

THE FATHER OF WATERS.

BANCROFT'S DESCRIPTION OF THE MISSISSIPPI—THE BOND OF THE AMERICAN UNION.

In the tenth volume (just issued) of Bancroft's History of the United States, occurs the following striking description of the Mississippi:—

"The Mississippi River is the guardian and pledge of the union of the States of America. Had they been confined to the eastern slopes of the Alleghanies, there would have been no geographical unity between them, and the thread of connection between lands that merely fringed the Atlantic must soon have been sundered. The Father of Rivers gathers his waters from all the clouds that break between the Alleghanies and the furthest ranges of the Rocky Mountains. The ridges of the eastern chain bow their heads at the north, and at the south; so that, long before science became the companion of man, nature herself pointed out to the barbarous races how short portages join his tributary rivers to the shore of the Atlantic coast. At the other side his mightiest arms interlock with the arms of the Oregon and the Colorado, and by the conformation of the earth itself marshals highways to the Pacific. From his remotest springs he refuses to suffer his waters to be divided; but, as he bears them all to the bosom of the ocean, the myriads of flags that wave above his head are all the ensigns of one people. States, larger than kingdoms, flourish where he passes; and beneath his step cities start into being, more marvellous in their reality than the fabled creations of enchantment. His magnificent valley, lying in the best part of the temperate zone, salubrious and wonderfully fertile, is the chosen muster-ground of the most various elements of human culture, brought together by men summoned from all the civilised nations of the earth, and joined in the bonds of common citizenship by the strong, invisible attraction of republican freedom. Now that science has come to be the household friend of trade and commerce and travel, and that nature has lent to wealth and intellect the use of her constant forces, the hills, once walls of divisions, are scaled, or pierced, or levelled; and the two oceans, between which the Republic has unassailably entrenched itself against the outer world, are bound together across the continent by friendly links of iron."

LIBERTY.

(To Editor 'New Zealand Herald' per favor of TABLET.)

In concert with Mr. Gladstone you—[Who? Not the TABLET, surely]—are, I see, trying to persuade the public that the Pope, by the Vatican decrees, aims a deadly blow at the liberty of the Press, and wishes to suppress even liberty of speech—nay, to crush liberty in every possible form. Were your representations correct, we Catholics would certainly stand in a very humiliating position, and would be slaves indeed. Liberty is a fine word, and a fine thing too, and Catholics prize it as much as others. But there are different kinds of liberty. There is a legitimate and wholesome liberty, and there is a liberty neither wholesome nor legitimate. It is against this latter, I presume, that the Vatican decrees are directed. It would be a suicidal policy in the Vatican to suppress the fair and legitimate liberty of the Press. A really true and well principled Press is, as I take it, the best ally of the Catholic Church in all countries. It is certainly so in England and the colonies. But why should the Pope interfere to check the liberty of the Press in any way by its spiritual authority? Cannot the civil law restrain the licentiousness of the Press when necessary? Unfortunately it cannot. Daily experience proves that the Press in the hands of certain parties can do an incredible, an immeasurable amount of mischief to society, to religion and morality in such a way that no human law can prevent it. In such circumstances it behoves a spiritual power to interpose, whether obeyed or not. There are men so perverse that neither a human nor divine authority will restrain them. But that is no good reason why both temporal and spiritual authorities should not do their duty and try to restrain them from evil. The liberty of speech stands on the same footing as the liberty of the Press, and is equally capable of abuse or perversion; and so with intellectual liberty. Why should the Vatican seek to destroy free thought in an absolute and unjustified sense? It is free thought which is leading so many good and learned men into the Catholic Church in our day, and keeping them there too. The Pope is the ruler of free men, not of slaves. But unlimited free thought is dangerous. Even Mr. Froude says it is, and it almost invariably leads to a rejection of all revealed religion—a consummation even Protestants must devoutly wish should be averted. The limits allowed to Catholics for free thought is amply sufficient for safe progress in every branch of knowledge; and the foundations of many important modern arts and sciences have been laid by Catholics. If Protestants have built on these foundations so much to their honor.—A.B.

"QUICK TRANSIT."—This is the problem that vexes the city of New York. All means proposed fail in practice. The last one is the most astounding one of all. It is for a moving sidewalk, to be propelled like an endless chain, by stationary engines, placed at the distance of a mile or half a mile apart. As the sidewalk on one side of the street moves in one direction, that on the other side moves in the opposite direction. The rate of speed suggested varies from 8 to 10, and as high as 15 miles an hour. And this plan is now being seriously discussed in the Albany Legislature, on a motion to grant a charter to a Movable Sidewalk Company, to operate on certain thoroughfares in New York city. The working model is said to be the most convincing as to the practicability of the scheme. Speer is the inventor, and the invention is named "Speer's Travelling Sidewalk."—Sac. Union.

WAIFS AND STRAYS.

WHAT EVERY WIFE OUGHT TO KNOW.—Every action and emotion depletes the physical system. Milk, the first food absorbed by men and animals, is the only natural mixture, containing all the elements of blood save the colouring. Water constitutes three-fourths of the body. To work well, physically or mentally, we must be fed judiciously and thoroughly. The worker must eat mixed food. Food properly administered stimulates the system as wine does, only more naturally. The long night hours empty the stomach, deplete the system, and chill the body. On arising the physical condition is low, and should be recruited. If we lose time at early morning in bringing the body up to its natural heat and strength, we cannot regain it during the day. A healthy man requires about one pound of nutriment per day to keep him in good condition. While a working man would need daily five pounds of solid mixed food, two and a half would be enough for persons who lounge and sleep much. Life said the lecturer, can be sustained two or three weeks on two ounces a day. A change of diet should follow a change of seasons—in winter, fats and sweets; in summer, fruits, fish, and lighter meats. Milk and eggs, a blood food; steak, a flesh food; potatoes and wheat, which, being heating material, are fuel; and coffee, a stimulant.—From a Lecture by Monsieur Pallis.

IRISH LACE.—It is in beautiful, delicate needle-work, and in the making of lace of different kind that the Irish Sisters excel. There are several houses in the South, each of which is famous for some special kind of manufacture. Persons who are learned in such matters can tell instantly, on looking at a piece of work, at what convent it was done. The crochet made under the superintendence of the Youghal nuns is exquisite, and so fine that it has, in many cases, been mistaken for other kinds of lace. I have heard of a lady who purchased a quantity of what she believed to be old Roman point, in Italy, at a great expense. On bringing it home she took it to her dressmaker in Dublin, and gave it to her as trimming for a dress, with many cautions against waste, and with repeated orders not to cut it unnecessarily. The woman smiled when she heard the discoloured work called antique point. She got a magnifying glass, and showed her customer that she had, in reality, bought Irish crochet lace, which had been dipped in some yellowing fluid, in order to give it an appearance of great age. This clever expert was, moreover, able to tell them in what part of the country it had originally been procured. Some ladies are very fond of purchasing sleeves and collars of this beautiful work, to wear at the table d'hôte when travelling on the Continent, as it does not require what is technically termed doing up; when soiled, simply washing and drying will restore it to its pristine daintiness. Besides this, it is quite uninjured by any amount of pressing or crumpling.

ARRANGEMENT OF ROOMS.—Concerning the arrangements of rooms the *Art Review* gives the following advice:—"Give your apartments expression—character. Rooms which mean nothing are cheerless indeed. Study light and shade, and the combination and arrangement of drapery, furniture, and pictures; allow nothing to look isolated, but let everything present an air of sociability. Observe a room immediately after a number have left it, and then as you arrange the furniture, disturb as little as possible the relative position of chairs, ottomans, and sofas. Place two or three chairs in a conversational attitude in some cheery corner, an ottoman within easy distance of a sofa, a chair near your stand of stereoscopic views or engravings, and one where a good light will fall on the books which you may reach from the table near. Make little studies of effect which shall repay the more than casual observer, and do not leave it possible for one to make the criticism which applies to so many homes, even of wealth and elegance—fine carpets, handsome furniture, a few pictures and elegant nothings—but how dreary? The chilling atmosphere is felt at once, and we cannot divest ourselves of the idea that we must maintain a stiff and severe demeanor, to accord with the spirit of the place. Make your homes, then, so cheerful that if we visit you we may be joyous and unconstrained, and not feel ourselves out of harmony with your surroundings."

HOW TO TREAT A WATCH.—A scientific watchmaker, Mr. Nelthropp, thus advises with reference to our vest-pocket companion:—"A watch is much like a child, requiring uniform treatment, that is to say plainly, not over indulged to-day, neglected to-morrow. Winding-up should be performed regularly, with a steady and uniform motion, not moving both hands, and nearly as possible at the same hour daily. A watch should always be kept at the same temperature, as nearly as possible. Left over night on a stone mantlepiece, it is sure to gain, or if the oil gets thickened, it may stop, to be started again by the warmth of the pocket. The regulator is too often viewed as an appendage more to be looked at with wonder than to be used, while the persons who can explain the theory of its action are few in the extreme. Yet the task of learning enough about a watch to become capable of talking intelligently about it, and exercising the control over a 'jobber' which that knowledge is certain to give, is but slight, and it ought to be reckoned as blameworthy to be ignorant about one's watch as to know nothing of the merits of one's boots or clothing. Mr. Nelthropp gives to the uninitiated a few hints as to the purchase of a watch, which are worth reproducing. The case, be it gold or silver, should be correctly made and of fair thickness; the hinges close and smooth; the glass well fitted; the dial of clear bright enamel; the seconds sunk, and the whole of good weight when held in the hand. When the dome is opened—for it is better that a watch-case should be so made, though more expensive—the brass work should look well finished, the edges smoothed off, the steel of a diamond-like polish, the jewels pale in color, but of a fine, clear lustre; the action of the spiral spring should be even when the watch is set going."