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A CHILDREN'S PALACE.

Novel Feature Projected for the Columbian Exposition.

Elaborate Arrangements Proposed for the Dissemination of Knowledge and Everything Calculated to Amuse and Instruct the Young.

One of the most original as well as interesting of any of the world's fair projects is that for a children's department, the details of which are now under consideration. The lady managers are naturally called upon to be the godmothers of such a scheme, and word from Mrs. Potter Palmer has been received by Wilson L. Gill, of New York city, assuring him that space on the fair grounds will be granted for this purpose.

The plan, says the New York Tribune, as it has taken shape thus far, is for the erection of a building which shall have two separate and distinct parts, one for the dissemination of knowledge by means of lectures, and the other by means of articles for the use of children. For this purpose there should be a large auditorium, where arrangements could be made for lectures, illustrated with the stereopticon. In this way a good many things relative to child-life in various nations could be shown—things which it would be impossible to demonstrate with the children themselves. Such lectures and exhibitions would be carried on from hour to hour and day to day, as long as there were audiences to listen. Three quarters of an hour would be allowed for each lecture, and a quarter of a hour for the dispersing of one set of people and the reassembling of another. The lecturers would be those competent not only to make the several features entertaining, but those who would have the direct and principal object of adroitly interesting the people in doing what they could for the pleasure of their own children. They would also get much information as to how they might do it in their own individual homes. On Mondays the child-life in Japan might be illustrated; on Tuesdays, the child-life in some other country or countries, and so on.

The second division would necessitate the use of two floors, one more especially to interest babies and little children and to show improved and simplified methods for clothing babies and little children of various ages. Dr. Grosvenor, of Chicago, the designer of the Gertrude suit famous for babies, has offered to take charge of the department devoted for crib beds, clothing and other nursery conveniences. By means of blackboards and piles of sand and clay, the advantages would be shown of entertaining and educating a child, both in the kindergarten and in homes, the idea that children can have these little pleasures outside of school being thus brought to the attention of parents.

Food for children and its preparation will also be a feature of the children's palace, it being probable that one of the several organized cooking schools would have it in hand, showing especially the best ways of cooking the more ordinary foods.

In the department of playthings an endeavor would be made especially to make use of such toys as may be desirable in teaching object-lessons. Building blocks, for instance, are to a great extent educational, and when children are taught to make use of the book of drawings accompanying them they will learn to interpret them with delightful results. The rest of this floor would be given up to pictures, books, dolls and toys in general for children, with perhaps space in the center where children might be left with their attendants and games played which it would be desirable to disseminate.

On a lower floor there would probably be an exhibition for older children. This would consist of drawing, etching, engraving on copper, steel and wood; painting in oil and water colors, wood-carving, photography, clay and plaster work, electric motors, printing office with press and type, carpentry and machine work, smithing and plumbing. There would also be a display of bicycles, tricycles, boats, sleds, etc. The public would have it demonstrated to them that it is valuable for girls as well as boys to know all about these things.

The board of lady managers and all others who have given thought to the children's department look upon it as one of the most striking features of the exposition, and they especially consider that it will be of interest to people who live away from cities and know little of the newer developments in educational matters—the kindergarten, manual training, etc. It is proposed to make the children's palace a building of national interest and importance, and it is believed that every state will wish to have a share in the exhibit.

Breathes with Closed Mouth.

A frog cannot breathe with his mouth open. The conformation of his breathing apparatus is such that when his mouth is open his nostrils will be closed, and, paradoxical as it may seem, all you have to do to suffocate a frog is to put a stick in his mouth so he cannot shut his jaws. It is a strange phenomenon, probably unparalleled in animal history, but nevertheless anyone who pleases may make the experiment, though it certainly will be disastrous to the frog.

Ancient Envelopes.

Envelopes are supposed to be quite modern, but in the Birch manuscripts in the British museum, No. 4433—105, there is a letter from Martin Triewald to Sir Hans Sloane, dated Stockholm, April 24, 1755, inclosed in an ordinary envelope, which is opened out and mounted at the end of the letter

SOUTHERN BUTTERMILK.

It Is Said to Be Finer Than That of Any Other Section.

To the southern housekeeper buttermilk is a practical, everyday necessity. She not only uses it in cooking, but puts it upon her table as a beverage.

"I never use baking powder," said a lady to a New York Recorder reporter one day, "except in cake," and I noticed she expressed the minds of the southern women generally.

One woman will even sour her sweet milk with vinegar rather than not make her biscuit in the usual way. The Tennessee woman churns every day in warm weather, and she churns sweet milk.

In fact, all the milk that is not used for family purposes is put into the churn. It follows that the amount of butter is small, but it is the buttermilk she is after and that she gets in such abundance that the question of the little child: "Mamma, which cow gives the buttermilk?" is not so strange, after all. The children drink it as they would water.

At dinner it is often the only beverage upon the table. What is not needed for the family is readily sold at the uniform price of ten cents per gallon. Many a woman of the south makes her pin money in this way.

In fevers and all diseases of a malarial type buttermilk is a useful drink. An observant physician who knew the habits of both northern and southern people once remarked: "I believe that one reason the people of the south do not suffer so much from dyspepsia is because of their free use of buttermilk. It is not only a promoter of good digestion, but a good blood purifier, and therefore a valuable internal cosmetic."

Do you suppose, my northern lady, that when you taste the sour, salted contents of your bi-weekly churning after that great golden lump comes forth you can form a just idea of what southern buttermilk is?

If you wish to do so you must sacrifice somewhat of your butter's gilt and weight, you must churn as did the black "aunties," and then you may know the fresh, sweet, nutritious, anti-malarial, anti-dyspeptic buttermilk of the sunny southland.

POETRY AND DEMOCRACY.

Poets Will Give Expression to the Great Heart of Humanity.

"The voice of the masses was never heard in the old world literature," says Walter Blackburn Harte in the April New England Magazine. "A whisper of it was heard almost for the first time with the French revolution. It is now beginning to be heard in real earnest, and if it does not find a strong utterance in poetry as yet, it is because poetry is trammeled by tradition. When the poets really awake to the grandeur of being able to give expression to the great heart of humanity, we shall hear no more of this twaddle about this age being too democratic and too prosaic for the production of good poetry. If the common life of the nations cannot afford inspiration for a great poet, then we may believe that poetry is indeed dead forever; for it will then appear that the great poem of God is ridiculous in the eyes of his human mouthpieces. The awakening intellect of the millions will throw down kings and aristocracies and plutocracies and the brutal chivalry of romance forever, and there will then be a greater, more human, more divine inspiration for the true poet in the common life of the people. The old poets, from Homer down, concerned themselves principally with the prominent men of their time; the men who were the peaks of circumstances, and whom we have since learned to accept as great. They have really been deified by the greatness of the poets. History is beginning to show us how small and mean and petty they actually were in their lives. The poets were too often courtiers."

Dress of the Salvation Army Women.

This is what Mrs. Bramwell Booth says about the dress worn by Salvation Army women: "The dress, I think, was developed bit by bit. It was not in the early days so distinctive a uniform as it is now. In the Christian mission period the bonnet was small and close-fitting, and it might be trimmed with black velvet, but the strings were of white ribbon, which soon became soil d. Our present bonnet, when you come to consider how many styles of face it has to suit, is not unbecoming. Elderly women and people with large faces look much better in a large bonnet than in a small one, and a large bonnet is protective to the hair—a point which we have to consider. The dress might formerly be either black or navy blue. Now it must be blue. Yes, the uniform is very comfortable, and it is pleasant to think that we need not discard it for any change of fashion. My only fear is that our dress should look rather too smart for the very poor people we go among, for our chief point is that we should be in all things one with themselves."

Big Pay for Knot Making.

There is in St. Louis a firm of rope makers and dealers that has a side line that it does not advertise. It is the manufacture and preparation of hangman's ropes. The firm sells as many as one hundred of these ropes annually. The price of the rope, with the noose ready for use, is five dollars. The ropes are hand-made and of hemp, and one of the employes of the firm's North St. Louis rope walk ties the knot. A few weeks since the sheriff of Madison county, Ill., had a man to hang at Edwardsville. He bought a rope that he thought would answer the purpose. The tying of the knot he found, however, to be a more difficult matter than he imagined, and he went to St. Louis to have the noose made. The ropemaker charged him two dollars and fifty cents for tying the knot.

IN ARCADY.

Poets Dwell There with Shepherdesses Under Spreading Beech Trees.

Arcady never arose out of sheer gladness of heart and lustihood of fancy. To the poetic imagination, says a writer in Scribner, the difficulties, depravities and insufficiency of actual life have always been especially manifest and oppressive. But the poetic imagination at its best never rests in discontent, in the mere apprehension and recital of woes. It is creative and seeks a remedy, or at least a refuge. From the first it has found some approach to that peace and sincerity which it cannot do without, but which actual life seems to deny, everywhere in nature. Thus the poet's favorite haunt has always been the vales and the groves, the flowery banks and the green fields. But nature wholly unpeopled still failed to satisfy, and so the poets in their inspirations after earthly perfection fell to colonizing their placid retreats with the children of their fancy. Thus came Arcady—the land of fantastic shepherds and shepherdesses, where everybody was honest and simple, where the tending of sheep was but a pastime, and the chanting of madrigals the chief pursuit.

A Japanese Poison.

One of the most dangerous and fatal poisons used in Japan and Java is obtained from the bamboo. The young shoots of the cane when they first push through the ground are covered with fine, brownish hairs, which, under the microscope, appear to be bayonet-like spikes of crystals of silex, infinitely sharp and hollow. Small quantities of these hairs administered daily in the food bring on ulceration of the whole alimentary canal, stimulating malignant dysentery. The action must be of a mechanical rather than chemical nature, just as the spores of the common puff ball act upon the eyes. The bamboo crystal is greatly dreaded by all European residents of Java. A Dutch official report says that scores of deaths among European planters are due to the bamboo hairs and to the jealousy of native women, who whenever they take a fancy to a white man will either have him or poison him on bamboo hairs if it takes months to accomplish the job. The infinitesimal hollow through these hairy crystals is the most remarkable thing in connection with them, they being the only known hollow vegetable or mineral thorns or crystals.

Electrical Stamps.

The man who introduced the first cancelling machine in the New York general post office is employed there now, but he has lived to see his machine surpassed. His invention would cancel four thousand stamps in an hour, or less than the average number for a skilled man working by hand. Three or four other machines, each a little faster than its predecessor, were introduced in turn and discarded. One was invented that far exceeded the speed of the swiftest hand worker, and it was used until the discovery was made that it sometimes cut through envelopes and damaged their contents. Then the present machine, which cancels forty-eight thousand stamps an hour, was introduced. The five machines in use at the general post office are run by electricity.

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