

## THE ROMANCE OF THE LEITERS OF CHICAGO

"America may well feel proud of Lady Curzon," said Mrs. Franklin MacVeigh, the present leader of Chicago fashion, to me Monday. And this is true not only because she has attained today the highest honors ever achieved by any American woman in a foreign land, but because it is typically an American woman who gives her country and her countrywomen such honored representation. Her beauty has been the talk of two nations and she has had attention, honor and admiration enough to turn the head of almost any woman. Nevertheless, she remains to-day the modest, sensible, unassuming and ever gracious American woman that she was when as Mary Curzon she lived in Chicago. When I look my four around the world two years ago I spent much time in India and found the country most interesting, and the people most interesting. I had known Lady Curzon since she was a very small girl. Our families were a very small family. I was privileged to be her guest on several occasions as the vicereine of India. I was there during the patriotic American celebration, and I believe my veins flowed over so much blood when I saw Lady Curzon on the latter looking every inch the regal and beautiful vicereine and graciously receiving the adoration of India's people, who do greatly adore her.

Between commonplaces and fairyland there is no greater contrast than that which has marked the transition of the Leiter family in this country from respectable poverty to opulence and eminence. There is a romance which, beginning in the bare realism of American village life, culminates in the dream-like glamor of the Arabian Nights.

The village of Leitersburg, in Maryland, founded by the ancestors of the lady who now sits on a throne in Calcutta, is the first lady among 400,000 people, and the center of the most splendid politico-social ceremonies in the world, whose husband is vicereine of those people, who rides on the sacred elephant.

The elephant should not be forgotten. Do not look upon it as an anticlimax. Remember what Mrs. Leiter, the mother of the vicereine, said only the other day:

"I saw Mary Leiter upon that elephant. I did not know what it meant to be Lady Curzon."

THE SPLENDOR OF HER SOCIAL POSITION.

It meant, indeed, that the former Mary Leiter occupies the most splendid position that any woman of America has ever occupied in the Old World. In mere social precedence the Baroness Curzon of Kedleston is indeed still the nominal first in England of her fellow countrywomen the Duchess of Marlborough. But the official position of the wife of the vicereine ranks her above her sister nobles in India, the most magnificent of all the British dependencies, and bestows her even in England with a far greater personal interest and influence. And the almost barbaric glories of the durbar, recently celebrated in honor of King Edward visited upon the distinguished couple the eyes of the entire

civilized and semi-civilized world. Her name and incidentally that of her family, has penetrated to the imperial and royal courts and parliamentary assemblies from China to Peru, in most of which the names of Marlborough and of Vanderbilt are practically unknown.

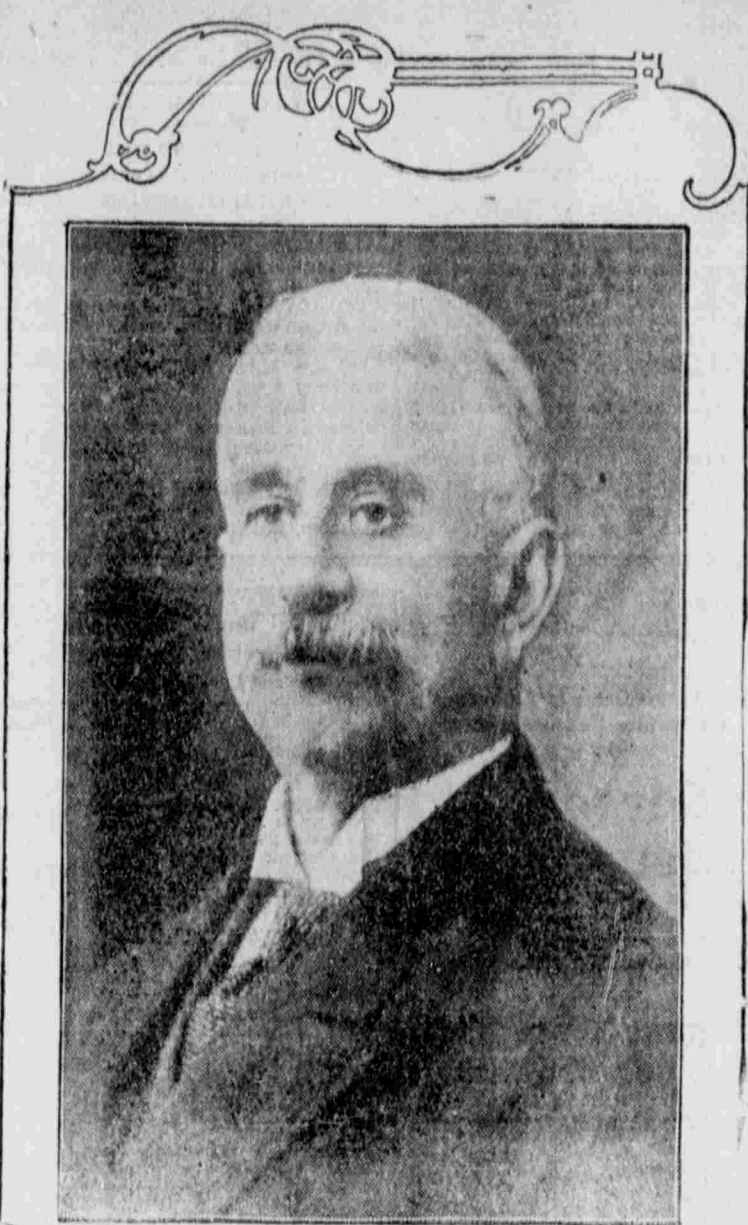
As the English papers have pointed out, she is the first American ever called to assist in the imperial government. While the great durbar was occupying the attention of the world the little town of Leitersburg, Md., birthplace of Lady Curzon's father, Levi Zeigler Leiter, lies practically unknown to millions who are interested in the charming vicereine and the history of her family. One must imagine a quaint little village founded by Andrew Leiter as far back as 1815. Two streets alone cross each other, the steeples of two churches standing high above the green and silver of the maple trees, and the bluest mountains of western Maryland surrounding it, and then half its charm is not told.

Perhaps no village in that part of the country has such a wonderful view. The purchase of the present site in 1762 was made by Jacob, the pioneer of the Leiter family. This land was the "Resurvey on Well Taught," and embraced a title to 1294 acres. Evidently Jacob was a man of some substance. In his will the orthography of the name of "Lyder," and other forms of the name are "Lidro," "Lighter" and "Lider." This refutes the theory that Lady Curzon's father is of Jewish extraction. In point of fact, all his ancestors came from Holland, and the maternal side of the house for generations were good Lutherans, the paternal, members of the Dutch Reformed church.

From the hilltops to the north of the village Waynesboro, Hagerstown, Smithsburg and Greencastle can be seen very distinctly, like beehives through the valley. At the foot of Water street, lined with little frame houses, huddled between cabbage patches and luxuriant flower gardens, runs the famous Antietam creek, which winds for miles around the meadows of Leitersburg. Here the boys of the family from old Andrew to Levi Z., scampered off, bait worms in hand, to the most shady banks and still pools. Such sunfish and suckers are only found in the Antietam. The founder Andrew, was a brother of Abraham, who beget Joseph, who beget Levi Zeigler, who beget Mary, Lady Curzon. The Leiter home in their native town stands on the crest of the hill, and is a substantial square red brick house, two stories high, of generous proportions, built to weather a hundred years of storms.

At both sides are gardens. Fruit trees drop plums, red apples and peaches at the very kitchen door, while on the other side white and pink foxgloves of lilacs of the valley and hound red roses nod close to the livingroom windows. In recent years a bow window and a more extensive front porch have been added.

Unlike most other places, Leitersburg has resisted the "storm and stress" of time, and today an old stage coach runs daily its seven miles to Hagerstown, where passengers and mail bag seek the swifter methods of steam. Although the census is taken most accurately, the town usually boasts of about 300 inhab-



SEN. ALVIN B. CONNER.

State Senator A. B. Conner of Delaware maintains that when votes are paid for, the goods must be delivered. "Buying a vote is based upon the same code as buying a horse" is Conner's way of putting it.

It is very curious that Leitersburg, a Maryland town, does not have one negro family. They come, stay perhaps a few months, and for some unknown reason depart.

Farmers, schoolteachers, carpenters and machinists in the Waynesboro shops are the majority of the people. The most prominent member of the community is Josephus Ground, one of the first merchants in that part of the country. Mr. Ground is not only well known commercially, but is a cultured, traveled gentleman, whose family has lived there for years in the old Oliver Lantz house, which covers half a block on the center square, and has dispensed hospitality in time honored Southern style. Leitersburg has many interesting old graveyards and curious land-

marks scattered in neighboring fields. WHERE THE LEITERS WENT TO CHURCH.

The Lutheran church stands in the center of a beautiful old churchyard, where slanting stones and beautiful monuments mark the family lots of some of the oldest settlers. Zeigler, Lantz, Byer, Martin, Newcomer, Fletcher, Gabe are familiar old Maryland names found there.

Just below the town, after crossing an arched stone bridge, mirrored in the Antietam, as the brush of Hopkinson Smith might delight to picture it, lies the family burying ground of Lady Curzon's ancestors. Several years ago Mr. Levi Leiter had it inclosed from the rest of the field with a handsome marble wall; the trees were pruned and

weeds cut down which had partly covered the fallen stones and practically obscured it from view. By the tavern pass droves of cattle for shipping, and a crooked old sign hangs with vivid and lasting insistence to the weary footed drover.

One does not visit Leitersburg and ever forget it. The huge old stone slabs, all shapes and sizes, form a strange sidewalk after the stereotyped brick pavements of more modern times, and these were laid there under the direction and at the instigation of Dr. Samuel Guol by Isaac G. Bell. Nor does the charm of rambling along the Antietam, through meadow after meadow, fill one with the enchantment of those waving silver maples that form an archway from street to street and make it the quaintest of quaint little villages.

It was amid these picturesque but humble surroundings that Levi Zeigler Leiter was born on Nov. 2, 1834. He went West to seek his fortune in 1853, locating first in Springfield, O., where he found employment with a merchant named Peter Murray. The marvelous growth of Chicago attracted him thither in 1856. He entered the employ of Downs & Van Wyck, with whom he remained until 1858, when he secured a position with Cooley, Wadsworth & Co. Marshall Field was one of his fellow clerks. Mr. Leiter became bookkeeper and showed himself an excellent judge of "credits." He understood men and he had a natural genius for finance. Mr. Field, his senior in age, came to be a partner in the firm. In 1865 Field and Leiter withdrew to purchase a controlling interest in the business of Potter Palmer, which was reorganized under the firm name of Field, Palmer & Leiter. Later, on the retirement of Potter Palmer and his brother, it was Field, Leiter & Co., with Mr. Leiter as the credit man of the firm.

The business prospered. But Mr. Leiter became interested in real estate and other speculations, and in 1881 he in turn withdrew from the firm to devote all his time to his investments. The sum which he took out with him from the firm was variously stated at from \$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000. Whatever it may have been it represented only a portion of his capital.

SOCIAL CAMPAIGNS OF THE LEITERS.

Early in life Mr. Leiter had married Miss Mary Carson of Chicago. They had two daughters and a son. He was not naturally a man who took much interest in the social side of life. But his wife had ambitions not so much for herself as for her children. She determined to storm the citadels of the Chicago four hundred. There at first she met with rebuffs. She found Mrs. Potter Palmer, the wife of her husband's former partner, arrayed against her. It was the charm and tact and intelligence of her two daughters, and especially of the elder one, Mary, now growing into a brilliant young womanhood, which finally conquered all obstacles.

Meanwhile the Leiters had moved to Washington. They selected the house which James G. Blair had just built, but had found too expensive to maintain. Here the plans for an elaborate social campaign were laid. Again it was Mary Leiter's personality which won the victory. The young Chicago girl, now in her twentieth year, became one of the great belles of the capital city. New Yorkers who visited Washington returned with stories of her beauty and her accomplishments and the wealth and hospitality of her father. This paved the way for her acceptance in New York and Newport society, where for some seasons she divided the honors with Miss Salie Harcourt. She had a train of suitors at her heels.

The Leiters spent a good deal of time abroad. In England Miss Leiter met George N. Curzon. It was a case of mutual love. He is a member of one of the great historical families of England and the heir to a barony. Best of all, he was a man of integrity, intellect and ambition. He had already won his spurs in the house of commons and had held important positions. The two were married in Washington on April 22, 1896. They went to England shortly afterward. The life of the American girl there was a series of triumphs.

It was at her instance that her husband occupied the post of vicereine of India. He himself had been looking forward to a great parliamentary career, with the preponderance of England somewhere in the far future. His wife preferred the more immediate glories of the vicereine of India. As vicereine her husband is the most important man in Asia. He can do pretty much as he pleases there. An vicereine Lady Curzon is the head of Anglo-India society. She performs regal functions. She receives the native princes. Her "drawing rooms" are precisely similar to those given in Buckingham palace. The state balls, held alike in Calcutta and in Simla (for India, like Rhode Island, is blessed with dual capitals) are probably the most gorgeous in the world, for nothing can exceed the splendor of the Indian uniforms.

Her triumphs have been personal as well as political. Her charm is acknowledged in private and has been blazoned in print. The native press has raved over her. The leading journals in England, the *Standard* has declared that "all the good looks of the British Empire must hide their heads in the presence of Lady Curzon" and has likened her to a "diamond set in gold or a full moon in a clear autumnal sky." *Kansas City Star*.

## THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE.

New York's Up-to-date Merchants a Great Feature.

Notes Picked Up on the Way Over.

The accompanying reproduction from the New York Herald of a section of New York City and the Brooklyn Bridge, illustrates the advantage that advertisers have taken of the enormous traffic between these two great cities. While there are other concerns than the one shown represented, the great preponderance of these particulars signs evidently induced the Herald to give to its readers a general idea of what the patrons of the bridge are confronted with the year round.

The Brooklyn Bridge, than which, perhaps excepting the London bridge, there is no other equally famous the world over, connects the two cities from Park Row, New York, to Sands street, Brooklyn. It is a grand structure and the local authorities are making it still more elaborate by the addition of imposing entrances in each city.

Work on the bridge was begun Jan. 2, 1870, and the public had the pleasure of watching its progress for 15 years. It was opened to the public May 24, 1883, and from that date to the present time has had an enviable record.

Considering the service since rendered and the fact that the bridge has become a public necessity, the cost, which startled some people at the time of its completion, is not excessive. Fifteen millions of dollars cannot exactly be called a bagatelle by the majority of the residents of Greater New York, but it is not such an enormous sum when expended for such a benefit as the bridge has proven to be.

The bridge, by the way, is quite a money maker. If you walk over you are not required to pay, but that's as far as your privileges extend. You are not allowed to hang over the outer rails and gaze at the river below in a pensive manner, and if you carry a suspicious looking bundle which might contain a diving outfit you are arrested at once as an intending imitator of "Steve Brodie," the bridge jumper, actor, saloon owner and real estate dealer.

If you decide to ride in the pleasure of the promenade and ride in one of the company's cars the privilege will cost you three cents. Better pay a nickel and get two tickets. If you are riding horseback you must give up three cents for your steed. The company has not yet started a bargain sale in horse tickets, so there will be no advantage in buying two tickets for your share. A horse and vehicle are taxed five cents, and if you are sitting behind a pair of stoppers the tariff will be a dime. Each extra horse above two attached to a vehicle is charged for at the rate of three cents.

The bridge is just eighty-five feet wide and has a river span of 1,595 feet 6 inches. Each land span has a length of 930 feet. The length of the Brooklyn approach is 971 feet, and that of the New York approach 1,562 feet 6 inches. The total length of the carriage-way is 5,893 feet, and the total length of the bridge, with extensions, 6,537 feet.

The clear height of the bridge in center of the river span above high water, at 10 degrees Fahrenheit, is 135 feet. The height of the floor at the towers, above high water, is 119 feet 3 inches.

There are four cables, the diameter of each being 15 1/2 inches. The length of each single wire in the cables is 3,575 feet 6 inches. The ultimate strength of each cable is 12,000 tons. Each cable contains 5,296 parallel (not twisted) galvanized steel oil-coated wires, closely wrapped to a solid cylinder 15 1/2 inches in diameter. The permanent weight suspended from the cables is 14,680 tons.

For the year ended December 31, 1900, 55,479,592 passengers were carried by the bridge cars alone, and the receipts from this source amounted to \$1,475,714, and from the carriage-way \$113,445.

A magnificent view of the river and harbor is afforded as well as that of both cities, Governor's Island, Bedloe's Island and the Statue of Liberty. To the south lies Brooklyn; its broad area carrying the vision as far as the eye will reach. To the north, New York, its marble sky-scraping buildings, golden domes, huge chimneys and noted spires all combine to photograph on the mind one grand panorama never to be forgotten. Not the least interesting feature of the free exhibition is the multiplicity of strikingly conspicuous signs, notwithstanding many people are of the opinion that they mar the general view.

## A PRETTY COMPLIMENT.

The Duchess of Marlborough, who was Miss Consuelo Vanderbilt, took tea on one of the warships engaged in the sham battle off Newport during her visit to America last summer.

A young naval officer narrated the other day a story told him by the Duchess on this occasion.

"She said to me," he began, "that the custom of saying grace before meat seemed to be dying out everywhere, and she added, apropos of this, that she had entertained a bishop shortly after her settlement in England, and the question of the omitted grace perplexed her not a little."

"However, at the first meal which the bishop partook of at Blenheim Palace, no grace was said. The Duchess apologized slightly for this, but the prelate, smiling and bowing, said:

"Your grace is sufficient."



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A View of New York City Looking Up Manhattan Island and Across the Brooklyn Bridge.  
An Idea of What One May See When Crossing.

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