

vocating constitutional enactments disfranchising voters who fail to pay their capitation or other tax, or who are convicted of larceny, and prescribing an educational qualification for voting and jury duty. This reminds me that the colored university was relentlessly broken up, an appropriation being refused to pay even the arrears of the professors. It was very odious to the whites from its perversion, having once been to the old, gentlemanly, chivalric Palmetto element as Oxford to the Tories and churchmen. The legislature has resolved to turn it into a white college again, and give the negroes a college for themselves, with an equal pecuniary support. There is great prejudice in this State against free schools for any color; nor have the airs put on by colored school children contributed to remove it. Policy, however, and past promises will probably impel the maintenance of a free-school system for some time at least, but on a less extensive scale. It is proper to add that some cultured Southerners are in favor of educating and elevating the negro as the best way to solve our race difficulties. But it is doubtful if their views will prevail against inherited prejudice.

Reconstruction has certainly failed to make the negro a full-fledged citizen, with all the rights and privileges enjoyed by the white race. But no longer

a slave, owning perhaps a tenth of the property in the State, free to earn money and to go where and hire to whom he pleases, with his rights of property and (while he votes with his master, or refrains from voting) his person secure, he certainly has made an immense stride forward from the time of the overseer and the patrol, the quarter and the plantation; nay, even from the time when he was set free, penniless and helpless, despised and ridden over by his former masters, and the prey of greedy adventurers from the North. As to the future, he is side by side with a branch of that race which has yet found no superior on the earth; and the evolutionists should watch with interest that which will prove to be a most instructive phase in the progress of the great struggle for existence.

Readers of this paper may find themselves left in some doubt as to the sentiments of the author on the policy whose results are recounted. Nor should they be charged with a lack of discernment. Over the first and second results stated, the author is inclined on the whole to rejoice. In the third, fourth, and fifth results described, while he finds some things to approve, he perceives much to deplore. Consequently, he knows not what to say at present. His mind is not made up.

A South Carolinian.

SOME RAMBLING NOTES OF AN IDLE EXCURSION.

IV.

THE early twilight of a Sunday evening in Hamilton, Bermuda, is an alluring time. There is just enough of whispering breeze, fragrance of flowers, and sense of repose to raise one's thoughts heavenward; and just enough amateur piano music to keep him reminded of the

other place. There are many venerable pianos in Hamilton, and they all play at twilight. Age enlarges and enriches the powers of some musical instruments, — notably those of the violin, — but it seems to set a piano's teeth on edge. Most of the music in vogue there is the same that those pianos prattled in their innocent infancy; and there is something very

pathetic about it when they go over it now, in their asthmatic second childhood, dropping a note here and there, where a tooth is gone.

We attended evening service at the stately Episcopal church on the hill, where were five or six hundred people, half of them white and the other half black, according to the usual Bermudian proportions; and all well dressed, — a thing which is also usual in Bermuda and to be confidently expected. There was good music, which we heard, and doubtless a good sermon, but there was a wonderful deal of coughing, and so only the high parts of the argument carried over it. As we came out, after service, I overheard one young girl say to another, —

“Why, you don’t mean to say you pay duty on gloves and laces! I only pay postage; have them done up and sent in the Boston Advertiser.”

There are those who believe that the most difficult thing to create is a woman who can comprehend that it is wrong to smuggle; and that an impossible thing to create is a woman who will not smuggle, whether or no, when she gets a chance. But these may be errors.

We went wandering off toward the country, and were soon far down in the lonely black depths of a road that was roofed over with the dense foliage of a double rank of great cedars. There was no sound of any kind, there; it was perfectly still. And it was so dark that one could detect nothing but sombre outlines. We strode farther and farther down this tunnel, cheering the way with chat.

Presently the chat took this shape: “How insensibly the character of a people and of a government makes its impress upon a stranger, and gives him a sense of security or of insecurity without his taking deliberate thought upon the matter or asking anybody a question! We have been in this land half a day; we have seen none but honest faces; we have noted the British flag flying, which means efficient government and good order; so without inquiry we plunge unarmed and with perfect confidence into

this dismal place, which in almost any other country would swarm with thugs and garroters” —

‘Sh! What was that? Stealthy footsteps! Low voices! We gasp, we close up together, and wait. A vague shape glides out of the dusk and confronts us. A voice speaks — demands money!

“A shilling, gentlemen, if you please, to help build the new Methodist church.”

Blessed sound! Holy sound! We contribute with thankful avidity to the new Methodist church, and are happy to think how lucky it was that those little colored Sunday-school scholars did not seize upon everything we had with violence, before we recovered from our momentary helpless condition. By the light of cigars we write down the names of weightier philanthropists than ourselves on the contribution-cards, and then pass on into the farther darkness, saying, What sort of a government do they call this, where they allow little black pious children, with contribution-cards, to plunge out upon peaceable strangers in the dark and scare them to death?

We prowled on several hours, sometimes by the sea-side, sometimes inland, and finally managed to get lost, which is a feat that requires talent in Bermuda. I had on new shoes. They were No. 7’s when I started, but were not more than 5’s now, and still diminishing. I walked two hours in those shoes after that, before we reached home. Doubtless I could have the reader’s sympathy for the asking. Many people have never had the headache or the toothache, and I am one of those myself; but everybody has worn tight shoes for two or three hours, and known the luxury of taking them off in a retired place and seeing his feet swell up and obscure the firmament. Few of us will ever forget the exquisite hour we were married. Once when I was a callow, bashful cub, I took a plain, unsentimental country girl to a comedy one night. I had known her a day; she seemed divine; I wore my new boots. At the end of the first half hour she said, “Why do you fidget so with your feet?” I said, “Did I?” Then I put my attention there and kept still.

At the end of another half hour she said, "Why do you say, 'Yes, oh yes!'" and "Ha, ha, oh, certainly! very true!" to everything I say, when half the time those are entirely irrelevant answers?" I blushed, and explained that I had been a little absent-minded. At the end of another half hour she said, "Please, why do you grin so steadfastly at vacancy, and yet look so sad?" I explained that I always did that when I was reflecting. An hour passed, and then she turned and contemplated me with her earnest eyes and said, "Why do you cry all the time?" I explained that very funny comedies always made me cry. At last human nature surrendered, and I secretly slipped my boots off. This was a mistake. I was not able to get them on any more. It was a rainy night; there were no omnibuses going our way; and as I walked home, burning up with shame, with the girl on one arm and my boots under the other, I was an object worthy of some compassion, — especially in those moments of martyrdom when I had to pass through the glare that fell upon the pavement from street lamps. Finally, this child of the forest said, "Where are your boots?" and being taken unprepared, I put a fitting finish to the follies of the evening with the stupid remark, "The higher classes do not wear them to the theatre."

The Reverend had been an army chaplain during the war, and while we were hunting for a road that would lead to Hamilton he told a story about two dying soldiers which interested me in spite of my feet. He said that in the Potomac hospitals rough pine coffins were furnished by government, but that it was not always possible to keep up with the demand; so, when a man died, if there was no coffin at hand he was buried without one. One night late, two soldiers lay dying in a ward. A man came in with a coffin on his shoulder, and stood trying to make up his mind which of these two poor fellows would be likely to need it first. Both of them begged for it with their fading eyes, — they were past talking. Then one of them protruded a wasted hand from his

blankets and made a feeble beckoning sign with the fingers, to signify, "Be a good fellow; put it under my bed, please." The man did it, and left. The lucky soldier painfully turned himself in his bed until he faced the other warrior, raised himself partly on his elbow, and began to work up a mysterious expression of some kind in his face. Gradually, irksomely, but surely and steadily, it developed, and at last it took definite form as a pretty successful wink. The sufferer fell back exhausted with his labor, but bathed in glory. Now entered a personal friend of No. 2, the despoiled soldier. No. 2 pleaded with him with eloquent eyes, till presently he understood, and removed the coffin from under No. 1's bed and put it under No. 2's. No. 2 indicated his joy, and made some more signs; the friend understood again, and put his arm under No. 2's shoulders and lifted him partly up. Then the dying hero turned the dim exultation of his eye upon No. 1, and began a slow and labored work with his hands; gradually he lifted one hand up toward his face; it grew weak and dropped back again; once more he made the effort, but failed again. He took a rest; he gathered all the remnant of his strength, and this time he slowly but surely carried his thumb to the side of his nose, spread the gaunt fingers wide in triumph, and dropped back dead. That picture sticks by me yet. The "situation" is unique.

The next morning, at what seemed a very early hour, the little white table-waiter appeared suddenly in my room and shot a single word out of himself: "Breakfast!"

This was a remarkable boy in many ways. He was about eleven years old; he had alert, intent black eyes; he was quick of movement; there was no hesitation, no uncertainty about him anywhere; there was a military decision in his lip, his manner, his speech, that was an astonishing thing to see in a little chap like him; he wasted no words; his answers always came so quick and brief that they seemed to be part of the question that had been asked instead of a

reply to it. When he stood at table with his fly-brush, rigid, erect, his face set in a cast-iron gravity, he was a statue till he detected a dawning want in somebody's eye; then he pounced down, supplied it, and was instantly a statue again. When he was sent to the kitchen for anything, he marched upright till he got to the door; he turned hand-springs the rest of the way.

"Breakfast!"

I thought I would make one more effort to get some conversation out of this being.

"Have you called the Reverend, or are"

"Yes s'r!"

"Is it early, or is"

"Eight-five!"

"Do you have to do all the 'chores,' or is there somebody to give you a"

"Colored girl!"

"Is there only one parish in this island, or are there"

"Eight!"

"Is the big church on the hill a parish church, or is it"

"Chapel-of-ease!"

"Is taxation here classified into poll, parish, town, and"

"Don't know!"

Before I could cudgel another question out of my head, he was below, hand-springing across the back yard. He had slid down the balusters, head-first. I gave up trying to provoke a discussion with him. The essential element of discussion had been left out of him; his answers were so final and exact that they did not leave a doubt to hang conversation on. I suspect that there is the making of a mighty man or a mighty rascal in this boy, — according to circumstances, — but they are going to apprentice him to a carpenter. It is the way the world uses its opportunities.

During this day and the next we took carriage drives about the island and over to the town of St. George's, fifteen or twenty miles away. Such hard, excellent roads to drive over are not to be found elsewhere out of Europe. An intelligent young colored man drove us, and acted as guide-book. In the edge

of town we saw five or six mountain-cabbage palms (atrocious name!) standing in a straight row, and equidistant from each other. These were not the largest or the tallest trees I have ever seen, but they were the stateliest, the most majestic. That row of them must be the nearest that nature has ever come to counterfeiting a colonnade. These trees are all the same height, say sixty feet; the trunks as gray as granite, with a very gradual and perfect taper; without sign of branch or knot or flaw; the surface not looking like bark, but like granite that has been dressed and not polished. Thus all the way up the diminishing shaft for fifty feet; then it begins to take the appearance of being closely wrapped, spool-fashion, with gray cord, or of having been turned in a lathe. Above this point there is an outward swell, and thence upwards, for six feet or more, the cylinder is a bright, fresh green, and is formed of wrappings like those of an ear of green Indian corn. Then comes the great, spraying palm plume, also green. Other palm-trees always lean out of the perpendicular, or have a curve in them. But the plumb-line could not detect a deflection in any individual of this stately row; they stand as straight as the colonnade of Baalbec; they have its great height, they have its gracefulness, they have its dignity; in moonlight or twilight, and shorn of their plumes, they would duplicate it.

The birds we came across in the country were singularly tame; even that wild creature, the quail, would pick around in the grass at ease while we inspected it and talked about it at leisure. A small bird of the canary species had to be stirred up with the butt end of the whip before it would move, and then it moved only a couple of feet. It is said that even the suspicious flea is tame and sociable in Bermuda, and will allow himself to be caught and caressed without misgivings. This should be taken with allowance, for doubtless there is more or less brag about it. In San Francisco they used to claim that their native flea could kick a child over, as if it were a merit in a flea to be able to do that; as

if the knowledge of it trumpeted abroad ought to entice immigration. Such a thing in nine cases out of ten would be almost sure to deter a thinking man from coming.

We saw no bugs or reptiles to speak of, and so I was thinking of saying in print, in a general way, that there were none at all; but one night after I had gone to bed, the Reverend came into my room carrying something, and asked, "Is this your boot?" I said it was, and he said he had met a spider going off with it. Next morning he stated that just at dawn the same spider raised his window and was coming in to get a shirt, but saw him and fled.

I inquired, "Did he get the shirt?"

"No."

"How did you know it was a shirt he was after?"

"I could see it in his eye."

We inquired around, but could hear of no Bermudian spider capable of doing these things. Citizens said that their largest spiders could not more than spread their legs over an ordinary saucer, and that they had always been considered honest. Here was testimony of a clergyman against the testimony of mere worldlings, — interested ones, too. On the whole, I judged it best to lock up my things.

Here and there on the country roads we found lemon, papaya, orange, lime, and fig trees; also several sorts of palms, among them the cocco, the date, and the palmetto. We saw some bamboos forty feet high, with stems as thick as a man's arm. Jungles of the mangrove-tree stood up out of swamps, propped on their interlacing roots as upon a tangle of stilts. In dryer places the noble tamarind sent down its grateful cloud of shade. Here and there the blossomy tamarisk adorned the roadside. There was a curious gnarled and twisted black tree, without a single leaf on it. It might have passed itself off for a dead apple-tree but for the fact that it had a star-like, red-hot flower sprinkled sparsely over its person. It had the scattery red glow that a constellation might have when glimpsed through smoked glass.

It is possible that our constellations have been so constructed as to be invisible through smoked glass; if this is so it is a great mistake.

We saw a tree that bears grapes, and just as calmly and unostentatiously as a vine would do it. We saw an India-rubber tree, but out of season, possibly, so there were no shoes on it, nor suspenders, nor anything that a person would properly expect to find there. This gave it an impressively fraudulent look. There was exactly one mahogany-tree on the island. I know this to be reliable, because I saw a man who said he had counted it many a time and could not be mistaken. He was a man with a hare lip and a pure heart, and everybody said he was as true as steel. Such men are all too few.

One's eye caught near and far the pink cloud of the oleander and the red blaze of the pomegranate blossom. In one piece of wild wood the morning-glory vines had wrapped the trees to their very tops, and decorated them all over with couples and clusters of great blue bells, — a fine and striking spectacle, at a little distance. But the dull cedar is everywhere, and its is the prevailing foliage. One does not appreciate how dull it is until the varnished, bright green attire of the infrequent lemon-tree pleasantly intrudes its contrast. In one thing Bermuda is eminently tropical, — was in May, at least, — the unbrilliant, slightly faded, unrejoicing look of the landscape. For forests arrayed in a blemishless magnificence of glowing green foliage that seems to exult in its own existence and can move the beholder to an enthusiasm that will make him either shout or cry, one must go to countries that have malignant winters.

We saw scores of colored farmers digging their crops of potatoes and onions, their wives and children helping, — entirely contented and comfortable, if looks go for anything. We never met a man, or woman, or child anywhere in this sunny island who seemed to be unprosperous, or discontented, or sorry about anything. This sort of monotony became very tiresome presently, and even some-

thing worse. The spectacle of an entire nation groveling in contentment is an infuriating thing. We felt the lack of something in this community, — a vague, an undefinable, an elusive something, and yet a lack. But after considerable thought we made out what it was, — tramps. Let them go there, right now, in a body. It is utterly virgin soil. Passage is cheap. Every true patriot in America will help buy tickets. Whole armies of these excellent beings can be spared from our midst and our polls; they will find a delicious climate and a green, kind-hearted people. There are potatoes and onions for all, and a generous welcome for the first batch that arrives, and elegant graves for the second.

It was the Early Rose potato the people were digging. Later in the year they have another crop, which they call the Garnet. We buy their potatoes (retail) at fifteen dollars a barrel; and those colored farmers buy ours for a song, and live on them. Havana might exchange cigars with Connecticut in the same advantageous way, if she thought of it.

We passed a roadside grocery with a sign up, "Potatoes Wanted." An ignorant stranger, doubtless. He could not have gone thirty steps from his place without finding plenty of them.

In several fields the arrowroot crop was already sprouting. Bermuda used to make a vast annual profit out of this staple before fire-arms came into such general use.

The island is not large. Somewhere in the interior a man ahead of us had a very slow horse. I suggested that we had better go by him; but the driver said the man had but a little way to go. I waited to see, wondering how he could know. Presently the man did turn down another road. I asked, "How did you know he would?"

"Because I knew the man, and where he lived."

I asked him, satirically, if he knew everybody in the island; he answered, very simply, that he did. This gives a body's mind a good substantial grip on the dimensions of the place.

At the principal hotel in St. George's, a young girl, with a sweet, serious face, said we could not be furnished with dinner, because we had not been expected, and no preparation had been made. Yet it was still an hour before dinner time. We argued, she yielded not; we supplicated, she was serene. The hotel had not been expecting an inundation of two people, and so it seemed that we should have to go home dinnerless. I said we were not very hungry; a fish would do. My little maid answered, it was not the market-day for fish. Things began to look serious; but presently the boarder who sustained the hotel came in, and when the case was laid before him he was cheerfully willing to divide. So we had much pleasant chat at table about St. George's chief industry, the repairing of damaged ships; and in between we had a soup that had something in it that seemed to taste like the hereafter, but it proved to be only pepper of a particularly vivacious kind. And we had an iron-clad chicken that was deliciously cooked, but not in the right way. Baking was not the thing to convince his sort. He ought to have been put through a quartz mill until the "tuck" was taken out of him, and then boiled till we came again. We got a good deal of sport out of him, but not enough sustenance to leave the victory on our side. No matter; we had potatoes and a pie and a sociable good time. Then a ramble through the town, which is a quaint one, with interesting, crooked streets, and narrow, crooked lanes, with here and there a grain of dust. Here, as in Hamilton, the dwellings had Venetian blinds of a very sensible pattern. They were not double shutters, hinged at the sides, but a single broad shutter, hinged at the top; you push it outward, from the bottom, and fasten it at any angle required by the sun or desired by yourself.

All about the island one sees great white scars on the hill-slopes. These are dished spaces where the soil has been scraped off and the coral exposed and glazed with hard whitewash. Some of these are a quarter-acre in size. They

catch and carry the rain-fall to reservoirs; for the wells are few and poor, and there are no natural springs and no brooks.

They say that the Bermuda climate is mild and equable, with never any snow or ice, and that one may be very comfortable in spring clothing the year round, there. We had delightful and decided summer weather in May, with a flaming sun that permitted the thinnest of raiment, and yet there was a constant breeze; consequently we were never discomforted by heat. At four or five in the afternoon the mercury began to go down, and then it became necessary to change to thick garments. I went to St. George's in the morning clothed in the thinnest of linen, and reached home at five in the afternoon with two overcoats on. The nights are said to be always cool and bracing. We had mosquito nets, and the Reverend said the mosquitoes persecuted him a good deal. I often heard him slapping and banging at these imaginary creatures with as much zeal as if they had been real. There are no mosquitoes in the Bermudas in May.

The poet Thomas Moore spent several months in Bermuda more than seventy years ago. He was sent out to be registrar of the admiralty. I am not quite clear as to the function of a registrar of the admiralty of Bermuda, but I think it is his duty to keep a record of all the admirals born there. I will inquire into this. There was not much doing in admirals, and Moore got tired and went away. A reverently preserved souvenir of him is still one of the treasures of the islands. I gathered the idea, vaguely, that it was a jug, but was persistently thwarted in the twenty-two efforts I made to visit it. However, it was no matter, for I found afterwards that it was only a chair.

There are several "sights" in the Bermudas, of course, but they are easily avoided. This is a great advantage, — one cannot have it in Europe. Bermuda is the right country for a jaded man to "loaf" in. There are no harassments; the deep peace and quiet of the

country sink into one's body and bones and give his conscience a rest, and chloroform the legion of invisible small devils that are always trying to whitewash his hair. A good many Americans go there about the first of March and remain until the early spring weeks have finished their villainies at home.

The Bermudians are hoping soon to have telegraphic communication with the world. But even after they shall have acquired this curse it will still be a good country to go to for a vacation, for there are charming little islets scattered about the inclosed sea where one could live secure from interruption. The telegraph boy would have to come in a boat, and one could easily kill him while he was making his landing.

We had spent four days in Bermuda, — three bright ones out of doors and one rainy one in the house, we being disappointed about getting a yacht for a sail; and now our furlough was ended.

We made the run home to New York quarantine in three days and five hours, and could have gone right along up to the city if we had had a health permit. But health permits are not granted after seven in the evening, partly because a ship cannot be inspected and overhauled with exhaustive thoroughness except in daylight, and partly because health officers are liable to catch cold if they expose themselves to the night air. Still, you can *buy* a permit after hours for five dollars extra, and the officer will do the inspecting next week. Our ship and passengers lay under expense and in humiliating captivity all night, under the very nose of the little official reptile who is supposed to protect New York from pestilence by his vigilant "inspections." This imposing rigor gave everybody a solemn and awful idea of the beneficent watchfulness of our government, and there were some who wondered if anything finer could be found in other countries.

In the morning we were all a-tiptoe to witness the intricate ceremony of inspecting the ship. But it was a disappointing thing. The health officer's tug ranged alongside for a moment, our

purser handed the lawful three-dollar permit fee to the health officer's boot-black, who passed us a folded paper in a forked stick, and away we went. The entire "inspection" did not occupy thirteen seconds.

The health officer's place is worth a hundred thousand dollars a year to him. His system of inspection is perfect, and therefore cannot be improved on; but it seems to me that his system of collecting his fees might be amended. For

a great ship to lie idle all night is a most costly loss of time; for her passengers to have to do the same thing works to them the same damage, with the addition of an amount of exasperation and bitterness of soul that the spectacle of that health-offi¹ could hardly sweeten. Now why would it not be better and simpler to let the ships pass in unmolested, and the fees and permits be exchanged once a year by post?

Mark Twain.

CRUDE AND CURIOUS INVENTIONS AT THE CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION.

IX.

IV. COTTON, SILK, AND SPINNING.

COTTON is the principal textile fibre of the world. Wherever in tropical and semi-tropical countries the people go clothed, it is in cotton, and in temperate climes it forms a part of the usual dress. If the wider use, and therefore greater importance, of cotton than wool, flax, or silk be the measure of dominion, then "cotton is king." We know it by a name derived from the Arabic *goton*, which reminds us of the great people, the Saracens, who introduced it to European notice when they became possessed of Spain. Previous to this the knowledge and reputation of the fabric depended upon the notices by travelers and writers, and upon limited importations from the East.

On our side of the Atlantic cotton has been known from time immemorial, but the kind now cultivated in the United

States is from seed which originally came from the Levant to England, thence to the Bahamas, and from those islands to Georgia late in the last century. Columbus found cotton to be the principal material for clothing among the Mexicans; Magellan describes it as common in Brazil in 1519.

There is no knowledge of the time when in the south of Asia cotton was otherwise than what it is now, the principal dependence for clothing; while its common use in Europe north of the Mediterranean countries, and in our own country, is a matter about one hundred years old. Machinery has given it its importance with us, but the Hindoo methods are probably just what they were when Herodotus spoke of the tree wool, and mentioned that the Indian contingent of the army of Xerxes wore cotton drawers.

Figure 227 is a view of the roller cotton-gin of Hindostan as exhibited in the British colonies collection in the Main

ished from his due and rightful pedestal in the world's literature. Let the blank remain a blank; and let it suggest to the reader that he has sustained a precious loss which can never be made good to him.

M. T.

¹ When the proofs of this article came to me I saw that The Atlantic had condemned the words which occupied the place where is now a vacancy. I can invent no figure worthy to stand in the shoes of the lurid colossus which a too decent respect for the opinions of mankind has thus ruthlessly ban-