BRITISH BARMAIDS.

Study of the Barmaid System in Great Britain.

ITS RELATION TO BRITISH "PUBLIC HOUSE" DRINKING.

Interesting Incidents and Illustrations of Character in Barmaids and Customers Gathered From Behind Bars in England and Scotland.

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More than nine-tenths of all the tremendous quantity of ale, beer, wine and liquor annually consumed by the men, women and children of Great Britain, is served by women.

There are nearly 200,000 women thus engaged every day in the year. These are, as a class, the prettiest and tidiest women in the three kingdoms. Whatever their relations to society at large, they have characters good or bad, manners and morals, interesting or otherwise, and souls saved or unsaved, though the clergy, church societies and missionaries never seem to have troubled themselves much about the latter.

During the first half of the past ten years I had opportunity for frequent study of these British barmaids. During the last five years I have been able to closely observe them nearly every day and evening of my life. At first thought, many may regard them as hardly meriting serious consideration. It seems to me they are really worth talking about.

English literature is full of the barmaid. Prose and poetry are redolent of her. Those rare old fellows who lived, or rather slept, "in chambers" and dined and wined in public houses while making most of the books which last all along down through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and even as near to us as the first third of the present century, seem to have drawn their inspiration largely from the tap-room fount. Indeed, if we will be wholly honest about it, English literature, the sweetest and grandest on earth, and the spigot have ever known close fellowship. And even if little stress should be laid upon the matter, we owe to the very presence of the barmaids of those days preservation of the sweetest fancies, the most sparkling humor, the most charming situations, and a no mean number of the most chaste and pathetic incidents known to ballad, poetry and fiction. This is not defensive of the barmaid. It is merely historic of her effect on and presence in literature. And I have often thought because it was so, because the puclic house of old and the barmaid of old became British institutions unconsciously, though universally grounded in the human heart, they have survived civilization and decay.

On this line, there are two things about the British people which we in America utterly fail to comprehend. One is the Briton's passionate loyalty to anything sanctioned by prestige and sanctified by precedent into the status of an institution—a British institution. In general, all the more honor to him for that; for in steadfastness and loyalty to a nation's own are preserved all good things, if a few bad ones happen to remain. Another is, the average Briton, high or low, is a being who will retain and sustain all "rights," good or bad, which literature, society, prestige and government have marked out for him, with a pertinacity and bravery which puts to beggarly shame the indifference of most American people to all manner of governmental, monopolistic and other encroachment.

This may seem going a long way for trivial sequence. But it is undeniably true that because the barmaid was long ago elevated into a British institution through English literature; because the older any sentiment or thing, barring the barmaid herself, is in Britain, the more endearingly it is prized; and because your British nobleman or workman will have his wine or "bitters" from the hand of a tap-room divinity whether all the world like it or not, the prototype of the American "bartender" is here unknown, and 200,000 women serve 20,000,000 British people with their brews and spirits to-day. There are other effects, such as the rapid national increase in the consumption of liquors; the increasing power in politics and legislation of the liquor interests; and, worse than all, the startling increase of liquor drinking by all classes of British women, upon each of which vast and sad volumes might be written. But the great host of British barmaids is what the British people like and will have, and, being accounted for, it only remains to speak of this particular class as it individually and collectively exists.

Rural England is a thing of the past; and there never was a rural Scotland or a rural, Ireland where the sweet old inn and the sweet young barmaid were havens and objects of material and ethical delight. With the end of the coaching days was an end of the inns, and with them, long after the old London type had gone, faded away the cherry-cheeked Hebe of the rural hostelry. To be sure, if you are a genuine tramp who will seek odd nooks of provincial England and Scotland for the very love of adventure, you will now and then still find a gentle being in cap and apron, whose very presence behind the cupboard-like bar fills your mind with all manner of chivalrous fancies, until the whole locality takes on a magical seeming as of sunshine and flowers. But if you remain long enough, you will find that even this rural rarity is already tainted by modern unrest. A farmer's daughter, the child of some castle gamekeeper, of a widow lodge keeper or of some underling of the manor demesne, she has already her ambition fixed on Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool or London, or even the bright, busy railway refreshment rooms; and a year thereafter, you will find her, saucy and pert, straight and lofty, sage and calm, one of the great army of public house barmaids, at "fourteen bob a week and found." Probably one-half of the whole are recruited from this source. The other half are from the eternal overplus of city-born girls, who, without positive immoral tendencies, have overborne restraint, and with much vigor, without sex in sentiment and that saving consciousness springing from the true virtue of the glory of sex, have forced their way into this manner of life and employment.

Some curious facts have developed, on certain interesting lines, in my five years' study of these people in England, Ireland and Scotland. As a rule, in my wanderings, I have sought the humbler class of inns for housing; not only from motives of comfort, but as best furnishing various and vagarous forms of character study; inns on a par, as nearly as can be compared, with our American hotels of the "second class." Coming again and again to many of these, I have secured such friendships and confidences as gained for me, in many instances, the agreeable position of "one of the family" with the inn's host or hostess. Not being fitted by inclination or habit for honors in front of these bars, which I have always found gains respect from even those who exist by them, I reached many a snug corner within them. There, in the landlord's or landlady's chair of honor and state, while apparently reading my mail, or scanning the papers, I have been favored at all hours of the day or night with pictures of life in British "Pubs"—as the bar-rooms attached to inns or restaurants are here universally called; and, during their moments of rest between customers' demands, I have received from British barmaids themselves innumerable kindly, honest, and altogether womanly, revelations as to their previous condition, with the mode and motive of their lives.

One of the first series of careful inquiries was made in reference to the sources of supply of females for this vocation. Who were these bright, handsome, graceful women? What manner of social condition was that out of which they came? How could 200,000 women, apparently fit to grace respectable and refined homes, assume such questionable employment as this of their own volition? Of what stuff, in the guise of women, with all of woman's wit, self-poise, and winsomeness in physical graces, could be so vast and anomalous a class be created? These and many similar speculations, along with ceaseless personal inquiries, resulted in the following facts and figures being scattered through my note-book. I do not know whether these averages on about 1,700 will hold true with 200,000. They at least serve as a basis for reputable conjecture; and bring the subject, in its entirety, home to all who all give thought to sociological questions with unusual impressiveness.

Daughters of farmers, villagers, and of various employes on estates of the British nobility, 760; daughters of small tradesmen, 214; publicans' daughters, sisters and other female relatives, 187; factory girls, 34; seamstresses and milliners, 83; divorced wives, 11; school-mistresses, 72; drapers', and other clerks, 39; telegraph operators and postal employes, 6; actresses, variety and otherwise, 13; cashiers, 25; canvassers, 14; unsuccessful singers and music-teachers, 44; mission workers, Sunday-school teachers and "Salvationists," 57; photograph colorists and "artists" generally, 19; "literary" persons—8 of whom had written poems, 6; pamphlets, 4; ballads and book, 2, all of which "had been published," the balance of whom might be classified as "human various"—39; while 13 had been domestics; 18 scullery maids. 7, governesses; and 53 as nursemaids, originally had the molding of the minds and morals of the British youth.

I took these figures to a very noted English thinker, leader and writer, a man whose name is a familiar one in every newspaper and household throughout the English-speaking world. He examined them carefully; seemed lost in reflection for a time; and gave his views regarding the sociological study in rapidly propounded return questions, after our true Yankee fashion.

"You have a great many women in America at the present time known as 'agitators' and 'reformers,' have you not?

"And has not each one a mission or scheme, or a divine call, to gallop, plunge and cavort about, shrieking out all manner of notes of warning regarding the enslavement of her sex?

"And do not these females sound timbrels, beat tom-toms, and override everything established, tender and sacred, in an effort to attract attention to themselves, until the grand, true wives and mothers of your country are whipped into partial indorsement, the clergy bullied into silence and your editors, through a forgivable chivalry, influenced into lending them a quasi support?

"Well, sir, precisely the same female, or rather unfemale qualities, which, through these mental harridans, are accomplishing the gradual unsexing of American women and the revolutionizing and destruction of the American home, are at the root of our cursed barmaid system. It is simply a different form of expression for the same original evil—a female passion for some form of notoriety. Your over-shrewd and under-principled American female who cannot indorse home-making, through the pretense of some heaven-indorsed mission, at once enters upon a career of home-breaking. She poises and poses, higgles and wriggles along a gamut of "isms' and 'ists,' from female suffrage past a score of reforms to Christian Science, theosophy and spiritualism into the capacious bosom of the Over-Soul itself, meantime pausing anywhere just so long as she may continue a disturbing element; ever thrilled and ecstatic over any form of notoriety conducing to what she hysterically imagines has become a 'career.' Our barmaids are just that sort of male females; proud of tap-room publicity; eager for trwdry notoriety; consumed with ambition for a public career. But we are the most fortunate nation. With us, rigid and healthful social limitations force these characters into their proper place at once. Your female birds of prey defile and fatten upon your tenderest and most sacred social and domestic institutions. Ours impinge only upon our lowest national weaknesses."

Many will consider this British comparison and estimate of our suffering sisterhood as a very severe one. Some will be ungallant enough to regard it as an unjust classification of British barmaids themselves. As a rule, I have found them hard-working women. Few ever know a holiday. They are on their feet from twelve to sixteen hours per day. Whatever their natural tendencies, they are perforce honest. The British bar system is entirely different from ours, and still retains much of the flavor of the old custom of the publican and his wife sitting in their own private room and serving customers with liquors through a little shelf-bottomed window; while the publican, his wife, or some member of his family, is never absent from the bar during business hours. This is much protection to the personality of the barmaid. Though you may regard her as lost to all moral sense and the significance of words, through the endless repetition of infamous language in her presence by drunken brutes, brainless cads and clever roues, in the main she remains measureably free from rough treatment. The modern British bar is practically a walled extension of the ancient British bar-window. There is no access to it from the public room. It is as high as your chin. The barmaid herself, behind her silver beer and ale pumps, stands two feet above you, a charming study in black, white and carnation — a black, perfect-fitting gown, a dainty white apron, the glory of the rose in, or on, her cheeks and lips. But after a day and evening of banter and wiles, through which scores of pockets have been emptied, brains beclouded and her master further enriched, the highest and lowest are remorselessly shut from sight of her smiling face. It is a sad, wearied, tired face now. She is practically a prisoner there. She lives with the publican's family. She goes to a room not fit for a dog's keeping, snatches a few hours' sleep, and is again at her post behind the bar to cheer and wheedle the trembling drunkards of the early morning hours. Her meals are snatched between ferocious rushes of customers at the bar. She must know everybody; be cognizant of something about everything; have a soothing word for rum-bedeviled tempers; placidly listen to discussions of herself like those upon an animal; accept direct and infamous insult with invitation in her eyes and honeyed words upon her lips; sympathetically receive confidences of the most sacred or damnable character; in brief, to the end of her days, remain a marble Venus for the worship and slavery of Bacchus' crazed and maddened victims.

For all this she receives from five to twenty shillings per week and "keep." Some masters provide gowns and aprons. The inconceivable degradation of her calling can only be hinted at in the statement of fact that there is but one place in Great Britain—at the refreshment bars of leading railway stations—where refusal to serve one who insults her would not lead to her immediate discharge without "a character." The lowest grade in her vocation is among the sailors' "Pubs," in the slums of Marylebone, Liverpool and East End London; the highest, in the gorgeous London West End cafes. What become of them? Many die at an early age of lung diseases, the result of their foul environment. Few drift into the unnameable classes. Ever seeing the worst side of men, they are armed, though roughly, against temptation. Some become manageresses of inns, "Pubs," of railway refreshment rooms and cafes, with a bevy of younger barmaids under them, of cheap museums and all manner of enterprises at seaside resorts. Many marry reputable men, but drift back into their old lives. English nobility's ranks have been recruited from their number, and recently a wealthy young American of Baltimore wed one of the most beautiful and good of their kind in the three kingdoms—an Irish barmaid at Cork. No honest man can speak of them unkindly as a class. The power behind them is responsible for the evil they accomplish. That is incalculable. Because of their presence countless British women find it easy to become drunkards. Because of their agreeability, sympathetic kindliness and outright blandishments, all grades and conditions of men are more and more enriching the British dram shop with all that should preserve and sanctify the British home.

EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

BEECHAM'S pills cure sick headache.

THE OLD FIDDLER.

Our Correspondent Tells a Good Story of a Story.

THE DIFFICULTY EXPERIENCED WITH HARD-HEARTED PUBLISHERS.

The "Old Fiddler's" Mission Was Not All in Vain, for Jack and His Wife Were Finally Made Happy for Life by Penning It.

[Special Correspondence of SUNDAY UNION.]

NEVADA CITY, Jan. 15, 1891.

I have just been reading "Len's" Christmas story in the SUNDAY UNION of December 28th, and it has brought back to my mind a story which I wrote away back in the years that are gone, when I had more ambition than I have now.

It was not a Christmas story, nor a Fourth of July story, nor a New Year story, nor a Thanksgiving story. There were in it no descriptions of balls, toboggan slides and peach blossoms in December. I suppose that is the reason the *Century, Scribner's*, and every other publication on earth refused it. Stories, to be successful, must have something original about them. Otherwise they are only fizzles; and over and above all things, a story should have a hero, who is so good and true and lovable, and a heroine, who is so sweet and pure and beautiful. Around these two characters one may set in motion a whirligig of villains, thugs, cutthroats, dudes, scheming widows, poor orphans, rich bankers, stableboys, grooms, valets, lords, dukes, earls, kings, queens, jacks, aces, spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs, horses, dogs, shotguns, pretty waiter girls, sentimental typewriters, detectives, book reviewers, actors, supes, and a haughty mother and stern, unmerciful father, with a great fortune that he has made by skinning the poor. Also, a heart that is hard as flint all over, except in one spot, where his daughter, the heroine, has found a soft place about as big as a filbert.

The story I wrote had none of these things in it, and it was a fizzle. That is, it was a fizzle from a literary or dramatic point of view. The title of it was "The Old Fiddler."

There lived in the little village of my youth an old fellow who managed in some way to eke out a lonely, miserable existence by fiddling for parties and balls, and by giving instructions to those who were anxious to become fiddlers too. He was a jovial old fellow, but drank so much whisky that it was only on rare occasions one could find him sober. Nobody knew much about him. He had come from the East at an early day, and that was all he ever told anybody about himself. This naturally set the people of the village to supposing, and they supposed that he was born of "rich and fashionable parents;" that he had loved a girl of low degree, probably one of his father's maid servants; that his parents had driven him away, and that he had gone forth into the world to seek a fortune, and had not found it yet.

One rainy day, when I was kicking my heels together and wondering what I should do to become famous, the old fiddler reeled by, full as a goose, with his violin case under his arm and a jug of brain-stealer in a sack. Immediately I was seized by an inspiration. I sat me down and wrote the story of "The Old Fiddler."

I told how the gentle, blooming youth, who loved music and the daughter of his father's cook, had become estranged from his family; how he had taken his fiddle and his father's curse and gone out into the cold and pitiless world; how he had struggled and toiled for fame; how he had risen high in his profession; how he had learned one day that the cook's daughter had ran away with the head waiter of the stables; how he had taken to drink and gone down steadily until the blooming youth was an old man full of whisky.

Then I worked my story to a pathetic focus. I told how the Old Fiddler had become despised and forsaken, and was jeered at and kicked into the gutter, while the rich people had their snug homes and their great banquets, with never a thought for the friendless old man who tottered by their doors.

Then I got up a great storm that blew the horns from the cattle, the tails from the swine and the tail-feathers from the great rooster that stood on one leg over the Town Hall, and brought with it rain and hail and snow just when all the gay people were assembled at church for the evening service.

I remember now that I wrote up this storm as follows:

"How the wind blew! How the rain came down in torrents, drowning the young ducks, and also drowning the voices of the singers in the church. The street was a raging sea. Old hats, boxes, baskets, chips, chickens, and other things too numerous to mention went sailing by on the muddy flood. * * * * Then there came a change. The wind ceased as suddenly as it had come, and the rain, with a final swish, fled with it. After the rain came the snow, a blinding mass of feathery flakes that gathered and piled themselves upon the earth at a wonderful rate. * * * * *

"Softly now the great organ pealed forth its melody, that echoed along the vaulted roof and stole out upon the snow burdened air.

"In a corner of the door, wrapping his tattered coat about his shaking form, stood the Old Fiddler. Great tears ran down his sunken cheeks and froze upon his unkempt beard as he heard again the grand old song which his mother had sung to him in the days gone by.

"With hearts made tender by the evening service the people were passing silently out into the storm. The old deacon, leading the way with his lantern, stumbled over something in the snow, and pitched headlong over it. He arose hurriedly, his fall greeted with a shout of laughter from the unthinking ones.

"An examination of the object was made.

"'Great heavens!' cried the old deacon, as he bent over it, 'it is the Old Fiddler, froze as stiff as a poker!'

"Tenderly they bore him away; tenderly they cared for the dead. Gently they closed the eyes that could see no more of man's inhumanity to man."

Of course the funeral was described at length, and I know I made the scene at the grave very affecting.

When I had finished the "Old Fiddler," and the finishing of him cost me a great many tears of real sorrow, I sent the story off to the *Century*, and in due time I received a letter saying that the "Old Fiddler" had been placed on file. A month later I received a notice that the "Old Fiddler" had been rejected, and would be returned on receipt of eight cents postage. I forwarded eight cents in stamps to the Century Company and in a week or so the "Old Fiddler" returned, looking somewhat the worse for the trip. Then I sent him off to Harper's, and that company of hard-hearted publishers sent him back so quickly that I am certain that they never thoroughly examined him. The next trip the "Old Fiddler" made was to Scribner. Scribner didn't like him and he came back to me again, looking decidedly shabby, so I copied him all over again, and touched up the storm and made the pathetic parts more pathetic, and fired him off to Frank Leslie. Frank Leslie kept him awhile, and then returned him with thanks.

I began to see now that none of the magazine publishers cared to associate with the "Old Fiddler," and I felt like a father whose first-born is a brilliant fool. But I was determined, and the "Old Fiddler" was sent away again and again. Monro had him a week; *Saturday Night* entertained him a fortnight; the *Argonaut* ran him through with a file; the San Francisco *Call* scanned some of him; the *Overland* refused to touch him; the New York *Ledger* amputated the three last sheets, and sent back the remains with a big blue hieroglyphic on the title page.

That was the last straw.

I began to see plainly that that confounded Old Fiddler was eating his head off in postage and not doing me any good. I had been very certain, when I buried him with the entire population of his village standing up to their necks in snow, that he would go for a good price. With the money thus obtained I intended to publish a novel, and become as famous as Rudyard Kipling. But he didn't go for anything, and so the world lost another great novelist without knowing anything about it. Such things happen, sometimes. When the Old Fiddler came back for the last time he was laid away in a box, with a pair of old rubbers, a box of blacking and a toothbrush that had taken a notion to shed its hair on my whiskers when I used it, and I gave up for a while the idea that I was a born writer, and emigrated to another part of the State.

Several months elapsed before I thought of the Old Fiddler again. But one day, as I sat by my fire, lighting my pipe with a coal and thinking, I heard the most awful squeaking of a fiddle in a house across the street. It was the worst attempt at a hornpipe I ever heard in all my life. I arose hastily and was about to close the door, when I heard a resounding whack, the fiddling stopped with a screech, and a woman's voice, full of tenderness, said:

"O, Jack! Did I hurt you? I didn't mean to strike so hard."

"No, of course not!" roared a deep bass voice. "Of *course* not! But you've busted my fiddle, just the same. What in thunder do you mean, anyhow? Can't you let a man have a little music?"

"O, Jack! I'm real sorry! But you know that horrible screeching drives me wild!"

"Horrible screeching!" roared Jack. "*Horrible screeching!* Great Scott, Mary, you are positively insulting! What do you call 'horrible screeching?'"

"Now, Jack, dear," said Mary, "you know you can't play a little bit, and you know how it tortures me when you try. Why don't you quit? Do you think you will ever become a good fiddler?"

"Do I?" he repeated. "Yes, I do. And I intend to keep on trying until I do. There's just lots of money I could earn fiddling if I was a good fiddler. I'm tired of working in the mines."

There was nothing more said then, and I resumed my seat by the fire. But the Old Fiddler had got into my mind again.

The Old Fiddler was drawn from life. I had penned him just as he was; only he had not yet died in reality. Finally I said to myself:

"Here is a young fellow who would like to be a fiddler and quit mining. He wants to fiddle for a living. If he quits mining and goes to fiddling, he'll become another Old Fiddler. He must be saved. He *shall* be saved."

I ascertained that young man's name. Then I raked the Old Fiddler out of the box, wrapped him up carefully, addressed him to that young man and chucked him into the Postoffice.

That evening I saw Jack bring him home. Through the open window I saw them poring over the manuscript together. Several times I saw Mary wipe her eyes and kiss Jack, but Jack looked stern and angry. The Old Fiddler was working on his soul.

That night, when everything was quiet, I saw Jack steal out with his fiddle under his arm. He crept along the fence until he came to an old well. There was a faint, twanging sound for a moment. Then Jack stole back to the house again.

There has been no more horrible screeching in that house. Jack is working steadily in the mines, and his wife is happy as a bird.

The mission of the Old Fiddler was not in vain.

A. V. HOFFMAN.

OWNING A PAPER.

An Old Victim States Some Cold Truths Without Hesitation.

Many are the ways of making a mark in the world. An advertiser in the *Journalist* asks: "Do you want a paper of your own?"

I should say not. I have had a paper of my own several times, and in each instance the paper had me before I knew it. In the early morning of life it is a beautiful thing to dream over what you would do with a paper of your own; how red-hot editorials on the burning questions of the day would follow each other in bewildering confusion from the point of your facile pen. Oh, yes, it is just lovely to imagine how, enthroned on the editorial chair, or tripod, you dispense hope or despair upon the literary aspirants who hang upon your nod. The pretty girl with a poem is beamed upon benignly; the tattered wretch with a joke is frowned upon darkly. In the realms of imagination it is glory—almost too much for one mortal to bear—to wield the destinies of a paper. But get a paper, and you can get one mighty cheap; you will be surprised to find how many first-class papers there are that can be had for a song, a mere song, if you sing it well; then one by one that great iconoclast, experience, will shatter the statuary in your mind's art gallery. You will find that printers are mercenary and terribly prosaic; though they handle the best thought of the country, they will insist upon pecuniary remuneration sometimes as often as five times per month.

Then the paper man, hard as adamant, refused to change his white paper for anything but currency, and last of all, the world at large, in which you had such faith, that great unconfined sea of popular sentiment which you expected to agitate and set in a seething turmoil, refuses to seethe over your best efforts. The largest and most powerful of your shafts sinks beneath the surface and not a ripple marks its fall. This is bad, to say the least, but perhaps you think you have not struck the right cord, and you try some other—but it's no use. You thought you had the whole world by the coat-tails and could pull it whenever you so desired, but the first yank left you with a handful of straw. In the meantime you have become estranged from your family, not having had time to keep up acquaintance with your wife and children; your digestion is ruined, and you have no temper worth speaking of. In the race for the elusive dollar you find that you are distanced. Then you learn that somehow or other the boot is changed and the paper has you. A few, when they have reached this point, see the situation and are content to lead prosaic lives of hard work. Others, who cannot accept the situation, settle through the Sheriff and retire.

No, not to-day, thank you. I don't wish a paper of my own. It is the scorched rodent that shuns the conflagration.—*Texas Siftings.*

Always in the Front Rank.

[Pomona Daily Times, Jan. 13th.]

The old Sacramento RECORD-UNION has put on a new dress, started a splendid new press, and goes on its way rejoicing. The old UNION has been a stand-by for the northern part of the State for the past twenty-five years, and has always been in the front ranks.

"Most Reliable."

[Dixon Tribune, January 17th.]

The RECORD-UNION came out in a new form and a new dress last Sunday morning. It is now printed on a new Goss press, and its typographical appearance has been much improved. The RECORD-UNION is one of the most reliable and respectable journals on the Pacific Coast, and deserves all its prosperity.

The Old Hog Merely Grunted.

In the midst of a crowd slowly making its way into a theater, a corpulent gentleman who was closely following a pretty girl amused himself by certain tender squeezes and amatory whispers, which at length so annoyed the fair one that, turning her head as far as she could, she exclaimed with great sharpness of tone:

"I wish you would leave me alone, sir."

"Very well, my dear," said her plump admirer, "but pray don't eat me."

"You are in no danger," replied the nymph, "I am a Jewess."—*Scraps.*

A cauliflower measuring 15 inches across the top and weighing 17½ pounds is the largest important farm product in Multnomah county, Oregon.

Salt has been found near Kanapolis, Kan., at a depth of 640 feet. The vein is 240 feet thick.

RUSSIAN TURKESTAN.

Peculiar Characteristics of the Country.

LAKES AND RIVERS SLOWLY BUT SURELY DRYING UP.

Two Distinct Races of People, Divided into Numerous Branches—Peculiar Characteristics of the People and their Customs.

What may be called Russian Turkestan is a spread of country about one-twentieth of the Russian Empire between the Irtish and Oxus. A more varied surface does not exist. Some of the highest mountains of the Himalayas are there, as well as great plains, rich valleys, desert wastes and marshy tracts. The climate is in harmony, the northern portion being often as cold as Greenland, with the summers in the southern as hot as the torrid zone. Drouth is an all-pervading feature. Such a thing as rain in the warm months is unknown, except in some of the mountain districts, and as a result the lakes and rivers are steadily drying up. Where there were ponds and streams within the memory of many of the people, there are now only sandy beds, and hundreds of spots attest the same course of nature in former centuries. The population is divided into the Caucasian and Mongolian races. The Caucasian has two branches, the Aryan and the Semitic, which latter comprises Arabs and Jews. The Aryan has also two branches, the Iranians, called Tajiks, and the Persians, Afghans, Hindoos and Gypsies. The Mongolian race is divided into the Kazaks, Kara-Kirghese, Uzbegs, Turkomans, Tartars, and the Kaimuks, Chinese, Sibos and some others. The leading religious belief is the Mohammedan, then comes Christianity, then the pagans and then the Jews. The male sex is largely in the majority, but why has never been explained.

The Kirghese, who frequent the plains, are not only the most numerous of the people of Turkistan, but they wander over the largest territory. They are divided into the Little, Middle and Great Hordes, each of which is sudivided into races, the races into tribes, the tribes into clans, and these into *auls*, or groups of tents, each living in independence. Their number is estimated at 2,250,000. They are strong, clumsy, with slouching gait, but bold riders. Their sight is so developed that they can see small objects at seven miles' distance. In character the Kirghese is unsophisticated, honorable and brave, until he sees the chance of gain, and then he is prone to thieving. They are also revengeful. The men work hard only when necessity presses, domestic labors being invariably left to the women. They prefer idleness to work, and having food and raiment are perfectly content.

Their raiment resembles that of other natives of Central Asia. Those well off have shirts, but the poor wear next the skin their *khalat*, closely resembling a loose dressing-gown, over which as many other like garments are worn as the weather requires. Commonly the *khalat* is of cotton or a mixture of cotton and silk, but for the rich it is of silk of gaudy colors or velvet. These garments for grandees are sometimes embroidered with gold and silver; others are of fur. Trousers, both for men and women, are of buff or reddish leather, immensely wide and baggy, but found to be so suitable to the climate that the Turkistan soldiers wear them. The shaven head of the Kirghese is first covered by a skull cap called a tibetel, and over this on certain occasions the men wear tall steeple-crowned hats with brims turning up in two horns, made of felt or velvet embroidered with gold. These are for gala days. An equally striking hat among the Adaef Kirghese is hood-shaped of sheepskin. The flaps come down over the shoulders, and although not pretty by any means, it is a splendid protection from the wind and sand when riding over the steppe on a camel. The dress of the women closely resembles that of the men, except the under garment is like a night-shirt. Their heads are wound around with cloth that is allowed to fall down over the breast, making a combination turban and bib. At the back falls a veil or shawl of silk.

Fifteen is the marriageable age, and preliminaries are commenced by the parents of the bridegroom sending a deputation of match-makers to the parents of the bride, offering presents, and among them a dish specially prepared for the occasion of liver and mutton fat, which signifies that they mean matrimony. After this the compliment is returned by presents and a similar dish sent by the girl's parents to those of the bridegroom. The bride's father then summons a meeting of kinsmen to consider the gross amount to be paid for the bride. The *kalim* may consist of forty, sixty or one hundred sheep, or from nine to forty-seven head of cattle, besides which the bridegroom has to give at least two presents of camels, horses, cows or firearms. These things decided, the bride's father sends to the bridegroom's *aul* for the *kalim* and one of the presents, after which the bridegroom takes the other present and goes to see the bride for the first time. The delivery of his present virtually seals the marriage contract, and he is so firmly betrothed that should he die before the time of marriage the intended wife has to go home to his parents and be taken for the wife of the next son. On the other hand, if during the period of betrothal the girl should die, her parents are bound to give instead their next daughter, or in default of one to return the *kalim* or pay a fine.

When the period of betrothal is at an end, the bridegroom goes to the aul of his bride, who is given up by her parents, with a dowery of a tent, a camel or riding horse, cattle, and a bride's head-dress, besides a bed, crockery and a trunk of wearing apparel. On the wedding night the priest places the bride and bridegroom in the midst of a tent, puts before them a covered cup of water, and begins the prayers. Then he asks the contracting parties if it is with their full consent they engage themselves to be married, and three times gives them the water to drink. The completion of a marriage is followed by feasting and games, and then the newly married depart for the bridegroom's aul, with camels carrying the trousseau, and the portion of his wealth which a father gives to each of his daughters on her marriage.

The Kara-Kirghese are essentially a nation of shepherds and breeders of cattle. They are not rich as their brethren in the plains. Very few own as many as 2,000 horses or 3,000 sheep. Also, they have fewer camels; but, on the other hand, possess an excellent breed of oxen for traversing the mountains. Their cows are large, but do not yield much milk. Yaks are kept by them instead. Their cattle-breeding claims far less labor than agriculture, but is exposed to great risks. For the support of a nomad family for a year are required eleven head of large and ten of small cattle, and to provide hay for the winter consumption even of this number exceeds the working power of one household.

When about to move to a new spot the women pack the tents and the men form the cattle in droves. The camp is ready and starts before dawn, the women of the family riding in front. After the oldest come the other women, variously mounted on the top of carpets, tea-kettles and tents, the whole being made to wear, as far as possible, a festive aspect. The length of a stage is from thirteen to seventeen miles, and the *aul* traverses about twenty-five miles in twenty-four hours.

At the place of encampment the wife puts up the tent. The principal parts of a tent are large pieces of felt to cover a frame-work that consists of lintel and side posts for a door, and pieces of trellis work surmounted by poles that meet in the center. On this trellis work are suspended arms, clothes, bags, basins, harness and cooking utensils. Crockeryware is not abundant, and leather has to do duty not only for making bottles, but also pails, some of which are furnished with a spout. Round the walls of the tent are piled boxes, saddles, rugs and bales of carpet, against which the occupants lean, the head of the household sitting opposite the door.

Widely differing in customs and habits are the Uzbegs. Among them the women are kept out of sight of a male stranger, even though he may be a distinguished guest, and he is expected to be amused by dancing boys and musicians. The musical instruments of Central Asia are somewhat limited in number. One resembles a guitar, forty-six inches long, with a sounding-board nine inches by four. Another resembles the flageolet, and has something of the hautboy sound, or between that and the bagpipe. Singing is frequently accompanied by men beating tambourines before a charcoal fire in a brazier, over which from time to time they hold their instrumehtsi to tighten the parchment. The dancing boys allow their hair to grow long, like that of the girls, and dress in long flowing robes and wide trousers. On occasions of dancing they sit upon a piece of felt or carpet, dressed in their long sheepskin hats, which give a somewhat ferocious appearance.

A BALLAD OF THE EAST AND WEST.

Kamal is out with twenty men to raise the border side,
And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that is the Colonel's pride;
He has lifted her out of the stable door between the dawn and the day,
And turned the calkins upon her feet, and ridden her far away.
Then up and spoke the Colonel's son that led a troop of the Guides:
"Is there never a man of all my men can say where Kamal hides?"
Then up and spoke Mahommed Khan, the son of Ressaldar:
"If ye know the track of the morning mist, ye know where his pickets are.
At dusk he harries the Abazal; at dawn he is into Bonair;
But he must go by Fort Monroe to his own place to fare;
So if ye gallop to Fort Monroe as fast as a bird can fly,
By the favor of God ye may cut him off ere he win to the Tongue of Jagai.
But if he be past the Tongue of Jagai, right swiftly turn ye then,
For the length and the breadth of that grisly plain is sown with Kamal's men."
The Colonel's son has taken a horse, and a raw, rough dun was he,
With the mouth of a bell and the heart of hell, and the head of the gallows tree.
The Colonel's son, he's up and away as fast as he can fly,
Till he was aware of his father's mare in the gut of the Tongue of Jagai:
Till he was aware of his father's mare with Kamal upon her back,
And when he could spy the white of her eye he made the pistol crack.
He has fired once, he hasfired twice, but the whistling ball went wide.
"Ye shoot like a soldier." Kamal said, "show, now, if ye can ride."

It is up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as blown dust-devils go,
The dun he fled like a stag of tan, but the mare like a barren doe.
The dun he leaned against the bit and slugged his head above,
But the red mare played with the snaffle bars as a lady plays with a glove.
They have ridden the low moon out of the sky, their hoofs drum up the dawn,
The dun he went like a wounded bull, but the mare like a new-roused fawn.
The dun he fell at a watercourse—in a woful heap fell he—
And Kamal has turned the red mare back and pulled the rider free.
He has knocked the pistol out of his hand—small room there was to strive—
"'Twas only by favor of mine," quoth he, "ye rode so long alive;
There was not a rock for twenty miles, there was not a clump of trees,
But covered a man of my own men with his rifle cocked on his knee.
If I had raised my bridle hand, as I have held it low,
The little jackals that flee so fast were feasting all in a row;
If I had bowed my head on my breast, as I have held it high,
The kite that whistles above us now were gorged till she could not fly."

Lightly answered the Colonel's son: "Do good to bird and beast,
But count who come for the broken meats before thou makest a feast.
If there should follow a thousand swords to carry my bones away,
Belike the price of jackal's meat were more than a thief could pay.
They will feed their horse on the standing crop, their men on the garnered grain,
The thatch of the byres will serve their fires when all the cattle are slain.
But if thou thinkest the price be fair, and thy brethren wait to sup,
The hound is kin to the jackal spawn—howl, dog, and call them up!
And if thou thinkest the price be high, in steer and gear and stack,
Give me my father's mare again, and I'll fight my own way back!"

Kamal has gripped him by the hand and set him upon his feet,
"No talk shall be of dogs," said he, "when wolf and gray wolf meet,
May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in deed or breath,
What dam of lances brought thee forth to jest at the dawn with death?"
Lightly answered the Colonel's son: "I hold by the blood of my clan;
Take up the mare for my father's gift—she will carry no better man!"
The red mare ran to the Colonel's son and nuzzled against his breast,
"We be two strong men," said Kamal, then, "but she loveth the younger best,
So she shall go with a lifter's dower, my turquoise-studded rein,
My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, and silver stirrups twain."

The Colonel's son a pistol drew and held its muzzle end,
"Ye have taken the one from a foe," said he, "will ye take the mate from a friend?"
"A gift for a gift," said Kamal, straight, "a limb for the risk of a limb.
Thy father has sent his son to me, I'll send my son to him!"
With that he whistled his only son that dropped from a mountain crest,
He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and he looked like a lance in rest.
"Now, here is thy master," Kamal said, "who leads a troop of the Guides,
And thou must ride at his left side as shield to shoulder rides,
Till death or I cut loose the tie at camp and board and bed.
Thy life is his; thy fate it is to guard him with thy head.
And thou must eat the White Queen's meat, and all her foes are thine;
And thou must harry thy father's hold for the peace of the border line,
And thou must make a trooper tough and back thy way to power—
Belike they will raise thee to Ressaldar when I am hanged in Peshawur."

They have looked each other between the eyes, and there they found no fault;
They have taken the oath of the brother in blood on leavened bread and salt;
They have taken the oath of the brother in blood on fire and fresh-cut sod,
On the hilt and the haft of the Khyber-knife and the wondrous names of God.

The Colonel's son he rides the mare, and Kamal's boy the dun,
And two have come back to Fort Monroe where there went forth but one.
And when they drew to the quarter guard, full twenty swords flew clear—
There was not a man but carried his feud with the blood of the mountaineer.
"Ha, done! ha, done!" said the Colonel's son. "Put up your steel at your sides,
Last night ye had struck at a border thief, to-night 'tis a man of the Guides!"

Oh, east is east, and west is west, and never the two shall meet
Till earth and sky stand presently at God's great judgment seat.
But there is neither east nor west, border or breed or birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come from the ends of the earth.

—*Rudyard Kipling.*

"Second to No Other Paper."

[Santa Rosa Democrat, January 14th.]

The Sacramento RECORD-UNION has been greatly improved. With the introduction of a new perfecting press it comes out in a new typographical dress and has resumed the publication of Supreme Court decisions in full. The latter will recommend it to the legal fraternity of the State. The RECORD-UNION has returned to its prestine usefulness in other respects, most notably on the tariff issue, and is second to no other paper in the State.

Recovering Tin.

A prize has been given in France by the Society for the Encouragment of National Industry, for a process for recovering tin contained in the wash of water from silks which have been treated with bichloride of tin for the purpose of giving weight. By adding milk of lime to the water, and by properly agitating, the tin settles down in a few hours in the state of oxide, which can be readily collected and disposed of.

MUSIC AND DRAMA.

DUNLOP'S REVIEW OF THEATRICALS IN THE METROPOLIS.

Fannie Kemble's Performance of Julia, in "The Hunchback"—Ready to Hiss—Stage Notes.

Dunlop's *Stage News* of the 10th says: "No absolute novelties were produced in the metropolis during the week. On Monday 'Ganelon' was seen for the first time at the Broadway Theater, although it did service on the road last season. As a spectacle it fills every requir