

HOTEL CLERKS.

No Longer the Butt of Criticism and Poor Jokes.

NEVER AS BLACK AS PAINTED.

His Trials, Tribulations, Urbanity, and Universal Knowledge Freely Conceded by an Intelligent Traveling Public.

The importance of a man's position in the world depends upon the power which the position gives him to benefit or annoy his fellows. The banker and the stock broker are of importance in the commercial world because they can exert a potential influence upon a business man's reputation and his financial standing, while a pawn broker who, on a more limited scale and with different class of people, does the same kind of business that the banker does, is of less importance in the business world, because his position is not a commanding one, and his influence is not so far-reaching or so powerful either for good or evil.

This being true, the hotel clerk becomes a proper subject for the study of a man who is especially for the study of a man who would eat and sleep properly, and who does not perform these two functions as a mere habit but as a duty and a pleasure.

The hotel clerk has in the past been the butt of a good many poor jokes and has sometimes been the subject of criticisms that would hardly bear the construction of a joke, but would be considered by the unprejudiced reader rather with nature of a savage attack upon the hotel clerks as a class.

The hotel clerk is not as black as he is painted. If he is autocratic in his manner, it is only because he is compelled to be so by the circumstances surrounding him, and it is no more so than your bank cashier, ticket agent or other man who must wait upon several hundred clamorous people in the course of the day and night, and who is expected by them to devote as much time and attention to each one as he can afford to bestow upon a score of them.

"People who suppose that a hotel clerk has a 'picnic' are not posted," said one of these public martyrs of duty. "If any class of people ought to escape purgatory after death, for the reason that they have undergone its miseries while in the flesh, it is the hotel clerk. Just imagine yourself standing behind the register there and being the target for a thousand and one questions from a hundred different people from morning till night, and from night until daylight, if you happen to be the night clerk. If they were questions within the ken of the clerk or that he ought to know, it would not be so bad; but the questions range from a problem in metaphysics to the probable state of the weather tomorrow."

"What class of travelers give the hotel clerks the most trouble?" "Country people and those who have traveled but little but who wish to appear as though they were great travelers and perfectly familiar with all the details of the first class make trouble because they are ignorant of the ways of city habits, and are excusable to some extent on that score for the annoyance and trouble they unwittingly occasion by their senseless questions. The latter class, however, have no patience with, and an experienced hotel clerk can tell them as soon as they set foot in the house. They seem to have an idea that the more exacting they are and the more capricious they are in their criticisms of the house and its way of accommodating its guests, the more they will be enabled to impress people with the idea that they are traveled people. Nothing in the house is good enough for them, and to hear them complain of the minutest details that they had at some time lived in a palace and been fed upon the richest viands that the earth affords. The fact is, the most of these people when at home live upon the most frugal fare, and if they are accustomed to any luxuries, it is when traveling but once a week on alfalfa, a species of coarse clover; the mountains being entirely devoid of vegetation of any kind, the animals are thus compelled to fast until reaching a station. In the highest mountains they saw no vegetation, a fur-bearing animal. The Dunlap and Stetson hats are made from the skins of these animals, small droves of which find a subsistence somehow on the higher Andes. Mr. Martin, however, went into the opinion that the animals descend to the valleys at stated intervals to feed for a day or two. Arriving at the mines, the American engineer found a cluster of Bolivian Indian huts, and was informed that these savages were and had been lazy workmen he would have to depend on to erect the building and machinery. It should be stated that the Choquechilpe mines are located in Bolivia, but that country having no seacoast or port of its own, the Chilean one of Arica is used for commercial purposes.

Having surveyed the ground for the building and plant, Mr. Martin put his blanket robe on Bolivians to work on the excavation, and the course of about one year the Indians succeeded in making the excavation and setting in the foundation. The work was frequently interrupted by holidays and celebrations, in which every Indian got drunk on alcohol. The rate of wages paid was twenty-eight cents per day, Bolivian money, equal to about eleven cents American money. There was neither priest or doctor at the mines, the physician em-

ployed by the company having resigned and returned to France shortly after Mr. Martin's arrival. He had visited the mines generally for ten days, there, which, of course, no work; but of feasting and marriage and giving in marriage there was plenty.

Some ten years Mr. Martin was engaged in completing his task he was compelled, besides his other labors, to baptize the children, prescribe for and cure the sick, read the burial service over the dead, and keep tab on couples who could not get on their feet. The priest, however, the couples Mr. Martin insisted on seeing married when the priest arrived.

The machinery and iron for the plant were transported up the Andes from Lima on the backs of mules. No piece of heavy machinery was over eight feet in length nor weighed in excess of three hundred pounds. It took exactly one year to transport all the necessary material from Lima to the Choquechilpe mines. Thus over two thousand tons of material were put into the plant in working order, but instead of a hundred and sixty tons output, but sixty could be produced, as the Indians could not and would not produce more than an average of sixty tons monthly. They were assayed fifty times to the ton, with richer veins in sight, making the mine a valuable one indeed. The company operating it is composed almost exclusively of Frenchmen, and but one foreign stockholder has ever visited the place.

The altitude, Mr. Martin states, is impossible to live in to exceed thirty days at a time, when a descent to the valley for a few days rest and recuperation are necessary. This does not imply, however, to the Indians or Bolivian natives. The Indians are of stunted growth; but few men of either fine physique or of average height are to be seen. They climb the steep slopes, and setting a small piece of lime in the mouth, which they carry for the purpose, the alkali of the leaf is extracted and cocaine in its undiluted form is the result. To the constant use of this leaf, and to the habit of smoking it, the Indians attribute their underized and emaciated appearance. The least scratch or abrasion of the skin results in ugly and incurable ulcers, due no doubt to the condition of the blood, and the mixture of cocaine and alcohol in their system.

The seroche, a fever of the higher altitudes of the Andes, makes it impossible for the European or American to live or locate near the mines, as the monthly descent to the valley for a few days rest and recuperation is compulsory to prolong life, and is therefore exceedingly monotonous, besides being inconvenient and ruinous to any enterprise on hand; for, while the "Americano" is absent, the Indians get drunk, and the result is a riot.

When Mr. Martin had operated the mill for one month, according to the terms of the contract made with the De Sociedad Minera Compania, he turned the mill over to Don Juan, an Antonio Lino, administrator. An American engineer was engaged to run the machinery and look after the machinery, and the company paid Mr. Martin in full the contract price agreed to in Chicago by the agent, Senor Jorge Basadre, the same time each year the occupants of the mines make the seven hundred-mile trip to Lima for supplies. This latter city Mr. Martin describes as beautiful in the extreme, its botanical gardens being pronounced the finest of the world. The city itself enjoys all the modern improvements of advanced civilization—electric lights, street cars, finely paved and clean streets, handsome private residences and imposing public buildings. There are numerous clubs and societies, and several Masonic lodges, to all of which Mr. Martin had special invitations and several of which he visited in company with the only American resident in Lima. At a souvenir of his ride on the surface electric street cars, Mr. Martin brought home a number of "transfers" issued to passengers after the manner of the Washington roads. A facsimile of the ticket is as follows:

TRAMWAY DE LIMA. CISCO CENTAVOS. 17 Guardese este boleto como comprobante del pasaje. Mr. Martin describes the days as being exceedingly warm, even at the altitude of 18,000 feet, with frequent rain in sight. At 2 p. m., however, a cooling wind set in, and by dusk the night is cold enough to sleep under blankets. In all his travels below the equatorial line, in Peru and Chile, Mr. Martin never saw any poisonous snakes, reptiles, etc., and he says that he has seen no such animals in any of his travels extended. In returning home Mr. Martin had for companions several South American gentlemen, natives of Peru and Chile, among which was the most of the San Antonio mine, in Peru. Mr. Martin endeavored to interest the Senor in American methods of silver mining and reduction, but to all representations that his output could be increased one hundredfold by the use of the Milwaukee Heavy Work, he made the invariable and astonishing reply, "I do not want more money taken from the mine. I have all I need. I educate my children in Europe, and when I want more money than that, I make a trip abroad. I simply order my superintendent to get out the extra quantity, and there you are. My money is in the ground, and that is safer than a bank; and, besides, the mine is my own estate. What do I want your machinery for, eh, Senor Americano?" and Don Razon would give Mr. Martin a friendly tap on the cheek as he courteously extended his cigar.

MODERN DENTISTRY Description of the Ancient Art and How Teeth Were Extracted.

TERRORS OF THE TOOTHACHE.

Painless Extraction of Teeth One of the Greatest Blessings of Our Advanced Civilization.

If toothaches could be purchased in the market for so much an "ache" and kept in stock, what a convenient thing it would be for those who might desire to torture an enemy by means of one simple and effective! A good supply of inquisitorial toothaches would have knock more out of the market than salicylate and the Reformation itself and made heretics scarcer than salts in purgatory.

Violent throbbing as an agent of jealous revenge would be the most ardent if good health toothaches could be bought by the dozen and carried around by the avenger ready for use at a moment's notice. There has been no form of agony ever invented that could compete in hideousness with a toothache that understands its business and throws all its energies into the work before it. There is only one form of pain that equals the toothache in intensity, and that is the old style of yanking the molars out, and even that was temporary in duration, while the ache itself represented an infinity of suffering, for each moment of the jumping, bounding pain is equal to a month of ordinary time.

In the old days when tooth-pulling was a good deal like murder in the first degree and when the tools used in the homicide were about as big and awfully as a blacksmith's tongs, it is no wonder the people bore the evils they already had rather than to fly to those they knew not of, but which they had a faint idea consisted of a broken jaw and a mouthful of blood and splintered enamel; but in these days of laughing gas and smiling dentists it seems strange that a person will endure the tortures of the temporary relief when relief can be secured so speedily. It is a fact, however, that tooth-pulling is not much more popular or fashionable now than it was when the kings of England, who were the first dentists, by the way, used to have their teeth pulled out by the dentist on a large table, and the patient would not come down with the cash so sorely needed in the royal exchequer.

The loss of an aching tooth at the hands of a smiling dentist is an awful ordeal, largely because the imagination of the patient is so easily excited. In a fact, however, the operation many times in anticipation before the forceps grapple with the offending molar. Newspaper men are not any freer from the agonies of the common mortals, as is proven by an experience during the past week. The victim in question had a tooth that had been with him so long a time that a sort of friendly intimacy had sprung up between the two. The tooth, however, had recently got into its job and kicked so vigorously to get out in the wide world and seek its fortune that he finally concluded to let it go. Before he came to this conclusion he had sent the tooth to a dentist for the hope that it would change its mind and conclude to remain, but to no purpose. Its demands for release became so importunate that its objections to removal were sent flying in the air, and he yielded to the reporter's demand, which ended in his surrender. He became a close student of the dentist's cards in the newspaper in his endeavor to find one who could perform the operation "without pain," and he finally made selection of a dentist on the basis of this selection was made on Monday. He met the doctor on the street and discussed the weather and other topics of interest with him, and finally inquired if he would be in his office the next day, and was told that he would. Tuesday morning the stairway leading to the office, but didn't think the dentist was in. He didn't know just what led him to think this, but he was inspired with the thought of going to the dentist's office the next day morning the tooth raised a big rumpus at the long delay, and so he made a bee-line for the doctor's office. At the foot of the stairs the tooth seemed sorry for the impatience it had exhibited, and he sat on the stairs for a while, and it was not so anxious for the separation as it pretended, concluded he would give it one more chance to be friends, and so went on up the street about his business.

If the tooth had any regrets about the coming separation, however, they were of short duration, for during the following night it held a "wake" over the dead friendship that had before existed between the two, and sent the reporter to the dentist's office the next morning before breakfast, with the determination that no more compromises would be submitted to on his part. The dentist was early up, and the tooth, who he would have told some other patient came in, "just to see how it was done." "Misery loves company," it is said, and he thought if he could see a jaw or two broken (for someone else) before his turn came, he would feel a great deal better. He had not long to wait. A man came in with his jaw bound up in a cotton handkerchief. His left cheek looked as if he had undertaken to swallow a baseball, and that he had lodged in the left side of his mouth. As well as he could, considering the impediments to speech, he said he had the jumping toothache and wanted the nerve killed. 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