

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger. United States Correspondence.

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 26, 1878.

A pleasing coincidence occurred at Howard University the other day, during the quarterly public exercises. A young colored freshman, who looked much more like an Indian than a negro, with his long thin features, straight hair and thin lips and nostrils, delivered an oration on Benedict Arnold, in which the traitorous conduct of Arnold was excused in some measure, his faults smoothed over, and his noble traits of character, which were many, brought out and discussed. Directly after this speech, "Grace Greenwood," who was present, was called upon for a recitation, and as she came upon the platform she said she was desirous before reciting, to thank the last speaker for his eulogy of Benedict Arnold. She then went on to state that Arnold was her mother's own cousin, and that some of his grandchildren who live in Canada told her not long since that to his dying day, Benedict Arnold averred that his endeavor to betray West Point to the British was prompted by the belief that such a course would shorten the war and save life. One of these grandchildren, a young man, fought in the Union Army during the rebellion. He had a wild dream of redeeming his grandsire's reputation in some way. Another, a girl, is the wife of Queen Victoria's Private Secretary. When the couple were married the Queen herself gave the bride away. This was, in substance, what "Grace Greenwood" told of her relatives, and of course there was much comment about it in the city papers the next morning. One person remarked that some one would be claiming relationship to Judas Iscariot next; and another said that Voltaire was not an infidel, Arnold was no traitor, and soon we shall hear that Satan was a most exemplary character.

Ill-natured remarks will always be made upon such occasions; but the other side of Benedict Arnold's character and life is worth knowing, and there is no reason why justice may not be done the man's character, so long blackened by thought of the treason he meditated, even at this late day.

As the time for the opening of the Paris Exposition draws near, and people begin to make preparations for crossing the ocean, as so many will do, the thing gets to be talked of more than it has since our own Centennial. Then everybody was planning to go to Paris in '78, but the great fair in Philadelphia satiated the public appetite for exhibitions so that the subject was dropped for a time. But now it forms the principal topic for conversation in social, as well as in many political circles, tickets are being secured and days set for sailing.

Although an extensive representation of our Government was despaired of on account of the failure of necessary appropriations on the part of Congress, yet, so expeditious has been the Committee, that from present appearances we shall make a very creditable showing of American produce and enterprise. If we are unable to put our best foot forward it will be only because the space given us as exhibitors was not earlier assigned and appropriations made.

Of natural products, Iowa sends specimens of timber; Tennessee, samples of cotton; New York, North Carolina and Minnesota send flour and wheat; Louisiana, rice and salt; Long Island, starch; New Orleans, sugar; California, Missouri, New Jersey and Virginia, varieties of wine; Kentucky and several other States send tobacco; Pennsylvania, old rye whiskey and beer; and canned goods go from all parts of the Union.

Machinery of all kinds will be well represented. Engines, hand and machine tools, and agricultural implements of every variety. The Pullman Co will send a model sleeping car, and New York and Philadelphia some street cars, while different kinds of railroad machinery will appear among our exhibits. Fighting implements that the United States has produced—especially models of torpedoes, furniture, silver-ware, watches, pottery and painted china, are being sent, and, all things considered, we may not after all have so much cause for mortification as has been feared.

MERRILL.

A WORD TO BOYS.

Boys did you think that this great world, all its wealth and woe, with all its mines and mountains, its oceans, seas and rivers, steamboats and ships, railroads and printing presses and telegraphs, will soon be given to the boys of the present age? Look upon the inheritance, and get ready to enter upon your duties.

'TIS THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

We flourish awhile. Men take us by the hand and are anxious about the health of our bodies, and laugh at our jokes, and we really think, like the fly on the wheel, that we have something to do with the turning of it. The sun does not stop for our funeral, everything goes on as usual, we are not missed in the street, men laugh at the new jokes, and in three days the great waves sweep over our path, and wash out the last vestige of earthly footprints. Such is life.

When the last reed, on which you used to lean, breaks, then God will interpose his strength, and enable you to rely upon it: "He giveth power to the faint."

The Opening up of Africa.

The year 1877 will be ever memorable in the history of Africa. It was as the year drew towards its close that Mr. H. M. Stanley reached the mouth of the Congo river on the western coast, having completed the work which the lamented Livingstone began. It was just about a quarter of a century after Livingstone had been compelled to leave his missionary field and depart from Kuruman on his journey to the western coast at Loanda and to the eastern at the mouth of the Zambesi. He left in November, 1852. Only twenty-five years, yet what vast progress has been made in opening up the hidden recesses of the African continent and pointing out new paths to the commerce of the world and to the missionaries of the churches! There is no more remarkable series of explorations than those which within the last quarter of a century have aimed to reveal the mysteries of Central Africa; none whose history is more interesting, whose results promise to be of greater importance. The future historian of that continent will not forget to record the names and the achievements of Livingstone, Burton, Speke, Gaunt, Baker, Cameron, and Stanley; nor will the Christian historian fail to recognise in them instruments whom God has raised up to help on that work which their ascending Lord bade His people perform—to go into all the world, and to preach the Gospel to every creature.

The great task which Mr. Stanley has accomplished may be thus briefly described: Dr. Livingstone commenced his last journey at Pemba, on the eastern coast, on the 9th of April, 1866. He moved westward, passing Lake Tanganyika, and discovered Lake Bangwedo, a large body of water extending from 28deg. to about 30deg. 30min. east longitude, and from 11deg to 12deg. south latitude. It is the recipient of numerous streams, one of which, the Chambezi, rises in the high lands directly to the south of Lake Tanganyika. Flowing northward from Bangwedo, nearly two degrees, the waters enter the great Lake Moero. Thence they are discharged by Lualaba river, flowing to the north-west. The most northern point reached by Dr. Livingstone was Nyangwe, on the Lualaba, about four degrees south of the equator. It was a sore disappointment to him when he was compelled to retrace his steps, and leave others to determine whether the Lualaba poured its waters down the Congo to the Atlantic Ocean, or through the Nile into the Mediterranean. From Nyangwe it was reserved for Stanley to make his way to the Atlantic Ocean, and to demonstrate that the Congo was only the western name for the Lualaba, whose waters flow for 2900 miles, from the fountains of the Chambesi to the ocean. From Nyangwe they flow to the north-west, nearly touching the second parallel of north latitude, on the twenty-third meridian, and then bending south-west until they reach the coast at 6deg. south latitude. In this way they drain the immense and fertile basin of Central Africa.

The tidings which Stanley brought met everywhere with a very favourable

cent amusements were various board games, depending chiefly on skill, and resembling a good deal our chess and back-gammon.

Roman books were rolls of papyrus bark or parchment, written upon with a reed pen, dipped in lampblack or sepia. The back of the sheet was often stained with saffron, and its edges rubbed smooth and blackened, while the ends of the stick on which it was rolled was adorned with knobs of ivory or gilt-wood. Letters were etched with a sharp iron instrument (stilus) upon thin wooden tablets coated with wax. These were then tied up with linen thread, the knot being sealed with wax and stamped with a ring.

The Romans had three forms of marriage, of which the highest was called *confarreatio*. The bride, dressed in a white robe with purple fringe, and covered with a bright yellow veil, was escorted by torch-light to her future home. A cake (*far*) was carried before her, and she bore a distaff and spindle with wool. Arrived at the flower-wreathed portal, she was lifted over the threshold, lest—evil omen—her foot might stumble on it. Her husband then brought fire and water which she touched; and, seated on a sheep-skin, she received the keys of the house. A marriage supper closed the ceremony.

Great pomp marked the funeral rites of the nobler Romans. The bier was preceded by a long procession of female trumpeters, female dirge-singers, and even buffoons, all clad in black. It was only under the later emperors that white became the fashion for female mourning. In the *Forum*, under the *Rostra*, the bier was set down, a funeral oration was delivered, and then the gloomy lines wound slowly to the burial place. When, as was common in earlier times, the body was burned, the bones were gathered and preserved in an urn. But in later days the custom of burying in a coffin was more frequently followed.

—*Collier's Events in History.*

Family Matters.

THE FAMILY CIRCLE.

The family constitution is of divine origin, wise in design, and of great importance. If there be any relation or bond in life which ought to be sacredly guarded from everything that can put it in peril, it is that which unites the members of a family. If there be a spot upon earth from which discord and strife should be banished, it is the fireside. There centre the fondest hopes of parents and children and the most tender affections.

How lovely the spectacle presented by that family which is governed by the right spirit! Each child strives to avoid giving offence, and is studiously considerate of the other's happiness. Sweet, loving dispositions are cultivated by all, and each tries to surpass the other in his efforts for the common harmony. Each heart glows with love, and the benediction of heavenly peace seems to abide upon that dwelling with such power that no black fiend of passion dare raise his head within it.

Who would not realize this lovely picture? It may be realized by all who will employ the appointed means. Let the precepts of Christianity be applied, as they are designed to be, and they will be found to shed a holy charm upon the family circle, and make it the most heaven like scene on earth! Children you can do much to make it so.

A HAPPY MOTHER.

What a blessing to a household is a merry, cheerful woman—one whose spirits are not affected by wet days, or little disappointments, or whose milk of human kindness does not sour in the sunshine of prosperity. Such a woman in the darkest hours brightens the house like a little piece of sunny weather. The magnetism of her smiles and electrical brightness of her looks and movements infect every one. The children go to school with a sense of something great to be achieved; her husband goes into the world in a conqueror's spirit. No matter how people annoy and worry him all day, far off her presence shines, and he whispers to himself, "At home I shall find rest." So day by day she literally renews his strength and energy, and if you know a man with a beaming face, a kind heart, and a prosperous business, in nine cases out of ten you will find he has a wife of this kind.

circular couches were used. There were no table-cloths; but the guests wore over the breast a linen napkin (*mappa*), which they brought with them. Instead of knives and forks two spoons were used—one, *cochlear*, small and pointed at the end of the handle; the other, *ligula*, larger, and of uncertain shape. The splendor of a Roman feast was greatly marred by the oil-lamps, the only light then used. The lamps themselves were exquisite in shape and material, as were all the table utensils, but the dripping oil soaked the table, while the thick smoke blackened the walls and ceiling, and rested in flakes of soot upon the dresses of the guests.

At feasts, instead of the *toga*, short dresses, of red or other bright colors, were worn. Before the drinking began, chaplets were handed round. For these, roses, myrtle, violets, ivy, and even parsley were used. Before they were put on, slaves anointed the hair with nard and other sweet unguents. Wine was almost the only drink used. Before being brought to the table it was generally strained through a metal sieve or linen bag filled with snow, and was called *black* or white according to its color, just as we talk of red and white wines. The famous Falernian was of a bright amber tint. Besides pure wine they drank *mulsum*, a mixture of new wine with honey, and *calda*, answering to our *negus*, made of warm water, wine and spice.

The Romans spent much time in their splendid baths. The cold plunge in the Tiber, which had braced the iron muscles of their ancestors, gave place, under the Empire, to a most luxurious and elaborate system of tepid and vapor bathing, often repeated seven and eight times a day. At the baths the gossip of the day was exchanged, as was done in English coffee houses a hundred years ago, and as is now done in our clubs and news-rooms.

Their many slaves enabled the Romans to travel luxuriously. The favorite conveyance was a wooden palanquin (*lectica*) with leathern curtains, within which the traveler lay soft on mattress and pillows. They had cabs and carriages—as many, if not so elegant, as ours; and there was no want of hack vehicles and post-horses. Inns were used chiefly by the lower classes; for, except in cases of necessity, respectable travelers lodged at the houses of private friends.

The theater, with its tragedies and comedies, the circus, and the amphitheater, supplied the Romans with their chief amusements. At the circus they betted on their favorite horses or charioteers; at the amphitheater they revelled in the bloody combats of gladiators. Four chariots generally started together. The drivers, distinguished by dresses of different colors, stood in the cars, leaning back, with the reins passed around their bodies, and a sharp knife in their belt to cut the thong if anything went wrong. On they whirled amid clouds of dust, seven times round the course, shaving the goal amid the thunders of the excited crowd. A large sum of money was generally the prize.

The most brutal of all Roman pastimes were the gladiatorial combats. At the trumpet's sound throngs of wretched men—captives, slaves, or convicted criminals—closed in deadly strife. The trodden sand grew red; yet on they fought with parched lips and leaping hearts, for they knew that a brave fight might win for them their freedom. Ere long hacked and bleeding limbs began to fail, and dim eyes turned to seek for mercy along the crowded seats. There were times when the dumb prayer was answered, and the down-turned thumbs of the spectators gave the signal for sparing life; but too often mercy was sought for in vain, and the sword completed its work. Combats of gladiators with wild beasts often took place. Whole armies sometimes thronged the scene. When Trajan triumphed after his victories in Dacia, ten thousand gladiators were exhibited at once. Another great public sight was the triumph of a victor. And here, too, blood must stream, else the pageant lost its zest. When the glittering files reached the slope of Capitolinus, the conquered leaders were led aside and slain.

Among many games of exercise, playing at ball was a favorite. Within doors, much time and money were squandered at dice. Other more inno-

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