

THE GARDEN OF THE GODS.

If ever there was a place on earth where the gods of the Greeks and Romans may be supposed to have lived and had a good time, that place must have been in Colorado. Near the foot of the famous mountains known as Pike's Peak lies the "Garden of the Gods." It is a small valley, just on the edge of the Rocky Mountains, and is completely surrounded by a high perpendicular wall of white sandstone. There are two entrances through this wonderful wall; one of them—the larger—is called "The Beautiful Gate." It is a narrow gap in a mass of rock more than 100 feet high. As you enter, you look over a valley fenced in on all sides with white sandstone; and, nearly opposite, at the top of a hill, is another smaller gateway, half concealed by a huge rock about the size of an ordinary cottage. This mass of rock is so balanced on the edge of the slope that it looks as if it might jump off and go thundering down the hill while you look at it.

The Garden of the Gods abounds with beautiful trees and foliage, and towering amidst this loveliness, are some of the most extraordinary, queer and fantastic shapes ever made out of rock. Ages ago, when this part of the world was in a state of terrible commotion, vast layers of rock were forced up out of the earth in all sorts of positions. Some were vertical, some slanting, and some were criss-cross and mixed up generally. Learned men say that was the way these layers of sandstone, which once were flat, got up edgeways and in all other ways. We must take their word for it. There was nobody there to see.

Trees and shrubs, after a time, grew up around, and the disturbed earth had peace. Then came the mountain winds and the long autumn rains. The wind blew the sand against the rocks, which are so soft that you could dig holes in them with a strong jack-knife. The wearing of the sand and wind and water against these stony surfaces carved them into all sorts of wild and funny shapes. Ages and ages passed away, probably, before these grotesque sculptures looked as they do now.

Here and there among the trees raise up fantastic shapes like spires, towers and steeples. Some of the fanciful names given these are "Montezuma's Cathedral," "Cleopatra's Needle," "Washington Monument," "The Cathedral Spires," and "Needle Rock."

But, of course, the half-human looking objects that gave a name to this curious garden are most likely to attract attention. The names by which they are known are as fantastic as the shapes themselves. One, a figure of a woman draped and standing motionless, has many names. It is called "The Mourning Bride," "The Widow," "The Old Maid," and by other titles, any one of which may happen to stick to the pathetic figure, that might be called "Lot's Wife," only that it is a pillar of stone instead of a pillar of salt. Then there is a huge water-worn boulder, that looks for all the world like a gigantic frog in the act of getting ready to jump. You get tired looking at this stony frog. He seems about to leap, but he never does. He has been in that position for I don't know how many hundred years, and he has not jumped yet.

One part of the wall, where the white sandstone is mixed with red, is a gigantic head of a buffalo. There it rests,—horns, ears, nostrils and all,—glowering down at you, just as if it were a petrified mammoth buffalo's head stuck up there as a trophy, as the head and antlers of deer are sometimes hung up—trophies of the chase. Another singular group is "The Nun and the Seal." You will have no difficulty in making out this picture; and, as the seal is peering over the rock at the nun, who seems to have been at prayer, this group is sometimes called "Interrupted Meditation." If it may be allowed, I should say it might be called "The Height of Impudence." It is about fifty feet high—Mrs. Eliza Greathouse, in St. Nicholas for Dec.

MARK TWAIN INTERVIEWED.—In the forthcoming volume, "The Lotus Leaves," the following is the contribution of Mark Twain: Q. How old are you? A. Nineteen in June. Q. Indeed! I would take you to be thirty-five or six. Where were you born? A. In Missouri. Q. When did you begin to write? A. In 1835. Q. Why, how could that be, if you are only nineteen now? A. I don't know. It does seem curious somehow. Q. It does, indeed. Who do you consider the most remarkable man you ever met? A. Aaron Burr. Q. But you never could have met Aaron Burr if you are only 19 years old? A. Now, if you know more about me than I do, what do you ask me for? Q. Well, it's only a suggestion; nothing more. How did you happen to meet Burr? A. Well, I happened to be at his funeral one day, and he asked me to make less noise, and— Q. But, good heavens, if you were at his funeral he must have been dead; and if he were dead, how could he care whether you made a noise or not? A. I don't know. He was always a particular kind of a man that way. Q. Still I don't understand it at all. You say he spoke to you and that he was dead. A. I didn't say he was dead. Q. But wasn't he dead? A. Well, some said he was, some said he wasn't.

Q. What did you think? A. O, it was none of my business. It wasn't any of my funeral. Q. Did you— However, we can never get this matter straight. Let me ask about something else. What was the date of your birth? A. Monday, October 31, 1833. Q. What! Impossible! That would make you 180 years old. How do you account for that? A. I don't account for it at all. Q. But you said at first you were only 19, and now you make yourself out to be 180. It is an awful discrepancy. A. Why, have you noticed that? [Shaking hands.] Many a time it has seemed to me like a discrepancy, but somehow I couldn't make up my mind. How quick you notice a thing!

This was the beginning. Before that interview was over there must have been one, at least, of the race of inquisitors who had his curiosity satisfied.

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THE WIDOWER AND THE GOOSE.—Bodger was a widower, of middle age, intelligent, unsophisticated, quiet and frugal, and yet he had a spice of gallantry in his composition.

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It chanced that just as the erst-outfitted and smiling visitor had disposed of himself in the comfortable chair the widow had done with her pressing-iron, which was an ordinary tailor's "goose." She sat on the rug upon the hearth, and called to her negro man, who was in a distant room;

"Cato!—Cato—Come and take out the goose!" Bodger started with astonishment and alarm.

"Cato,—do you hear?" pursued the widow. And, as the deafy form of the stalwart negro appeared in the doorway,— "I wish you to remove this goose."

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A lone hand.—Daniel Drew was seated in his office one day after his disastrous tilt with the Northwest when the boys of Wall Street tilted the old fellow out of two millions.

While seated thus, a stranger entered and accosted a confidential clerk who had better prepared than ever to manufacture all articles in the TIN, COPPER and SHEET-IRON WARE line.

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