

THE FATHER OF WATERS.

Tribute Paid by the Poet of the Streets to the Mighty River. (Boston Globe's Letter.) I have discovered a city here, not far from the Mexican seas, which is built below the level of the river. I have before me a city here where the wells are built above the ground. I have come upon a city here of nearly a quarter of a million of people, where the graves are built on top of the earth. And the dead people in these graves which are built on the top of the ground in the heart of this mighty and antique city outnumber the living.

But no withstanding all that this city is a beautiful and delicious city. The water is not so bad after all. I have not yet tried the graves. New Orleans, on first sight, reminds me of a very pretty girl with a smudged face. And it is to be admitted that she is a pretty old pretty girl, too. And she knows a tremendous lot. I can tell you. But for all that, she is a girl that you can't help falling in love with at first sight to save your life.

By the banks of the mighty river— It has a mouth, and can speak for itself, I hear you say. My friend, take off your hat, and be serious in his presence. Millions of thoughtful men of Europe would gratefully bare and bow their heads here. These waters come down to us from the stormy north with their story of nearly thirty states. They have nourished and ministered to needs of a hundred millions of people. Their work is done for this year. They are on their way to the seas to rest. They are contented to respect.

I have looked on the banks of the Amazon, gone all the way to the Ganges to see the worshippers of water, made my home on the banks of the Nile, but nowhere have I found a river at all like this I have come upon here. It is up and down and entirely alive. It is an American river in its fullest sense. An independent river is this, too; running on its own account, turning aside for neither Republican nor Democrat. May be it is running the independent ticket. May be it is for St. John, the cold-water man.

And how few Americans have seen this mighty river, or either source or mouth! I know plenty of pretty eastern ladies who are willing to be counted well-traveled. Not one of them in ten ever saw this greatest natural wonder of the world. It is hard to escape the intense fascination of this vast, surging, sweeping river before me here; hard to cease saying things of this tremendous stream, this artery, the life-blood of our broad republic. And, oh, how the poets of old—the poets when poets were upon earth—would have loved this river! There is not a poem in the world worth reading that has not rivers running all through it, from the Meander and the other little rivulets, around Troy, on down to the story of the unhappy Acaadians, whose final place of rest I can almost see from my house-top. All such places in the Bible are made green with running rivers. Paradise, that it might be of matchless elegance and eternal verdure, gathered the three great rivers in one.

The wondrous river here, like all things that are great and full of power and of splendor, is very still, very docile seemingly, as if it might be easily managed, led, or driven anywhere. But contemplate its vast volume as it flows, past its depth 100! 200! 300 feet! That is the Mississippi river. And yet, you American mud-heads, you railroad-makers, you hardly know we have a river in the country. Shame on you! But, sirs, you may need it, need all of it, every drop of it—water your stock.

A Thorough Education.

[M. Quast's Letter.] Do not sigh for a "thorough education," unless you have a target beyond it. There are plenty of thoroughly educated men who are a heavy burden on their friends. Without having determined on a profession they rushed off to college, graduated with the highest honors and walked out into the world again to find themselves worse off than before. Book-keepers are paid for being accurate, honest and reliable. The merchant never asks to see any specimens of their Greek translations or essays on physiology. Cashiers may have spent twenty years at college without receiving a dollar more salary than a man who got his schooling in a village. If the doctor is thoroughly educated in medicine, and the lawyer in law, and the clergyman in theology, we demand no more. I have heard it said of a man that he was a scholar and I have seen that same man glad of an opportunity to take the position of a traveler for a wholesale house. He had been educated without any aim beyond it.

Romance of Eugene and Napoleon.

[Pittsburg Dispatch.] It was at a ball given by President Napoleon at the Elysee, some nights before the coup d'etat, that Mile. Eugenie met her future husband. A romance is connected with the meeting. Wishing to avoid the crowded ball-rooms, Louis Napoleon, with the duke of La Moskowa, went into the Elysee gardens, where he suddenly came upon a radiant, blushing girl. She was tying up her hair alone, opposite a glass in the conservatory. Her hair had come down during a waltz, and the crowd was too great to admit of her reaching the ladies' dressing room. She had glided to this place, hoping to be unobserved. This little circumstance of the fall of her back hair led to her subsequent elevation to one of the proudest positions ever occupied by a woman.

The Melon Shrub.

[Exchange.] A plant called the melon shrub has been introduced into California from Guatemala. It grows to the height of three feet, bears a beautiful purple and white flower, is an evergreen, and produces a melon about four inches long by two or three in diameter, of excellent taste.

Antique Teakettles.

[Chicago Tribune.] Sir Samuel Baker is an enthusiast on artistic and antique Japanese teakettles, and has a fine collection of about forty specimens. He follows a long way after Mrs. De Struve, however, for she collected 700, of which no two were alike.

Some Facts About Fur.

[Cincinnati Enquirer.] One of the most important fur-bearing animals that we have is the common cat, and it is astonishing to know the number used in cheap furs, over 1,000,000 being thus utilized last year. The kinds most preferred are the pure white, and black fat Maltese seal well, while the yellow and parti-colored cat skins are dyed and sold under a variety of fancy names. There is every thing in a name, for example, over 350,000 skunk skins are made up into furs every winter, bought and worn, but not as skunk. They go off as Alaska, sable, Chinese mink, or something of the kind. Ohio and New York provide the most of them and, as in the capture of the lion and tiger, brave men are required. The fur, however, is beautiful, long and glossy, and by no means the cheapest of furs. The muskrat, over 3,000,000 and sometimes 5,000,000 of which are taken every year, is much used in the manufacture of hats. The New York muskrats are worth 75 cents, while Delaware and Maryland produce an animal worth twice as much. This innocent creature is often utilized by dealers as seal, and, when dyed, so passed upon the public. Cheap grades of furs are made from the Siberian squirrel, muskrats, rabbits, wildcats, badger and coon. Of lion skins 500 are consumed by the trade every year; while 20,000 bears, 500 tigers, 100,000 buffalo, 100,000 chinchillas and 6,000,000 squirrels have been used yearly in various branches of trade. Beavers to the number of 20,000 are yearly sacrificed, and it is safe to say that in fifty years the animals will have become extinct. In all, over half a million foxes are caught yearly, and it would seem that they will follow the same fate.

A Patent Spotter.

[Indianapolis Journal.] A new cash and ticket indicator is attracting some attention with railroad men. The device has for its object the prevention of a diversion of cash receipts from their proper destination; being intended to prevent conductors from fobbing moneys collected on the trains, and keeping and selling unaccounted tickets, the appliance at the same time furnishing the company with a full and complete record of all passengers carried on the trains, whether they pay cash, present tickets, or hand in trip passes. It consists of a box with a glass front, one of these boxes being placed on a panel between the windows under the rack, for each double seat. In this box the conductor places the ticket, which falls into one of the two upper compartments, and remains in sight in that compartment until the lid is again raised for the reception of another ticket, when the first one falls into the lower compartment, still remaining in sight, but inaccessible by any but the proper agent at the place or station appointed.

As each new passenger takes a seat he drops into the lower compartment the ticket of his predecessor in that seat. A passenger can tell from the "indicator" whether or not a seat is really occupied; and if it is being "hogged" (or occupied by some mythical "friend" of the passenger in the next seat) he can readily disprove the occupancy. At the same time, a passenger who leaves his seat at a station, before his journey's end, has his right seat reserved to him, but he cannot reserve two seats at once in the train.

Rainbow Rocks of the Yellow-stone.

[Exchange.] From a natural platform at the very edge of the lower falls, the sight-seer can look 400 feet upward to the top of the heavily wooded banks, and down to the foot of the falls, 300 feet. It is not over forty feet from this natural platform to the other side of the river, and the volume of water compressed into this narrow space is enormous; but as soon as it passes it is transformed into snowy fleecy foam, and from below rises a thick mist as the water is hurled upon the rocks that break its fall. Grand as are the falls themselves, the Grand canyon really gives to the scene its unrivaled charm. One may see towers, towers, pillars and cones, and hundreds of other fantastic shapes, according as the reins of fancy are loosed. The colors of the rock include every tint of the rainbow. Below this is a stratum of brown rock, gradually shading into red. Then come orange, or yellow, violet and white limestone. Yonder is a bright red tower, and besides it is a pillar of black flint stone. Below is a white cone, above a purple arc.

The Mind-Reading "Pin Trick."

[Labourers in London Truth.] Take, for instance, the trick of finding a pin, the whereabouts of which is known to the subject. The trick is generally performed in a room full of people, who also know where the pin is concealed. Collusion, therefore, is possible. This, however, is not necessary, for if the performer be adroit he knows where to go, owing to the unconscious indications given by the subject. Nothing is more easy than to prove this. Let the subject be blindfolded instead of the performer, and the latter will never find the pin. I asked Mr. Stuart Cumberland whether he could find a pin under those conditions. Being an honest man and making no pretense to do more than closely follow indications, he replied that he could not.

Apprenticeship.

[American Home.] Please do not carry such an air of persecution. You look more and more disagreeable for it, and you are laboring under a great mistake all the while, which everybody but yourself knows. The world will take you just as near what you are worth as it takes anybody, and that is all you ought to expect. That part of the world which you understand will understand you, and what ought you to care for the rest of it? If you carry a clean face into sunshine, that face will reflect sunshine, or vice versa.

A Touch of Nature.

[Exchange.] Col. Higginson's little daughter celebrated her third birthday recently, and had so good a time that she wished the anniversary would go right on. When she woke up next morning and found the world moving along in the regular, old-fashioned way, she felt as all have felt on similar occasions, and cried out: "Oh, mamma, where is my birthday?"

BOARDING-HOUSE CHILDREN.

A Boy and Girl Who are so Self-Possessed that They Will Die Early.

[Cor. Chicago Tribune.] We were seated at a round table in the middle of the dining-room, where covers were laid for five. Three seats were vacant. The door was opened by the attendant and two children, a boy and girl exquisitely dressed walked in side by side, followed by their mother, a hard-featured and aggressive looking woman, who bowed on either side as she walked up the aisle between the tables with great frigidity and solemnity. She swept to her place in the middle of the three vacant seats at our table, and the children were lifted into their chairs by the waiters. I was conscious that the little girl's eyes were upon me and glanced down at her. She bowed gravely with an air that said plainly, "I don't know you, but I consider it only proper to bow to strangers at our table," unfolded her napkin and began to chat with her mother. I looked at the boy. He raised his head, said "good evening, sir," politely, and then turning at once to his mother, remarked in the quietest tones possible, "Mamma, Mrs. Blank is evidently waiting for you to recognize her." The mother turned with seamed and lined visage over her shoulder, showed all of her teeth, and bowed with cast-iron politeness to a lady who nodded smilingly from across the room.

I forgot to eat while I watched the children. The girl was certainly not more than 7 years of age, and the boy less than 9. They were delicate but not frail looking. The characteristics that made them most remarkable were their entire ease and self-possession. There was none of the robust, vigorous, and careless flow of spirits which usually distinguishes children, but a tranquil and even demeanor. Not that they were at all solemn or melancholy. On the contrary, they laughed and chatted with one another brightly, but always in the quietest voices and never with undue hilarity. The waiter leaned deferentially over the little girl and handed her a bill of fare. She scanned it thoughtfully as she held it in both of her tiny hands for a time and then said concisely: "I'll have some bisque of crab, James, a little striped bass, and—and—(turning to her mother) I suppose you will allow me to have croquets of veal again, mamma, will you?"

"No, dear; they are too rich for you." "Well, then, James," continued the child, turning to the waiter, "you may give me some lamb and a Roman punch, you know, and just a mouthful of roast duck, and, I say, give me no end of fruit, particularly grapes, James." The man bowed, took the card from her hand and went to the boy, who ordered a dinner that would have made one of our Puritan forefathers gasp with amazement. The children sat there with their bright eyes roaming about the room and conversed steadily with their mother, who was gorgeously arrayed in evening dress, but who nevertheless looked common and was without even the superficial refinement of her charges. In one instance, after the boy had been silent for some time, he raised his eyes with a quizzical sort of an expression and said as he bowed to an old lady who trotted down the room: "I never see Mrs. Dash come in here that I don't think of her last winter in Rome. Don't you remember the day she fell out of a cab, mamma! She always seems so blind. She holds her nose in the air and her eyes half closed, and just rushes right ahead without looking where she is going. There! There she goes now!"

As he spoke he leaned over the table and looked eagerly down the room. The erratic little old lady of whom he spoke had just kicked a champagne-cooler over and was expostulating with the waiter for leaving it in the way. Both of the children smiled and then laughed quietly, but the outburst that one would naturally have expected from little ones of their years did not occur. The boy reminded me of the anecdote we have all read so often of the wonderful command of words which Macaulay exhibited in his childhood. He tried to walk down-stairs one day, lost his balance on account of his diminutive stature, and tumbled to the bottom. He was taken to the nursery and soothed, and the lady of the house went to him a few hours later, and said: "My child, how do you feel?"

"Thank you, madam," said the infant Macaulay, "for your courtesy. I am glad to say that the pain in my head has considerably abated."

"God bless the child," said the hostess, "how very old he is." Macaulay lived for many years after this.

The First Meridian.

[Albany Express.] The original idea of a universal first meridian belongs to France, and as far back as 1632 a decree, signed by Louis XIII, and proposed by Cardinal Richelieu, established a universal meridian on the island of Ferro. This meridian was ultimately abandoned by Cassini to gratify Louis XIV's pride, and the Paris one was retained by the metric commission in 1793 under the pretense that an arc of this meridian had been measured for determining the length of the unit of measure.

An Interesting Case.

Three medical celebrities met together to consult at the sick-bed of General X. After they go, the general rings for his man-servant. "Well, Jacques, you showed those gentlemen out; what did they say?" "Ah, general, they seem to differ with each other. The big fat one said that they must have a little patience, and at the autopsy—whatever that may be—they would find out what the matter was."

Crows' Language.

The language of crows has evidently received considerable attention from Dr. C. C. Abbott, as he avers that they have twenty-seven distinct cries, calls, or utterances, each readily distinguishable from the others, and each having an unmistakable connection with a certain class of actions.

Novel Solar Engine.

Paris experimenters have succeeded in operating a printing press by means of sun rays concentrated on a steam boiler by reflectors, and they think they are in a fair way of dispensing with other fuel.

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