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TOPICS OF AN OLD-TIMER

The Destruction of San Francisco—A Child of Spain and of the Church—Founded by the Franciscans in 1776—Dedicated to St. Francis—Its Beautiful Location and Magnificent Scenery—Beautiful and Healthy Women and Children—Advanced Municipal Laws—Will Rise Again—A Stronghold of the Irish Race.

I am in sorrow for San Francisco and the State of California. I once knew both well. I made their acquaintance first in the fall of 1870. I was preceded there by a brother, who was one of the Argonauts of 1849, and subsequently by a sister, who went there in 1866, with friends. The remains of two beautiful young sons lie buried in the Oakland Catholic cemetery, opposite the far-famed Golden Gate, and I have therefore a family as well as a general interest in the unfortunate city and country.

I am sorry for San Francisco's fate because in the first place it is the child of the Church, the Franciscans having founded it. I am sorry for San Francisco because it is one of the strongholds of the Irish race in America, where they achieved success and became prosperous. I am sorry for San Francisco because its people are enterprising and great, and as generous as they are enterprising and great.

It is a great community, that of San Francisco. People who go there and reside there for some time grow from common-place people to be giants physically and intellectually. There the most beautiful race of people in the world is to be found. And none are more charitable and ready to extend a helping hand to those who need it. Others, contrasted with the San Franciscans are narrow and contracted mortals. Their stature is increased, mind is expanded and a superior race is brought forth into the world. The Celt flourishes there and leads in the march of civilization.

Let me say something of the topography and scenic surroundings of that great western mart now laid low in ashes and ruins, but which, like the phoenix, will rise again more beautiful and brilliant than before, with the experience and evidence of her present calamity to guide her. I will quote the description given of her by a great British statesman, James Bryce, Chief Secretary for Ireland in the present British Cabinet. It occurs in his great work on "Democracy in America," and to the truth of it I can well testify as no overdrawn picture:

"Few cities in the world can vie with San Francisco, either in the beauty or natural advantages of her situation. Indeed there are only two places in Europe—Constantinople and Gibraltar—that combine an equally perfect landscape with what may be called an equally imperial position. Before you there is the magnificent bay with its far-reaching arms and rocky isles, and beyond it the faint line of the Sierra Nevada, cutting the clear air like mother-of-pearl; behind there is the roll of the ocean; to the left the majestic gateway between mountains through which ships bear in commerce from the farthest shores of the Pacific; to the right, valleys rich with corn and wine, sweeping away to the southern horizon. The city itself is full of bold hills, rising steeply from the deep water. The air is keen, dry and bright, like the air of Greece, and the waters not less blue. Perhaps it is air and light, recalling the cities of the Mediterranean, that make one involuntarily look up to the top of these hills for the feudal castle, or the ruins of the

Acropolis, which one thinks must crown them."

This is very fine and very eloquent, but really there is a great opportunity for descriptive power that might heighten the color of the picture. Across the great bay, between which and the ocean, the Golden Gate intervenes, studded with bold and high islets are the dimpled hills of the Contra Costa, at the feet of which nestle towns and villages which for beauty of contour and the refinement of their people, no ancient Greece nor classic Rome could show an equal. There is Berkeley, the seat of the state university, named after an Irish churchman of fame and learning, who wrote that well-known poem, "Westward the Star of Empire Takes Its Way." At that little city Mr. Douglas Hyde, during the past month delivered one of his enlightening and broadening lectures on the Gaelic revival, and was received with favor and encouragement. And there is Oakland, a city now of about 70,000 inhabitants, which if not as bold in outline and position as San Francisco, has more fascinating charms, with its ever-blossoming exotic shrubs and trees, which make a constant Arcadian summer. Two Hayes of distinction have made this bower of flowers dear to Irishmen—Catherine Hayes, the distinguished swan of Irish song in the early years of the fifties; and "Col. Jack Hayes, the Texas Ranger," who led a portion of the American army through the Halls of Montezuma in 1848. He was one of the founders of Oakland and lived on his ranch in the foothills. His Irish countrymen when recounting their heroes, hardly ever think of him, although men travelled hundreds of miles to join his "rangers" when going to war with Mexico in 1846. And there is the other beautiful little city of Alameda, not noted for any Irish distinction, but which is a bower of celestial beauty, soft with the fragrance of flowers and the balmy of southern breezes. Then, on the other side of the bay there is Sausalito, San Rafael, hidden among the rose-clad hills and free from the rough winds of the ocean. There, a little further to the west, is the coast railroad, built by Peter Donohoe without the aid of any company, an Irishman born in Glasgow, and full of the enterprise and spirit of the boldest American.

Still further to the northwest is tall Mount Tamalpais, with the sign of the cross cut on its crest by a stroke of lightning and visible for many a mile. Further towards the east but visible from San Francisco and the Bay, is Monte del Diablo in Contra Costa county, from which the streets of San Francisco, with some prominent objects were visible, so clear is the air, although fifty miles distant. This used formerly to be the haunt of wild animals and as some said also of wild men.

I have said nothing of what is to be seen in the country south of the late great city. San Jose, fifty miles away, is one of the prettiest little cities in existence. It was in this city the first legislature of California met and it is full of historic interest. This first legislature is known in California history as "the Legislature of a thousand drinks." It was the first incorporated town in California, under Spanish rule, and here in overland days crowded in many of the earliest immigrants—the Murphys, the Reeds, the Rylands and other noted California Irish families. It was here the first American governor of California lived and became a convert to the Catholic faith and brought the majority of the people of the place with him, including judges, lawyers, doctors and capitalists. There is a beautiful avenue connecting San Jose and Santa Clara, which latter is a few miles further west. Here is located the Santa Clara college of the Jesuits, one of the most efficient schools to be found anywhere. This institution suffered but slight damage from the recent shock. Some few miles to the west of this is the great Stanford University, which suffered to the extent of four millions of dollars. But I might dilate on the beautiful and gratifying gifts of nature long enough to fill a book. Many years ago I was enthusiastic enough to make a book about them, and it was truly a labor of love.

Rudyard Kipling, arriving in San Francisco from India many years ago, recorded in his "American Notes" that San Francisco was a mad city, whose population was made up of perfectly insane people and whose women were of a remarkable beauty. The bustling, active life of men living in that climate—a climate which is stimulating the year round, without any excess of heat or cold—appealed to this dreamer from the lethargic and far Oriental lands. He could not understand at that time the active American temperament. The out-of-door life, possible the year round, the mixture of the races, and the abundance of cheap and nourishing food, have given to the women that physical beauty to which he referred. But physical beauty is not confined to the women alone. I lived once near one of the largest schools of San Francisco and used to delight in noticing the beauty and grace of the school children. And not alone was it physical beauty that they possessed, for they had lovely voices and it was a treat to listen to their singing. As the climate favored physical beauty, I am inclined to think the men were equally favored, if not so noticeably as in the women and children.

San Francisco is a gay city, the people being pleasure loving; and some go so far as to accuse its inhabitants of being an immoral people. Indeed there are those who believe that this visitation of earthquake and fire is a visitation of Providence on the people for their sins. The climate, no doubt, gives rise and prominence to moral imperfections that are constantly cast up to them. They have counterbalancing virtues, however, that are all their own. They are generous to any other people to deserving objects and purposes. Human sympathy ever finds lodgment in the people's hearts. I may instance the case of Dr. Douglas Hyde, who had just come away from there with \$20,000 of money in his pockets for the benefit of the Gaelic League and the building up of an Irish Ireland.

There is nowhere a more public-spirited people than those of San Francisco. There are no people who are more advanced in civic and organic ideas. On January 1, 1900, a new city charter, drafted by a board of its own freeholders, went into effect, and it is considered the most advanced code that is anywhere to be found. It confers upon the mayor large responsibilities as to appointments and the power of removal of executive boards sets up a rigorous civil service system, divorces the city from the State in order to avoid the biennial rapacity of the Legislature, limits taxation to one dollar on the one hundred of assessed valuation, limits expenditures to funds established inviolably at the beginning of the fiscal year, and prevents extravagance by giving the supervisors (aldermen) the power, simply, of raising the revenue, with no power to handle its expenditures. It gives to the people, by a unique feature, the right, by the Initiative and Referendum (borrowed from Switzerland) to legislate for themselves if their local legislative body fails them. This is pure and ultimate democracy, which they are now endeavoring to imitate in Chicago. Great sums of money have been spent for park purposes and their Golden Gate Park was one of the finest to be found anywhere.

The people of San Francisco are great lovers of art and besides purchasing pictures abroad have encouraged native artists more than any other city in America, thus showing tastes akin to the Greeks of old. In their street parades, in their theatres and their picture galleries this taste for art is ever visible. Also in their architecture is the same taste displayed. San Francisco had several beautiful museum parks and it was a great treat to visit Woodward's Gardens, for there were to be seen

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things that were instructive and not to be found elsewhere. It is the land of the olive and vine, emblematic of the deeds that are done in that clime.

It will not be now amiss to describe the origin of San Francisco and California. They are the children of Spain and of the church. California was Spanish by right of discovery and possession. It is not an old community by any means. It was Catholic through the missionary zeal of the order of Franciscans, who were the first to enter it, possess it and undertake its civilization. San Francisco is just as old as the American Republic. It was not known before 1776 when the Franciscans set up a cross and took possession of it in the name of the founder of our religion. The Jesuits had established themselves in Lower California, but never attempted any missionary work in Upper California, having been suppressed before they had time to attempt anything in that country. The Franciscans superceded them. A band of them landed at San Diego and vigorously entered upon their work to convert to Christ and civilize the natives, who were red men, indolent, lazy and brutal. This was sometime in the sixties of the seventeenth century. They had the civil support of the Spanish government, which gave them a few Spanish soldiers for their protection. In addition to instructing the natives in the rudiments of religion, they taught them the domestic arts, trade craft and traffic. The missionaries moved along northward in their work. There is a picture somewhere that I have seen of one of those missionaries having a removable bell swung up in a tree, calling the aborigines together to receive their instructions. They built churches and mission buildings, many of which I have seen and are yet standing. That at San Diego was the first; the last at Sausalito, far in the interior, and where the late shock was felt most and was very damaging. Twenty-one in all of those cradles of the faith, were built, when the American invasion in the forties put a stop to the good work. The missionaries at the beginning had an idea that there was a great bay somewhere northward in the country, but they had no exact knowledge of it. The early navigators knew little about it, although Captain Drake (Sir Francis) had wintered near it when intercepting and robbing the Spanish galleons coming from Manila, loaded with the riches of that far away country. After many of the mission houses and churches had been established and given the names of Spanish saints, such as Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, San Diego, etc., the question arose among the Fathers, when they had made their headquarters at San Carlos, near Monterey, where they were to erect a mission in honor of the founder of their Order, St. Francis of Assisi?

Father Junepera Serra, their leader, answered:
"Where St. Francis wants us to erect a mission to his memory he will lead us to the spot. There is a great bay said to exist further north; we will seek that and if a desirable spot is found on its borders and St. Francis approves of it, it will be there. We will send one expedition in search of it as Pious Portala discovered and raised his cross at Monterey, by land, and another by water. So these expeditions were fitted out, with one in charge of Fathers Cambon and Parlon, and the other led by Lieutenant Moraga, a Spanish officer. So they drew their caravansaries along by water and by land; the land party moved along by the valleys of Salinas, Santa Clara and Alameda, in the meantime naming those places, taking the calendar of Saints for their choice of names. The land party found the great bay first, but had to build boats or barges to take them across to the promontory that stood westward between them and the sea—the

(Continued on page 5.)

THE SPRING IN ITALY

The Churches, Palaces and Market-Place of Genoa—A Day at Pisa.

(Elizabeth Angela Henry in the Buffalo Catholic Union and Times.)

This Italian seaport city shows to best advantage seen from the harbor and, if it so happens that one's steamer arrives at nightfall, when town and bay twinkle with a thousand lights, the view is doubly charming. Semi-circular in form, a shower of lights falls from the topmost point, a height of over 12,500 feet, to the water's edge, where the big steamers from the North and the West carry the illumination far out into the water. And when morning comes the aspect is no less inviting—a city of sunshine, luxuriant gardens and marble palaces. Even a self-sacrificing group of Portuguese Sisters, who were en route to India to teach and do hospital work, cast longing eyes at "La Superba" as if they, too, wished to tarry within its pleasant quarters.

Just now Genoa is especially gay, because of entertaining the officers of the British Mediterranean squadron, which is anchored here for ten days. A brilliant ball is to be given for them, a repetition of the jolly doings held when Admiral Sigsbee's fleet visited the port a while ago. The American Consul, James Jeffrey Roche, and Mrs. Roche, were the hosts on that occasion, and we can imagine no more hospitable entertainers than the genial Mr. Roche and his charming wife. The Consul's office is the rendezvous of Americans touring Northern Italy, where the last of a long day's quota of callers received the same cordial welcome as does the first. There spoke a true son of Erin when the Consul said, at parting, "Give Ireland my love." She has always had that, Mr. Roche, and your loyalty!

Just now the city is alive with travellers, some returning after wintering in The Riviera, others who are touring Italy before the warm season. You may see them, guide book in hand, wandering about the churches, frequently at unseemly hours when Mass is being celebrated, and abusing by loud whispers and a pushing presence the privilege permitted them of the Open Door. To be sure, it is difficult to visit a church in the morning and not be present when a Mass is in progress, especially at one of the most notable here, the Church of the Annunciation, which has several altars. Its frescoes are exquisite in coloring, yet some of the altars are decorated with hideously colored artificial flowers, when at the door may be had for a few pennies an armful of fragrant roses and dewy violets. This street corner market swings into life at 6 o'clock and disappears three hours later. Flowers and green vegetables alone are sold here, and the bare-headed market women with their red shawls make a pretty study in red and green. About five years ago a fine, modern market building was erected convenient to the business section of the city, and there one may buy anything from a radish to a bolt of cotton.

Genoa's Cathedral, but for its great age (it was founded in the tenth century), will never invite a visitor to enter and pray, so bleak and neglected is the interior. Yet, it contains most precious relics—the chalice from which Christ and His apostles drank, and in which Joseph of Arimathea caught some of the precious blood as it flowed on the cross; also the Zaccharia Cross, which contains that piece of the true cross on which rested the Sacred Head and which was detached by the hands of St. John the Baptist. That Mother Eve is not yet quite forgiven we were forcibly reminded by a refusal to allow women to enter within the Chapel of St. John the Baptist, which adjoins the main altar of the Cathedral. Another custom noticeable in Italy and Spain—men are accorded the privilege of receiving Holy Communion within the sanctuary rail, while women must kneel without—but the latter always outnumber the former. A few steps from the Cathedral is a little church built by the great Genoese patriot, Andrea Doria. His ashes lie buried there and his good sword hangs above the altar.

The Doria palaces and those of many other great dukes of Genoa are no longer occupied by the descendants of the original owners, other cities evidently proving more than attractive for residences. Along one of the principal streets, the via Palli, nam-

ed after a Jesuit, who built at his own expense the handsome University Palace, are a line of ducal palaces. One after the other presents facades that are imposing, while their interiors are a succession of spacious rooms decorated with artistic taste, and beautiful galleries supported by marble columns. Genoa is the city of palaces, all of which are situated on the slope of a high hill. It is this situation of the seaport city which makes it so charming. Looking down from the city's crest we see lovely gardens dropping until they reach the level of the sea.

In the group of fourteen hills surrounding Genoa lies the city's Camposanto, the most beautiful cemetery in Italy. A gallery-like structure of stone and white Carrara marble encloses three sides of an open space, where are buried Genoese of moderate or no means. In the galleries repose men and women who, in death as in life, were among the favored. The monuments are representative of several renowned sculptors, many of whom are buried in the Camposanto. A chapel forms part of the galleries and within its niches are statues designed and executed with artistic and dignified feeling. Yet, after one has duly admired this superb resting place of the dead and then walks out among the green mounds marked by humble crosses, it does seem as if a grave with the soft grass for a cover and the blessed sunshine above were a more welcome place than the marble galleries in which to await the trumpet's call.

One does not wonder at the lavish use of marble in Genoa when he remembers that whole mountains of it are near by, as at Massa on the road to Pisa, where the sound of the marble cutters' chisels may be heard miles away. Even by train it is a delightful journey to Pisa, past numberless little villages and towns with beautiful gardens. One of the prettiest spots is Nervi, where the late Secretary Hay sought a respite from the fatal sentence. The walks in Nervi show a tangle of white, winding through rows of pine black in their thickness. Even in country places are roadways which are avenues, the shade trees, tall, slender pines that branch out like the bowl of a long-stemmed goblet. And as you scan the gardens and fields which have no unsightly fences to mar their sweep, Pisa looms into view, and from the train window you catch the first glimpse of the Leaning Tower.

No one who possibly can avoid it lingers any longer in Pisa than will allow a visit to the city's group of famous buildings, the bell tower, Cathedral and Baptistery. It is such an unattractive looking town and it rains on four days out of seven. But the trio of buildings are its saving grace. Situated on the north side of the slowly-flowing Arno and surrounded by a green meadow, they are well worth spending a day in even a less inviting town than Pisa. We all remember when we were taught to enumerate the Seven Wonders of the World. Here stands one of them, a marble tower of eight stories, the last leaning slightly forward as if in welcome to admiring visitors. At the top hang seven bells, the largest weighing several tons and which is made to hang opposite the overhanging wall of the tower. The Cathedral occupies a central position in the group of three buildings. It was consecrated in the middle of the 12th century and is constructed of the white marble with black and colored bands. Its facade and bronze doors, the latter having representations of scriptural subjects, are magnificent. In the nave hangs a beautiful bronze lamp whose swaying is said to have suggested the pendulum to Galileo.

A short walk and we are at the Baptistery, which is also of marble, and being circular in form, balances the tower on the other side of the Cathedral. In the center is a marble octagonal font, where the children of Pisa are made heirs to the Kingdom of Heaven, and near it stands the famous pulpit by Nicolo Pisano, elaborately decorated with bas-reliefs depicting the life of Christ. Before visitors leave the porter invariably entertains them by running the scale to show off the fine echoing properties of the Baptistery.

It being Sunday afternoon, Pisans were enjoying the weekly drive. The driveway edges the meadow and no more grotesque contrast than the parade with the Cathedral environments can be imagined than was this. Every four and two-wheeled vehicle in town

(Continued on page 4.)

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