

BILL NYE TAKES A BATH. He Enters the Wild Waves and Gambols Down at Coney Island.

Coney Island this season seems to be a good deal improved as to the character of its patrons. I was told that many of the toughest class had gone to Toledo and thus greatly increased the business of the West End. I had quite a little talk with Mr. Elias Drooler, the artist and tintype impressionist at the West End, early in the week, regarding this change for the better. He also says that many of the canoeists of Coney Island have gone to Ocean Grove for the summer. Mr. Drooler took a tintype of me in bathing costume while I waited; very few people look well in a bathing costume, it seems to me, and this picture would indicate that I am no exception. Bathing in a hired chameleon with red braids on it does not give me that gentle sense of thorough ablution that I felt when in childhood I defied the police and, clothed nothing but conscious rectitude and a little bag of assafetida which I wore around my neck to keep off the prairie mange and other plagues incident to a thorough education, I plunged like a long, slim buff streak into the bosom of the mill-pond.

"Oh, then was glorious days," as Sir George Pullman says in his night Thoughts. "How lean and meager is the salary we get to-day compared with the joy that came with freedom and health and fried mush and gentle sleep."

I was speaking to Sir George about it the other day and as he charged a colored porter up with the loss of a towel on his last trip he heaved a sigh, and looked out at window as who should say: "Ah, what recompense have wealth and position for the unalloyed joys of childhood, and how gladly to-day as I sit in the midst of my Oriental splendor and costly magnificence, a titled foreigner with a glittering order on my breast, but chaos in my soul and thoughtfully run my hands through my choice but changing chin whiskers would I give it all, wealth, fame, title and position, for one brief, balmy, breezy day gathered from the mellow haze of the long ago, when I stood full knee deep in the lukewarm pool near my suburban home in the quiet dell and allowed the yielding, soothing mud to squirt up between my dimpled toes."

The West End is not overrun with wealth and style or russet harnesses or clanging chains, but it has an atmosphere of light melody and freedom from restraint which is real nice, I think. I won a cane there during the week by throwing rings at it. It was not an intellectual cane, but cheap and with a very small development about the head. The more I go to Coney Island and watch the ways of West Enders and cane vendors the more I notice that the gold headed canes are so wide across the top that the rings will not budge them. The cane I got has a nice red typewriter head on it made of celluloid and the stick itself is of pure hide-bound Weehawken malaga. It only cost me eight cents, but the canes I bought did not get cost me \$2.85.

Pop corn this year is flavored with everything as neatly as soda water and is less gummy, as a young lady from Caesar said to me on the boat as I was holding her hand for her a moment, while she was listening to some boat music. Speaking of boat music in New York this season, I thing I noticed a slight improvement in that regard, several of the bands having been shot by maddened passengers and their places not yet supplied by others. One entire boat band was bitten by a mad-dog in June, also in the calf of the leg, and no one has been raised up to take its place as I write. Much good may be done at times, I think, by well directed hydrophobia. A colored quartet who thought they sang on board the excursion boat which last year encircled Staten Island daily now imagine that they are singing at South Beach. For the privilege of wailing on that trip last year these men had to pay the boat a small sum. Towards autumn their wives raised it by laundry efforts. Nothing was paid in by passengers except one. An ill-guided man from Poughkeepsie who was deaf and also absent-minded gave them five cents on the 15th of July but he was observed to another passenger and the next day the body of the Poughkeepsie man was found far out to sea with an airtight stove tied to his neck.

These colored gentlemen are dependent solely on their voices and wives for support. If they were not permitted to obtain their livelihood by singing they would have to work. I do not dislike these musicians, but their songs, devoid of anesthetics, will kill burdocks by the roadside. I like good ocean music, and will walk quite a long distance to hear it, but when it is so rank that the restless oysters turn over in their little oyster beds and moan as the boat goes over them, I think it is time to call a halt.

Many able prophets said that this year would see a great falling off in the attendance at Coney Island but I do not notice it. It was said that other new resorts would cut into Coney Island even as the enraged and outraged surf had cut into Brighton beach, but it is not apparent. New York needs all the breathing holes there are, and though you give me one I think that the multitude cannot be duplicated you find that it can over and over again at hundreds of other places, seaward and inland.

Good food can be had at Coney Island at a moderate price, many articles comparing favorably as to quality and tariff with those in the city. Devilish crabs and lionized potatoes especially are to be had in great profusion and at reasonable rates for all.

Mr. Anton Seidl is holding his recitals at Brighton beach and amidst the roar of the surf the sweet music of the orpheus and geraniade may be heard On the day I attended Mr. Seidl was in good form. He does not play himself, but merely does the ornamental beckoning and gives the playing his general approval as it goes along.

The programme opened with an overture, which is frequently the case at

such times, and was followed by a suite of dances by Brill. It was from the Ballet La Champagne, and one could almost imagine that he saw before him the gentle, graceful, lithe-limbed and giddy skippers of the legitimate drama. Then came soft easy going waltzes by Gounod, Saint-Saens and other able composers. After that Mr. Seidl introduced a Hungarian rhapsody by the eminent Liszt. It was No. 12 of the rhapsodies, and Mr. Seidl kept good time to it with his little parrot handle. When the music was completed the applause of the audience mingled with that of the roaring billows outside, and then some more pieces were played with great success, closing with a selection by Nessler, called the "Trumpeter of Skowhegan," if I am not grossly mistaken. The opera which it was taken from, as the tautologues have it, was laid on the Rhine, where it was afterwards secured and utilized by Mr. Nessler. Mr. Seifert played the trumpet solo in this piece, and was recalled at its close by red message, he being somewhere up toward the iron pier in order to give his music the right distance.

Mr. Seidl uses only the Chickering piano at his performances. He uses it by standing it in the pit with a large monogram tarapaulin over it bearing the name in tall gilt letters. Then at the close of the season Mr. Chickering throws off his horse-blanket or sweater together with half the price, and lets Mr. Seidl have the piano.

He also uses the Mason & Hamlin organ in a similar way. I lectured once in a large city for the benefit of watermelon sufferers in Georgia, and on the programmes I "only used the Chickering erect overstrung piano" at all my entertainments. Somebody did well out of that but I was not in it, to use a truism from Socrates.

The time will come when a prima donna may pause between her selections while the orchestra proceeds with interludes and, slowly but deftly removing her artificial teeth, polish them neatly with her elbow and call attention to their general good qualities and biting powers, at the same time giving the name of the maker and thus getting an extra cent at the end of the season.

Mr. Informal Williams of Ninth avenue, who has practically controlled the pretzel market at Pier One for the past season, has opened a branch at the West end and last week shipped a whole fish-pole full of these toothsome viands.

A hot Frankfurter works at South Beach, owned by Perley Dinksbatter, caught on fire last Friday week and was completely gutted.

Long Branch looks bright and smiling this season and along the ocean drive many new faces are seen. I frequently save up enough during the winter to stop over at Long Branch between boats by being economical.

I like to visit Long Branch each summer, and every one is glad to see me there and wonders why I cannot stay any longer. It is no because I am prejudiced against the Branch, but because I cannot afford it. Now at South Beach I can go from my country seat at Slipperyknob-Buck-of-the-Reservoir-by-the-Sea for 5 cents. Carrying my own bathing suit, which consists of a knitted chemise, I repair to some unfrequented portion of the shore and after eating a hasty bite of some pure food, consisting in part of salt pork laid in place by Shaker flannel cake and washed down with a beaker of old Rhishen wine from a secret vineyard of mine in the hills of old Kentucky, I disrobe behind an arch which I stick up in the sand and plunge madly with a glad, gurgling cry into the spray where I snort about for an hour or so and then return to my atelier, where I resume work on my new almanac for 1891 and do other literary work till my seething brain warns me that I must desist or incur the displeasure of the board of health.

All of this costs but a trifle and leaves me considerable means to use in the purchase of members of the legislature and other farm produce. I hear some complaint this summer at the bathing places regarding lack of proper care of the bathing houses and the crying need of more cleanliness. One lady at Coney Island this summer, whose home is on the east side of New York and whose husband made his money by a judicious system of plumbing and unsanitary charges for same, told me that her eldest daughter, Elfrida, came home after using one of those public bathhouses and her clothing was just literally covered with germs.

People can't be too careful in that way. A correspondent writes me from Ocean Grove to know what he shall do about collecting a slight bill of \$500 against the landlord of a boarding house there who rented a house last summer for that sum. Toward the close of the season last summer the guests all assembled at the breakfast table one morning and while merrily chaffing each other and such things, some one asked, "Where is Mr. Van Pelt?" for that was the gentleman's name who ran the establishment. He came not till the breakfast was cold, and so several went in search of him. They went up in the garret, where summer guests had been in the habit of hanging themselves, but he was not there. His business had been profitable so they did not see why he should suicide unless he was leading what is called a double life and the two families had got acquainted with each other.

However, they dragged the Atlantic ocean carefully and got a great many other curiosities but did not get Mr. Van Pelt.

It is now over a year and the correspondent asks me kindly to mention through these columns that any one giving information regarding a heavy set and rather wheezy blonde male, weighing upwards of 250 pounds with iron-gray whiskers in his ears and a decided penchant for fried chicken and revivals, will confer a favor upon him by communicating with said gentleman in my care. And that any person interested who will take the trouble to come down to Ocean Grove when Mr. Van Pelt is brought back can see some fun by staying around here a day or two while he and the tradespeople and others rearrange their acquaintance with Mr. Van Pelt and unravel his works for him. BILL NYE.

RATS! A Wonderful Battle Between a Seattle Man and a Rodent.

George Stillwell, a laborer, had a very exciting adventure with a rat which was, if Mr. Stillwell's word can be taken for it, about two feet in length. Mr. Stillwell had occasion to go under Yesler's wharf in a rowboat early in afternoon. He was in a small rowboat which he pushed in far enough to be almost in darkness, when suddenly he was startled by hearing a series of noises resembling the squeaking of a rat, only louder and more intense. The noise not only continued, but multiplied, until he appeared to be surrounded on all sides by rodents, which, judging from the noise, were of mammoth size. He looked round him in the gloom and then became thoroughly frightened. Glaring at him from all directions were eyes that resembled living balls of fire. It seemed to his excited imagination as though there were hundreds of these pairs of eyes and the noise made by the animals was deafening.

Mr. Stillwell endeavored to turn his boat around and head it for open water when suddenly there was a splash of the water, and then a heavy object struck the boat with such force that it caused it to rock violently. In terror Stillwell glanced toward the stern of the boat, and could see two fiery eyes glaring at him. The eyes were large enough to have belonged to a panther. Stillwell's terror increased, and he commenced to work his boat out in deep water, all the time keeping his eyes on the unwelcome passenger in the stern sheets. In the meantime the noise continued, and when he took his eyes for an instant from the animal in the stern he could see the eyes on all sides still glaring at him.

Suddenly the man became aware that the animal in the stern was moving toward him. He felt for his knife which he usually carried in his pocket but it was not there. Then he cautiously raised aloft an oar, preparatory to striking the animal an awful blow.

Just as Stillwell was about to strike, the animal gave a spring. Stillwell dropped his oar and grabbed it just as it sank its sharp fangs into his clothes, and scratching to find that the animal was fastened to his back. Stillwell was so seized it was apparently about twice as large and heavy as a full-grown cat. He struggled with the animal, and finally succeeded in throwing it from him into the water, but not until he had received several bad scratches and bites.

Stillwell then pushed his boat out into the open water, and says he will never go under that wharf again.

This is the story that Stillwell tells of the manner in which his clothes became torn and his face scratched, and if you don't believe the yarn he says he will take you down and show you the wharf and the skiff to verify the statement.—Seattle Press.

The Corpse Arose.

A friend of John Bergan, who recently fell dead near Twenty-first and Larimer streets, had a thrilling experience in Coroner Walley's office which may turn his hair gray. Bergan was to be buried and had been laid out preparatory to being dressed in his burial robes. He was covered with a white sheet. Early in the evening "Bob" Roberts, one of the coroner's assistants, who had been working hard all day, laid down on a long bench near the corpse, and drawing a sheet over him to prevent the flies from bothering him, went to sleep. The dead and sleeping men were in the above positions when one of Bergan's friends came in to pay the last tributes to his friend. The fellow was a little the worse for several good-sized glasses of whiskey, and on entering the morgue asked to see the remains of his friend. The men employed there were busy at the time, and one of them pointing over to where two forms were lying, said: "There he is." The visitor went over to the bench where Roberts was sleeping, and giving him a hearty slap on the stomach and said: "Poor Jack, it was only day before yesterday I was after asking him to drink with me."

The blow awoke Roberts, and he hastily sat upright. The man's hair stood on end as he was faced by his supposed dead friend, and with a howl of terror which stopped the clock, rushed through the building and down Fourth street at a gallop that would beat the best professional sprinter in the country. He gave a yell every few jumps and the last seen of him he was nearly to the Platte river and still going. Friends were trying to find him and it is presumed he will be heard from after he recovers from his fright. Roberts indignantly demanded to know why he was thus rudely disturbed, but everyone was so convulsed with laughter that they could not answer him.

East vs. West.

We have recently returned from a trip to the east, visiting Illinois, Indiana and Ohio, but more particularly the latter. Unlike the refreshing, bracing atmosphere of Willapa harbor we found the air hot and dry, making life miserable and breathing a difficult task. Old Sol drove the mercuries regularly every day up in the nineties and frequently passed above the one hundred mark. Who would live in a country like that after one living in this section, Western World.

According to a calculation made by the Economist, Belgium, the cost of firing a 110-ton gun is, in round numbers, \$822, divided as follows: 900 pounds of powder, \$320; 1,800 pounds projectile, \$435; silk for cartridge, \$17; total \$822. But this is not all. The 110-ton gun can be fired but 15 times, and after that becomes incapable of being used, and requires repairs. Now the cost of the piece being \$82,400, it is necessary to estimate the cost of year at about \$985 for each shot, thus raising the cost of each charge to \$1,700.

The wisest, most learned, and most intelligent of the medical fraternity do not place the same reliance on drugs that their predecessors did. They are very much more apt to make a patient cure himself by the observation of ordinary and well tested rules of hygiene than to make his stomach a clearing house for an apothecary's shop.—San Francisco Chronicle.

How The Prince Died.

I have recently had a very interesting interview with an English gentleman who was present in Zululana at the time of the death of the Prince Imperial and who knew the young gentleman well, besides being personally acquainted with all the details of the catastrophe. He was not much impressed with the character and manner of the fated prince himself, describing him to me as a very full-fledged specimen of the most obnoxious type of a fast young Parisian society man. Besides which was possessed with an overwhelming idea of his own importance, and insisted always in taking command of every expedition in which he was included.

The fatal fray in which the unfortunate youth lost his life owed its whole success for the Zulus to the fact of the prince's party being taken by surprise. Everybody ran away on the sudden attack of the savages, and it was owing to a broken giraffe that the prince failed to make his escape with the others. There were only five Zulus concerned in the attack and they all belonged to one family—a father, three sons and his son-in-law. They stripped the body of their victim leaving nothing behind but gold locket suspended around his neck, and which the Zulus thought contained a charm.

My informant told me that, for him, the most trying part of the whole business was the interview which the Empress Eugenie insisted on having with him after he returned to England. She asked the most minute questions about the prince's death, being especially anxious to know if the fatal wounds were not dealt him in front, but unfortunately they were all in the back. Then she wanted to be told that he died fighting for England, and the Englishman was compelled to assure her that such was not the case. "But, at least, Mr. X., you can say it was," was the unhappy mother's suggestion. It did not occur to her, poor lady, that an English gentleman has a natural objection to telling lies on any subject whatever.

Not Used in England.

I had an experience all my own in Lock & Co.'s hat store, in St. James street. The aged proprietor displays ancient helmets and caps in his window which is kept scrupulously dusty. Noting this I said:

"This must be a very old store indeed."

"Store?" said the man, "It's no store at all; it's a shop, sir. I call a store a place for the sale of a miscellaneous lot of goods; but this is a shop, sir. You ought to be more careful in your use of terms."

If that was rudeness—and I do not know how great he considered his provocation—it was the only rudeness I experienced from any shopkeeper. But I learned from that incident not to say store. And before I left London I had swelled my index expurgatorius to the extent that I seldom use the following words: Guess; yes, sir; glass (for tumbler); railroad; horse car; cents; fix; store; or pad of paper. "Block of paper" they said, when at last I got them to understand that I wanted a pad. Guess and fix are pure Americanisms, and are to be used or not, as you want to attract curious attention or to avoid it; but the most difficult thing for an American to avoid saying in England, is "sir" to strangers who address him or to an old gentleman. Yes, sir, and no sir, over there are the verbal insignia of a servant.—Ralph Julian.

The Senator on Top.

Lately in Lakeview, Cogswell and Truitt were on one side of a case tagging testimony and Sperry and Gregg on the other. Pretty soon Charley Cogswell, hearing what he regarded as pure Rider Haggard romance proceeding from the tongue of Mr. Gregg, promptly called that gentleman a wanderer from the holy pathway of truth—a sort of vagrant "stray," in fact, from the sweet range of rectitude—and he didn't use any very softened phraseology, either.

Stung by a sense of affront, Mr. Gregg expressed his resentment by calling Mr. Cogswell a thief. From a clear sky came all this thunder down upon the court, and as the combatants clenched and baged away at each other, Sperry getting in and Truitt tagging mightily every care of him, the scales of justice wobbled awfully.

The blow awoke Roberts, and he hastily sat upright. The man's hair stood on end as he was faced by his supposed dead friend, and with a howl of terror which stopped the clock, rushed through the building and down Fourth street at a gallop that would beat the best professional sprinter in the country. He gave a yell every few jumps and the last seen of him he was nearly to the Platte river and still going. Friends were trying to find him and it is presumed he will be heard from after he recovers from his fright. Roberts indignantly demanded to know why he was thus rudely disturbed, but everyone was so convulsed with laughter that they could not answer him.

The Manufacture of Celluloid.

The manner in which celluloid is made in France is as follows: A huge roll of paper is unwound slowly, and while unwinding is saturated with a mixture of five parts of sulphuric and two parts of nitric acid, which is carefully sprayed upon the paper. The effect of this bath is to change the cellulose in the paper into pyroxylene. The next process is the expelling of the excess of acid in the paper by pressure and its washing with plenty of water. It is then reduced to a pulp and bleached, after which it is strained, and then mixed with from 20 to 40 per cent. of its weight in water. Then follows another mixing and grinding, after which the pulp is spread in thin sheets, which are put under enormous hydraulic pressure and squeezed until it is as dry as tinder. These sheets are then put between heated rollers and come out in dry elastic strips, which are worked up into the various forms in which celluloid is made.—Scientific American.

Mr. Abernethy, of Champsoo, has a Royal Ann cherry tree which produced 1750 pounds of good cherries and realized the most little sum of \$63.28. He has about thirty of these trees, and intends going into the cherry business.—Woodford Independent.

It has hitherto been supposed that the maximum depth of the Mediterranean was 10,782 feet between Sicily and Sardinia. Lieutenant Maguach, of Italy, has found a depth of 13,550 feet between Malta and Candia.—Revue Geographique.

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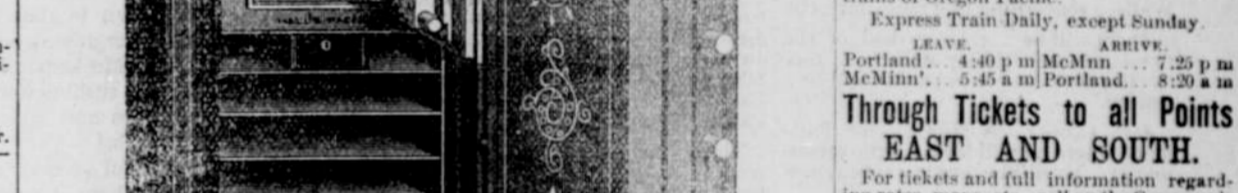
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