

BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC

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NEW ENGLAND OBSERVATIONS

By G. R. A. (Continued from last week.)

Birmingham, Mich., June 23.—Well, folks, we arrived home today, after driving a total of 1950 miles. You may rest assured that Birmingham looked better to us than any place we visited on the trip. Below we are completing the tirade of impressions that came to us during the time we were gone.

Proprietors of wayside lunch stands have a funny sense of humor, especially in eastern New York state. We passed one that had on display a huge placard reading, "Say it with sausage." Another stand advertised its wares by informing motorists to "Beware the dogs ahead—hot ones." There is little danger of a motorist running out of gasoline east of Buffalo. It seems that the Standard Oil Co. has a "corner" on about a billion sites for gasoline stations, for about every hundred rods you are greeted with a crimson background bearing the word "Socony." And gas costs more in the east than it does in Michigan.

We do not wish to underestimate the beauties of Michigan, but we are compelled to concede that the Mohawk Valley through eastern New York is one of the prettiest spots imaginable. To one who would seek splendid roads over a bit of country that is just about as God made it, we recommend this trip. From Syracuse to Albany the mind is almost bewildered with the sublimity of the natural scenery that makes the Mohawk Valley famed throughout the land.

From Albany one crosses the Hudson River and strikes eastward toward the Berkshire Hills, passing over the genuine old Mohawk Trail. This marvelous road, once the narrow trail of Indians, has been turned into a good highway, and the sights that may be seen in every direction are truly beyond description. It's uphill and downhill; little and even fair-sized towns nestling here and there; the old Deerfield, the Miller and other rivers winding in and out of the rolling Berkshires. And where the trail lies in Vermont and western Massachusetts one may see huge deposits of granite and other stones that have made this country famous in America.

Ah, we saw a sight a week ago Tuesday that ought to thrill the souls of Paul Revere and his contemporaries with joy unconfined. At Wellesley College, within 15 miles from where the early colonists made the first descent of our country, we witnessed the spectacle of nearly 400 young women, their minds and bodies containing all that the present century may lend toward higher education and culture, march in their Commencement Procession. It was a fine sight, this line of youthful figures, clothed in cap and gown, wending its last journey, as students over the college grounds. Fond parents and happy friends, as well as several hundred alumnae, formed a double line through which passed part of the next generation of the mothers of men and women. These 400 young women are but a small fraction of the entire graduating classes of American educational institutions, and it is excellent proof of the progress made toward a higher civilization since the Pilgrims arrived in 1620. The hope of all civilization depends upon our educational institutions; we need more of them—for the brick in a schoolhouse will stand longer than a rivet in any battleship.

Historians, notice! What is popularly known as "The Old North Church" in Charlestown, Boston, is really a branch of the Christ Church, and is called by this latter name today. Longfellow, in "Paul Revere's Midnight Ride," refers to it as "The Old North Church"; it was Longfellow, then, who has incorrectly recorded a part of American history. You will remember that it was from the belfry of this church that Robert Newman hung the two lights that warned of the approaching British officers. "One if by land and two if by sea, and I on the opposite shore will be," are the words that Longfellow put into the mouth of the patriot, Paul Revere.

We had a nice chat with the sexton of this Christ Church. We asked him a few questions about it. Our own information was obtained from various histories, so we wondered why he smiled during our conversation. "Don't believe all you read in the histories," he declared. "Why, there's a lot said about this church that never had a word of truth in it." When I came here 13 years ago, there were a lot of knock-knacks scattered about the church which I knew were fakes. For instance, there used to be a number of dishes standing on shelves about the church quarters; they had a lot of ancient pictures on 'em, like Paul Revere on a horse, etc. Well, one day I took 'em all down, smashed 'em up and put 'em in the ash barrel. They ought to do that with about half of the so-called antiques in New England."

We have mentioned the simplicity that marked the life of Henry D. Thoreau. In Sleepy Hollow Cemetery in Concord is the grave of Thoreau. Although there is a fair-sized monument on the lot that contains the Thoreau family, the great man's grave is marked by a small stone, about six inches high, bearing just the word, "Henry." Over in another part of Sleepy Hollow is a beautiful rose granite boulder upon which is a small bronze tablet signifying that Ralph Waldo Emerson is buried beneath it. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Louisa M. Alcott and other notables are resting in Sleepy Hollow.

If you are unacquainted with Boston, you'll have a hard time finding your way about. The streets run in every direction. Our own guess about this is that the early settlers, when they first landed, must have had a number of cows corralled on their first camping ground,

and the cows became stampeded, scattering in all directions. The paths made by the cows were later used in laying out the town of Boston.

Gloucester is a wonder spot on Cape Ann, just north of Boston. It's chief industry is fishing and sheltering tourists. One can smell the fish a mile before entering the city. It is situated on a beautiful natural harbor, and in this harbor, located on narrow strips of projecting land, are three lighthouses that guide the mariner to a safe anchorage. To drive around Cape Ann is to skirt the ocean, where the old Atlantic hurls its surfs upon Bass Rocks, Mother Ann, and many other high deposits of stone boulders that life the shore. Thousands of people spend the summer in and near Gloucester. Perhaps the most beautiful estates in the world are located between Marblehead, Magnolia and Gloucester.

Of course we visited Niagara Falls on our return. Because of the heavy rains last week, more water than usual was pouring down the river. Because the month is June, more newlyweds than usual were making their first pilgrimage to one of the seven wonders of the world. But man is gradually taking away the grandeur of the Falls. Many great stations have been erected along the river above the Falls, tapping the flow of water for the purpose of manufacturing electricity without the aid of steam. God made the Niagara River, the immense cold deposits in the earth, the mind of man with its inventive genius; but man, with his desire to create material wealth, will probably destroy Niagara Falls of its natural grandeur before many generations have passed.

GETTING WELL By BEATRICE M. McDONALD

When I was sick and had to lie Upon my bed, I did not cry; And seldom did get tired or blue; I had so many things to do.

My books were always at my side And pictures and gay flags were tied Along the wall from post to post. I think that I liked those the most.

And yet I liked my flowers, too, That filled my china vase of blue. They stood upon my little stand Where I could touch them with my hand.

I had my games and all my toys, And played the same as other boys. Except I couldn't run and yell; Still, I liked best the getting well.

FROM THE ECCENTRIC COLUMNS of Long Ago

Just Bits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric—The Items That Made Up the Historical Background Of The Birmingham Of Today.

Twenty-Five Years Ago A little daughter arrived at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bert Bird Wednesday last. A reception was held at the U. P. parsonage last Monday evening in honor of the homecoming of Rev. L. S. Clark and the new bride.

Forty-Three Years Ago Will Fink, who has been kicked off a baseball moustache—nine on a side.

We received a short pleasant call from Prof. W. H. H. Colner recently. Very profitable for both parties.

The average Irish Church girl parteth for a funeral to the end that she may again behold the face of brown-eyed Charlie—Jim Beattie's hawk driver.

The first tomato of the season put in an appearance upon our table last Monday and was the product of the garden of E. C. Pollock. It was rather early for such large ripe fruit.

The ladies of the History Class have commenced work again. The first paper is "Lord Benevolence" and "Garfield." Last week it was James T. Field, our own.

Mitchell, the junior editor, had of the enlarged proofs, kicked up his heels and wended his way to the green pastures of Independence on Tuesday last. In other words, he was sent far away from the office.

Water Cure Extra! (An extra, consisting of a small handbill printed by the Eccentric, announcements as follows in full.)

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A nation in mourning. President Garfield slain by the assassin, Charles Giteau, at Washington.

A disappointed office-seeker named Charles Giteau shot President Garfield at Baltimore and fled to the R. depot this morning at 9:30 a. m.

The assasin was promptly arrested and safely imprisoned and will not doubt meet his Waterloo.

The managers of the Birmingham Driving Park Association have made some very great improvements in their track near town.

We will not forget to mention the big pickle that Will H. Stephens hooked one day on the banks of the Straits Lake. The gallant old fellow weighed 12 pounds and gave this nicky on of mind a good hard fight for his life.

The prompt action of the village board has put Willetts street in good condition and driving to the cemetery by that route is again safe.

will be on file. Wm. C. Reynolds seems to be chief cook of the society.

The lawn party at Elder Brown's was a success. All enjoyed themselves very much.

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