

Harper's Weekly, Vol. 34 (Oct., 1890), p. 835

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HELEN LOUISA NELSON.

OUR "ARAB COLONY."

IN Greenwich and Washington streets, on the west side of New York, lives the so-called "Arab colony." The two dilapidated houses in question are in reality head-quarters and not homes for the nine hundred odd peddlers who have come here from the Mohammedan countries to manufacture and sell the goods of their native lands. The "Arab" himself, as the American small boy is wont to call the red-fezzed dealer in Oriental wares, is seldom or never an Arab. The few members of that Semitic race who do cross the ocean are circus performers or other athletes. Those who are erroneously known by the name are Armenians, Greeks, Turkish half-breeds, Syrians, Copts, and human mongrels from Asia Minor. Many of them have so much negro or negroid blood in their veins as to be as dark-complexioned as Malays or Cuban mestizos. As a class, they are of medium height, well proportioned, thin, and muscular. They are clever, genial, orderly, patient, and indefatigable, but ignorant, clamorous, intolerant, fierce, and vengeful.

They are brutal, not like Gilbert's British coster "jumping on his mother," nor the American tough seeking a brawl at every opportunity, but in the manner which marks the passionate but slavish masses of the East—the manner which sets three men to attack one, which thrusts the poniard into the back of the foe, or dashes a heavy flower-pot from a window upon his head.

They waste no time on coming to the New World. On the voyage from the East they pick up enough English to express their wants and to do business. Immediately upon arrival they go to their colony and begin to work. A few remain here to do the necessary manufacturing, while the majority procure an assortment of goods, and start out upon the road. The goods which they sell are but few in kind, and comprise crucifixes, rosaries, glove boxes and card cases, which are said to be made out of wood from the Mount of Olives; ottar of rose and extract of orange flowers, put up in handsome cut-glass or fine crystal vials; Oriental jewelry and tinzel-work; soap from Mount Carmel and the Mount of Olives; Arabian candy; Turkish fig paste; and relics from the Holy Land. Nearly all the list consists of frauds and shams. One third of the wooden goods are imported, but they come from Greece and Turkey; and never from Judaea; the other two-thirds are made in New York from scraps of the thoroughly seasoned timber found in the lumber yards of the great planing-factory. The ottar of rose is sometimes a mixture of this delightful perfume

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While their mode of life at the headquarters is modified by American surroundings and conditions, it affords glimpses of Oriental habits far from artistic. They are not clean. They may sell, but they seldom use soap. Man, raiment, furniture, and room are singularly innocent of water. They perform the Moslem rite of washing the face and hands with religious exactitude, but they follow the strict letter of the law. On neck and wrist are the high-water marks which the ocean of worship makes upon the shores of cloth. They sleep on rags and straw, shavings and debris in preference to beds. They eat and drink sparingly for days or even weeks, and then gorge themselves to repletion. Their cook and chambermaid is some light-witted youth or infirm friend unable to go about, and whom they tyrannize and abuse in the most approved Turkish style. Yet they are kind in their way, nursing their sick, aiding the unlucky, and instructing the tyro. Despite the injunctions of the prophet, they drink regularly though with moderation. At rare intervals they celebrate some event, and get drunk like true Christians. But the orgies are confined to their own rooms, and are never had in public. Only twice in the police annals of the metropolis has the turbaned faithful fallen into the hands of the infidel M. P. He likes the great republic in a mild way, and is perplexed, even up to the hour of his departure, that no cad, or tax-gatherer, takes from him the lion's share of his earnings. As a result he is coming in slowly increasing numbers, but so far as can be seen will never flock across the ocean in such swarms as are now issuing from Italy, Hungary, Bohemia, Russia, and Poland.

A NITRO GLYCERINE EXPERIENCE.

B. KIRK MUNROE.

"WANT to go well shooting, do you?" said my friend the broker as we stood in the Petroleum Exchange at Oil City. "Well, every one to his taste. Now nothing would induce me to travel with a torpedo-man. However, I'll fix it for you."

I was thereupon introduced to a quiet young man, who said he was a well shooter, was going to torpedo a well some six miles out in the country at daylight the next morning, and would be very glad to have me go with him.

At four o'clock the following morning I awaited, at the stable where he kept his spirited team, the coming of my new friend. A few minutes later he appeared, bearing on his shoulder a bundle of new tin tubes ten feet long and two and five inches in diameter.

The torpedo wagon in which we were to ride was an open single-seated box buggy hung on the lightest and most delicate of steel springs. The seat was hinged and swung forward. Beneath it was a strong box divided into six square padded compartments. To my great relief they were empty.

While a sleepy hostler was harnessing the team—two jet-black spirited young animals, for a torpedo-man prides himself upon the mettle of his horses—my companion affixed to the left-hand side of the buggy two curved iron rests, something like those placed at the back of a victim's head by a photographer. They were also padded, and in them was

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Is the magazine in here? Yes, only a short distance. You surely don't drive of the glycerine aboard? Why, of course. This is It isn't a first class one, I'll was too good, inquisitive I tempted to come in here. In though, The supply wagon only the day before yesterday sand pounds of the 'stuff,' at all right. There's the place!

As he spoke, the torpedo team in front of a small wind of rough boards, the single was fastened by an ordinary conspicuous place on its front sign that read: "Danger! Is this building?" This sign, that I could hardly avert my even though I plucked a w bush that leaned confidently a zine, and pretended to be a ing its beauty.

How much is there in the Oh, fifteen hundred quart anyway, to blow Oil City on swered my companion as he door and stepped inside.

Reflecting that the danger greater in the building than to followed him. The interior of square two gallon tin cans had a handle on top and two vent holes. They looked a might contain maple syrup equally harmless; but know, really did hold started the my forehead as I gazed at the

Taking two at a time, the four of the cans on the ground magazine, and relocked the drawing a sharp steel instrument like an ice pick from his boot, one of the tightly-driven cans, and examined its contents himself that it was full. The the corks were replaced, and them one at a time up to him the packages into the padded provided for them, and in a we were driving away from the zine over the stumps, rocks, of the horrible trail, with 120 pounds of glycerine, liable to explode without concussion, snugly stowed seat.

The ride over that rough altogether too exciting to be, was like being confined in a volcano known to be on the tion, and the main road, when a haven of safety. The remainder drive was made without in, we drove at what appeared to pace, the torpedo-man saying a little late.

At last we turned in through bars, and, crossing a field, a derrick that marked the well shoot. The horses were secured a tree, and the contents of the carried to the well, where they fast to a stout post. From which terminated in an iron barried through a block hung directly the earth. A number of drilmen interested in the well, were lounging about the derrick, le

ject at the capital most entitled to commiseration. There are widows of officers who have died after faithful service to the country, leaving nothing for the support of those who survive them; widows and orphans of men whose property or services have been taken by the government, which of all other governments is the most unjust and dishonorable in its relations with its creditors; Union women whose substance was consumed years ago by the armies of the country which now refuses compensation. There are the widows of public men who seek for modest places under government for themselves or their families. There are the wives and daughters of men who have been ruthlessly turned out of employment because their places have been "wanted" for the followers of some politician, whose mercy is begged for with the certainty that it will be refused. There are sadder stories than any I have suggested—stories of brutal men and of brave and suffering women.

All these women frequent the lobbies of the Capitol, asking for pensions, for the money that is their due, for employment, for redress. Congressmen are often annoyed by them, and are often at their wits' end to discover some means for helping them. They are doubtless very persistent, and not conducive to the comfort of legislators who love to do nothing, nor to those whose serious duties are engrossing. They are sometimes treated rudely, but generally they are received courteously, and listened to attentively. Many a poor woman is securing bread and a home for herself and her children through the kind offices of a member of Congress; but most of the applicants for charity or justice go away empty-handed, and there is no worse place than a capital for a woman who does not possess the defence of pecuniary independence.

These three types of Washington women are due to the influences of the political life of the capital. Women are interested in the affairs of their husbands, or they should be, and as you shall find in New York the woman who knows the difference between a "put" and a "call," so you shall find in Washington the woman who knows when the caucuses are to be held in her home, and who are the men who will control them; the woman who understands what alliances her husband ought to make, and the woman who has learned the methods by which claims are prosecuted or government employment obtained. And yet all these constitute but a minority of the women of Washington. Besides these, there are the wisest of their sex, whose sympathies do not lead them into the field of men, but who inspire and console.

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In Greenwich and Washington streets, on the west side of New York, lives the so-called "Arab colony." The two dilapidated houses in question are in reality head-quarters and not homes for the nine hundred odd peddlers who have come here from the Mohammedan countries to manufacture and sell the goods of their native lands. The "Arab" himself, as the American small boy is wont to

with twenty times its bulk of the oil of rose geranium, but more frequently it is a cheap and impure preparation of the latter liquid. The jewelry and trinket work come from ingenious imitators in France, Belgium, and Germany. The soap and candy are of American manufacture, and that of the poorest and worst kind.

The peddler, with a choice assortment from this worthless lot, sets out after fortune. In the great cities he does little or no business, finding too many shrewder rascals to warrant competition. What sales he makes there are chiefly of ottar of rose and candy. In the small cities and towns he finds his harvest fields, and quickly disposes of his goods. His commercial system is simple, and essentially Asiatic. He asks ten times as much for his wares as he will in reality accept, and twenty times what they are worth. He employs impertunity, eloquence, mendacity, sympathy, and even fear to secure a customer, but, to his credit be it said, rewards every purchaser with a gratitude and obeisance that would be dignity itself were it not for their suggestiveness of servility.

His stock sold he hastens back to the headquarters, partly to rest awhile and partly to make ready for another trip. Here he and his colleagues compare notes, and gather information regarding their next routes. In this respect they show a commercial spirit worthy of a Yankee. Each contributing the facts of his experience to the common fund at the headquarters, they obtain a complete knowledge of the business opportunities of every route and place, and even figure out the profits which each of these yields when properly "worked" by the craft.

Their ambition is not very great. A few thousand dollars means opulence in the little towns of Asia Minor, and this seems always the goal of their labors. With good luck they reach it in three or four years, with ill in six or seven. They then shake the dust of the gharour from their feet, and sail toward Mecca.

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laid and securely lashed to tubes. In the buggy, behind placed a heavy iron reel on which some two thousand feet of cord, a coil of fuse, another and a "go-devil." As we and the lively team sprang to remind the torpedo-man gotten his nitro-glycerine.

"Oh, no, I haven't," he is not allowed to bring it into several small magazines in the woods, near the differe have to travel. There is one well we are going to shoot that we shan't have to drill mile with the stuff aboard."

The morning air seemed a team, for they danced along sionally springing from side terror of a stump, a black, puff of steam from a pumping exhibitions of equine reckles gard of consequences were I assuring, and would have bing had the "stuff" been u seat.

We passed several teams, their drivers caught sight of tin tubes that denoted the equipage, they drew as far as side of the road, and respect us to pass.

"Oh yes," said the torpedo have all the room I want crowds this outfit."

At length we were high up where the hot morning sun the mist that still lay like a s over the lowlands. All at a sharply to the left, and dense forest. The trees had the rude trail that we now their stumps remained. loose rocks, and through tive horses scrambled, and bounced with such plunges a was difficult to retain one's s

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"Oh, fifteen hundred quart anyway, to blow Old City out swered my companion as he door and stepped inside.