

ROBBERY'S REVEL.

(Continued from page 1.)

diameter and 137 feet in height; 50 cents for ride of two round trips.

Movable Sidewalk, Long Pier, Jackson Park—Electrically propelled sidewalk; five cents a ride from shore to end of sidewalk, or vice versa.

IN A PUBLIC PARK.

Most of the Robbery I. Committed on a Spot Dedicated by the People's Money.

It will be noticed that in the foregoing list of "extras" that many of the extortionate shows are located on "Midway Plaisance."

This "Midway Plaisance" is part of the park system of Chicago.

It belongs to the people.

Yet it is given up to fakirs and their ilk, and every step on this public ground costs money.

Oh, this "World's Fair!"

It is a dandy!

HOTEL EXTORTIONS.

The Chicago Tribune Speaks Out on the Subject.

[From the Chicago Tribune.]

It is time to talk plainly about the question of hotel extortion.

Elsewhere in this issue the Tribune prints the results of its investigations.

They are not of a character which is creditable to the proprietors of certain hotels or to the city.

They show a general advance of prices and a determination to make a still further advance later on in the season.

A disposition to ignore and drive out their regular guests, and to practice extortion upon transients.

It does not occur to them that by this policy they are injuring the good name of the city, imperiling the success of the Fair, and sacrificing eventually their own advantages.

Probably they do not care for any of these results, as their only motive is one of greed.

Commissioner Calhoun, of Washington, has warned his friends at home against these extortions, and Mr. Frank Wiggins, of California, has sent a letter home in which he says:

We are being bled in every quarter for board and lodging, and are a little bit doubtful whether the treasuries of the California counties will be able to foot the bills when we get through.

I have no idea what will become of us after the 1st of May, as every contract ends then, even to the newsboys.

No matter what you do or what you undertake it has to terminate here the 1st of May.

I look for the cows to go dry that day, and I think the fish will all leave these shores and start in another direction.

If the people of Chicago have not killed the goose that laid the golden egg I am much mistaken.

They are overdoing the matter in every direction.

Of course there will never be another World's Fair here, and they think this is their opportunity, and we poordevils have to submit to every manner of imposition.

I hope we will live through it and come out on top.

It is possible, of course, that Mr. Wiggins has exaggerated the situation somewhat.

It is to be hoped at least that he has.

It is also certain that not all the hotel proprietors are engaged in this extortion.

Some of them have kept to the pledges which all of them long ago made, that they would not depart from their regular rates, but there are too many of them, both down town and around the Fair grounds, who have violated them grossly and who are prepared to go still further unless some influence is brought to bear to stop it.

The investigations made by the Tribune's reporters show that there is no occasion for any advance.

The hotels in the city and at the park are more than sufficient in capacity to accommodate a crowd even bigger than that which was here at the opening of the Fair.

The advance which has been made therefore is simply robbery.

Fortunately the offense carries its own remedy. As the supply is larger than any possible demand, the greedy crowd will only kill the goose that lays the golden eggs.

This is already manifest. The hotels which are charging reasonable rates and not driving away their regular guests are the only ones which are full and making money.

Those, on the other hand, which are overcharging are losing money, and it is hoped they will continue to lose to the end.

But whatever may happen to these extortionists does not redeem the nature of their conduct.

It is vicious, infamous, and disgraceful. Its only effect can be to hurt the good name of the city and affect the success of the Fair.

If persisted in it will leave this city in the same disgraceful condition in which Vienna found itself.

In this matter the Tribune does not believe it would be doing the city or the Fair good service by concealing the facts.

It proposes to publish them

and do what it can to stop the disgraceful business. Hence it invites every man or woman who is charged with extortionate rates or who is treated with insolence to make his or her accusation, and if it be well founded the parties guilty of it shall be exposed, no matter who they are, so that other persons coming to the Fair may shun their places.

HE WANTS THEM ELEVATED.

Mayor Harrison Explains His Position on the Subject of Elevated Tracks.

Mayor Harrison said the other day that the inhabitants of the Twentieth and Thirtieth Wards were mistaken in thinking he was opposed to elevating or depressing railroads within the city limits.

On the contrary, he said he was the first to suggest those methods, but as it would involve a legal fight of ten to fifteen years to force the railroad companies to adopt them he was, in the meantime, in favor of temporary viaducts to put a stop to the loss of life at crossings.

The O'Neill ordinance, he said, could never be carried out with the consent of the people of the West Side.

The people who proposed it did not stop to consider that there was a long line of railroad tracks on the west bank of the river extending from 22d street to Kinzie street and beyond Kinzie street approaching and running upon the east bank of the river.

If those roads were elevated it would put them up to the level of the approaches of the bridges, and would make of them surface roads as far as street travel was concerned.

Mr. Harrison thought the better plan would be to employ competent engineers to study the problem and devise the most practicable means of solving it.

A First Ward Row.

First Ward Republican clubs have declared war against each other.

Last Saturday night the Republican club of the ward met at the Sherman House for the purpose of electing officers.

Before its members separated angry words, fierce looks, wild gesticulations, and even blows were exchanged.

The meeting began in peace and harmony. Charles Wathier presided and Isaac M. Powell acted as Secretary.

Isaac N. Powell, Treasurer, F. P. Gleason. Immediately there was a shout of indignation.

One member spoke of "sandbagging," and others used equally uncomplimentary expressions.

A colored member arose to speak. A white one arose at the same time.

His antagonist went under the table. The names mentioned were put to the meeting.

The Chairman declared that the officers were duly elected. There was a loud cry for a division, but the demand was unheeded.

The supporters of the committee then left the room.

Those remaining held another meeting. It was resolved that those present organize another club, and the following officers were elected: President, F. A. Brokoski; Secretary, Julius Rodbertus; Treasurer, John Ritter.

If there is any city in the world with a greater amount of snobbery than New York it is Washington.

There is quite a dispute in "sassy" circles of that municipal corporation as to whether the accent should be placed on the first or last syllable of Postmaster General Bissell's name.

A similar discussion arose in 1885, when Colonel W. F. Vilas, now United States Senator from Washington, was appointed Postmaster General.

At the national capital a crowd of snobs with extra creased trousers assured him that his name should be pronounced "Velaw."

The Democratic Badger statesman and orator told the surrounding dudes in plain terms that his name was "Vilas," of honest Vermont Democratic derivation, and that he would not have it Frenchified if he could help it.

The snobs subsided.

PROF. BAEYER, of Munich University, has been rummaging around among the mummy graves of Achua, and he has made a study of more than archaeological interest.

He has examined the remains of an embalmed Egyptian princess, and with them a lot of cosmetics used for improving the complexion and brightening the eyes three or four thousand years ago.

He is submitting the ingredients of his find to chemical analysis, and hopes to put these ancient preparations on the market for the benefit of the ladies of to-day.

Prof. Bayer's discovery indicates that what a woman desires is concerned in the world's history.

It is a fact, however, that it makes its home in the hollow of a decayed coconut tree, and that it climbs like coconuts and sows at the stems of the nut until they drop to the ground.

Then the crab descends with marvelous rapidity, and by the aid of its powerful nippers strips the husk from the nut.

When the eyes of the coconut are laid bare, the crab inserts its horny claws and bursts the succulent nut, devouring the nut with great relish.

This particular crab was located by the mass of husks and nutshells around the root of the tree where it lived.

It managed while being brought to Honolulu to strip the husk from the finger of a Kanaka who was endeavoring to get on some of familiarity.

The crab, when its claws and nippers are extended, covers a space of about twenty inches in diameter.

(Honolulu Dispatch.)

ARMOR FOR SOLDIERS.

American Officers Take Little Stock in the Alleged Bullet-Proof Uniforms.

A series of experiments with so-called bullet-proof uniforms has recently been made at Vienna.

Dowe, a tailor, is the inventor of the new armor. His idea is that soldiers should wear in action a bullet-proof, flexible composition, faced with cloth, and buttoned over or under the uniform.

He claims that steel-faced bullets from modern rifles have failed to penetrate the stuff at any distance over 100 metres.

At less than 200 metres the shock of a bullet might render a man clad in the armor unconscious.

Whatever may be the real value of the invention, it is certain that a Berlin firm has offered Herr Dowe an enormous sum for the patent.

Major General Howard, of the United States Army, does not believe that armor will be introduced into modern warfare during the next two decades at least.

"For years," he said, "we have been told of experiments of this nature being made. They are favorably commented upon at the outset, but prove failures eventually and are forgotten.

The last important battle in which armor figured was Waterloo. You remember the results there? Napoleon's steel-clad cuirassiers were simply cut to pieces by the English.

Their armor proved no protection whatever, and although the English and Prussians had armored troops on the field they kept them almost entirely out of the action.

There is nothing in the law of nations prohibiting the use of armor. I fancy there will never be any need for the insertion of such a clause.

The chief objections to armor are easily summed up. If the armor be strong enough to be really bullet-proof it is sure to be too heavy for marching.

If it be light enough for marching it cannot be strong enough to adequately resist bullets.

With regard to Herr Dowe's invention, I am inclined to think that it is an improvement on the invention of Herr Karl Scarned, which was tested in several countries some years ago.

Scarned's armor was of undressed hemp, stitched together and put under hydraulic pressure. It was thoroughly tested, and found to be useless in time of war.

The Dowe invention is probably the same stuff, with the addition of a wire netting.

General Howard was asked if any branch of the American army had ever worn armor, and he answered:

"Some regiments of Federal troops during the Civil War tried chain armor. It did not turn out to be a success, and was soon abandoned."

Said Lieutenant H. Bean, U. S. A., ex-Government Instructor to State Militias:

"Should armor or a modification of armor, ever be re-introduced, the art of war will be revolutionized. Candidly, I do not anticipate any such event.

I witnessed the tests made with the Scarned armored uniform. Scarned exhibited his hempen material with bullets twisted in its meshes, yet when the armor was placed on a sheep the animal was killed by a distance of somewhat over 100 metres.

Armor of any kind would be cumbersome to infantry soldiers. Armor of this kind would be of no use whatever against the bayonet.

The cavalrymen might wear armor advantageously enough. If it be introduced at all I should think that the experiment would be made with the mounted branch of the service."

The Scarned armored material was made to be worn under the uniform. It covered the entire body, saving only the hands, feet and face.

Being quite light, it admitted of the free movement of the muscles. The armor was made in three pieces, which overlapped each other and were secured together by hooks.

The Rock of Gibraltar.

The rock, outwardly so harmless in appearance, has been tunneled with wonderful ingenuity and at an enormous expense.

There are three tunnels, one above another, and all connected at intervals by heavy iron gates.

They contain over two thousand cannon, facing as many loop-holes. The view from some of these loop-holes is unrivaled.

Here the eye sweeps over the Atlantic and the beautiful Mediterranean at the same time, and also two quarters of the globe.

The highest point is 1,430 feet above the level of the sea, and is called the Signal El-Hacko. The rock is three miles long and from one-half to three-quarters of a mile wide.

It is six miles in circumference. The extreme end of the rock facing the sea is "Earop Point." It is crowned by a light-house, and defended by strong batteries.

In 1797 it was taken from Spain by the English at the battle of Trafalgar, in which Lord Nelson lost his life.

Since then an enormous amount of work has been done by the English government, a million dollars a year being spent there on its fortifications.

(Indianaapolis News.)

The Robber-Crab.

The steam tug R. C. Bishop, which returned to this port a day or two ago after an unsuccessful search for the missing boat's crew from the wrecked bark Lady Lamson, brought back with her a monstrousity in the shape of a robber-crab.

The ferocious looking crawler was captured on Fanning Island. Strange to say, very little seems to be known of the crab around Honolulu.

It is a fact, however, that it makes its home in the hollow of a decayed coconut tree, and that it climbs like coconuts and sows at the stems of the nut until they drop to the ground.

Then the crab descends with marvelous rapidity, and by the aid of its powerful nippers strips the husk from the nut.

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(Honolulu Dispatch.)

A NOVEL-MAKING MACHINE.

Five Thousand Entire Novels an Hour—Cost of Making a Paper Book.

There are various rumors and tales floating about New York among those in the business concerning some wonderful machinery over on the west side of the city, in a certain monstrous book-making establishment, says the special correspondent of the Philadelphia Press.

But even the best informed seem to have shadowy notions, for one gentleman in conversation with the writer said they made three books at a time on this machine, and when they were all sewed and covered great knives came down and cut them apart as they were end to end.

But a visit to the establishment revealed nothing of this sort, though there was other machinery perhaps equally wonderful.

The "novel machine." It is a large web press similar to the kind newspapers are printed on, but arranged to take curved electrotypes of each page of a book, instead of a single large metal cylinder casting. There are two cylinders, on each of which 144 pages may be screwed, and as the long strip of paper goes through first one side is printed and then the other, making it possible to print 288 pages at every revolution.

The strip of paper, after being carried over rollers which dry the ink, is cut, folded, and brought together in the shape of a small volume, with the edges all trimmed. Every time the great cylinder goes around, a novel is printed, folded and trimmed, and 5,000 of these are turned out every hour, while, if it were necessary, 7,000 or 8,000 might be the quota.

From the printing press these books are carried to a little machine that looks like a sewing machine, and two wire stitches are taken in the back of each. The stitched volumes are then carried to the covering machine, where they are put side to side in a long feeding trough.

At the end of this is a little compartment large enough to take a book, carried on an endless chain running over wheels at each end—indeed, there are a series of little compartments on this chain, and as the chain moves along each one receives a book.

As the book proceeds a wheel running in a glue-pot presses against its back, smearing it with glue. A little further along there is a pile of covers that comes up at just the right moment, leaving a cover sticking to the gluey back of the book.

Of course the cover stands out straight on each side, but as it is carried all the way around on the chain, the glue thus has a chance to dry.

When the circuit has been made the book drops off on its back, and by falling in between other books the covers are folded up against the sides.

In this way fifty books can be covered every minute. Two hundred and fifty thousand of these paper-covered novels are thus turned out every two weeks, and extra editions of 50,000 or so are often worked in besides.

It is the paper, which costs the most, nearly five times the price of printing. But that is only about two cents for a novel. The rest of the expenditure—for printing, covers, etc.—is about three cents. The whole is not over three cents, and doubtless is something even less than that when such great quantities as I have mentioned are printed.

This machinery is not duplicated in any other establishment.

LIBRARIAN SPOFFORD'S MEMORY.

The prodigious memory of Librarian Alsworth Spofford, of the Congressional Library, his remarkable ability to locate any book among the hundreds of thousands under his charge and his familiarity with the contents of most of them are well known.

In a chat with the Star representative, Assistant Postmaster-General H. Clay Evans related an interesting instance of Mr. Spofford's ability.

"General Lew Wallace, while dining with me some years ago," said General Evans, "told me how he got some of the material for the chapter which deals with the chariot race between Ben Hur and Messala. He doubted if there existed a book in the United States that contained what he wanted and referred to his particular matter and at the period—29 B. C.—but concluded that if it was not in the Congressional Library Mr. Spofford could aid him.

"He came to Washington and saw Mr. Spofford, explaining what he wanted. No book was on the shelves of the Congressional Library that would aid him, he was informed, and there was but one book in the United States that had any bearing upon the subject.

"You will find it," said Mr. Spofford, "in the Athenaeum Library in Boston. I don't remember its title; in fact, it has none. It is an old, plaidy-bound volume. The librarian will probably tell you he hasn't it, but he has, because I have seen it, and it contains the material you want. I'll draw a diagram of the library, so you can go to the book."

"He drew the diagram and explained how General Wallace was to go down this aisle and into that alcove, and that the book would be found on a certain shelf, so many books from the end. Armed with this diagram General Wallace proceeded to the Athenaeum library, and was informed that they knew of no volume that contained the material he sought.

"He received permission to inspect the library, and, consulting his diagram, soon placed his hands upon an old musty volume just where Mr. Spofford had told him he would find it, and sure enough, it contained just the material as to the customs, chariots and races of the people of whom he wrote which he lacked.

"I recall another instance. It was during the debate in Congress over the ruins, Speaker Reed presiding. Attorney-General John R. Quinn, of Nashville, reading of the question in the newspapers, recalled a like question having come up in the English House of Lords. He telegraphed me that somewhere in the Parliament reports the debate and its result could be found. I hurried with the telegram to Mr. Spofford. He contacted his books, thought a moment and then pulled out a volume of English reports, thumbed over the pages and said, 'There's what you want. I ran with it to Tom Hayes, who was then speaking and who used it in his speech. Speaker Reed afterward using it in an article in one of the magazines.'"

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