

[FOR THE CRITIC.]

A PARADISE IN HALIFAX.

A visitor to Halifax should by all means take a walk through the Public Gardens. Going out by Spring Garden Road we enter from the south-east through a gate and hedge of trees left to grow in their own natural wildness, and giving us no idea of the enchanting scene that opens to our view when once we are within the enclosure. Our attention is first attracted to a small stream running over stones and forming little cascades under shrubs and trees and widening out into a small pond with an island in the centre, on which is a miniature mill of the olden time with its large wheel turned by a jet of water and ringing a bell amidst a shower of spray. As we glance our eyes to the left we see an immense garden laid out on a scale befitting its size, broad walks, between carpets of softest and richest green, laid out in graceful curves and winding through groves of lovely shade. Rustic seats are placed at intervals, some in groups around old trees, and others alone, inviting us to rest awhile. Beds of flowers of every hue, grasses and mosses of every shade delight the eye. Nor are we charmed more with the flowers than with the exquisite taste shown in forming the beds and grouping the flowers and moss of different shades. Ovals, circles, squares, and diamonds, oblongs, scrolls, and cornucopias, with many others of artistic shape are found with borders neatly trimmed and interspersed with shrubs and trees of various kinds, both indigenous and imported. Passing on we come to a pond that seems from its artistic arrangement of little bays and jutting points, and island in the centre, to be much larger than it is. Tall trees and shrubs are growing around and over it, while swimming on its surface and feeding on its margin are seen a number of different kinds of water fowl, graceful swans, both black and white, geese and goslings, ducks and their young, all enjoying themselves to their hearts content. A short distance on we find another miniature pond bordered with shells, and from an island in the centre a fountain is playing and whirling the drops of water on grass and lilies growing around. At night the gardens are lighted by ten strong electric lamps, the rays from which as they light up the grounds and glint through the dark green foliage form a scene of surpassing loveliness. By the kindness of Mr. Power, the manager, we learn that there are seventeen acres enclosed which are kept up and improved at an annual cost of about four thousand dollars per annum, one half of which is contributed by the city and the rest obtained by concerts on the grounds.

There are gardens and parks on the continent fitted up with more lavish art, in marble, stone, and bronze, but none with more charming taste and arcadian simplicity. In one small carpet bed of star shape there were some ten or twelve shades in exquisite harmony of color, and composed of no less than six thousand separate plants. The citizens of Halifax are wise in their expenditure, and will do well to adopt the suggestions of their enthusiastic gardener who lays the parks and gardens of England and Scotland, France and Spain, together with those of Egypt, China and Japan, to say nothing of Mexico and South America under contribution to his work.

A. M. S.

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OUR BOSTON LETTER.

Boston, Aug. 21, 1886.

The hot season is usually a somewhat dull one in Boston, as in most other places, but it has been exciting enough this month to suit the most morbid of minds. Ever since the month opened there has been an endless array of sensations of one kind and another, and they are now beginning to get rather monotonous. First the town was startled by the discovery that the treasurer of a great bleachery corporation was a defaulter to the amount of something like \$400,000, and while people were just about beginning to get interested in this affair it developed that a woman was living almost in their midst who was the probable poisoner of six or seven people. This filled the papers with big head lines for a while, and just as the now sensation was in its most interesting stage it was eclipsed by the announcement that another one of Boston's "blue bloods" had embezzled over half a million dollars from the corporation of which he was treasurer and disappeared. The culmination of this latest affair was the suicide of the cause of all the sensation the first of the week. Resultant from this came the suspension of one of the city's best known financial men, and the semi-panic in the money market engendered by this event caused the failure of one or two other smaller concerns, so that, altogether it has been about as lively a time as Boston has ever experienced in the "dull" season. The outcome of the whole matter will undoubtedly be beneficial rather than serious, so far as the general business world is concerned, for it will act as a thunder-storm does in clearing the atmosphere. The defalcations have both been serious ones, and have well nigh resulted in ruining the victimized concerns. The case of Gray, the man who "misappropriated" the largest sum, is a somewhat remarkable one. He stood high in the social scale, was the owner of considerable real estate, kept several fast yachts, and was in a position to hold up his head generally. So truly good did he consider himself to be that he could scarcely deign to be civil "to anybody under the rank of a stockbroker," as they say in the Mikado. And yet this aristocratic shining light was all the time slipping into his own pocket hundreds of thousands of dollars of other people's money, building about him a structure on a foundation of sand that was certain some day to give way and bury him beneath its ruins. He might have lived in comfort and happiness until he was ninety if he had been content to live within his means, but instead of that he died before he was fifty by his own hand, and left his once happy family in misery and disgrace forever. There are some things in this world that are unaccountable, and why men will do such a foolish thing as this is one of them. Discovery in such cases is inevitable, but the warning is apparently never heeded. The great problem of the day

now is how to prevent such defalcations. Perhaps the proposed new extradition treaty will be a factor in its solution?

THE CRITIC, I notice, is not rapturously in love with that modern two-edged implement of war, the boycott. If it was published in Massachusetts it would be even less in favor of it. I have seen one recent instance of how this namesake of Captain Boycott works, and I must confess that the impression I gained of it was not a very inspiring one. A week or so ago I had occasion to go down to the town of Penobscot, where trouble was in progress among the employees of the numerous tanneries that there abound. It seems that the men had been on strike for several weeks, and that the manufacturers having become tired of the prolonged deadlock, had "imported" a number of "union men" to take the place of the strikers. This proceeding was so obnoxious to the latter that they raised a regular riot and made a murderous attack upon the new comers. Thanks to the authorities, they did not succeed in killing any of them, but they were bound to have revenge in some manner, and so they instituted a boycott against the objectionables. So vigorously did they keep this up that the landlady who boarded them informed me that she could not procure either groceries, provisions or fuel in the whole town, but had to send 15 miles to Boston for everything she required. The strikers and their sympathizers even went so far as to refuse to longer trade with a milkman who was so unfortunate as to hold a policeman's horse for him while he was engaged in helping to quell the riot. The boycott doesn't fit into these nineteenth century times.

What is the matter with the British service, and particularly that portion of it at present represented in Halifax? Coming down to Boston in the Halifax steamer a week or two ago I fell in with a rather interesting personage. He was a deserter from the line regiment at present stationed in Halifax, and was on his way to the land of the free and no standing army. Desertions from the army are common things, but his was a most peculiar one. In the course of a conversation he informed me that if he had remained one year longer he would have completed his 21st year in the service, having entered it when he was a mere boy. He had travelled all over the world in the service, and knew India and Egypt better than he did England. In all this time he had never been promoted and now he was leaving the ranks by stealth and with bitterness in his heart. He was going to the States, he said, and never wanted or expected to see British soil again. I wondered how he ever escaped the vigilant corporal's guard on the Halifax wharf looking out for just such as he, but he did somehow. What he told me about the bearing of the officers in Halifax toward their subordinates would make mighty interesting reading for those gentlemen, but it might also be provocative of a libel suit, and as the most important witness in the case has been swallowed up in the shifting quicksands of American humanity, I shall not allow the feline to escape from the sack. T. F. A.

COMMERCIAL.

Dealers claim that trade is dull. Of course, as compared with other portions of the year, the volume of business is small. Still a larger amount of activity prevails than has been the case in the closing days of August for many years. A considerable amount of—well, nervousness—has been exhibited in certain circles owing to the presence of several "customs detectives" from St. John and elsewhere in this city. They, as might be expected, represent themselves as engaged in various lines of "legitimate" trade, but as their personnel is well known it is not probable that they will succeed in "discovering" anything unless the claws are placed in their hands. Forewarned is forearmed, and the local smugglers are evidently on the alert and will not be caught napping. The "detectives," however, claim to have a lot of "broken threads" in their possession which they think they can weave together so as to entrap some well-known dealers. They promise startling revelations before long, but decline to furnish any details at present.

Farmers are still engaged in attending to their ripening crops, and they expect to realize well on them, as prices promise to be favorable and the yield will be large. It is to be hoped that they will heed the advice given last week, and sell promptly whenever they have a "fair offer." The yield of the entire world for 1886 is certain to be an abundant one and fancy prices are not to be looked for.

While it is true that Russia appears to be endeavoring to reopen the "Eastern Question," and has administered a "feeler" to both England and Germany by the Batoum and the Bulgarian incidents, it is not probable that war will result in the immediate future. Therefore any who hold in the hope that such a war will unsettle ruling prices in an upward direction will be foolish in doing so. "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," and our farmers will find that cash in the hand this fall is worth more than grain or hay in the barn.

REAL ESTATE.—The week has been quiet in this line. Some small transactions have transpired, but the call has somewhat slackened off. Very few properties have changed hands, and those on private terms. The lady managers of the Convent of the Sacred Heart have secured "Sherwood" (near the Four Mile House) and purpose establishing their academy for young ladies there. It is admirably suited for the purpose.

GROCERIES.—Sugars have been quite depressed, and the tone of the market is not hopeful. The West Indian, Malaysian, and European crop of cane and beet sugars will be larger than ever before, and as they come into the field and compete with stocks held over figures must tumble. Molasses sympathize with sugar, and are falling. Sugar is now very cheap, and as it promises to reach a still lower level, the mission of molasses as a sweetener appears to be drawing to a close. Tea has fluctuated considerably the past week, but the panic noted in our last has subsided, and the market is firmer than at our last writing. The spice crop will be an enormous one and prices will probably rule low for the next year.