

The Morganton Star.

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THE FOUNDRY FIRES.

See the foundry fires gleaming With a strange and lurid light, Listen to the anvils ringing

Measured music on the night; Clanking, clinking, never shrinking, Strike the iron, mold it well; On the progress of the nations Each persistent stroke shall tell.

Showers of fiery sparks are falling Thick about the workmen's feet; Some are carried by the night wind Far along the winding street. Clanking, clinking, never shrinking, Labor lifts her arms on high, And the sparks fly from her anvils Out upon the darkened sky.

In the lurid glow of feeling, With the anvil-strokes of thought, Men are shaping creeds, and welding Single truths the age has wrought. Clanking, clinking, never shrinking, Strike the truth and mold it well; On the progress of the nations Each persistent stroke shall tell.

Let the sparks fly from your anvils In the ways where thought is rife; Each shall light some friendly fire On the waiting forge of life; Clanking, clinking, never shrinking, Work till stars fade, and the morn Of a wider faith and knowledge From the radiant East is born.

Crude the mass the sweating fergemen At your eager feet have hurled; Centuries of toil must follow Ere ye shape a perfect world; Yet with clanking, clinking, clinking, Strike the iron, shape the truth Science is but now beginning. Thought is in its early youth.

Think each one his arm the strongest, Each believe that God to him Has revealed the fairest treasures Hidden in His storehouse dim; Clanking, clinking, never shrinking, Ring your sharp strokes, age and youth Each must hold himself the prophet Of a perfect form of truth.

—Arthur W. Eaton, in *Youth's Companion*

ROMANCE OF ECUADOR.

THE WONDERS OF A STRANGE LAND.

The landlord at the hotel here says a letter from Quito, the capital of Ecuador, to the *New York Sun*, requires you to pay your board in advance, because he has no money to buy food and no credit with the market men; the muleteers ask for their fees before starting, because their experience teaches them wisdom; and there is scarcely a building in the whole republic in process of construction, or even undergoing repairs. Death seems to have settled upon everything artificial, but nature is in her grandest glory.

The population of Ecuador is about a million, and the nation owes twenty gold dollars per capita for every one of the inhabitants. The president is compelled to live at Guayaquil so as to see that the customs duties, the only source of revenue, reach the government, and to quell the revolutions that are constantly arising. Three hundred thousand of the population are of Spanish descent, 100,000 are foreigners, and 600,000 native Indians or persons of mixed blood. The commerce is in the hands of the foreigners entirely, and they have a mortgage upon the entire country. The Indians are the only people who work. Over the doors of the residences or the business houses, and both are usually under the same roof, are signs reading, "This is the property of an Englishman," "This is the property of a citizen of Germany," and so on, a necessary warning to revolutionists, who are thus notified to keep their hands off.

The Spaniards are the aristocracy, poor but proud, very proud. The mixed race furnishes the mechanics and artisans, while the Indians till the soil and do the drudgery. A cook gets two dollars a month in a depreciated currency, but the employer is expected to board her entire family. A laborer gets four or six dollars a month and boards himself, except when he is fortunate enough to have a wife out at service. The Indians never marry, because they cannot afford to. The law compels him to pay the priest a fee of six dollars, more money than most of them can ever accumulate. When a Spaniard marries, the fee is paid by contributions from his relatives.

It is a peculiarity of the Indian that he will sell nothing at wholesale, nor will he trade with you anywhere but in the market place, on the spot where he and his forefathers have sold garden truck for three centuries. Although travelers on the highways meet whole armies of Indians, bearing upon their backs heavy burdens of vegetables and other supplies, they can purchase nothing of them, as the native will not sell his goods until he gets to the place where he is in the habit of selling them. He will carry them ten miles and dispose of them for less than he was offered for them at home.

The same rule exists in Guatemala. A gentleman who lives some distance from town said that for the

last four years he had been trying to get the Indians, who passed every morning with packs of alfalfa (the tropical clover), to sell him some at his gate, but they invariably refused to do so; consequently he was compelled to go into town to buy what was carried by his own door.

Nor will the natives sell at wholesale. They will give you a gourd full of potatoes for a penny as often as you like, but will not sell their stock in a lump. They will give you a dozen eggs for a real (ten cents), but will not sell you five dozen for a dollar. This dogged adherence to custom cannot be accounted for, except on the supposition that their suspicions are excited by an attempt to depart from it.

In Ecuador there are no smaller coins than the quartillo, change is therefore made by the use of bread. On his way to market the purchaser stops at the bakery and gets a dozen or twenty breakfast rolls, which cost about one cent each, and the market women receive them and give them as change for small purchases. If you buy a cent's worth of anything and offer a quartillo in payment you get a breakfast roll for the balance due you.

The Indians live in villages and communities, which are presided over by an alcalde, or governor. The native women all wear black. One never finds a glimpse of color upon a descendant of the ancient race. They are in perpetual mourning for Atahualpa, the last of the Incas, who was cruelly murdered by Pizarro. Their costume is a short black skirt and a square robe or mantle of black, which they wear over their heads and hold in place by a large pin or thorn between the shoulders. They look like nuns, and walk the streets with burdens upon their backs or heads in processions as solemn as a funeral. They never laugh, and scarcely ever smile; they have no songs and no amusements. Their only semblance to music is a mournful chant which they give in unison at the feasts which are intended to keep alive the memories of the Incas. They cling to their traditions and the customs of their ancestors. They remember the ancient glory of their race, and look to its restoration as the Aztecs of Mexico look for the coming of Montezuma. They have relics which they guard with the most sacred care, and two great secrets no amount of torture at the hands of the Spaniards has been able to wring from them. These are the art of tempering copper so as to give it as keen and enduring an edge as steel, and the burial place of the Inca's treasures.

It will be remembered that Pizarro offered to release Atahualpa if the Indians would fill with gold the room in which he was kept a prisoner. They did it. Pizarro thought there must be more where this came from, and demanded that the ransom be doubled. Runners were sent over the country to collect the treasure of the kingdom, and were on their way to Cuzamarca, where the Inca was a prisoner, loaded down with gold to buy his freedom, when they heard that Pizarro had strangled him. This treasure was buried somewhere in the mountains of Llanganati, northwest of Quito, and has been searched for ever since.

A Spaniard named Valverde married an Inca girl, and from poverty became suddenly rich. To escape persecution from those who wished to know the secret of his sudden accumulation of gold he fled to Spain, and upon his deathbed made a confession to the effect that through his wife he had discovered the Inca's treasures, and left a guide to the place of their deposit as a legacy to his king. This guide has been followed by the government and by private individuals; fortunes have been wasted in the search, hundreds of men have perished in the mountains while engaged in it, and, while the gold of the Incas will never cease to haunt the memories of the avaricious, no man has been able to reach the spot designated by the confession of Valverde.

The last attempt it was an English botanist, who wrote a pamphlet giving his experience. He says that no one who was not familiar with every inch of the Llanganati mountains could have written the Valverde document, for the land marks are all minutely described; but the path indicated leads to a ravine which is impassable, and in attempting to cross which so many people have lost their lives. It is his opinion that the condition of this gorge has been so changed by volcanic eruptions and earthquakes as to obliterate the landmarks which Valverde describes, and permanently obstruct a path which he is said to have followed.

The capital and productive regions of Ecuador are 160 miles from its only sea

port, Guayaquil, and are accessible only by a mule path, which is impassable for six months in the year, during the rainy season, and in the dry season it requires eight or nine days to traverse it, with no resting places where a man can find a decent bed or food fit for human consumption. This is the only means of communication between Quito and the outside world, except along the mountains southward into Bolivia and Peru, where the Incas constructed beautiful highways, which the Spaniards have permitted to decay, until they are now practically useless. They were so well built, however, as to stand the wear and tear of three centuries, and the slightest attempt at repair would have kept them in order.

Although the journey from Guayaquil to Quito takes nine days, Garcia Moreno, the former president of Ecuador, once made it in thirty-six hours. He heard of a revolution, and, springing upon his horse, went to the capital, had twenty-two conspirators shot, and was back at Guayaquil in less than a week. Moreno was president for twelve years, and was one of the fiercest and most cruel rulers South America has ever seen. He shot men who would not take off their hats to him in the streets, and had a drunken priest impaled in the principal plaza of Quito as a warning to the clergy to observe habits of sobriety or conceal their intemperance. There was nothing too brutal for this man to do, and nothing too sacred to escape his grasp. He died in 1875 by assassination, and the country has been in a state of political eruption ever since.

Although the road to Quito is over an almost untrodden wilderness, it presents the grandest scenic panorama in the world. Directly beneath the equator, surrounding the city whose origin is lost in the mist of centuries, rise twenty volcanoes, presided over by the princely Chimborazo, the lowest being 15,922 feet in height, and the highest reaching an altitude of 22,500 feet. Three of these volcanoes are active, five are dormant, and twelve extinct. Nowhere else on the earth's surface is such a cluster of peaks, such a grand assemblage of giants. Eighteen of the twenty are covered with perpetual snow, and the summits of eleven have never been reached by a living creature except the condor, whose flight surpasses that of any other bird. At noon the vertical sun throws a profusion of light upon the snow-crowned summits, where they appear like a group of pyramids cut in spotless marble.

Cotopaxi is the loftiest of active volcanoes, but it is slumbering now. The only evidence of action is the frequent rumblings which can be heard for a hundred miles, and the cloud of smoke by day and the pillar of fire by night which constantly arises from a crater that is more than three thousand feet beyond the reach of man. Many have attempted to scale it, but the walls are so steep and the snow is so deep that ascent is impossible, even with scaling ladders. On the south side of Cotopaxi is a great rock, more than 2,000 feet high, called the "Inca's Head." Tradition says that it was once the summit of the volcano, and fell on the day when Atahualpa was strangled by the Spaniards. Those who have seen Vesuvius can judge of the grandeur of Cotopaxi, if they can imagine a volcano 15,000 feet higher, shooting forth its fire from a crest covered by 3,000 feet of snow, with a voice that has been heard six hundred miles. And one can judge of the grandeur of the road to Quito if he can imagine twenty of the highest mountains in America, three of them active volcanoes, standing along the road from Washington to New York.

Here in these mountains, until the Spaniards came in 1534, existed a civilization that was old when Christ was crucified; a civilization whose arts were equal to those of Egypt; which had temples four times the size of the capitol at Washington, from a single one of which the Spaniards drew out twenty-two thousand ounces of solid silver nails; whose rulers had palaces from which the Spaniards gathered 90,000 ounces of gold and an unmeasured quantity of silver. Here was an empire stretching from the equator to the antarctic circle, walled in by the grandest groups of mountains in the world, whose people knew all the arts of their time but those of war, and were conquered by 213 men under the leadership of a Spanish swineherd who could neither read nor write.

The present reigning dynasty of Japan dates back 2,546 years, and is considered the oldest in the world. The records of Japan are accurately preserved for that time. All the nations now called civilized, without exception, had their beginning since then.

FUN.

A soft answer turneth away wrath, but a club keeps it turned away.

The way to make an overcoat last is to make the undercoat first.—*Lyons Union*.

When boarder meets spring chicken then comes the tug of jaw.—*Philadelphia Call*.

When a man sees double, it is evident that his glasses are too strong for him.—*Boston Transcript*.

Some one says that liquor strengthens the voice. This is a mistake, it only makes the breath strong.

Atmospherical knowledge is not thoroughly distributed in our schools. A boy, being asked: "What is mist?" vaguely responded: "An umbrella."

If a barber could only hold his own chin as well as he does that of his victim he would soon be able to use real bay rum.—*New York Morning Journal*.

Friend—You don't mean to say you understand French, Tommy? Tommy—Oh, yes, I do; for when pa and ma speak French at tea I know I'm to have a powder.

Reverend Gentleman—"My child, you should pray God to make you a new heart." Youthful sinner—"So I did, papa, four days ago; guess it isn't done yet."—*Life*.

The fishing season is "on." "What did you catch yesterday?" asked a Peoria urchin, with a pole and an oyster can, to another boy. "Just what you'll catch when you get home," said the other, morosely, rubbing his shoulders. And then each smiled a sickly smile, and the convention slowly and solemnly adjourned without date.—*Peoria Transcript*.

A New York Sunday-school teacher told her pupils that when they put their pennies into the contribution box she wanted each one to repeat a Bible verse suitable for the occasion. The first boy dropped in his cent, saying: "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." The next boy dropped his penny into the box, saying: "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord." The third and youngest boy dropped in his penny, saying: "A fool and his money are soon parted."—*Detroit Journal*.

At a Dinner Party in Persia.

They all set to at a kind of l'assommoir. All were wealthy men, and as they gambled only for silver coin not much harm was done. Like a Christmas party of children at Pope Joan, how they shouted, and how they cheated, openly, most openly! He who cheated most was happiest, and the only disgrace was in being found out. S—Khan, who sat next to me, had a method of cheating so simple, so Arcadian in its simplicity, that it deserves description. He lost, lost persistently; but his head did not perceptibly diminish. I watched him. His plan was this: When he won he put his winnings on his head of coin. When he lost he would carefully count out the amount of money he had to pay. "Sixty kerans; ah! Correct, you see—sixty. He would then gather it up in his two hands, place the closed hands on his own head, let out the greater part of the sixty silver coins on his head, and opening his closed hands from below upward, apparently paid his losses into the pile of his successful adversary with a "Much good may they do you! Another sixty kerans." After about an hour of this, the music and singing having been going on unceasingly, dinner was announced. The money was pocketed, or handed over to the care of servants. A long sheet of embroidered leather was spread on the ground; over this was placed a sheet of hand printed chintz, some twelve feet by four; bowls of sherbet (iced syrups and water) were laid at intervals; and the various dishes, filled each to overflowing, and mostly swimming in fat, were placed in circular trays before every six guests. A plentiful dinner—no Barmecide feast. Lambs roasted whole, stuffed with dates, almonds, raisins, and pistachio nuts; sparrow and pomegranate soup; kebabs of lambs and antelope; all the thousand and one delicacies of the Persian cuisine—chillaus, pillaus, curries, fowls boiled and roast. All was good, well cooked and luscious; for each man had some half dozen servants with him, who would dine on the leavings; and our host had certainly fifty servants, all of whom would get a meal of these crumbs from the rich man's table.—*Chambers' Journal*.

Florida has entered the list of competitors for the Northern flower market. A horticulturist at Tangerine recently shipped 30,000 tube-rose bulbs to the dealers in the North.

Mohammedan citizens of London are making arrangements to build a mosque in that city. It will be the first and only edifice of the kind in Europe outside of the Sultan's dominions.