

A DAY AT HAMPTON COURT.

[The following interesting letter from England is copied from the New York *Observer*.]

Of all the places in the Old World, there is not one so rarely rich in historic interest as this glorious structure which Cardinal Wolsey built and gave away!

"Why are you building a palace so much more splendid than any of mine?" his jolly old master, Harry the Eighth, inquired of the Lord Chancellor.

"To make it a present to your majesty," was the ready and wily answer of the ambitious Wolsey.

It stands on the Thames, twelve miles out of London, and is the great resort of the public, for whose pleasure the grounds and halls and galleries of art are now freely thrown open. Its history I shall give as I go on with my letter.

It was Friday morning when I rode out there. Not the pleasantest morning I could wish, but the only day I could command before leaving the city, and if I did not see the palace now, I never should. I must not pause to speak of the many classic spots I passed in that morning ride: the haunts of Pope, of Thomson, of Gay, of Cowley, of Oliver Cromwell, and a host of others known in their country's story. I reached the palace about eleven, and was surprised to find myself alone on the ground. The armed sentinels were pacing the great doorway, which were open as if an army as well as a single traveler might enter, but I was speedily summoned to stand. "There is no admittance here to-day: it is Friday."

This was a blow to my hopes, and I asked if the rule was inflexible. "O yes," was the answer, "there's a great many come here Fridays who don't know the rule, but they never get in: they try to hire somebody to show them the apartments, but the porters are all gone, and there's nobody to show them. You can't get in at all."

Here was dead failure. A ride of twelve miles to see a royal palace, and any one of my guide-books would have told me it was closed on Friday, but thoughly I had come on the only day when it was shut, and the only day I had to spare before leaving. I was more than disappointed— vexed at my own dullness, and made resolutions not to be so careless in future. The gardens were open and I walked among the beds of flowers, and under the bower of beauty, gravelled and shaded walks a mile in a straight line, and lakes with gold fish and sparkling fountains on either hand, but even these, more luxuriant and paradise-like than I had ever seen, seemed but to aggravate my disappointment. I sat down in an airy chaise in a lovely nook, and promised myself not to mention my visit to Hampton Court to any of my friends. Several parties had been out to see it and returned to me with glowing descriptions, and now I had come alone and was to return as I came. A thought struck me. My venerable father had often said that he never knew a door that would not open at my asking, and he had often been amused, in travelling, by the facility with which I gained access to the most inaccessible places. It had always answered in America, why should I not experiment upon it in England. I determined to try. Finding a servant on the grounds, I asked if there was a gentleman anywhere who had any connexion with the palace, to whom I could apply for some information. He led me to a door, and gave me the gentleman's name. I called upon him: sent him my card: he invited me in, and received me courteously. I told him I was ashamed to say I had come on a fool's errand: carelessly had visited Hampton Court on Friday, and must now return to America without seeing it, unless I could find access to-day. He said that during his residence there he had never known of the apartments being opened except on the appointed days: that crowds varying from 500 to 5,000 were there daily, and sometimes 15,000 had visited it in a single day; and on Friday the doors were never opened: but, and then I began to hope—but said, "it would give me great pleasure to walk with you through the palace: the porters are all away, but if we get the keys we will be our own porters, and take our own time."

DESCRIPTION OF THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

From the official publications of the Association we compile a description of the Crystal Palace.

Reservoir square, on which it is erected, lies at the northern extremity of the city, west of the Croton distributing reservoir, and between that vast erection and Sixth avenue. The Sixth avenue railroad runs directly past it; the Fourth avenue railroad runs near it; and it lies immediately in the vicinity of the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth avenues—the main thoroughfares of that part of the city.

The story of Wolsey, the Prime Minister of Henry VIII., is familiar to every youthful reader. And it should be. His life is the grandest lesson for statesmen, and indeed for all mankind, that English history presents. By rapid strides he rose from obscurity to be more powerful, more wealthy, and far more luxurious than his monarch; and then he fell like Lucifer and perished miserably, by poison, to escape the shame of the scaffold. In the days of his greatness he resolved to make a palace of unrivaled glory. He called on foreign and domestic doctors to select the healthiest and the fairest spot in the vicinity of London; and this being chosen, he bought up thousands of the surrounding acres, and converted them into parks, and gardens, and hunting grounds. He lavished untold sums of gold in building a house that covers eight acres of ground, with apartments to lodge and entertain some thousands of guests; and these he embellished with the most costly paintings and every luxury that the wit of man could suggest or a voluptuous imagination conceive. The records of the revellings that once made these halls jocund for successive months, appear like romance to us who live in days when vice is less public, if not less common than in the times of our ancestors. The king accepted the present of the palace in 1530, and here he set up his royal residence and right regally he held sway in these now peaceful courts. I have just been in the Chapel Royal, where successive monarchs have heard prayers. Here Edward VI. was baptized with Archbishop Cranmer for god-father. Here Jane Seymour, his mother, died a few days afterwards; and here the many-wives Henry VIII., having disposed in various ways of five, was married to Lady Catherine Parr. Here, too, James the first presided at the famous conference between the Presbyterians and the Established Church, and out of that conference grew our present translation of the English Bible. Queen Anne, his wife, died here. Charles I. was born here, and Cromwell was buried after him, and here celebrated the nuptials of his daughter. After the restoration, successive sovereigns resided here, but I will not weary you with the history. William III. adorned the palace and made extensive improvements, and there are monuments of his taste on every hand. But what is now the use to which it is all applied? The state apartments embrace a series of magnificent rooms in the central palace, a quadrangle with a fountain court in the centre. Here is the Guard Chamber, the King's Presence Chamber, the Audience Chamber, the King's Drawing Room, the King's Bed-room, the Queen's Bedroom, the Queen's Drawing Room, the Queen's Audience Chamber, the Great Hall hung with the most remarkable tapestries and emblematic flags. These and many other apartments I have not named are hung with paintings all but innumerable, by the most illustrious masters, making galleries of priceless value; portraits of the most distinguished men and the most beautiful women, in the costume of the times in which they lived: on many of which I could descend at any length, but in such a wilderness of paint, I know not where to begin. I could more easily recite the great men whose portraits are not here.

I was hastening on lest I should be trespassing on my kind and excellent friend's courtesy, but he insisted on my proceeding leisurely and studying all that I wished to master. And there we enjoyed the silent and solemn quiet of these old halls, looking upon the faces of men and women that had

once shone in those very courts. One chamber contains all the frail beauties of the licentious court of Charles II. Another is filled with scenes from Holy Writ, making strange contrasts now as of olden time: here is the portrait of a little man, Sir Jeffrey Hudson, who was so very small, that at a feast given to Charles I. he was actually served up alive in a cold pie; and then we have a full length portrait of a man seven feet two inches high. Philosophers, poets and painters, kings, queens and statesmen, priests and people are here in endless ranks. It was so much better to be alone in this study than in the midst of a crowd, and my guide was so familiar with the pictures, that he enlivened the hours with anecdotes new and interesting, and I was not unwilling to give him one or two in return. And when we had at last completed the circuit, he sent for the keys of the old kitchen unlosed for two hundred years, where the Cardinal's feasts were prepared. The fire-places were sixteen feet across, and the iron bars still stood in them on which the spits rested to roast the meats before huge fires; and then we explored the old vaults where the rich wines were stored, and we thought, for a cardinal, that Wolsey must have had things quite comfortable.

"And now it is dinner time, come and dine with me," said my new friend to me as we emerged from the lower regions. And in spite of all my protestations to the contrary, he insisted, and the rest of the day was spent at his hospitable board. We had a good time there too. And was not all this as handsome a specimen of kindness to a stranger, of genuine urbanity and hospitality, as you ever met with. I refrain from the mention of his name, *I know that I should offend him if I did not*, but I take a pleasure in recording it as not only the Baptists are equally benevolent, if not so numerous or influential. The Episcopals flourish in the cities, where they have able ministers and the handsomest churches; and the Catholics are prosperous at the old missions in San Francisco and other places. The American population complain of lack of talent in this church among the fathers. The immigrant need not fear being without his accustomed church privileges in this country. The great danger is that he will leave his religion behind him. There are several ways leading out of California to the "great high-way" of which we read in the good book.

The Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Catholics, all have their lines which they say connect with the "highway of holiness," and each line is furnishing suitable cars to accommodate the "traveler to eternity" who start from California.

You see those plain looking cars yonder? That is the Methodist train. The little noisy, strong-looking locomotives you see there is the John Wesley. It always starts off with a tremendous load. The road runs meandering up the rivers, across the prairies through the woods, by all the towns, along the settlements past every hut, and to the very tops of the mountains, and the train stops at every place for passengers. The passengers are zealous and enthusiastic. When they start they give a loud, long shout, and you would think the kingdom of heaven suffered violence and the violent (were about to) take it by storm." On their banner is inscribed, "reign in earnest," and as they pass through the woods they make the wilken ring with the song

RELIGION IN CALIFORNIA.
SAN FRANCISCO, April 22.

THACKERAY ON THE ETHIOPIAN MINSTRELS.—When humour joins with rhythm and music, and appears in song, its influence is irresistible; its charities are countless; it stirs the feelings to love, peace, friendship, as scarce any mortal agent can. The songs of Barranger are hymns of love and tenderness; I have seen great whiskered Frenchmen warbling the "Bonne Vieille," the "Soldats au pas, au pas," with tears rolling down their moustaches. At a Burns' Festival, I have seen Scotchmen singing Burns, while the drops twinkled on their furrowed cheeks; while each rough hand was flung out to grasp its neighbour's while early scenes and sacred recollections, and dear and delightful memories of the past came rushing back at the sound of the familiar words and music, and the softened heart was full of love, and friendship, and home. Humour! if tears are the aims of gentle spirits, and may be counted, as sure they may, among the sweetest of life's charities—that of kindly sensibility, and sweet sudden emotion, which exhibits itself at the eyes, I know no such provocative as humour. It is an irresistible sympathizer; it surprises you into compassion; you are laughing and disarmed, and suddenly forced into tears. I heard a humorous balladist not long since, a minstrel with wool on his head, and an ultra Ethiopian complexion, who performed a negro ballad, that I confess moistened these spectacles in the most unexpected manner. They have gazed at dozens of tragedie queens, dying on the stage, and expiring in appropriate black verse, and I never wanted to wipe them. They have looked up with deep respect be it said, at many scores of clergymen in pulpits, and without being dimmed; and behold a vagabond with a coked arch and a banjo sings a little song, strikes a wild note which sets the whole heart thrills with happy pity. Humour! humour! is the music of tears of; she knows the way to the *sous lachrymarum*, strikes in dry and rugged places, with her enchanting wand, and bids the fountain gush and sparkle. She has refreshed myriads more from her natural springs, than ever tragedy has watered from her pompos old urn.

HOODWINKING THE PIGEONS.—Pigeons are much more injurious to the gardener and farmer than crows, or any other of the feathered tribe. It is said that a pigeon eats its own weight of food in a day, and that principally of a vegetable nature. A new sown field of barley or peas is, therefore, a glorious treat, and will be made short work of by a flock. The boys and farm lads of Sussex follow a cruel and senseless plan of thinning flocks to marauding pigeons. Going to a garden or field likely to be frequented by these animals for the sake of plunder, they stick into the ground small pieces of paper, twirled into the shape of a funnel, pointed end downward. Into each of these paper funnels they place a single pea.

The boys having left the ground, the pigeons soon arrive, and commence looking about for food; and seeing peas ready, as they imagine, for the picking up, they pop their heads into the funnel, which, sticking to them, they lift up and immediately mount into the air, as if with a nightcap drawn over their eyes. Under such hapless circumstances they soar aloft in a perfectly straight line to the zenith, till lost to the eye of the beholder in the clouds. How far the poor creatures thus proceed into the heights of the atmosphere, it is impossible to conjecture. It is certain they continue their flight till nature is exhausted within them and death relieves them from their misery. Down they sink through the yielding air like a bullet; and so straight upward has been their course, that they generally fall within a few feet of the spot whence they took their flight. We do not remember of seeing this remarkable peculiarity in the flight of the hoodwinked pigeon noticed by naturalists.

STRANGE INFATUATION.—Some ten years ago there resided in this State a gentleman, his wife and two daughters, who were as much respected as any family in it. Blessed with a competency of earthly goods, and surrounded by hosts of friends, their happiness seemed as near perfect as human beings could expect to enjoy. Six years since this family left here for the south, where the husband and father took to drink, and in two years became a bankrupt and a son. Next, the wife and mother became a drunkard, and now we understand the two girls are inmates of a low brothel in a city on the Mississippi river. What a commentary on the free use of ardent spirits. In six years a whole family of respectable people reduced from affluence to the deepest depths of degradation. And how many cases of a similar nature are to be met with every day.—*Richmond Morning Mail*.

COPIOUS RAINS.—We have been blessed in this section with fine rains, for the last two or three days. The sky is now (Wednesday) very cloudy, and we have a promise of more. If the seasons are good, we will yet make good crops, as the corn was not beyond redemption, as it is in some portions of the State. The accounts from the lower counties are gloomy in the extreme, and many planters will not make enough for seed.

[Athens Banner.]

THE ROYAL CHRISTENING.—The christening of the infant son of Her Majesty and his Royal Highness Prince Albert, took place on the evening of the 27th in Buckingham Palace. The sacred rite was performed in the private chapel in the Palace, which was duly prepared for the occasion. Two rows of chairs of crimson satin and gold were placed on each side of the centre, for the use of the Queen, the Sponsors and the Royal personages invited to be present. The principal compartments or pews, (two on each side of the chapel,) were appropriated to the representatives of foreign powers connected with the Royal family and the Sponsors, and the Cabinet Ministers. The altar was lined with crimson velvet panelled with gold lace, and on the communion table were placed the golden vessels used in the Sacrament, with salvers and two large candlesticks. Seats of crimson and gold were placed for the officiating clergy. The font was elegantly formed of silver gilt; the rim was formed of the leaves and flowers of the water lily, and the base from which its stalks and stems sprang was composed of infant angels playing the lute in front of the Royal arms. The font was placed on a fluted plinth of white and gold. Over the altar was a fine piece of tapestry, representing the baptism of our Saviour. The chapel was brilliantly illuminated by large globes of light, constructed on a scientific principle, so that no orifice is visible; these globes being also inserted in the roof.

Lady Caroline Barrington with the infant Prince taking her seat in front of the font, and the four illustrious Sponsors having ranged up on one side, the Archbishop of Canterbury commenced reading the Baptismal Service.

On reaching that portion for the naming of the child the Archbishop demanded of the Sponsors how it should be named, when the King of Hanover answered, Leopold George Duncan Albert, and his Grace baptizized it accordingly.

Queen Victoria was present, and wore the Koh-i-noor diamond diadem. Prince Albert, the King and Queen of Hanover, the Duke and Duchess of Saxe Coburg, Gotha; the Grand Duke and Duchess of Mecklenburg Strelitz, and other royal personages were present.

THE HEART OF RICHARD COEUR DE LION.—A correspondent of the London Times offers a suggestion for the consideration of the committee who are now discussing the subject of a statue to the lion-hearted King. Every one acquainted with English history will remember the affecting disposal of the remains of Richard. His body, by his last will, was directed to be buried at the feet of his father, his bowels among the rebels at Poitou, and his heart at Rouen. That heart is now without a shrine in the Museum of the town of Rouen, and the writer suggests to the committee that a deputation should at once be appointed to wait upon the authorities of town, and solicit this relic, which might be entombed beneath the proposed statue.

THE MIRAGE IN AUSTRALIA.—That curious optical illusion, the mirage, may be occasionally witnessed on the plains of Australia. I first beheld this singular phenomenon one hot summer's morning; the sun was shining, the wind hushed, and the sky cloudless when the plain was journeying over appeared suddenly transformed into lakes of glistening silver. I rubbed my dazzled eyes, gazed again and again, stared at the ground and peered at the sky, in order to be convinced that I was indeed on terra firma, so beautiful, so strange, and so fairy-like, was the prospect. The idea of a mirage did not immediately cross my mind, as I had neither read nor heard that the phenomenon had been witnessed in the Australian colonies. Travellers in the East, had recorded that mirages in those parts have all the appearance of water; those I witnessed in the Australian colonies had a somewhat different aspect; for though they reflected images as distinctly as water, they looked so hard and metallic, that no one would take them for that element. I could learn nothing satisfactory from the colonists as to when or under what circumstances these illusions take place. I myself have seen them only when the weather was hot and calm; they are probably induced by the mass of atmosphere on the plains remaining at rest, while the stratum in contact with the soil becomes heated by caloric disengaged from the parched earth. I remember, on one occasion, a breeze sprang up, when the silvery scene presented a series of undulations, and then suddenly vanished.—*Australasia as it is*.

The second story contains 148 columns, of the same shape as those below, and 17 feet 7 inches high. These receive another tier of girders numbering 160, for the support of the roofs of the aisles, each being covered by 16 cast iron semi-circular arches, each composed of four pieces.

The dome is supported by twenty-four columns, which go up above the second story to the height of 62 feet above the floor, and support a combination

POET.

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EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

With the view of varying the contents of these columns, we will furnish our readers with a note or two of our impressions derived from our present visit to New York and a brief inspection of some of its most prominent attractions. We left the pleasant borough of Norfolk on Wednesday morning, the thirteenth inst., late in the forenoon, on board the new and noble steamer, JAMESTOWN, Capt. Parrish, with a fine company of friends, and bore away down to Hampton Roads in gallant style, enjoying, with all our hearts, the beautiful scenery of those spacious waters, and inhaling the inspiring sea-breeze with the most lively sensations of pleasure.

The boys having left the ground, the pigeons soon arrive, and commence looking about for food; and seeing peas ready, as they imagine, for the picking up, they pop their heads into the funnel, which, sticking to them, they lift up and immediately mount into the air, as if with a nightcap drawn over their eyes. Under such hapless circumstances they soar aloft in a perfectly straight line to the zenith, till lost to the eye of the beholder in the clouds. How far the poor creatures thus proceed into the heights of the atmosphere, it is impossible to conjecture.

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Do you see there; do you notice that beautiful train of cars, yonder, with handsome gothic windows and velvet cushioned seats? Do you see the surprise, the silk gown, and the golden cross? That is the Episcopal train. That gorgeously mounted and smoothly running locomotive is "Henry the Eighth." It sweeps over the solid trail as if propelled by Ericsson's new motor.

There is a large, sprinkling of lawyers in that train. It is the most fashionable and genial train that runs out of California. (The Unitarian are not fairly under weigh yet.) They take towards heaven a vast amount of wordy wisdom, theological learning and pious gentility. It is supposed that St. Peter