# THE VAGABOND PAPERS: SKETCHES OF MELBOURNE LIFE, IN LIGHT AND SHADE, FIRST SERIES

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The Vagabond Papers: Sketches of Melbourne Life, in Light and Shade, First Series by Vagabond

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# **VAGABOND**

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VAGABOND

# PAPERS

Sketches of Melbonrne Tife, in Tight & Shade

FIRST SERIES

George Bobertson

MELBOURNE, SYDNEY, AND ADELAIDE

1877

1877

### DEDICATED

TO THE

Conductors of "The Argus,"

IN RECOGNITION OF

MANY PRIVATE AND PROFESSIONAL

KINDNESSES.

## PREFACE.

TWELVE MONTHS back I landed in Melbourne, sick in body and mind, and broken in fortune. After the manner of new chums, my first proceeding was to spend all my store. Then I was reduced to the disagreeable alternative of raising money, or becoming, in truth, "a vagabond." In other days and climes, friends have flattered me with commendations of my capacity for "slinging ink": so, not being able to obtain a Government sinecure, I turned my thoughts towards literature. I think that the number of the Australasian in which my first effusion was inflicted upon the Victorian public is about the most interesting ever printed. It started a new era in my existence. Since then, with the kind assistance and patronage of the conductors of The Argus, I have been striking out a new line in Australian journalism, and have been investigating the social life and public institutions of Melbourne from a point of view unattainable to the majority. I have everywhere been on "the inside track," and write from that eligible vantage point.

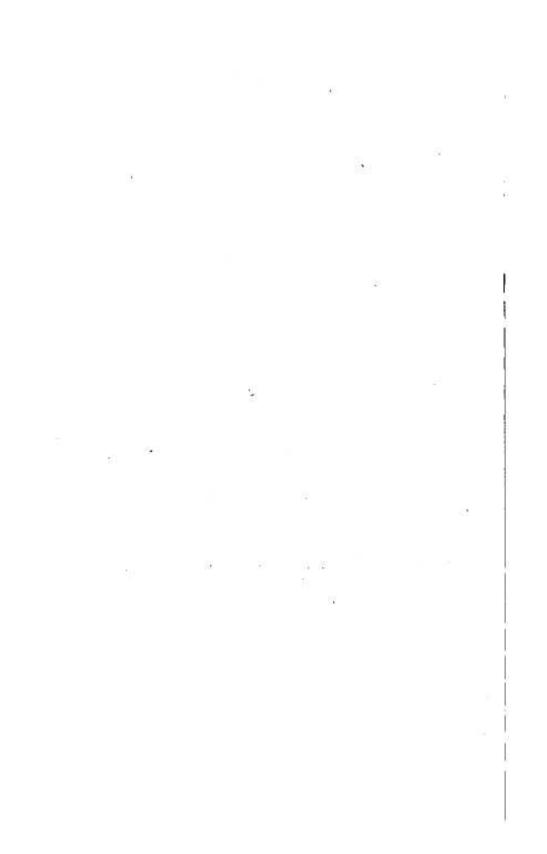
It will be seen that I have had, much to my disgust, to work in the different characters I have assumed. I only trust my hard labours have been repaid by the amusement I have afforded the public. Some modicum of useful information respecting our charitable institutions, and particularly the lunatic asylums, may also be gathered from these revised papers. They are issued in compliance with many requests, and with the sanction of the proprietors of *The Argus*; Mr. George Robertson having boldly expressed his willingness to risk the publication.

"THE VAGABOND."

MELBOURNE, November, 1876.

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## THE VAGABOND PAPERS.

### A NIGHT IN THE MODEL LODGING-HOUSE.

Facilis descensus Averni-the road to ruin is proverbially easy. But the word ruin has many different significations. The Duke of Diddlesex a short time back was said to be ruined. After spending his time and substance in riotous living, he thought to retrieve his fortunes by plunging heavily on the turf. He attempted to break the ring, but, as usual, that institution was too much for the amateur, and the ring broke him. The Duke gracefully retired to the Continent, and lives in elegant ease on the few thousands which yearly fall to his share after payment of the interest on the mortgage on his estates. As for those creditors who are not secured, why they may go hang, the wants of a Duke cannot be curtailed to satisfy some miserable tradesmen who doubtless charged him 50 per cent. above the value of their goods. The Hon. Fisk Allan, exsenator and banker of New York, was ruined last year, failing for 10,000,000 dollars. According to the New York press, the hon, gentleman was universally sympathized with. He still resides in his well-known mansion in Fifth Avenue, and his wife still wears those magnificent diamonds which the Grand Duke