mr John Robson has produced "Hamlet," "Macbeth," &c., but he can promise a very creditable enactment, which if properly patronised ought to place something handsome to the credit of the Shakespeare statue, which will in due time be another grand ornament to the city to help spread its fame through the world. Certainly, while I am away I won't forget our statuary in speaking of Ballarat, nor will I forget that the statue to A. L. Gordon is also sure to come in the not distant future.

.....Tom then writes regarding Henry George.... (born September 2, 1839, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania—died October 29, 1897, New York City, New York), land reformer and economist who in *Progress and Poverty* (1879) proposed the single tax: that the state tax away all economic rent—the income from the use of bare land but not from improvements—and abolish all other taxes.

### **EDISON'S LATEST**

Mr Edison's very latest invention is a phonographic clock, which will probably come into very common use soon, but it is sure to very startling, if not appalling effects at first. Instead of striking the hour or half hour, the phonographic clock will utter the desired words at the given time, thus it will cry "two o'clock," (quarter-past two," and so on. But that is not all the uses to which it can be put. It can act as an alarm in the morning, and instruct you what to do, such as "Get up and light the fire," or "Hurry to catch the train,". It can be used to remind a young man that he is overstaying his time with Arabella in the parlor, and it could be even used to ask him – "Why don't you propose, and cease fooling?" to the chairman of a public meeting, the clock is expected to prove invaluable, for it would cry "Time," and its cries would admit of no appeal. In schools it will be of great use in calling up the classes with punctuality, and in hotels these clocks will call the boarders to meals, &c. There is no limiting the uses of such a clock.

.....Tom then writes regarding the Judicial Commission and London Poverty which concludes with the following .....

Mr Baxter says: "The mortality amongst the children is frightful, because the poverty of the people is so great that they are unable to call in medical aid, and they refuse to go the workhouse. So overcrowded, too, are the houses that it is a common thing for families to be living for days together in one room with a corpse." I am not unprepared to see somewhat of this sort of thing in London and the other great centres, but I hardly think I can prepare myself for the shock such sights must give one coming from a place like Ballarat, where if people are poor they have room to move about, good air to breathe, and a certainty of speedy burial when they die.