

F. F. BAILLIÈRE

BOOK SELLER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

BY LAUREL CLARK

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE WAS ESTABLISHED BY Act of Parliament in 1856. By 1860 the colonial book seller and publisher Ferdinand François Baillièrè had become a supplier to the University. The vouchers from the University Archives reveal that in February 1861 payment of £180 was made to Baillièrè “in advance for periodicals for 1860 and 1861” and further payments were made in 1862 and 1864.¹

Baillièrè was born in London, but he was a descendant of a French book selling and publishing family, who in the 19th century had international links. He was born on 11 July 1838 at 219 Regent Street London, which was the address of the bookshop his father, Hippolyte, had opened that year.² Hippolyte’s older brother Jean Baptiste had founded the business in Beauvais in France in 1826. Moving to Paris, Jean Baptiste concentrated on selling medical books, having located his business on Rue Hautefeuille, on the Left Bank near the university’s medical faculty. The business moved into publishing, specialising in medical books. In England Hippolyte published over 150 titles, mostly medical and scientific, until his death in 1867. Medical books are still published in England under the Baillièrè name, which is owned by the giant multi-national publisher Harcourt.

The British Library has catalogues from the London bookshop in the 1830s. As well as London and Paris the family also established businesses in Madrid and by 1850 had moved across the Atlantic, establishing businesses in New York and Baltimore. The New York Public Library has city directories which list Baillièrè on Broadway from 1851 until 1868. Two younger brothers of F. F. Baillièrè ran the business in New York. Commencing with a bookshop, they also ventured into publishing, however only in a fairly small way. With businesses in five countries in the 19th century, they were a multi-national company ahead of their time. This innovative spirit was certainly reflected in the business activities of Ferdinand François who brought the business to the far flung colonies of Australia.

Ferdinand François Baillièrè was only 22 when he left Liverpool on 6 August 1860 for Australia, arriving in Melbourne on 30 October. Despite his youth, he was blessed with a family tradition and a healthy background of book trade experience. When Baillièrè arrived in Melbourne the local book trade was already well established, mostly due to the wealth that gold had brought to the new colony. Like most members of the trade at the time he was both a book seller and publisher.³



Ferdinand Baillièrè was paid £180 by the University of Melbourne in 1861 for periodicals. (Voucher: University of Melbourne Archives.)

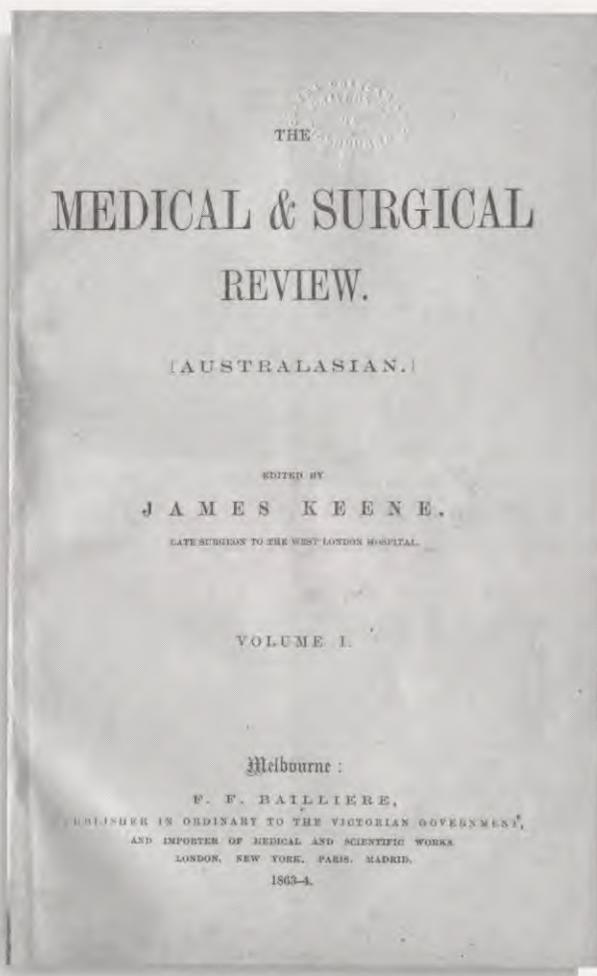
Two years after Baillièrè’s arrival the *Sands & Kenny Directory* (later known as *Sands & McDougall*) lists Baillièrè and 38 other “book sellers and stationers” in Melbourne. Of these, 16 were also involved in publishing. George Robertson (1825–1898), Samuel Mullen (1828–1890), Henry Tolman Dwight (1823?–1871) and E. W. Cole (1832–1918) were the best known figures of the book world at that time. They were all successful book sellers and publishers whose work has been documented. Robertson⁴ and Mullen⁵ became popular book sellers and publishers, the business name still active in the 20th century; Cole⁶ was known for his “Book Arcade” and particularly his “Funny Picture Books”; and Dwight has been chronicled by Ian McLaren, who was one of the University of Melbourne Library’s important benefactors and for whom one of the Library’s most important collections is named.⁷

Baillière too was a successful book seller and publisher; although we do know he supplied the University Library, less is known about his book selling. Due to a lack of sources on Baillière's book selling my research has concentrated on Baillière as a publisher. Nonetheless some important details of Baillière's book selling career have emerged. Selling to the University so soon after his arrival is significant. A link with an important public institution was a coup for his new business and was no doubt inspired by the family link with the university in Paris. He also was associated with another important public institution in Melbourne, the Public Library, now the State Library of Victoria, to which he sold books in the 1870s. This type of association was a hallmark of Baillière's activities as he also developed links with the government in his publishing enterprises.

The Melbourne literary figure James Smith⁸, who was journalist for both the Melbourne dailies *The Age* and *The Argus* and was described as "a voracious and systematic reader",⁹ was one of Baillière's distinguished clients. Baillière advertised the books he sold in his own journal *The Medical and Surgical Review* (P MED). Book sellers' catalogues are a great source of information about their activities. Although only three of Baillière's catalogues were traced, published in 1862, 1864 and one undated,¹⁰ all catalogues offer a substantial number of works for sale and reveal a book seller with good stock and what would seem a flourishing business. He also sold second hand books, medical equipment, medical practices and was at one stage a shipping agent! This certainly reveals his entrepreneurial spirit, although it was common practice then for book sellers to sell other goods. Baillière's first business address was at 51 Temple Court. Within a few months he had moved to 85 Collins Street, previously the address of George Robertson. In 1865 Baillière moved his business to 104 Collins Street where it remained until he died. On 21 December 1861 he married Sophie Frederica Medex at St. Kilda. They had two children.

Baillière's first Melbourne publication was *Journal of Landsborough's Expeditions from Carpentaria, in Search of Burke and Wills* (AB 919.42090431 LAND), which appeared in 1862. The imprint of this title is important for it lists London, New York, Paris, Madrid as well as Melbourne. There would be few books published in Melbourne at this time which could boast such international links. It is important too to note Baillière's business acumen in publishing a work on exploration, especially concerning the Burke and Wills expedition, which was of such notoriety at that time. Baillière continued to publish works on exploration. Still capitalising on the interest in Burke and Wills, in the same year he published *McKinlay's Journal of Exploration in the Interior of Australia: Burke Relief Expedition* (AB 919.4 M158).

This publication is important, as a close examination of the title page reveals "F. F. Baillière Publisher in Ordinary to the Victorian Government". Within three years after his arrival in



Title page of the first issue of *The Medical & Surgical Review (Australasian)*, F. F. Baillière, Melbourne, 1863-1864. (Brownless Biomedical Library, University of Melbourne.)

the colony Baillière had become Government Publisher or at least he claimed to be, for no official record can be found of his appointment. The contemporary press made comment on it, as *The Australasian* 26 May 1880 reported, "We believe that Mr. Baillière claims to be a publisher to the government. We do not know the exact nature of his duties, or how often, and in what cases, his services are called into requisition. But we trust that the Treasurer will be on his guard in dealing with such an accomplished artist". There is certainly some implication of mistrust about his position.

Strangely, not all of Baillière's publications claim his status as "Publisher in Ordinary". Another publication concerning exploration which does claim this status is *J. McDouall Stuart's Explorations Across the Continent of Australia: with Charts, 1861-62* (SpC/Ax 919.4 STUA). Baillière recognised the importance of mining and published *The Mines of South Australia* (AB 622.09942 A936) by J. B. Austin in Adelaide and

Melbourne in 1863. This work also made claim to his status as Government Publisher. Baillière published over 50 works, yet only six titles — other than gazetteers and directories — that I could identify proclaim his official status. His role as Publisher in Ordinary is important, for it was his “official” link with the government that led to a situation which may well have caused his downfall, but for his untimely death.

Baillière is probably best known by librarians and researchers for his gazetteers and directories. The production of these was virtually a staple in colonial publishing.¹¹ The new colony was hungry for information about its geography and similar details. His first directory, *Baillière’s Victorian Gazetteer and Road Guide*, was published in 1865 (MIC/F 4420). Others were published in 1870 and 1879.

Gazetteers were also published in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania. The Victorian gazetteers were compiled by Robert Whitworth. Before coming to Victoria in 1864 to work as a journalist, Whitworth had a varied career as a horse-breaker, journalist, and actor. He was described as a “boon companion”¹² of that 19th century literary celebrity Marcus Clarke, with whom Baillière also became associated. In 1880 Whitworth compiled for Baillière *The Official Handbook & Guide to Melbourne* (SpC/AX 919.45043 OFFI). Once again showing his entrepreneurial flair, Baillière published this work to coincide with the 1881 exhibition in Melbourne. The handbook’s cover states “Exhibition edition”.

In a similar vein to the gazetteers and directories was *Baillière’s Victorian Atlas* (SpC/AX gf 912.945 BAIL), which was published in 1866. Baillière also produced post office directories in Victoria yearly from 1868 until 1880.

Publications of gazetteers and directories gave Baillière credibility and respectability in the Melbourne publishing world, something he in many ways needed due to his association with the notorious doctor James George Beane. The caricature reproduced in *The Medical Journal of Australia* in 1953¹³ is indicative of the furore Beane created in the Melbourne medical world. In a further link with the University of Melbourne, this doctor endowed a generous prize in the Medical Faculty which is still currently awarded. Beane was described in a recent Medical History Museum exhibition as “‘Diamond Jim’ James George Beane who operated with diamond rings on his hands”.¹⁴ It was not surprising that Baillière became a medical publisher in Melbourne for as noted there was a strong family tradition in this area. Baillière came into contact with Beane through Baillière’s first medical publication, *The Medical and Surgical Review*, which ran from 1863 until 1866. Certainly the publication of a medical journal was a way to get a foothold into the publishing world. However, Melbourne at that time boasted three other medical journals. *The Australian Medical Journal* and *The Melbourne Medical Record* opposed the views of *The Medical Record of Australia*, which was owned and edited by Dr C. E. Reeves,¹⁵ known as a “friend and supporter” of Beane.¹⁶



Cartoon of James George Beane, originally published in the *Melbourne Medical Record*, 1875. (Reproduced in *The Medical Journal of Australia*, Vol. 1–40th year, No. 18, 2 May 1953. (Brownless Biomedical Library, University of Melbourne.)

In 1859 Beane had written *Original Contributions to the Practice of Conservative Surgery*, considered “one of the first medical books published in Australia”,¹⁷ which was published by George Robertson. However, it was Baillière who was to publish the works from the pen of Beane. Beane had been tried in 1866 for the murder of a barmaid, who had died during an illegal abortion Beane had performed. The jury failed to agree and he was retried and acquitted the second time.

Considerable criticism was made by Beane and others of the

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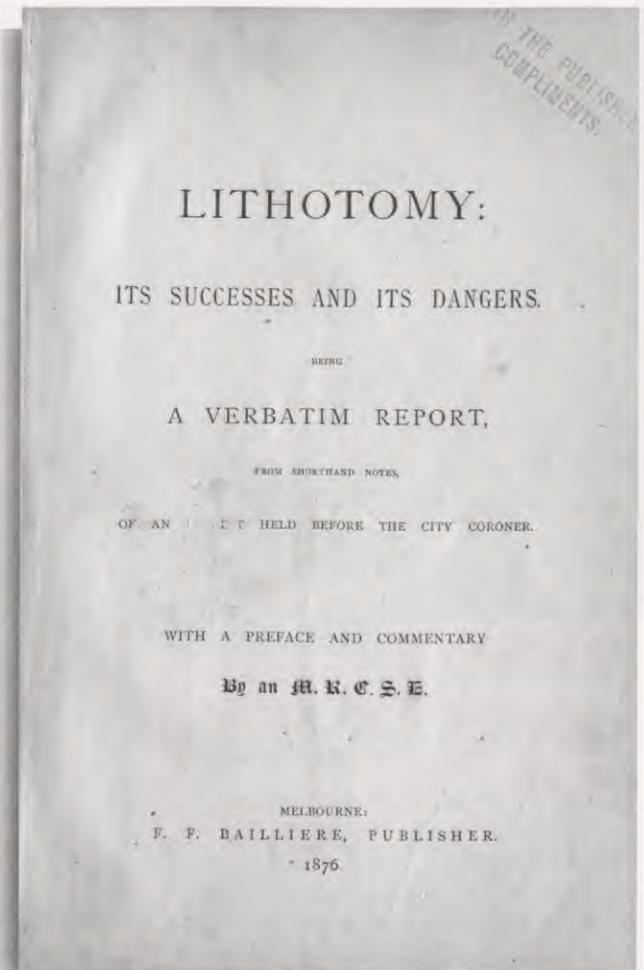
“unsatisfactory medical testimony of the Crown”.¹⁸ Beaney responded with his publication *Dr Beaney's Vindication: with reflections on the inquest held upon the body of Mary Lewis*. This trail not only brought to light some of Beaney's somewhat questionable medical and ethical practices, but also revealed the faction-fighting, petty squabbling and corruption of the Melbourne medical profession.

Baillière first published Beaney in 1872 with *The Generative System and its Functions in Health and Disease* (Bio Med STX 612.6 BEAN). In 1876 Beaney was again in court following the death of a patient during lithotomy. In response to this case Beaney produced *Doctors Differ a Lecture Delivered in the Melbourne Athenaeum* published by Baillière. In this work Beaney attacked his opponents over the criticism he had received in the lithotomy inquest. Subsequently Baillière published further works by Beaney including *Lithotomy: its successes and its dangers* in 1876 (SpC/McL Cr Aust LITH) and a response to the court case. In 1877 he published two further works by Beaney, *The History and Progress of Surgery* (Biomed RB BEAN) and *Surgical Diagnosis* (Biomed RB BEAN). Baillière published eight of the 20 books Beaney had written.

Given Beaney's unhappy relationship with the Melbourne medical establishment, it was perhaps surprising that Baillière so readily associated with him. Perhaps Beaney's somewhat flamboyant style was the attraction. However, their relationship was to be crucial to Baillière's career. In May 1880, in what could be considered a surprise action, Baillière took Beaney to court. The Melbourne *Argus* reported the case over three days.¹⁹ Baillière claimed £650 damages from Beaney. Four hundred pounds was for a commission Baillière claimed he had obtained for Beaney, the rest was printing costs for a sale he had arranged of Beaney's possessions. In 1878 Beaney had travelled to Europe with a letter from the Victorian premier, Graham Berry, which Baillière had obtained for Beaney. Beaney was well received on the strength of this letter, but on return he had refused to pay Baillière for the commission. Even Beaney's worst enemies could hardly have expected what the trial revealed. Claims and counter claims were made between Beaney and Baillière. Although Baillière lost the case, he may have been satisfied for he exposed Beaney as a charlatan. Yet it appears that Baillière had in fact organised writers for Beaney's various works and promoted his dubious causes.

Baillière was one of Melbourne's earliest specialist medical publishers and he also specialised in publishing gazetteers and directories. It appears that he also specialised in publishing authors of some importance in colonial Melbourne. A small note on Baillière's death in the Sydney *Bulletin* makes note of his role in the Melbourne book world. He is described as quite

a “character” in the Victorian metropolis. A few years ago his “den” as he used to call it, was the constant resort of many of the literary and medical celebrities of the city.²⁰



One of the books by James Beaney published by F. F. Baillière, 1876. (McLaren Collection, University of Melbourne Library.)

Included among the celebrities whom Baillière published were the well known lawyer Thomas A'Beckett,²¹ the pioneer geologist Richard Daintree,²² the geologist R. Brough Smyth,²³ the expert on colonial wines, Ignatius Bleasdale,²⁴ the one time premier and educational reformer John O'Shanassy²⁵ and the most distinguished literary celebrity of the time, Marcus Clarke.

In this environment it is of course not surprising that Baillière was also associated with Redmond Barry, who was largely responsible for establishing Victoria's “major cultural institutions”.²⁶ The two most notable institutions are the University of Melbourne, where he was inaugural Chancellor, and the Melbourne Public Library, as the State Library of Victoria was then called.

By 1873 a separate picture gallery had been constructed at the public library. The new gallery was popular and public pressure for illustrative material led the trustees, presided over by Barry, to commission a collection of photographs which Baillière was chosen to publish. Entitled *Photographs of the Pictures in the National Gallery Melbourne* (McLaren



Waterpool Near Coleraine, by Louis Buvelot, 1869: photograph in *Photographs of the Pictures in the National Gallery Melbourne*, published by F. F. Baillière in 1875. (McLaren Collection, University of Melbourne Library.)

Collection, uncatalogued), it was edited by Marcus Clarke. This work is important in the context of 19th century Australian publishing and it was reviewed glowingly in English art journals; *The Graphic* commented on its “diffusion of sound principles of taste”²⁷ and *The Academy* noted “several excellent works by well known English artists that cannot fail to interest students in the Colony who have not Royal Academy exhibitions every year to satiate them with the productions of our English school of painting”.²⁸ It was equally important in the context of Baillière’s publishing achievements for it was a publishing success as the trustees noted: “It is gratifying to be able to state that the demand has exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the publisher”.²⁹ It is one of the earliest catalogues depicting pictorial aspects of an Australian gallery collection.

Furthering his link with Marcus Clarke, in 1877 Baillière published *History of the Continent of Australia and the Island of Tasmania (1787 to 1870)*, compiled for the use of schools (SpCMcL Aust Clarke). Clarke had been commissioned by the Victorian Education Department to write this history for schools. The publication was fraught with difficulty. It became the subject of considerable correspondence between Clarke, Baillière, the historian John Shillinglaw and its printers McCarron Bird. It appears that “Baillière had considerable difficulty in obtaining the manuscript from Clarke”,³⁰ a problem that still exists between writers and publishers. Clarke had obtained the services of Shillinglaw to help with research. Baillière had to pay Shillinglaw for his work.³¹ Despite its prestigious author the book was not the financial success that Baillière expected. Baillière’s letter to Shillinglaw³² requesting the last proofs also mentions the printers’ intention to charge £1 a copy for the delay. Certainly Baillière did not have the same problems as he had with Beaney, nonetheless this publishing venture did not run smoothly.

Baillière may well have had plans to continue publishing the pens of the colony’s well known figures. However his book selling and publishing career came to a sudden halt just one year after his celebrated court case. *The Argus* noted on 31 August 1881, that as a result of an accident on the Hobson’s Bay Railway, “Mr. F. F. Baillière, publisher [was] killed on the spot”. The note on his death in *The Bulletin* recognised his importance in the colony:

Mr F. F. Baillière, the medical bookseller of Collins-street, East Melbourne (sic) was killed in the Jolimont accident ... His recent law suit with the well-known Doctor Beaney, and the disclosure made about its progress, are doubtless fresh in the public mind. Mr. Baillière had not prospered in a worldly sense, and was in difficulties some time ago; but his last smash poor fellow, was the worst of all.³³

His death at 43 years was a tragedy, yet the court case was equally tragic for it ruined him financially, as *The Bulletin* article indicated.

So the University of Melbourne Library is linked from its earliest days with this man who was very much a man of his time, reflecting the entrepreneurial, if not the racketeering spirit of the boom city — “Marvellous Melbourne”— that gold had created. Within 20 short years, Baillière, some time “Publisher in Ordinary” to the Victorian government, publisher of gazetteers and directories, collaborator with the notorious Beaney, publisher of works by notable men of the colony and book seller, had shown the flair and vision of his booktrade ancestors. In doing so he made a unique and distinctive contribution to the Melbourne book trade and the colony of Victoria. ♦

Laurel Clark has worked in Information Services at the University of Melbourne Library for over ten years and is researching the Baillière publishing company.

NOTES

1. Vouchers, 1861, University of Melbourne Archives. I am indebted to Dr Cecily Close for assistance with this information.
2. P. Brown, *London Publishers and Printers c1800–1870*, British Library, London 1982, p. 7.
3. For more information regarding Baillière see L. Clark, *Aspects of Melbourne Book Trade History: innovation and specialisation in the careers of F. F. Baillière and Margareta Webber*, M.A., Centre for Bibliographical and Textual Studies, Monash University, 1997; and L. Clark, *F. F. Baillière: Publisher in Ordinary ... publisher extraordinary*, forthcoming Mulini Press, Canberra.
4. J. Holroyd, *George Robertson of Melbourne: pioneer bookseller and publisher*, Robertson & Robertson, Melbourne, 1968.
5. See *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 5, 1851–1890, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1974, pp. 309–310.
6. C. Turnley, *Cole of the Book Arcade: a pictorial biography of E. W. Cole*, Cole Publications, Hawthorn, 1974.
7. Ian F. McLaren, *Henry Tolman Dwight; bookseller and publisher*, University of Melbourne, Parkville, 1989.
8. See *James Smith Diary*, Mitchell Library B955, 13 May 1863, p. 149 and L. Stuart, *James Smith: the making of a colonial culture*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1989, for comprehensive information on Smith.
9. *Australian Dictionary of Biography* Vol. 6, 1851–1890, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1976, p. 145.
10. *A Catalogue of English and Foreign Medical Books*, No. II, F. F. Baillière, Melbourne, 1863.
A Catalogue of British and Foreign Medical and Other Scientific Books, No. III, F. F. Baillière, Melbourne, 1864.
F.F. Baillière's Catalogue British, American, Foreign New & Standard Works, F.F. Baillière, Melbourne, n.d.
11. See W. Kirsop "Bookselling and publishing in the nineteenth century" in D. H. Borchardt and W. Kirsop, *The Book in Australia: essays towards a cultural and social history*, Australian Reference Publications in association with the Centre for Bibliographical Studies, Monash University, Melbourne, 1988. p. 28.
12. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol 6, 1851–1890. Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1976. p. 395.
13. B. Gandevia "Some Aspects of the Life and Work of James George Beaney", *Medical Journal of Australia*, Vol. 1, May 1953, p. 617.
14. *Quacks, Eccentrics and Alternative Therapies: tales of colonial medicine*, exhibition at Medical History Museum, Brownless Medical Library, 1997.
15. B. Gandevia, "A Review of Victoria's Early Medical Journals", *Medical Journal of Australia*, Vol. II. no. 6, August 1952, p. 184.
16. For fuller details of Beaney and his relationship with the medical world in Melbourne see *Harold Love, James Edward Neill: Victorian virtuoso*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1989.
17. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 3, 1851–1890, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1969, p. 125.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *The Argus*, 26, 27 and 28 May, 1880.
20. *The Bulletin*, 3 September, 1881, p. 13.
21. *Introduction and Notes to the Transfer of Land*, Baillière, Melbourne, 1867.
22. *Report on the Geology of the District from Bacchus March to Bass's Straits*, Baillière, Melbourne, 1864?
23. *Prospector's Handbook: a catalogue of useful minerals in Victoria*, Baillière, Melbourne, 1863.
24. *An Essay on the Wines Sent to the Late Intercolonial Exhibition...*, Baillière, Melbourne, 1976.
25. *Primary Education in Victoria...*, Baillière, Melbourne, 1878.
26. Anne Galbally, *Redmond Barry: an Anglo-Irish Australian*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1995. p. xi.
27. *The Graphic*, 12 September, 1874.
28. *The Academy*, 24 October 1874.
29. "Report of the Trustees of the Public Library Museum and National Gallery of Victoria, with the Reports of the Sectional Committees for the year 1873–4", in *Papers Presented to Both Houses of Parliament*, 1874, Melbourne, p. 67.
30. Ian McLaren, *Marcus Clarke: an annotated bibliography*, Library Council of Victoria, Melbourne, 1982, p. 313. This bibliography contains 16 references to Baillière and thus demonstrates the importance of Baillière's relationship with Clarke.
31. Lee Baillière to Shillinglaw, 30 May 1876, Shillinglaw Papers, Box 81/2, La Trobe Australian Manuscripts Collection, State Library of Victoria.
32. *Ibid.*
33. *The Bulletin*, 3 September, 1881, p. 13.

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