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Miscellany.

From the N. Y. Evening Post. Colorado Scenery.

"The Garden of the Gods" is generally an objective point to the traveler's ambition from the moment he enters Colorado. The very name fills one's fancy with vague visions, which, on examination, he finds to be composed in nearly equal parts of the "Celestial City" in "Pilgrim's Progress," the castle picture in Cole's "Voyage of Life," and such dim remembrances as may have survived to him of the Mount Olympus of Homer and Virgil.

The experience of our own little party may, perhaps, show better than any generalization how far the garden performs the celestial and horticultural promises of its enchanting name. We started on a true Colorado morning. The natives here call a day which promises to be rainy and disagreeable a "State's day." These pleasure-parties look very pretty as, with the addition of chance equestrians, they wind through the valley or over the hills, under the intense sunshine of an atmosphere of more "utter blueness" than is ever elsewhere out of Italy. A two-mile drive on the right bank of the rushing river brings us to the gateway of the garden.

IMMENSE TOWERING ROCKS. No description which I have ever seen gives a correct idea of the impression produced by these tremendous stones. Rising directly from the plain, of a red color unsurpassed in vividness by the brightest corneal, stand two bowlders three hundred feet high—at once majestic and graceful in outline, and leaving just space enough between them for a fine natural roadway. The idea of a systematically planned architectural effect is irresistible. "Who put them there? when? how?" we ask involuntarily; for, in position, shape and color they are so artistic that our minds revert at once to such ruins as Luxor and Baalbec rather than to any purely natural objects.

At the right, just before we pass through the grand portal, is a shining mass of gypsum, as intensely white as the sandstone is red, and perhaps half as large as the column nearest to it. Once past the entrance an overwhelming impression overtakes us of being in a gigantic temple, whose sculptured columns and majestic images are crumbling to ruin before our eyes. All around, rising abruptly from the light soil, are sandstone obelisks, fifty, seventy-five, and even a hundred and fifty feet high; so narrow, so tall, and so bafflingly intentional in their shapes and groupings, that one's fancy runs riot in a thousand vagaries. These frowning monsters, surrounded by uncouth forms of animals which seem to fawn at their feet, represent to us the degraded heathen deities who, Milton tells us, never cease to lament over their lost empire; here they stand, petrified by the neglect and contempt of the ages.

So we wandered slowly through what seemed to be the remains of a forgotten worship, more picturesque than the Egyptian, more solemn than the Greek, but partaking of the symbols of each. We crept into a low-browed cavern on one side of the gateway, whose huge bosom could contain all the oracles ever uttered from Delphic times to the last meeting of the Spiritualists; but we were glad to hurry out again, as the possibility of being punished for our irreverence by the shutting of its narrow jaws overcame even the proverbial stolidity of a nineteenth-century American. The wonderful mountain flora here seems to outdo itself in honor to the geni of the place.

If we stifle our vagrant fancies, still science asks nearly the same questions as ignorance. How did these separate red and white rocks come up or down, within twenty feet of each other, on a soil unlike either stone, and totally unlike the soil of Pike's Peak, of which they might otherwise seem to be debris? If they were the result of the same uplift, why are they not geologically contemporaneous? If of different ages, why do the strata show such similarity of tilt and direction? In

vain! The solemn figures keep their secret well, turn up their noses visibly at our childish ignorance of facts which they must know as the Yankee knew his father, "Just as easy!" The traveler rides shudderingly beneath the overhanging masses, which generally appear as indifferent to the requirements of gravitation as the Leaning Tower of Pisa, and wonders to what storm each will finally succumb and what fleeing pleasure party will be caught by the fearful destruction. These sensations cause the exit from the garden to be hailed with feeling of relief, and we drove out upon a smooth road which leads us between rich stones, crowned by natural-looking old castles.

PARADISE IN A WILDERNESS. At a sharp turn in the road our feudal castle became a reality in the more gracious shape of a beautiful modern Italian villa. Here is a rustic-work gate, flanked by a picturesque vine-covered porter's lodge, a winding stream bordered by willows, and at the end of a park road, in the very pocket of a romantic glen or bower, handsome and new enough for a show palace on the Hudson River. Our surprise was intense, but a glance at a *bona fide* eagle's nest perched half-way up on a tremendous rock near the gate convinced us that this was the "Glen Eyrie" of which we had heard so much, and the house and grounds those of General Palmer, who has chosen this unusual site for a handsome and hospitable country home. It is a singular position—yet beautiful; the park is shut in on every side but one by precipitous rocks, or almost equally precipitous hills; these remarkable obelisks, like those in the Garden of the Gods, actually overhang the dwelling. They are called the Needles, but to our eyes they much more nearly resemble a gigantic alderman, his tub-shaped wife and their obese daughter, endeavoring to do the honors of their first reception—they looked so stiff and uncomfortable, and were so outrageously fat! In addition to these strange neighbors, the house has one of the wildest canons in Colorado, stretching out at one side and forming an extension of the pleasure grounds.

The interior of the villa evinces the same eccentric but noble taste as its environment. The hall has a deep fireplace over which stares the head of a gigantic buffalo, so large that it takes one's breath away, and seems more like some monster of an extinct species than any animal that can have survived to these times. The hearth is formed of a choice selection of all the stones found in this gem-bearing region, while across the face of the carved mantle-piece runs a graceful design in natural leaves, fastened there by some ingenious process.

A buffalo calf, head, feet, skin and all, is fashioned into a luxurious chair, so contrived that an appearance of life is preserved to the clumsy but powerful beast. Faded and tattered flags won in battle for the Union, hang over superb elk horns. In short, time would fail to tell of all the ways in which love and admiration for this paradise of a country have been shown by the owner of this unique country seat. Of the more easily appreciated taste shown in a fine library and a well-used grand piano, we forbear to speak, as we forbore to linger in their neighborhood, and tore ourselves away, because as strangers we were ashamed to trespass any more, and also because the famous Queen's Canon (named after Mrs. Palmer) was still to be visited.

THE QUEEN'S CANON. To this gorge Nature has cunningly framed an entrance so narrow that no impertinent vehicle can ever disturb her sacred music, and we gladly dispensed with all carriage but our own feet in threading those enchanting shades. Imagine perpendicular walls of rocks many hundreds of feet high, full of inviting caves and grottoes hung provokingly out of reach of anybody but bears and catsamounts, and holding close a roaring torrent so full of resonant motion that it seems to bear away one's breath upon its seething foam, and so even in its force that the basins

which it carves in the solid stone are as circular as watch-crystal.

What poet, what word-conqueror shall yet arise to fitly describe a Colorado mountain brook! Cold as ice, clear as a diamond, fostering the loveliest ferns, mosses and creeping plants on its rocky borders; shadowed by solemn white pines whose pictured trunks shoot up one hundred feet, and then spread into interlacing branches; and above all, an ocean of deepest, tenderest blue, sprinkled with whitecapped waves of cloud that ebb and flow obedient to the tides of upper air. This is Queen's Canon in Glen Eyrie, and we reverently thanked God that we had seen it.

A UNIQUE AND FUNNY SCENE. Monument Park was the next wonder on the programme. I may as well confess at once that the result of that visit was to fix certain unromantic alternatives firmly on my mind. The sight of those funeral draped and figures with chocolate-colored caps awoke neither awe nor enthusiasm. I was convinced either that the wags of the pre-Adamic era once collected all their fashionable neighbors' chimneys together and filled this valley with them for fun, or else that all the queer, long-necked, stiff-skirted old maids of the same period were at some time suddenly turned into stone, and were thus condemned to present this ludicrous but instructive spectacle to future ages. To me this set of formations is not so solemn except at a distance, when they certainly mimic Greenwood or Mount Auburn very creditably, but when you stand in the midst of them they are simply funny. I affirm that if some of the tall, slender females of the days of tiltinghoops had been suddenly petrified by an outraged Providence, they would have looked exactly so, and the large dark top which invariably crowns their little heads is exceedingly like the portentous sun-bonnet affected by worthy matrons in some of our rural districts. These caps are said by the guide-books to be made of "black hematite," but at a moderate distance they would represent black gingham distended by pasteboard very well. I do not know what black hematite means; I never met anybody who did; but I conclude that it is a kind of fossilized calico, very much the worse for wear. The bodies of the supposable Lot's wives are of sand, apparently stuck together just enough to stand up, all as round as though turned in a lathe, and full of little pebbles which appear to have no necessary connection with the parent stem.

I regret to say that we spent our time in Monument Park entirely in naming the columns after different acquaintances whom we thought they resembled, which base advantage taken of the absent may have been the reason why we were caught in a thunder shower and obliged to take refuge in a neighboring ranch.

[From the Independent.] Science.

As the approaching transit of Venus draws near, the notes of preparation thicken on every side, and it is evident that it is to be most thoroughly observed. In the Northern Hemisphere the astronomer will be stationed along a belt which extends from the mouth of the Nile, across Palestine, Persia and Siberia, to Northern China and Japan. In the Southern Hemisphere New Zealand, Tasmania, and the scattered islands of the South Pacific will be occupied. The Russian Government have provided for 25 stations in or near their Siberian dominions. At three or four of their stations the observations will be made with heliometers—instruments by means of which the apparent distance of the planet from the centre of the sun's disc can be accurately measured at any moment. At several other stations photography will be employed but at the greater number probably the observations will consist of a simple noting of the moments when the planet first touches and leaves the solar disc. The arrangements, however, are not finally completed, and the programme may quite possibly be changed in many respects. The German governments combine in providing for three principal and two subsidiary expeditions.

The principal stations will be the port of Chifu (China), Auckland, and McDonald or Kerguelen's Island. These parties will be very completely equipped with instruments for the observation of contacts, with heliometers, and with photographic apparatus. The photographs will be made by the means of equatorial telescopes, of 5½ inches aperture and about 6 feet focus, driven by clockwork. Of the subsidiary parties one will be sent to Mauritius, provided with heliometers, and another to Persia, for photographic work solely. France provides for eight or nine stations. In the north she sends to the Red Sea, to Palestine, to Peking, and to Yeddo, in Japan. In the south to Reunion Island, St. Paul, Campbell Island, and New Caledonia, with probably a station at the Sandwich Islands. The precise equipment of the parties is not settled; but they will rely mainly on photography, and will not use the heliometer to any extent. The English Government sends out five parties to occupy Oahu (Sandwich Islands), Kerguelen's Island, Rodriguez Island, Auckland (New Zealand), and Alexandria, in Egypt. There will also be one or two stations in Northern India—one certainly at Peshawar. The astronomer royal relies mainly on the observation of contacts; but photography will also be provided for. The equipment of each party will consist essentially of a clock and altazimuth instrument, with an equatorial of six inches aperture, driven by clockwork, and a so-called photeliograph. This is a small telescope, driven by clockwork, and provided with an enlarging lens, by which a picture of the sun some four inches in diameter can be obtained. This plan of photographing is regarded with suspicion by most non-English astronomers, on account of the danger of distortion in the enlarged image. Heliometers will not be used.

Our own Government is doing its part nobly. Eight parties will be sent out—four to Japan and the neighboring countries, and four to the Southern Pacific. Probably also a ninth, for the mere observation of contacts, will go to the Aleutian Islands. Our parties, besides the usual apparatus for the determination of time and geographical position, will be equipped with 5-inch clock-driven equatorials, and with a most perfect and elaborate photographic apparatus, upon which the main reliance will be placed. The image will be made of sufficient size, without any enlargement, by using an object-glass of very long focus, in the manner proposed and successfully practised by Professor Winlock, of Harvard College. The tube of the photographic telescope, which is some 30 or 40 feet long, is placed horizontally, and the sun's rays are reflected through it by a plane mirror, driven by clockwork. An instrument of this kind is, of course, less portable and easy to manage than the photeliograph; but it is generally believed that the results will be enough more accurate to repay well the extra trouble and expense. The parties are not yet organized as to their personnel; but the instruments are in a good state of forwardness, at the workshop of the Clarks, in Cambridgeport. It is expected that the expense of the expeditions will lie between \$150,000 and \$250,000, of which \$50,000 has already been appropriated by Congress, for instruments and preliminary arrangements, and placed under the control of a commission, consisting of the superintendent of the Coast Survey (Prof. Pierce), the president of the National Academy of Sciences (Prof. Henry), the superintendent of the Naval Observatory (Admiral Sands), and two professors of the same institution (Prof. Newcomb and Harkness). The final selection of stations and assignment of observers will come in due season. It is proposed that each party consist of an astronomer in charge, an assistant astronomer, two or three photographic assistants, and a mechanic, with such laborers as the nature of the station may demand.

Besides these government expeditions, several private ones will probably be organized. The November number of the Monthly Notices of the

Royal Astronomical Society contains an account of the preparations now making by Lord Lindsay, the heir to one of the richest and most ancient Scottish duchies, for an expedition to the Island of Mauritius. His party will be more thoroughly equipped than any other yet arranged for—with provision for photographic observation by both methods, with a large and perfect heliometer, and with arrangements for the observation of contacts spectroscopically, as well as in the ordinary manner. It is speaking entirely within bounds to say that all his plans seem to be laid on a scale of truly princely magnificence; with no regard to display, indeed, but without regard to expense where expense can secure any real gain in accuracy and certainty of result.

Sixty-seven Years Ago.

THE LYCOMING MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATURE AT THAT TIME.—Mr. Samuel Dale, of Trout Run, has handed us a copy of the Journal of the House of Representatives, Harrisburg, for the session which commenced on December 2, 1806. The volume shows the ravages of time in its faded pages, but the letter press is clear and distinct, and it is interesting to look over the proceedings of the House at that early day.

On an examination of the musty volume we find that Isaac Smith was the member from Lycoming county at that time. It appears that his seat was contested, for on the 12th of December, 1806, Mr. Ingham presented a petition from a number of qualified electors of Lycoming and the provisional county of Tioga, stating that they were fully persuaded that frauds were perpetrated at the last general election in Tioga which deprived Hugh White of a seat in the House, and praying for a trial. A committee was appointed, of which Joseph Huston was chairman, to investigate the matter. After a careful examination, the committee reported that although such election may not in all respects have been conducted agreeable to the letter of the different laws on the subject, yet they cannot discover that any fraud or frauds were committed, or that a different result would have been the consequence from the more strict adherence to the letter of the law; and the committee are of opinion that Isaac Smith had the greatest number of legal votes, and declare him duly elected.

It appears that thirteen witnesses were subpoenaed, for which the sergeant-at-arms presented a bill for \$66.25. The fees of the witnesses amounted to \$464.61, the highest sum to any single one being \$32.36. After hearing the report the House approved of the same and orders were accordingly drawn by the Speaker on the treasurer of Lycoming county for the sums specified. So ended the contest for the seat of the member from this county sixty-seven years ago.

On the 4th of February, 1807, Mr. Smith presented a petition from the inhabitants of the third election district in Lycoming county, praying that the place for holding the elections in said district may be removed from the house of John Potts to the house of James Shearer, innkeeper, in a village called Jersey Shore.

It is curious to look over the proceedings of our law-makers two generations ago and contrast them with those of to-day. And although a great deal of corruption at the polls is charged in these latter days, it would seem that our ancestors were not entirely free from the charge in 1806, when it was alleged that Mr. Smith obtained his seat through illegal votes. Be that as it may, however, we do not believe the people of those early days were any purer, politically, than they are now.

When the Legislature of which we are speaking was in session, Thomas McKean was Governor and Hon. Simon Snyder was Speaker of the House of Representatives.

McKean was one of the most distinguished of Pennsylvania's long line of Governors. He was elected under the Constitution of 1790, December 17, 1799, and served three terms, retiring December 20, 1808. During his lifetime he was President of Delaware, Governor of Pennsylvania, member of Congress from Delaware a period of over eight years, and Chief Justice of Pennsylvania for twenty-two years.