OFF THE COAST OF PATAGONIA.

Unexplored Islands of the Chilian Archipelago—Through Smythe's Channel Into the Straits of Magellan—A Fearful Tempest.

PUNTA ARENAS, STRAITS OF MAGELLAN, June 15.—The spinal column of the hemisphere, that chain of mighty granite vertebræ, extending from the Arctic to the Antarctic Sea and called the Cordilleras, breaks suddenly at the foot of the southern continent and is divided by a narrow and deep ravine called the Straits of Magellan. Before the straits are reached, along the western coast of South America are numberless islands, cast into the sea by some continental convulsion like sparks flung from the hammered iron. Few of these islands have ever been explored, but they all bear a close resemblance to the main land in their geographical formation, and it is believed that deposits of copper, silver, and other minerals, as well as coal, exist under their surfaces. On Chiloe, the largest of the Chili archipelago, there is no end of coal, and mining companies are already operating to a considerable extent; but of the resources of the other islands little or nothing is known. They rise in picturesque outlines from the water, some of them to an elevation of several thousand feet, and the panorama presented to voyagers in what is known as Smythe's Channel is beautiful and grand. This is a narrow fiord, named from its first explorer, scooped out, the geologists say, by the action of ice during the glacial epoch, running along the main coast, and protected against the violence of the ocean by the numerous fragmentary formations that line the shore. A glance at the map of Patagonia will show how many these islands are, and how slender is the thread of sea which separates them from the continent.

The water in the channel is very deep and smooth, but the passage is avoided by navigators, because of the powerful currents and the frequency of snow storms which prevail at all seasons of the year. Vessels which take this course are compelled to anchor at night unless there is a very bright moon, and always lay up when the snow falls because of the circuitous turns, and the danger of collisions with ships and icebergs. In places Smythe's Channel is so narrow that two steamers cannot pass between the mighty rocks which rise on either side, and icebergs do not recognize the international regulations of navigation. Most of the steamship companies prefer to risk the storms which rage outside, where they can have plenty of sea room, and shorten their voyages by sailing night as well as day.

There is no more dangerous sailing in the world than off the west coast of Patagonia and around the Horn, and vessels bound southward from Valparaiso are very lucky if they enter the Straits of Magellan without catching a gale of wind. Only a few days ago the steamer Italia, from Genoa to Valparaiso, 4,000 tons, was lost, with nearly all on board, including an opera company. She lies in the cemetery of a sea where many a noble ship is buried. We got a taste of the same storm, and for thirty-six hours it was a question whether our ship's company would ever see land again.

We were to enter the Straits of Magellan at Cape Pillar at daylight, but at 7 o'clock a terrible gale from the north came up, and the Captain was compelled to heave to and "keep her nose to the storm." All that day and all the next and half the long terrible night that passed between, our ship was knocked about in a manner that I thought would end the voyage then and there; and although the bows were pointed northward and the engines exerted all their force, we were driven 105 miles in the other direction. Storms at sea furnish themes for poets and subjects for the artist's brush. The sublimity of the ocean is a topic of which writers never tire; but no words can convey an idea, no picture can present a glimpse, of what a tempest in that region really is. That the seas off Cape Horn should be the heaviest found anywhere is not surprising when one remembers that the ocean there completely belts the globe, and a ship starting from the one entrance of the Straits of Magellan can sail in a direct line around the world to the other without meeting anything but iceberge to cause a change of course.

The winds that sweep down the snow-covered Andes meet the bitter blasts that come from the Antarctic Circle, both of them ice laden, while the gales from east and west, no matter where they originate, strike the coast of Patagonia and the islands of Terra del Fuego with a force that is felt nowhere else. There is no choice of winds, as in other parts of the universe. Here all agree death and destruction will follow, no matter whence they come or whither they go. We had a taste of the worst weather common to this locality, and it was almost a miracle that we came through.

The storm we met was anticipated, however, and the day before it struck us the Captain's face wore a very anxious look. The days are very short in this latitude, and the sun rises about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. To see the sun in the north is rather a novel sensation and difficult to become accustomed to. At noon on the day preceding the storm, it was only 19 degrees and 37 minutes above the northern horizon, and looked very queer. All the day before the sky had been overcast, and heavy rain fell, so that no observations could be taken, and the position of the ship had to be determined by dead reckoning, a mathematical calculation based upon the estimated distance travelled and the direction of the course since the last solar observation was made. As noon came, the Captain and all his officers, with sextants, watched for the sun to peep through the clouds. About five minutes before 12 there was a rift just long enough to get a glimpse of him, which appeared to be for our special benefit, and was considered a good omen, as heavy clouds, swelling with moisture, covered the sky the remainder of the day. Taking the sight with unusual care the Captain and his mates rushed down into the chart room to figure out the longitude and latitude, and soon came out smiling to say: "We all agree to a dot. To-morrow morning at daylight we will see Cape Pillar, and before breakfast will enter the Straits." This was encouraging, and the ship's company was cheerful; but the prediction was not fulfilled. We did not make the Straits for nearly sixty hours after the time appointed.

It was a fine clear night, with the most brilliant stars. You miss the star-groups so familiar at home—the Great Bear, Orion, the Pleiades, and Hyades. None of them are visible below the equator, and the Southern hemisphere cannot show their equal. The far-famed Southern Cross, by which the mariner guides his helm as he does by Ursa Minor in the North, was hanging in full glory, but is not so beautiful as many constellations in the Northern sky. The Magellan clouds, like small specks of luminous dust upon a black-blue surface, hung over the mastheads, resembling what we call the milky way, and bright planets watched us patiently as we went up to talk at the weather before turning in at night. The sea was a magnificent spectacle.

At 5 o'clock in the morning the gale struck us, coming from the north. Near midnight after the second day it went down, and during that whole time, at frequent intervals, the seas that rose like mountains surged over the ship, burying her under a weight of water that seemed as if it would crush her decks. The Captain hove to, and "steered into the wind's eye," so as to catch and break the force of the water upon the iron bows. The wind came from the northwest, and the ship was bound toward the south; but if the waves had struck her stern or sides they would have swamped her instantly, and dropped her to the bottom of the sea. The quartermaster was lashed to the wheel, and the officers and sailors stood about the deck with life lines around their waists, so that if they were swept overboard their mates could haul them in. The passengers remained in the cabins, crying and praying. The deck was swept clean of everything, the windows of the pilot house were broken in, part of the bridge was carried away, and the iron railing, made of rods more than an inch in thickness, was broken by the force of the water as if it had been made of straw. Sometimes the decks would stand almost perpendicular as the ship mounted a mighty billow, or some Titan's hand had grasped her keel. At times she would stand horizontal, and then as the billow passed under it would go down in the other direction, down, down, down, as if she were sinking into a black pit filled with a roar of raving waters, and lie buried for an instant while the fierce foam swept over her with a sound like the discharge of artillery, and a shiver, as if every timber had started from the keel.

There was a lull in the fury of the gale during the afternoon, and I went on deck. The Captain, in a suit of oil-cloth and a line around him, was directing some sailors who were making the battens more secure.

"Go below at once," he said. "If you don't want to be swept overboard."

"It's awful down there." I replied.

"It's worse on deck," was his answer. "Go down and pray."

"What will I pray for?"

"Pray that the steering gear may hold out, for, if that gives way, we will sleep at the bottom of the sea to-night," he said.

The gear did hold out, and near midnight of the second day the wind went down almost instantly. The speed of the ship was slackened, and she tossed uneasily upon the swells until morning, when an observation showed that we had been driven far out of our course. When the waves ceased to come over the decks, the doors were opened, and the passengers crept out to look at the damage the storm had done. The ship looked like a bruised and battered giant, with this part of the rigging torn away, and that part hanging in shreds. The cannon, which stood in the bows, had been torn from its carriage and carried to the other end of the deck; chains and hawsers that should have held a locomotive had been parted like cobwebs, and the force of the storm was realized more fully by its results. The passengers who were the first to weep and pray, were soonest to joke about the narrow escape from disaster, and those who confessed to having been frightened were very few.

The sensation of gratitude and the consciousness of safety, even though for a few days, were never more thoroughly experienced than by the passengers of the Coquimbo when calm water lapped her iron bows. The entrance to the Straits on the west coast is very narrow, and Cape Pillar rises like a mighty beacon to mark where shelter can be found, but in a northern gale it is dangerous to attempt an entrance even with steamers, for they might be driven upon the rocks. Several vessels have been lost while attempting to seek refuge in the Straits, and the insurance companies have forbidden skippers to enter in the night, except during the full of the moon. As in Smythe's Channel, all the sailing in the Straits is during the day, and anchors always drop with nightfall, to avoid collisions with ships and icebergs.

The scenery from the Pacific side to the town of Punta Arenas is very grand, but as you go eastward the mountains disappear, and the landscape flattens out into an unlovely desert of sand. For most of the distance the Straits are about as wide as the Hudson River, but are so circuitous and broken by inlets that the skipper has to keep his eye constantly on the chart. You think you are going to enter a broad, beautiful bay, when suddenly the wheel is whirled around, and the ship turns a sharp corner through a narrow passage between the rocks in a most unexpected and bewildering manner. The channel is as puzzling to the landsmen as a labyrinth, and you are kept in a state of alarm lest the Captain should make a mistake and take the wrong course.

To describe the scenery in detail is impossible, as we passed along the narrow channel at the rate of fifteen miles an hour; but on either side was a succession of mighty cliffs, with tall peaks and pinnacles rising from them, covered with vast fields of unbroken snow glaciers running down into the sea, and glistening in the sunlight with a pinkish glow. When the light sunk down into the valleys and ravines it brought out wonderful shades of greens and grays and purples, like the combinations people admire so much in the Alps. All the banks were clothed with verdure, and the cliffs were covered with lichens and mosses of many hues. Little cascades, each a mass of dark green foliage, rose above the surface of the water, whose color was the densest shade of blue, and saw themselves inverted in a mirror that was without a flaw. At night we anchored under the shadow of a mighty cliff, which sheltered some cataract whose roar was very loud, but which we could not see. In the early morning films of ice were seen whenever the water was stagnant, but it remained only a moment under the sun.

DISHES OF SILVER AND GOLD.

Costly and Pretty Designs in Table Furniture which Fashion Now Sanctions.

The common usage among wealthy persons of giving elaborate dinners has brought about many changes and many improvements in table ware and the decoration of the table. The change has been in the direction of increased richness of effect, and is marked by the substitution of massive silverware for the decorated china and porcelain which was popular for several years.

The fashion of giving heavy dinner parties seems to have been copied from the English, and the prevailing styles of silverware are also copies of old English models. Japanese work, hammered work, and other styles have had their day, and fashionable silversmiths now manufacture only imitations of the old Queen Anne or fluted ware, and the repoussé flower and leaf patterns of English and sometimes French design. Often the fluted and repoussé styles are combined, a plan which gives a very handsome effect.

The old epergnes carrying several dishes, to be filled with fruit and flowers, and which obstructed the view across the table, are entirely out of use. Candelabra, with spreading branches, take their place. These bear white wax candle, fitted with small red shades, which, by an ingenious device, descend as the candle burns down. A well-fitted table has two candlebra and four small candlesticks, each carrying a single candle. In the centre of the table is a low silver dish resting on a plateau and intended for flowers. At the four corners are four comports for bon bons, and beyond these, at each end, a larger comport for fruit. All are covered with richly chased repoussé work, that on the comports being composed of vines and grapes, relieved, perhaps, by pierced work. The fluted ware is simpler, but not so rich.

The closeness of the imitation of the old ware can be seen by comparison with a teapot at a John street jeweler's. It was made at Edinburgh in 1717, nine years after the introduction of teas into Great Britian. Its age is determined by the hall marks. It is repoussé work, but of a kind far inferior to the work now done in America. The art of working in silver in this country is much in advance of that in Europe. There is now on exhibition at Tiffany's a pitcher in repoussé work of marvellous finish. It is valued at $500, and it would not be possible to make another like it in Europe.

The tendency of silver table ware has been toward smallness and compactness, and this has affected the size of the smaller ware. The butter plates, salt cellars, and pepper pots are very diminutive, and as a rule they are decorated in the same manner as the larger pieces, although there are some very odd and striking designs. A new style of salt cellars is made in the form of a diminutive stowpan. Others imitate shells, leaves, fruits, and flowers. A silver cigar lighter, to be passed around after dinner, resembles an antique lamp. It has a handle at one end, and at the other a wick, which burns and sucks up alcohol from the bowl. Pepper pots come as mushrooms; salt cellars, strawberries and acorns, and the only limit is the imagination of the designer.

A leading house has a specialty in the use of the Indian characteristics as applied to silver ware. It has a very solid and ornamental effect. They also manufacture sets of Indian coffee spoons, like the apostle spoons of old times. The tops of the handles are hammered out into shapes that represent Indians going through their various dances. The work is very delicate, and the ornamentation on handles and bowls is copied from wigwam decoration. These spoons are enclosed in boxes covered with deerskin, untanned. Other Indian spoons have the figures in bas-relief and richly colored with enamel. These designs are distinctively American.

In France the tea cups are sometimes of silver, but this fashion is not favored here, as the metal heats too easily. Occasionally silver is used for coffee cups, and, when decorated like the Niello or Tuba ware, with black and red inserted metal, has a pretty effect; but, as a rule tiny cups of richly decorated porcelain for coffee form a part of the regular silver dinner set. An attempt was made to introduce the French style, but it was not successful, except for cups. The substitution of silver for glass has been carried so far that there are silver table brushes and crumb pans, silver tongs for lifting asparagus, silver fish knives and forks smaller than those used ordinarily, small silver butter knives for the separate use of each guest, silver cail bolls, silver toasting and pickle forks, silver bon bon sets, and indeed all wood and metal used at the table—and even China in France—has been supplanted by silver. It is easily kept in good condition and readily repaired, a good quality which fine china does not possess.

The custom of making tea at the table has been newly introduced from London, and the silversmiths have tried their hands at making very elaborate tea caddeys. The majority are in old English repoussé work. The lid is generally used to measure the amount of tea to be used. Fruit plates and waiters in etched silver are an expensive novelty. The plate is covered with varnish, on which the artist etches an original design. It is then exposed to the action of acid which eats into the silver only where the varnish has been scratched away. The result is that the drawing is reproduced in the most elaborate manner, and retains the full spirit of the original. Some of the designs are of sporting and hunting scenes, and the drawings are clever. In making repoussé work the design is first snarled out from the inte ior, which is then filled with cement. The chaser then finishes the design from the outside.

Gold services are very rare, although they are very serviceable, as they do not tarnish. Mrs. Catherine Astor has a gold service, and the fashionable travelers say they know of other persons who have them, but they decline to give names, as it would be an advertisement to thieves. Persons who fancy the gold color use silver gilt, which, when heavily plated, wears well, and looks well on a snowy white table cloth. There is something too royal about a gold service to tempt most Americans, and perhaps its security would be the cause of too great anxiety. The larger pieces of a silver service in repoussé work cost from $1,000 a set upward, and a gold service would cost fully sixteen times as much. Such a service is not kept in stock anywhere in this country, and would only be made to order.

TARANTULAS IN TOWN.

Tropical Curiosities Said to Come to this Country as Stowaways.

"Any tarantulas in town?" asked a New Jersey shopkeeper of a Barclay street fruit dealer yesterday.

"A few," was the reply.

"Well, just give me a bunch of bananas without any, please," said the customer. "The last bunch I got had a boss one. I took him home and he nipped my little boy."

When the Jerseyman had shouldered his purchase the fruit dealer said to a bystander: "He hasn't heard of the snakes yet, or he would have asked about them. Yesterday an Italian was in our cellar trying to cut up a bunch of bananas. The bananas into even sixes, when he suddenly yelled, 'Santo diavolo,' and went out into the street in three skips. As he had paid for the fruit, I didn't bother to stop him; but after a while he came jabbering back again, pointed at the bunch he had been cutting, and then I saw a snake about a foot and a half long curled up on the floor.

"We yanked him into a box and my partner spent all the afternoon trying to sell him to the dime museums in Chatham street, but they wouldn't buy him because he wasn't stuffed. We had to kill him. He was a South American adder—the worst you ever saw.

"Sometimes we have scorpions in the fruit, and snakes and them tarantula spiders. Barclay street is full of 'em at times. The tarantulas like to crawl up the awning posts and drop on the people's heads; when they get tired they jump down into the cellars and hide in the cracks. If they bite you you are gone, but we don't mind 'em."

MAKING SOLID BAMBOO RODS.

Skilled and Patient Labor as Well as the Finest Material Required.

"Look at her! Isn't she a beauty?" The speaker made a quick movement with his wrist, as if he were casting a fly along some cool trout stream, and the rod in his hand quivered like a leaf in the breeze. "She" was a beauty. The maker, whose shop in a large fishing tackle factory the fisherman had visited, handed the rod to his visitor. As the latter held it, it quivered again. No sportsman could have taken it in his hand without being transported in thought to streams and lakes, was sensitive and delicate, and yet strong—the perfection of a split bamboo rod.

"I made that to fill a special order for a contestant in a fly-casting contest," said the maker. "From its looks, it might be the same as the rods I usually turn out. But it's made of twelve pieces instead of six. It is stronger than the six-piece rods, although for practical purposes they are strong enough. By using twelve pieces, I am simply making assurance doubly sure."

"From where do the bamboo poles come?"

"From Calcutta we receive them twenty-two feet long, usually in sacks of fifty. Many are, however, worthless, and not one can be used entire. To begin with, the poles of the female plant cannot be utilized. They are worthless to us. Many of the male plants reach us in a defective state. As a result, it happens sometimes that only one out of a sack of fifty can be used. Even of this one out of fifty we can use only a strip from each side. You see (pointing to knots at odd intervals) there have been leaves at these knots. Wherever there is a knot the fibre is thrown out of line and the bamboo weakened. As there are leaves on two sides, it follows that only the other two sides can be used."

"That must make the material more expensive than it is generally supposed to be?"

"It certainly does. People think from the wholesale price of bamboo that the value of the material in a rod is only about twenty-five cents. Owing to the number of poles which are valueless, the material in a split bamboo rod is worth at least $2. Let me show you the difference between a bad piece and a good piece of bamboo."

The maker took a strip of bamboo and bent it. "It broke with a 'mushy' sound, he said. "That's a bad piece," he said, "and a rod made of such pieces would be worthless. We have to exercise great care in selecting material. Now this strikes me as a good piece. Let me cut out the soft part, for we care only for the fibre under the enamel. The enamel is the outer surface of the stalk. The natives in Calcutta iron the stalks. That gives them the dark ornamental lines. Now watch me bend this."

He slowly bent the piece of bamboo. When the ends nearly touched each other there was a sound like the crackling of a fire. The reporter looked closely and saw that thousands of fibres were breaking, not simultaneously, but in rapid succession. By the time the piece was bent double the fibres had been broken about half through the thickness of the layer—the other half was intact and strong.

"There's no material as fine for fishing rods as bamboo," said the maker, as he looked admiringly at the piece of bamboo in his hands. "I'd guarantee to make a rod that you could bend without breaking until its ends met."

"Have you made rods as limber as that?"

"No. They would be too limber for use. A rod should have a little stiffer. But I guarantee that a fifteen to twenty foot solid bamboo rod will take anything short of a whale."

"Do you subject the bamboo to any preparatory process before using it?"

"No sir, nothing more than slightly heating it to straighten it out. Then I take the strips at each end, to make a perfectly three-cornered strips. Then they are glued together. As I stated, every piece of the rod usually consists of six three-cornered strips, which form a hexagon. For exceptionally fine work an additional hexagon is placed inside the first. Some makers do this simply for the fun of planing them. I dislike this method of filing because it is very slow, and the result no better than when the strips are planed."

"How long does it take you to make a split bamboo rod?"

"Two days for the larger or finer rods. Others I can make in a day. Formerly it took longer, because putting the ferrules on by hand was considered indispensable to fine work. But the fact is that with machinery you can put the ferrules on much quicker and firmer than by hand."

"What are the sizes of your rods?"

"I make them from nine to twenty feet in length, and from four and a half to fifty ounces in weight. Rods from nine to twelve feet in length are used for trout, from twelve to fifteen feet for fish like grilse (young salmon), and that length to twenty feet for fish like salmon."

"How do the prices of split rods range?"

"They are about one-half as cheap as formerly. A lot of inferior machine-made rods have gone into the market, so that now the highest price for six-piece rods is $50, and for twelve-piece rods $100."

In conclusion, the maker stated that the best split bamboo rods in the world were made by two Americans, Brown and Leonard, who are working in two separate factories. The former has made rods for the Prince of Wales, and Lord Dufferin, and the latter for other distinguished fishermen.

SUNNYSIDE'S GEESE FARMS.

The Neighbors Say They are Nuisances, and They Certainly are Curiosities.

At Sunnyside, Long Island City, are a number of establishments where geese are sent by New York and Brooklyn butchers to be fattened for the market. For years past wagons filled with geese have been seen going from Hunter's Point in the direction of Astoria, and coming back with fewer but fatter geese, that had benefited by country air and grass. So long as this state of things continued, the people living around the geese farms, as well as those dwelling along the routes taken by the wagons, could view so satisfactory an arrangement only with complacency, and look hopefully forward to Christmas. But recently the Jewish butchers who patronize the Sunnyside geese farms have arranged with their proprietors to slaughter, as well as fatten, the birds committed to their care, and peace has fled from Sunnyside and its vicinity. People near the farms say that the geese farms have become intolerable nuisances.

On Tuesday at a meeting of the Board of Health of Long Island City it was reported that the Sunnyside geese farms were very detrimental to the health of the community, and a committee consisting of Commissioners Hanan and Burnett was appointed to visit the establishments and report upon them. Meanwhile it is said that the geese fatteners propose to make a vigorous resistance to anything like interference with their business. They deny the charges made against the management of the farms. A butcher who has his geese killed at the farms said he thought the people were becoming a little too particular. Did they want their geese killed, or did they prefer to wait until they died of old age, which would be in about 100 years from the moment of bursting the shell? If they had to be killed, surely it was better that the slaughter should be done near Hunter's Point, which has grown impervious to disagreeable odors, than in New York or Brooklyn.

"A goose is a mighty uncertain bird, any how," said a wholesale dealer in poultry doing business near Washington Market. "All the recognized modes of telling its age and condition often fail. You make sure you have got a young and tender bird, and when you have it nicely roasted and placed on the table you find him as tough as though he had saved Rome. I know nothing about those Sunnyside farms that you speak of. I deal in both live and dead geese, but I prefer to get them alive, as the butchers like to kill them themselves, when they are in the right condition. But some farmers refuse to sell live geese, as they get a little more money for them dead. There are large tracts of land, veritable farms, in New Jersey and Long Island devoted exclusively to the culture of geese. There is some money in the business, but the work is not a great deal. To be sure, a goose does not require much care, but the demand for them is not very great, except at certain seasons—Christmas and Michaelmas, chiefly. They are fed morning and evening on mashed grain or some work and potatoes. The rest of the day they graze, and it is wonderful what an amount of grass they consume. It is amusing to see them when meal times come around. A drum is beaten, and at the sound they fall into line, the ganders ahead, and waddle along toward the feeding place, gabbling as loud as they can. Of course large flocks have to be divided into companies, and each company has a different feeding place. They run along in single file, and the line is never broken, although the last bird of each company knows that he will receive a smart blow of a whip when he reaches home. They seem to manage their order of march among themselves. They can get along with or without water to swim in, but the goose that passes its days on dry land is apt to be more tender than the one that is always bathing.

"The mode of treatment that I have described makes the geese hardy and healthy and tough, but when the time approaches that must end their lives they are taken off the farm and cooped up indoors. If nothing very particular is required of them they are simply allowed to eat all they want, and they grow fatter and more stupid, if such a thing is possible. But if great things are expected of them they are crammed. That is, food is continually forced down their throats. A little *pâté de foie gras* is made in this country, but it has never been very popular. We adopt the Strasburg system of keeping the geese before the fire, so that they are constantly thirsty, and are allowed to drink all the water they can. This produces the swollen livers that are wanted. A good goose should weigh about sixteen pounds, but by cramming that weight can be doubled."

DICK COPLEY'S LUCK.

The Wallowing Chickens of an Envious Neighbor were Blessings in Disguise.

Three big miners, just in from Montana, sat at a little table in the barroom of the Miners' Arms in Front street yesterday. They were drinking beer slowly, while they talked in low voices to one another about the doings in the mines until the bartender stopped by the table, and, wiping his hands on his partly white apron, asked them if they wanted a round at the expense of the house. They all assented promptly, and then one who had been addressed as Ed Dennison said:

"Say, pard, yer going to have chicken for dinner, ain't ye?"

The bartender assented.

"I know'd it; I smelt 'em. Makes me think of the trouble Dick Copley had at the diggin's afore he struck it sick. The chickens did the business for him. Do you mind Dick?"

The bartender sniffed the air when he said he did, and Dennison noticed it.

"Dick wasn't no great shakes when you know'd him—always monkeyin' around with garden truck instead of workin' in the diggin's, and that's how he got into trouble. You see when the news got spread around that pay dirt was struck in Lonesome Creek in Dakota last year, what does he do but stake out a ranch on the Yeller Lick, half way between the diggin's and the Northern Pacific, instead of goin' on and makin' his fortune honestly. He 'lowed he raises vegetables, and dispense 'em to them as would be travelin' both ways, and so scoop in enough dust to break the community.

"What's the matter with a half-way house?" said the bartender.

"Nothin' for them as has no spirit of adventure into 'em, but Dick wasn't goin' to have no soft snap of it, if he was on the ground first. He just hanged up his claim for a month, and then another crank came along and staked off another claim right alongside of Dick's and set up in opposition. The new chap's name was McGiven. He tumbled to Dick's garden right away, and Dick always said it was spite that led the new chap to bring a lot of chickens into the country. Any how, the chickens come, and the first thing Dick knowed they was a pilin' over into his garden sass and awallerin' in it like they never see so much fun before."

"Dick's cook know how to dress a chicken?" asked the bartender.

"Shew! thought you know'd Dick. Dick was a man of peace. He didn't dare to shoot the critters for fear he'd catch a dead mine from McGiven, who was as fierce lookin' as a man eater. Howsever, Dick sent a kid out to watch the garden, and so kept 'em off for a week or two; and then McGiven he hired the boy to come over to his ranch. That most broke Dick's heart, and he moped round the house all day and never went out even to look at the garden he'd worked over so much. In course the chickens was rangin' around and luxuriatin' in the products of civilization what Dick had planted, and along just before dark some of the boys as happened in there see him sneak out of the back door. The sight that greeted him was exasperatin', even for a white-livered saint like Dick. The soil along the Yeller Lick is jest as mellow as sand and as rich as the Garden of Eden. Why, it would raise forty bushels of wheat to the acre. Dick he had planted a big patch of corn late, so he could sell roastin' ears to the boys until the snow 'ud begin to fly, and there in that patch was the whole flock of them blasted chickens. The most of 'em was laborin' away with their heels just as vigorous as if they'd been starved for a week, but some of 'em was a wallerin' in the dirt and makin' the dust fly like a one-horse shay on a country turnpike.

"The sight of it made Dick groan aloud. More'n half the patch was rooted over. When Dick groaned a big rooster gave a cry, and then the whole brood stopped and looked sideways at the blamed fool didn't know enough to skunk to defend his own rights. But that sassy look was too much even for Dick, and he rushed back into the house and brings out a Winchester and begins to blaze away. He fetched two of the wallerin' hens and the old rooster, and the rest of them scattered.

"McGiven he showed up, but Dick cracked away at him and winged him the first pop, and he scattered the same as the chickens, cause he wasn't so fierce as he looked. So when the smoke had cleared away and the enemy had retreated, Dick and the boys waltzed out to the corn patch and gathered in the plunder. One tick carried the rooster and another chap brought in the hens, and Dick and the rest on 'em all agreed that the drinks was on the house for luck. Well, they walked into the sittin' room and hauled the dead onto the bar as was there, and one of the boys he 'lowed he'd bet the hens calls for two rounds, and the cock, bein' he's a cock, calls for two more. How's that?' And Dick, bein' flustrated over his luck, said he'd make it six. So he lighted a glim and brought out the big bottle covered with basket work, 'cause you see he never keeps no regular bar, but only eatables. Mongst the boys that stepped up to take a pull at the tin cup that Dick placed beside the demijohn was an old chap that had worked in the California placer diggin's and most everywhere else. He pawed over the chickens and he sorted for his turn, and then he fingered the dust what he shook out of the hen's feathers.

"Purty soon he began to get down over it and peer at it in different ways, so's he could get the glim on to it just right. His eyes begin to bulge to onceet, and he scared look around, he bolted for the rear door, and the whole gang after him, thinkin' he'd gone clean daft. But he hadn't, and the rest were wilder nor he was in two minutes. Soon as ever he got to the corn patch he took off his hat and giv a yell, and he mopped round them and all creation that that 'ere garden was his claim for skin gold and other minerals as it might contain. The rest on 'em weren't slow in follerin' his lead, and before month had gone all in possession of claims that would have made Croesus rich if they'd know'd what to do with their dust. Dick hev' dug over the garden all the season without knowin' what was in the soil, but when that old man got his paws on the dust that the hens had throwed up on to 'em, he recognized the stuff to onceet. He could see the gold in it, and he got the best claim on the ranch. But Dick didn't do bad, and the last I heard of him he'd made his pile and gone back to the old country, where he come from."

MIDDLE NAMES OF GREAT MEN.

A Midnight Search for Thurman's—What the G. Stands For.

From the Ohio State Journal.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE OHIO STATE JOURNAL—*Sir*: Last night at 11 o'clock the writer received the following despatch:

NEW YORK, Aug. 4—9:31 P. M.

MR. ——: Please telegraph what is the middle name of Allen G. Thurman. What does the G. stand for?

C. S. LORD NEW YORK SUN.

Hastily suppressing a yawn, the writer put back the key to his room at the United States Hotel and leisurely strolled out on High street, thinking it would be no trouble to find some local Democratic politician who could give the desired information, for Allen G. Thurman had been president of Columbus for the past forty years or more.

Ed Parlow, one of the proprietors of the hotel, was the first man tackled. Ed knew, that is he "used to know," he said, but had forgotten.

Mat Martin, Jr., was found in front of the American House. Interrogated he scratched his head, and delivered himself as follows: "Pap knows it, I can only find pap, he'll tell you. Pap has known Thurman for forty years." "Pap" could not be found, however, having gone home to bed.

The Hon. G. H. Bargar, Chairman of the Democratic State Executive Committee, had seen this name in print lately, but had forgotten it, and so had ex-Secretary of State Baines.

A brilliant idea now struck the innocent reporter. Hastily he made his way out to the residence of the owner of the "red bandana," he would go to the fountain head of all knowledge, the *Times* office. Modestly entering the city editor's room, he found a free-for-all there, eating peanuts and stealing local items from the exchanges. The conundrum was propounded. "Want to win a bet, sh?" asked the city editor. Disclaiming the bet, the reporter was told that the Franklin County History was the place to find the name, and he left.

At the bottom of the steps another Martin, whose surname is Allen, was found. "Can you tell me what the G. in Allen G. Thurman's name stands for?"

"Let me see," he replied. "No-o, I can't but pap can. Go up and see pap; he ain't asleep yet. T'isn't far to our house on Fourth street. Pap will tell you, sure."

By this time everybody on High street, between State and Town, were asking everybody else the conundrum; but none could tell. In a spirit of desperation the scribe started for "Pap" Martin's. He found the old gentleman in bed, of course, as it was now after midnight, but with shame and humiliation Martin confessed that he did not know; that he had not heard the middle name of the Democrat he worshipped for over forty years.

As a last resort the man with the conundrum telegram started for the home of the "Old Roman." Thurman now lives on Rich and Washington avenues, half a mile from the State House. It was late, very late. The streets were deserted, and the back ones dark. The reporter was afraid. Might not he be knocked down or held up and robbed—of his railroad passes? The stars winked and blinked, and looked coldly down on the man who was going to wake up an old statesman to ask him his name. And the scribe had heard that Thurman owned a savage dog, one who had swallowed samples of half a dozen tramps' friends. The place was reached, and, after a great deal of noise was made at the front door, Allen G. Thurman appeared at one of the up-stairs windows of his new residence. The matter was explained, and, after wondering why THE SUN wanted to know, he good-naturedly said: "My name is Allen Granbery Thurman."

Comments by the Journal.

It is seldom that such a commotion is created over such an occurrence as the above. In the early hours of yesterday morning, about 1 o'clock, a *State Journal* correspondent was at the American Hotel, when the question as to Thurman's middle name was asked by a crowd in the office. It was found that everybody along the streets had been agitating the question since 11 o'clock. At the hotels and restaurants there was much sport of it. The gamblers were betting on it like a horse race, but with all the agitation the information could be learned nowhere except from the distinguished citizen who, with all his knowledge and greatness, seemed to have a corner on his name.

SUMMER SCHOOLS.

A New Scheme for Giving the Boys a Pleasant and Improving Vacation.

"It has been a problem with parents of young and lively schoolboys in the city, how to give them a vacation and yet keep them out of devilry," said the principal of a large up-town private school yesterday. "An experiment has been tried for several years which has become popular, and seems to be a success. The plan is for a teacher to take the boys with him into the country, go with them in their rambles, and be a boy himself, while he looks out for the safety of his pupils. The teacher begins the enterprise by visiting the boys' parents in the city. He tells them it is not good for boys to forget in their two months' vacation all they have learned in nine months at school. He proposes to continue school instruction at least five days in each week for a short time each day. He will, besides, go fishing, riding, hunting, rowing, walking or bicycling with the members of his summer school, and keep a sharp eye on their doings.

"This captures the parents. Few New York business men have a summer residence in the country where their children will receive watchful care. Their boys are a source of anxiety to them all summer. Every father who stays alone in the city is in constant dread of receiving a despatch that his boy has shot himself accidentally, is drowned, or half killed in some escapade. The thought that he can escape this harassing dread greatly pleases him. He does not haggle over the sum asked by the teacher. This is usually $100. It includes all expenses of transportation, and boarding, lodging, and tuition.

"Many of these summer vacation schools are scattered this summer through the Eastern and Middle States. The places usually selected for the school are near a body of water. This affords boundless fun for the boys in swimming, rowing, sailing, and fishing. I have in mind a summer school on an island in one of the little inland lakes in central New York. The teacher owns the island, and has built a pretty cottage for the school. It is more like a dwelling than a school house. He has thirty boys from the city in his charge. They are not compelled to sleep in the house, except in stormy weather. When it is cold and rainy the scholars amuse themselves indoors with books or games or some musical instrument. The principal encourages the boys to practise on musical instruments, but he drawn the line at accordeons. In the largest room of the house, however, the boys are expected to assemble every forenoon for two hours' study. In pleasant weather the boys camp out. Wall tents are put up in two rows, with four boys in each tent. They are provided with ordinary cots. The teacher has a tent in the centre of the camp, and in it the boys gather for their morning recitations. Their intellects are not overtaxed. The exercises consist of reviews of lessons previously learned in the city schools, and in the common English studies—reading, spelling, arithmetic and geography. Besides this, the teacher in his trips with the boys, either on land or on water, seizes every opportunity presented to teach some fact in natural history. If a fish is caught he tells about its species, its peculiarities, the best way to catch it, and in what part of the country it may be found. Every tree and flower is made to give some lesson. The teacher finds sermons in stones, but he has to be careful not to be a bore.

"Miscellaneous visiting by strange boys is not permitted at summer schools. No one is permitted to mingle with them but the boys' parents. It is important that a boy's father or mother does not take a run into the country to see how their young hopeful is flourishing. This keeps the cooks and chambermaids in the cottage busy in the dog days, and brings a nice sum to the pocket of the principal.

"It is like the scheme," added the teacher, "Tough boys are not now allowed to enter such schools. The scholars have all the innocent liberty they could desire, and although it would seem that the boys would not have genuine unrestrained fun, yet in fact they do romp to their hearts' content, and when they don't know that they are being taught something something which sets them off again. It's a good scheme, and I'm going to try it myself next year. There's money in it."

HIKERS ON THE DELAWARE.

Swift and Naval Racing Craft Sailed with Movable Ballast.

From the Philadelphia Press.

The "hiker" is an aquatic race horse, not more than fifteen feet long, without a deck, with a mast away up in the bow, with a single sail big enough for a good sized yacht. The "hiker" does not carry any ballast except that which can move about on two legs. Her crew of two men are her ballast. In order to utilize their weight so as to prevent capsizing, the unknown genius who invented the "hiker" devised the following scheme: Fastened to the centreboard, the mast, and the lower yard of the sail are five or six ropes, which reach to the water's edge on either side into the water. At the ends which go over the side are fastened bars of wood, and on these bars of wood hang the human ballast.

An admirable illustration of the working of this simple but rather moist device is afforded during every regatta of the Southwark Yacht Club. The Southwark is composed entirely of "hikers," either with a double or single bow. When the starting gun is fired from thirty to fifty racers dip across the line as their crews frantically haul up the sails. They continue hauling until such a spread of canvas is displayed that any spectator not well acquainted with the use of the apparently useless ropes and wooden bars, which seem to be only in the way of the men, would say at once that the unballasted little boats would go over before the first quarter mile was finished.

On they glide, with the wind blowing in increased momentum with each moment. Still their progress is comparatively slow, there being but a breath of air. The crews all sit staring at the sail and at the river behind. Suddenly the ruffling of the water tells of the coming of the wind. The crew of each "hiker" scramble over to the windward side and perch themselves on the gunwale with the bars of wood in their hands. Perhaps the wind blows steadily—perhaps it strikes them in a gush. If the former, then the men sit where they are, balancing the craft simply by their all being on one side. But if the latter, while tacking, the "hiker's" spread of canvas above proves too much for her and she plunges over, the Captain yells frantically, "hike over."

In an instant the ropes are stretched taut and the wooden bars disappear overboard into the water, followed by the men. Only their legs remain in the boat as they ride on the transverse bars and hold on to the ropes. Every other wave surges up to their neck, and often a dip to windward submerges them completely, with the exception of their legs, which flourish wildly up over the side of the boat, but when they reappear they are all right, and then saved from capsizing by this sudden hanging out of from 800 to 1,000 pounds on the windward side. Sometimes an entire tack across the river is made with the crew "hiking out" in this manner.

Sometimes, as they come about, in spite of their efforts, the wind proves too strong for them, and the side they are sitting over is raised high up into the air. Then for a few brief seconds every nerve is strained as they pull on the ropes and hang, alm