YORK STATE POLITICIANS.

AN INTERESTING CAMPAIGN FOR MEN AND MUGWUMPS.

Many Important Offices to be Filled and Some Interesting Problems to be Solved—The Work in the Republican Room Yard.

UTICA, June 12.—There are all the necessary conditions and requirements to make the political campaign of this year in this State one of the most interesting and exciting of any that has occurred for some time, except the elections on Presidential years. Aside from the unusual number of officials to be chosen, this year's contest will in a great measure decide whether President Cleveland, in his distribution of patronage and conduct of the Administration since he took possession of the White House, has strengthened or weakened his party. It will tell whether he has drawn back the disaffected element which last year broke away from the Democratic party to which it had been allied, and cast for the Republican candidate for President nearly 100,000 votes in the Empire State alone. It will decide in a measure whether the Democratic party, by the aid of the President, retains or has lost the support of the Mugwumps, and whether the Stalwarts, after contributing to the defeat of Mr. Blaine, are content, and are no longer to be counted as assistant Democrats. On the other side, it will test the ability of the Republican party leaders to unite the old Stalwarts and Half Breeds on the same ticket and harmonize those factions, now that the party has lost control of the disturbing element of Federal patronage, over the division of which it quarrelled and divided. It also will determine whether the Mugwumps have left the Republicans to stay for the present at least; also whether the large class of Irish voters who, for the first time, voted the Republican ticket last year have taken up their abode in that party permanently, burning their Democratic bridges; also whether the Prohibitionists intend to continue their warfare on both parties.

All of these are points far be wholly or partially made clear by this year's campaign, to which the philosophic politicians are already looking forward with much interest, and about which they are speculating and wondering. There is just enough of doubt and uncertainty about each point to increase the interest in the campaign as the election day approaches.

There are likewise more than usual attractions in this year's campaign to the practical politicians. There are more officials to be elected this year than have been voted for at any one election in the State for a number of years. There are, including State officers, Supreme Court Judges and county officials, 414 officers to be chosen at the election in November next, without counting any of the officers under the Government of this city or of any other city which holds its charter election in November. This, of course, means the nomination by the party conventions of a thousand or more candidates, and that number of men will be in the field on election day soliciting the votes of their neighbors and friends. These offices are such as to attract the attention of the local workers as well as the State politicians, because they include places from Governor down to Coroner, while in this city, Buffalo, and some other cities Aldermen and other city officers are to be chosen.

In the first place, the State ticket will embrace a candidate for Governor and a candidate for Lieutenant-Governor to be chosen for a term of three years each, and candidates for Secretary of State, Comptroller, State Treasurer, Attorney-General, and State Engineer, each for a term of two years. Those are all the candidates that will be voted for by the people of all sections of the State. The rest of the officials are elected by districts or by counties. Of these there are thirty-two Senators to be elected for a term of two years, and one hundred and twenty-eight Assemblymen for one year, or in fact an entire Legislature, with all its power, patronage and perquisites, including the lobby, which elects itself.

Next come the Supreme Court Judges, four in number, or one in the place of Judge George C. Barrett of New York, one in the place of Theodore R. Westbrook of the Albany and Ulster district, one in the place of Joseph Porter of the Saratoga and St. Lawrence district, and one in the place of George A. Hardin in the Oneida district. These are all for a term of fourteen years.

The counties of Queens, Schenectady, Suffolk, Tompkins, and Wayne each are to choose a County Judge for six years, and Washington a special Judge for the same term.

The counties of Cattaraugus, Onondaga, Ontario, and Suffolk are to elect Surrogates, and Jefferson a special Surrogate, each for six years. There are also to be elected three of the State Select County Clerks, including the counties of New York and Kings, for terms of three years. Thirty-nine counties, including New York, elect Sheriffs for three years; fifteen counties elect County Treasurers; thirteen counties elect District Attorneys, and Kings county chooses the County Clerk, Register of Ingloster of Deeds, all for a three years' term.

All the counties except four or five elect officials known as Superintendents of the Poor. There are thirty-one of these to be chosen this year. The counties have more than one Coroner each, and there are ninety-three Coroners to be elected this fall, which includes three in the city of New York. This long list of offices will insure the attention and activity of the politicians, while the other features and tests of the campaign are expected to draw out the Mugwumps and theorists.

As a general rule, the practical politicians class the Mugwumps by the list of voters who only turn out on Presidential years, and the others, and either go fishing or stay at home on all election days, save those when a President is to be chosen. They do not believe that the Mugwumps will be a factor at the polls this fall, but expect that they will make a great noise during the campaign. If they do vote, the politicians of both parties will be surprised, and come to the conclusion that the men have changed their habits of voting since they became Mugwumps.

As to the candidates for Governor and other State offices, there is more talk about them on the Republican than on the Democratic side at present. This is not on the part of those seeking the nominations, for they are now canvassing and looking around to see who can best unite the party. There are plenty of names mentioned for the Republican nomination for Governor, but only one, Secretary J. B. Carr, has announced himself a candidate and is seeking the nomination. Republicans are in doubt about their chances for success this fall. This deters those who ordinarily would seek the nomination from making an effort. Mr. Carr has many warm supporters, but the party leaders almost unanimously predict that he will not be nominated for Governor, while his close friends say that he will not take his present place again.

The *Evening Journal* managers at Albany brought out Joseph W. Drexel during the winter as a candidate for Governor, and sent the story around the State that inasmuch as the Republicans had lost the Federal officials to draw upon for a campaign fund, they must provide for a large campaign fund from some other source, or they would have no chance to win, and that Mr. Drexel would spend a half a million if nominated. Whether it was from a want of faith in the half a million part of the story, or for some other cause, the Drexel boom has ceased, and even a faint echo is left. He was developed too early.

For a time there was considerable talk among the party leaders in favor of James D. Warren of the Buffalo *Commercial* and Chairman of the State Committee. The active men in several sections of the State were sounded as to the propriety of the step, but for some reason those connected with that movement now are looking in other directions for a candidate, except, perhaps, Collector Gould of Buffalo, who has not made a sound on the question since President Cleveland appointed Mr. Bissell Collector in Gould's place.

Judge Charles Andrews of the Court of Appeals has notified his friends that he will not accept the nomination, preferring to remain on the bench for thirteen years to the nomination for Governor for three years, with the uncertainties of the campaign. He would be obliged to resign his present place to run for Governor, and stand the chance to lose all. He proposes to let well enough alone. Congressman Frank Hiscock has taken himself out of the list of candidates, and it has been his wish that Senator Denis McCarthy, who is looking for the nomination for Lieutenant-Governor, Both Judge Andrews and Mr. Hiscock announce themselves for McCarthy for that place.

Congressman H. G. Burleigh of Whitehall, who has become one of the most active pipe layers and pipe pullers in the Republican party, has of late headed a movement for Lieutenant-Governor Cannon of New York and Vermont. This move was started under the belief that the Union League Club would come forward and aid in Col. Cannon's election, as the club did in the election of Our Own Evarts to the Senate last winter. Le Grand B. Cannon was one of the chief men in the Union League Club in the movement for Mr. Evarts's election. It is expected, as a matter of course, that Mr. Evarts would take the stump and tell the people in his long sentences about the merits of Col. Cannon as a candidate for Governor. It is now announced that the Union League Club does not take hold with anyenthusiasm of the boom for Mr. Cannon, but has started one of its own for Cornelius N. Bliss, a merchant, who has had closer connection with the local Republican machine during Gen. Arthur's reign than did Col. Cannon, and is, therefore, something of a practical politician. The move for Mr. Bliss has been taken hold of by several politicians, including amateurs and professionals, both inside and outside of the Union League Club. It is announced that it is their intention and purpose to make an alliance with Secretary Carr, putting up Mr. Bliss for Governor and Mr. Carr for Lieutenant-Governor. Some of the prominent men connected with the move are also talking up a scheme for starting a penny morning Republican paper, modelled in form after the Philadelphia *Times*, the expense of starting such a start during the campaign for Bliss and Carr that they can make it permanent. The new paper move, if persisted in, will sink the Bliss boom before it gets far up the political stream.

Ex-Attorney-General Leslie W. Russell's friends insist that St Lawrence is entitled to the nominee for Governor this year, and that Mr. Russell's action in the Senatorial contest suffices him to the position of the head of the ticket, but this boom has not made any perceptible headway.

There is a quiet movement going on in favor of taking William H. Seward of Auburn for Governor, a banker and business man, who resides in the old Seward mansion. This is under the belief that the name of Seward will be a good one to conjure with and reunite the party on, and that William H. Seward's name will revive the old memories and traditions of the early days of the party. The move has made no other headway than the development of a sentiment.

The Mugwumps have intimated that they might support the Republican candidate for Governor this year if the party will nominate Mayor Seth Low of Brooklyn. The Republicans in the interior, northern and western part of the State decline to consider the proposition. They sent missionaries to Brooklyn last winter to investigate Mayor Low's Republicanism. Those missionaries brought back the report that Mayor Low was not true to the Republican national ticket last fall. The rural Republicans announce that no man can be their nominee for Governor this year who was not a true supporter of Blaine and Logan in 1884. The report made in regard to Mayor Low's course rules him out of the list of possible Republican nominees for Governor. There is a class of Republicans who announce that they are willing to make concessions to the Mugwumps, but that the extent of such concessions will be the nomination of Sherman S. Rogers of Buffalo for Governor, who was an Independent in 1882 but an earnest supporter of Blaine in 1884.

The names of Senators T. E. Ellsworth of Niagara county, Ira Davenport of Steuben, and Henry R. Low of Sullivan are also mentioned. So is that of John Swinburne of Albany. The workingmen's paper in Albany is booming Mr. Swinburne as a Republican candidate.

The old Half Breed element in this section some time since trotted George B. Sloan of Oswego out, and Mr. Sloan appeared to be willing, until Senator Warner Miller came around and intimated that he had other uses for Mr. Sloan than that of running him for Governor. Senator Miller has not as yet taken any great interest in the contest for Governor; he has a special interest in a matter nearer home which occupies all his political time. The State Senators elected this fall have a vote on the question who shall succeed Warner Miller in the United States Senate. Mr. Miller, of course, wants to succeed himself, and he is very busy looking over the field and picking out men to run for the Senate in the Republican districts. He wants Warner Miller men in the Senate from all those districts. Mr. Miller and Mr. Sloan have trained together politically for several years and cooperated in several contests, and Mr. Miller wants Mr. Sloan to go into the Senate. Mr. Sloan therefore announces that he is not a candidate for Governor and is at once brought out as a candidate for State Senator in the Oswego and Jefferson district. It is expected that since his make-up with Tom Mott, Judge Multivy, and the other Stalwarts, he will be an favorable candidate for the Senate in that district, and, if successful, will take charge of and manage Mr. Miller's reélection campaign. Senator Miller has selected his man to run in the Madison district and is looking over the field for candidates in his interest in the other districts. He is willing to allow the other fellows to amuse themselves with making Governors last year as they do not interfere with his plans in selecting Miller men for the State Senate.

There are two or three active candidates for Lieutenant-Governor on the Republican ticket. Senator McCarthy heads the list, and is not only making considerable progress in central New York, but expects to secure delegates from the city of New York. Senator McCarthy is strong more in western parts of the State for ex-Speaker Edmund L. Pitts of Orleans for Lieutenant-Governor. He is a full-fledged Half Breed, and is likely to turn up with considerable strength. Both Pitts and McCarthy want the nominee for Governor to be taken from the eastern part of the State. Those two men have no such relations personally that they will be likely to cool their issues and unite their forces against any other aspirant for the place.

James W. Wadsworth has been announced as a candidate for Governor, but it is now stated that he is looking for his old place, the Comptrollership, and will probably get the nomination. He was last year a cross between a Half Breed and an Edmunds Independent, but is now working as a Miller Half Breed.

New York Politics.

OSWEGO, June 13.—No better proof exists that the Arthur-Miller combination which elected Evarts intended to reélect Miller also than the announcement from ex-Speaker Sloan that he is a candidate for the nomination of Senator in the Twenty-first district to succeed Fred Lansing. Mr. Sloan's ambition, however, soars higher than the Senatorship. He would prefer a place upon the State ticket, but in the interest of his friend Miller, whom he did much to nominate in '81, he consents to stand his chances for Senatorial honors.

With Sloan and Sheard in the Senate Miller would feel that his canvass was in good hands. It is claimed by Mr. Sloan's friends that an understanding has been reached between Mr. Sloan and the Stalwarts who have always successfully opposed him, and that the Arthur-Miller alliance at Albany paved the way for harmony. They point to the fact that Mr. T. S. Mott, who has been Mr. Sloan's Nemesis, is now favorable to Mr. Sloan's candidacy as proof that such a truce has been arranged.

The Hon. W. W. Rice, who last year set to Chairman Warren, represented the President in the Evarts boom, is known to be hostile to the selection of Mr. Sloan as Senator, and it is believed that the ex-Congressman will unite with ex-Assemblyman Cullinan in supporting a candidate in opposition to Mr. Sloan, who will be with Tom Platt this year, Senator Miller.

An effort has been made in Oswego county to boom Fred Lansing for Comptroller, but Republicans do not enthuse. The Senator's real ambition is to be nominated Attorney-General, but Jefferson county politicians have an understanding with St. Lawrence regarding the Hon. Charles Skinner's chances in the near future for Congress, which cuts off any opposition to Leslie W. Russell from Jefferson county.

A Fight of Stallions.

From the Cincinnati Enquirer.

I was a boy then in Littekenny, North of Ireland, a small town near where I was raised. Just outside the town was the market. Here the farmers and the horse traders assembled and the stallions of the country were brought. There was one that was kept in a stable some four miles beyond, and one morning as his groom was leadinghim out, to take him to exercise, he crowded him up against the door, and, suddenly making a bound, dragged him to the ground, and was soon off. Finding he was free, he broke into a run straight for the market.

There were a number of animals at market that day, and they pricked up their ears as old Roscommon, splashing through the mud, dashed in. Such a neighing and whinnying was never heard. Several of the bystanders in the market endeavored to catch old Roscommon, but he wouldn't have it, and when any one got too near him he turned and let fly his heels, and everybody got out of his way, thinking he had been bitten by himself only. Hitched to a small post near the centre of the market space was a fine blooded English stallion that had lately been brought over the Channel by one of the wealthy farmers of the neighborhood, and old Roscommon was not long in finding him out. He edged up to where he was, and sniffed at his nose. The English stallion was nervy, and took in the situation at a glance. One toss of his head and the halter that held him snapped like a wisp of straw. The two combatants looked at each other for a moment, then reared and, laying back their ears, snapped at each other viciously. They struck out with their fore feet, hitting each other sounding blows on their fore shoulders. Roscommon flashed to one side, and, making a feint as if to strike, came at the English stallion and grabbed a piece of flesh, hair and all, tearing it out of his neck. He dropped the flesh like a hot potato, and, whiriing, kicked out for the English stallion's rump.

The English stallion was not thoroughly roused, his neck bleeding a stream, his eyes fairly flashed, and quicker than I am telling you he whirled after his antagonist and grabbed him by the neck, holding on and shaking him as a dog would a rat. Roscommon squealed and floundered, but the English stallion kept his hold, doing terrible work with his fore feet against the legs of his opponent, breaking his shins, and at last throwing him down.

For twenty feet around the crowd kept out of the reach of the infuriated animals. The blood spattered their shirt fronts and faces. The men hallooed and the women screamed, and it was little selling of wares that was done. But the Irish horse had no idea of lying down and being trampled to death, so he rolled over in the mud, his four feet striking out in all directions, and was soon on his feet again. He was a sorry-looking object—mud and blood, and a terrible gash on his neck. Yet he was as plucky as ever, and, making a bold dash for the English nag, he snapped a piece of flesh out of the tender part of his nose. This delayed him but for a minute, and drawing up his right fore paw, as the other horse stooped as if to get an under hold, he dealt him a terrible ringing blow that sounded over the whole market place, and we all thought his skull was broken. The Irish stallion gave a terrible snort, shook his head knowingly, drew back a few paces, and, with nostrils distended, kicked at the enemy viciously. The blows told. The ribs, sides, and rump of the English stallion received these kicks; but he was not slow in returning them, with interest, and such a kicking contest was never before witnessed.

At last the Irish stallion let fly his hind hoofs with a terrific force, and broke one of the fore legs of the English stallion, and down to the ground he went. The fight then ended as quickly as it had begun. Roscommon suddenly became as gentle as a lamb, and allowed himself to be led away amid the cheers of the crowd, but he seemed to know that he was the lion of the hour, and he took all the pattings and seemed to understand all the compliments that were paid him just as if he had been a victorious prize fighter led out of the ring and being congratulated by his backers.

"And the English stallion, what of him?"

Poor fellow, they splintered up his leg, and some horse doctor took him in hand to cure him, but blood poisoning or something or other set in, and though he hobbled about in an old pasture for a few months or so, he got a running sore broke out, and the old fellow got so worthless that they had to knock him in the head.

NEW JERSEY WORK PEOPLE.

STATEMENTS GATHERED OFFICIALLY.

They Complain of Indigestion, of the Effects of Strong Drink, of Child Labor, and of Imported Labor, but Some are Contented.

Some interesting statements are made by individual workmen of the different branches of trade and business in New Jersey to the Bureau of Statistics. Thus, glassblowers at Glassboro say that their greatest evil is strong drink, and that the entire prohibition of the liquor traffic would improve their circumstances. Besides that, the short time given for meals makes them eat too fast, and dyspepsia follows. One of them writes: "Have but little time to give to these subjects. Work and sleep is my lot." A glass worker of Bridgeton says: "Our morals are low here, on account of rum." From Williamstown a glass worker writes: "The educated comprise but a few of our trade. Whiskey and beer are the great obstacles here." From Salem a man of the same trade says: "We go into the factory too young and have to work too hard afterward." Another from Woodbury says: "The importation of foreign labor under the contract system is doing us a great injury. They work too hard; eight hours should constitute a day's work instead of ten. Our condition would be improved by doing away with beer." A Camden glass blower says that "the glass blowers of Camden are of a high standard morally, socially, and intellectually." From Bridgeton these cries come: "There are some demagogues among us;" "Many of our men love beer more than their families." "Our intelligence is nothing to boast of."

Of the silk industry a weaver of Wortendyke says that evening schools, technical schools, free libraries and reading rooms, public lectures on topics of the day (except politics), proper encouragement of temperance and musical societies, rigid enforcement of the Excise laws, and more public parks, are needed in his locality.

From Paterson the cry is "fewer hours for silk weavers." "Owing to misrepresentations concerning the condition of this branch (weaving) of the trade, large numbers of operatives have been induced to emigrate from Great Britain and settle here, thus overcrowding the market. These deluded people eventually find that, with the increased cost of living, their condition is no better than formerly." "The importation of foreign labor within the past five years has been very disastrous to this branch of trade." A silk dyer of the same city says: "I have been working since I was 6½ years, and though now 65, I have no money. Silk dyeing is so irregular that many times I have had to go at something else. From October until March or April work is very slack; from the last week in May till the last week in July many hands are laid off, and then they will be a rush, and machinery will run all hours till October. In winter we are kept on short time or laid off. The working people of my class live like the rest of wage workers; they are an ill-fed, ill-clothed, and ill-instructed mass. We are employed any number of hours daily, from one to thirteen, as there is no limit to a day's work, nor does any one know from his day's work is done. For example, last January and February I worked only about thirty hours per week, and had to provide for our little home; while in May and June I had to work from seventy-four to seventy-eight hours weekly in hot, stifling rooms, where the thermometer ranged from 95 to 110 degrees."

A hatter of Newark complains that his trade is being ruined through convict and Italian labor, that it is getting worse every year, while at present no one can make a living at hatting. Springfield and Belleville workers in hats tell the same story.

Those engaged in shoe manufacturing take a more cheerful view. Camden reports that they have improved in a very marked degree, socially and intellectually. In morality, religion, and temperance the trade, they say, stands second to none in the country. Mount Holly adds, "The condition of wageworkers is better now than at any previous period in the world's history."

A tobacco of Newark complains of the length of the public school vacations. He thinks children should be kept at school two hours daily all through the summer, and there instructed particularly in reading, writing, and arithmetic, in which they are wofully deficient.

The cotton and wool employees say that many girls employed in the factories "are cursed with a passion for dancing that has done much to corrupt their morals."

Here is what an iron worker of Trenton writes: "I think moulding is a very healthy trade. At fifty-five I can do as much work as in my younger days, and have not failed in any way except, perhaps, in my eyesight. Most moulders who take ordinary care of themselves and do not drink to excesses are good at 50 years of age. The iron workers of Trenton are, as a rule, moral and industrious. Too many drink a great deal, but not more than other tradesmen. They keep posted on current events, and read the newspapers. Many are members of churches. Our wives and children have saved money, and some own their own homes."

"Foreign labor does not affect the machinists," says a worker of Oxford, "because about eight per cent. only of skilled mechanics who come to this country are machinists, and they are absorbed without any effect on prices."

One of the 400 hands employed by an electric light company at Newark says:

"We work ten hours daily, except on Saturday, when the time is nine hours, although the company pays for ten. From one-half to two-thirds of the labor is more or less unskilled, and these workmen receive $7 to $13 weekly. Tool makers earn from $3 to $3.50 per day, three being at the head of the factory. Probably 100 of the men have families to support on $10 to $12 per week, while many who earn similar wages are single men. Foremen are paid $4 to $6 per day, and laboratory men (thirty or forty) are also well paid. The glass blowers in the incandescent department earn $3 to $3.25 daily, working ten hours. In my opinion the eight hours system, if the machinery would be an eight-hour day, as machinery has so increased his productive power that a few years' work results in a glutted market and consequent depression in trade."

The carpenters of Trenton tell their grievances. One writes: "Better let well enough alone and stop this labor question."

The engineers at Trenton write: "Times too low for the risk they run, and say that almost anybody is allowed to take charge of an engine, whether qualified or not, as long as he will work for small wages. A Jersey City engineer says: "What is wanted, at least in Hudson county, is a requirement that every engineer should pass a suitable examination and obtain a license, and any one acting without it should be punished. So should a manufacturer who employs an unlicensed man. The employment of boys should be prohibited. Young men boys run engines here. If that were prevented, it would benefit us and save a great many lives. There should also be boiler inspection."

CAR 11,088.

It has Been the Scene of Three Murders, and Strange Sounds are Heard in It.

From the Los Angeles News.

"It often starts off on a perfectly level track, and we have to keep the brake on all the while in order to keep it quiet," said Jack Martin, a brakeman on the San Pedro road.

"What's the matter with the car?" asked the person addressed.

"I think it is haunted. At least all the boys say it is. It may and it may not be; but it is certain that the car often moves when no one is near it." The car in question was an old one and stood on a side track. It had just been brought up from San Pedro and had been emptied of six tons of iron for the cable railroad. Continuing, Martin said: "That car has a strange history. No less than three murders have been committed in it. Three years ago it was brought out from Boston loaded with fine furniture for a hotel in Sacramento. Somewhere in Nevada the door was broken open and two tramps entered and closed the door. They were anxious to get to Frisco, and being supplied with food and water they proposed to go through without charge. No one knows how the deed was done; but when the car was opened at Sacramento the body of one of the tramps was discovered. His throat was cut and he was stabbed. The other tramp could not be found. The car was sidetracked at Sacramento three months, and was then loaded with flour for Stockton. While at the depot at the latter place a couple of railroad hands occupied it one night, and during a game of cards one of them, named Joe Dewey killed his companion. He died in a few moments. The trial was a long one, and Dewey was sentenced to San Quentin for twenty years. He claimed he acted in self-defence. When arrested, however, he had about $38 in his possession, while his dead companion did not have a nickel. That looked rather suspicious. Well, the next we heard of No. 11,088 she was the scene of another mysterious affair. This was about a year ago at El Paso. During a strike among a lot of Italian laborers at that place this car was boarded by half a dozen of them. A quarrel ensued over some trifle, and one of them was beaten so badly that he died before medical aid could be summoned.

"The car must be haunted," remarked Martin's companion, who listened to the story with the closest attention, "and I would not sleep in it for a hundred dollars."

"All the train men say it is," continued Martin, "and the fact that it will often move on a level track shows that something is wrong."

"Do you ever hear any strange noises around it?" asked the reporter.

"I fancy sometimes I hear a moan or some indistinct mutterings, but it may be only imagination," replied the brakeman. "The engineer said yesterday he heard a human voice in it, but, upon looking all around the car, saw no one. The fact of the matter is, I do not have much to do with the old thing, and I wish the company would drag it off." At this point in the conversation Martin's train pulled up from the new depot, and he boarded it, and was soon engaged with the duties attending his line of business. Car 11,088 is considered haunted by nearly all the railroad boys.

QUAINT MEXICAN CUSTOMS.

COMMEMORATING THE LAST SCENES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

An Interesting Description of the Land of Flowers and Guitars and Fandangos and Songs—A Device for Pot Hunters.

CITY OF MEXICO, June 1.—The amusements which in Mexico immediately succeed Lent began on *Viernes de Dolores* (Friday of Sorrows) with the annual flower festival. Business of most kinds is suspended during Holy Week, churches are draped in mourning, theatres are closed, and everybody gives himself up to commemorating the divine tragedy enacted in Syria more than eighteen centuries ago. The blessed palms of the preceding Sunday have been carefully hung in the balconies of the rich and the squalid huts of the poor, where they will remain throughout the year the *lares et penates* of the possessors. On Thursday the curious custom of washing the feet was observed, and in every church throughout the land the text of discourse was, *Padre, perdononalos, no saben lo que hacen* (Father, forgive them, they know not what they do), while in many suburban and interior villages, realistic melodramas were performed, mostly with living subjects, minutely representing the last scenes in the life of Christ. The more cosmopolitan citizens of the capital content themselves with comparatively little display under the present anti-Catholic régime, and in its streets are no longer seen the procession of the angels; the capture, trial, and condemnation of Christ; the descent from the cross, and not even a living Judas, as in the good old days of Papal power, when hundreds of the faithful were willing to personate the betrayer and do penance for their own sins by allowing the crowd to buffet them about and spit in their faces all day.

It is truly alarming to lovers of the picturesque to see the quaint customs of the past cut off, one by one, in this day of so-called reform. The names of the streets are changed, as, for instance, the Street of the Holy Ghost is now called Diaz street. Even the somewhat startling nomenclature of the shops is ignominiously curtailed to the commonplace—from the "Pulqueria of the Blood of Christ," the tobacco shop of the "Mother of God," or the green grocery of the "Loves of Venus," to prosaic, Yankee-like signboards.

Good Friday is observed as a sort of May festival. This year, as usual, the *Paseo de las Flores* (Flower Promenade) was held along the Viga, the picturesque canal which stretches away between rows and rows of the far-famed floating gardens of the ancient Aztecs. The scene along the historic causeway was astonishing to foreigners, and as charmingly peculiar as it was typical of a poetic and pleasure-loving people. They are early risers in this land of the sun, where breakfast is not taken till midday, and everybody is enjoying a long siesta during those hours when Americans are most actively at work. At sunrise the Viga and its boulevard were thronged with the aristocracy of the city and a vast concourse of plebeians and Indians. By 7 o'clock the festivities were at their height. For miles along the tree-lined avenue a constant procession of vehicles, horsemen, and pedestrians packed the sidewalks between green booths on either side, while the canal was crowded with canoes and Venetian-like gondolas. Everything imaginable on wheels was here—the stately closed carriage of the Mexican millionaire, open barouches, coupés, victorias, dog carts, wagonettes, even velocipedes and tricycles, while the sounds of horseman galloped gayly between. The severe simplicity of the German and English style of riding habit contrasted well with the gorgeously caparisoned, silver-decked equestrians. Most of the ladies were dressed in what we would consider full ball or opera costume—pale silks or satins, no wraps or covering for the head, except some delicate mantilla, draped Spanish fashion, upon the back hair, and a wealth of jewels such as the fair Mexicanas are famous for.

Although the laws of propriety are so rigorously strict that a gentleman may not rise in the same carriage with the lady to whom he is betrothed, yet flirting is openly indulged in to an extent which would put to blush New York, Chicago, or San Francisco. Following a method its own, down the promenade and staring intently in her face is an accepted mode of compliment here, doubtless gratifying to the young lady, but somewhat dangerous to the adorer if she happen to have others equally devoted; and it not infrequently happens that duels are the result, she being preëminently the belle who can boast the greatest number of such encounters.

The canal was hidden by boats, big and little, the majority being long, clumsy, raft-like barges, each with a covered space in the middle, and a deck at both ends, and propelled by three or four Indians, who push their long poles against the canal bottom, singing as they go. Others were enclosed with an airy lattice work of woven rushes, intertwined with flowers, thus shading the happy occupants. Many, gay with flags and awnings, were exact imitations of Venetian gondolas, and thousands were simply dugouts, the primitive *chalupas* which Cortez found in use among the natives nearly four centuries ago. Most of the canoes carried guitar players, a few were seen with harps or viols, and others had reed instruments, which may have been patterned from that of the great god Pan among the river rushes. Here everybody sings, for these happy-go-lucky children of nature are full of song. The air is loud with their meaningless folk songs, rendered in softest Castilian, or high-pitched patriotic hymns, which just now incorporate a great deal about the transcendent virtues of "Porfi-ri-o Di-i-i-az."

Which rank of society shows the best taste in its pleasure enjoyment, these simple people or the proud patricians who shut up in close carriages, driving in full dress and solemn silence, I leave for others to determine.

The banks were lined with booths of green branches festooned with garlands, where loads of flowers, lemonade of various colors, chia, a delightfully cooling drink made from the seeds of a species of sage, and sherbets with pineapple juice, pulque, orchata, and other Mexican beverages were sold. But the great attraction along shore was the flowers offered for sale by Indian girls, whose deft brown fingers darted back and forth like shuttles as they fashioned bouquets with surprising rapidity. From earliest days Mexico has been noted for the beauty and diversity of its flora, and here were fragrant heaps of the choicest specimens. Wicker caskets lined with moss were filled with carnations, pansies, English violets, lilies, forget-me-nots, and the most magnificent roses—gorgeous basketfuls which in New York could not be purchased for less than $25 were sold for one or two reals.

Near the bridge of the Embarcadero the City Council had erected an enormous booth of leafy branches at a cost of several hundred dollars, and beneath it two rival military bands played alternately during the day. In this delightful retreat, commanding a view up and down canal and causeway, chairs were let at a real, or 12½ cents each. A detachment of gendarmes rode constantly back and forth as guardians of the peace, and police were stationed every twenty feet along the boulevard, from the bridge to the Garita de la Viga, commemorating Guatimotzin, the youthful poet, priest, and soldier-king of ancient Mexico. It is estimated that fully 20,000 people visited the Viga on this Friday of Sorrows. All bore in their hands or on their heads some floral tribute, while boat loads of blossoms were coming down from the bridge to Santa Anita and the floating islands of Ixtacalco.

The festivities were kept up, though in diminishing scale, until late Sunday night. During all these days the shrill, discordant rattle of ten thousand matracas rose above the Babel of human voices. These little instruments of auricular torture are made of tin, iron, ivory, wood, and of gold and silver, and in all possible shapes. Some are in the form of humming birds, peacocks, birds of paradise, chickens, parrots; others are like gridirons, frying pans, musical instruments, fruits, flowers, or reptiles. Everybody must have one, from the dignified grandparent to the baby in arms, and by twirling them rapidly a most unearthly, rasping, grinding sound is produced by wooden springs inside. The noise is intended to typify and ridicule the cries of the Jews, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" as they followed Christ to his death.

Already the sale of Judases that commenced, for on the following Sunday the strangest of all Mexican ceremonies took place, in the burning of the traitor. During all Holy Week men were continually perambulating the streets, holding high above the heads of the multitude long poles encircled by hoops, upon which were suspended the most grotesque figures, in every conceivable color, shape and degree of deformity, and all with horns and crooked backs and twisted noses. These were filled with firecrackers, the moustache or tail forming the fuse, and millions of them are annually exploded. Many are life-size, some having faces to represent politicians who are unpopular at the present time. Some are hung by the neck to wires stretched across the streets, or to the balconies of houses. Every horse car and railroad engine and donkey cart is decked with one, and even every mule driver has one or more tied upon his beast. Not infrequently the Judas is made to look like the hated Americano, or a Protestant figures in the same guise. At 10 o'clock on Easter Sunday, when the cathedral bells peal forth in commemoration of the Christ's resurrection, they are all touched off at once, and the air is filled with flying traitors everywhere over the length and breadth of Mexico.

One of the most delightful excursions which can be made anywhere in the world is up the Viga. A covered boat, with movable benches, awnings, and two Indians to propel it, can be hired for about $3 per diem. It is best to make up a party of congenial spirits, if they can be found in this far-away country, to provide generous lunch baskets, and to start at the first peep of dawn, that there may be ample time for picnicking among the gardens at noonday and a glimpse of the evening festivities of Santa Anita.

Leaving the Garita de la Viga, an old Spanish water gate at which toll is taken from the market boats, before sunrise, one meets multitudes of canoes coming down to the city with overflowing cargoes of fruits, flowers, or vegetables. Each mummy-like figure, wrapped to the eyes in *reboso* or *serape*—for the morning airs are chilly—murmurs a musical *Buenos dias, Señoras*, as you pass, generally supplemented by the solicitous query, *Como passe V. la noche?* (How did you pass the night?) for the poorest of these people are wondrously polite. The chalupas are each managed by a single native, who plies his long pole with marvellous dexterity. Not uncommonly it is an Indian girl alone, and a very pretty picture she makes, ensconced among her market produce, or on a flatboat piled high with fragrant alfalfa, or on a canoe laden with tobacco, or castor oil beans, or freshly gathered rushes, with which to decorate the doors of the pulque shops, or on a load of poppies and marigolds, with which to strew the floor of some church for a fiesta or a funeral.

Gliding along under the bending willows, the scene upon either side is surpassingly beautiful. The hills which environ the far-famed valley of Anahuac are still wrapped in their misty robes of night, but the first rays of the rising sun flush snow-crowned Popocatepetl, and the dead giantess, Ixtaccihuatl, stretched on her bier beside him. To the left rise those heights upon which the signal fires of the Aztecs were kindled during the early days of Spanish invasion, and a little further on is the Hill of the Star, where Montezuma's sanguinary priests sacrificed a female captive at the end of each cycle of fifty years to induce the sun's return, believing the world would end unless the gods were thus propitiated. The few houses in sight are mostly adobe huts, thatched with Spanish-dagger leaves, with here and there a gray or pink-tinted adobe villa, with private water gates, apparently uninhabited for centuries—a most appropriate prowling place for spooks. Numerous old churches, most of them now in ruins, point crumbling towers toward heaven, on both sides of the way, for in olden times the Catholic lawmakers granted lands and privileges to those pious souls who erected these sanctuaries. The shallow salt marshes on the right are a literal hunter's paradise, being forever blackened with millions of wild duck, which winter and summer here. The lands not diked into garden beds are submerged as a kind of fowl preserve, and are leased as hunting grounds. The Indians have a singular manner of committing wholesale slaughter among the innocents. Several hundred musket barrels are planted along in hollowed logs, so arranged that half of them point horizontally along the water to sweep the duck flotillas as they fly by, the rest are elevated at an angle of 45 degrees to rake those that rise. The guns are all touched off by fuses, and the execution is terrific.

The chinampas, or floating gardens, are generally disappointing at first sight to the tourist who has read much of Prescott. But, although the soil is now mostly solidified, time was when it actually floated, and in that condition bore crops. To this day expanses are found with four feet of water under them, which are kept in place only by stakes, yet strong enough to sustain grazing cattle. Further on one meets wandering strips of verdure, appropriately called islands, floating about wherever the current carries them. We are told that in earlier times these floating fields, with their cargoes of fruit and vegetables, were sometimes wrecked, like vessels, by bumping together in gales of wind, or by driving violently ashore; and that the robbers and pirates have been known to escape much by diving under the illusive areas, "bob up serenely" elsewhere. The gardens of to-day, which liberally supply the markets of Mexico, are formed by the division of what was once all water, but is now made earth, into small square patches, intersected by narrow canals. The patches are so tiny that the owner, paddling around the borders in his canoe, can reach any one of them to stake water upon it with a gourd.

Santa Anita, the first village on the Viga beyond the city of Mexico, is the great attraction on Sunday for natives and sightseers from the capital. There is always a fiesta at Santa Anita, and there the Indians are forever fandangoing, ballooning, singing, and pulque drinking. The first business of everybody on arriving at this village is to secure a wreath of poppies and corn flowers, with which the women crown their tangled hair and which the men wear upon their hats, even though but partially covered with scant and dirty rags. Lovely wreaths sell for about six cents each, and the woman who is not thus crowned before the day is over is either deep in disgrace or dreadfully out of fashion. We are told that the most valuable gift which Montezuma presented to the Spanish ambassadors who visited his court was accompanied by a bouquet of rare flowers. To-day those who sit in the market places must needs spread their wares beneath bowers of green branches garlanded with poppies, while some proses, pulque barrels and pulque shops, cups and mugs and pitchers are similarly bedecked. The poorest village church has its floor strewn with flowers, and fresh bouquets are arranged upon all the altars before service begins. The babe at its christening, the child at its confirmation, the bride at her wedding, and the corpse in its coffin, all have flowers.

At the Indian village next above Santa Anita is a rare old church, built by Cortes in 1533, and still in daily use. It is well worth a visit, and if the doors chance to be closed a few pence will induce the custodian to produce the key and reveal all its treasures of antique ugliness. In the rear is a weed-grown graveyard, with a row of skulls grinning along the arms of its central cross, which is surrounded by the inevitable pile of human bones. In front of the church, facing the plaza with its fountain, where the women collect with their water jars and gossip, are several blue painted adobe tombs. The vaults are mostly empty, except a few mouldy bones and shreds of clothes, but each is graced by the owner's skull and crossbones, placed carefully on top. There is something grotesquely ludicrous in the idea that these long-dead folk have come out to watch the little world they left, and each eyeless dome of thought seems to wear a cheerful smile, as if appreciating the situation.

Nothing more picturesque can be imagined than the home coming at evening down the Viga, the happy hearted natives singing on shore and in their boats, fandango dancing to twanging guitars, the dusky gondoliera keeping time to the music with their paddles, the sleepy waters growing purple beneath the willows, and the soft twilight in the marvellous climate throwing a glamour over all.

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