

THE HUMBLEST COT.

It was a little cottage home,
Beside a little wood,
No turret high, no shining dome,
Above its thatched roof stood.
Yet, 'twas a place
Where Love's pure grace
Poured forth its healing flood.

Through all the darkest storms of life,
Through sunshine and through shade,
Apart from mad ambition's strife,
It beautified the glade.
It was the seat
Of pleasures meet—
Of joys, with Peace inlaid.

No rustling satins there were heard,
No silken-soft footfalls;
No costly painting ever stirred
With life, its spotless walls.
Yet Beauty's own
Light ever shone
Within its humble halls.

Tho hearts that beat beneath the roof,
To Virtue e'er were true;
From wrong and shame they kept aloof,
And shunned temptation, too!
They clung to Right
In His full sight,
And kept Heaven's Hope in view.

It was the shrine of pure Content,
A haven sure of Rest;
And, not beneath Heaven's firmament,
Stood cot more sweetly blest;
For wrong or sin
Ne'er entered in
That place, a welcome guest.

Oh, rich-ones of the earth! think not
That wealth alone can buy
True Joy, for oft in humblest cot—
The humblest 'neath the sky—
Are comforts found,
Which ne'er abound
In mansions proud and high.

LONDON.

THE LARGEST CITY THAT EVER EXISTED.

Americans are charged with a tendency to exaggeration of expression in describing anything or in giving vent to their feelings and opinions. But there is no danger of committing this error in describing London. One may use the strongest adjectives and intensest verbs with safety, and strictly within bounds of naked truth. It is safe to affirm that it is the largest city in the world, or, for that matter, that ever was in the world. It contains more inhabitants, and more houses, and more miles of street, than any other city of ancient or modern times. And it is far the wealthiest city that ever existed. London is to the modern what Rome was to the ancient world, in respect to population and wealth. But Rome, in her palmy days, was a poor city in comparison with London. The 3,500,000 of souls which compose the population of London need never do another day's work for wages. They have capital enough invested in bonds and stocks, in domestic and foreign securities, and money at interest, and income from real estate and railroad earnings, and other sources from which they derive dividends, comfortably to subsist the entire population, to purchase them food, clothing, fuel, drinks, furniture, literature, make all repairs of their habitations, pay all their taxes and assessments, and, in short, defray all their household expenses and personal outlays, to the aggregate total of what they now expend in cost of living.

All the productive labor performed by the people of London adds itself to their capital. London is in the condition of a family whose income, in the shape of dividends on stocks and bonds, exceeds the cost of their style of living, and who may, therefore, go out of business and live on that income without trenching on a dollar of the capital of the family. Of what other great city can this be said?

But the property of London is not owned and held in common, or in equal portions. One man has a hundred times more than he needs, and a hundred men have less than they need. London has some thousands of citizens worth tens of millions each, and also has 100,000 citizens in the poor house. But the great mass of the people are prosperous and in comfortable circumstances, tens of thousands of them worth tens of thousands each.

The leisure class—those living on fixed incomes and regular dividends on investments—are very numerous, numbering tens of thousands. Their only business is to amuse themselves and fight ennui. They live a continual picnic. They are habitués of the club, patronize

the turf, keep fast horses, support establishments, ramble about the island, roam over Europe, and make excursions up the Nile and to the Holy Land and the "farther Ind." London is the headquarters of the landed aristocracy of the three kingdoms, who are in receipt of rents aggregating nearly a thousand millions of dollars per annum. The absentee Irish landlords may here be found during the "season," flourishing like "green bay trees." Here is concentrated the banking wealth of the empire. Here is held the bulk of the bonds representing the national debt, and a large part of the national, state and municipal debts of the world. Here are owned a majority of the railway stocks and bonds of Great Britain and the colonies, including £100,000,000 invested in the India railway system, besides vast sums in railway stocks and bonds of other countries, the United States included. Here is the grand depot of the tea, coffee, sugar, spice, and drug commerce of Great Britain. Here are held the largest stocks of woolen, silk, leather, and even cotton goods, in the Empire. Great as is the shipping of Liverpool, it is not nearly equal to that of London, for here is the focus of the shipping trade of Great Britain and the East and West Indies, China and Japan, the Mediterranean, and most of Africa. The greater part of the exports of California and Russia, and the beef, wool and gold of Australia, come up the Thames to London for a market. The chief part of commerce carried on with France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Scandinavia, Russia, and, indeed, all Europe, is transacted in London. It is the headquarters of the exchanges of the world, and its quotations fix the value, in a great measure, of all the raw and manufactured products of all nations, and go far to determine the current value of the stocks and bonds, of every kind, of other lands. London is the world's clearing house, its largest warehouse, its biggest bank.

Looking at London geographically, it is difficult to convey an accurate conception of the space it covers; indeed, it is hard to describe in any respect, for it is the elephant among cities. On the clearest day, from the highest point of observation the whole city cannot be seen, but beyond the range of vision are streets and thousands upon thousands of houses. Taking Charing Cross as a centre, its suburbs cannot be reached in any direction in less than eight or ten miles, and in some not in twice that distance. The Thames runs twenty-five miles through the city. If London were put down in Cook county, it would reach along the shores of the lake from Evanston to the Calumet, and spread out far beyond the Des Plaines river. On this space is concentrated a population equaling that of the States of Illinois and Wisconsin, or, according to the census of 1873, that of the cities of New York, Brooklyn, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Cincinnati, St. Louis, New Orleans and Chicago, all combined. But, immense as is the population of London, it has not ceased to grow. On the contrary, it never added so many people to its numbers as during the last decade. The Board of Public Works report that 149,320 buildings were erected between 1861 and 1871. The addition was but little less than the whole population of New York.

Prodigious as is the population of London, it is not disproportionate to the base of its support. In the first place, it is one of the oldest of existing cities. It was a place of importance under the Romans, and was famed for its vast conflux of traders, and its abundant commerce, even in the first century of the Christian era. From the Romans it received its municipal institutions, which have endured, in their main features, to the present day. It was the chief city of Great Britain at the time of the Norman conquest, and its officers and inhabitants refused to lower the draw on the London stone arch bridge to let William's army cross into the city, until they had first exacted from him a pledge that he would respect the ancient rights and liberties of the guilds, burgesses, freemen and corporation of London. The Conqueror, pleased with their jealousy of their rights, added many privileges not heretofore enjoyed. The new charter was reduced to writing on parchment, signed and sealed by the King; whereupon the drawbridge was let down, and the King and his cavaliers crossed the London bridge and took possession of the royal

palaces. This charter from William the Conqueror is still preserved in the archives of the city. London has grown in numbers, magnitude and consequence, with the growth of the nation of which it has been the capital, for more than twelve centuries. London is now the political capital of an empire of 250,000,000 of souls, and it is the financial capital of the whole Anglo-Saxon race, including the United States. It is a curious fact the "Revolted Colonies" are the largest customers of the "Mother Country," and the largest borrowers of London money.

When speaking of "London," the ancient corporation of that name must not be understood. The city of London proper, ruled over by a Lord Mayor and Board of Aldermen, is only a mile long by two thirds of a mile broad, containing 450 acres, and less than 75,000 inhabitants. It decreased between 1861 and 1871, more than 37,000 in population. The old London, a couple of centuries ago, contained 220,000 inhabitants. But the family population have nearly all moved out of it, and it is now given up to banks, insurance offices, wholesale stores, book and newspaper publishing, government offices, lawyers' offices, and such business as one sees in New York one mile from the Battery up Broadway and the cross streets.

But what the world calls London, consists of ten districts, the smallest of all the others being much larger than London proper, viz: Chelsea, Finsbury, Greenwich, Hackney, Lambeth, Marylebone, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Westminster, and London. Three or four of these districts each contain more than 500,000 souls. The whole are known here as the Metropolitan District. Old London is the only division that is governed by a Mayor and Board of Aldermen. The other districts have Boards of Vestrymen, whose duties are as few and simple as those of the Town Board of an Illinois township. They have very little to do except to look after the paupers in their districts.

The powers of the Mayor and Aldermen of Old London are very peculiar and difficult to understand or describe, as they bear no resemblance to the municipal government of an American city. The charter of London is not from Parliament, because it is older than Parliament. It dates back to Julius Caesar, and consists of various special privileges, rights, and monopolies granted and conferred by various monarchs—notably by William the Conqueror, King John, Henry III., Elizabeth, and others. Whenever the Kings were hard run for money to carry on their wars, the Corporation of London would give or loan them a sum in consideration of an enlargement of special privileges, monopolies in trade, tolls and duties.

The Aldermen are elected for life, but have no salaries. In addition to Aldermanic duties, they are Magistrates, having certain Justice of the Peace powers. The two Sheriffs of London are elected by the Aldermen from their body, and also two Under-Sheriffs, each for one year. From these Sheriffs the Mayor is selected by the rule of rotation. He occupies the office only one year, and is rarely ever re-elected, though eligible. His salary is \$25,000 per annum, with furnished mansion house and liveried servants provided at the city's expense. He is always knighted, and has a "Sir" as a handle to his name. He is expected to spend twice his salary in giving banquets and civic entertainments, and rarely fails to do it. The honor of the place is considered an equivalent for the \$25,000 of which he is out of pocket at the end of his year. His duties, aside from entertaining distinguished people and giving banquets, consist of presiding over the city council, and holding a criminal court, where he can punish by imprisonment, the same as Police Justice, Banyon. He has no veto power, no pardoning power, no power of appointment or removal, no seat in any other board, and no authority to send messages, general or special, recommending any thing or measure to the Aldermanic body.

The present mayor has the same power, and duties, and ceremonies to perform that all the preceding eighteen hundred lord mayors had—neither more nor less. I could not learn that the functions of his office had been enlarged or diminished since the Norman, Saxon or Roman conquests. It would be esteemed worse than sacrilege to

change anything connected with the office an iota. Such is the invincible force of habit and love of ancient usage in the English mind.

Aside from these curious old customs, the Metropolitan District of Great London is governed by Parliament, which is really the common council of London. Metropolitan London is governed, first, by a board of public works, selected in some way by the Ministry—whose duties are very extensive and important. They have charge of the river, its bridges and embankment-walls of stone; the sewerage, water, gas; also, street openings and improvements, paving, repairing and cleaning; and, I must add, the streets are better paved, cleaned and kept in repair, by all comparison, than those of any city in America.

Next is the police board, with a force of 10,000 men under their charge, who are controlled and worked on military principles and by military officers. It is a splendid body of men, under the highest state of discipline and efficiency, and affords a protection to life, limb and property, and a sense of security little known or felt in any American city, unless it be Boston. After the men and officers have served acceptably a certain number of years, they are retired on pensions, and, if they are crippled or maimed in the service, they receive pensions. They are all appointed for life or good behavior. I wish the Chicago Board of Police could see and study the London police force and its discipline as a model for their own force.

Next comes the fire-brigade, consisting of about 500 men and 35 steamers, with other fire-equipments to match. All I need say of them is, they rarely ever permit any fire to extend beyond the building in which it commenced, and not often beyond the room or floor. It is hardly necessary to add that the Fire Brigade are in the highest state of discipline and efficiency. The best class of men are selected to fill vacancies, as is the case in the police force; and the same rules exist as to terms of service and pensions for wounds and old age. The Ministry controls the appointment of the Board.

The Health and Sanitary Department is also under control of the Crown. The Board of education is elected by the people, on the cumulative-ballot and minority-representation plan, copied from the Illinois Constitution. Women who are rate payers may vote for members of the School Board, and are also eligible as members of it.

Such, in very brief, is the form of the municipal government of ancient London and Metropolitan London. It is an excellently governed city; its affairs are prudently, economically, and honestly administered. In a comprehensive sense, Parliament itself is the city Council or legislative body, and the Prime Minister is Mayor—or perhaps Her Majesty the Queen. As a matter of fact, the Prime Minister is the reigning monarch of Great Britain. The Queen bears about the same relation to the body politic as the bonnet with its ostrich plumes on the head of a lady who, when she goes a-shopping, thinks of her elegant head-dress, and is influenced by it just about in the same degree and manner as the Queen influences the realm, so far as any will or control she exercises over public affairs and the politics of the Empire.—Special Correspondence Chicago Tribune.

A DOUBLE LIFE.

A WEALTHY BACHELOR AND ALSO AS AN OBSCURE BENEDICT.

One of the marvels of metropolitan life is a case now on trial in the Surrogate's Court in New York City. It is the history of an importer who during twenty-five years earned two millions and an honorable reputation, and who moved day by day among his acquaintances as a wealthy bachelor, and night after night went to his home in an obscure quarter of the city to meet a lady who claimed and was acknowledged to be his wife, and a few neighbors who knew him under an assumed name, and never dreamed that he was a millionaire. George Hardin was born, in the early part of this century, near Belfast, Ireland, and came to this country in his twenty-first year. He established himself in New York City as an importer of Irish linens, and subsequently became the agent of a Belfast house.

Doing business alternately in William, Pine, Broad, and Liberty streets, he prospered and grew rich. Those who had business dealings with him knew nothing of his private life; his chosen comrades in social life had no knowledge of his business relations. He was reticent, retiring, frugal, almost penurious; his business acquaintances supposed that he was a rich old bachelor, and few of them knew where he lived. He finally retired from the importing business, and increased his fortune by buying commercial paper and making investments in safe securities. His circle of acquaintances was very large, and he was well known by leading Irish residents, and yet for twenty-five years he lived as a married man under an assumed name in an obscure street in the Ninth Ward.

In 1848 a gentleman fifty years old, and a lady twenty years younger, leased a plain two-story house in Cornelia street. His landlord and his neighbors knew them as Mr. and Mrs. Walker. A young man named Searles, with his wife and two boys, occupied the second floor of the house for a year, and afterward kept up the acquaintance. Mrs. Dunn, living across the street, and a few others, occasionally visited them, but they seldom made or received calls. In the directory his name was recorded as George Walker. He purchased the house, and lived there with his companion until his death. On the morning of March 7, 1872, George Walker's few acquaintances saw with amazement the announcement that George Hardin had died at No. 22 Cornelia street, and soon after the funeral they heard with increased wonderment that their old friend Mrs. Walker, who had lived so simply and plainly among them for so many years, had applied for letters of administration on the estate of George Hardin, which consisted mainly of personal property worth \$2,000,000. The administrators in such cases are forced to give bonds for double the value of the personal estate; but as this was out of the question, the Surrogate placed the securities in the hands of the United States Trust Company, and then granted the letters of administration. At this juncture, six nephews of Mr. Hardin, residing in Belfast, interposed a claim that the lady was Mrs. Walker and not Mrs. Hardin—his mistress, and not his wife. As Mr. Hardin had left no will, one-half of his estate belonged to this lady, if she was his wife. There have been several sessions of the Surrogate's Court in this case. The contestants, through Burrill, Davis & Burrill, are attempting to show that it was not a legal marriage; the lady, through Robert H. Corbett and the Hon. John K. Porter, maintains that it was.—Ex.

Shocking Accident in Nevada.

The Unionville Silver State of December 2, gives the following particulars of the horrible death of a Chinaman in that place: "About 6½ o'clock, on last Friday morning, a coal oil lamp exploded in the kitchen of the Arizona restaurant. Bill, the Chinese cook, has been in the habit of putting out the light by striking it with a little sheet iron shovel, such as is used in turning griddle cakes, and struck a little to close, hitting the lamp hard enough to break it. He was standing under the lamp at the time, and the oil which ran down all over his person, ignited immediately. He ran out into the street, tearing off his burning clothing with his hands, and throwing the pieces away from him. The cry of fire roused the slumbering portion of our population, and several assisted in saving the building. A terrific wind was raging at the time, and had the fire got a good start no human power could have prevented the destruction of the entire town. Among the many deserving of credit, the action of one, Ed. Rinckle, should receive especial mention. Mr. Rinckle although in "undress uniform" at the time (having just jumped from bed), comprehended the situation at a glance and rushing out with a large double blanket, succeeded in completely enveloping the roasting Chinaman with it, thus smothering the flames. But the relief came too late to save his life, and, after suffering intense agony, the poor fellow breathed his last at nine o'clock in the evening of the same day on which the accident occurred. His lips and nose were burnt almost to a crisp, his hair was almost all burned off his head, and his hands were burnt