SECOND PART.

THE PITTSBURG DISPATCH.

PAGES 9 TO 17.

PITTSBURG, SUNDAY, MAY 25, 1890.

A LAND OF PROMISE.

Possibilities of the Future in Southern Africa.

CAPE TOWN'S MIXED RACES

How American Ships Get Worsted in the Carrying Trade.

GOLD AND DIAMOND INTERESTS

[CORRESPONDENCE OF THE DISPATCH.]

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA, April 10.

AFRICA suggests to the average American a vast continent inhabited almost wholly by savages and wild animals, with a climate deadly to the white man. It is a very erroneous notion indeed. By a glance at the sketch of South Africa here given the four political divisions under control of the white man will be seen. These are Cape Colony (English), the Orange Free State, the South African Republic and Natal, an English colony. Cape Colony is the oldest and largest of these divisions. It was first settled several centuries ago, and has been an English colony for the past 80 years. The combined area of the four divisions of South Africa is 368,500 square miles and the total population about 2,426,000, distributed as follows:

Cape Colony—Area in square miles, 200,000; population, 1,000,000; whites, 300,000.

South African Republic—Area, 110,000; population, 810,000; whites, 100,000.

Orange Free State—Area, 41,500; population, 136,000; whites, 69,000.

Natal—Area, 17,000; population, 480,000; whites, 30,000.

Thus it will be seen that there are over half a million whites in a total population of two and a half millions in South Africa.

Cape Town is the most important city and the capital of Cape Colony. The city is peculiarly situated. For almost the entire distance around it on the land side are mountains. One of these mountains rises seemingly perpendicularly to a height of 3,500 feet, and then appears to be cut off so that its top is level over its entire extent. From its appearance the mountain has received the name of Table Mountain; and the pretty bay, directly in front of the city, which is overlooked by Table Mountain, is Table Bay. A view of part of the city as seen from the bay is shown here. The mountain appears to be quite near the water, so that the city seems to cover half its entire ground. Indeed, as one approaches Cape Town by water for the first time, he does not think it is a city of 50,000 inhabitants.

THE PEOPLE OF CAPE TOWN.

But it contains fully that number, and a more mixed mass of humanity it would be difficult to find—mixed both as to race, color and religion. Besides large numbers of English and Dutch, there are blacks of all shades and bloods. There are 12,000 Malays among the colored population. There is such a mixture of whites and blacks that it is unusual to see one who has not the blood of different races or of different tribes in his veins. For instance, many years ago Hottentots were very common here, and to-day not one full-blooded Hottentot could be found in Cape Town. The Hottentots have been mixed with other blacks, and whites as well. Very many of the blacks are part Dutch, part Malay, and perhaps part something else. In short, the colored population of Cape Town, aside from a few thousand Malays, may be summed up as a mixture of Dutch, Malay, Hottentot and various other branches of Kaffirs.

All sorts of features and colors are to be seen. From this it would seem that the laboring class is large and labor plentiful, but a more independent set of people than the Cape Town blacks cannot be found and labor is very scarce. The majority of the Malays work for a few days, earn a few shillings, and then "lay off" and spend the money. Saturday afternoon is a general half holiday here and besides this and Sunday when all labor ceases, the Malays take Mondays, so this day is always known as "blue" Monday, and you must not count on having work done by Malays upon that day.

COMMERCE OF CAPE TOWN.

Most of the English and colonial people of Cape Town are well-to-do and in very good financial circumstances, many of them being wealthy. Cape Town is a good business point. Because of its location great numbers of ships stop for supplies, and there are several large firms who supply coal and provisions to ships. Coal sells for about $17 per ton. Another colonial industry carried on extensively is the manufacture of wines. The Cape wines are famous for their quality and the low price at which they are sold. It is needless to say that almost everybody drinks wine, and the wine market is chiefly a home one. Ostrich farms were once very common throughout Cape Colony, but as the demand for ostrich feathers has greatly diminished the industry has decreased accordingly.

There are no large manufactures of any kind in the colony, and hence all supplies are brought from England. England's South African colonies, as well as the Free State and the South African Republic, furnish an immense market for her goods. There are, however, two or three firms who deal in American goods only, for a few articles such as chairs, doors, window frames, blinds and some hardwares can be bought in the United States and delivered here with duty paid cheaper than they can be made here. This is because skilled labor is so scarce and expensive here. There are two English lines of steamers which run regularly between England and South Africa. Each line runs two steamers a month, so that one arrives from England every week and one leaves for England as often. Both lines are first-class, and carry the mail and passengers with great regularity. It requires about 18 days to make the passage, and the fare is from $140 to $200. Ships of all nations except America are quite common.

AMERICAN SHIPS ABROAD.

American ships cannot compete with those of most other countries, because the various Governments subsidize their ships. We had an instance of this several weeks ago when an American barque, which had brought a cargo from New York, was obliged to return to America with nothing, because an Italian barque bound for the United States carried a cargo which both bid for, much cheaper than the American could do it. The Italian Government paid its barque about $2,500 for carrying the cargo. Of course the American stood no chance. While upon this subject let me speak of an American schooner which has been stationed here for several months. There are immense quantities of fish in Table Bay, and among them many mackerel which heretofore were never used. Mackerel are becoming scarce on the United States coast, and an American captain learning of the Cape Town mackerel ventured to come here (a distance of over 7,000 miles) and see what he could do in the way of catching the mackerel and shipping them to America. Everyone at home ridiculed his adventure and predicted failure.

Captain Chase, the American referred to, came here with an American crew and, shortly after being here made a shipment of over 100 barrels. In due time he learned the fish proved to be as good as the American mackerel and that they brought a good round price. As there is very little expense involved in catching, salting and shipping them, Captain Chase is realizing a very handsome profit, and has proved beyond any doubt that mackerel fishing in Table Bay is a sure and paying business. Since the captain started catching the mackerel they have come to be in demand here, and now every one wonders that they were not used before.

GREENMARKET SQUARE, CAPE TOWN.

GOVERNMENT OF CAPE COLONY.

Cape Colony is as independent of England as any of the English colonies. The Queen appoints a Governor and Judges of the Supreme Court together with other officers. All laws are made by the Colonial Parliament, but are, of course, subject to the veto of the Crown. This power is, I believe, never exercised by the Queen. A new Parliament House has been recently erected. The Government is fairly progressive, and has supplied good railroad, telegraph and postal service throughout the colony. There are at present about 2,000 miles of railroad in operation. The main line is from Cape Town to Kimberley, the seat of the great diamond fields. This line, as well as all the branches, are shown in the map. An extension is now being made beyond Kimberley, and this will soon reach the rich gold fields to be mentioned later. Many more miles of railroad are needed in South Africa, and there is no doubt that a few years will see a great increase in this respect.

The climate of South Africa is a very healthy one. The thermometer never goes far below 40 degrees Fahrenheit. In the summer months, November, December and January, it is sometimes very hot, but the oppressive days are generally very few. The winds of Cape Town are very peculiar, and during certain seasons blow quite hard. The one from the southeast is best known. It can always, I am told, be predicted from the appearance of a white cloud over the top of Table Mountain. This white cloud often forms over Table Mountain in such a way as to give a very beautiful scene. It is known as the "table cloth" of Table Mountain.

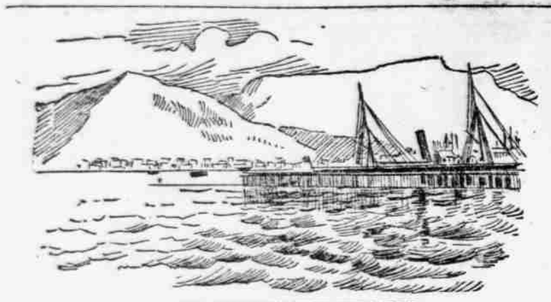
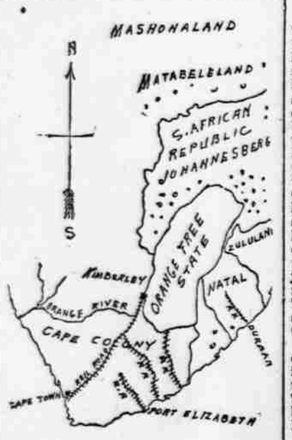


TABLE MOUNTAIN FROM THE DOCKS.

THE MINERAL RESOURCES.

In 1872 diamonds were discovered at a place which is now Kimberley. These diamond fields have become famous all over the world for the great quantities of diamonds which have been taken from them. But I hope to make Kimberley and the diamond mines the subject of another letter, and so take up the gold fields. For many years, or even centuries, Africa has been thought to be rich in gold. Travelers who were in Africa a century ago, said there were rich mines of gold and silver in Eastern and South Africa. It has been known for these many years that natives from the interior of South Africa used gold as a medium of exchange. I find it is generally believed that Ophir, the place where the Scriptures say Solomon obtained gold to the value, as some one has estimated, of $4,500,000,000, was situated in Southeastern Africa. A traveler of a century ago gave this subject much attention, and after consulting ancient Portuguese and African records and the traditions of Arabs, fully believed Ophir was in Africa. Five centuries ago gold mines were known to be in operation in South Africa.



Map of South Africa.

Notwithstanding the fact that gold has been known to exist in Africa for centuries, there has been no attempt on the part of white men to get this gold until very recent years. The reasons for this are found in the fact that vast numbers of natives were ever ready to oppose any such attempts of the whites, and that the climate of the gold districts was believed to be deadly to whites. This belief has been proved a mistaken one, for gold has been found to exist in large areas of country which are unusually healthy.

CALIFORNIA SCENES RE-ENACTED.

From 1870 to 1880 gold was mined in small quantities, but it was not until about 1884 that large discoveries were made and a great rush of people has followed. Within 3½ years, from 1884 to 1888, over 20,000 people were drawn to the gold fields of South Africa and $50,000,000 were invested. The greater part of the discoveries were made in the territory of the South African Republic. Three years ago gold was found at an uninhabited place, where there now stands a city of over 40,000 people. This is the city of Johannesberg. From all that I can learn Johannesberg is a well-built city. It has many large and fine buildings. America cannot show a case of such marvelous growth—the discovery of gold, founding and building a city of over 40,000 inhabitants, when there were no railroads within 300 miles, and all of this in three years' time. Though Johannesberg is now down, and "times are hard" there, it is not due to an insufficient quantity of gold, but to the fac that it costs too much to get the gold. There being no railroads, transportation is very expensive, and all supplies are exceedingly high. Besides this, the Government seems to have done its share by burdening the people with heavy taxes. Many mines are, however, not paying well, and a near future will undoubtedly see a change for the better at Johannesberg.

The South African Republic is almost covered by gold fields. But to the north of the Republic lie two countries where gold has been found by travelers. These countries are Matabeleland and Mashonaland. The former is under the absolute control of a native King, Lobengula by name. He is the absolute owner of every living person and thing, as well as every acre of ground within his territory. His word is law, and death is invariably the penalty for every refusal to comply with his law. Lobengula has an army of 20,000 men, and with these he has assumed control of Mashonaland, a country to the east of Matabeleland under independent chiefs. Lobengula has nearly exterminated the Mashonas, who are a very peaceful and industrious people.

PLUNDER AND SLAVERY.

Agreeably to the King's wishes a number of his warriors go into Mashonaland, capture all the cattle and people they can, kill all the men, and bring all the women and children back as slaves for his own people. The Matabeles proper are a branch of the Zulus and are well-trained as warriors. They are a very warlike people and have never been conquered. Lobengula has for years known something of the mineral wealth of his country, and he has never allowed whites or blacks to touch any gold. Natives have been known to find large nuggets of gold and to have hastily thrown them back into the streams from which they came. Death is the penalty for touching the gold.

Many whites have tried to get permission to dig for gold, but the King has always refused. He readily grants permits to whites to hunt and trade in his country, but appoints a guard of half a dozen warriors to stay continually with every white until he leaves the country. Thus no whites have ever been able to touch the gold. But Lobengula is smart enough to see that he cannot always keep the whites from his country, and so about two years ago he granted concessions to some Englishmen, who have formed an immense company. The concession gives the right to hunt for gold in Lobengula's tributary possession, Mashonland. The capital of this company is $20,000,000, and it is backed by a charter from the English Government. The King has been very friendly to this company, which has made him valuable presents, and he is full aware of the company's doings. Two of his councilors went to England and were presented to the Queen. The Queen sent a commission with a royal letter to Lobengula, and they were received very kindly by him.

The first expedition of the English company, which is called the British South African Company, leaves for Mashonaland about April 15. I shall accompany this expedition and hope to be able to inform the readers of this paper of the journey to Mashonaland. Without any doubt the successful opening of this fine country and its judicious settlement by the whites will prove a great benefit to South Africa.

CLAIRE A. ORR.

THE NEW INDIAN MESSIAH.

He Is Bald Headed, Wears a Wig and is Teaching New Religious Dances.

An Indian runner reports at Helena that couriers sent out by the Cheyenne Indians to find the new Messiah, or second Christ, heretofore mentioned in THE DISPATCH, saw him and talked to him. They located him in the mountains beyond Salt Lake, and from their description of him he is an old man with a long white beard, which hangs down over his breast. Some days he wears white hair, and at other times has no hair on his head, from which it appears that he is bald-headed and wears a wig. He made one of the Cheyenne Indians who visited him a high priest, and instructed him in the rites and mysteries of the new religion. He gave him the figures and ceremonies of a new Indian dance, which takes four nights and one whole day to perform. The Cheyennes have just finished their first performance of this religious dance at the Rosebud agency. They all believe in the new Messiah, and all work has about ceased among the Cheyennes.

Major Carroll says the new Christ is no doubt some old Mormon elder or bishop who is a spiritualist, and is proselyting Indians to Mormonism through mystery and deceit. The cell in the guard house at Fort Custer has been dusted out and prepared for the Messiah if he can be caught.

NEW FEVER REMEDY.

Antipyrin Succeeded by Antikamnia, Which is Said to be Harmless.

St. Louis Globe-Democrat.]

The opposition which began in Europe to antipyrin, as a dangerous agent for the reduction of fever and the abatement of pain, has been the indirect cause of the introduction of a new remedy of the same class and the same general origin. It is called antikamnia, which means "opposed to pain," and is a product of coal tar, as is antipyrin. The new medicine is a certain remedy for headache, neuralgia, locomotor ataxia, sciatica, and in fact for all pains that can be reached by medicine taken into the stomach and diffused into the blood. Antikamnia does not excite the heart, nor does its use grow into a habit, as it contains neither opium, cocaine nor any other dangerous drug or chemical. It does not produce gastric disturbances.

SHARPS AND FLATS.

Men Who Live by Their Wits in New York and Their Victims.

WALL STREET A DEN OF THIEVES.

Promoters and Brokers Who Rob Under Cover of Sheet Iron Safes.

SWINDLES THAT ARE MORE BRAZEN

[CORRESPONDENCE OF THE DISPATCH.]

NEW YORK, May 23.—The "sharps" and "flats" of New York form a social study worthy of many chapters. Whether the "flats" are responsible for the "sharps," or the reverse is the case we need not stop long to inquire. Perhaps there would be no fishers of men if there were none to be caught. My own opinion is that both are the natural product of a higher civilization. In London, Paris and other old European cities the classes of men and women who prey upon each other are scarcely more distinctly marked than in this American metropolis. The nice shades of business morals, where legitimate dealings fade into robbery and innocence becomes indistinguishable from crime, are unobserved and unrebuked here the same as in the great cities of the effete East.

New York has some 10,000 dissolute females, 50,000 indigent persons and 5,000 professional criminals, it is said. There is something inspiring in the fact that there are about 2,000 persons in this city while I write who would not hesitate an instant to clap a deadly sandbag to my head, or thrust a knife between my shoulders as I go along the darkened hall if they felt any reasonable certainty of realizing $10 by the operation. Most of these financial operators are known. No man falls into their clutches knowingly or willingly. Their victims are involuntary. The kind of robber I now have in mind to write about is not that sort of a man. He is a good deal more numerous and a good deal more dangerous. His victims outnumber the involuntary sacrifices 10,000 to 1.

A WALL STREET BROKER

told me the other day that there were more "suckers" in New York than in any two other cities of the United States. A good many of these suckers find their way to Wall street and some of them are brokers. Now "a Wall street broker" carries with it to the verdant ear a financially solid sound. I used to consider a Wall street broker a man among financiers, beyond the respectable reach of other commercial gentlemen and to be envied of his kind. Some merit this imaginative tribute of respect. The most of them, are men of the mental and moral grade which characterize the ordinary banker—faro banker.

If you want the fairy edge taken off of your imagination, go down on New and Broad streets occasionally and cultivate these gentlemen of the road. Or, go into some of their bogus offices with formidable vaults and sheet-iron safes and try them on a "flyer." Of course, you can have more fun for your money at the races, or sitting up over faro and roulette, but go in the interests—well, let us say in the interests of moral science. There are more men operating in "the street" literally than have offices in Wall. The legitimate and financially honorable brokers of Wall street, who control the exchanges, form but a small majority of the number reaching out for business in the guise of the profession. They are all gamblers. They are all sharps lying in wait for the flats with more money than brains. That the number of the latter is legion is evidenced by the luxurious offices, expensive homes and colossal fortunes of many of these sharps. When there is any lack they turn upon and rend each other. Like race-track bookmakers and other gamblers everywhere, they have certain rules of honor among themselves which are scrupulously observed.

HOW THE ROBBERS WORK.

These rules, however, do not prevent, they facilitate the robbery of their victims. There are members on the floor of the Stock Exchange who have been convicted of putting the money of a customer in their pockets without a pretext of equivalent. This right before the man's face. In the trial that followed they were only "censured." This was the case where a broker had an office system whereby his partner on the floor of the Exchange was instructed by telephone in the hearing of the customer to purchase or sell certain stocks. The floor partner responded by telephone report; but the deals were never made where a "flat" was concerned, the money of the latter being promptly placed in the broker's inside pocket. They finally made a mistake by "sizing up" a man wrong. He wouldn't stand it.

But this is being done in Wall street every day. Let me warn you against the seductive advertisements of alleged Wall street brokers who claim inside knowledge and large and certain gains on small investments. You have no more show for your money than if you played it up against a brace game of faro or put it in the Louisiana Lottery. On general principles distrust the man who offers something for nothing. The corporation with just a little stock to sell, which will pay 500 per cent (some day) is a common form of the sharp to catch the flat. Lower Broadway is full of them, and so is every side street below Chambers. The electrical companies alone, having nothing but their patents, samples and office furniture, can be counted by the hundred. They exist on the proceeds of the stock they can sell and not on legitimate earnings.

DIRECTORS THAT DON'T DIRECT.

"There are probably a thousand such corporations in New York. They are duly incorporated and pay taxes, sometimes, and often have imposing offices in big buildings down town. Their seductive advertisements can be read in all the leading newspapers in the country. Their correspondence is conducted on engraved letterheads containing a long list of officers and directors. Of course, these usually have no financial interest in the concern—they are purely and simply dummy officials, with say one share of stock each. There are men in New York who make a business in directorships. They are negative quantities, attend board meetings regularly, register the will of the controlling stockholder and are not too inquisitive.

These professionals get from $5 to $20 for every attendance and frequently a good dinner into the bargain. If the man has enough directorships he can pick up a very comfortable living. Is this a fraud on the business public? Well, it would be if the public didn't know all about it. There are some people, perhaps, who are flat enough to believe that directors direct, but those are getting fewer every year. The recent check-kiting operations of certain bank-wreckers in this city caused a visible falling off in believers of this sort.

HOW PROMOTERS WORK.

Hand-in-hand with the corporation of the above description is the promoter. He may be seen fluttering around the corridors of the great office buildings down town during the day, and at night about the uptown hotels and Delmonico's. The promoter is a man of great schemes and bewildering gall. He is the middleman between the bottomless corporation and the flats who have money to invest. A man I have known for a long time as a promoter said to me recently: "If I could raise $1,000 to fully equip a nice office down town, put in a clerk and typewriter and observe other appearances of respectable business life I could make $35,000 a year on my knowledge of New York. You can't make anything on the curb. It takes a little money. You've got to make a show. You must have a nice place to take customers, and when you get them there you must be surrounded by evidences of business."

"It was suggested that a sheet-iron safe, well painted, was highly ornamental to an office of that character, but could hardly be put down as an evidence of business. "It would do just as well," said he. "You can do a legitimate business with an empty sheet-iron safe, just the same as with a $1,000 one. It is no sign a bank has money because it has vaults and safes and a lot of loose bills scattered about. Why, there are hundreds of men doing business in New York on appearance. You must have appearances."

HOW ONE FELLOW WAS WORKED.

And there are unquestionably thousands of business men here doing business on appearances. While in Chicago recently I met a man who had invested $5,000 in the stock of a New York corporation with the agreement that he was to have the Chicago agency at a certain salary. The Chicago man went on to New York and visited the main office. Everything seemed to be all right. There were all the indications, so far as handsome office rooms, pretty typewriters, clerks, office boy and other appurtenances were concerned, of a big business. The money was paid in and stock issued. The man returned to Chicago with instructions to spare no expense in fitting up the local office and send in the bill. He followed the instructions. He also sent in a bill for some $250. He also paid the bill himself, finally, the New York "Company" having vanished in the meantime with his $5,000. Inquiry elicited the fact that it had never had any business and had never even paid for the furnishings in the New York office. The "promoter" did the business.

The metropolitan newspapers fairly teem with the advertisements of these speculators. The very extravagance of the promises they contain should be sufficient to deter any investor from even answering them.

The theatrical swindler has a permanent lodgment in New York. He preys upon stage-struck young women and poor actors out of a job, principally, though everybody who has money is fish for him. It was only yesterday a New York paper ran one of these vermin to earth. His scheme was to advertise for actresses and actors for certain plays to be put on the road, offering to pay traveling expenses and for wardrobe and a comfortable salary.

WHERE THE MONEY CAME IN.

The preliminary stage of the game was to send the manuscript part to be played, the charge for the copy of the play being $5, C. O. D. This was the end of the game, so far as the aspirant for histrionic fame was concerned. But this is a single case. There are alleged legitimate theatrical agencies here doing a thousand times more damage. The loss of $5 to a theatrical swindler is a small matter, and the result is doubtless beneficial to both parties. The agents who bring young women to New York and work them for every dollar they have for so-called instruction, and then, having ruined them financially, turn them loose to shift for themselves, are the worse criminals. There are a dozen agencies of this kind.

Last summer a bright young lady came to my office with an actress, and asked my advice as to a certain man in this line of business. She had lived in Indiana and had come to New York to study for the stage. An advertisement brought her to the theatrical agent. He took the easiest way to get rid of her—turned her over to a broken-down actress for instruction at so much per week. It was a good deal from her slender means, but she was an enthusiast, and had resolved to win herself a place. She had been promised a part from one of his friends in a company to go on the road, but had been put off from time to time until she had grown suspicious. I took the pains to look into the matter, and found that the broken-down actress was living with the agent, and the latter turned in these feminine flats as payment.

OTHER FORMS OF FRAUD.

The bunko steerers and green goods men have been so often described that it would seem to be superfluous anywhere to mention them, and yet scarcely a week goes by but the papers contain glowing accounts of their successful operations. A new crop of fools spring up daily. The clairvoyant thrives in this city. You can see this by the daily standing advertisements. Sometimes there is a half column of them in a single paper. And they reach out far and find victims all over the country. This class of sharps has been exposed time and time again, but ridicule and abuse, imprisonment and finest, have no appreciable effect on the profession. The flats who patronize them are the silly and ignorant, who never read newspapers, and if they ever learned by accident the character of the fraud, have not the strength of mind to profit by the sad experience of others.

This is but a brief outline of the list of harpies who prey upon weak humanity. Of the man who lives by his wits without violating the moral code, I will write hereafter. The grouping of the sharps and flats here given illustrates with extended significance the adage, "The fool and his money is soon parted. CHARLES T. MURRAY.

HIS IDEA OF EXTRAORDINARY.

Nothing Remarkable About a Man Falling 1,000 Feet Unless He Lived.

New York Herald.]

Some 10 or 12 years ago an incident happened at Gibraltar which illustrates the practical views of a certain class of people. A subaltern named O'Donohue was the officer of the guard at the Elphinstone Guard. At this point of the world-known rock there is a sheer drop of over 1,000 feet. A lieutenant who had taken too much champagne at a mess dinner walked over the rock and undoubtedly was dead before he reached the rocks far below. When the officer of the guard came to fill in his report and reached the question, "Has anything extraordinary happened while you were officer of the guard?" he wrote in the blank space reserved for the answer, "Nothing."

Of course, he was summoned before Lord Napier of Magdala, the Governor of Gibraltar. When he appeared, Lord Napier asked:

"You were the officer of the guard at Elphinstone Guard yesterday?"

"I was, sir?"

"And this is your report?"

"It is, sir."

"Lieutenant M—— was killed by walking over the rock?"

"He was, sir."

"You knew that when you made out your report?"

"I did, sir."

"That he was killed?"

"Yes, sir."

"And yet you said in your report that nothing extraordinary had happened on your guard?"

"I did, sir."

"Well, Mr. O'Donohue," said Lord Napier, sternly; "don't you think it is extraordinary when a lieutenant walks over the rock, falls 1,000 feet and is killed?"

"Indeed, sir," was the prompt reply, "I should think it was extraordinary if he had fallen that far and not been killed."

DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS.

Lines of Progress in Undertaking in America and England.

In America the undertaking fraternity prides itself on its embalming ability and on being able to prepare a body for burial in such a form that it will withstand the ravages of time and decay. In England they are going just the other way. Lead coffins and even oak caskets are being tabooed in favor of wickerwork and other light coffins, in order that decomposition may not be retarded a single day.

THE GOOD GRAY POET

A Picture of Walt Whitman on the Eve of His 71st Birthday.

SCARCE EVER LEAVES HIS ROOM.

This is the Golden Age of Literature, Especially in America.

HIS PARALYSIS A RESULT OF EXPOSURE

[CORRESPONDENCE OF THE DISPATCH.]

CAMDEN, N. J., May 24.

THIS is a quaint old town to be sure! Its silence is almost idyllic. The air is perfumed, the grass is green and the plants in the gardens are nodding and smiling in the warm sunlight. Camden has one claim to greatness. It is the home of Walt Whitman, and here that grand old poet is passing the last years of his life. In a few days he will have reached the seventy-first milestone. He is very feeble, being racked with paralysis, and only on great occasions goes out of his house or sees visitors.

The poet lives at No. 328 Mickle street, in a little old house far from the noise of street cars and wagon traffic. A ring at the door bell brought a young man, hatless and coatless, to answer our summons. He politely asked us in, but a shade of doubt gathered over his face when we said we had come on a pilgrimage to the old poet, but he soon returned with the announcement that Mr. Whitman would be glad to see us in his room upstairs. "You may have just two minutes with him," he said, "for he is very feeble."

We walked up two half flights of narrow, wooden stairs, and were at the chamber of the poet. In response to our knock, there was a pleasant "Come in." The room seemed at the first glance to be almost square, with a low ceiling and two windows looking into the street. There sat the venerable, "good gray poet" in a large armchair, wearing a light-blue blanket overcoat or dressing gown. He made a splendid picture as he sat there with the morning sunlight dancing in and out of the room, and making grotesque figures on the wall.

A PICTURE OF THE POET.

He had a leonine look. His long white hair fell partly over his face. And such a face! Strong, manly and full of human nature. His gray beard, thick and fluffy, seemed to be scattered all over his huge chest. His shirt was wide open at the throat, exposing his large neck and part of his bosom. His steel gray eyes snapped with pleasure as he extended his large arm and big right hand. He did not look decrepit. If he could have stood up straight, he would have measured nearly six feet in height, and exhibited the frame of a man who, even now, at 70 years of age, weighs 200 pounds.

Racked with pain and rheumatic gout,
The aged poet, gray and stout,
Alone within his modest room
Sat weaving thoughts from fancy's loom.
He saw the years of youth and dreams
Gliding away like summer streams,
And in his soul a vision came
Of honor, friends and lasting fame.

The little room was almost covered with papers, magazines and periodicals. They lay around in heaps, and evidently had not been moved for many months. In fact, there was nothing to admire about the disorder of the room. The poet's bed was on one side of the room. Right in front of the poet's chair was a large table, with a pyramid of old papers on it.

At the base of the pyramid there was enough clear space left on the table for the bard to lean over and write his name. His hands are not paralyzed and he can write his signature in a bold, legible hand, which often he kindly does for autograph collectors. There was no attempt at bric-a-brac, pictures or fairy lamp ornamentation in the room.

"I am glad to see you, sit down," said Mr. Whitman, after a cordial handshake. Leaning back, he said he was unable to get to his bed, a few feet away, without assistance.

A MEMENTO OF THE WAR.

"I would like to talk to you at length and ask many questions, but I cannot," he said. "Say to the boys that my heart is in the highlands with them. You see, I am whacked and banged up so with paralysis that I am not fit for anything. It is the direct result of my war experience many years ago. My brother was wounded and I went to him. I exposed myself, and from that time I have never been the hale and hearty man that I was previously. It is a great trial for me to get away from my room. I do not write any now and have nothing unpublished."

The poet paused, put his hand to his head a brief moment, and in answer to questions said: "Yes, I have many visitors, and it warms the cockles of my heart to have my friends drop in and shake me by the hand. Sir Edwin Arnold called upon me and we had a friendly time of it. I have never read his 'Light of Asia,' but I have heard others speak highly of its merits. The apostle, or rather the former apostle of æstheticism, Oscar Wilde, is a friend of mine. Outside of his long hair—he has it cut now—and his Bunthorne attitudinizing, I found him a whole-souled and natural fellow."

SOME REMINISCENCES.

Mr. Whitman then spoke of being in New York over two years ago, and speaking at Madison Square Theater one afternoon on the anniversary of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, when he stirred everybody by reciting "Captain, My Captain!" James Russell Lowell and Edmund Clarence Stedman, the poets, were there to hear him and chatted with him after his discourse.

"You ask me about cotemporary literature, and it I think literature in America is deteriorating. Well, I must confess that I do not keep up as I should. Things are moving with a rapid pace. Since I published my 'Leaves of Grass' in 1855, nearly 35 years ago, many, many volumes of poems and literary works have been published. It would not be fair to criticise works that I have not read. I am not a pessimist. I see that the march of progress cannot be stayed, and but for these pains that keep me inactive, I would be, I hope, in the swim."

The old poet moved about uneasily in his chair as he spoke, and seemed like a great wounded animal eager and anxious to arise in his majesty and do something. But the paralysis of which he spoke chained him to his chair.

FATHER OF AMERICAN LITERATURE.

"This is the golden age for literary workers," he went on. "They are better paid for their productions now than ever before. The publishers get up their books in better style than ever before. Americans are a busy, rushing people, but have time to pause and listen to the Muses, and if they sing in tune our people are ready to applaud. Our literary workers have done wonderfully good work and will do better. There are scores of promising young men and women in this country, and the banner of American literature will never trail in the dust."

We had conversed longer than his visitors are usually allowed to converse. We arose to go and he bent forward, shook us cordially by the hands, and said: "I am glad you came. I wish I could talk longer. Remember me to all my friends, and above all do not forget to say to them that my heart is in the highlands with them. Good-by." FOSTER COATES.
HOMER FORT.

[WRITTEN FOR THE DISPATCH.]

[CONCLUSION.]

CHAPTER XXX.

AVE ATQUE VALE.

That frightful journey—no nightmare was ever half so awful! But it came to an end at last—there was the Bryngelly station. Geoffrey sprang from the train, and gave his ticket to the porter, glancing in his face as he did so. Surely if there had been a tragedy the man would know of it, and show signs of half-joyous emotion, as is the fashion of such people when something awful and mysterious has happened to somebody else. But he showed no such signs, and a glimmer of hope found its way into Geoffrey's tormented breast.

He left the station and walked rapidly toward the Vicarage. Those who know what a pitch of horror suspense can reach may imagine his feelings as he did so. But it was soon to be put an end to now. As he drew near the Vicarage gate he met the fat Welsh servant Betty running toward him. Then hope left Geoffrey.

The girl recognized him, and in her confusion did not seem in the least astonished to see him walking there at 6:45 o'clock on a summer morning. Indeed, even she vaguely connected Geoffrey with Beatrice in her mind, for she at once said in her thick English:

"Oh, sir, do you know where Miss Beatrice is?"

"No," he answered, catching at a railing for support. "Why do you ask? I have not seen her for weeks."

Then the girl plunged into a long story. Mr. Granger and Miss Granger were away from home, and would not be back for another two hours. Miss Beatrice had gone out yesterday afternoon and had not come back to tea. She, Betty, had not thought much of it, believing that she had stopped to spend the evening somewhere, and, being very tired, had gone to bed about 8, leaving the door unlocked. This morning, when she woke, it was to find that Miss Beatrice had not slept in the house that night, and she came out to see if she could find her.

"Where was she going when she went out?" Geoffrey asked.

She did not know, but she thought that Miss Beatrice was going out in the canoe. Leastways she had put on her tennis shoes, which she always wore when she went out boating.

Geoffrey understood it all now. "Come to the boat house," he said.

They went down to the beach, where as yet nobody was about except a few working people. Near the boat house Geoffrey met old Edward walking along with a key in his hand.

"Lord, sir!" he said. "You here, sir! and in that there queer hat, too. What is it, sir?"

"Did Miss Beatrice go out in her canoe yesterday evening, Edward?" Geoffrey asked hoarsely.

"No, sir; not as I know of. My boy locked up the boat house last night, and I suppose he looked in it first. What! You don't mean to say— Stop; we'll soon know. Oh, Goad! the canoe's gone!"

There was a silence, an awful silence. Old Edward broke it.

"She's drowned, sir—that's what she is—drowned at last; and she the finest woman in Wales. I knewed she would be one day, poor dear! and she the beauty that she was; and all along of that d——d unlucky little craft. Goad help her! She's drowned, I say"——

Betty burst out into loud weeping at his words.

"Stop that noise, girl," said Geoffrey, turning his pale face toward her. "Go back to the Vicarage, and if Mr. Granger comes home before I get back tell him what we fear. Edward, send some men to search the shore toward Coed and some more in a sailing boat. I will walk toward the Bell Rock—you can follow me!"

He started, and swiftly tramped along the sands searching the sea with his eyes. On he walked sullenly, desperately, striving to hope against hope. On, past the Dock Rocks, round the long curve of beach, till he came to the Amphitheater. The tide was high again; he could barely pass the projecting point. He was round it, and his heart stood still. For there, bottom upward, and gently swaying to and fro as the spent waves rocked it, was Beatrice's canoe.

Sadly, hopelessly, heavily, Geoffrey waded knee-deep into the water, and catching the bow of the canoe, dragged it ashore. There was, or appeared to be, nothing in it; of course he could not expect anything else. Its occupant had sunk and been carried out to sea by the ebb, whereas the canoe had drifted back to shore with the morning tide.

He reared it upon its end to let the water drain out of it, and from the hollow of the bow arch something came rolling down, something bright and heavy, followed by a brown object. Hastily he lowered the canoe again, and picked up the bright trinket. It was his own ring—the Roman ring he had given Beatrice, and when she told him in the letter she would wear in the hour of death. He touched it with his lips and placed it back upon his hand, this token from the beloved dead, vowing that it should never leave his hand in life, and that after death it should be buried on him. And so it will e, perhaps, to be dug up again thousands of years hence, and once more play a part in the romance of unborn ages.

Ave atque vale—that was the inscription rudely cut within its round. Greeting and farewell—her own last words to him. Oh, Beatrice, Beatrice! to you also ave atque vale. You could not have sent a fitter message. Greeting and farewell! Did it not sum it all? Within the circle of this little ring was written the epitome of human life; here was the beginning and the end of Love and Hatred, of Hope and Fear, of Joy and Sorrow.

Beatrice, hail! Beatrice farewell! till perchance a spirit rushing earthward shall cry, "Greeting," in another tongue, and Death, descending to his own place, shaking from his wings the dew of tears, shall answer in his turn, "Farewell—farewell to me and Night, ye Children of Day!"

And what this other relic? He lifted it—it was her tennis shoe, washed from her foot—Geoffrey knew it, for he once had tied it.

Then Geoffrey broke down—it was too much. He threw himself upon the great rock and sobbed, that rock where he had sat with her, and heaven had opened to their sight. But men are not given to such exhibitions of emotion, and fortunately for him the paroxysm did not last. He could not have borne it for long.

He rose and went again to the edge of the sea, and just then old Edward and his son arrived. Geoffrey pointed to the boat and then held up the little shoe.

He walked back. Mr. Granger and Elizabeth had not yet arrived, but they were expected every minute. He went into the sitting room. It was full of memories and tokens of Beatrice. There lay a novel which he had given her, and there was yesterday's paper that she had brought from town, the *Standard*, with his speech in it.

Geoffrey covered his eyes with his hand, and thought. None knew that she had committed suicide except himself. If he revealed it things might be said of her. He did not care what was said of him, but he was jealous of her dead name. It might be said, for instance, that the whole tale was true, and that Beatrice died because she could no longer face life without being put to an open shame. Yes, he had better hold his tongue as to how and why she died; she was dead—nothing could bring her back. But how, then, could he account for his presence there? Easily enough. He would say frankly that he came because Beatrice had written to him of the charges made against her, and the threats against himself—came to find her dead. And on that point he would still have a word with Owen Davies and Elizabeth.

YOU UNMANLY CUR, HE CRIED.

Scarcely had he made up his mind when Elizabeth and her father entered. Clearly from their faces they had as yet heard nothing.

Geoffrey rose, and Elizabeth caught sight of him standing with glowing eyes and a face like that of Death himself. She recoiled in alarm.

"What brings you here, Mr. Bingham?" she said, in her hard voice.

"Cannot you guess, Miss Granger?" he said, sternly. "A few days back you made certain charges against your sister and myself in the presence of your father and Mr. Owen Davies. These charges have been communicated to me, and I have come to answer them and to demand satisfaction for them."

Mr. Granger fidgeted nervously and looked as though he would like to escape, but Elizabeth, with characteristic courage, shut the door and faced the storm.

"Yes, I did make those charges, Mr. Bingham," she said, "and they are true charges. But stop; we had better send for Beatrice first."

"You may send, but you will not find her."

"What do you mean? What do you mean?" asked her father, apprehensively.

"It means