

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, JANUARY 16, 1892.

ON THE WAY TO BEJA.

PORTUGUESE DONKEYS AND THE WORK THEY DO.

Walking Is Not Popular, But the Donkey Is Very Much So—Where Boarding and Lodging Can Be Got Very Cheap—Life in Portugal.

(Progress Special Correspondence.)
We came to ancient Evora, where we found the most striking Roman remains in Portugal, by rail. But I can never forget the look of anguish and commiseration which came over the face of Dobraido, my good Gallegan guide and servant, and I announced that henceforth our journey was to be pursued on foot. The honest fellow finally wept so copiously that a compromise was effected upon donkeys as far as Beja, when should not he wish to accompany me on foot he was to return to Lisbon.

The genuine grief of Dobraido drew my attention to two facts of some importance to travellers in Portugal. One is that such firm suspicion of the character of any one groveling enough to travel on foot is so fixed and prefixed in the Portuguese mind, that the sentimental tramp labors under the greatest possible disadvantage. The humblest farmer is attended by his still humbler servant; and there is not a peasant in the entire kingdom so desperately impoverished as to be without this patient beast of burden.

The other stubborn fact is the Portuguese donkey itself, and the variety of uses to which the little animal is put. Thousands of them can be found in all the larger cities, doing all manner of labor and service. Every human being in the country districts seems to possess from one to a score. In front of every church, in every praça or square, and huddled in every crumbling archway, are dozens and scores, the most of them accompanied by a barefooted driver with an iron-pointed goad as long as a hoe-handle, caparisoned with a rope around its shaggy neck, in lieu of halter or bridle, and a huge wooden saddle with upturned wooden yokes at the front and back.

They are brought into requisition for the most trifling journeys. The padre will not walk a rood if his own or any other person's donkey is within call. The goatherd on the mountains has him for an inseparable companion. The bull-herders who care for the black bulls which are bred and furnished for bull-fighting at Lisbon and Oporto, which, by the way, is not at all like the repulsive Spanish butchery, but is veritable skill and sport combined, are always found with more donkeys than bulls. If a sheep herder's ground is shifted but half a mile, all the preparations for a long journey are made and the shepherd rides in state to his new station among the rocks. So if a peasant laborer is engaged for a day's service on an adjoining farm, if he has occasion to go from one field to another, or if women in the country wish a bit of gossip at the next cabin or cross-roads, each sets out with boundless preparation, arrives as from a ten day's pilgrimage, and giving the donkey a kick or whack in admonition of self-support, never recalls so trifling a matter as the beast until it is wanted for the return trip. Then all any one has to do to get his donkey is to express a wish for it. A horde of lads, whooping and howling, hunt him, capture him, and rush him to his owner in a perfect hurricane of dust, goads and florid Portuguese maledictions, when his duties are demurely and faithfully resumed.

On the way many interesting experiences and incidents illustrative of the customs of the country and the characteristics of the people were enjoyed. Near one little hamlet named, I think, Vianna, we met the procession of "Nosso Senhor," as the Host or lord sacrament to the dying is called. We dismounted from our donkeys and knelt with the peasants about us as the solemn procession went by. It was preceded by villagers who scattered aromatic leaves in the road before it. A white-robed acolyte was in advance tolling a strangely toned bell in measured strokes. The priest, clad in a gorgeous chasuble, walking under a red silk canopy held in its place by four supporting youths, followed. He bore in his hand a silver vessel containing the sacred emblem of consolation. At his side marched white surpliced choristers and acolytes carrying censers; while following these were members of some irmandade in scarlet stoles, each carrying a long wax candle. All were chanting at intervals a dirge-like hymn. The entire procession was out of sound and sight before we who knelt in the roadway arose; and Dobraido told me that a Portuguese superstition rendered this kneeling until the doleful throng had passed from sight of the direct importance. Else "Nosso Senhor" would next be required at the bedside of him who should so fail in meet and complete reverence.

A spot full of quaint little Portuguese pictures of their kind was an ancient inn of a still more ancient and slumberous town where we were compelled to pass the night. I saw little but its huge archway entrance and the strong iron gates closing behind us as we entered, for it was late and I went directly to my little alcoba above. It had once been an inn of some importance, and the structure which was already hundreds of years old, and had been in the hands of one family for over 300 years, was good for more than another half a thousand. The walls of the entire structure were capable of withstanding siege; and the alcobas or tiny sleeping rooms were no larger than prisoners' cells of modest size. Indeed the prison effect was enhanced by the riveted and bolted doors of chestnut, six inches thick, in which were iron latticed gratings with little slides behind; while where windows should have been were only tiny grated holes splayed outwardly through the huge stone wall.

No monk's cell could have been more secure or austere, and Dobraido told me that this sort of a structure was greatly in favor in the time of such grand robbers as

Giraldo, of Alfonso Henrique's time, who often secured large booty at less defensible inns, when abbots, friars or merchants were traveling with treasure.

When morning came I found the interior, the paco or court of the old inn, most odd and charming. All sorts of quaint utensils and furniture were scattered along its sides. A narrow gallery ran along the entire second story, with here and there a bird in cage and a semi-tropical plant. On one of its sides some pretty vines crept up against the old walls in a vagrant, luxurious way; while the roof of half-round tiles extended a distance over the galleries, leaving generous opening to the sky above. The whole interior, while a picture of medieval quaintness, was a structural compromise between the closed abodes of northern climes and the lovely half garden house-courts of the tropics; a suggestion of snugness and protection from whistling winds, and as a true tribute to zephyrous airs and a genial sky and sun.

But opposite my chamber, along the shadowy end of the court was the surest sign of equable climate and summery days. That was my breakfast cooking in the open air—not upon a stove, nor in a fireplace, nor yet by any of the ruder devices our grandmothers knew. Heavy flat stones furnished a sort of raised rocky dais as high as the knees of the ancient senhora who was bustling about the court. On this dais furze fagots were burning in two tiny fires no bigger than your fists. Above one of these on a triangular piece of iron something was grilling. Above the other in a copper pot held there from a long distance by a wooden pike beneath its bale or handle, something was stewing. Between bars and snatches of song, a maiden of ample bust and hips, with arms akimbo and hands pressing against the sides of her scarlet bodice, converted herself into a human blow-pipe, feeding the flame of furze with such blasts from her powerful lungs as would for the time completely hide the two females in a kind of a volcanic shower of ashes, the volumes of smoke swirling away towards the clouds through the ever-open roof of the court. Thus for an hour came song and smoke and strange dissolving views of cookery, women and fire, when I was most ceremoniously conducted to my almoco or breakfast. The table was bare of covering, but amends were made in dishes and their contents. A tremendous frasca para vinho or wine flagon or glass with a pewter goblet at its side contained fully two gallons of the cheap wine of Alentejo. A brown earthen plate before me held a slice of grilled Portuguese bacon of mighty proportions. A sweet potato or yam, big as a cucumber, stood steaming alongside. A basin containing some mysterious stew flanked the yam; and piled before me in an actual recklessness of munificence was a mountain of corn-meal bread, yellow as saffron and hard as rock. For all this service, including my night's lodging and the care of Dobraido and the other donkeys, with the countless blessings of God and "Good Voyages!" showered upon us at departure, I was only called upon to pay a sum equal to about forty cents in American money.

At a villeggiatura or gentleman farmer's home—as all farmers in Portugal above the grade of peasants are called morgados or gentlemen farmers—where we sought shelter from a shower and after the custom of the Portuguese were not permitted to depart for a day, I had opportunity of briefly studying the Portuguese country gentleman's home. Near all large cities the morgado only comes to his country home in summer. But at this distance from Lisbon many live at their villas the year round, visiting Lisbon in the gay winter season.

These villas of the better class are all on one general pattern. A high walled courtyard in front, filled with ancient orange trees, half hides a low large house of heavy architecture, whose walls extend far to the rear and form another courtyard of vast proportions, filled with home and farm belongings. This is generally the lounging and play spot for numerous servants and children. The interiors are quaint in huge rooms, strangely constructed staircases, odd galleries and invariably a tiny chapel where mass is said for the family and dependents on Saints' day. These homes will possess many objects of refinement, but seldom any books. Occasionally beautiful statuary is seen. Odd ornaments in metal, and gargoyle water-spouts and fountain-pieces are common. Curious old paintings and extraordinary specimens of china are in every home; and the guitar, though seldom any other musical instrument, will be found in nearly every room in the house. In every villeggiatura in Portugal the stranger and the friend are alike welcome.

Its exterior and surroundings are quaint, dreamful and charming. In this portion of Portugal verdure is never absent, the roses never cease blooming and the songs of the birds are never done. Avenues of overarching camellia and orange trees lead from the villa to a score of places upon the farmstead—among them to the granaries, to the threshing floor, to the roadway, to the ancient Nora or water wheel, where blindfolded oxen tread round and round, raising the water which is sent in stone troughs to villa cascades and fountains, and to countless places in the gardens and fields. Everywhere that labor is done, save in the fields, are shade and blossom and nesting birds; and while life here possesses none of the thrilling pace and fine friction we know, it is always one of easy labor, ample content and languorous repose.

EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

How It Got Its Name.

The title of the White House at Washington was strangely bestowed. Soon after it was built it was proposed to call it "The Palace," but this was opposed, as savouring of Royal interference, and tending towards government by an aristocracy. Congress determined that it should be called "The Executive Mansion." It became known as the White House because, when rebuilt after the British soldiers had partly destroyed it, it was painted white to hide the black traces of smoke and flame upon the freestone walls.

A YOUNG PHILANTHROPIST.

A Clever Boy who is Doing Good Work in New York.

One of these devoted lads is Tello d'Apery, the fourteen year-old son of a French professor, now resident in the United States. Tello was born in Philadelphia in 1877. When he was about five years old his parents moved to New York city. He was a bright, manly boy, but with a mind serious and reflective beyond his years. Although young, he has become famous as a philanthropist and editor, being head of what is known as the barefoot mission, by which hundreds of little New York gamins are supplied with boots and shoes. He tells the story of his life and work as follows:

"Finding that I could not raise enough money any other way, I decided to try to do it with a little paper. With the assistance of some friends, I prepared to issue the first number of *The Sunny Hour*, a small monthly published for children. People seemed to be interested in the barefoots; still, the net profit on the first issue, (which was one thousand copies) was only six dollars and twenty-five cents. I was congratulating myself on the result, and planning how best to spend this sum, when a thief picked my pocket and got it all. But, in spite of this misfortune, I felt encouraged and subscribers began to come in. I made the next issue ten thousand, of twelve pages (the first was but four), and enlarged the size of the sheet, besides. The paper grew and every dollar over expenses was used for buying shoes, stockings and clothes, for soon I had around me a large number of needy boys and girls, of just the sort I desired to help.

"It would be too long a story to tell you all about my experiences in the Barefoot Mission, during the three years since *The Sunny Hour* was started. To sum it up, I may say that in all about three thousand pairs of shoes, old and new, have been given where they were sorely needed. I got together all the serviceable pairs possible, had them mended and where no shoes would fit, I bought new ones. Just before last Christmas, I had on hand about three hundred pairs, part bought and part sent in by kind people who wanted to help the wails, and to the lot I added a number of new pairs. Then invitations were sent out to four hundred children to come to a Christmas tree (we have had one every year since the start), and all were given shoes, good, warm, comfortable stockings and other clothing. These boys and girls are just as proud of shoes that well-to-do folks put off when half worn, as though they were brand-new."

But this modest statement gives only a meagre idea of the extent of the work that is being done by the Barefoot Mission. Besides, shoeing and clothing hundreds of tatterdemaldons from the slums, its philanthropy extends to the sick-room and it sends bread, beet-tea, milk, fruit and sim-

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ple delicacies to the suffering children of the tenements. In this christian work, it is sustained and helped by many charitable people, in different parts of the country, who send money, packages of clothing and occasionally a box of wholesome food for the sick.

The headquarters of the Barefoot Mission at No. 18 West 14th street, New York, present a unique picture. Tello sits in his editorial sanctum surrounded and sometimes almost hidden by a heterogeneous mass of old shoes and clothing. Even the little desk at which he prepares his copy for *The Sunny Hour* is often burdened with these articles, compelling the young editor to write on his knees. On the walls are the photographs of many famous people who have written cheering words to the Mission. Some books and a few curiosities such as any bright lad might accumulate in his room, complete the odd furnishings. He writes an hour each day and finds this quite enough for the needs of his paper. Indeed the pages of *The Sunny Hour* show that other hands do a great deal of the work, for they are brimful of pleasant little stories and sketches contributed by bright young people, and letters of cheer from distinguished grown-up folks. Free contributions, bearing famous signatures, that would be greatly prized by magazine editors, are printed side by side with letters from tiny tots of eleven and twelve of both sexes. In the latest issue, Sir Edwin Arnold has a new poem entitled "Mothers, a Dialogue at Boston."

Mr. Gladstone, Henry Ward Beecher, and a host of other celebrities have contributed to the *Sunny Hour*, gratuitously, while the great magazines would have been glad to pay fabulous prices for the articles. Such is the work of a boy.

HOW A POET ACQUIRED A THIRST

Influence of Imagination Upon a Man Who Looks Upon the Wine.

One Monday night several years ago the late "Fritz" Emmet was at Indianapolis. While his audience was assembling a rumor became current that Emmet was drinking, starting on a spree. James Whitcomb Riley heard the rumor at the theatre entrance. Several months had intervened since the poet had been in his cups, a fact his friends had noted with gratification.

Riley's seat was in the parquette and well to the front. He sat through the performance, but within a few minutes after leaving the theatre had emptied in rapid succession a number of well-filled glasses and was thoroughly intoxicated. The spree was one of his worst, lasting a week. When still quite nervous from its effects he told a remarkable story of temptation by the imagination, which under Riley's recital was impressive and pathetic. It ran as follows:

"While waiting for the curtain to rise I wondered if Emmet would appear, and if so how drink would effect his acting. When, the play being on, Emmet bounded on to the stage with his rollicking face and manner, I imagined him under stimulation and from drink just taken. He was feeling good—his singing and dancing showed that. Later, he was not quite so brisk—the stimulation was wearing off. I thought, But near the end of the act he was more sprightly, and, noticing him glance towards a wing door, I fancied I knew the inspiration. He knew that in a minute or two more he could have another drink. When in its descent the curtain was yet several inches from the floor I saw Emmet's feet in motion—going for that drink.

"During the wait for the second act I imagined Emmet—I could fairly see him—drinking. It was whisky, and he enjoyed it and praised it. The bottle and glasses looked inviting. Somehow my throat had by this time become dry though I had not thought of a drink for myself.

"Emmet's coming on in the second act was even more spirited and the audience caught his infection and laughed and applauded him. The whisky was at work, I thought, and I sympathized with his exhalation; how pleasant it was to feel that way! How clear and musical his voice; his throat was not dry—he had just had a drink.

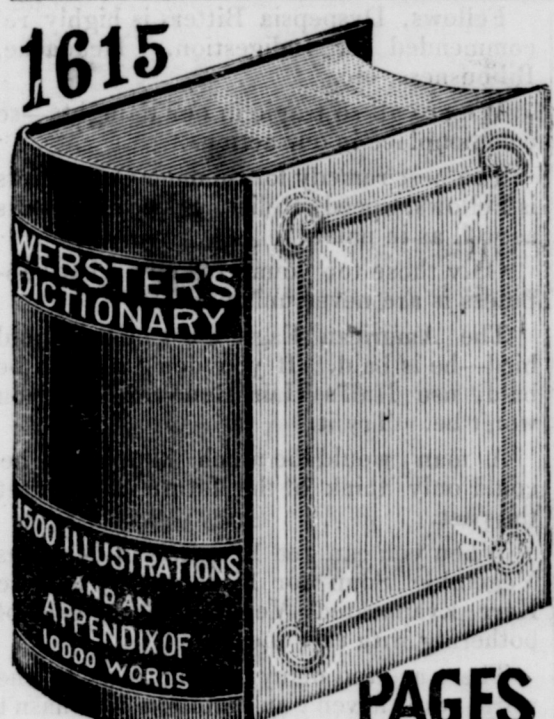
"In the final scene Emmet seemed to be rushing for a quick finish. He wanted the performance over, and no wonder. As the curtain was descending the expression on his face read: 'Good night! I'm off for a lark now.'

"I remember hurrying out into the street with an overpowering thirst on me, and hastening, as I imagined Emmet was doing, toward a bar for whiskey, and that is all I remember until next day."

It was the poet's fervid imagination that did it all, for the rumor of Emmet's drinking that set it working was unfounded that time.

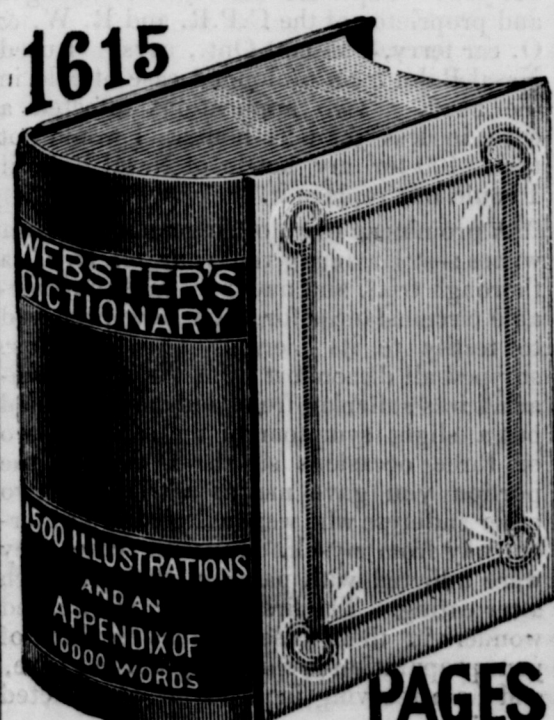
A Sailor's Cure For Seasickness.

The drinking of salt water is said to be a perfect cure for seasickness, though it makes the drinker very miserable for a few minutes after he takes the cure. The sailor who recommended it to the sufferer in question accounted for it by saying that the stomach on board ship is in a very sensitive state, and that the salt water pickles it, so that it gets hardened to conditions which had previously revolted it.



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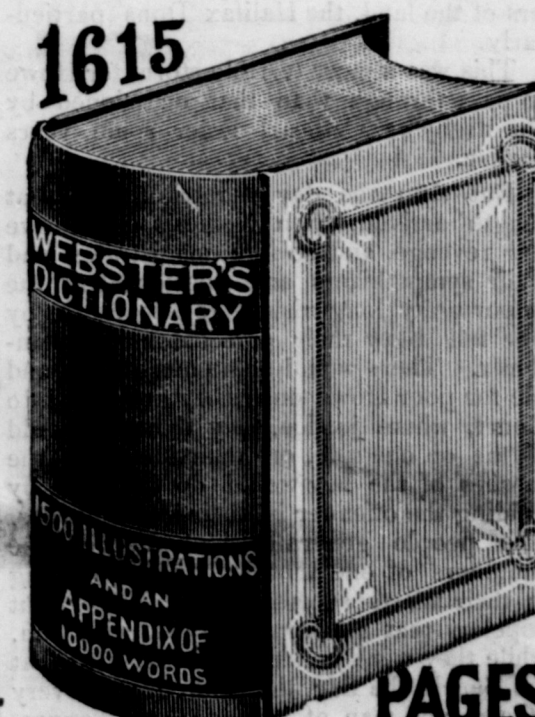


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