

THE SEAMY SIDE OF PHILANTHROPY.

Tiers of SLAVE cells UNEARTHED beneath the foundations of STEPHEN GIRARD'S house in PHILADELPHIA.



DIGGS of workmen digging one hundred feet beneath the surface of old Market street in Philadelphia, just above the water front, have unearthed what is in all probability the clew to the foundation of famous old Stephen Girard's immense fortune.

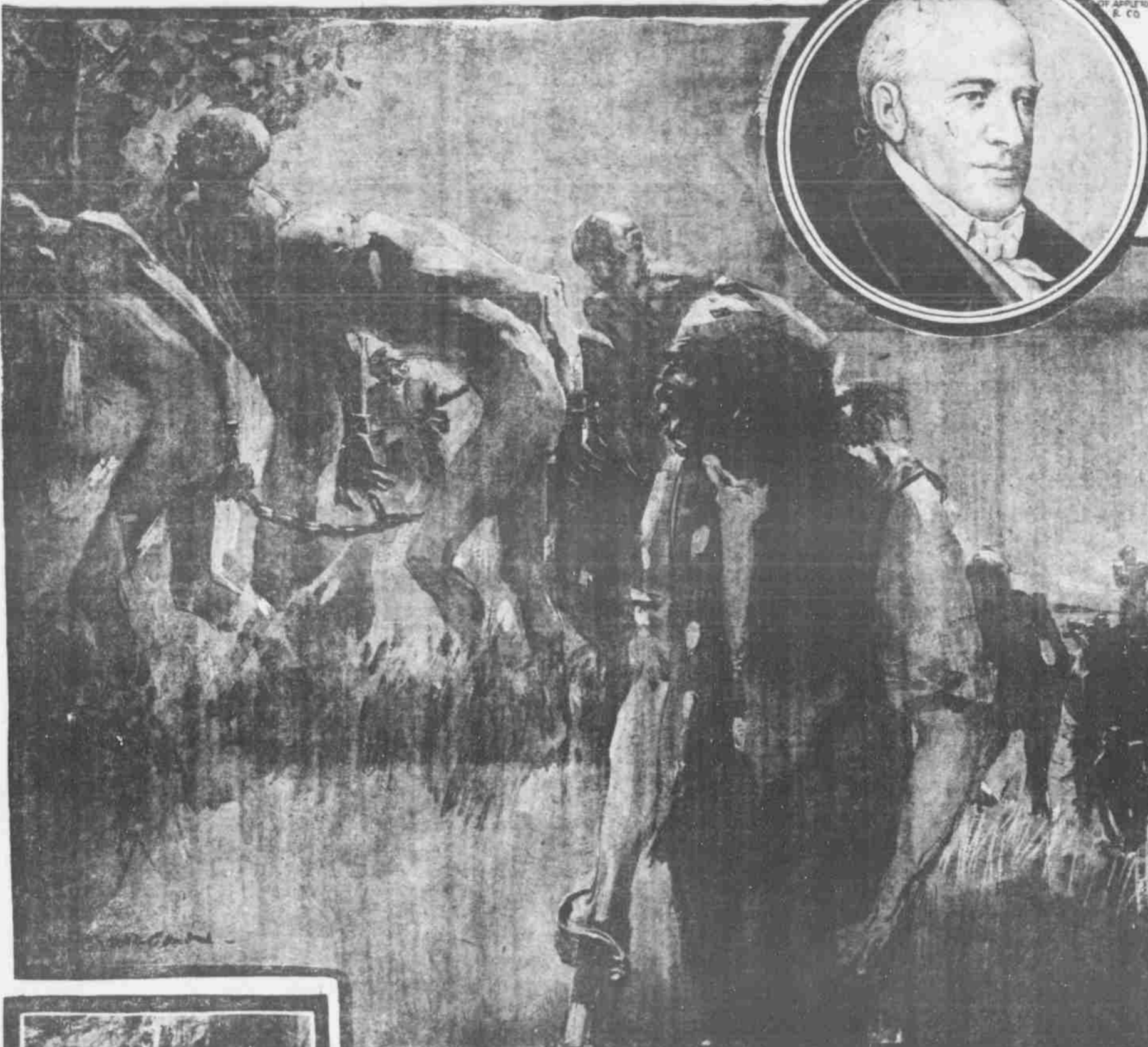
Burrowing down beneath the old Girard mansion in North Water street, one hundred paces from the Delaware River shore, the laborers have uncovered a series of ghastly underground dungeons, falling one tier below another. Three such tiers have been traced, and there is the possibility of still another below them.

With iron bound and barred windows looking out on a narrow three foot corridor between three foot walls, with manacle irons still in the walls and in the corner of one of the cells a femur bone whose nature is unmistakable, there is no doubt as to the use to which these sunken cells were put.

They formed prisons for slaves, the "blackbirds" who in the time of Girard were such profitable merchandise.

Historians, ancient denizens of the neighborhood, the Board of City Trustees, in whose hands are the countless millions of the old "merchants and merchants," have had absolutely no trace of knowledge of the existence of this deep sunken prison. The Board reacts dutifully and strongly the report that the creator of the wealth they hold derived it from so terrible a source. Nevertheless, experts, men who know the South and the old slave pens there, say that there is absolutely no doubt as to the purpose of the den beneath Girard's old mansion.

John W. Jordan, librarian of the Pennsylvania Historical Society, after inspecting the place, said that there was no doubt at all as to its use. He had visited recently just such an underground structure in Elston, Md., and this duplicated, stone for stone almost, the one just found. Fastenings for chains and manacles were still in its walls. In themselves the dungeons show clearly their reason for being.



HIS FORTUNE A MYSTERY.

Source of the fortune of Stephen Girard, founder of the great Girard College, in Philadelphia, financial backer of the United States in the War of 1812, hero of the terrific yellow fever epidemic in his city, has always been veiled in mystery. There has been a persistent story that most of it came from the negro uprising in San Domingo; that at that time Girard, in command of a vessel, was in the harbor, and that to him the whites had intrusted their jewels and money. The uprising came before they could get to the vessel, whose families were slaughtered, and Girard sailed with the treasure. On the other hand, there have been persistent reports that he was actively engaged in the slave trade. "It is no secret that he kept slaves in Philadelphia as his personal servants, and that on his great sugar plantation in Louisiana he employed hundreds."

He settled in Philadelphia in 1778. Soon many ships belonging to him set out from the city. His riches increased. It was his wealth that really enabled the United States to win the War of 1812. Some of Girard's ships had been overhauled by the English and his sailors impressed. The strong, eccentric old man swore vengeance and financed the government to an enormous extent. Afterwards, when the yellow fever scourged Philadelphia, and when men were coming from it, old Girard worked day and night among the sufferers, utterly regardless of personal peril. At last, except for his unfortunate marriage, he lived and soon he died.

When his will was opened it was found that he had created the tremendous institution that now, occupying ten squares of the most valuable land in the city, bears his name. Every penny of his immense riches he had left for an orphan's college. The old man had worked out all the details. No matter or protest was ever to cross his threshold. Religious instruction was to be confined purely to readings of the Bible and slight ethical teachings. The curriculum was to be kept abreast of the times.

Through the years this college has grown until each year it turns out hundreds of well educated men, to whom in no other way could education have come. The original estate left in the hands of the Board is now in the hundreds of millions. It takes in mines, railroads and whole townships.

Recent life during Girard's life as to the way in which he gained his fortune, began to die away after his death. Until the discovery of these slave pens it rested only in historical documents and old letters.

In the course of its operations in building the underground trolley road that is to stretch under Market street, the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company found it necessary to buy Girard's old house, at No. 22 North Water street, to make way for the foundation of its river front terminal. The ancient dwelling, in which Girard had lived and died was bought from the estate's trustees, and early in October the work of raising its walls began.



THE IRON BARRED WINDOW OF ONE OF THE CELLS



GENERAL VIEW OF EXCAVATIONS REVEALING TIERS OF DUNGEONS BENEATH STEPHEN GIRARD'S HOUSE

SECRET OF THE DUNGEONS.

Down to its foundations the house had been torn when the workmen came across a passageway leading from the cellar. It had been blocked and tiled, but the entrance was still visible, and the laborers began to attack what was apparently the foundations of the building. They penetrated through the cellar door and found that this was only the roof of another excavation beneath. Entering this they found the first tier of cells.

There were six stone rooms on this tier, windows heavily barred with iron and each compartment capable of holding six persons. Along the front of them ran a 3-foot corridor between walls three feet thick. Penetrating the dungeons the workmen found at regular intervals in the wall supports that were afterwards declared to be intended for manacles.

Following the corridor the investigators dipped down and were soon walking along under cover of darkness to Girard's house, only a few steps away. There they would have been kept until the time came to ship them away in one of the old merchant's vessels. It is also possible that insubordinate seamen on Girard's scores of sailing ships may have been thrown into these dark holes under the Water street house when they became too unruly on shipboard.

The Pennsylvania Historical Society and the Board of City Trustees are taking the matter up in earnest—the first to find out what the den really were for, the second to clear Girard's name if possible of the stain of slave trading, although why they should try to do this the members of the

first society say they cannot see. They point to the fact that at that time there was no prejudice against slavery that now exists and that old Stephen Girard could legitimately have engaged in the trade. Why he cast such mystery around it is the only thing that they say they are unable to understand.

One member has already prepared a monograph on it for the delectation of the Historical Society at its next meeting. On the other hand Superintendent James Kilpatrick, of the Board of City Trustees, defends Girard's memory by the argument that "he would not have put a good cow or horse down those holes, much less a free black."

In the meantime there are the three

sums tiers of unmistakable dungeons with their bars and manacle supports and prison corridors, staring Philadelphia in the face. And Girard's house was right on top of them.

Also there are the Girard millions, the source of which has never been known. It is possible that when the fourth tier is dug into the sewer will be unequivocal and that some of the mystery of the great man's life will be cleared up.

"Look here," remarked a volunteer recently, "you were talking all through my nose."

"Oh, don't worry about that!" replied the man addressed. "I assure you I wasn't saying anything that you would particularly want to hear."

OPPORTUNITIES IN SIERRA LEONE.

MODERN discoveries and developments have made Africa a country worthy of the consideration of business men throughout the world, reports Vice Consul Raymond P. Dougherty from Sierra Leone. The map of Africa is no longer a mere outline marked with a few rivers and mountains. The secrets of the heart of the continent have been laid bare, and mighty arteries of its future commerce traced and its far spreading shores and wonderful hinterlands brought under the influence of a network of progressive commerce.

In West Africa England has the following territories—Gambia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, Lagos, Southern Nigeria and Northern Nigeria. The first four are colonies of standing with adjacent protectorates.

Northern and Southern Sierra Leone have been protectorates. Recently it has been decided to unite Lagos and Southern Nigeria, with colonial headquarters at Lagos.

West Africa, situated in the equatorial belt, has much against it on account of climatic conditions, says Mr. Dougherty, but even this insuperable part has not been neglected. Energetic steamship companies traverse the whole coast. Railroads are pushing into the interior. The telegraph follows the steam engine and ocean cables form commercial and political links with the great nations of the world. The insular, with his schools and churches inculcating higher views of life. All these influences and agencies contribute largely to the social, commercial and political uplift of the people. Such an advancement, though it has touched only the fringe of the Dark Continent, carries with it a great increase in domestic and foreign trade, and this will receive a still greater impetus as civilization penetrates inland.

From West Africa were brought the ancestors of the millions of Negro men now living in the United States. The intelligent population of Sierra Leone and Liberia is largely made up of the descendants of freed slaves. These enlightened members of the negro race take active part in all the affairs of their commonwealths and are developing the country industrially and commercially. Some of the promoters of trade, agriculture, and other industries were formerly inhabitants of the back belt in America or imbibed the American idea of study and travel. The Tuskegee school is taking hold even in this remote part of the world. Native tribes are also contributing to the advance in skilled labor. Young men are being trained in various trades and professions.

The colony of Sierra Leone includes a small peninsula at the mouth of the Sierra Leone River and the island of Sherbro, farther down the coast. Stretching far inland from these civil, commercial and military centers is the vast territory of the protectorate. The colony and the protectorate together have an area of 23,000 square miles. The colony contains 75,000 inhabitants and the protectorate about 1,000,000. The development of the protectorate is an important factor in the advance of commerce. The railroad has penetrated almost to the Liberian boundary. Numerous roads have been improved, while new and more permanent highways have been constructed in certain parts. This work of bettering the thoroughfares of trade will continue, and there is now in the stage of formation a government project to facilitate the navigation of the great river which flows into the harbor at Freetown.

The export of raw products from Sierra Leone is increasing. Among such products is tropical seed, a valuable oil product, which is exported to a small extent. Cash nuts are in great demand in northwest African countries, and are exported to the value of \$2,000,000. Ginger is exported to the value of \$1,000,000. The main source of the main commodity is in the mountains of the interior. The value of trade in tropical Africa. Value exported, \$1,000,000. Palm oil, obtained from the palm kernel, is exported to the value of \$1,000,000. The fibre industry is receiving greater attention, and many vegetable products are furnishing excellent fibre.

This list of raw commodities makes it quite apparent that Sierra Leone is rich in natural products and the resources are only partially developed.