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(From late London Papers.)
VAUXHALL GARDENS.

ASCENT OF THE NEW BALLOON WITH NINE PERSONS.

On no previous occasion in the annals of aerostation has public curiosity been so strongly excited as on that of the ascent of the stupendous "Royal Vauxhall Balloon," which took place yesterday from the above Vauxhall Gardens. Although the price of admission had been increased to half-a-crown, long before the doors were opened, which was not until half past one o'clock, a large number of persons were in waiting for admission. On the doors being thrown open, the balloon was found to be already two thirds inflated, the process, from the extraordinary size of the machine, having commenced as early as ten o'clock. About two o'clock a sudden change took place in the weather, and from that hour until past four o'clock it rained incessantly; but the ardour of the lovers of aerostatics appeared to be nothing daunted by the untoward occurrence, for they flocked into the Gardens regardless of the "pelting of the pitiless storm," many elegantly dressed women not even opening their parasols to shield them from the rain, for fear of obscuring their view of the balloon. Shortly after four o'clock a favourable change appeared on the face of the heavens, at which time it became apparent the inflation was nearly completed the balloon having assumed the form of an immense pear. About half-past four o'clock the rain having subsided, preparations were commenced for the ascent were commenced; they, however, occupied nearly two hours, the power of the balloon several times raising a large party of the L division of police, who had hold of the netting, from the ground, notwithstanding near thirty half hundred weights were also attached by ropes to the stupendous machine. At five o'clock a large party of the nobility were admitted by tickets within the arena, where the inflation took place. Among them were the Duke of Beaufort, the Earl of Coventry, with a party of ladies, Lord and Lady Charleville, Count d'Orsay, Sir William Abdy, Colonel and the Hon. L. Stanhope, Captains White, Ogle, Stopford, &c. Shortly afterwards the car, which on account of the weather had been stripped of its splendid purple velvet covering and gilded eagles' heads, was brought forward with only a covering of scarlet cloth, and attached to the ring to which the ropes of the netting had been fastened. Twenty-four bags of ballast, each weighing 14lbs., were put within it, as were also six carrier pigeons, and a number of other articles. At twenty minutes to six o'clock, everything being then considered ready, the following persons entered the car:—Mr and Mrs Charles Green, Mr James Green, Capt. Currie, Mr Edwin Gye, one of the proprietors of the Gardens, Mr Hughes, another gentleman connected with the Gardens, and two other gentlemen of the names of Sheel and Holland (as we are informed.) Two strong ropes were then attached, one on each side of the car, which were each held by upwards of fifty persons, on which Mr C. Green commenced trying the power of the Balloon, when he soon discovered he had got too much gas. After letting a considerable quantity escape, he called his niece, Miss Mary Anne Green, (daughter of the late Mr William Green,) who immediately, and apparently very gladly, obeyed the summons, and jumped into the car, making the ninth adventurous spirit, within its already crowded interior. The word was then given for the ropes to be loosened, but before that could be done, the rope across the hoop, by which the neck of the balloon is fastened, broke with a loud snap, and there is too much reason to fear some accident would have happened, had not the police immediately clung to the car and secured it. The damage, was, however, soon repaired, and after Mr Green had allowed nearly one-fourth of the gas to escape, the signal gun was fired, and exactly at a quarter past six the magnificent machine

quitted terra firma, amid the spontaneous cheers of the assembled company, (which at that time was computed to consist of not less than 30,000 persons,) the band playing "God save the King." The balloon rose very steadily, until it had attained a considerable altitude, when it took a westerly direction, and it was considered probable the descent would take place about Hounslow; but after pursuing that course for about ten minutes, it entered a strong current of air from the north-west, when they quickly retrograded, and when last visible, which was about half an hour from the ascent, the balloon appeared to be pursuing a steady course into the county of Kent.

On the outside of the gardens, long before the hour appointed in the bills for the ascent, an immense number of persons had collected. Millbank, the bridges, the parks, and almost every elevated spot throughout the metropolis from which a view of the balloon, on its rising from the earth, could be obtained, were crowded by persons anxious to witness the novel spectacle of so large a number of persons traversing the aerial regions in a bark so fragile as a wicker-work car.

(ANOTHER ACCOUNT.)

Never, perhaps, since the days of Lunardi Blanchard, and Garnerin, or the very earliest days of aerostation, has public curiosity been excited more than it was yesterday, to witness the long promised ascent of the Royal Vauxhall Balloon, which, not only in magnitude, in beauty, and in pretension, exceeds all its previous competitors, but has created a new era in science, as far as utility is concerned, deemed valueless, but to which noble, if not to say princely patronage, has tended of late to give popularity as an amusement. It was believed by many persons that the promises held forth by the proprietors were fallacious, but we can bear testimony to their entire fulfillment, and to the practicability of taking up twenty instead of ten persons. Indeed so buoyant and powerful was this gigantic machine, which it is to be remembered contained 70,000, instead of 20,000 cubic feet of gas—the ordinary dimensions—that it required not less than thirty six policemen to hold it down by the net-work and ropes, and an addition also of some forty half hundred weights, which, for safety's sake, were appended to the cordages connected with the balloon. The process of inflation commenced as early as eleven o'clock, and was admirably directed by Mr Hutchison, consulting engineer. This alone is said to have cost the owners £70, though before the ascent Mr Green found it necessary to let at least a fourth of it escape. Though 4 o'clock was the promised hour of ascent, it was not until 20 minutes after six that the balloon was released, when it calmly but majestically rose above the trees, amidst the waving of hats and handkerchiefs, and hearty cheers of the assembled spectators, to which the aerial voyagers most cheerfully responded. For a short time the balloon took a direct easterly course, and it was thought would have descended in Kent, but she afterwards veered a little northward, which would probably take her into Essex. The balloon descended in the marshes two miles from Rochester, after travelling an hour and a half. Mr Edwin Gye and Mr Holland, two of the aeronauts, arrived in town at half past 12. It being dark, and no conveyances at hand, the other seven passengers remained.

THAMES TUNNEL COMPANY.

A special meeting of the proprietors of this company was held yesterday at the City of London Tavern, for the purpose of receiving the report of the Directors and a statement of the accounts, &c.

Benjamin Hawes, Esq., took the chair. The Chairman stated he felt great pleasure in informing the meeting that the engineer had advanced 60 feet further under the river since the introduction of the new shield, making nearly 700 feet in the whole. The success of the undertaking was placed

beyond a doubt, as there was good hard ground to proceed with the work. When it was considered that, in order to proceed with the work, they had to use a machine weighing 140 tons, propelled under a pressure of 3000 tons under the bed of the Thames, it was not desirable to proceed too rapidly; but, on the contrary, that every step taken should be regulated with care and caution. The total number of persons that had visited the Tunnel since its formation was 300,000, among which were distinguished foreigners and several royal personages. It would not be long, he believed, before the proprietors would be enabled to go into the Tunnel at Rotherhithe, and come out at Wapping. (Hear.)

Mr Charlier, the Company's clerk, then read the report.

It stated that the directors felt great satisfaction in stating that since their report in March last, 60 feet of the brickwork of the tunnel have been completed, making nearly 700 feet under the Thames. When the stop page in 1828 took place, it was occasioned by no difficulties of an engineering nature, but solely from the original capital of this company being exhausted. At that time about 559 feet out of 1300 feet were completed for the sum of £120,000 only. The directors never received of the original subscriptions more than £182,000. The difference between these sums, viz., £62,000 was as has been frequently stated to the proprietors, absorbed by the purchase of land, machinery, engines, stores, buildings, parliamentary and other expenses (including the cost of maintaining the works during the period of their suspension of nearly seven years,) and by the extra expenditure occasioned by the two interruptions of the river. The directors stated that the new shield had fully answered its purpose, and had enabled the work to proceed through some portions of ground in almost a fluid state. Some idea may be formed of the extent of the excavation which it enables the miners to carry on through the ground of the consistency just mentioned, and which it preserves until the brickwork is completed, when it is known that the area before and around it is equal to 2000 superficial feet, over the whole of which vents are opened for the infiltration of water from the river and land springs. After entering at some length into various particulars relative to the carrying on of the works, &c., &c., the report concluded by stating that the directors continued their unabated confidence in Mr Brunel, and reiterated their opinion that at no very distant period, this great undertaking will be completed.

The Chairman stated that since June Mr Brunel had been able to proceed with the works at the rate of four feet and a half per week, the expense of the undertaking would be less than the estimate sent into government (hear, hear,) and in a short time he had no doubt that the work would be proceeded with at the rate of eight or nine feet a week.

The Clerk then read the accounts, from which it appeared that in June there was a balance in hand of £3000.

The Chairman said, that previous to June government had advanced them £30,000, and since then £10,000 in addition, and the probability was that another £10,000 would very shortly be advanced.

The report was unanimously adopted, and ordered to be entered upon the minutes.

In answer to a proprietor the Chairman said that a stranger visiting the works at the tunnel might think the falling of earth, &c., were matters of an appalling nature, whilst those who were conversant with the works would think nothing about them. The writer of a letter to a morning paper might, therefore, possibly feel all he had stated. A complaint had been also made to the navigation committee; but when the company attended to meet the charge no complaint appeared (hear, hear,) and the Lord Mayor acted upon the occasion in a manner that was highly gratifying to the company.

At the suggestion of Mr Adams it was arranged that for the future the liabilities of the company should be set out in the accounts furnished to the proprietors.

Upon the motion of Mr Hawkey, the thanks of the meeting were given to the directors.

The Chairman having acknowledged the compliment, the meeting separated.

MODE OF SUPPORTING THE POOR IN BELGIUM.

Viscount Villain XIII, who has long been appointed Minister to Rome, has resigned his office as Governor of East Flanders. Before quitting Ghent, Viscount Villain addressed a circular to the different functionaries under his government, in which are some interesting details relating to the operations of the charitable workshops (*ateliers de charité*) established in different parts of Flanders. He states that the number of these institutions amount to 43—that the total prime cost of material and salary paid to the poor amounts to 176,378, and the sale of manufactured articles to 192,833 leaving a loss upon the whole of only 13,804. Thus, at the expense of 18,804, provision and employment have been given to 2265 poor people during the whole of the winter and part of the spring; and thus at the trifling expense of six francs a person, 43 parishes have been rescued from the evils of mendicancy, and a large body of poor creatures who must otherwise have begged or starved, have been actively and usefully employed, and have had the means of supporting their families without other parochial relief. The letter adds that the average loss of six francs only arises from defective administration in some of the parishes, since it results that in 25 out of the 43 the loss has not exceeded two francs, and indeed in some of these has not been more than 80 centimes per person. In seven parishes the receipts nearly balance the expense so that the poor have cost little or nothing; and in four parishes the returns have exceeded the expense, so as to leave a balance in the hands of the directors after supporting all the poor. These are remarkable results, and are well worthy the attention of the philanthropists in England and Ireland. For what can be more praiseworthy, more advantageous, or honourable to the community, than the establishment of institutions by which pauperism, idleness, and immorality are neutralised without expense, and by which a number of poor persons who would otherwise be thrown upon the public workhouse, or become burdens to the parish, are actively employed and encouraged in habits of industry and economy? Viscount Villain earnestly recommends the establishment of similar workshops throughout the whole country. Where he able to effect his benevolent object, he would obtain one of the most important and most beneficial results effected in a civilized nation, and Belgium would present the phenomenon of a whole population purged, as it were, of idleness and pauperism. Whilst upon this subject, it may be observed, according to official statistical documents published by order of the Minister of the Interior, that the total gross amount of the revenues of hospitals, charitable establishments, and of the divers sums expended upon the poor, amounted in 1833, to 11,647,000 francs, or about 285 francs per individual. The number of poor in the provincial workhouses had been reduced from 3454 in 1827, to 2,622 in 1833, a remarkable diminution, seeing that the population has increased in an inverse ratio, having augmented from 3,800,000 in 1827 to 4,061,000 in 1833. The same documents state that the total number of persons receiving instruction at the various colleges, schools and pieces of education of all denominations, amounted altogether to 353,342 in 1826, whereas in 1833 the number of children attending the 5229 primary schools alone, exceeded 370,000. If the progress of education has been great, the diminution of immorality is not less striking; for one finds the number of foundlings (*enfants trouvés*) to have amounted to 11,023 in 1823, whilst in 1833 they did not exceed 7997. This is not a place to develop subjects of this kind, but the above examples will suffice to show that Belgium is making considerable progress in those