

BOSTON'S BIG COMMON.

THE CROWD IS FOUND THERE SUN-DAYS AND WEEK-DAYS.

A Gathering Place For People with All Sorts of Idiosyncrasies—Some Who Would Reform the Country if They Could—Where Needless May be Found.

BOSTON, May 15.—Sunday is the great day on Boston common, the day when all the people linger on the walks, stroll through the grass, sit on the trees, or listen to the gospel preachers and social reformers, or the band concert.

During the week it is simply a short-cut to the Back Bay for the majority, but there is a time when there are unoccupied benches to burn as it were, on the common, and the long line of humanity basking in the sun along the Tremont street wall is seldom broken. There you see life. Sitting on one of the benches facing the street, you see thousands of people passing and re-passing, hundreds of street cars of every size and color, long lines of them, horse cars and electric, moving along at a snail's pace it not stopped altogether.

It is a sight that invariably strikes the visitor from the rural districts, and he is always very much in evidence with his best girl. Then there is the "perpetual unemployed," the weary looking lords of the common, who like a bench a piece after night fall, and whose slumbers are often broken by a tap on the bottom of the feet with a policeman's baton.

But all sorts and conditions of people loaf on the common, nurse girls bring children to sail boats on the frog pond, or get under the trees, respectable looking men, with spare time go there to read the daily papers, while hundreds of school boys and newboys and boot blacks, and pretty big boys, play base ball, and duck and drake, and all the games imaginable all day long, even coming back in the evening to play under the electric light.

The Sunday crowd is interesting. Everybody is on the loaf, and even those who wear an anxious look on week days out of work, and business worried have leisure, an air of which seems to stick out all over them.

So the people who like to hear themselves talk have plenty of listeners.

Some years ago it used to be quite common for local preachers to hold forth on King Square in St. John, and I remember one old fellow in particular—Mr. Moffatt, the blind man—but of late years the salvation army has had the outdoor business pretty much to itself.

On Boston common the talking is not confined to religion, by any means, for social reformers of all kinds turn up Sunday after Sunday until some of them are now almost as much a part of it as the monuments or the frog pond.

There are socialists, single taxers, nationalists, everybody with a hobby, in fact, and with nerve enough to face an audience turns up to have his say on the common, and always finds an audience.

Sarcasmous old gentlemen with long white whiskers, and a few enthusiastic Sunday school pupils select a spot, and then begin to sing, then a crowd begins to gather. It takes very little to arouse the curiosity of the people, and along in the afternoon, the common is spotted with black spots of humanity.

The crowds are not listless by any means. The radicals with schemes for hurrying on the millennium, always have a mob ready to cheer and applaud when the back Bay capitalist is assailed, and when a disbeliever gives expression to his views in an undertone, there is always somebody at his elbow to take the other side. In fact every one of these gatherings has a number of side shows, some of which become quite exciting, and it has sometimes been a wonder to me that the whole thing did not end in a free fight.

Passing through the common last Sunday afternoon, I stopped to see the result of one of these side shows. A short stout fellow with an English accent wanted to know why American free traders wanted to adopt the policy of a country they said was no good and a back number, then shot off a harangue for protection.

"You wanted to 'ave things cheap," he said "now you 'ave 'em cheap, and you aint got any money to buy 'em. That's a 'ell of a policy aint it?"

"Kats" said a young fellow with the finest kind of accent, "it isn't policy, its the sweat shops if you mean cheap clothes."

Then all the defects in the immigration laws were pointed out and discussed, until the atmosphere got warm, and one called the other a ward heeler, and the meeting broke up, the friends of the debaters carrying them off bodily.

The foreigners in these crowds have a good deal to say, and if the Jews on the common could be taken as representatives of the race in this country, they would be the strongest trades unionists and social reformers in the country.

The Sunday crowds of Boston are out nowadays. From the common the people drift down through the public gardens, which are looking prettier than ever, and every week brings out more leaves and more shady spots, and fewer places to sit down. The flowers are all abloom, and fragrant, the swan boats sail on the lake, and the summer is here.

So, too, out at Franklin park, bicycles by the hundred, strollers by the hundred,

hundreds loitering on the grass, having a nice quiet time. Tens of thousands at the marine park, and street cars crowded all the afternoon. There are plenty of places to go.

A young St. John man who arrived here went down to Scollay Square Saturday night, to ward off homesickness. The receipt worked first rate. He met fifteen St. John men within an hour. It was like standing at the head of King Street and seeing the Saturday night crowd doing the see-saw set, up King, along Charlotte, down Union, etc. etc. No place like home. R. G. LARSEN.

WHY BRUCE IS IN JAIL.

The Plain Dealer Happened to Swing in Too Wide a Circle.

The editor of the well, if not always favorably known paper called the Plain Dealer is in jail. He has, been there for some little time, and while a good many people sympathize with him, others rejoice exceedingly, not exactly as over a brand plucked from the burning but rather as those rejoice who see a brand which is scattering sparks in every direction, and threatening their own hay ricks every moment, in a fair way of extinction. But unfortunately the gentleman who now languishes within the hoary walls of Dorchester jail, declines to be extinguished and still continues to lamsh thunderbolts at the heads of his enemies, and those whom he considers his oppressors from behind the prison bars.

The editor of the Plain Dealer won notoriety about two years ago, by starting a weekly paper, which speedily became famous as a red-hot advocate of the working man, and a fierce opponent of all who attempted to take advantage of that "honest tradesman," or interfere with his rights in any way. The paper was distinguished from the first for its policy of making bold, and often injudicious attacks on everyone who happened to be in favor. It struck out in every direction with such apparent impartiality that it was impossible to predict who would be the next victim, and if it often hit the wrong man, why it did not deserve it this time he would be sure to do so soon, therefore there was no harm done—he had only been dealt with a little out of his turn, that was all.

Sometimes these attacks on the most respected citizens were utterly unwarrantable and excited the warmest indignation; and again the little sheet would administer such a well deserved flagellation to some evildoer that its very fearlessness compelled the admiration of those who were not in accord with it on any other subject and people who did not approve of the paper itself, would sum up their opinion in the comment that "Bruce was a dear fellow, and it was a great pity he did not make better use of his talents.

But that was some time ago, and it the fearless journalist has alienated some of the people, who were inclined to be friendly to him at first, he has only himself to blame for it.

In his mistaken zeal for the working man, who does not seem to have taken his efforts in the best part, he began a series of little and most unjust attacks on the heads of departments in the I. C. R. From the general manager down, he hurled invective and accusation at them under the mistaken idea that he was helping the working classes. With three or four notable exceptions, every man who occupied a position of any prominence on the list of I. C. R. officials was a rasal of the deepest dye, and if he had his due according to the Plain Dealer, he would certainly have been making brooms and pails in an institution with close cropped hair, and variegated clothing. I believe even the Minister of Railways was a rasal too, but I am not sure.

Not satisfied with accusing the most respectable men of almost every crime in the catalogue, except murder, the editor of the Plain Dealer unfortunately adopted a style of literature in his paper which made it unfit for decent people to read: he asserted that he was putting down vice, and using this means to accomplish his end, but he was unfortunate in making the remedy appear so much worse than the disease itself, which at least kept out of sight, that the Evangelical alliance, and the W. C. T. U. felt compelled to take the matter up and prosecute him under the Dominion act relating to impure literature. A warrant was issued, and after a good deal of delay, and some dispute, the culprit was lodged in jail at Dorchester.

But now comes the most singular part of the case. Imprisonment failed to crush the dauntless spirit of the Plain Dealer man. He blamed three prominent Moncton men, one of whom was the Mayor, for his incarceration, and he resolved, like Constance in "Marmion," that they should "dread me in my living tomb," so he employed the too abundant leisure his dungeon cell afforded, with such effect that the next issue of the renowned Plain Dealer was a literary curiosity in its way! It made things decidedly interesting for the men its editor blamed for his loss of liberty, and it not only said some very unpleasant things, but offered to prove them.

This of course was not to be tolerated for a moment. Liberty of the press was all very well but not too much liberty, and therefore the paper which had been sold openly on the streets for more than a year during the time it was doing its best to

ruin the reputations of some good citizens, without the least effort being made to suppress it, became all of a sudden too obnoxious a sheet for decent people to countenance in any way, and the city marshal received instructions to seize the entire edition, and prohibit its further sale. The edition referred to, came out on Tuesday, and so prompt was the action taken, and so rapid the effect produced by the statements made in the paper, that on Wednesday evening a lengthy reference was made at the meeting of the city council, to the "cancerous sore in our midst" and an appeal addressed to all good citizens to discountenance the Plain Dealer in every possible way.

The significant statement was made that no one knew "what was going to come out, or who was going to be blackmailed," and reference was also made to the rumor that it had "been a blackmailing sheet all through." It was asserted that the sheet had had a detrimental effect on Moncton, and prevented good men and true from taking up their abode in the city, so it must be put down once and for all.

True! Oh King! You speak the words of truth and soberness, but why was the fact not discovered sooner? Were not the statements which appeared concerning the I. C. R. officials quite as scandalous, quite as libellous, and quite as offensive to their wives and families, as anything which has come out lately? I think so, but of course that was not the same thing at all, the difference was not so much who fired the stones, but who was hit in the fray, and somehow the reckless firing lately, seems to have changed the point of view wonderfully and curtailed the liberty of the press in a corresponding degree. In short the Plain Dealer had evidently struck the "wrong man" in a different sense from that referred to at the beginning of this article, and therefore the time for suppressing the paper, and giving the public an object lesson in morality, came rather sooner than it might have done otherwise.

It may be all right, and the seizing of an edition not one fourth as bad as many others of the same publication which have been sold without hindrance, may not be such an arbitrary proceeding, or show so much personal feeling as it appears to at first sight, but on such an occasion the homely old proverb "What is sauce for the goose, is sauce for the gander" naturally occurs to the unbiased mind, and the said mind cannot help speculating as to why so well known a culinary rule was disregarded in this instance, and apple sauce served with the goose of one description while sauce piquante, was administered with the other.

Why Eyes of Portraits Follow You.

How is it that the eyes of some portraits seem to follow a spectator around the room? It is thus explained: Suppose a portrait has its face and eyes directed straight in front, as is to look at the spectator. Let a straight line be drawn through the tip of the nose and half way between the eyes. On each side of this middle line there will be the same breadth of head, of cheek, of chin, and of neck, and each iris will be in the middle of the whole of the eye.

If one now go to one side the apparent horizontal breadth of every part of the head and face will be diminished, but the part of each side of the middle line will be diminished equally, and at every position, however oblique, there will be the same breadth of face on each side of the middle line, and the iris will remain in the centre of the eyeball, so that the portrait will preserve all the character of a figure looking at the spectator, and must necessarily do so wherever he stands. In portraits the apparent motion of the head is generally rendered indistinct by the canvas being imperfectly stretched, as the slightest concavity or convexity entirely deforms the face.

Where the Twilight is Short.

The period of twilight shortens toward the equator and lengthens toward the poles. In other words, the less the thickness of air through which the rays of the setting sun have to pass, the sooner darkness comes. From this it naturally follows that the region which has the shortest twilight is the one which is situated nearest to the equator and at the greatest elevation. These two conditions are combined in the region in which stands Quito, the capital of Ecuador. This plateau is 9,422 feet above the level of the sea, it is also surrounded by mountains, twenty peaks, eleven of which rise beyond the snow line, visible from the streets of the city. Added to this, it is only fifteen miles south of the equator; hence it has a shorter twilight than any other spot on the equator, partly because of its elevation and partly because the western mountains intercept the rays of the setting sun and so cause darkness to follow daylight with greater rapidity than any other spot on earth.

Ivy Around Houses.

The growth of ivy on the walls of houses renders the walls entirely free from damp, the ivy extracting every particle of moisture from wood, brick, or stone for its own sustenance by means of its tiny roots. The over-lapping leaves of the ivy conduct water falling upon them from point to point until it reaches the ground, without allowing the walls to receive any moisture from the rain.

How Whiskey can Enliven Folks.

The skull of a man who has died from delirium tremens contains an alcoholic gas. A small opening in the skull, soon after death, permits the gas to escape, and it can be ignited, and burns with a bluish flame.

How much pleasanter this world would be to live in were it as easy to go to bed at night as it is to get up in the morning, and as easy to get up in the morning as it is to talk of getting up when you go to bed!

Single Advice from a Deserter.

They say that stolen kisses are the sweetest," he said, "as they eat on the lips, looking at the moon."

"Indeed?" she said.

"Yes, what do you think about it?"

"Oh I have no opinion at all; but it seems to me if I were a young man I wouldn't be long in doubt as to whether they were or not."

The Old Novel and the New.

"What is the difference between the old novel and the new?" I am asked. Here is a sentence which will just answer the question: In the old fiction they marry in the last chapter and live happily ever afterwards. In the new they marry in the first chapter and live unhappily ever afterwards.

Hit the Facts of the Case.

While engraving a matrimonial invitation, a New York artist made a curious blunder. The invitation read thus: "Mr. and Mrs. Johnson have the pleasure to request your presence at the marriage of their daughter."

A curious organ is to be seen at the Jesuits' Church at Shanghai, China. It was manufactured by a native, a "brother conjurer" of the Jesuit order. The pipes of the instrument are in bamboo wood instead of metal, and the sonority is of incomparable sweetness, "angelic and superhuman," says a correspondent, and such as has never been heard in Europe.

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