

San Francisco

In 1860

FROM the treasure house of his memory of the men who have made American history for the past half-century, and from the wealth of his recollection of stirring events in which he had a part during his life of seventy-two years, Clark E. Carr—soldier, diplomat and author—has selected the most notable personages and the most striking incidents for his recently published volume, "My Day and Generation." Colonel Carr served through the Civil War, and he discusses, intimately, Lincoln, Baker, Sherman and Ericsson; he has been active in the Republican party since 1856, and he writes reminiscences of Oliver P. Morton, Benjamin F. Wade, and the Hayes-Tilden campaign. He was United States Minister to Denmark for four years, and he gives us interesting side lights on the Danish court. Californians, however, and more especially San Franciscans, will be attracted to the opening chapter, wherein he describes a journey to this state in 1860. The railway had shortly before been completed across the continent, and his party, which included the war governor of Illinois, Hon. Richard Yates, was one of the first to take the trip.

The curse of unreasonable labor agitation then, as now, was a feature of San Francisco conditions, and Colonel Carr gives us his impressions of Kearneyism in the following words:

"Dennis Kearney was in the zenith of his fame, speaking every night down on the sand lots. He was not what any one could call an able man—neither a profound thinker nor a reasoner. But he was a fluent and impressive speaker, and just the man to move and lead the laboring men who gathered about him. That was the first practical demonstration I ever saw made by organized labor, which has finally extended over the entire country. Before the adoption of this policy there were no distinctive classes such as exist in the old countries. We had no peasants. By crystallizing the laboring men together, they are rapidly becoming a class by themselves, a peasantry under another name. Under the old regime, when we were all simply American citizens, the laboring man of today, by the force of his ability, industry, and initiative genius, became the superintendent, the manager, the 'boss,' and the capitalist of tomorrow."

"The Chinese must go," was the slogan of the labor agitator of 1860, and the author comments on the movement as follows:

"At the time of our visit, the discussion of the policy of keeping out the Chinese, which culminated in the Exclusion act, had begun to be a burning question. I saw many apparently intelligent American laboring men who were gradually drawn into the movement which finally carried everybody with it. I then thought and still think that the Orientals were needed to develop the country. Had they continued to be admitted under limitations and regulations that could have easily been imposed, California would now have rivalled New York and Pennsylvania in wealth all along the Pacific coast. By the exclusion of the Chinese, California, Oregon, and Washington deprived themselves of the thing of all others they needed—labor. In the end the enterprising American laborers would themselves have become employers of that cheap Chinese labor which was such a bugaboo. Instead of California languishing undeveloped for half a century, the wealth of her mines and farms and forests and orchards and vineyards would have enriched her and her people beyond the power of calculation. We later saw literally thousands of bushels of fruit that would have commanded good prices in eastern markets rotting on the ground, because of the inability to get help to take care of it, and still the people of the whole Pacific Coast, led by Dennis Kearney, seemed to be clamoring for exclusion laws to keep out the only available laborers."

The intense personality of William C. Ralston, the ill-fated president of the Bank of California, made a profound impression on the soldier-author and he terms him "one of the noblest and most generous of men."

"The most potential man in San Francisco and on the Pacific Coast at that time was William C. Ralston, called everywhere and by everybody 'Billy' Ralston. Whatever Billy Ralston said went everywhere, and with everybody. The great capitalists, all the 'get-rich-quick' men, the bonanza men who had squeezed vast fortunes out of the Comstock lodes, and all the Virginia City miners, laid their money and stocks at his feet to be invested or hoarded as seemed best to him. He lived like a prince and was the most beautiful entertainer I have ever known. Ralston was of lithe figure, and quick and active in elucidating propositions, in coming to conclusions, and in carrying measures into effect. At our first meeting he told us our drafts would be honored for any amount we chose to draw. 'You are far from home, gentlemen,' he said, 'and must not be troubled about money. Draw all you want.' It was a dangerous offer to make to so young a man as I then was, and it encouraged me to draw more than I otherwise would have done. California was on a gold basis, while our greenbacks were at a discount from gold of about 40 per cent. We had to turn our money into coin, and it was a great hardship for us to get only 60 cents each for our dollars. The smallest coin recognized was the 10-cent piece, which we had to pay for a newspaper even, and nothing was sold for less than that amount."

"San Francisco had just then begun to get the benefits of the vast mineral wealth which

was being developed in the mines, and to realize what it meant to her. Men poor today, tomorrow woke up to find themselves bonanza kings with millions upon their hands, which they had no idea how to dispose of, or even take care of. In this dilemma they turned to Billy Ralston. He managed it all better than any one else could, but in the end it almost overwhelmed him. He bore the burden for some time after we came home, about six years, when we heard that one afternoon, after the bank closed, he went, as was his custom, for a swim in the bay. He did not turn back as usual, but continued on until at last he sank out of sight forever. Mr. Ralston's heart and soul were bound up in San Francisco and the Pacific Coast, to the success and development of which he devoted his whole mind and might and strength."

Open-handed hospitality and lavish entertainment of visitors was characteristic of the bonanza days, as it was when the Spanish-Californians possessed the land. Colonel Carr writes interestingly of an excursion to San Jose:

"We steamed out of San Francisco at eight in the morning on a special train, arriving at San Jose soon after ten. There was a fine commissary department upon the car, with abundant wines—none of them native, however, but of the choicest French vintages. At San Jose a sumptuous breakfast had been prepared at the principal hotel by direction of our host. When we finished our meal, we found carriages in waiting, and now began to see the fruits and flowers of California in all their luxuriousness. I had never before seen such luscious fruits grown in such abundance. The quantity was so great that it was impossible to gather the harvest. Our train moved back to San Francisco, but stopped at intervals at interesting spots, where we always found conveyances waiting to drive us to beautiful rural homes and grounds, with hospitable occupants, who had been warned that we were to visit them, waiting to receive and feast us. We visited dozens of these great places, at every one of which we were expected to partake of their bounty. At our journey's end, notwithstanding all the gastronomic feasts we had already accomplished, we were set down to a table loaded with viands and dainties as delicious as could have been served at Delmonico's. These we were expected to consume, for we were now in our host's own country house, and we must show our appreciation of the entertainment. How we managed to survive all this I shall not attempt to explain, but I heard of no casualties."

Before the advent of the automobile, San Franciscans were great lovers of fast-stepping horses, and the richer residents owned magnificent stables. When the author's party was returning from San Jose their host pulled the bell-cord of the train without warning them of his intentions:

"I just want to show you a barn," he shouted, and we all got out and he led us up through an alley, calling to the sleeping grooms to wake up and let us in. Soon they had the whole building lighted—by gas, for of course it was before the time of electric light—and such luxury! Harness rooms of exquisite plate glass, floors of mosaic, stalls of rosewood and mahogany, everything the most costly that money could buy. The horses—a dozen, I should say—lazily rose from their beds and stretched themselves to show their beautiful proportions. This place belonged to Mr. Hayward, a business man of San Francisco. Mr. Ralston drove back and forth every day to his country home, which was twenty-five miles from San Francisco. He had in his stables—I don't know how many, it was said forty—thoroughbred horses, all constantly worked and kept in condition for fast driving. Between his home and San Francisco on the road he constantly kept several stables with relays of horses. He himself drove four-in-hand at great speed, grooms in two or three minutes replacing his team with fresh horses at each of the relays, thus enabling him to make the drive in a very short time."

The visiting Easterners were invited to attend a meeting of the Pioneers, and the author gives the following description of the gathering:

"To be a Forty-Niner then was, and still is, a distinction. Being a Forty-Niner in California is equivalent almost to a seat in the nobility, a sort of peerage, one may say. These pioneers celebrated the anniversary of their emigration every year. Many had gone to their reward at the time of our visit, but many of them still survived. This year, 1860, was a great event, as it was their twentieth anniversary. Governor Yates was asked to address Forty-Niners, and as many of the pioneers had emigrated from Illinois, he was really delighted to have an opportunity to appear before them. The meeting was held in Metropolitan Hall, which was filled to its capacity by as fine and intelligent body of men as I have ever seen assembled anywhere. I had heard the governor speak on many occasions. He was always eloquent, and I may say brilliant, but I never heard him when he so approached sublimity as in his address to those Forty-Niners. I wish I could do more than faint justice to the splendors of that remarkable address, especially when the orator depicted the possibilities of the future development of the Pacific Coast, as in imagination he believed it would be attained. He told how the great cities of Europe had grown up on the western coast of that hemisphere and predicted similar development on the Pacific slope. When, twenty years later, I visited Los Angeles and San Francisco and

Portland and Seattle, it seemed to me that Governor Yates had been moved by a spirit of prophecy. But the brilliant climax of the oration came when he pictured the possibilities of achievement in literature, art, and science among the peoples that were to come in that region. Toward these ideals, if they have not been attained, the people of the Pacific Coast are rapidly advancing. Governor Yates' auditors seemed to go mad over the oration. They could not contain themselves. They rent the air with shouts, cheering the speaker to the echo. They shouted and laughed and cried as he went on, and at the close there was every possible demonstration of enthusiasm."

Col. Carr's volume will be given a royal welcome by students of the history of American life and statecraft. His estimates of the leading figures of forty years ago must be taken as authoritative. The author has not attempted any grace of style, and is at times almost garrulous, but he has, withal, given us an entertaining book, and one to be thankful for.—Argonaut.

THE COST OF RUNNING GERMANY

"The disappointment which is felt by educated Germans at the poverty of the imperial exchequer, while the political position of the empire has been so greatly aggrandised, is beginning to produce a new consequence," writes the Spectator. "They are discussing quietly the question whether the empire might not be organized upon a cheaper basis. They will support it whatever it costs, but they are weary of the weight of the taxes."

"They will not abstain from increasing the fleet, though they are more doubtful than is imagined in this country as to its ultimate utility, and they will not reduce the army, which, as they perceive quite accurately, is the secret of the immense respect felt for them in the Foreign offices of Europe; but they are asking whether their federal system does not necessarily involve a needless extravagance of expenditure."

"Here are thirty or forty little dynasties with separate ministries, cabinets, and paid parliaments, and therefore a total outlay in official salaries which, say those who favor the idea of complete unity, is more than the annual deficit, the prospect of which so greatly shocks economical financiers. If Germany were made one for all purposes, as she now is for purposes involving international dispute, the deficit would be made good, the taxes might be made lighter, and the work of administration would be greatly simplified. One influential publicist makes the suggestion 'in the plainest fashion, in a way, indeed, which he would never venture to employ if he were not sure of support among a strong section of the official world. To cut down expenditure, say by forty or fifty millions without limiting the fleet or refusing the additions to the army so constantly demanded strikes many reflective Germans as a great triumph, and one which is not beyond the range of political possibilities."

"If the civil governments yielded to the suggestion, there is certainly little chance of forcible resistance. The local armies would not be ready to defy such a proposal at the cost of civil war, for they have already contracted the feeling of devotion to the national flag, and are more or less accustomed to endure a discipline essentially Prussian, a discipline, too, which public opinion in a united empire might gradually render more lenient. As for external opposition, it is scarcely to be feared. The powers are already aware that if resisted by Germany in any project they will be resisted by the whole of the empire, and complete unity would no more irritate Austria or Italy or France than federalism does."

"The Hohenzollerns, who under the constitution are hereditary chiefs of the empire, are understood to desire the change for the sake of new energy in their foreign policy as well as of the imperial treasury; and the little kingdoms, principalities, and grand duchies have already learned to believe that unity is part, an unpleasant part it may be, of their future destiny. If, therefore, the common opinion of the masses included within the empire could be gradually reconciled to unity, the object might be achieved, and the taxation consequently lightened, without any effort likely to alarm or astound those who have already seen a change even greater successfully accomplished."

"The project seems to outsiders exceedingly attractive, more especially as the German empire is now the only one in Europe which acknowledges itself to be federal. In Great Britain Home Rule is a word of menace rather than of hopefulness. In Italy 'regionalism,' as it is called, has ceased even to be discussed. In Austria, though it exists, it is not acknowledged, and is regarded by the Hapsburgs as a scheme of organization which would ultimately destroy the monarchy. In Russia, though it may prove the key of the future, it is condemned, not only by the dynasty, but by the bureaucracy, with a sort of horror, which displays itself, oddly enough, in incessant attacks upon the partial independence of Finland, which has always existed, and hitherto has been always found, consistent with the practical autocracy of the Czars. Finally, in France, even the idea of Federalism is regarded with horror as a step backwards towards the evil system which was ground to pieces under the resistless weight of the political steam-roller described as 'the Revolution.'"

A story is related of a young man who was recently married to the daughter of a wealthy merchant, says The Tatler. The groom did not have a penny, but he was honest. He was so honest that he would not even prevaricate in the marriage ceremony. He was repeating what the minister said:

"With all my worldly goods I thee endow,"

repeated the groom.

H. Begbie's Home

Jean Isabel Nesbitt, in Toronto Globe

AS that clever and highly-interesting book, "The Priest," is becoming widely known throughout Canada, the author, Mr. Harold Begbie, needs no introduction, least of all in Toronto. It was a glorious autumn day in the latter part of September when I left Bournemouth by the early morning train to visit my friends in Hampshire, just eight miles from the old cathedral town of Winchester. The booming of the guns in Portsmouth Harbor, distinctly audible in Bournemouth, was the farewell salute as the train glided out of the station, and one could easily imagine the training ships drawn up in the Solent for target practice; indeed the incessant reverberation as of distant thunder might lead one to imagine that a bombardment of Portsmouth was going on.

There is positively nothing worse than a slow English train. It stops at myriads of stations with unheard-of names, sidetracks itself in the most obliging manner for "specials" to thunder past, and finally leaves its despairing passengers on the platform of some wayside village station to wait for the next "local." My journey to Eastleigh was by such a train, but fortunately through one of the most beautiful bits of country one could possibly wish to see—that is, through the New Forest, which, you remember, was laid out as an extensive hunting ground by William the Conqueror after his seizure of the English Crown in 1066. The "local" train only runs to Brockenhurst in the New Forest, and here one must wait for another "local" to Eastleigh, which is liable to be still slower than the first. Not far from Brockenhurst is the "Rufus Stone," which is to mark the spot where William Rufus, the brother of the Conqueror, was murdered while hunting.

There are about fifty stops, chief among these being Southampton, before Eastleigh is finally reached. I found on arriving there that I had been two hours traveling a distance of twenty-two miles! The carriage was waiting for me, and soon we had left station and town behind, and were bowling along the dusty country roads between hedges which had arrived at an appearance of hoary old age from four weeks' lack of rain. This part of the country is intensely interesting. The scene of Thackeray's great historical novel, "Henry Esmond," is laid in this neighborhood. Castlewood, the country seat of the Marquis of Esmond, which withstood the besieging forces of Cromwell's Ironsides, is not far from here, and Winchester, one of the most historical towns in England, is just eight miles distant.

We presently passed through the little village of Fair Oak, and a few more turns in the road brought us within sight of my destination. The sound of approaching wheels had brought my host and hostess into the garden, and as we drove up to the entrance they came across the lawn to meet me. Upon alighting from the carriage I found myself the centre of a merry little group of Indians—the author's three little daughters, who, out of an enthusiastic admiration for Longfellow's Indian legend, call themselves "Hiawatha," "Minnehaha," and "Loon Heart." They escorted me into the quaint little house, and after I had laid aside my wraps we proceeded all six into the garden, and thence into the fields belonging to the estate to see the animals.

One or two dogs had joined our numbers now, and we were quite a gay party as we went through the adjoining meadow and climbed the first fence into the field by the brook, at the other end of which, picturesquely grouped, stood some three or four splendid horses, with heads erect and manes and tails streaming out in the wind. They had been calmly watching us climb the fence, and as we landed on terra firma the favorite hunter came gracefully towards his master, ears forward and nostrils distended—no doubt in expectation of the sugar which might be lurking in the right-hand coat pocket. The four beauties, one of which was a long-legged prospective hunter three months old, were all duly admired and petted, then bidden "good-bye" at the gate as we passed into the next field.

Later we went into the garden and thence into the road. This road is one of the bits of rural scenery which makes one wish the camera could reproduce color as well as form; it runs between pleasant meadows, is set between hawthorn hedges and elm trees; the interlacing branches of the latter form a lattice to the blue above, and send a dancing carpet of checkered light and shade upon the path below. A brook which comes from haunts of coot and heron makes "a sudden sally" just here and crosses the road, and the rustic bridge completes the beauty of the scene. About five minutes further along the road, around a curve, we came to the little church which dates back to the time of Cromwell and the wars of the Cavaliers and Roundheads. In front of the church is one of the most magnificent yew trees I have ever seen; the girth is tremendous, and the myriad branches form a forest in themselves; a branch of the road opposite the church gate leads down into the valley, and it is a true story handed down among the people in the neighborhood that Oliver Cromwell came galloping up this road with a party of his Ironsides, alighted and tied his horse to the yew tree, then directed his soldiers to sack the church.

It is rather wonderful to stand here on a calm morning in the year nineteen hundred and seven and picture what may have happened over two hundred years ago. The little church has scarcely altered at all in the last hundred years; the quaint old bell-tower is just as it first stood and even the nave, which is com-

paratively new, is so dubious-looking that Mrs. Begbie said she wondered every Sunday when they sat in their seats (just under the corner of the nave) if the stones would come showering down on them before the service was over. In the churchyard, among the stones, moss-grown and tottering, one reads the parish history:

"Beneath those rugged elms, that yew tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell forever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

One might, in fact, quote the entire "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" of Gray and find it entirely fitting. Among the newer graves in a distant corner is a somewhat more pretentious memorial stone. It marks the resting-place of the late Sir William Jenner, the favorite surgeon of Her Majesty Queen Victoria.

The Jenner estate joins the churchyard, and, passing through a little rustic gate, we entered the neighboring meadows of the estate; a short but thoroughly delightful walk along a path which grew more and more beautiful at each turn soon brought us to the brook again. The dogs, nosing along the bank for a shallow ford, spied a rabbit, and then ensued a furious chorus of short, sharp barks, and with yelps of mad excitement they all tore after the hapless animal in hot pursuit. The rabbit, however, must have discovered a lucky hole in the bank of the stream, for the dogs joined us in the garden some minutes later—hot, tired and unsuccessful.

After luncheon we went upstairs to the cosy sitting-room of the landing and listened to the "Melba" records on the gramophone. The gramophone was chosen for Mr. Begbie by Madame Melba herself just after she had sung into the recording instrument Gounod's "Ave Maria," with violin obligato by Jan Kubelik. Mr. Begbie had been one of those invited to the London gramophone rooms to hear Melba and Kubelik make this famous record, and he told us (while searching among the pile of records for this particular one) that when he asked the great singer after the trial was over how she felt while singing that glorious song into the black depths of the gramophone's funnel she replied: "I felt as though there was a huge eye at the bottom which slowly and maliciously winked at me out of the darkness." It was with a sensation of nothing less than awe that I listened to the preliminary buzzing before the first tones of the pianoforte accompaniment heralded the beginning of the song. Then the first low notes of that glorious voice sent a thrill through me as I realized it was the voice of Melba!

Later on we played cricket on the lawn. I may here mention that one of Mr. Begbie's neighbors is C. B. Fry, the famous cricketer, and he at one time presented the author with a bat which had "knocked up" many a world-famous score at Lords! I cannot say whether it was the overwhelming associations of the bat and its former owner, or the swift bowling of my host, which took away my nerve, but certainly the score resulting from my efforts that day is not likely to become "world-famous."

The sanctum sanctorum where those great books, "The Priest" and "The Vigil," were written is full of interest. Books, pictures, and objects d'arts abound; the writer's favorites are Shakespeare and Honore de Balzac; every known translation of the latter's works is to be found on the shelves which line the walls of the study; the table, where the writing is done, is placed across the end of the room, where long, bow-windows open onto a lawn of verdant green and velvet smoothness; close to the window is a huge pine tree, whose lowest branches sweep the path which runs past the windows—in fact, the entire surroundings hold naught but inspiration for the artistic and susceptible nature of the poet and author.

THE "ELECTRIC GUN" AGAIN

The reappearance of the plan to throw projectiles by electric power—this time in England—elicits a sarcastic word of comment from The Western Electrician (Chicago, May 2). Most of the scientific journals do not notice it at all. Says the paper just named:

"An old friend presents itself in the electric gun, which is attracting some attention in the English papers. This time the claim is no modest one. The gun is to hurl a projectile weighing 2,000 pounds to a distance of 300 miles. The inventor, or shall we say the re-inventor, is Mr. W. S. Simpson, 'the well known English metallurgist.' Mr. Simpson has great faith in this gun. He is quoted in a London paper as follows:

"Electricity has not been used in this special direction yet; its possibilities are so great that it will be difficult to suggest when or where its application will reach perfection. There is, in fact, no limit to the powers of electricity. It is quite as easy for my weapons to project 50 shells of 500 pounds each, per minute as to throw 50 of 50 pounds each, and to stop a shot at 100 miles distance as at 100 yards; distance is practically no object. Its cost will be cheaper than the existing artillery, while its life will be at least a hundred times longer than the best weapons now in use."

"Mr. Simpson is right in one thing; electricity has never been used as the propelling force in guns. He might have added that, although the theory was broached twenty years ago or more and has cropped up at intervals since, it has never had any practical development, simply because it won't work."