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CHOICE POETRY.

ONLY WAITING.

[A very aged man in an Alms house was asked what he was doing now? He replied, "Only waiting."]

Only waiting till the shadows
Are a little longer grown,
Only waiting till the glimmer
Of the day's last beam is flown:
Till the night of earth is faded
From the heart once full of day;
Till the stars of heaven are breaking
Through the twilight soft and gray.

Only waiting till the reapers
Have the last sheaf gathered home,
For the summer time is faded,
And the autumn winds have come.
Quickly, reapers! gather quickly
The last ripe hours of my heart,
For the bloom of life is withered,
And I hasten to depart.

Only waiting till the angels
Open wide the mystic gate,
At whose feet I long have lingered,
Weary, poor and desolate.
Even now I hear the footsteps,
And their voices far away;
If they call me I am waiting,
Only waiting to obey.

Only waiting till the shadows
Are a little longer grown,
Only waiting till the glimmer
Of the day's last beam is flown,
Then from out the gathering darkness
Holy, deathless stars shall rise,
By whose light my soul shall gladly
Tread its pathway to the skies.

Written for the Columbia Democrat.

THE ISTHMUS OF PANAMA.

BY C. R. BROCKWAY.

The Isthmus of Panama, or, as it is sometimes called, Darien, connects North and South America, and is the great thoroughfare for the trade and travel between the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. Steamship lines center here from all portions of the world, and almost all the produce of California, the western coast of South America, and the eastern coast of Asia, crosses at this point instead of taking the tedious voyage round Cape Horn. The principal cities to which foreigners have access, are Panama and Aspinwall. The former place is situated at the head of the Bay of the same name, and *was* a place of some size and magnificence, but it is *now* evidently on the decline. Its former situation was farther down the Bay, but being sacked by a Scotch pirate, it was removed to its present position and strongly fortified. Bolivar stormed the city a few years ago, and took it, though at the time it was considered impregnable against assaults by land. The walls are very thick and strong, and towards evening, when the sea-breeze sets in, form a delightful promenade.—Though nearly 300 years have rolled round since they were built, their solidity and preservation to this time attest how well the work was executed by the Spaniards. A few dilapidated cannon, and an immense number of shells and balls are yet visible. The most of their guns were sold to the United States by the New Granadian Government, and when they were remoulded, enough silver was obtained from them to pay for their cost and transportation. The walls, in places, are deeply indented with marks made by cannon balls in various sieges. Bastions, or towers, are placed at regular distances from each other, and command a full view of the Bay, which, from them, has a beautiful appearance, being dotted here and there with beautiful islets, which in this tropical country, are always green. Just inside the walls are the barracks and fort, which are almost surrounded by a deep fosse or ravine. In a few places the fortifications have been undermined by the action of the water, and are in a ruinous condition; but the wonder ceases when we remember that the tide sometimes rises to a height of 25 feet. The huge breakers, though they break on the reefs half a mile from the city, yet come rolling on with an almost deafening sound, and shake the foundations of the city as they dash against it, and cover the whole beach with spray. When the sea is somewhat calm, it is delightful to walk along the shore and gather some of the beautiful shells of which there is a lavish profusion. What we would prize here as curiosities of Nature, are used there to pave the streets, and the people laughed at me for gathering them.

The City of Panama is regularly laid out, but the streets are very narrow, as its founders did not anticipate the use of wheeled vehicles. A large and important part of the city, called Cienego, is situated outside of the walls and near the rail-road depot, the inhabitants of which are principally Jamaica negroes. Since the rail-road has been built across the Isthmus, the city has gradually lost its importance, and is slowly declining. The inhabitants speak with regret of the times when thousands of people were encamped in and around the city for several days at a time, waiting the arrival of a steamer; for then they grew rich on exorbitant charges, whereas *now* the passengers go from the cars immediately into the steamer, if the tide permits, without even passing through the city.—The hotel keeper informed me that formerly the crowds were so great, that not only the rooms and tables were all occupied, but he was obliged to chalk out places on the floor for the gold seekers to lie down. The churches, convents, and monasteries, which formerly must have been magnificent, are now mostly in ruins,—the effects of earthquakes and time. The one at my left has been turned into a distillery and cigar shop, while nothing remains of the grand cathedral in the center of the city but the bare walls, which are covered with a tropical bramble so luxuriant as to almost prevent exploration. The ruins alone cover two or three acres. Occasionally "a muttering priest" is seen on the streets in gown and vesture, but he appears only as a relic of the past, as he has forgotten the duties of his office and instead of being a sample of virtue and self-denial, his distinguishing traits are sensuality and corruption. Though celibacy is enjoined upon him by the canons of the church, yet children follow after him calling him *father* without offending him, and dignified women are proud to be considered his mistresses. No more do the nuns of the convent on the sea-shore gaze listlessly through iron bars on the blue expanse beyond and bright heaven above, and beseechingly implore the passing traveler to release them from an unendurable thraldom, as time has now spoiled the fair proportions of those temples dedicated to God, but used for the worst of purposes, and the captives are now liberated, but only to follow a life of infamy in the streets. The marriage relation is almost entirely abolished; and it is a mortifying fact that men, claiming to be American citizens, not only countenance this looseness, but themselves are participators in it. A prominent man there laughingly told me that there was not a virtuous woman in the city. Sunday is the principal feast & market day & the time when the horse-races, cock-fights and bull fights take place. I considered that I was traveling for the purpose of observing the manners and customs of the people, which is my excuse for attending such places. All classes of people, from dignitaries of Government to Jamaica negroes, were present, and betting ran high, especially among the priests. There were about 1000 negroes present, who originated the Panama riots, in which so many inoffensive American men, women, and children, were ruthlessly massacred. To tell the excesses which they committed, (and under the sanction of the Government of Panama,) as related to me by eye-witnesses, would be a horrible and sickening recital. The United States Government are obliged to keep men-of-war vessels at Panama and Aspinwall continually, in order to keep them in subjection, and preserve the lives and property of American citizens. The negroes regard the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies as their curse; and since the completion of the Panama rail-road have no employment, and so are obliged to resort to thieving and murdering to gain a livelihood. Three men were murdered by them while I was there, but the affair did not affect the public mind in the least. I met an intelligent negro, who had been Gen. Walker's body servant, (and he showed me that gentleman's note as President of Nicaragua for $600,) and he drew a doleful picture of his miseries since the emancipation, stating that before he had a family,—a home—and a kind master, but now his family was wandering over the face of the earth, and he himself was almost reduced to beggary. Every one I questioned on the subject, gave, in substance, the same answers.

And this has been the effect of English emancipation; to reduce the negro to a lower condition than before; and in spite of their precautions to stop the slave-trade, it is now as vigorous as ever, and the effect of their interference has been to increase the mortality from 14 to 25 per cent, and if 50,000 negroes are wanted in Brazil, 80,000 must be shipped, thus making an allowance of 30,000 for death through British interference. And the same parliament that voted £40,000 for education, appropriated £80,000 to repair the Queen's stables, or, twice as much for the horses as as for the subjects. They plunder their poor laboring classes of £5,000,000 annually to pay the interest on money squandered on the negro, and allow only £100,000 annually for the education of the people; or, in other words, they rob the laborer of *fifty* cents to elevate the *negro*, and allowed him *one* cent to elevate *himself*. It is estimated that Great Britain has expended £600,000,000 to put down the slave trade; and the most of this money comes from her poor, over-burdened laborers, who, themselves, are in a famishing condition, and some of whom are incarcerated in her mines, so as never to see the light of day. Famishing Ireland can tell how these taxes were wrung from the bones and sinews of her murdered sons, while the objects of this expenditure were basking in a tropical sun, and enjoying all the favors of a genial climate. In Great Britain there are 8,000,000 human beings unable to read, and let her first practice charity at home before she meddles with slavery elsewhere, as she has done in the past. But I digress.

Considerable gold exists on the Isthmus, but as the Government affords no protection from renegade negroes, it is almost impossible to secure it. Not far from Panama, an immense quantity was found in *huacas*, or graves of extinct tribes of Indians. The gold was of the finest quality, being already moulded, and was in the shapes of alligators, fish, birds, &c. I saw men come in with five and six pounds of it at a time in their hats and handkerchiefs.

It is universally conceded that Panama is one of the hottest places on the face of the globe, and hence my sojourn there was not of a very pleasant character on that account, as I was compelled to go almost in a state of nudity. The children here under six years of age go entirely naked, and from that on till they are twelve years old, their only garment is a shirt, which is never washed except by the showers of Nature, and never changed until worn out.—The youngsters present every variety of color from black to white, as amalgamation is practiced to the fullest extent. The women go slipping around with their toes in pairs of old slippers, and huge cigars in their mouths. The waist of the dress is put on only on grand occasions, at other times hanging down. Bonnets and hoops are equally unknown. The ladies of *ton*, when walking, take the center of the street so as to be seen from the balconies. They seem to have an aversion to water which produces *dark* consequences. As the sharks were too numerous in the Bay to admit of bathing there, I resolved to take a wash in native style, (for they do *sometimes* bathe,) and therefore went to a dark, dingy, dirty house, in the outskirts of the city, kept by mulattos, who admitted me to the *banos* upon my paying twenty five cents. I found there rather a miscellaneous collection of people of all colors, each standing on the ground in a state of nature, and with a calabash shell pouring rain water upon their heads, from an earthen jar. There was no manipulation, and the water ran from their greasy hides like "water from a duck's back," to use an expressive simile. I managed to get on a stone so as to be out of the mud, and also out of the reach of lizards and land-crabs, which are there very numerous. Panama is supplied with water from the outside of the city, and is carried on mules or donkeys, each carrying four kegs, which are placed in an iron frame, while the driver sits on the top, between the kegs.

I paid $25 for a ticket across the rail-road—a distance of 47 miles—and ten cents for every pound of luggage over 50 pounds. As my trunk was pretty well filled with shells, curiosities, &c., it amounted to quite a sum in the aggregate. The cars were pretty well filled with passengers, there being a number of soldiers to prevent insurrections among the free negroes. Capt. J——, who has seen most of the world, was my companion. He was despoiled of his property in China—chained in a dungeon in Peru, from which he escaped by bribery—worked in a chain-gang in Lima for meddling in political affairs,—was made prisoner in the Sandwich Islands for filibustering, and was released at the desire of the American Consul—was severely wounded in Nicaragua while in the service of Gen. Walker—chased out of California by a Committee of Vigilance for shooting a couple of men,—and was now leaving Panama for having killed a man in a duel, and was proceeding to Washington to place before the Secretary of State drafts of the castle Callao which he had made while within its walls. Another gentleman (?) whose acquaintance I had formed in Panama, had been mate on a whaler, and their vessel stranding on one of the Fejee Islands obliged the crew and officers to take a whale boat and pull for shore. The Island was inhabited by cannibals who spared M——'s life because he could perform certain feats of legerdemain. The chief dying, M—— was elevated to that post, and was living happily with his seven wives, when an American trader stopped at the Island and purchased some hogs, at the same time requesting M—— to stay on board the vessel one night.—While he was sleeping, the captain set sail, and when M—— awoke he was out sight of land. The captain's excuse was that he needed his services and would release him at Panama, which he did.—M—— was only waiting the issue of the trial between the captain and himself for abduction, to embark again and rejoin his family.

Soon after leaving the depot, we came to the mountain from the summit of which Vasco Nunez de Bilboa discovered the Pacific ocean, on the 26th of September, 1513;—three and a half centuries ago; and what *then* took him twenty days to perform, we accomplished in three hours by the aid of steam. Speaking of this discovery W. Irving says, "Nunez commanded his followers to halt, and that no man should stir from his place. Then with a palpitating heart, he ascended alone the bare mount-top. On reaching the summit the long desired prospect burst upon his view. It was as if a new world were unfolded to him, separated from all hitherto known, by this mighty barrier of mountains. Below him extended a vast chaos of rock and forest, and green savannas and wandering streams while, at a distance, the waters of the promised ocean glittered in the morning sun. At this glorious prospect Vasco Nunez sank upon his knees, and poured out thanks to God, for being the first European to whom it was given to make that great discovery. He then called his people to ascend * * *The people, kneeling down, joined in the *Te deum laudamus* with pious enthusiasm and tears of joy and never did a more sincere oblation rise to the Deity from a sanctified altar, than from that wild mountain summit." It is unnecessary for me to speak of the effects of that discovery on the world.

After crossing a ridge of exceedingly high and rugged mountains, we came to the level swamps which extend to the Caribbean, and from which arises that dreadful malaria which causes the Isthmus fever. The water has a deep, black color, and is covered with a thick, green scum.—The interminable jangles are the resort of enormous serpents, monkeys, parrots, species of tigers, *chigoes*, &c. The latter, better known as *jiggers*, work their way imperceptibly into the flesh, where they deposit their eggs, and then commence growing, the first evidence of their existence being an itching sensasion. Extreme care has to be exercised in removing them, not only to remove all parts of the animal, but the larvæ or eggs. I found five secreted under my toe nails at different times, and the pain they gave me was intense, almost preventing the use of my limbs. Upon opening the flesh a large quantity of black matter was discharged, accompanied by an offensive smell, and the physician informed me that mortification ensued in case they were not removed before a certain time, and amputation became necessary.

About $12,000,000 of dollars are invested in this road, or counting in the steamers, $15,000,000; and the most of the stock is in the hands of the Americans.—The *English* at first undertook the work, but failed; when *Yankee* enterprise commenced, and succeeded. So great was the mortality in building it, that it is estimated that as many human lives were lost as ties or sills were used! After a certain number years it will pass to New Grenada according to treaty stipulations, it being in her territory. Though we reached Aspinwall without accident, our journey about a year previous was not so propitious, as it commenced raining soon after we started, and we had not proceeded ten miles before the tender was thrown off the track by a heap of dirt which had been washed on the road. After half an hours labor we got in motion again, but the engine soon ran into another heap of earth almost burying itself. Upon inspection we found that the slide extended a distance of fifty yards, and in places was ten feet deep. Here we were fastened in the midst of the swamp, and the question naturally arose how we were to subsist until we could extricate ourselves? The cars were soon surrounded by the Native Indians however, and, though the food and water they gave us was of rather a questionable quality, yet in our famished condition we could not do better than to shut our eyes and *eat*. We had bananas, oranges, cocoa-nuts, coffee, lemonade, chocolate, &c, in abundance. We were obliged to pay ten cents a glass for rain water, five cents a-piece for crackers, two dollars for a chicken, and everything else in the same proportion. These articles were sold us by half naked Indians, to whom the accident was a harvest. The males were all armed with knives. When daylight came we discovered a few huts built of bamboo canes stuck in the earth and withed together while the roof consisted of plantain leaves. There was but one room, in the center of which the fire was built, the smoke making egress by means of the door and light goes in by the same avenue. Mud and filth existed in abundance. Not long after daylight the coal train arrived from Panama, and after wading some distance through the mud we reached the cars, which were open coal cars, and miserably dirty. Before reaching the summit, the cars nearly stopped, though two locomotives were attached, but 900 passengers up a grade of over 100 feet to the mile formed no inconsiderable load. At one place the rain had softened the foundation so that the road sank two feet while we were going over it, and this, too, on the very verge of a deep precipice. We reached Panama without any further accident than the breaking down of the passenger car.

RULES FOR HOME EDUCATION.

The following are worthy of being printed in letters of gold and being placed in a conspicuous position in every household:

1.—From your children's earliest infancy, inculcate the necessity of instant obedience.

2.—Unite firmness with gentleness.—Let your children always understand that you mean exactly what you say.

3.—Never promise them anything unless you are sure you can give them what you promise.

4.—If you tell a child to do anything, show him how to do it, and see that it is done.

5.—Always punish your children for wilfully disobeying you, but never punish in anger.

6.—Never let them perceive that they can vex you, or make you lose your self-command.

7.—If they give way to petulance and temper, wait till they are calm, and then gently reason with them on the impropriety of their conduct.

8.—Remember that a little present punishment, when the occasion arises, is much more effectual than the threatening of a greater punishment should the fault be renewed.

9.—Never give your children anything because they cry for it.

10.—On no account allow them to do at one time what you have forbidden, under the like circumstances, at another.

11.—Teach them that the only sure and easy way to appear good, is to be good.

12.—Accustom them to make their little recitals the perfect truth.

13. Never allow of tale-bearing.

14.—Teach them that self-denial, not self-indulgence, is the appointed and sure method of securing happiness.

Very Good.—Every one knows what keeping a farm in order means. It does not mean merely to keep the soil in a fertile and growing condition; but it applies to everything on the farm; the buildings, the fences, the fruit trees, the farming implements, particularly the latter; for what man can do a good job with poor tools? And what in more, look at the labor. Every one knows that it takes nearly twice the amount of labor to plow a field with a poor plow that it does with a good one, and when it is plowed, it is not more than half done. If a man has poor tools they are all the time getting out of order, and the time lost in repairing and the labor lost in working will pay for good and substantial ones.

We are *willing* to serve God when we love his son: there may be obstacles, but no unwillingness. We would be holy even as God is holy, and perfect even as our Father which is in heaven is perfect.

☞ "There John, that's twice you've come home and forgot that Lard?"—"La mother it was so greasy that it slipped my mind."

A PERPLEXED BRIDEGROOM.

Obtaining a Room with an Unfortunate Obtrusion.

Some days since a very rustic and inartistic couple, residents of Kentucky, near the Tennessee line, concluded marriage to be their destiny, and with this idea came to the Western Athens, desirous of sacrificing themselves to Hymen at the earliest opportunity.

In due time the pair arrived in Cincinnati, and repairing to the Spencer House, informed clerk Andrew Blum that they were extremely intent on perpetrating matrimony, and that nothing could thwart their purpose. Mr. Blum, so far from wishing to prevent their immolation, made every effort to facilitate their design, and so well did he succeed that in less than an hour 'James' and 'Jemine' were wedded affirmly as lay in the capacity of a clergyman to bind them.

The clerk, after the ceremony had been performed, believing that all new married people ought to be as well accommodated as possible gave them a parlor and bedroom on the third floor, and bade them 'good evening' about ten o'clock, not neglecting to wish them every possible bliss.

The twain meekly followed the servant to the rooms, and were left alone there for the night; the clerk thinking no more of them until about two o'clock, when, sitting dozing in an easy chair behind the counter in the office, he was roused by a voice saying: 'Look here, Mr. Clerk, oh, Mr. Clerk I'd like to speak to you jist a minnit, do now.'

Mr. Blum opened his eyes, and beheld his rustic friend, hatless and coatless, with a flushed face and dishevelled hair, and each generally disarranged attire as indicated that he had been undergoing some very violent exercise.

'Well, sir, of what benefit can I be to you?'

'Why, why, I didn't like to trouble you and I don't know how you fellers does things in this big town; but, but, but——'

'But what? my good friend,' questioned the clerk, auxious to free the ruralist from confusion, each moment on the increase.

Why, why, you know we're married—Jemime and me.'

'Oh, yes, and I wish you all manner of good fortune, my fine fellow.'

'Wal, I 'spose you do; but confound it if I can get the hang of things in this darned place. May be I'm green; I guess I am sort 'o that way; but by jingoes, you do funny here.'

'Explain, if you plerse, my man. What do you wish to say?'

'Well, we don't care, Jemime and me, for a little while; but to roll round on the floor all night is develish hard, stranger, I'll swear it is.'

'Roll round on the floor, what do you mean?'

'Well, I 'spose it is what you call fashion in a big town; but by gumbo where we come from married people allers go to bed.'

'Havn't you been in bed?' askek the clerk, in great surprise.

'Why, how the devil we go to bed when there weren't no bed to go to? That's what we want the worst sort.'

'My good fellow, there's a bed in your room. Did you not see it in the chamber in the rear of the parlor?'

'Did you give us mor'an one room stranger? By jingoes, I didn't know it. It's all I want—all right, old feller, and so saying he ran up stairs, and before the clerk could ascend to the chamber the bucollicist was in bed, and replied to the knock on the door: 'All right now; I've found it—Jemime and me's satisfied. We don't want you; all right, all right. God ss you, old feller. All right—fust-rate.—God bless you; good night.

Mr. Blum went chuckling down to the office at the idea that the unfortunate ruralist had passed four hours in his parlor without even supposing there was a bed chamber attached.

Poor simpleton; no wonder he was embarrassed and troubled—under the circumstances.

An Irishman had been sick a long time and while in that state would occasionally cease breathing, and life be apparently extinct for some time, when he would come to. On one of these occasions when he had just awakned from his sleep, his friend Patrick asked him; "And how'll we know Jimmy, when yer dead? yer after waking up every time. "Bring me a glass o' whiskey, and say to me, here's till ye, Jemmy and if I don't rise an' dhrink, then bury me."

☞ The memory should be a storehouse not lumber room.

SABBATH READING.

THE POOR.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

God keep the homeless poor,
Who wander through the land,
Seeking the alms the rich man gives
Often with a grudging hand:
Remember lonely hearts,
And send adown a ray
Of hope and love, the dim foretaste
Of heaven's eternal day!

The pale-faced, weary poor!
That man is richly blest,
Who takes meek-hearted Charity
To be his bosom guest;
And to his fellows ever lends
A pity broad and free,
That gives, as liberal as the streams
Give to the hungry sea.

God keep the friendless poor,
And, rich man, let thy gold
Go forth to clothe the naked ones
Who tremble in the cold!
And unto heaven thy deeds shall knit
A strong, unfailing cord—
For "he that giveth to the poor
But lendeth to the Lord."

SPURGEON'S GEMS.

Blessed be God, the green pastures and the still waters, the shepherd's crook and pleasant company, are objects which are quite as familiar to the believer's mind as the howling wilderness and the brandished rod.

The meanest lamb of the blood-bought flock shall be preserved securely by the "strength of Israel" unto the day of his appearing, and shall, through every season of tribulation and distress, continue to be beloved of the Lord.

If I once wandered on yon mountain top, and Jesus climed up and caught me, and put me on his shoulders, and carried me home, I cannot and dare not doubt that he is my shepherd. If I had belonged to some other sheep owner he would not have sought me. And from the fact that he did seek, I learn that he must be my shepherd. Did I think any man convinced me of sin, or that any human power had converted me, I should fear I was that man's sheep and he was my shepherd.—Could I trace my deliverence to the hand of a creature, I should think that some creature might be my shepherd; but since he who has been reclaimed of God must and will confess that God alone has done it, and will ascribe to his free grace, and to that alone, his deliverance from sin, such a one will feel persuaded that the Lord must be his shepherd, because he brought him, he delivered him, he snatched him out of the jaw of the lion and out of the paw of the bear.

When the light of God's grace comes into your heart, it is something like the opening of the windows of and old cellar that has been shut up for many days.—Down in that cellar, which has not been opened for many months, are all kinds of loathsome creatures, and a few sickly plants blanched by the darkness. The walls are dark and damp by the trail of reptiles; it is a horrid filthy place in which on one would willingly enter. You may walk there in the dark very securely, and except now and then for the touch of some slimy creature, you would not believe the place was so bad and filthy. Open those shutters, clean a pane of glass, let a little light in, and now see how a thousand noxious things have made this place their habitation. Sure, 'twas not the light that made this place so horrible, but it was the light that showed how horrible it was before. So let God's grace just open a window and let the light into man's soul, and he will stand astonished to see at what a distance he is from God.

Suppose a liar says that it is not in his power to speak the truth, that he has been a liar so long, that he cannot leave it off; is that an excuse for him? Suppose a man who has long indulged in lust should tell you that he finds his lusts have so girt about him like a great iron net that he cannot get rid of them, would you take that as an excuse. Truly it is none at all. If a drunkard has become so foully a drunkard, that he finds it impossible to pass a public-house without stepping in, do you, therefore excuse him? No, because his inability to reform lies in his nature, which he has no desire to restrain or conquer.—The thing that is done, and the thing that causes the thing that is done, being both from the root of sin, are two evils which cannot excuse each other. What though the Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the leopard his spots? It is because you have learned to do evil that you cannot now learn to do well; and instead, therefore, of letting you sit dow to excuse yourselves, let me put a thunderbolt beneath the seat of your sloth, that you may be startled by it and aroused. Remember that to sit still is to be damned to all eternity!