

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1898.

HAVANA AS IT IS TODAY.

THINGS SEEN AND HEARD THERE BY A TRAVELLER.

Guard Mount—Few Bicycles and no Dogs—Costumes of Women Who Resort to Cosmetics to Make up Their Beauty—Lottery Tickets and the Cemetery.

The one predominating element in Havana at the present time is the soldiery. The streets are literally filled with uniformed men and youth. The average Spanish officers or soldiers would not impress a stranger favorably. As a rule they are not well set up and they are generally undersized. They may understand the theory and practice of war, but the true martial ardor does not seem to reach down into their backbone and legs. None of the officers would ever be accused of wearing corsets as some of our fledglings in the military service are. The uniform of officers and men seems to be of the same material—a fine green and white stripe gingham or some similar fabric for both coat and trousers. The officers wear a few gilt stars on their coat sleeves and a white canvas cap; the enlisted men a Panama straw hat, with one side folded up and fastened with a rosette.

The volunteers, are doing duty in the city as an adjunct to the police. They have an inspection and guard mount every morning on the Prado. I twice saw this ceremony performed and never saw anything so slovenly done before. There was no sizing up of the men; a boy of 5 feet 2 inches would be between men six or eight inches taller. Talking in the ranks seemed to be allowed at all times. At the inspection the man became immovable only when the officer approached him and relaxed into sociability immediately after the officer had passed. Some had leggings, many had not. They were a job lot of misfits, assorted sizes and colors from 15 to 40. The regulars are having a hard time of it. In summer about 50 per cent sicken and die. At the present time some of them are begging on the streets not having received their pay for more than six months. This refers to the enlisted men. The officers are paid and, apparently, enjoy themselves. They seemed to have just war enough on their hands and no desire to increase the volume of that kind of business.

One might imagine that everybody in Havana was rich, as there is an utter absence of dogs, which cannot be accounted for by lack of poverty. Without asking for an explanation, one may conclude that they have gone with the reconcentrados. The bicycle had doesn't seem to have taken hold of the Havanaese. I saw but two bicycles on the streets and those were on the outskirts of the city, where there was a little patch of concrete pavement. There are very few streets in Havana where it would be a pleasure to ride a wheel. The business portion is paved with block granite in very good condition. The roads in the suburbs are execrable. The favorite drive is on the beach road, but there is very little pleasure in driving—the road is so full of ruts and depressions that carriage springs are severely tested. The condition of the streets and the almost entire absence of country roads is probably the excuse for not indulging in bicycling.

There are a few lines of street cars with mules for motive power. The charge is 10 cents, and travel by this method is naturally somewhat restricted. When the war is over there ought to be a grand opportunity for enterprising Americans to put in a first-class trolley system with five 5-cent fares. The favorite means of transportation in the city is by their one-horse victorias, of which there are thousands, and they will carry two persons from one point to another within the city limits for a peseta, or 20 cents of their money, equal in value to 14 cents English money. This is about the only cheap article in Havana.

A casual observer would say there was very little difference between the gowns and costumes of the Havanaese ladies and those seen in the large cities of the United States or Europe. They catch on to the prevailing fashions without much delay and adopt them to the extent of their purses. One does not see seal cloaks or other furs on the streets even in the winter months, when the temperature is between 70 and 80 degrees, although I saw one fur cape for sale in one of the shops. If a sale of them ever occurs, the purchaser is undoubtedly one who contemplates a trip North. Most of the women who appear on the streets in the daytime hood their faces with black lace

scarfs and use fans to protect their faces from the sun. Frequently you see young women walking together dressed exactly alike. This is so frequent as to be noticeable to strangers. On a Sunday afternoon I noticed in front of a fashionable residence five women, probably members of the same family, all gowned precisely alike, in a heliotrope fabric. It was suggested that the head of the family was pleased with the goods and bought a whole piece. Very few of the women are pretty, according to the recognized standard of beauty. They age early and rapidly, and resort to cosmetics and powders to continue their youthful looks long after their beauty if they ever had any, has passed away.

The Hotel Inglaterra is considered a fine hotel for Cuba. You would not be satisfied with the cooking and general conduct of the dining room. There is scarcely any variation of the menu from meal to meal and day to day. It is printed in both Spanish and English, but as the waiters cannot understand the English part of it, you are hopelessly lost if you undertake to give them an order. But I started to tell you about the bedroom. It is very roomy and at least twenty feet high. Broad wooden blinds open out on an iron balcony. Iron bars perpendicularly placed make access to your room from the outside impossible. The floor is marble and the walls are covered with a heavy dark paper of Moorish design. A half circle of colored glasses over your window make a very beautiful rainbow effect on the marble floor when the sun shines into the room. The beds are a pretty picture to look at. The bedsteads are brass, with a symmetrically curved mosquito canopy tastefully draped to protect the sleeper from those musical pests, which do business every month in the year. The picture is somewhat discolored when you discover there is nothing between you and a very flexible wire mattress except one thin quilt and a sheet. The effect is something like getting into a hammock. Another peculiarity of the room is that the partition which separates you from the adjoining room reaches only eight or nine feet from the floor, and by standing on a chair, if inclined, you can look in on your neighbors. We distinctly heard the voices of two feminines in liquid Spanish from the other side of the partition, but, having an insurance policy, insuring against all accidents, we went soundly to sleep without fear.

It seems to a stranger in Havana that one-half of the population are engaged in selling lottery tickets. They are offered to you by all classes, ages and sexes. They are hung on hooks in elevators, and the boy or man in charge of the lift suggests that you invest. Almost every store can supply you if you want them. Half-clad men, women and children importune you in Spanish to help them out. The wonder is where all these wretched people get the money to start in business. Probably they sell on commission, but it must be a great deal of confidence to trust them on the streets with so much valuable (?) property.

There is considerable absence of drunkenness in Havana. I saw but one person intoxicated and he was hanging around the American Consulate asking assistance. He was an American, I am ashamed to say. His story was that he had been stranded here, and being an American sailor, had been abused by the Spanish, to prove which he showed me the cuts on his head. He apparently deserved all he got.

The cemetery is an interesting place to visit and one is repaid for the trouble of a two or three mile drive to see some of the fine monuments there, especially one erected by the city to the memory of thirty-six firemen who perished in a conflagration several years ago. It is of Italian marble, grand in proportions and elaborate in workmanship. Medallions in life size of the dead firemen are cut in relief on one of the supporting blocks of marble, nine on each side. The main shaft is surmounted with the figure of an angel holding the dead body of a fireman in its arms, and on each side and angel is some beautifully worked design commemorating the occasion. The whole structure must be about 75 feet high and possibly 80 feet square at the base. It was made in Italy and must have cost several hundred thousands of dollars. The Havana funerals all occur at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, and soon after that time you see processions coming into the cemetery from all directions. The carriages remain at the entrance while the bearers carry the casket to the grave, followed by the mourners. I saw several funeral processions wending their way slowly up the hill without hearse or carriages. These were

of families too poor to have anything but a plain coffin. This was being carried on the shoulders of men, and as the distance is sometimes several miles, it requires quite a number of able-bodied men, who relieve one another frequently. Nearly all the lots in the cemetery are inclosed with iron fences, and almost every grave mark has a wreath of metallic flowers attached to it. There is an appearance of neglect noticeable throughout the cemetery, but that seems to be characteristic of the people.

UNDERGROUND STREAMS.

Thousands of Miles of Subterranean Rivers in Kentucky.

Mr. John R. Proctor, formerly State Geologist of Kentucky, has written an article for the Century on 'The mammoth Cave of Kentucky.' Mr. Proctor says:

Passing southward through Kentucky on the Louisville and Nashville Railway, the observant traveler will notice that about forty miles from Louisville the road climbs Muldrow's Hill, which is the northern encampment of an elevated limestone plateau sloping gently to the south and west. The road traverses this plateau for about one hundred miles, and descends a southern escarpment into the basin of central Tennessee. In this distance only three streams are crossed—Nolin, Green, and Barren Rivers; and between these rivers the entire surface-drainage passes away through subterranean channels, giving rise to a curious 'sink-hole' topography which is peculiar to this region. These circular and oval-shaped depressions are so numerous that in places the rims almost touch one another, and one can sometimes count several hundred to the square mile. Through vents at the bottom of these sinks the surface-water passes downward into caverns and underground streams, emptying into the above named rivers through arched ways near water level, and in places beneath the surface of the rivers.

The surface-rock of this plateau is the Subcarboniferous limestone, which is here several hundred feet thick, a massive, remarkably homogeneous rock, with no intervening strata of shale or sandstone—conditions most favorable for the formation of caverns; consequently this region contains more and larger caves, in a given area, than any other region in the world. In Edmonson County, where the celebrated Mammoth Cave is located, it is claimed that there are as many as five hundred known caverns.

A range of hills of uniform height, running parallel with the railway and several miles distant, will be observed to the north. On nearer inspection this will be seen to be a level plateau rising out of the limestone plain, and held up by a capping of massive sandstone. It is beneath the protection of this sandstone-capped plateau that the larger caves are found. Green River has cut through this plateau to a depth of about 320 feet; and as the sandstone cap is about 70 feet thick, we find about 250 feet of massive limestone exposed above the drainage level, we thus have 250 feet as the present limit of the vertical extension of these caves. The evidence is conclusive that these caves have been cut down to correspond with the deepening of the channel cut by Green River. In the region immediately along the line of the railway, where the sandstone capping and the upper limestone have been removed by erosion, the caverns have less vertical extension, and correspond to the lower avenues of the Mammoth and other caves to the north. Doubtless large caverns, corresponding to those now remaining beneath the sandstone plateau, existed here before the upper member of the limestone was eroded from this area.

There is no means of estimating the extent of the caverns and subterranean streams in this region. Every one of the innumerable depressions of sinkhole—save where the vents have been closed, thus forming ponds—communicates with an underground channel or cave, and the aggregate length of such channels has been estimated at many thousands of miles. Nor can we form any estimate of the number and extent of large caverns yet undiscovered.

But for the erosion caused by a small stream cutting through the roof of Mammoth Cave the present entrance would not have been broken open, and this, the greatest of caves, might have remained unknown. Several other of the largest and most beautiful caves in this region have been found by accident. Hidden grandeur doubtless yet remain untombd beneath the extensive uplands reaching out on both sides of Green River.

In crossing the southern upland we come upon oval-shaped limestone valleys, surrounded on all sides by a sandstone rim, with no outlet save through vents in the bottom. These valleys are sometimes hundreds of acres in extent, and are probably formed by the falling in of extensive caverns, the debris, disintegrated by the elements being carried away through the subterranean channels. The fact that existing caves under the hills surrounding these valleys have been found through entrances in the sides of some of the valleys is an indication that this may have been the condition.

HOW HARRY TRIPP DIED.

Incident of the Blowing Up of the Mississippi Steamboat Oceanus.

Any man who faces certain death without a tremor has in him an element of bravery and heroism. No matter what may have been his faults, a man's unflinching bravery at his dying hour commands the admiration of the living. Such a hero was Harry Tripp, one of the most noted gamblers on the river steamers in the palmy days of the Mississippi.

'The Oceanus was in the Red River trade out of St. Louis in 1871,' said an old steamboat man. 'Those were the days when the Mississippi River steamboat trade was yet in its glory. St. Louis was holding the trade in the richest selections of the South and one of the prosperous concerns in the city then was known as the St. Louis Merchants' Arkansas, White and Red River Packing Companies. This corporation sent boats down the Mississippi and up the Arkansas, White and Red rivers. Some of the best known men in St. Louis today held salaried positions with the river transportation companies in those times. Some of the big fortunes in St. Louis today were made by men who were at the head of those river packet lines or were in some way engaged in commerce connected with the river. To be connected with the river trade was something to be proud of.'

'The steamboat Oceanus was in the Red River trade. Her pilot, in the latter end of the river's palmy period, was Harry Tripp. Every old steamboat man remembers Tripp. He was a typical sport and steamboat man of these days. He was known from St. Louis to New Orleans as a king among sports and a prince among good fellows. He was tall and slender, but wiry. He was the most elegant dresser in the city of St. Louis. His linen was always as immaculate as the virgin snow; his suits were always of the finest black doeskin, which was then the fashion, and he wore a silk hat and kid or morocco boots with high heels. At that time it was fashionable for a man to wear a diamond cluster in his shirt bosom, and Harry Tripp had a cluster that was the envy of the social and the sporting world. From each side of this immense cluster of diamonds ran a delicate gold chain, which was fastened on the side of the vest with golden pins. Tripp was not a 'loud dresser' like the sports of to-day—he was always attired in black and his clothing was in excellent taste.

'Although of slight and slender build, there was no effeminacy in Harry Tripp's nature. To the contrary, he was bold, brave, and daring, and he was noted along the river as one of the most venturesome gamblers that ever dealt a card. He had physical bravery to equal that of a lion, and he was handsome to a fault—yes, to a fault, for he had a sweetheart in every port. He was a perfect type of the dandy, and wo-

men simply raved over him. He was about 40 years old at the time of his death.

'The Oceanus was coming up the Mississippi and was flying light one afternoon of a fine day in 1871 or 1872 when her boilers blew up just above Cairo. Twelve or fifteen lives were lost, many persons were wounded, and the boat was a complete wreck. The boat took fire and sank, but the water was low, and the hull didn't go under. When the boilers let go Harry Tripp was blown from the pilot house and landed on the fore-castle, close to the captain; a heavy timber fell across his legs and he was tied down as securely as if he had been placed in a monster vise. When the boat sank the fore-castle rested on a bar. Tripp lay on the fore-castle, and, although pinned down, he was not injured. He had no broken limbs and was not suffering to any great extent apparently. All was excitement after the explosion, and it was some time before Tripp succeeded in attracting the attention of the officers of the boat and of the survivors. It was discovered that the fire was making rapid headway toward Tripp, and a desperate effort was quickly begun to rescue him. Then transpired one of the most terrible scenes in the annals of steamboating in this or any other country.

'Tripp was a very profane man, and at first he used tongue-blistering blasphemy while cursing the officers and negro roustabouts in giving them directions how to save him. He was absolutely unharmed, was cool and collected, and he raised himself to a sitting posture as he talked to the men about him and told them how to proceed to cut away the heavy timber which held his lower limbs in a vise-like grip.

Men used big axes and saws and crow-bars diligently in an effort to remove the large piece of timber, but the wind fanned the flames into a fury and the men were working in a fierce heat. The hungry flames were fast eating the wrecked fore-castle and Tripp damned and cursed at the top of his voice as he urged on his rescuers. The flames grew nearer, and Tripp used a less number of oaths. The surging flames darted still nearer and nearer, and finally Tripp ceased swearing altogether. He perfectly cool and collected, he became quite and talked in lower tones as he gave directions to the men who were working to save his life. When he saw death staring him in the face he quit cursing and not another oath fell from his lips. The angry flames now surged around the rescuers, and still the heavy timber held Tripp beneath its cruel weight. It was now apparent that Tripp could not be saved, and none knew it better than he. With perfect composure he said to the men:

'Leave me! Leave me! Why sacrifice or place in danger other lives for me?' Realizing the impending fate of being burned alive, Tripp begged the men to knock him in the head with an axe before leaving him, but nobody observed his request for a coup de grace. As one by one the men were forced by the intense heat to leave the wreck, Tripp shook hands with them and said good-bye. Two negro roustabouts were last to leave. Tripp begged them to kill him, but they would not obey his command. The flames now burned so close that each of the two negroes struck his last blow at the timbers and they were forced to jump into the water and swim to a spot on the bar. The last survivors saw of Tripp he was in a half sitting posture when the flames rolled over him and burned him to a crisp. Thus passed away as brave a man as ever turned a card or a pilot wheel.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Longest Arch in the World.

A steel arch is to be thrown across the Niagara River near Clifton which will be 840 feet span—a greater distance than was ever yet spanned by an arch.

Bad Blood

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