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OUR NEW YORK LETTER.

Three Notable Characters—The Difference Between Good and Bad Men.

NEW YORK, May 2.

The news of the week consists very largely of the announcement of the death of three remarkable men, every one of whom showed in an extraordinary way the great possibilities of American life and especially of life in New York. I can think of nothing more interesting or instructive than a brief sketch of their extraordinary careers.

One, whose name was Paraf, came here from Europe 15 years ago—a mere adventurer. He had been educated as a chemist, and he was an exceedingly bright fellow. He had the knack of making easy social conquests, and he was one of the most accomplished swindlers that ever drew the breath of life. He came here professing to know the secret by which peculiar dyes for cloth are produced—dyes that would be of enormous value to certain American manufacturers of cotton goods. He sold his pretended secret to a large number of them, getting from \$1,000 to \$4,000 a piece out of them. Before he was exposed he had accumulated a considerable fortune; and no man in New York lived in greater style. He had horses and carriages waiting at his door all day and half the night. He lived on Fifth Avenue. He married an excellent New York lady. He gave grand dinners. He spent \$20 a day to perfume his bath. He managed to spend \$500 to \$600 a week, and of course he pretty soon came to the end of his rope. But by that time he had got another chemical swindle, and a hundred or some more rich men had been duped out of large sums of money. He did nothing by halves. He went on a grand scale. He was an enormous fellow in every way. Finally having run through a million or more—not one dollar of which he earned honestly—he was obliged to go away. The fine house was sold to pay old debts. His wife and her people found out how they all had been duped, and the rascal turned up in California. The next that was heard of him, he was in South America, where he was fooling more rich people, and enjoying another stolen fortune. And now the news comes of his death in Peru, and it has started everybody again to talking about his wonderful career. This fellow swindled shrewd rich men out of hundreds of thousands of dollars as easily as the common sharper swindles greenhorns out of a few cents; and he found that New York was the best field of operations in the world.

Another remarkable man died yesterday—Cornelius Garrison, millionaire. He came to New York a very poor lad indeed, and began work in a humble way. He discovered that he had a genius for large schemes. He went Southwest and, engaged in the great Mississippi traffic. Everything he touched turned to gold. When the California gold fever broke out he went to the Pacific. He organized a line of steamers from California to Asia, and became one of the very largest ship owners in America. Simply as manager of one great commercial product between the two continents, at one time he had a salary of \$60,000 a year. He was careful, honest, prudent. He made good use of his wealth and he made it double itself as often as possible. He came to be called Commodore by everybody, simply because of his identification with such great shipping interests. Having become one of the very rich men of the country, he made his home in New York which is the best place in the country for a rich man to enjoy himself. He continued to be the very last a large owner and an active organizer of railroads and shiplines and all sorts of big enterprises. He never gave his attention to small things, and he succeeded in making hundreds of thousands of dollars legitimately as Paraf succeeded in making them by fraud. He will be buried tomorrow, and many persons will follow him to the grave who have reasons to be very proud they knew him. This man was a useful citizen in the development of the country; and he, too, found this city the most useful, pleasant and convenient place to make the base of his operations. For the gigantic honest man as well as for the prodigious swindler, this is the best place in creation.

The third man whose recent death was an event that caused great sorrow and that recalled a remarkable career—was Isaac W. England, the publisher of the *Star*. He came here from England, a very poor lad; and after a long and hard struggle to make a living, he at last secured a place in a job printing office to feed an old fashioned hand-press; and he was paid \$5 a week. He was an industrious and plucky fellow. So he soon became a reporter on the *New York Tribune*, and he made a good one. Then he began to rise—one step after another, struggling hard at every step, until in mature life he became the business manager of one of the richest papers in the world, and he commanded a princely salary and owned large properties. Yet in the days of his wealth, he never forgot his early friends. When he was buried the other day, jour-

nalists from mere reporters to the most distinguished editors stood at his grave; and every man there felt that he had lost a sincere friend. It was one of the most affecting scenes that has recently occurred anywhere. This man likewise found New York the best place for an ambitious and patient and plucky fellow to win. He won—fortune, friends, a good name, and he leaves a blessed memory.

Yet the great city and its busy life go on, and no man, no hundred men, not even a thousand men would be missed. There are other swindlers, other great capitalists, other successful managers of great newspapers; and few people know the difference in a little while.

Other news—there is very little, indeed. The question whether there will be war between England and Russia is asked every morning, and every morning answered differently. The general opinion is that there will be war. When a Russian gun-boat came into the port the other day, it created something of a stir for a day or two. There are several English gun-boats near by. There may be a naval battle on our side of the Atlantic, or there may be a general capturing of trading vessels by these men-of-war. Don't you see the various chances for romance in the situation?

General Grant is well enough to be at work again on his history. CALDWELL.

THE CLIMATE OF THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN.

C. P. Stone in Science.

In so vast a region of country as the Egyptian Sudan, extending as it does over about sixteen or eighteen degrees of latitude and as many of longitude, with differences of altitude of more than six thousand feet on single parallels, it is evident that there must be great diversity of climate, a full discussion of which would occupy too much space for a reasonable article. But that portion of the Egyptian Sudan which at this time attracts the attention of the world by reason of the presence there of European troops, and the apparently intended operations of those troops, can be here consisely considered.

British troops now occupy two positions in the Egyptian Sudan; viz., the province of Dongola on the Nile, and the city and port of Suakin on the coast of the Red Sea.

Italian troops occupy the port and vicinity of Massowah, on the Red Sea coast; and the Bay of Assab and its vicinity, on the same coast, near the strait of Bab-el-Mandeb.

Whatever may be the object of the Italian government in thus occupying positions on the Red Sea coast, the object of the present British occupation is declared to be war against El Mahdi, and it will be necessary to consider the climate of the territories occupied by his forces.

El Mahdi now occupies and rules over the following: the province of Khartum, the province of Darfur, the province of Kordofan, the province of Senaar, the province of Berber, the district of Gallabat, the province of Taka (excepting the capital, Kassala), and the great desert region between the Nile near Berber, and the Red-Sea coast near Suakin and Agig.

Thus we have to consider the climate in the provinces and districts above named; and first the province of Dongola, now occupied by the expeditionary corps under Gen. Lord Wolseley, of probably about nine thousand British troops.

This is one of the rich and productive provinces of the Egyptian Sudan, extending from near Wady Halfa on the north, to the borders of the province of Berber along the course of the Nile. The correspondence from Lord Wolseley's corps has, during the past few months, made almost every hamlet and village throughout its length known to all parts of the world where newspapers are read. The climate of the region now occupied by the British force is not only good, but very agreeable, during four months of the year,—November, December, January and February,—though February sometimes gives specimen days of the Khamsen wind which are very trying, even to natives of the country. During the months of March, April, May and the first half of June, however, the climate, though not very unhealthy, is exceeding trying to all excepting natives of the country. The ordinary temperature is very high during the day; the thermometer in the shade often indicating from 95 to 110 degrees, F., while during the night the temperature falls to 65 or 70 degrees. This great difference makes it necessary to take great care to preserve health; and, with the best of care, intermittent fevers are exceedingly prevalent. These, if neglected, are liable to take typhoid forms. During these months, the dust-storms coming from the south-west are of most distressing frequency and violence. While these storms are hard to endure, and cause great suffering, I believe they to a certain extent destroy fever-germs, and prevent the climate from being so fatal to Europeans as it would otherwise be. From June to September the southerly and south-westerly winds come charged with moisture, though rarely yielding

rain; and, while relieved from the dust storms, the European is more subject to fever influences.

Such is the climate in which the British troops are apparently to wait during the next five months, before advancing against their human enemy. Should they wait there, under the best possible care and with the best possible medical surveillance, the commander will be fortunate should the "unseen enemy" not reduce his force by more than ten per cent before October next, while another ten per cent would be so debilitated by repeated fever-attacks as to require a month of cool weather to restore their strength, and make them fit for a vigorous campaign.

The climate of Suakin can hardly be considered unhealthy, but for the excessive heat which reigns there, except during the three months of December, January and February. There the desert comes down to the very sea-beach; and the air of the desert, though burning hot, is not unwholesome. But the heat in that region, where sometimes during two or three successive years rain does not fall, while the tropical subeans constantly bathe the rocks and sands is of an intensity not to be conceived by those who have never experienced the like; and exposure to it by Europeans, without extraordinary precautions, is certain to produce sun-stroke and congestions. The thermometer in April, in the shade, will often indicate a temperature of 100 to 105 degrees F.; but even this does not indicate the effect upon a foot-soldier, who, marching in the sun, receives the direct rays, and, in addition, suffers from the heat radiated and reflected from the light-colored soil. It is, however, quite different with the mounted soldier, whether on horse-back or on camel-back; as, if well covered, he suffers less from the direct rays of the sun, and not at all from the reflected and radiated heat. As the entire route from Suakin to Berber is subject to heats fully equal to those of the vicinity of Suakin, it may be safely asserted that it is impracticable for European foot-soldiers to make the march between those two points during the spring and summer months, except by using the night and early morning exclusively for marching.

The climate of the province of Berber is very similar to that of Dongola; but, owing to the effects of the waters of the river Atbara, in some parts of this province fevers are more prevalent during the summer months, and of a worse type than in Dongola.

In the province of Taka, and the district of Gallabat, the climate from June to October is deadly for Europeans. During that season the rains are there copious, and, mingling with the floods of water coming down from the mountains of Abyssinia, cause the rich soil to become like a saturated sponge, while the rank vegetation and the exhalations from the soil render the air poisonous.

From many districts the natives abandon the country in May, taking with them their families, their flocks and their herds—to save themselves and their families from fever; and their flocks and herds from the ravages of the stinging insects which, during the season of rains, infect the country. These people go north to the deserts and remain until the latter part of October, when they return, to find their own country delightful in climate and glorious in vegetation. These conditions remain through the winter, and the air is healthful until April.

The climate of Khartum is hot, damp and exceedingly unhealthy from April until October. The winter climate is not disagreeable; but even in winter the place can hardly be considered healthy, owing to the peculiar location of the town between the Blue and White Niles, and to lack of sanitary rule in the construction of the streets and houses. During the past twenty years, more care has been taken in the construction of dwellings; and the conditions are now more favorable than they formerly were.

The province of Kordofan is visited by less rain than that of Khartum or of Taka. During the winter, from the last of October until the 1st of March, the climate is very agreeable and quite healthy. The prevailing winds are from the north. The temperature is not high, ranging in the middle of the day from 80 to 88 degrees F. The air is bracing and invigorating, while the nights are cool and pleasant.

March, April and May are there the hottest and most disagreeable season, though not unhealthy. In June the season of rains commences and it lasts until the latter part of September or early October. The winds are then from the south and south-west. The rains come in showers, sometimes daily, but often once in three or four days. The air is debilitating; and fevers, intermittent in form, strike all excepting the natives.

No matter what care may be taken to guard troops from the effects of climate, the death-rate among soldiers is always great during this wet season. In an expedition which I sent into that province, well organized, well and very carefully commanded, well supplied, with good medical attendance and good hospital supplies, six per cent of the sol-

diers died during four months of the season of rains, while during the remainder of the year there were very few deaths.

The climate of Darfur closely resembles that of Kordofan. The rains come at the same time of year, and the sanitary effects of the different seasons are nearly the same; yet the fevers, according to the reports of the medical officers, seem to be more often severe in type in Darfur than in Kordofan.

A Rare Old Coin.

Dr. Adam Clarke.

There is extant a gold circular coin of the Great Mogul, *Shah Jehan*, struck at Delhi, A. H. 1062, A. D. 1651, five inches and a half in diameter; on each side of this coin is a square, the angles of which touch the periphery; within this square, and in the segments, there are the following inscriptions:

1. Within the square, on one side, *The bright star of religion, Mohammed (a second Sahib Kiran) Shah Jehan, the victorious emperor.*
2. In the segment, on the upper side of the square, *The impression upon this coin of 200 mohurs, was struck through the favour of God.*
3. On the lateral segment to the left, *By the second Sahib Kiran, Shah Jehan, the Defender of the Faith.*
4. On the bottom segment, *May the golden countenance from the scripture of this coin, enlighten the world.*
5. On the lateral segment to the right, *As long as the splendid face of the moon is illuminated by the rays of the sun!*

1. On the reverse, within the square, *There is no god but God; and Mohammed is the Prophet of God. Struck in the capital of Shah Jehanabad, A. H. 1062.*
2. On the top of the square, *Religion was illuminated by the truth of Abu Bekar.*
3. On the left hand compartment, *The faith was strengthened by the justice of Omar.*
4. On the bottom compartment, *Piety was refreshed by the modesty and mildness of Othman.*
5. On the right hand compartment, *The world was enlightened by the learning of Aly.*

On these inscriptions, it may be just necessary to observe, that Abu Bekar, Omar, Othman and Aly, were the four *Khalifs* who succeeded Mohammed. Abu Bekar was the father of *Ayeshah*, one of Mohammed's wives. *Othman*, from whom the Turkish government is still called the *Ottoman* empire, was son-in-law of Mohammed, having married his two daughters, *Rakiah* and *Om-al-Cathoom*. And *Aly*, son of *Abi Taleb*, Mohammed's uncle, was also one of the sons-in-law of Mohammed, having married *Fatima*, the daughter of his favourite wife *Ayeshah*.

Plenty of Time.

Baltimore Sun.

Persons who complain that the substitution of democratic for republican officials in the federal service is proceeding very slowly should remember that it is nevertheless going on, and that there are still at least three years and ten months in which to complete it. The people, no doubt, voted last November for a change, but they are not in a hurry. They see that there must be careful deliberation in selecting officials for superior positions, if the administrative shortcomings of the republicans are to be avoided. They want a "clean sweep" beyond question, but they want the offices cleaner six months after they have been swept than they were before the sweeping began.

The Natural Bridge of Virginia.

Read before the American philosophical society, Oct. 17, 1884, by Charles A. Ashburner.

During a recent trip to Virginia (Oct. 2 to 6) I visited the Natural Bridge; and although in possession of the guide-book of the locality (edition of 1884), and the admirable articles published by Major Jed. Hotchkiss in the *Virginia*, I failed to obtain certain information relating to the bridge, which would be of special interest to the topographer and geologist. Some of the observations which I made, although of a general character, may be of interest.

The bridge is undoubtedly the remnant of the top of a cave which was probably formed long before the Luray cavern, which is excavated out of the same lower Silurian limestone formation. The bridge seems to be located in the centre of a gentle basin or synclinal in the strata, which may account for the roof of the ancient cavern being left at this special point. The height of the bridge has evidently been much augmented by a lowering of the bed of Cedar Creek through the agency of chemical and mechanical erosion after the destruction of the original cavern. The height of the original cavity, at a point where the bridge now exists, was in consequence very much less than the present height

of the intrados of the bridge-arch.

The elevation of the railroad-track at Natural Bridge station, on the Shenandoah valley railroad, is seven hundred and sixty feet above ocean-level; and the elevation of Cedar Creek, under the north face of the bridge-arch, is nine hundred and fifteen feet, as determined by two independent lines of barometric levels which I ran between the railroad-station and the bridge.

The height of the crown of the arch on the north side, at the 'Look-out Point,' is one hundred and eighty-eight feet from the creek, measured with a cotton twine, which was the only line of the required length which could be obtained. The same height measured by the barometer (Short & Mason aluminum aneroid) was determined as one hundred and eighty-six feet. Neither of these methods of measurement is sufficiently exact to permit of a final statement, but the results are of interest in the absence of more definite data.

The thickness of the arch under the crown on the north side is approximately forty-six feet, and on the south side thirty-six feet.

An Appeal From the South.

W. H. Grady in The Century.

Let no one imagine, from what is here said, that the South is careless of the opinion or regardless of the counsel of the outside world. On the contrary, while maintaining firmly a position she believes to be essential, she appreciates heartily the value of general sympathy and confidence. With an earnestness that is little less than pathetic she bespeaks the patience and the impartial judgment of all concerned. Surely her situation should command this, rather than indifference or antagonism. In poverty and defeat—with her cities destroyed, her fields desolate, her labor disorganized, her homes in ruins, her families scattered, and the ranks of her sons decimated—in the face of universal prejudice, fanned by the storm of war into hostility and hatred—under the shadow of this sorrow and this advantage, she turned bravely to confront a problem that would have taxed to the utmost every resource of a rich and powerful and victorious people. Every inch of her progress has been beset with sore difficulties, and if the way is now clearing it only reveals more clearly the tremendous import of the work to which her hands are given. It must be understood that she desires to silence no criticism, evade no issue, and lessen no responsibility. She recognized that the negro is here to stay. She knows that her honor, her dear name, and her fame, no less than her prosperity, will be measured by the fullness of the justice she gives and guarantees to this kindly and dependant race. She knows that every mistake made and every error fallen into, no matter how innocently, endangers her peace and her reputation. In this full knowledge she accepts the issue without fear or evasion. She says, not boldly, but conscious of the honesty and the wisdom of her convictions: "Leave this problem to my working out. I will solve it in calmness and deliberation, without passion or prejudice, and with full regard for the unspeakable equities it holds. Judge me rigidly, but judge me by my works." And with the South the matter may be left—must be left. There it can be left with the fullest confidence that the honor of the republic will be maintained, the rights of humanity guarded, and the problem worked out in such exact justice as the finite mind can measure or finite agencies administer.

Then one of those small urchins—usually called young America's—arose and said, "It was a belled buzzard," cause 'THE TOPIC said so.' Well, that settled the first question. The next issue was, Who belled that buzzard? Some said they had heard it was belled at such a place by so and so, others said, at another place by so and so. So nobody knew what was so. The oldest member then arose and said, "I am an old man and I have never heard in all my life the beat of this. Why don't you all know it never were know'd who struck Billy Patterson? Then how are you gwine ter find out who belled that old buzzard?"

Then other questions of a like weighty nature were discussed. As, What did he bell it for? What is the buzzard going to do about it? But for want of time, will not report any of the arguments on any more but the last, which was, who does that belled buzzard belong to? One said that, as it had been marked with a bell, it belonged to the marker, but another said a buzzard was to be classed with the *feras nature*, that we all had an interest in common in it. But that the title was in the mark—But a former justice of the peace said that the title to that buzzard was in *in vobis*. Ye men of legal lore, how is it?

But right then and there the whole club rose to a point of order and unanimously (say one) passed a resolution that they would receive information about that belled buzzard in no way but through THE TOPIC. You have the actions and wishes of the club, and I will close by saying that other bells of W. N. G. have created sensations, but the belled buzzard "takes the tattered garment" in this vicinity at present. SEC. CURIOSITY CLUB.

subject to the contagion of popular interest, therefore we are curious to know all about that "belled buzzard." This might properly be called the lazy Valley, but still our people have enough patriotism to prompt them to inquire into the cause of this disturbance of Western N. C.

At an important meeting held a few days ago, the one absorbing theme was "the belled buzzard," and many doubts and theories were raised and advanced in regard to the said belled buzzard. These various surmises may be simmered down to about this, viz.

1. Was the apparition really a "belled buzzard?" On this point there was great doubt on the part of the members of the Curiosity Club. "No," one said, "he didn't believe there was anything in the rumor, only a late gotten up thing to excite the people and divert them from business, just as they were becoming convalescent from the election fever, mean tricks, &c. No, 2 jumped up and said, "No, sir! fellow-members, it was something, and I believe it was a new minister recently appointed by the President to some South American mission, and he was going there on the Air Line, and was just tolling the bell as it passed over this famine-stricken, dead-looking region." No. 3 said that he believed it was the black demon-like spirit of Republican fraud and corruption that had left Washington, and had plumed its pinions for a more congenial climate. Just then a lean, hungry-looking man in the rear hollered out, "That's a ding lie! for that dog-dasted buzzard was nothing but a new Democratic revenue officer in buzzard's clothes, prowling around, trying to smell a blockade still." Here the President of the Club called the excited member to order and fined him \$5 for improper language.

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The Tendency in Education.

To the Editor of The Lenoir Topic: The tendency of the times is to the practical and ornamental in education. This is without doubt, a mistaken idea of the subject. The practical in education ought to be only a result of the theoretical, and not the theoretical result of the practical. I regard education as being the logical development of the possibilities of an intellectual and moral being to their highest extent. It applies to all created intelligences, and has no absolute point of limitation. In man a physical department is added by which he is connected with this earth, and which in time must reach a state of exhaustion, because this sphere is not his final home. But not so with the intellectual and moral departments of his nature. These have eternity for the term, the universe for a study room, matter, spirit and principles for subjects, and Christ for the great instructor.

In the almost exclusively practical, the student loses the idea of mental and moral progression. We deal too much with matter and too little with pure thought. We soon learn to want a tangible subject, and this being absent, we drop first into skepticism, and then into atheism. This, doubtless, is the cause of the abundant atheism among the great scientists, so called.

As instructors, let us bring our students more fully into the sphere of pure moral thinking, and skepticism will decline in our midst. R. L. ABERNETHY.

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