

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, JANUARY 23, 1892.

"THE DEVIL'S HALF ACRE"

IN FULL BLAST AT DORCHESTER WITH A CHANGE OF ROLE.

New Scenes and New Actors—The Evidence of the Harriet Smith—Mistah Lig-gare and the Gentleman Luncers—Buttermilk Right from the Churn.

The celebrated play of the *Devil's Half Acre* was on the boards again last week at Dorchester. The trained rooster orchestra of former days was lacking, as well as some of the leading actors—in fact there was almost a complete change of role. The Heavy Villain was resting his tired lungs in his legal den across the Square, chuckling no doubt, in a thoroughly human way, over his latest verdict. His absence, however, served only to bring into more lurid prominence if that were possible, the sombre Corsican features and Communionist hair of Napoleon Emerson. Philosopher Powell, friend of man and the enemy of the gods, was missing from the cast, and, after gazing wistfully from behind the wings a spell, went forth into the outer void to indulge in a few torrid impressions having reference to the last local election in Westmoreland. The Pelican, too, in gloomy state, was lingering upon the shore of Time, awaiting a human minnow. But the Ancient Mariner was at his post, robust and rubicund, and in the foreground was old King Cole, the crier, guarding the jury with his club and ready to bless the Queen or d—n the weather at a moment's notice.

The charge was one of larceny preferred by that very litigious lady the queen against one "Priest" Wilbur, (of all men most unprincipally, upon the information and complaint of an individual named Legere. Mr. Legere related how he had in sober fact, but not in sobriety, gone forth upon a "batter," how he had loitered amidst the classic shades of Telegraph street, Moncton, where he had "had his leg pulled," and his pocket emptied. He spoke of a vast number of drinks which he had absorbed on that occasion. And he mentioned that he had imbibed a few within the grotto of Mistress Harriet Smith.

Mistress Harriet Smith is lady of so pronounced a brunette type as to suggest the extreme probability of her having first seen the light of day in the night-time. She was present in the Court and surely the Queen of Sheba, when she went to spark with cousin Solomon, was not arrayed like unto her. A brocaded silk dress with accommodation train adorned her person, together with a smile whose promising career was terminated at her ears. She kissed the book so convulsively that old King Cole leaned on his club in a scared and helpless manner. Then she mounted with the stride of conquest the platform on which His Honor sat. Her gossamer she threw across the railing and her umbrella fell against the sad stenographer. Upon Judge Landry, who occupied the dais as a favored guest, she beamed with gracious tolerance. Finally, and with a skillful wriggle, she swept her train in place and composed herself in a dignified manner. The faintest possible suggestion of whole oil might be detected in the room.

Whereupon Mr. Blair arose from the table and the examination began. "You live in Moncton?" "Yes, sah." "And you have a place there that you do business in?" "Yes, sah, when dars bizness 'o' to do." "What business do you chiefly carry on?" "Why, bress yo' heart, candy and apples, taters and fish and beah, and buttermilk and sweet milk, and tea and sugar, sah." This was greeted with a hum of applause and a very audible snicker from the audience.

"You are quite positive that buttermilk is a part of your stock in trade?" "O, yes indeed, sah, right from de churn." "Do you keep boarders?" "Well, not dizackly, sah. Gentleman luncers, sah." "When Mr. Legere came into your store what did he call for?" "Called fo' nuffin, sah! Called fo' nuffin."

This was said with a dramatic energy and expression that cannot be described, and created a storm of laughter. "Then I would assume you had no difficulty in serving him?" "No, sah, no. Why, sah, he come in like a fox and went out like a bird." (Great laughter.) "You might explain how it occurred?" "Well, sah, de gentleman luncers was a-sittin' down to tea and I goes out to de beahs, sah, and when I was a-openin' o' de doah, I see dis hyar Mistah Lig-gare, and raley, sah, I got sich a start, and I sez Hullo, what you doin' hyar, Mistah Lig-gare? but I raley couldn't say on my solemn oath, yo' honah, wedder he opened his chaps er not; I was all of a tremblin' so. Jess then, sah, a gentleman come in de shop and he sez, Hattie, sez he, You got some seegars? and I sez, Why yes, jess walk right inside, sah, till I serve de gentlemen luncers, and den I will git you de see-gar. So de gentleman went in and took a seat and I was jess comin' out to get de see-gar when dis hyar Mistah Lig-gare he went out de doah like a flash—jess like a bird on de wing! (Laughter) Well, sah, I have a great fashin when a gentleman goes out de doah, sah, jess to take a squint aroun' de casin' after him, sah, and so I shoved my head out de doah, sah, and hyar Mistah Lig-gare was a-goin' up de street jess like a shot, sah, jess a-climb'n', sah, like's if de debbil kicked him endways! (After this remark it was some time before the noise in the court had subsided so as to allow the witness to proceed.)

"When Mr. Legere went out can you call to mind whether he went through the form of opening the door or did he go through it?" "Ha—ha—ha! He—he—he—he! Now, shorly youse a-jokin', sah. I raley think he would have took it wid him, sah, if it hadn't been open, but de doah was left open, sah, which it aint good mannahs, sah,

if his face be white, by de gentleman to what I giv de see-gar when I took de beahs into de luncers. Mistah Lig-gare he jess went out like a ball, sah; I nevah seed nuffin travel so. Nevah said a word, sah; nevah said a word!"

"Then you deny that Mr. Legere had any drinks at your establishment?" "Called fo' nuffin, I say; called fo' nuffin."

"Well, didn't Mr. Legere visit your place again?" "Yes sah. Now jess allow me to explain. It was a Sunday mornin', sah, and I was a-gettin' ready fo' to go to church, yo' honah, and I heard a slite 'sturbance' in de shop, and I went out wid de curfin' tongs in my han' when who should I see but dis indetkible Mistah Lig-gare! Sez I to Mistah Lig-gare. What yo' doin' hyar, eh? Ain't yo' got nuffin fo' to do 'cept a-scarin' de bressed life outah 'spectable people with yo' goin's on? Sho! sho, outah dis, sez I to Mistah Lig-gare. When you gwine home, sez I, to de bosom ob yo' wit, sez I? But Mistah Lig-gare he jess stood dar, sah, like's if he was numpy. Sez he, Hattie, I loss my money. Savv you right, sez I, you brack nimbusil. What you bin with yo' doin's. What you bin a gallawantin, bey? But Mistah Lig-gare he was dat mumpy dat he raley couldn't tell me, yo' honah, what he sez. Sez I whar yo' loss yo' money, Mistah Lig-gare. God noze, Hattie, sez he, and wid dat he flew froo de doah and dats de lass livin' word I evah heard or seed from Mistah Lig-gare on de face of dis cruel world till I saw him in de court house hyar dis mornin'. Kin I lett de stage row, yo' honah?"

Whereupon Mrs. Smith retired from the stand and the curtain fell upon the last of the "Devil's Half Acre" with a mournful thud.

ABABYLONIAN INVENTION.

Why Sixty Minutes Make an Hour and Sixty Seconds a Minute.

Why is the hour divided into sixty minutes, each minute into sixty seconds, etc? Simply and solely because in Babylonia there existed, by the side of the decimal system of notation, another system, the sexagesimal, which counted by sixties.

Why that number should have been chosen is clear enough, but it speaks well for the practical sense of those ancient Babylonian merchants.

There is no number which has so many divisions as 60. The Babylonians divided the sun's daily journey into 24 parasangs or 720 stadia. Each parasang or hour was subdivided into 60 minutes. A parasang is about a German mile, and the Babylonian astronomers compared the progress made by the sun during one hour at the time of the equinox to the progress made by a good walker during the same time.

The whole course of the sun during the 24 equinoctial hours was fixed at 24 parasangs, or 720 stadia, or 360 degrees. This system was handed to the Greek philosopher, who lived about 150 B. C., introduced Babylonian hour in Europe.

Prokny, who wrote about 150 A. D., whose name still lives in that of the Ptolemaic system of astronomy, gave still wider currency to the Babylonian way of reckoning time.

It was carried along on the quiet stream of traditional knowledge through the middle ages, and, strange to say, it sailed down safely over the Niagara of the French Revolution. For the French, when revolutionizing weights, measures, coins, and dates, and subjecting all to the decimal system of reckoning, were induced by some unexplained motive to respect our clocks and watches, and allow our dials to remain sexagesimal, that is, Babylonian, each hour consisting of 60 minutes.

Here you see again the wonderful coherence of the world, and how what we call knowledge is the result of an unbroken tradition of a teaching descending from father to son. Not many years ago, about 100 arms would reach from us to the builders of the palaces of Babylon, and enable us to shake hands with the founders of the oldest pyramids.—*Science Signposts*.

Something About Celluloid.

Celluloid, the composition of which was long kept secret, but for some years been largely employed for imitating articles made of horn, shell, ivory, and even marble. It has the immense advantage that it can be welded, melted, moulded, and shaped without difficulty, and it is, for this reason, now largely employed for the manufacture of walking-stick handles, umbrella handles, piano keys, etc. It has also been used for making rulers, set squares, and other similar instruments of precision, for it has been shown that the expansion of this substance is much more regular and uniform than that of wood, and that errors, previously unavoidable, can be eliminated by its use. This industrial product, now indispensable for a number of articles of everyday use, is simply made up of nitro-cellulose, camphor, and water. It was invented in 1869 by two Americans, the brothers Hyatt, who soon endeavored to bring their invention into general use by establishing works in the State of New Jersey, in a small locality known as New Arch, which owes its increase and prosperity to this industry. In 1876 the brothers Hyatt introduced their industry into France, and established a similar manufactory at Stains, near St. Denis. France now has two large works where celluloid is made, together with a number of others of less importance, and the product turned out by these is considered the best in the market. Germany also possesses two large factories, the chief of which is that of Magdeburg, at Berlin, while the largest in the world is in London.

The Best Authorities.

Such as Dr. Dio Lewis, Pro. Gross, and others, agree that catarrh is not a local but a constitutional disease. It therefore requires a constitutional remedy like Hood's Sarsaparilla, which effectually and permanently cures catarrh. Thousands praise it.

Hood's Pills cures liver ills, jaundice, biliousness, sick headache, constipation, and all troubles of the digestive organs.

THEY TAKE LIFE EASY.

THE HOMES AND OCCUPATIONS OF THE PORTUGUESE.

The Women Pretty, the Men Lazy, But They Live Well and are Happy—Some Superstitions of the Country—How Travellers are Welcomed.

(PROMISED Special Correspondence.) My Gallegan guide, servant, companion and friend, honest Dobrado, became so enamored of our loitering sort of wanderings, that, on leaving Beja, I had no difficulty in overcoming his scruples against travelling on foot. And so our way to the southern seacoast of Portugal, perhaps 150 miles by windings of the quaint old thoroughfares of the country, was made from Beja in this delightful manner.

In no strange land have I walked that distance with such a continuous sense of elation of interest. There are early October days in our own land which all these days and nights recalled—days when the verdure is still rich upon the trees; when the aftermath has pushed above the stubble of the fields and spread an emerald carpet above the after-harvest sere; when skies are cloudless and of wondrous depth of blue; and when an aroma that hints of fruit or of wine is in the bracing air; evenings when the whole sky is ablaze from the setting of round red suns that seem to wait huge and glorious before plunging beneath the purple pillows of the West; and nights when the gleaming lights from farms and hamlets quicken the footstep of belated wanderers, and unconsciously makes more eager all home-gatherings where firesides are already taking on a bit of the winter glow.

This is the only winter central and southern Portugal know. There is a tender elation in it. You unconsciously breathe great draughts of the exhilarating air. Your head is erect and you walk in fine strong strides. There are countless lights and scenes which charm and enthrall; of cloud-capped sierra, of heath-covered moor, of boundless forest, of valley-landscape, of mountain-side, hamlets strung together as on a gaudy thread by strange processions: of huge old windmills as in Holland, of gigantic waterwheels creaking and swinging and oxcarts circling about them in endless tread, of walled-in farm-houses built as if to withstand siege, and of every form of peasant labor and pastime, always of deepest interest because telling the story of everyday life and living of the humble folk of any land, upon whose labor and lives, after all, the entire social and governmental superstructure of any nation is laid.

A sunnier land in which to travel does not exist. Hospitality is universal and intense. It is so extraordinary a characteristic among all classes that it often becomes an impediment to progress in travel. Between Evora and Tavira, about 250 miles by road, we were literally compelled to enter more than one hundred homes. In a dozen of these we were quartered for the night, and in all the other refreshments were offered and partaken of. Most interesting of all were the visits to numerous old monasteries.

Dobrado tells me this boundless hospitality is a changeless part of the Portuguese religion; that they have as a common saying, "Curses follow ill-will; good comes to those who are kind." And that the belief in general here that good fortune comes in degree to the bountiful entertainment of strangers who may chance among them. I have found the same custom and belief prevailing in only one other place in Europe. That is the West of Ireland among the poor but great-hearted folk of lone and rugged Connemara.

But of deeper interest than all else are the lowly folk of this fair land. I have not seen in town or city an instance of what we know as want and suffering. The lowly in Portugal possess nothing; acquire nothing; have burning ambitions for nothing. A bit of corn-meal or rye bread washed down with water is a repast. Add to the bread a bit of fish, a handful of olives or a few swallows of wine, and it is a feast.

The mountains and valleys of Portugal give home to a folk possessing all the winsome sunniness of the lovely towns with-out a tinge of their apathy and sluggishness. You may read all the pastoral poems ever written and gain no more colorful picture of pastoral lives in endless content and peaceableness than your eyes may behold in an hour's ride or walk anywhere in the interior of Portugal. Best is in the sun and sky, the earth and air, the home and field, in all men and in all nature.

I do not mean that no labor is performed. But all labor done has in it the seeming of mere dalliance with toils. The senses are not surfeited with odor, luxury and almost intoxicating profligacy of nature as in the tropics. Every active exertion of every human does not betray, as there, a superlative indolence painfully effortful in the bare process of existence. But a restfulness prevades these soft and kindly landscapes which reveals elation instead of sordidness; joyousness instead of sensuousness; peace rather than passion, pain. In and through it all there is, like the thrill of wine, an uplifting and exultation blending the physical and mental sense perfectly and gloriously. I do not say these Portuguese peasantry know this as you and I are conscious of it. But to the beholder's eyes these humble, happy-hearted people so touch and color the scene upon which he looks, that their presence is an inseparable element in its essential harmony.

The peasant tenant farmers of Portugal, the caseiros of the country, retain their holding under life leases, and pay rent to the morgados, the owners of the estates, or the "gentleman farmers," as they are here called, "in kind." It is a sort of title system always amicably adjusted between owner and peasant. A grade below these caseiros is the class corresponding to the English, Scotch, and Irish cottiers. These chaupannas live in the cabins of the morgados and caseiros at the will of the latter.

Aside from these, are the sheep and cattle herders and the goatherds that are found

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in more picturesque mountain localities; the flax-bleachers along the edge of some bawling mountain stream or against the sheltering rocks by the sea shore; the interior muleteers, who, for the most trivial wages or portions of grain, convey products and merchandise to and from the towns of the coast; the wood-choppers of the mountains; and the carboneros who are found in the highest mountain forests lazily employed in burning the charcoal used in cooking by the aristocracy of the cities.

peasantry may be counted the rush gatherers of the mountain tarr; the oxcutters who supply the basket-makers of the towns; the furze gatherers who dot the dreariest mountain heights; the fern and rush cutters who supply the churches and homes with fragrant branches for strewing on holy and feast days; and the wood-gleaners who gather dead limbs at will in forests of the estates and among the mountain wilds both for the use of the peasantry and the humbler classes of the towns.

Among all these people there is not a single implement or utensil invented with in the past thousand years; an ordinary American farm-hand would accomplish under our methods in one day more than a score of any of these; and the wizzardry of the painter of Barbazan never fastened upon canvass more startlingly among the clouds of Brittany, than remain universal and changeless among the bright-eyed but changeless folk of these entrancing mountain vales.

There is a careless half-jovious abandon upon the surface of all peasant toil which adds greatly to its picturesque quality. Join with this, quaintness in dress, primitive implements, that grace which unvaryingly accompanies innocent ignorance, and the universal loveliness of scenery, and your pastoral pictures are most idyllic and complete. Ground is tilled with oxen, tan-olm, in rush traces drawing a plow of the sort first known to man—the tree-crook or sharpened rod. Now and then you will find one rudely pointed with iron. One short furrow is scratched amid tremendous shoutings. Then the half dozen who have clung to the handles, rode upon the beam, or guided the oxen, blindfolded, the laden hedge or division wall to enjoy siccata or the delights of countryside gossip with passing goatherds or muleteers. Where the hillside is too steep for this gentle process, long-handled hoes with cumbrous blades do lazy duty; for the spade is rejected as a contrivance of the devil.

At every roadside and beside the granary of every village, round, high piles of pumiced stone, beaten and rain-soaked until hard as granite, may be seen. These, called caires, are the Portuguese threshing-floors. The grain is piled upon them and covered with a piece about as small as a silver three-cent coin. Like their fellows at Madna, they bear the mark of the god in whose temple they serve: the mark of Vishnu, in daubs of yellow and white paint.

Many pilgrims attend worship at all seasons. We saw them along the road; pilgrims of all qualities and castes, from the poverty stricken fakir, with his long hair and tin cans, making a business of his extreme holiness, torturing himself, nominally to acquire all knowledge, all goodness, actually to obtain a few coppers or a pinch of rice; to the rajah riding in his landau with outriders and footmen.—*Mail and Express*.

DISCOVERY OF WINE.

How a Lady of the Harem Drank the King's Poison.

Wine is reputed to have been discovered by Jemshed, the founder of Persepolis, the famous capital of ancient Persia. He was a great lover of grapes and in order to have them all the year round, had large quantities packed away in enormous earthen jars. After standing for some time, one of the jars was opened and the grapes were found in a state of fermentation.

Jemshed imagined that the resultant liquid was poisonous, and accordingly had it placed in other jars which were labeled "Poison" and conveyed to his bed-chamber. One of the ladies of the harem happened one day to be suffering from a severe headache. So great was the pain that she was driven to the verge of distraction, and, spying one of the vessels containing the grape juice, immediately opened it and took a copious draught of the supposed poison. The wine mounted to her head, overpowered sleep from which she awoke greatly refreshed. The remedy proved so enticing that she indulged in it whenever an opportunity presented, until at last the jars were emptied.

Soon after the king, being desirous of examining his "poison," was dumfounded at its sudden disappearance and immediately instituted an inquiry as to who had the audacity, not to say foolhardiness, to tamper with the royal stores. This resulted in

THE TEMPLES OF INDIA.

Some of them are Nearly Four Thousand Years Old.

I should judge that we must have passed through miles of temple, halls and shrines, the village room, where little children meet their doom and the hall of a Thousand Columns.

It was all the same—dark covered stone vaults, supported by columns more or less badly carved, especially in the large halls, crowded for space. We saw many idols of stone and wood; they say the sacred and unseeable idol has eyes of diamonds and clothes of pearls and precious stones.

Those we did see were greasy, black with oil and incense or daubed with red ochre, fragrant to an extreme with the odor of the temple flower. Worshippers lounged and slept or prayed before their offerings of rice, water and incense, ready to entertain a "god un-awares."

In one court three elephants decorated with the distinguishing mark of the god Shiva, in whose temple they lived, heading a procession. They are returning from the river after drawing the water for the temple use. The priests insist that the dignity of the place shall be maintained, but the present paltry show of three beasts with their faded trappings show only too plainly "how have the mighty fallen" for in former days these temples and priests were wealthy, and a stud of 100 elephants, with all their gold-mounted trappings, were a mere nothing.

Upon catching sight of the white faces of our party the elephants were brought to a stand and levied blackmail upon us; the whole ceremony was nothing to the chance of forcing a few annas from our pockets. The keepers were anxious to put the beasts through the usual circus tricks and invited us to ride, but we declined, and the procession passed on.

Still a hundred miles north is another temple called Srirangam, built on an island in the river Cauvery. It is dedicated to another member of the Hindoo trinity—Vishnu, the preserver, and next to Benares, is probably the largest and most sacred in the land.

Our writer places the foundation as far back as B. C. 2000. It is more than a temple; it is a city, a square, the outer walls extending over four miles. In fact, it consist of seven distinct sections, each a square surrounded by a wall, one within another, growing more and more holy as they approached the central shrine.

The sight from the top of a gopuram is grand. A fair idea of the place may be obtained and twenty-one enormous pagodas can be seen. Some ancient elephants, who are said to have existed on temple straw for over sixty years, are trained to pick up with their trunks a two anna bit, a piece about as small as a silver three-cent coin. Like their fellows at Madna, they bear the mark of the god in whose temple they serve: the mark of Vishnu, in daubs of yellow and white paint.

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THE SMALL BOY'S ELYSIUM.

"My little man, come tell to me, if you could by some magic be To the unknown fairland transplanted, Where boys may have their wishes granted. What would you wish to be?" "I'd wish," he sideways cocked his head, "Pondered, and passed, and then he said: 'I'd wish I had two brothers.' One great big one and one I could lick; That nothin' never'd make me sick, And eight or nine grandmothers."

the discovery of the culprit, who confessed, and after explaining the delightful effect produced by the liquor, was fully forgiven by his majesty.

He ordered a generous quantity of wine to be made, and, with his court, revelled in the delights of wine-drinking for many years thereafter. From that time to the present day the Persians call wine Zehere-Kooshon, which signifies "delightful poison," thus perpetuating the story of its peculiar origin.—*Detroit Free Press*.

ORIGIN OF SILK CULTURE.

The Chinese Kept the Secret for a Long Time.

Silk culture originated in China and ancient chroniclers inform us that the empresses of that country, surrounded by their maids, employed their leisure hours in rearing silk worms, winding the silk and weaving into delicate, filmy tissues. For several centuries the Persians supplied the Romans with this commodity which was brought overland from China by means of caravans, which crossed the Asiatic continent in 243 days. Notwithstanding the fact that an immense trade was thus carried on between the two empires, the knowledge of the silkworm or the manner in which the silk was produced remained a secret with the Chinese and was not known in Europe until the time of Justinian.

At that time two Persian missionaries who were stationed in India, visited China and there got an insight into the cultivation of the worm and the art of working the silk into a variety of elegant fabrics. Returning to Constantinople, they informed the emperor of the wonderful discoveries they had made, and minutely described every process. He promised them a princely reward if they would obtain a number of the worms and thus establish the making of silk in this capital. This arduous task was successfully accomplished; the monks returned to China and by recourse to strategy procured a quantity of silk-worm eggs, which they hid in the hollow of a bamboo cane.

In a short time vast numbers of silk worms were reared in various parts of Greece and Turkey, and the raw silk produced by them was manufactured in Athens, Corinth, Thebes and other cities.

The breeding of the worms rapidly extended to Italy and Sicily, and in every instance proved highly successful. Large factories were established in many of the towns in both these kingdoms, and very soon after the Chinese and Persians found that their silk trade had been monopolized by the Europeans.

EXTRAVAGANCE IN INDIA.

It is said to see how they live, perhaps on a bit of fruit or a mouthful of millet, dying of disease, earning little and wasting what they earn. Their meager savings are too often spent for jewelry or religious ceremonials, the curse of the country. One miserable dancing girl, recently complained to the magistrate that she had been robbed of her jewels, and when recovered they were found to be worth about 25,000 rupees, over \$8,300; and it is quite a usual sight for the filthy women in the streets, collecting the droppings for fuel, to be seen wearing gold nose rings and anklets of silver. An editor at Bombay, in speaking to me of the poor and their extravagances, said that a native servant getting 15 rupees a month wages asked a loan of 200 rupees for the wedding festivities of his daughter, and wanted to contract a debt which he meant to pay off nearly a year and three months' earnings. The same extravagance is expected in gifts to the priests and in funeral expenses. They starve for vanity's sake. Perhaps these facts may help account for the horrible want and excessive mortality during times of drouth.

THE RESULT.

Teacher—"If your mother should wish to give each one an equal amount of meat, and there should be eight in the family, how many pieces would she cut?" Class—"Eight." Teacher—"Correct. Now each piece would be one-eighth of the whole; remember that." Class—"Yes."

Teacher—"Suppose each piece were cut again, what would result?" Smart boy—"Sixteenths." Teacher—"Correct. And if cut again?" Boy—"Thirty-seconds." Teacher—"Correct. Now suppose we should cut each of the thirty-two pieces again, what would result?" Little girl—"Haah."—*Good News*.

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