# CHEAP LABOR A CURSE.

## THE ENERGETIC REMARKS OF AN AMERICAN ON THE SUBJECT.

**He Doesn't Like the European Way of Doing Things—State Railroads at Their Best and Worst—Men, Horses and Steam—Some Interesting Comparisons.**

PARIS, May 12, 1891.—European sightseeing is capable of many variations. Artists go to the Louvre and the Munich Pinakotbek, pork butchers spend hours in the abattoirs, doctors prowl about the hospitals and gloat over the surgical implements in the Rue de l'Ecole de Medicine, women haunt the shops. I know one man who never saw the Madeleine or the Boulevards, but spent so much time and money among the old book and curiosity shops on the Seine quays that he had to bring his

GOING TO THE FIELD WITH MANURE.

European trip to an untimely close. I was not surprised on making the acquaintance of a retired railroad contractor from America the other day to find that he was fairly boiling over with interesting observations on engineering works in Europe.

"I tell you," he said, "its wonderful how much these Europeans have been able to do of engineering work, considering their old-fashioned ways. If we had waited to build railroads in the English style the great West would have been half wilderness today. The rest of them are just as bad. I've seen railroad building going on in England, Scotland, Switzerland, and Russia, and everywhere it has seemed to me that we have very little to learn from them. Where we use wheelbarrows they use handbarrows, where we use dump carts they use wheelbarrows, and where we use temporary rails with tippe cars they use dump carts and horses. Up in Scotland I went nearly the whole length of a new railroad they are building through the Highlands, and it seemed as if they were scratching the earth at a hundred different places at once. There were thousands of men at work; the country literally swarmed with them; but only a comparatively small number were working in a civilized fashion with temporary rails and tip cars. Of all the ways of moving things about, carrying them on hand barrows is the hardest and most costly, yet that was the way they were handling bowlders. Now in America we would have divided such a road into about six or seven sections, and on each section we would have about half as many men, but a deuced sight more steam power. We'd start at both ends and work toward the middle, or at the middle and work toward both ends and shove the dirt from the cuts,along into the fillings, all on wheels and rails, lay the temporary track good enough to run heavy trains over at slow speed, bring all our supplies on our own rails and finish in half the time.

GOING TO MARKET WITH MILK CART.

We pay from a dollar and half a day up for labor and these poor devils over her work all the way from forty cents in Italy up to seventy-five in England, yet I honestly believe the same track could be laid in the same style for less money in America than in England or on the continent. It could certainly be done in far less time. I used to think that the high cost of labor in America retarded the development of the country, but you'll never hear me talk any of that nonsense again. It's actually a benefit because it has compelled us to use our wits and do things in the most economical way. You don't pay a man two dollars a day and then set him lugging one corner of a hand barrow with a hundred pound of stone on it.

"There's another thing. I was speaking about the slow way of building railroads. Well what makes it much more slow and costly than it used to be is that they do everything so thoroughly from the start. In Switzerland they are building two or three different roads, mostly for tourist traffic, I guess, and they are putting in beautiful stone arches over every picayune brook course where iron girders or trusses would have done just as well. The Yankee way is to build the road first as quick and as cheap as possible, get it to running anyhow and make it earn the money to improve the roadbed. That's the way the Central and Pennsylvania were built, and now they are as good as any roads in the world. The West Shore and the Nickel Plate were the only important roads ever built in America as carefully as the English would do it. The West Shore went bankrupt and the Nickel Plate was only built to tap old Vanderbilt's pocket."

"You say the Central and Pennsylvania are as good as any English lines. Why don't they run trains as fast?"

"Don't want to, that's all. Don't need to. Young man, there are seven million people in that bell's kitchen of a manufacturing district around Manchesser and there are nearly six million in London. Put seven million people at Pittsburg and six million in New York and the different lines could run express trains tomorrow over the existing road beds as fast as the wild Irishman They would, too. The trains would be so thick that they would step on each other's heels if they didn't skip along pretty lively. That sort of thing kills local traffic, though. You try to get from a way station on one English line to a way station on another, and see what you think of fast railroading. 'Twill be an all day job if its twenty miles. With us a town like Poughkeepsie gets express service. In England it would be a way station. The conditions are more like ours on the continent—longer distances, less traffic between points—and there you find no faster service than in America; usually not so fast. Railroads are built to make money. If it paid to run trains 50 or 60 miles an hour, or if it was necessary,I could name a dozen good old roads that would begin doing it in a month. Higher rates of speed per measured mile have been made on American roads than on English. Our rolling stock is better and our best roadbeds just as good, though the average isn't. The German railroads are the worst on the continent, of course except Russia and Turkey and those out of the way places."

"Is that because of the government management?"

"No. It's because the government don't care a red about the travelling public, and very little about the development of industry. If a railroad is wanted for military purposes they'll have it whether there's any traffic in time of peace or not. But if it's not wanted for soldiers, they've no money to spare for it. System's organized to get two or three million men to the frontier in short order, not to promote trade. Why, in Germany I visited a stone quarry, where an enormous quantity of excellent stone was being cut. They were carting it half a mile to the railway station.

"'Why in the name of the monoliths of Egypt don't you have a railroad track right to your quarry and load the stone on the cars direct?' said I.

"'Government won't let us,' said the quarryman.

"'Why not?' said I.

"'Well, you see,' said he, 'we could put a railroad right through the valley ten miles or so from one main line to another for a trifle, but it would draw traffic away from the government lines which connect the same points by a roundabout way, and the government won't build the road itself

CARRYING BOWLDERS ON HAND BARROWS.

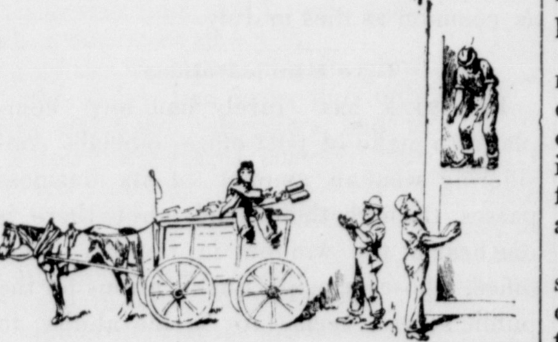
because it doesn't need it, and it won't let us do it.'

"'Well,' said I, 'if you can't build through, why don't you at least run a half mile spurt out the nearest way?'

"'Oh we could do that,' said he, 'but the government wouldn't let its cars run beyond its own station, and if we had cars of our own we would have to reload to the government ones. What's the use?'

"Well, you can imagine that that sickened me with the government control of railroads. It just made me boil over with anger to see such stupid management. Mind you, it was a quarry as big as the Connecticut brown stone ones. I had to change my mind again, though, when I got back into Belgium. Belgian roads are all under royal management, but they are admirable; admirable, as fast as in England, nearly, and the cheapest rates in the world. Belgium has got no war bogey on hand—neutral territory, you know—and that King Leopold, who can't be half so stupid as he looks, sees his opportunity. Belgium is the most formidable competitor England has in every branch of industry. Her farmers are the most skillful in Europe, except the Swiss, and her manufacturing towns are growing like weeds. Oh, it would be a big thing for us if we could have government management of the Belgian sort. Just think of it! No rate wars, no useless parallel lines built to sell, no town bond skin games, no differential rates, and the public getting the benefit of it all in freight and passenger rates, at absolutely cost price. I can't imagine a better thing for the country.

"Those Dutchmen are great engineers, too. Their railroads don't amount to much, but give a Dutchman a mud puddle, makes no difference how big, and he'll have a cabbage garden of it in six years. Why, the Manchester ship canal, about which the English brag so much, isn't a patch com-



PASSING BRICKS FROM CART TO SECOND STORY OF HOUSE.

pared to the draining operations in Holland. In twenty years they will have the whole Zuder Zee turned into the best farm land in Europe, worth two or three hundred dollars an acre on an average. It's an actual fact. They're going to drain it all in one big job, and with modern improved machinery it won't be a bit bigger undertaking than it was 50 years ago to drain the Harlem Zee forty or fifty years ago. It will cost $50,000,000 or so, and look at the result. Instead of a mud lake they would have nice deep canals to all the towns and the rest farm land. We can't teach them any tricks in the draining business. In fact, they do such things much better done in Europe than building railroads. The Manchester ship canal dredging plant is fully up to American ideas. They call their steam shovels 'American devils'; built in Lincolnshire on the American models, and they move all the dirt on rails with donkey locomotives. That's because the job is such a tremendous big one that they can't afford not to have the very best means of doing it.

JOHN L. HEATON.

# THE CITY BY THE SEA.

## A ST. JOHN BOY TELLS OF ITS INTERESTING HISTORY.

**Charleston, Its Condition after the War and at Present—Chimes that were Stolen and Sent Across the Ocean, and Others that were Cast into Cannon.**

CHARLESTON, S. C., May 9.—When the citizens of Charleston returned at the end of the war, it was with drooping spirits that they beheld the damage that had been wrought in their absence and the task of restoring the city to its former shape seemed hopeless indeed to them. But they set to work with energy and perseverance and now, after a quarter of a century, it is again assuming an appearance of prosperity and progress.

The first thing which impresses a visitor to the city is its lowness, for, being on a level with the sea, it seems so literally to rise out of the waters, that the name of the "American Venice" has been given to it. The next thing that impresses one is the number of antiquated buildings, the grounds around which are enclosed by high brick walls. I will describe briefly a few of the oldest buildings which are the landmarks of the city.

St. Philips' church (episcopal) is the oldest in the state, having been established in 1681; it is a very imposing structure of the Corinthian style with a steeple over 200 feet high. Its chimes were broken up and cast into cannon during the war and the clock was destroyed. In the cemetery attached to it, under the shade of a beautiful magnolia, stands a square brick tomb, where rests the remains of John C. Calhoun, Carolina's greatest statesman.

St. Michael's is the next oldest church, and the present building has stood for 130 years "the battle and the breeze," and has emerged more successfully than any public building in the city. It is a handsome edifice, with a very high steeple, which can be seen several miles out at sea. The chimes have an interesting history. They were imported from England in 1764 and when the British evacuated Charleston in 1782, Major Traille, of the royal artillery, seized the bells on the pretence that they were a military perquisite. The citizens applied for them on the ground that they had been purchased by private subscription, and Sir Guy Carleton issued an order for their restoration, but they had been already shipped to England, where they were sold. They were purchased and reshipped to Charleston, however, and were again placed in the belfry. In 1861 they were removed to Columbia for safety, and when that city was desolated by Sherman, they were so much injured by fire as to be rendered entirely useless; two of them were stolen and could never be recovered. In 1866 they were again sent to England to be recast; this was done by the successors of the firm that had made them 100 years before, from the same patterns, and the next year the eight bells, as nearly identical as possible with the original ones, were landed in Charleston and placed in the belfry, where they have remained unmolested since. The feeling of a true Charlestonian for St. Michael's church is similar to that of a Bostonian for King's chapel.

The French Huguenot church is of the Gothic style, and is the only church in the United States which adheres to the exact form of the Huguenot worship.

The post office, court-house, city hall, medical college, Charleston college and Jewish synagogue are all very old buildings, with interesting histories, but space will not permit me to enter into details. They were all shaken by the earthquake of 1886, as their battered walls still testify. The city hall was almost entirely destroyed, but it has been repaired, and now presents quite a neat appearance. The square in the background contains a statue of Wm. Pitt, erected by the grateful Carolinians for the repeal of the stamp act. It has stood for 120 years, and suffered the loss of an arm during the siege of Charleston by a cannon ball from a British gun. Throughout the entire length of the city which is three miles, there is but one slight rise of a few feet and on it is located the South Carolina Military academy, generally known as the "citadel." It overlooks Marion square, formerly called Citadel green, and here the cadets drill. In the vicinity are the Citadel square, Baptist church and the second Presbyterian church, two of the finest in the city; and surrounding them on all sides are many handsome residences.

The finest building in the city is the custom house, situated on Bay street and commanding a good view of the harbor. It is built of white marble in the Roman-Corinthian style, and presents a grand appearance.

Besides the churches I have already mentioned, there are several others of all denominations, and by no means least conspicuous among them are those belonging to the colored people, who are noted for their liberality towards their churches and pastors.

The market, extending from Meeting street to the bay, a distance of a quarter of a mile, is a low, narrow building open to the weather on all sides, and kept delightfully cool by the breezes from the ocean. The educational facilities of Charleston rank higher than most of the southern cities, and its schools are attended by students from all over the south. The colored schools are numerous, have a large enrollment of pupils and are well maintained. The Porter academy, founded in 1867 by Rev. A. Porter, D. D., to provide free education for poor boys from the low country has attained quite a celebrity. It is situated on the bank of the Ashley river on the outskirts of the city amid a grove of oaks and sycamores. Charleston's most prominent public institutions are the noble Orphan House and the Home for the Mothers, Widows and Daughters of Confederate Soldiers. The latter was originated by its patriotic women, and is ably supported by the people, who are ever ready to pay all due respect to the "lost cause." When Gen. Wade Hampton visited the city a short time ago, he was tendered a most loyal reception and cheered lustily wherever he went; and when Gen. Johnston died flags were half mast for days. The havoc and desolation caused by Gen. Sherman's marches were too well remembered to call forth many expressions of grief at his death. Charleston, with a population of 30,000 whites and 40,000 colored, supports two first-class theatres, which are kept running in good shape all the time. The latest event in the social world was the Mary Washington ball, which took place a short time ago in the Grand Opera House. It was gotten up by the descendants of the old aristocratic colonial families to raise funds to build a monument to perpetuate the memory of Mary, the mother of George Washington. All the costumes were in the style of 100 years ago and there were a few which were worn that long ago by the ancestors of the present owners. One of them, worn by a Charleston belle, was once worn by her distinguished ancestor, Rebecca Motte. Two good specimens of the houses of colonial days still exists. One, No. 59 Church street, was formerly owned by Judge Heyward and is noted as having been the place where Washington was entertained when he visited Charleston in 1791; the other, No. 24 Meeting street was the residence of Lord William Campbell, the last royal governor of South Carolina. I have already taken too much space in this letter and will complete the description of Charleston in my next.

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