

THE attractiveness of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens was on Saturday crowned by the unveiling of the 12 beautiful statues presented to the City Council by Mr Thomas Stoddart. It is a pity that we have not in this district a few more thoughtful and generous men of the Thomas Stoddart stamp. We have wealthy citizens, but very few feel inclined to leave a memento behind of the riches which they have made in this district. Long will the name of Mr Stoddart live in the memory of the present and future residents of Ballarat. It will be hard to forget it because every one of the many thousands of visitors who will inspect the horticultural and other displays at our gardens must see the name of the beneficent donor emblazoned on the pedestals supporting each of the magnificent statues, distributed along the walks. Mr Stoddart has presented the statues to the City Council on behalf of the people of Ballarat. By purchasing in Italy, at a cost of £1500, the statues, and presenting them to the City Council, Mr Stoddart has in the first place shown that while he was away on a visit to the Old World he did not forget the land of his adoption; and, secondly, in procuring the figures for Ballarat he performed an act that will tend to cultivate a love for the beautiful in the hearts of the young people of the district. The generosity and thoughtfulness of the donor will be productive of much good in the latter respect, for no persons can gaze upon the works of such masters as Bertozzi, Raggi, Marchetti, and Giovanni Udny without feeling a sense of the ability possessed by the sculptors in the way of producing figures in marble strikingly beautiful in appearance and delicate in formation. The demonstration at the unveiling of the statues in Saturday was a due recognition of Mr Stoddart's kindness to the citizens, and we hope that, ere long, it will be our duty to chronicle similar generosity on the part of other wealthy residents.

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