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THE FLOATING GARDENS.

MILES OF FLOWER BEDS IN THE BLACK, WARM WATERS.

A Visit to the Wonderful Gardens Near the City of Mexico—A Boat Ride on the Sluggish Canal—The Mystery Revealed at Last—Fragrance and Color.

Looking down from the foothills of Popocatapelt with a field-glass I could see the flower gardens of Mexico not far away. But they were inaccessible from the mountain side and must be reached from the city. Wonderful stories had the old Mexican to tell me of these flower gardens, ten or a dozen miles distant, between his cattle ranch and the city, and I determined to see them as soon as possible. They were floating palms, each a floating paradise. Yet I had heard all this before. In London, when I first set foot there, and they found I had been to Mexico, the inquiry was for the floating flower gardens. And I was compelled to hang my head and admit that I had never heard of them before.

But even here in this city I was asked almost as soon as I arrived by a sharp-nosed woman, with short hair and a bag over her shoulder, if I had yet seen Humboldt's floating flower gardens. "No? Well I have; going to write a book about 'em; wonderfull magnalicent! just too sweet for anything."

I am careful to say that I speak of these flower gardens as Humboldt's floating flower gardens only because I have heard others call them such; not that I have found one line of Humboldt's on the subject.

Taking with me my old Spanish friend, I drove out toward the southern gate, to where the Indians come with thousands of boats down the broad willow-lined canal with fruit and flowers and all sorts of things for the city. This gate is merely a bridge over the green and stagnant moat or ditch which almost entirely surrounds the city, and serves, or once served, as a wall. Yet there is still the semblance of a gate on this south side toward the flower gardens and Popocatapetl, and high marble and lava columns lift up on either side of the little bridge over the green and stagnant cane and willow-lined moat. On a marble tablet you read the date 1798; also a long Spanish inscription which tells you that this is the south gate of the City of Mexico. Passing over this little bridge to the south, with its ancient date and its famed Spanish inscriptions informing us that it is a gate, we soon came to the great canal with its thousand little boats.

A BOATRIDE ON THE CANAL.

To begin with, the boats are ugly and cumbersome. Now and then a little canoe with a single Indian standing erect, with one foot in the bottom and one on the edge, would dart past us as we slowly worked on up the sluggish dark canal, but as a rule the boats are heavy and slow. They are from ten to twenty-five feet in length and five and six feet wide. There is a low, coarse matting to keep off sun or rain thrown over some willow loops bent over the middle of the boat; and some of the boats have banners and gay awnings, but as a rule the whole affair on the canal of flowers is a somber affair from beginning to end. The canal is older than history, I should say. The banks are lined with trees. Under these trees are stone seats, set all along by the wide promenade. Here are many men going up and down on horseback; but very few carriages come this way. Thousands of people go to and fro with heavy loads.

Boat-loads of flowers! Nothing of the sort for miles. Yet I ought to explain that the flowers, as a rule, arrive very early, with the dawn almost, so as to be under the glass house near the cathedral for early market.

All along the willow and shaded banks of the broad, deep canal of many leagues in length, we saw the ever-present and stooping washerwoman. Find a pool of water anywhere you please in Mexico any time, you will find from one to twenty patient, silent, modest, and industrious women bending to their work, their brown babies, in all sorts of picturesque colors, tumbling on the grass in groups or sleeping in the shadow close at hand.

The first boat coming from the mysterious floating flower land which we encountered was laden with Indian corn: the second was loaded with fine wool for a woolen factory, which an English company had established on the banks of the flower canal. Then we met a lot of loud Americans, on their return from a flower excursion, a short distance up the canal; then some Mexican officers, with their wives and children; but never a boat-load of flowers for miles.

Another hour and we were in a wide lake. All about us to right and left and far away was one unbroken line of gardens rising from the water. But these little gardens, only six or ten or twenty inches above the water, are not floating gardens at all. The boats move very slowly and cautiously about among these gardens so as to not make a ripple in the water, for even a ripple would disturb the ground.

MYSTERY OF THE "FLOATING GARDENS."

These gardens are close under the south wall of the mountains in the valley of Mexico. They are not very far from the base of Popocatapetl and the other snow mountain with the unpronounceable Indian name, and called for the better convenience of strangers, "The Lady in White." But this lake in which these gardens grow is surely not fed from the snows of these mountains, for the water here is warm. And it is this warm temperature of the water here, rather than the air, which permits these Indians to take boat-loads of flowers and vegetables of all kinds into the city of Mexico in midwinter.

The patient old boatman rowed us carefully and slowly all through these gardens, as he had promised. There are miles and miles of these long, narrow, little, black strips, lifting up out of the black, warm water of the lake. Silent Indians, entirely naked, stood about here and there up to their waists in water, pulling up weeds or fishing up black, muddy water at their feet to pour over the vegetables and flowers. They did not even dare, it seemed, to stand upon their flower-beds, so frail and easily disturbed did these so-called "floating gardens" seem to be established.

There is no such thing as floating gardens in Mexico. And you can well understand how impossible, as well as how unnecessary, it would be for these industrious and sober-minded Indians to set up such things here.

True, these long and fragrant flower-beds, loaded down with flowers, fairly sinking under the weight of flowers, look as if they were floating gardens. On either side the rich, red blossoms dip to the dark waters, and you see nothing but flowers and flowers and flowers; the naked and silent red Indians in the black, still, warm water; the eternal blue of heaven overhead; the snow-white mountain's grandeur, the stillness, the rest, fragrance, the glory of color everywhere.

Such are the "floating flower gardens" as I found them here after two days' search with much persistence, only a few leagues from the City of Mexico.

And I venture to say that no other American has been there for a long, long time. It is entirely safe to assert that never before has an American gone so thoroughly through these gardens.

Stealing One Another's Military Secrets.

There is trouble in Berlin because the latest pattern of repeating-rifles adopted in the German army has been surreptitiously conveyed to the French government. The evidence goes to show that a Saxon officer is the guilty party, and it will go hard with him if he is caught. This is one of the little difficulties inseparable from the kind of intrenched camp business now being done by the principal nations of Europe. Pending a renewal of the fighting the several governments pilfer one another's military secrets, inventions, plans of fortresses, etc.—Chicago Tribune.

A Collection of Snuff-Bottles.

At the recent sale of Mrs. Morgan's art collection and bric-a-brac in New York, a collection of snuff-bottles sold for $4,700. The person who bought them can now have the satisfaction of sneezing in 365 different styles.—Chicago Journal.

COMICAL STAGE ERRORS.

SOME AMUSING MISHAPS RECALLED BY A VETERAN MANAGER.

Waiting for the Cars—Killed in the Wrong Place—A Funny Elephant—The Hotel Clerk's Reply to Fanny Davenport—A Substitute.

Drifting into a general conversation on shows and show people, Capt. "Bill" Fulwood, ex treasurer of the opera house, related many amusing incidents, which are now published for the first time. The embarrassing position in which the veteran, John Elisler, father of Effie, was once placed, formed the opening theme:

"One night several years ago," said Capt. Fulwood, "Uncle John played 'After Dark' in an East Liberty hall to an $85 house. In the last act he is supposed to be run over and killed by a train of cars. At the proper time Elisler prostrated himself on the stage, awaiting the dread catastrophe, but the catastrophe did not make its appearance, and glancing at the wings, Elisler saw to his horror that the train of stage cars had become disabied—the exact difficulty I do not recollect. At any rate, the stage hands were unable to cope with it. Then Elisler despairingly arose and assisted in pushing the train in full view of the audience, afterward dying in the most approved manner, amidst 'thunders of applause,' principally from the gallery gods.

"Ed Price (Fanny Davenport's husband) can appreciate Mr. Elisler's feeling of disgust on that occasion. Ed played a juvenile part in Barry Sullivan's company during a Pittsburg engagement. During the course of the play it was Price's misfortune to be killed. It was at the close of an act, and Price fell a corpse directly underneath the curtain, the ponderous pole falling directly across his body. There was an immediate resurrection."

A FUNNY SCENE WITH THE ELEPHANT.

"The most laughable stage error," said the captain, "that it has been my fortune to witness, was during a presentation of the Elephant of Siam. That was twenty-nine years ago, and the late Joe C. Foster was the manager.

"Foster sent to Girard, Pa., and secured Dan Rice's trick elephant to play the leading role. A prince and a princess, with a dozen of their dependents, are imprisoned in a castle, and the elephant is utilized in securing their release. At a signal the elephant wobbled on the stage, and proceeding to the castle wall, took upon his back the prince (Joe Leonard), and the princess (Annie Eberlee). After conveying them behind the scenes the beast returned for the ten supes, who acted as the prince's retainers. One by one they climbed over the battlements and alighted on the elephant's back. Each time the elephant crouched upon its forelegs, and dropped the bewildered "super" to the stage. Finally there lay the ten young men in a heap, apparently unable for the moment to extricate themselves. The applause which came from all parts of the house grew more deafening every moment. A whispered consultation of the supers, and it was decided to repeat their act, and to the amusement of the audience, now convulsed with laughter, they filed, one by one, into the castle, and were once more precipitated in confusion on the stage. The audience was by this time growing wild, but was spared a third "daring escape" by the prompt interference of the exasperated and disgusted stage manager.

A TIPSY HOTEL CLERK'S REMARK.

"A funny remark by a man in the audience once created great merriment at the Pittsburg opera house, in which everybody in the house, off and on the stage, joined. Fanny Davenport and her company were the attractions. A young hotel clerk, who had imbibed too much liquor, walked slowly down the aisle, and ensconced himself in an orchestra chair in close proximity to the stage. In an adjacent seat he cast his overcoat and hat, and had just sat down, when Miss Davenport repeated the lines:

My, lord, I can not love you.

"The hotel clerk, whose muddled brain instantly conceived that the remark was intended for him, arose to his feet, grasped his coat and hat, and in a tone loud enough to be heard all over the house said: 'By ——, that settles it,' and made his exit. The hearty roar of laughter which followed was joined in by both audience and actors, and the gravity of both was seriously disturbed during the entire performance.

"The effect of liquor on this man recalls a little incident in the career of Harro Hatto. It was the first presentation of the 'Black Crook' in this city. Hatto was a member of the company. Hatto staggered into a s ene—a rosebud in the middle of a golden river—and smashed it to pieces, spilling the little girl occupant on the stage. Hatto was immediately discharged, but was re-engaged the following evening. Hatto made a much better impression on another occasion when supporting Forrest in 'Richelieu.' The 'walking gent' was taken suddenly ill and Hatto was compelled to play the part in addition to his own. As the walking gent's substitute, Hatto came on the stage 'made up' so that the entire audience recognized a remarkable resemblance to George Washington. The people were so impressed that a great stillness settled over the house. Then Hatto became so frightened at his own success that he hurried off the stage and took refuge in his dressing room."—Pittsburg Cor. Globe-Democrat.

The Banjo Has Had Its Day.

The banjo has had its day as a parlor musical instrument, and the fair hands that picked the strings so persistently a year ago have laid it aside for the more picturesque and historic mandolin. This is the instrument to which cavaliers have sung their love ditties, and it calls up dreamy imaginings of manly figures, cloaked and plumed, singing in the dusky shadow under my lady's lattice, of a red rose dropped through the fragrant darkness, or of a gondola floating over moon-lit waters. So the charming girls fell in love with it at once when the handsome Spanish students brought it into notice, and it has been growing steadily in favor. It gives a pretty accompaniment for love ballads, and the imaginative girl who sings to its thin, sweet notes may find in its romantic associations a dangerous aid to fee ing in her song.—New York Cor. Chicago Times.

Scene in the Reading-Room.

"You look tired, Cholly." "Yaas." "Been hard at work, eh?" "Yaas." "What at?" "Aw—waw" (yawning). "Well, I had to write a letter to maw, don't chew know, and she will insist on having two pages. And then I—aw—waw—made a mistake in the adwess, don't chew know, and had to wite it twice. Aw—waw—augh." Goes to sleep till dinner time.—New York Town Topics.

A New Variety of Passion Flower.

John Thorp thinks that the new passion flower, Constance Elliott, will probably prove an acquisition. Its color, pure white, with just a suggestion of purple at the base of its corolla, is in its favor, but its chief advantage over the old passiflora cœrulia, from which it springs, is its longer period of bloom. It flowers when the vine is much smaller than the old kind, and consequently much earlier when planted out, and will continue all the latter part of summer up to hard frosts. It will probably be as hardy as the present plant, which if cut back and covered will ordinarily survive our winters.—Chicago Herald.

Montana Indians' Burial Ground.

The funniest thing about the Fort Peck Indians, though, is the manner in which they bury their dead. They have abandoned the customs of their fathers in lodging the bodies in the forks of trees or placing them on scaffolds, and now dispose of them by boxing them up as the white men do. The boxes are then placed in a straight line, one after another, and piled on top of each other. Each family has a pile of their own, and for nearly a mile in a direct line may be seen these burial boxes. Tourists are, however, recommended to pass them by on the windward side.—Montana Letter.

"Glucose" in the New Testament.

The word "glucose" does not appear in the English translation of the Scriptures. The phrase, "It shall be, in thy mouth, sweet as honey," in Revelation, x: 9, contains in the original Greek, the nearest approach to the word "glucose" having a place in the text, as follows: "Esthai gluku hos meli."—Brooklyn Eagle.

Cost of Suppressing the Locusts.

The cost of suppressing locusts in Cyprus since the British occupation amounts to over $330,000. But the government engineer states that, large as the expenditure has been, it is certain that it has already been recovered by the island many times over in the value of the crops saved.—Foreign Letter.

Madagascar's Queen at Sunday-School.

When the queen of Madagascar attends Sunday-school she passes into the chapel, where guards, with fixed bayonets, stand ten deep. Within the chapel, where 1,000 persons may find seats, the queen sits high up on a throne on the side of the pulpit.

There are few things in this world worth getting angry about, and they happen to be precisely the things which anger does not help.—Henry J. Raymond.

TRIP THROUGH SCOTLAND YARD.

Startling Souvenirs of Blood—The Assassin's Nest—Burglar's Budget.

From Scotland yard is directed the entire mechanism of the great machine for the prevention, repression and discovery of crime. There, in a low, dingy series of old houses, are congregated the various bureaus of the department, the telegraph and printing offices, the paymaster's and surveyor's offices, the "green yard," where the lost property of the public is kept until claimed, and the "black museum," where the articles found on prisoners are put aside for them until their release. In the "black museum," which was originally got together by Mr. Harris, a most courteous and well-informed officer of a literary turn, are treasured some startling souvenirs of blood and murder, which render it more morbidly attractive than Tussaud's Chamber of Horrors. A visit to it has much the same effect on the sensitive temperament as the perusal of Edgar Poe's tales in the attic of a solitary mansion in the small hours of a winter's night. It puts the nerves out of gear and leaves a taste in the mouth.

There, in addition to a miscellaneous assortment of trumpery, finery, and poor belongings, broomsticks, crockery, flatirons, aprons, sacks, hammers, and fiddles, are pigeon-holed costly lace, malachite buttons, diamond rings and chattels of genuine value. In an upper room, the assassin's nest, are the ropes with which men were hanged, remains of the potions with which they were poisoned, or the daggers with which the souls were brutally dug out of their bodies, side by side with ugly flint pistols, bludgeons suggestive of Bill Sykes, and the evil-looking pikes wielded by Malay pirates who enjoy the grim hospitality of a quicklime grave under Newgate's flagstones. A lady who would insist on entering the place once was carried out in a deadly swoon.

But the burglars' budget of tools is a remarkable and edifying object of study. They are beautifully finished, and of the most exquisitely-tempered steel. A fine trade in the manufacture of these excellent specimens of skilled handicraft must be done somewhere. The dark lanterns are ingeniously wrought, the list slippers delicately embroidered, and some of the jimmies are polished until they resemble oxidized silver. There must be aesthetes of the housebreaker's art. How Sir Claude de Crespigny, the would-be hangman, would rejoice were he let loose in this happy hunting-ground! It sickened me. I had to ask for air when the curator showed me a patch of the charred skin of the woman whom Wainwright had butchered, suspended in a vial of spirits of wine and neatly docketed.

The coiner's apparatus exhibited a notable progress in the march of intellect—that is, the intellect which is immortalized in the Newgate calendar. The curator told me the criminal classes were acquiring a dangerous acquaintance with chemistry and dynamics, and that facility of penmanship was on the increase. Is this the result of school-board training? It would be melancholy if such an argument—that education is not an unmixed blessing—were to be taken as valid against its spread. The abuse of a gift is no reason that its dissemination should be hampered.—Thomas S. Gill, M. P.

A Bill Passed for "Pious Frank."

Among the bills before the house committee on military affairs recently was one providing for the removal of the charge of desertion against one Frank Thompson, who it was said had enlisted in 1862 in company F, Second Michigan volunteers. The person in question, it is said, is none other than a woman, who is at present a resident of Colorado, known as Mrs. Sarah E. Seely. She entered the military service in Michigan when she was 19 years of age, attired as a male, under the name of Frank Thompson. From the fact that she did not indulge in the use of tobacco, play cards, or any other of the so-called camp vices, she was dubbed "Pious Frank," and always went by that name. Other than this reserve there was no reason for suspecting her sex. She went through two battles, and did as good service as any of her comrades.

She was detailed at brigade headquarters as an orderly, and one of the members of the committee, who served in the same command, says that he saw "Frank" carrying brigade orders in the thickest of the battle at Petersburg. Her reputation and character were never brought in question. After thus serving two years she was taken sick and ordered to the hospital, where there was also a number of her company comrades. It now became apparent to her that if she remained in the hospital she could no longer conceal her sex, and rather than have this exposure made she quietly walked off and left the service. She proceeded to Oberlin, Ohio, and entered college, where she was educated. She is the author of the book "Nurse and Spy." At present she is a resident of Colorado, a worthy wife and the mother of three children. The committee unanimously recommended the passage of the bill.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Meteorology of the Congo Country.

Mr. A. von Danckelmann, a German meteorologist, has been making observations at Vivi, in the country of the Congo, and reports some curious results. During about a year that he stayed there the barometrical column did not vary more than ten millimeters; even the passage of tornadoes seemed to produce no greater effect upon it. The year is divided into rainy and dry seasons. During the latter, from May to October, no rain falls, but the earth is occasionally moistened by the depositions from fogs. From November to April heavy showers of short duration preval, and the water falls, in portions, sometimes as high as 102 millimeters—about four inches—in two hours.

Long, fine rains are unknown. The country is visited by cyclones, but, while storms passing to the north of the station turned the vane in a contrary direction to that of the hands of a watch, those passing it to the south turned it in a direction corresponding with them. The natives burn the tall prairie-grass in the dry seasons, causing fires that last for a long time, and produce considerable meteorological effects. The air is constantly loaded with smoke, while cumulus clouds are formed over the fires and emit lightning with thunder. One of the most remarkable meteorological phenomena of the region is the existence of a southwest wind, which, begining at sunset, blows all night till sunrise with such force as to raise large and dangerous waves on the river.—Phrenological Journal.

TEARING DOWN A MOUNTAIN.

The Proudest Achievement of the Panama—A Contractor's Huge Task.

Buhio Soldado is the proudest achievement of the Panama Canal company, and is, indeed, a great work. The hill is of solid rock, alternating at places in huge cobble bowlders. We are saluted with a following volley of 200 gun-cotton explosions to show how rapidly such work can be manipulated. On the smoke clearing off a really grand engineering feat meats the eye. Ledge upon ledge of sloping rock terrace tower up to the highest point, about 280 feet. On several of the ledges stand rows of wagons, which were it not a holiday would be busily at work. We are at the bottom, and it is necessary to ascend, which we contrive by means of winding paths, M. De Lesseps on a sure-footed mule, for the heat is intense.

The contractor for the raising of this large mass is a Swiss of the name of Sonderegger, whose face is a sanguine and cheerful picture, as if the impediments were nothing. Contrary to the policy of many of his colleagues, he is open and straightforward. The contract has been for the removal of a little short of 2,000,000 cubic meters, he says, as if enjoying the idea; 1,300,000 of this has been done and only 800,000 only remains. The rocky section is 500 meters long, about eighty feet broad at the bottom, sloping up to about 120 feet at the top, and the contractor further takes the swarthy ground as far as kilometer thirty-three. Mr. Sonderegger answered me plainly that he had no doubt of completing his task by the end of next year.

His mode of excavating is very ingenious. He first pierced a tunnel right through the mountain leading to the flat ground on either side. Above this tunnel large holes about three meters broad are made, four in all, at various points above the tunnel, the top being made funnel-shaped. The rocks are then blasted and rolled into these apertures, whose standing sides embrace a large circuit. Below a train of wagons is in waiting to receive the huge bowlders as they dash through. In this way four traffic cars are filled at once, and in a very short time the whole train moves away with its heavy load. Such is the practical and swift means which this enterprising contractor takes to diminish his huge task. No wonder the company are proud of him; and were there many of his practical nature, who could show such good solid work, the canal would gain many friends.—Panama Cor. Chicago Times.

A Thrust at Manual Training-Schools.

There is a gimlet and corkscrew conception of school education abroad that would make its fundamental purpose the production of human automata that, upon having their numerous strings pulled by an overseer, a base-workman or a director of some kind, would file, turn, rasp, polish and finish mechanical products of various kinds. * * * None of this is education; it is the system of apprenticeship applied to school education. No such conception can lie at the bottom of state school education. These automata are far more likely to be bad citizens than good ones.—Professor S. S. Parr in Indiana School Journal.

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IMPERIAL, - - - (Roller Patent.
WHITE ROSE, - - - - (Extra Fancy.)
X. L. C. R. - - - - - (Fancy.)

These brands have been on the markets East, West, North and South for ten years, and have won an enviable reputation wherever introduced. To try them is to stay with them. We are always in the market for wheat at highest cash price.

OLIVER & IMBODEN CO

J. R. HOLLIDAY. G. WILBUR.

J. R. HOLLIDAY & CO,

WICHITA GROCERY,

Successors to MAJOR & HOLLIDAY, Dealers in

STAPLE & FANCY GROCERIES,

No. 227 East Douglas Avenue, WICHITA, KAN.

"EAGLE'

Town-Site Company,

AT

WICHITA, KAN.,

Have for sale, on line of WICHITA & COLORADO RAILROAD north-west of Wichita, town lots at new towns of

MAIZE, 9 Miles from WICHITA.

COLWICH, 14 " WICHITA.

ANDALE, 20 " WICHITA.

MT HOPE, 27 "

Trains are now running regularly on Railroad from Wichita to Mount Hope.

These towns are in the best portion of Sedgwick County, Kansas.

Maps of Towns and Prices can be had as hereinafter set forth:

At Wichita, call on N. F. Niederlander or Kos Harris.

At Maize, call on H. F. Rhodes;

At Colwich, call on Geo. W. Steenrod;

At An Dale, call on J. W. Dale.

Also see Geo. W. Anderson, Mt. Hope, for An Dale lots.

THE "EAGLE CO." HAVE ALSO FOR SALE LOTS IN

"Junction Town Company" Addition

to Wichtia.

This Addition is at junction of Ft. Scott and W. & C. Railroads, one-half mile west of Bridge on Big Arkansas river, and are very desirable lots. Street cars will be in operation, connecting this Addition with the east side of the river in 1886.

Price List of this Addition can be seen by calling on:

F. G. SMYTH & SONS, Wichita. KOS HARRIS, Wichita.
N. F. NIEDERLANDER, " P. V. HEALY, "
ANGLO-AMERICAN Loan Office. O. MARTINSON,
Resident on said Addition.