

## Gurgles from the Outpourings of Omaha's Globe Girdler



① IN PARIS THEY FLIRT



② CAIRO



③ WHO'D LIKE TO BE A CAMEL



④ PARSEE CUSTOMS



⑤ COLOZIBO

**R**ALPH W. BRECKENRIDGE, the well known Omaha lawyer and literary light, made a world-girdling tour last winter, and on his return had printed a little volume containing his impressions, which he circulated privately among his friends. Assuming that only those observations have been set down that are printable, The Bee has taken the liberty to make some excerpts from the volume, from which our artist might draw inspiration:

1. Paris is an out-of-doors city; that is, the people sit, drink their wine and beer, and flirt on the streets. How all the little shops that front on the walk can be supported, is almost incomprehensible; and yet they all seem to flourish, and the big stores are jammed. The French have done much smashing; they have destroyed a great many things that should not exist and they have been utterly wanton in their attacks upon many wonderful buildings and works of art. So much remains, however, as to tire the eyes and the feet in a short time.

2. Cairo is the poorest lighted city of its size (600,000) I know, and the dirtiest; but when we got to Shepherd's hotel, to which we were assigned (and which, by the way, is one of the famous hotels of the world), the scene changed. I thought the French were vociferous, but the Egyptians, the Turks and the Arabs are the most boisterous people we have met. And the lights of the hotels and the shops and the unusual dress of the natives, made altogether, a very charming sight. Beggars swarm like flies. I noticed one fellow at the station who said "good-bye" as we climbed into a carriage—he did absolutely nothing for us, but as we drove off he ran after us crying, "Backsheesh, backsheesh, for the good-a-bye."

This afternoon we visited the great Cairo museum. We saw statues of Rameses and a lot of other Egyptian rulers, and the mummies of Rameses II, Seti and the Pharaoh who disagreed with Moses. I asked our guide as innocently as I could, if Pharaoh was dead, and he said quite wittily: "Yes, he died from eating too many bullrushes."

3. The ride from Cairo to Suez was not particularly pleasant. The soil is highly cultivated where it is cultivated at all. But the mixture of men, women and children, camels, dogs, donkeys, cattle and goats in the fields is very amusing. It is a common thing to see a cow and a bull yoked together, and a camel and a cow. I suppose we have seen over a thousand camels in two days.

4. The interesting thing about the Parsees, however, is the way they dispose of their dead. On the very top of Malabar hill, in the center of a beautiful garden, are the Towers of Silence, where every dead Parsee is brought. Our guide through the tower grounds was an intelligent old chap who spoke excellent English. He told us that 45,000 Parsees live in Bombay and all on or near Malabar hill. If one dies in the evening his body is taken to the towers the next morning; if he dies early in the day he is carried there at 5 in the afternoon. After a religious service of some sort, white robed priests

## Strange Experiences and Adventures Met with in Far-Away Lands Vividly Narrated at First Hand by Our Widely Traveled Fellow Citizen for the Delectation of His Stay-at-Home Friends

take the body up the stairway into one of the towers, which are circular in shape and open at the top. They contain groovelike places in a slanting platform, in the middle of which is a well, thirty or forty feet deep. On the outer rim of this platform are the grooves for the men, next for the women, and then, in the center, places for the children. The naked bodies are placed there and left; inside of two hours the vultures roosting by the score on the edge of the wall, strip the carcasses to the bone, which are left to bleach in the hot sun for a few days, and then they are swept into the center pit or well, where they soon become chalk and lime and are totally dissolved by chemicals. We have this morning, on our way to Agra, seen hundreds of graves, if such they can be called, consisting of thatch or bamboo stretched on poles raised eight or ten feet from the ground, where the bodies are placed to be stripped by carrion birds. Some such modes of disposing of the dead seems necessary in the tropics.

5. We saw hundreds of water buffaloes up to their necks in the water. Once I saw a lizard not less than three feet in length leisurely crawling along. I found upon inquiry that it is a sort of a dwarf crocodile, lives on the land, and feeds on snakes and chickens; it is not poisonous, and it is not hostile to man.

6. Leaving Kandy we saw several elephants taking their daily bath in the river. Our encyclopaedic friend Van Buren told us that these animals, which are owned on some nearby estates, will not work unless they are taken to the river daily, where, in great ecstasy, they wash and cool themselves. He also said the elephants will not work on Sunday. That is, they seem to know that the men do not work in the field every day, and, unless some holiday has thrown Mr. Pachyderm off his count, no amount of blows can make him lose his day of rest. A sort of elephant's union this!

7. Darjeeling is the summer resort of India. It stretches over the side of a mountain, and the streets are like so many stairs. No street cars in Darjeeling! Rickshaws, or one-seated, two-wheeled carts, with two coolies to pull and one to push, are the most comfortable conveyance to be had; there are also "dandies," shaped something like coffins, carried either by four or six men.

8. On the pavement are found scores of beggars; some of them are the visiting Hindu sisters, and some are blind musicians (?) who play and sing the most unearthly and outlandish music imaginable. A cat concert is classic in comparison.

We crossed the equator last night about 9 o'clock; we had a comfortable night, and as I write,

at 11 o'clock a. m., the thermometer registers under 85 degrees Fahrenheit.

Four p. m., same day. A tragedy on ship! Extensive preparations had been made for the ceremony usually celebrated when ships cross the equator, in which Neptune and his crew take charge of the ship—and do things to certain of the passengers. The whole affair is, of course, a screaming farce and the lay-out looked like the arrangements for an Ak-Sar-Ben initiation. The drunken sailor who is supposed to rescue the victims from the tortures inflicted on them, had made his appearance and aroused the mirth of the passengers who were crowded around the improvised throne of Neptune, and the ducking vat in front of it, when the alarming cry was heard: "Man overboard! Man overboard!" and almost immediately, and in view of many passengers, a woman was seen in the sea; the ship shot out a line of life preservers, on the farthest of which was a smoking torch to mark the spot where the unfortunate woman was supposed to have fallen, and a brave young chap, one of the passengers named Marcus Jordan, sprang into the sea to rescue her. The ship reversed its engines, a lifeboat was lowered, and it was exactly twenty-two minutes by the watch of a man who had it in his hand when the first alarm was given, to the time the printing of some kodak pictures had been taken, until the unfortunate woman was brought aboard. The doctors and nurses tried for two hours to resuscitate her. It was a plain case of suicide. A lady saw her go to the rail, climb up, and then step off; and the life she tried to get rid of, the doctors could not give back to her. The event is another instance of the proximity of farce and tragedy. There is much praise for the brave boy who risked his life trying to rescue the poor woman, and for the way the ship was handled.

Our drive to the Kasuga shrine was through a large park containing the largest herd of deer in the world; these are as tame as sheep, and followed us around like dogs; there are said to be over 500 in the herd.

It surprised me to find that there is no city of Hong Kong and no postoffice of that name; but Hong Kong is an island, and the British city of Victoria is situated on it. The place, however, is best known by the original Chinese name of Hong Kong. The British habit of giving the name of Victoria to parks, hotels and towns could not succeed in Englishing this Chinese city, although the harbor, the barracks, the business blocks, the streets and the police are distinctly British. It is a singular fact, and one which shows the farsightedness of J. Bull that from New York to San Francisco the only ports we have visited or will stop at, not British, are the French port Villefranche, the Dutch port of Batavia in Java, the American ports

of Manila and Honolulu, and the stopping places in Japan and except the Japanese ports and Villefranche, no one of them is in the hands of the native people.

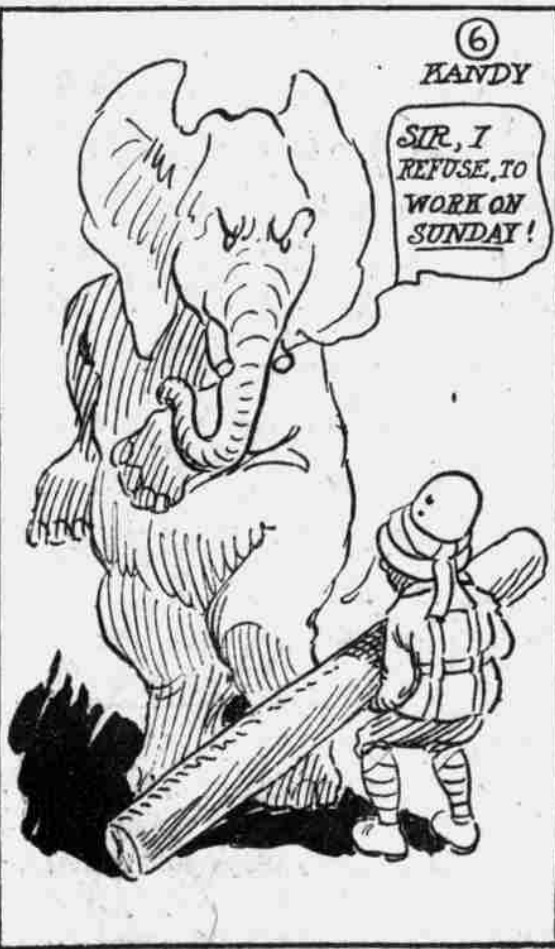
9. I had a letter to a Catholic priest connected with a Jesuit college to be established there, and he took us into sections of the city that we never should have seen but for him. He lives in a quarter where only occasionally are seen the modern influences that are making a new Japan; and the old Japanese house he lives in is probably the only one of its kind we could have entered without taking off our shoes. For the Japanese are good housekeepers, and permit no mud to be tracked in on their spotless matting, which answers not only for a carpet, but, in most places, is their table and bed. Father Hillig took us into one of the native Japanese grade schools which afforded us a much desired glimpse of the way the Japs are imitating our educational system. This school is for both boys and girls and has an enrollment of about 900 pupils. After entering the enclosure we were conducted to a waiting room or office, where tea was served, and hibachis (braziers), were brought in so we could warm our hands, as it was cold—below freezing. We saw all the girls drill in the court, and visited the primary, first and third grades, where the children were taught as mine were in the Omaha schools, to make things out of paper, and the three r's, "reading, riting and rithmetic." The boys were, many of them, very bright, and acted exactly like so many American kids of the same age. Their writing lesson was quite funny to us, for they use a sort of brush, and the letters they were making were the old Chinese characters. I wonder how long the Japs will keep their present alphabet and language! Father Hillig, who is studying it, says it is the most difficult of any. The alphabet has eighty letters, and the various combinations make up about 6,000 independent characters. And he says he shall not try to learn to write in Japanese, for it would take him about six years to attain any proficiency. The educational system is compulsory for about six years, and the optional middle (high) school term is five years longer. A foreign language is required in the middle course and at present English is the one required. When we indicated our purpose to leave the school, we were taken back to the office where we again sat down and had more tea and cakes—and such cakes. No more real Japanese sweet cake for me! No one is in a hurry in Japan—that is, when making calls of any sort, and custom requires the caller to accept nearly everywhere such hospitality as was shown us, and tea is the almost universal beverage.

The most interesting acquaintance I made in Japan, and one of the most charming men I have

met in a long time is the Methodist missionary bishop for Korea and Japan, M. C. Harris. When I was introduced to him, he at once said, "I have met you before, I traveled with you once when you and your boy were going fishing somewhere west of Laramie, Wyo." I now recall the meeting, but he was not then a bishop, and I do not remember that he had said much about his work except that he was a preacher; but he is a live wire. It is nearly forty years since he first went to Japan, and he has been there most of that time. I spent an evening in the hotel in Yokohama with him, and got a lot of information from him. He was to preach the next morning in Japanese, so a number of us went to the little Japanese Methodist church. The hymns were sung to familiar tunes, and we could sing in English what these Christian Japs were singing in their native language. After the bishop finished his short sermon, he explained in English the points he had made, and then introduced the American guests to the congregation and called on several of us to speak. Our talks were interpreted in Japanese and the service ended with the song, "God be With You Till We Meet Again." It was really an interesting experience. Bishop Harris insists that the Japanese are great admirers of and absolutely friendly to the United States, and that the government and the ruling classes are even now practicing Christian principles. He may be optimistic, but I think he is right.

10. We have had two Saturdays! We had gained a day by putting our watches ahead from time to time, and when we reached the 180th meridian we equalized the matter by putting in two Saturdays. This gave one of the passengers whose birthday was January 20, two birthdays this year. Another passenger, who leaves the Cleveland at Honolulu for Australia, will cross the meridian again going west, and lose the day he has gained; that is, if the ship should reach the 180th meridian on a Tuesday, they will not count that day, but will jump from Monday to Wednesday. Our crew called the extra Saturday meridian day, and a lot of country fair sports were arranged; a potato race, a three-legged race, a hairdressing contest (in which a number of young men undertook to dress the hair of an equal number of young women), a pillow fight with the combatants astride a pole, a tug-of-war between the single and the married men, etc., and on the regular Saturday a fancy dress ball was given, which permitted the exhibition of some of the gorgeous garments purchased in India and China, and created merriment.

Honolulu is riotous in color. Immense heaps of purple bougainvillea are found everywhere. Some flowers attract insect pests, but others are immune, and these with the stately palms, and thousand of beautiful homes, give the city an almost fairylike look until the business district is reached, and there is Omaha, Los Angeles or St. Paul, and the great docks that take the place of our railway terminals. There are two first-class hotels in Honolulu, both of them better than anything we saw in all India. I mention this, for one expects to find good hotels in a city of a million people, and there is not a first-class hotel in either Bombay or Calcutta.



⑥ KANDY



⑦ NO STREET CARS IN DARJEELING



⑧ INDIA - HINDU VS. CAT MUSIC



⑨ JAPAN



⑩ SEEING DOUBLE