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SIAM'S METROPOLIS.

An Oriental City Which Has Been Called the Venice of the East.

Bangkok is entirely different from all other Eastern cities I have seen. Elsewhere the houses are compacted together so as to cover as little space as possible and the people massed as in hives. This city, however, with its 350,000 people, covers more ground than Canton, with its 1,600,000. There are but few streets, but they are quite broad. The canals run in every direction, and are so numerous that the Siamese are proud to call their capital the Venice of the East. Houses project over these canals, with open balconies, and both sides of the river for six or more miles are lined with floating houses, used not only for residences, but for business.

People do their shopping in boats, and while a woman sells to her customer in open view—for all houses have open fronts—her lazy husband fishes, sitting upon a box of goods, and his children bathe and swim around the house. In rowing or being rowed about there was never a moment that I could not see somewhere a bather; and just at sundown all the common world seems amphibious. The panoong is retained on when in the water, and is then either exchanged for a dry one or left on to dry. Rivers and canals are always filled by freight boats, forty to sixty feet long; by small peddler-boats; by canoes of all sizes, from ten feet, barely holding a man, up to a hundred or more feet, with fifty or more paddlers moving in state with some high official. I saw one long canoe with nearly a hundred rowers. Each one would dip his paddle and then lift it on high—a curious sight thus to see nearly a hundred paddles in the air at the same time. There are quite a large number of small steam barges in the city. These dart about very rapidly. In fact, all boats seem to do so, for the tide runs very swiftly, and boats going with its current move in the channel, while those going against it stick to the eddies. This makes the river a very lively one, especially toward the cool of the day.

Trees abound throughout the town, along streets, along the canals, and about the houses—many of them of good forest size. Looking down from a high pagoda one can scarcely realize oneself in the heart of a great city. The ordinary house is almost entirely lost in the mass of green. Here and there one peeps out looking cool and shaded. But the lofty, snow-white pagodas, the tall, steep-roofed temples—roofed in tiles of many colors—many of them in gilt, the beautiful kiosk turrets of the palaces, the gilded royal wat and cenotaph, and the white palaces themselves make the city from an eminence look like a vast royal garden, with princely palaces and oriental temples nestled among ornamental tropical trees.—*Carter H. Harrison, in Chicago Mail.*

GOOD-NATURED PEOPLE.

Are They as Interesting as Those of a Positive Disposition?

As a general thing, original people, people with wills and opinions—in other words, interesting people—are not, I am inclined to believe, of a very easy-going temper. The man who has a mind of his own usually wishes to have his own way, and is therefore not likely to be regarded as in any conspicuous degree pleasant. When it is said of a clergyman: "Oh, he is a very *good* man," all church-going persons at once get an idea of very dry sermons. (For the conveying of such compliment as this all the vowels and consonants together are not equal to one left-handed inflection.) The most interesting character in Milton's Paradise Lost is unquestionably the arch-fiend himself; and in the modern newspaper—epic poems being long out of date—no class of persons, unless it be political candidates, cut a greater figure than the criminals. There is no doubt of it, good nature and even a good character—which things, I comfort myself with hoping, are not exactly the same—do tend to grow somewhat monotonous and tiresome. Human nature is like an apple—all the more palatable for being a trifle tart. No husband and wife ever lived together in greater mutual affection than did Esau and her cousin Bridget, concerning whom we read, nevertheless: "We agree pretty well in our tastes and habits—yet so as 'with a difference.' We are generally in harmony, with occasional bickerings, as it should be among near relations. Our sympathies are rather understood than expressed; and once, upon my dissembling a tone in my voice more kind than ordinary, my cousin burst into tears, and complained that I was altered."

A little flavor of individuality and self-will is excellent for preventing insipidity. Thus I theorize. And why not? If a man is fond of his own ease and his own way, always "notional," often out of sorts, and never very amiable, why should he not shape his theory to the facts?

All the while, however, I am conscious that I could find much to say on the other side. There used to be a funeral hymn (it may have gone out of vogue ere this) beginning: "Sister, thou wast mild and lovely," the word "lovely" being employed, I take it, in the old-fashioned, dictionary sense of lovable, not in the new-fangled, boarding-school sense of beautiful; and I can not help feeling that mildness, gentleness of spirit, is one of the traits which most people like to attribute to their friends, at least after they are dead. It would sound rather odd and incongruous—would it not?—to sing about the coffin: "Sister, thou wast irascible and interesting." And even in the case of the living, I must confess to a preference for an equable and obliging disposition, especially in a woman. I may be whimsical, but I have never seen many who affected me as uncomfortably sweet-tempered.

—"What can you tell me about Esau?" queried the pedagogue. "Esau," responded the youth, with the glib alacrity of one who feels himself for once on safe ground; "Esau was a writer of fables who sold his copyright for a bottle of potash."—*Christian Union.*

LIGHT-HOUSE LIFE.

Difficulties in the Way of Getting Supplies to the Keepers.

"I know at least one man in this country who is able to live cheaply and get paid for doing it, all because he lives where the cost of getting his food, fuel and light to him is about five times as much as the original cost of the supplies themselves, and he lives not more than thirty miles from Boston, at that," said the captain of a vessel in the coastwise trade between New York and Portland, Me. "It seems queer that a man can get along more economically on account of the high cost of getting supplies to his home than he could if the cost were less, don't it? But it's a fact all the same. For instance, a ton of coal costs about $6 in Boston. If it costs no more than $6 to lay it down in this man's bin, he would have to pay for both coal and delivery, and his coal would stand him $12 for every ton. The same, in proportion, with his beef and his pork and his potatoes and his flour and his oil. But just because it costs in the neighborhood of $30 a ton to carry his coal from Boston to his bins and corresponding prices for his other supplies, he gets the whole business for nothing. His flour he gets free and his beef and his pork and his potatoes and his oil, as well as his coal. The entire outfit don't cost him a cent and he gets may be $1,000 a year for staying where he is and receiving the annual donations.

"It will be queer, now, if you ain't thinking to yourself that this man I am speaking of has a soft snap. Well, may be he has. He is a light-house keeper. He lives on a big rock at Cape Ann. No seagoing vessel can get within a quarter of a mile of his home. No loaded boat can reach his abiding place in safety. To get a ton of coal to his bin, which is perched on the rocks above high-water mark, it must first be shipped from Boston to as near the light-house as the vessel can approach. The coal is in bags, and these are placed in small boats and taken to the edge of the shoal water, inside of which they dare not enter. The bags are then carried ashore on the backs of the crew, who wade ashore through the shoals, clamber up the rocks with their burdens, and empty the coal in the light-house bin. The other bulky supplies are delivered to the Cape Ann light-keeper in the same way, and the Government pays the expense. May be he has a soft snap, but I'd rather be on my vessel, tossing and pitching on the heaviest sea that his light ever shone out upon, than to be firmly grounded on that Cape Ann rock like he is. Wouldn't you?

"But this man isn't the only one the Government supplies with free coal, light and rations at its light-houses. Whenever the keepers are located at stations where the cost of carriage exceeds the cost of supplies, they are provided free; but where the cost of delivery does not exceed the price of the goods, the keeper is compelled to pay for both. That's a queer rule, but Government has many a queer way of doing things. At all of the barren rock light-houses, like Cape Ann, Minot's Ledge and others, the keepers have even to be supplied with fresh water from the points on the main land. They collect a great deal from rains in cisterns and tanks, but in most cases it is not sufficient for the needs of the keepers, and the supply from abroad must be regularly taken to them no matter what the cost or the difficulties are in getting it there."—*N. Y. Sun.*

PARTING OF SAVAGES.

An Incident Which Proves That Their Indifference Is Not Real.

The stoical indifference of savages is proverbial. It is not altogether real, however. It is partly studied for concealment; and partly due to the fact that the affections are latent. Our mistake is in supposing the savage nature incapable of feeling. The following observation shows what belongs to that nature and what is lacking to it:

When away with a recruiting party from the labor-ship Redcoat, on the San Christoval coast, I was present at the parting on the beach of six natives, who had elected to go to Fiji to work for a term of three years on the plantations. But little regret was visible in the faces of those whose friends were leaving them. Son parted with father, and brother with brother, with as little regret as if they were merely parting for the hour. The mother or sister played no part in this scene, a characteristic negative feature of the social life of these natives.

However, amongst the six natives was an elderly woman who was following her husband to Fiji, and her departure was evidently keenly felt by a small knot of female companions on the beach. One poor creature stood at the edge of the water, looking wistfully toward the boat as it was being pulled away, and crying more after the manner of a fretful child. It was the bond of a true affection that knit together the hearts of these poor women. In this episode I saw, to employ those beautiful lines of Milton:

A sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night.

In it was evinced the only sign of the tenderer feelings which was displayed in the whole of that day's proceedings.—*Youth's Companion.*

Circumstances Alter Cases.

The Misses Recherche and Rusher, walking arm-in-arm, meet Miss Purser. Miss Rusher smiles and bows.

"What, do you still recognize that Miss Purser? Why, the very day her old dad failed I gave her the cut direct."

"Oh, but you were entirely too hasty! Don't you know her father has compromised with his creditors at twenty cents on the dollar?"—*Detroit Free Press.*

—The farmers of Chester County, Pennsylvania, rather than to submit to the extortion of coal combinations which demand eight dollars a ton for anthracite, have cleaned out their old-fashioned fireplaces and returned to the wood supply for fuel.

FINE BUILDINGS

To be Erected in the Queen City of the West.

NEW CITY HALL.

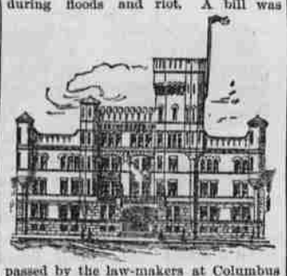
No city in the world of its size needs a building for city offices worse than Cincinnati. The present edifice used by the officials is totally unfit for the purpose. The city has out-grown it. By a recent act of the legislature the authorities were authorized to issue bonds to the amount of $700,000 for the purpose of erecting a building adapted to the needs of the municipal government. Plans were adopted and the work began.

The cut above shows the front elevation as approved by the trustees. Since its adoption, however, a movement has been started looking to the condemnation of property near the original site that would give more room for the building. This would cost $300,000 more.

As the increased outlay met with some opposition from the press and people, a bill was passed a few days ago by the general assembly referring the matter directly to the people, to be voted on at the next election. This election occurred recently and resulted in favor of the condemnation, thus giving space for the building commensurate with the city's needs and greatness. This will afford room for a police station as well as all other offices required, and will be a vast improvement on the dingy and filthy apartments that have disgraced the Queen City for so many years.

FIRST REGIMENT ARMORY.

Several months ago ground was broken for the foundations of a magnificent stone structure that in the future will be the home of Cincinnati's military organizations. The picture above shows how it will look when completed. For years past the First Regiment and Second Battery, Ohio National Guard, have been compelled to put up with very indifferent quarters—the former occupying an export house and the latter stowed away in a building totally unfit for its uses. Finally a public spirit was engendered which set the ball in motion for the provision of an armory more in accordance with the merits of the military and as a just recognition of the valuable service rendered by the citizen soldiers during floods and riot. A bill was



passed by the law-makers at Columbus empowering the issue of bonds to the amount of $100,000 for the purpose of erecting an armory to be used in common by both arms of the service.

The Governor appointed three trustees to look after and superintend its construction. These were William B. Smith, Esq., E. Cort. Williams, Esq., and Mr. Sol. P. Kincon.

The board set to work at once, and their labors of the past year have been arduous in the extreme. In order to have money sufficient to furnish the armory (the appropriation was barely sufficient to complete it) one of the commissioners volunteered to do the work of a secretary, thus saving the salary of that official and devoting it to the completion of the work.

The First Regiment consists of eight companies, all but one of which are located in the city, the other being at Hamilton. The Battery is the finest in the State service and the only one armed with gattling guns.

Both organizations performed good service at the Berner riot in 1884, and by their soldierly qualities have gained the confidence and respect of the better class of citizens.

CINCINNATI CENTENNIAL NOTES.

Where could you enjoy a show of the magnitude of this for fifty cents?

There would be no "kick" on the price of admission if it were known what a grand show it will be.

All the buildings will be brilliantly illuminated outside. The trees in the park will be lit up by huge fire-flies of electric light; and the effect will be beautiful in the extreme.

Twenty-five hundred editors of the Centennial states will be invited to participate in the dedicatory exercises of the Press Club, which takes place at Washington Park on May 1.

Mr. M. S. Turrill is the clerk of the Department of Education. He is one of Cincinnati's old educators and was principal of the Twenty-sixth district schools for about thirty years. His headquarters are in the office of the Superintendent of Public Schools in the Public Library Building, third floor.

Somebody writes the Commissioners for a chance to produce an "historical drama" of "Aaron Burr" during the Centennial. The drama is said to contain all the important historical events of those exciting times in Ohio's history when Aaron Burr was plotting at Blennerhassett's Isle for a southwestern empire.

Cheap Rates to Arkansas and Texas.

The L. & N. will sell excursion tickets to all points in Arkansas and Texas good 60 days at one fare for round trip. Tickets good 15 days in each direction. Tickets sold on the following dates: March 20th, April 3rd and 24th, May 8th and 22nd and June 5th and 19th.

A church will be dedicated at Empire next Sunday. It is a union building.

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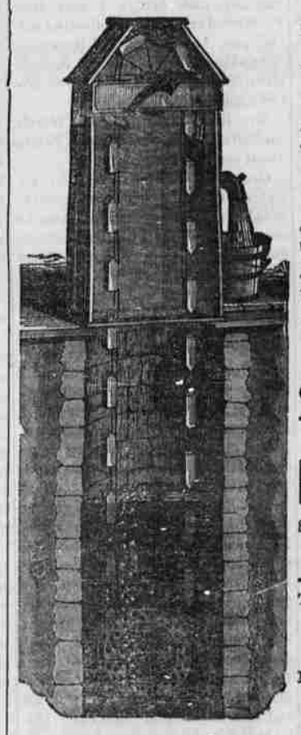

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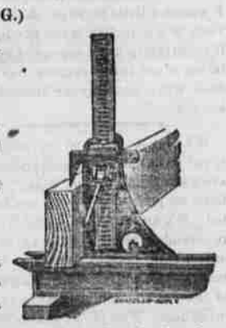

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