

islands, and curiously bounded strips of land, all accessible at most seasons by any barefoot boy or girl, and it is not an odd fact that though there are two vast and pretentious bridges across it, the Puente de Segovia, nearly 700 feet long with nine arches, designed by the architect Herrera, and the Puente de Toledo, nearly 400 in length, crowned by the statues of San Isidro and his holy wife; its sole use to the city of Madrid is that of an endlessly used and all-sufficient wash-tub.

Ten thousand women soak and splash and souse and beat the linen of Madrid within its scant waters every day. Not an article of clothing is elsewhere washed. No other than these Manzanares lavanderas are permitted to labor as laundresses, and for three miles up and down the stream, from opposite the infantry and artillery barracks upon the heights of Montana del Principe; past the windows of the queen regent's apartments in the royal palace, and circling around away beyond Taledo Gate, the moving dots of red and blue, yellow and gray, comprise this great army of Amazons with arms and legs on them like tree trunks; with voluptuous breasts and shapely necks, hard-muscled and bronzed as Turks, the most arduous toilers, the wickedest black-guards, and withal the sunniest tempered souls in Spain.

There are three grades in this labor. They are the mistresses, or amas, the overseers or ayudantas, and the lavanderas themselves. All are women. The first are the agents who receive the work from the hotels, great houses, and the city agencias, in huge lots, and are responsible for its safe return. The ayudantas or overseers, are really the forewomen of from a dozen to a score of lavanderas each, and they are responsible for work placed in their hands by the amas. At five in the morning, winter and summer, the lavanderas will be seen, many of them with children trundling beside them, creeping along from the barrios abajos or lower quarters of the city towards the Manzanares.

Near the river is an asilo or asylum, a refuge for their children. Here the lavandera first deposits her charges where they have food, care and training free, until she returns for the little ones at night. Then she saunters to a venta de lavanderas; or cheap washerwoman's inn and takes her copeta of brandy, or cup of coffee, and at once repairs to her own banca, or little washing-box or station, provided for each washer. By six o'clock you might count from 5,000 to 8,000 of these strange creatures at work.

The entire sloping, sandy banks are covered with drying-poles. At this time of the year the water from the mountains is of icy temperature. But it seems to make no difference with their labors. Here and there are huge cauldrons of boiling water. From time to time a trifle of this is poured in the little hollow where each one toils in the sand and water, but this seems to be done more from habit than necessity. Each lavandera brings her own huge roll of bread, perhaps a bit of cheese, a clasp-knife to prevent undue liberties from the straggling soldiery near, as well as to use in cutting bread, and, just before noon, they breakfast in huge wooden sheds on salt fish, potatoes and coffee with a measure of red wine provided by the ama, duplicating this meal as a dinner, at four in the afternoon.

They eat like animals, and the moment their food is disposed of, the tinkle of the guitar is heard, and you or any kindly disposed passer may dance with them, as I did, until the 30 minutes allowed them for food and refresco have expired. On these occasions, every one dances, girls of eighteen and women of eighty, and the scenes along Manzanares are very picturesque and interesting. But when I tell you that one of these iron-framed wenchers must wash and dry ready for the "starching," which is done by the criadas in the city, pieces of linen equaling the cleansing of 70 sheets, in order to earn 25 cents a day, the poetical sense in it all is with the interested onlooker, rather than with the drudging lavanderas of the Manzanares.

EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

WASHINGTON LETTER.

WASHINGTON, February 8, 1893.

President-elect Cleveland is an annexationist. He not only favors the annexation of Hawaii, the commissioners of which are now in Washington asking that their country be taken under the protection of the United States, but he also favors the annexation of Canada, and from what Hon. Don M. Dickinson, who is in his confidence, said to members of Congress here this week, he expects to see Canada annexed during his administration. Mr. Dickinson intimated that he had positive and authoritative information which led him to expect that in the near future Canada would take similar steps to those now being taken by Hawaii. It is known here that the present administration has quietly encouraged the annexation sentiment in Canada whenever it has had an opportunity to do so, and that many prominent Canadians who have been here at different times have taken away unofficial assurances that whenever Canada applied for admission her application would be favorably received.

It has not been definitely decided what will be done with the application of Hawaii for annexation, which will be formally presented by the commissioners tomorrow, further than that it will be something that makes American control of Hawaii certain, whether it be annexation or a protectorate. There is no politics in the question, and while there is a difference of opinion in Congress as to what should be the first step, there is practical unanimity in the opinion that it must be something that will make it impossible for any European power to obtain control of Hawaii, and this opinion has been greatly strengthened by the rumor that Great Britain would protest against this country assuming control of Hawaii.

It appears that the Nicaragua canal bill is not to get through the Senate without a struggle. When Senator Sherman attempted to secure for the bill the right of way left vacant by the passage of the anti-option bill, he was antagonized by Senator Vest, who said that it was far more important than the "Cherokee outlet" bill should be considered and passed than that the time of the Senate should be taken up in the discussion of a measure that it was an open secret could not pass at this session. It is significant that Mr. Sherman's motion was voted down.

Should a senator vote according to

his own belief in what is right and proper, or according to instructions of the legislature of his state? When the final vote on the anti-option bill was taken in the Senate, a number of senators voted contrary to resolutions which had been adopted by their state legislatures. Some made explanations among them. Vest, of Missouri, said that, notwithstanding such instruction to vote for the bill, he took pleasure in voting against it, even if his constituents regarded such action as sufficient reason for retiring him to private life.

The fate of the anti-option bill is now in the hands of its friends in the House. If they are shrewd they can outwit the men who have announced their intention to filibuster against it when it comes up in the House for concurrence in the Senate amendments, and rush it through.

Party lines were wiped out in the vote on the anti-option bill in the Senate. The forty votes in favor of the bill were cast by two Populists, eleven Democrats and twenty-seven Republicans, while the opposition which mustered twenty-nine votes, was made up of nine Republicans and twenty Democrats.

The House sub-committee to investigate the whisky trust, of which Representative Bynum is chairman, held its first meeting today. Mr. Bynum and other members express their intention to get to the bottom of the whole business, if it is within the range of possibility to do so.

A last attempt is being made to get the Democrats in Congress to support the bill for the repeal of the Sherman silver law, which is to come up Thursday and Friday of next week. Friends of Mr. Cleveland say that he has made up his mind to call an immediate extra session of Congress if this bill is not passed by this Congress, and to make sure of the extra session passing it he will make no appointments to fill until it does. There is now a possibility that the bill may get through the House, but there it will have to stop.

Ex-Secretary Thompson is expected here tomorrow to testify before the House committee that is investigating the charges of bribery and corruption in connection with the American end of the Panama Canal company. Mr. Thompson was American president of the company.

If both House and Senate do not get a rush on it will be almost impossible to prevent an extra session, by reason of the failure of appropriation bills. Only two of these bills have passed both House and Senate, and only four weeks of the session remain.

NO TERRITORIAL FAIR.

The question of holding or not holding a Territorial fair this year then came up and was discussed at length, and for the following reasons it was unanimously decided not to make a Territorial exhibit this year: The inadequacy of the grounds for a proper stock exhibit, fifty animals having been turned away at the 1892 fair; the extra exertion being made for success at the World's Fair; the securing of the great mining congress for this Territory; the difficulty which would probably be encountered in getting the