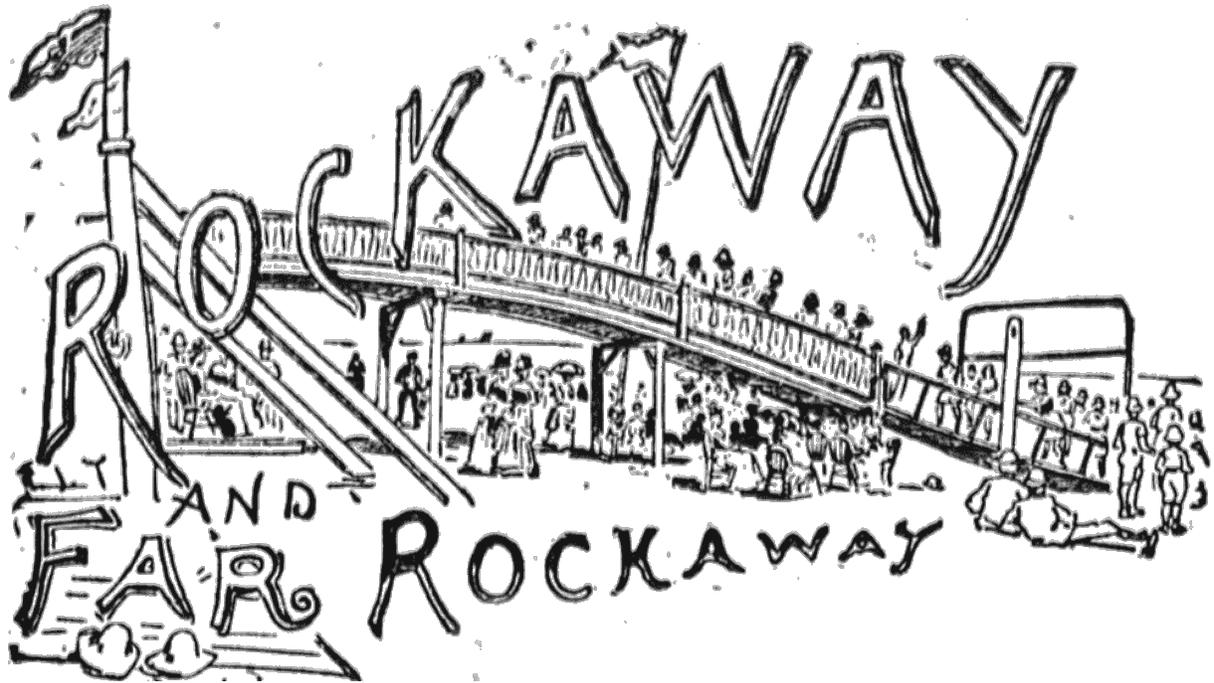


THE SUN, SUNDAY, AUGUST 8, 1886



ROCKAWAY AND FAR ROCKAWAY

Whoever who has stood in the edge of the ocean for a full minute has felt a great wave dash itself past him upon the sand, and in another second has felt the water of it rushing back into the sea, pulling the loose sand and pebbles after it, pell-mell, down the shelving plane. He has felt a strong suction accompanying the retreat of the water, a draught powerful enough to unsteady him on his feet. Just such a pulling, dragging, straining sensation is experienced at Rockaway by anyone who determines to remain there over night for the first time. The daily billow of humanity has been flung upon that spit of sand by the great three-story boats and the winding trains. It is a wave that surges all over the place and covers it with people. At night it begins to run back, with down-hill force and swiftness, to the city, and as the atoms in the mass begin to scurry across the sand to catch the cars and boats it is very difficult indeed to stand your ground and stay there—in solitude, you suspect—until the wave of to-morrow dashes its tide of merrymakers and idlers upon the beach.



FLYING ON THE SCUFF.

But there is no such thing as solitude on that pleasure ground of the people, excepting within the walls of the big hotel which has been closed for years. Every here and there are hotels full of people, unnoticed except for their barrooms when the multitudinous excursionists are about, but delightful homes for hundreds when their lights make them conspicuous at night.



COMFORT IN A HAMMOCK.

What sort of folks stop at them? Mainly women, of course; but plenty of men of consequence enough and sufficiently close upon fame to have their names painted high and big upon the signs of the city, shopkeepers, undertakers, saloon keepers, contractors, marketmen, and, in fact, that whole great and useful section of humanity, which, in the aggregate, has more money than the millionaires, and whose members, as individuals, are far freer with money than those who own it by the barrel. And there are celebrities there also—a prize fighter, a song and dance man, and a tenor singer. The busiest part of the island is planked over like a bridge from bay to sea, because, boast as you will about the country, the cold fact is that it is made of dirt—a thing we city folks pay a million a year to get rid of—and so, when we own a place like Rockaway, we board it over and make it as citified and homelike as possible. Yet though the

hotels in this part rise right out of the boards like city houses out of flagging, some of them have green yards full of umbrageous trees, and some are fringed with gay awnings like the flounces on a Cuban lady's dress, and some have both, as is the case with Brosnan's, where we stopped along with 400 others, and had sea fish and clams and lobsters and chicken, as well as the whitest of bedrooms and bedclothes.



FUT UP YOUR ANTE, SARAH.

Civilization here is at its heartiest stage, and even the women are as democratic as the ballots the men cast at elections. There is not a Mugwump on the beach. Everybody does as he or she pleases, and everybody respect every other body's pleasure. For instance, it pleased a party of ladies to play poker every afternoon and night in the parlor, and it is not easy to conceive any medley more melodious than the rattle of poker chips blending with the dulcet tones of ladies calling, "I raise you five, Eliza," and replying, "Show us what makes you so daring, Mary Murphy," They dress in wrappers when they please, because they came to Rockaway for comfort, and have no idea of paying \$4 a day for the privilege of boxing themselves in tight dresses. They are very genial and full of mirth, and some of their witticisms are both broad and deep. The married ones are sometimes seen in little groups, excluding the young girls, and the sparkle of their eyes when they whisper and the merry peals of laughter at the close attest the genuineness of their enjoyment. There's more of solid heart and honesty in Rockaway in a minute than in Newport in a season.

NO DRINKING IN BEDROOMS HERE.

Being a hearty place, there is more or less drinking there; less among the women, and more than less by the men. And when the ladies want to drink there is no concealment about it. They drink on the piazzas, the verandas outside the barrooms, and in the parlors, and some of them can give points to a bartender with regard to mixing spirits.

“Tell John,” you’ll hear a rosy, robust woman say to a waiter, “that he made my husband’s punch of Jamaica yesterday, and he likes it of Jamaica and Santa Cruz, half and half; and when you bring my ‘sour,’ leave a little more lemon in it, and less sugar and ice.”



A COSEY BE-SIDE HOUSE.

Why, we cannot give you a clearer idea of how natural and free the life is at these cozy hotels than by recording the fact that every day when the proprietor of the best and biggest house went out into the roadway to walk about his property, his son caught hold of his coat tails, his daughter dragged on the boy’s jacket, and sometimes the dog caught the little girl’s skirts in his mouth, and so they went along like a comet and its tail.



CRABBING IN THE BAY.

And when the girls go crabbing they know that it's no harm to tuck their dresses and petticoats up, to walk through the shallow water where the crabs lie; better that than spoil their clothes, you know. The men are the mightiest fishers, though. Rockaway Beach and Jamaica Bay, behind it, are the favorite fields of those thousands in New York who, no matter if they are as poor as Job, or busy as bees in June, can always find a day or two in the week for casting a line for fish. The iron pier at Rockaway is rented out to these folk at ten cents a head, and the wharves and boats in the bay are full of them. Just now they are getting fine messes of fluke and kingfish, snappers, weakfish, and bass.



MINSTRELRY FREE, AS OF OLD.

Rockaway is mainly an excursion place to which city folks escape for a day in the heated term, and a very curious thing about it is that thousands upon thousands who go there do not spend ten minutes in the place. On any afternoon while the last boat from New York disgorges its vast load at one wharf and the next to the last boat from the beach is lying at the next wharf ready to steam away, you may see two-thirds of the new arrivals walk to the departing boat, a block to the eastward, and prepare to enjoy the sail home again. Nobody minds this loss at Rockaway, for at that time the beach is certain to be crowded. A very picturesque scene is presented at this time. The merry-go-rounds are whirling, the museum men are shouting, the free minstrels are singing, the men with the balls to throw at the dolls, and those with the rings to toss at the canes, and all the other caterers, peddlers, fakirs, showmen, bathmen, and musicians are up to their chins in business. This reads like a description of affairs at Coney Island, but somehow Rockaway is very unlike Coney Island. Coney Island is for sightseers, countrymen, people bent on spreeing, and those who want excitement. Rockaway is the resort of the plain people seeking modest recreation. It is preeminently the place to which mothers go to give their children fresh air; and, by the way, if some of those essayists who fear that men are failing in duty by remaining single and that women are growing derelict in the matter of child bearing will spend a day at

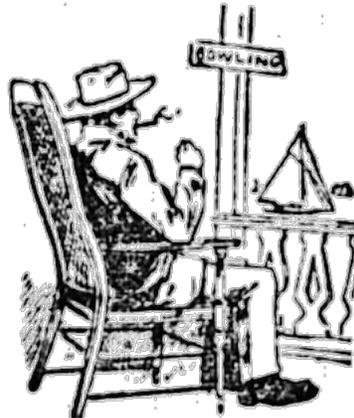
Rockaway, the sight will be as balm to the wounded. In any 200 feet on Seaside avenue one may be certain to find at least one mother with babes enough to stock a village.



THE WAY THE WOMEN BATH.

They bring their luncheons in baskets, and all along the roadways they find groves of stunted cedars or platforms furnished with chairs and tables, heralding on signboards the news of "Tables free," "Groves and tables free," "Tables and seats free." The proprietors make a profit by selling beer and soft drinks to the people with the baskets. There is no place where bathing is so popular as here. The water fairly swarms with bathers all day long. At every other place there are certain hours for bathing, but here the folks bathe when they get here, whenever it may be. The suits the bathmen distribute to their patrons are odious to the sight. The skirts barely cover the loins of the women, and then, as if to do too tardy homage to modesty, the breeches legs reach to the calves of their limbs. Innumerable lines stretched upon iron frames in the water are hung with dangling ends of rope for the bathers to cling, by so that the sea looks somewhat like the upper regions of a toy theatre filled with pendant strings whereby to move the marionettes. The women cling to the ropes and the men frolic by themselves. The edge of the water is sprinkled with children whose parents buy no suits for them, but send them in with skirts looped up, with undershirts and drawers on, or in trunks. They dress and undress their charges publicly on the sand; and oh, how much good the water and the cool air do to the little ones, many of whom are wan and weak, with puny limbs, and ribs that can be counted through their skins.

Rockaway is a great sanitarium, where health is gained as well as pleasure, and its benefits are within the reach of all.



UNCLE JIM REMSEN.

Uncle Jim Remsen is a famous character there. One day, thirty-one years ago, when he was a tavern keeper in Jamaica, Judge Fordyce invited him to attend a foreclosure sale at Merrick, He went and bought a good part of Rockaway Beach for \$3,025. He and his partner, William Wainwright, own most of it yet. Wainwright's leap to wealth is almost as surprising, for in 1856 he was selling THE SUN in Williamsburgh. He went to the Assembly, persevered, and made himself well-to-do before he became one of the lords of this beach. Uncle Jim is very popular, and a little too good natured. He has as many courtiers as a king, who follow him about with flattery and adulation, hoping to profit by his friendship. It is doubtful whether they can ever get further into the shrewd old countryman's pocket than the price of a drink.

"Is he very rich?" we asked of a tradesman on the beach.

"Rich?" he retorted. "Well, look a-here. He don't sell nothing; he only rents these places. He gets \$4,500 a season for that dancing pavilion, \$300 for that strip those awnings are on, \$125 for the land under that popcorn stand, \$570 for the site of that corner stall, and \$150 for the place where the mermaid's tent is. That tiny barber shop rents for \$150, and if you want to put up a hammer-striking-try-your-strength-machine on eight square feet of sand it's \$75 a season."

FAR ROCKAWAY'S OLD FASHIONS.

Everyone who has been there knows what the first morning sounds are at a seaside hotel. The sun's coming seems to create racket and confusion. There are the rattle of crockery and jargon of servants' voices from the back of the house, and within doors, boarders are slamming doors and rattling keys, and porters

are pounding to awaken death-like sleepers and thundering along the halls with trunks. This is so at all places except Far Rockaway. There the only noise is the bustle of nature leaping into another day at the stirring touch of dawn. There, a myriad birds carol in the trees, the hum of insect life in the grass and trees weights the air, cows are lowing, hens are cackling, and in the distance, softened and made poetical, is heard the “snack-snack-snackle” of the blocks and rigging by which the great sails of the ferry sloops on the inlet are being lifted into the enlivening breeze.

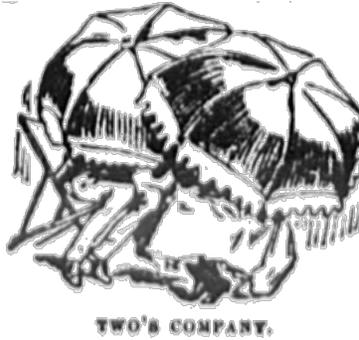


THE INLET, FAR ROCKAWAY.

Marvelous as this is when found at the very gates of New York, it is only of a piece with all else at the hotels at this place, for this is a Simon-pure, honest, old-fashioned resort, so old that our fathers came here when they were boys, and yet we may bring our boys here and let them fare precisely as their grandfathers did; no, not precisely, for THE SUN the present newsman sells to the boarders is a million fold better paper than THE SUN of that earlier day, and yesterday we heard an Irish lass singing about

A telegram from distant lands,

which, of course, is a thing our grandmothers would not have alluded to in their ballads. Then, again, the hall maid told us not to be afraid of fire, “for,” said she, “there are fire distinguishers on every floor,” and the head waiter said he could recommend the “Chatter Margaret” for dinner, and promptly brought the *Chateau Margaux*—two incidents of the present and not preceded in our grandfathers’ day.



THE SUN's tourists reached here at supper time last Saturday. They found the principal hotel, a great white house, rising from a soft lawn amid the shade of great trees, looking for all the world like a Shaker "family house," with green shutters on it to make it gay and a wide piazza to offer worldly luxury and idle ease. The sleek proprietor, with the white vest and oiled hair, sticks to his arm chair, but a clerk takes down a room key from the great white-painted board all speckled with black numerals, and says:

"Ye'll find a light on the table at the far end o' the hall. No, sir; it'll not be a ker'sene lamp, sir; they're not safe. It is a hotel candle that ye'll find there."

In the dining room supper is almost over. Take note of your experience at this meal, for thus our grandparents lived and were as happy and as healthy as we, to say the least. The room is big and dreary white, with a bare board floor and bare white walls. From the bare white ceilings depend a dozen kerosene lamps. Twenty or two dozen tables wear white cloths, and each bears a pewter cruet stand and heavy stoneware dishes. Young girls in limp calico flit among the tables. One of them comes to your side.

"We have cold ham, cold corned beef, tea or milk, hot biscuit, cheese, currants and mixed cakes," she says.

It's a revelation. It's like having a curtain lifted between one's present and past. You see some of the young fellows at other tables slyly pinching the arms of the pretty waiters. Unquestionably they are surprised, like yourself, and are doing so to see whether they are awake or dreaming. You ask for a butter plate, and get it in a moment, accompanied by the remark, "You're the only one that uses them, sir."

You reach forward with the delight of a grown man who grasps the well bucket he drank from in childhood, and, pulling the plate of cakes toward you, try to decide which of the old memories of the palate you will revive—whether the one the [...]bles will recall, or that of the round heart-[...] ones sure to be summoned by the taste of the ginger snaps or the sugar kisses. But before you decide you are startled by hearing the cheery-looking man of 30 at the next table say to his waiter girl: “Molly, get Katie and Susie, and take a sail or a ride with me to-morrow evening.”

“You are very kind, sir,” the girl replies; “but the gentleman at the table beyond have invited all of us girls to go sailing to-morrow night. Next night after I’ll get Susie and Katie for an evening with you, sir.”

Why, it’s all as old as the “Sentimental Journey,” and as innocent as that chronicle pretends to be. There are two or three just such hotels here, and yet outside of this place there is not another hostelry so quaint and old-fashioned on the whole seaboard, excepting at the Highlands of Neversink, where there are two delightful counterparts to these. It is said that they were there when Columbus discovered the continent.



FAR ROCKAWAY'S BATHING BEACH.

When you want a pitcher of ice water you are told that you must either climb down three stories to the office or “go out in the hall and holler.” You put on your neatly fitting summer suit and high white collar and patent leather shoes and salmon-colored kid gloves and discover that all the other men are wearing flannel shirts and seersucker coats or no coats at all. Some buxom women are

playing at billiards in the barroom, and the bartender advises you to get the weights at the office and go out and play shuffleboard in the arbor-like lattice-work house on the lawn. But all the life centers at the barroom. It is big and glittering and busy. It is more modern and complete than any other feature of the place. Most of the energy and interest of the proprietor is bent upon making it attractive. At the Rockaways the test of a place is the kind of a barroom it has; but it grieves us to say that the liquors are not the best, and the cigars are so vile that for fifteen cents one can get only a tenement-made five-cent smoke, with a gold and blue collar around it. "Headlights" and "Hoboken fumas" the politicians call them.

Both the Rockaways are famous places for seeing politicians; and you can tell a group of them as far as you can see them, they are usually so sleek and fat and well kept, and dress so closely to the verge of ostentatious display. They always wear high hats, whether black or white, and if fortune has been kind they carry diamonds. They make a fine show, and will always sell for about what they cost. At the seaside they do what most folks would think they might as well do at home, drink champagne in public and play cards in the bedrooms. They gravitate together like ducks, so that if four of them come to a place by four different routes, and not one knows of the presence of any of the others, you will find them all together half an hour later. As a rule, they try to be very dignified, but their ideas as to the nature of dignity are very odd. They consider it a blending of ostentation and contentment, and, keeping always in mind the fact that they are public characters and must be careful in their behavior, they come naturally to the conclusion reached by every other sort of egotist—*i.e.*, that everyone is watching them and that they must make as much display as possible, so that at Far Rockaway they ride on open carriages to places reached by five-cent or ten-cent hacks, hire for themselves the entire use of one of the ferryboats, in which the fare would otherwise be five cents each, set up champagne because only ordinary persons drink beer, and pose upon the verandas for public inspection in the intervals between their other exploits.

They are usually full of wit, but their humor often takes the form of sarcasm and their conversations are word-jousts and sometimes duels.

"Hello, O'Brien," we once heard James Oliver say to John J. O'Brien, when the two met in Albany. "I hardly knew you, you look so strange in a clean shirt."

“I have another I’ll lend you,” said O’Brien. “How did you get so far from the Bowery, swim or walk?”

“Never mind,” said Oliver; “but you’ll go part of the way back with less trouble. Warden Brush is here, and he’ll take you free as far as Sing Sing.”

That *rara avis*, a modest politician, spent last week at the United States Hotel, Far Rockaway. This was Senator F. Reilly of the Sixth or shipyard district, who abolished the tax on the engineers, put through the gas bill that bears his name, and arranged for an evening high school on the east side. He was seen to pay a five-cent fare in a ferryboat, and to buy lager beer when he was thirsty.

“I’ve been coming here for years,” said he; “for three seasons; it’s a cheap place, and a nice one at the same time; many of the people of my district come here, and there’s nothing ‘stuck up’ about the people here.”

GIRLS AND WAVES AND BREEZES.



TEACHING HER TO FLOAT.

But all this time we are kept away from the sea and the bathing and the girls. Such girls, too! You can see for yourself what rugged health they boast, and how fitted they are to become the wives of future summers, for their mothers at the hotels, boarding houses, and cottages almost all have large families of children, and are as devoted to them as hens are to their little broods. And even if they have seven or ten little ones they still are the jolliest, stoutest, most companionable of souls, ever ready to trip through a waltz, plunge into the

waves, join the men at their beer, or take a lively part in whatever is going forward. And nowhere else on the coast will you see husbands more fond and proud of their helpmeets than at the Rockaways. It does not matter if they are so big that they look like the three-deckers of old in the water, or if they are homely, or what they are, they have their silks and heavy jewelry, and you will see their husbands sitting on the piazzas or the beach with an arm around their waists, as proud of their partners as may be.

But look toward the sea; what a fluttering of flags and banners and sails and skirts and ribbons and drying bath clothes and streamers and awnings! Everything is throbbing with the breeze, everything is beckoning the landmen and women to the bathing. The beach is not at the edge of the land, as it is at most places, and used to be here twenty odd years ago, but it is beyond the first water, and is formed by a reef thrown up at that time a quarter of a mile off the coast. Nature is giving all Long Island this outer reef. She works slowly. She finished the job for the other places some time ago, and now she is building a big reef for Rockaway and Coney Island. If you want to see how Coney Island will be in ten or twelve years, go to Far Rockaway and look. It's a good thing for any place, for once the salt breakers and spray cease to beat upon the land soil begins to form, and trees and grass ensue.

Down by the waterside are little long-legged wharfs, and at the end of these are strong, large sloops, the size of oyster boats, to carry you to the beach. What lucky boats! What favored skippers. To every man twenty women and girls go over in them, smiling, laughing, airing their pretty clothes, wielding their dainty charms that slay and enslave men's hearts, singing their merry songs until the water resounds with melody. Often, they are in their bathing suits, having donned them for the still water bathing in the inlet, then changed their minds and started for the surf. How charming they are in this free and easy attire with their shapely arms, bare and brown, and their tiny skirts revealing limbs as good as those poor Actaeon was punished for gazing at. Ah, you vain and stiff-necked ones at Long Branch and the other haunts of fashion, sitting in your half-acre parlors or stiff in your silks at the music on the piazzas, you think yourselves better than these at Rockaway, but you never have such sport, such chances to show off beauties that your money cannot purchase, or such absolute rest and freedom from the restraints of city etiquette as these at Rockaway who would not leave the people and the people's beach for all the pride and glitter of your starched existence.



ON A FERRYBOAT.

Five cents is the fare we pay. There is a moment of scurrying, of calls of "Hurry up, Mary Ann," and "Lizzie Carley, you'll never find your manners, jumping off the dock with your skirts at your knees," and then the nose of the boat is pushed from the piling, the sheet and block shoot across the traveler at the stern, the great sail bellies out, the boat cants over on her side, the skipper leans upon the rudder bar, the gentle waves lick the flying hull, the lovers steal an arm around the solid waists beside them, and away goes as happy and free-hearted a load of sovereign New Yorkers as ever turned a holiday into a fit of laughing.

Here and there in the boats are some very fashionable folks, for Far Rockaway shares its charms with all who come, and they are so great and so manifold that no sort of folks has been able to resist them. Right in the town is Wave Crest, a group of handsome villas rising out of a grand sweep of lawn upon the edge of the Inlet. Not far away is Lawrence, another settlement of rich folks, and close at hand is Cedarhurst, where all these model people assemble for the racing, and sometimes break the law forbidding gambling. You can tell them apart from the others because the men and women have more money to spend and are able to dress especially for whatever they do, so that they have separate

costumes for the beach, the boats, the churches, the evening walks, the afternoon drives, and all the rest, while your Far Rockaway hotel and boarding house folks have only their winter clothes and summer clothes, their every day and their Sunday suits—and good enough clothes they are for anybody. They look with curiosity on the tall and slender girls of Wave Crest, in their flashy striped skirts and odd Tam o' Shanter hats, but as they are modest and very pretty no one "passes remarks" about them, as is so often done with respect to the Wave Crest young men in coats of alternate bars of red and blue, in little English flannel caps, red raw seal shoes, and pipe clay trousers flapping upon pipe stem legs.

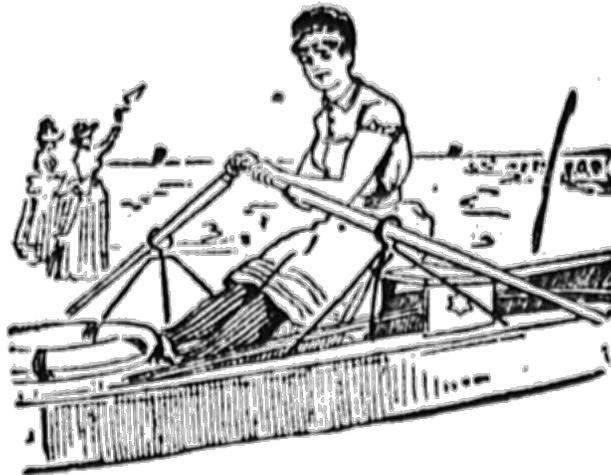
And now the fleet sloop, its cockpit crammed with pretty girls, and only here and there a man, is rubbing against the further wharf. The skipper, certain to be from Patehogue (a hustling, Yankee port upon Long Island), is holding the sloop and the wharf together, and the girls are making great steps from the dancing deck to the steadfast wharf. And now you'll see how our grandfathers used to bathe. No frills on this beach, no jigsaw bath houses and varnished rooms and nickel-plated shower spouts, and pretty rugs and mirrors, and dressing stands and chairs; nothing but plain shelter to undress behind—for modesty's sake—and bathing as fine as all the Creator's gifts are. Here, plump upon the dry and yielding sand, are planted rows of tatterdemalion, unpainted rough wooden boxes, each with a slit in the door to see through, a slit in the back for air and light, some rusty nails for clothes pegs, a pail to plunge your feet in (on the presumption that you would just as lief have the rest of your body sanded like a country tavern floor), a board knee high against one wall to sit on, and all the rest furnished by the Lord, and paying a royal profit on the investment. The sand blows into the houses, and the sun blazes away upon them, but, heaven forefend that they be made any better than they are, for then other things will be changed, and where will the plain people go then?

A pretty girl at Rockaway goes to the bath office, and standing in line behind the fat politician who is shelling out a good watch and chain, a diamond stud, two sleeve buttons made of double eagles, and a great solitaire ring to be tied up in his handkerchief and shoved in a drawer for safekeeping, she pays a quarter and gets either a long-legged blue Rockaway suit or her private dress—quite apt to be constructed after the same pattern. She gets a pair of towels and descends from the platform to wade ankle deep in the sand for a block or a block and a half to the bath houses. She undresses speedily to escape suffocation, and then trudges barefooted or in stocking feet over the long stretch of burning

sand to the water. Few stockings are worn, because most of the breeches reach halfway from the knees to the ankles, and she does not get her face tanned because the women here nearly all wear the most abominable homely big yellow straw hats, whose rims turn down so that the things look for all the world like old waterlogged peach baskets. In the water they are washed off, and the beach for a mile away from the bathing places is dotted with them.

ALL DESCENDANTS OF ADAM.

There is one feature at Far Rockaway that is simply amazing to a person who is familiar with the other resorts and not with this one. That is the democratic character of the place.



TRYING A CATAMARAN ON LAND

“Some persons put on airs and hold aloof from others,” we heard a young woman exclaim at sight of a dudine from Wave Crest; “but it’s not my way to feel like that. ‘We all date back to Adam’ is my motto.” You need not have an introduction in order to speak to your neighbors. If you are a sober young man of decent manners and appearance and you find yourself beside a pretty girl in one of the flying ferry sloops, you need not hesitate to converse with her. Nineteen in twenty of the young women will be glad of the chance to be sociable and friendly. If you find yourself next to a woman in the water, married or single, ask her if the water is not delightful, whether she feels the cold streaks in it, if she can swim or not—anything appropriate—she will answer you. And if you are fortunate enough to be witty and light-hearted, you will leave a host of friends there though you land there an utter stranger. Now, there’s a point

for the young men who form such a host in New York, and who say they go to barrooms because they have no way of getting into any sort of society, and don't know any nice girls or people of any sort except where they work. Let them go to Far Rockaway and get acquainted with the whole-souled, honest, and often, well-to-do summerers there. They may pick up a wife, and if they do, we will almost warrant she will be sound and strong, and—if she's treated fairly—tender and true, in the bargain. But, for the sake of the girls, we trust they will not become wives to these fellows in too great a hurry. The Methodist plan of putting folks on probation is a good one, whether applied to professors of religion or of love.

Why, there was not a corset under a bathing suit on Far Rockaway beach on Sunday, Monday or Tuesday. There was no need of such contraptions either to produce good appearances, or reinforce debilitated backbones. There were here and there some limbs that a merry girl said had been "put on upside down," so thick were they at the ankles; and there were women of tremendous port, but there was no fraud or humbug or angularity or boniness to be seen, and for every criticisable creature a score of pretty dimpled misses were in sight.



Those long trousers the women wear at Rockaway are wretched things, especially as the skirts outside them are no longer than the skirts at other places. It's a shocking comparison, but recall to your mind the dresses that organ grinders put on their monkeys, and you have the Rockaway style to a dot. Some of the girls know that, and roll the legs of their trousers up to the knee, pinning them to hold them there. Then, with stockings on, they look quite pretty. Others won't have the old-fashioned things at all, but bring their private suits. These are so few that the bolder patterns cut a tremendous dash. There is something mysterious about the holes in the bath house doors, as the artist

has shown. A thousand women in street dress or in Rockaway suits may pass and repass a line of these bath houses, and not a sign of life within them will be seen, but let a pretty girl in a showy private dress, ending at the knees, chance along, and a masculine face will appear at every window where the men are at their toilets.



BEAUTY APPRECIATED.

The prettiest dress we saw was displayed on Sunday. It was of white flannel, very well fitted, particularly on the legs, and instead of sleeves, the plump young matron in it wore a white satin ribbon tied in a bow knot on the fleshiest part of each arm. She had on high black stockings, every inch of which was displayed from above her knees down to the high-heeled French slippers on her feet. Her skirt, which had two tucks at the bottom, was long by Narragansett Pier measure, but very short by any other standard, and on her proudly poised head she wore a stylish black cap of oiled silk.

A very different sensation than the one she created was that produced by a most unfortunate mishap to a fair bather on the same day. She was in one of the primitive bath houses and had just taken off the last garment preparatory to putting on her bath stockings and following that with her dress. Suddenly, as she was hanging up the last thing she had taken off, there was a whistle of wind, a glare of light, and the crash of her door against the next house. She had not

been able to fasten the door securely, and it blew open. She flattened herself against the wall behind the single board to which the door was hinged and instantly realized that she could neither cross her floor to reach her dress nor get a leverage on the door without stepping into the opening. So, she began to hammer the partition with her elbows, and to call to the occupant of the next house to shut her door for her. "It is wonderful how small you can make yourself," she added afterward. "I am certain I was not visible behind that single board, and yet it was not ten inches wide." A little girl was the first to pass that way, and she shut the door and released the woman from her predicament.



This is the only watering place we have visited where there is a drinking place right on the beach. Here, next door to the bath houses, is a pavilion with a bar and restaurant at one end, and if the men or the ladies stay in too long or get chilly or for any other reason want a drink they can have a glass of anything described in "The Barkeeper's Guide" at moderate prices. Beer is what the women are fondest of, and most of the married ones, as well as many wide awake single ones, stop at the pavilion and take a glass before returning to the hotels. In the evening they return, and enjoy milk punches or whiskey sours on the beach. It's about all there is to do, and it necessitates two trips across the inlet.



There is little or no rollicking in the water here, of the sort conspicuous at other places. The men are nearly all good swimmers, and go into deep water, while the ladies hang to the life ropes side by side in long lines like sparrows on the telegraph wires. The love making in bath dresses is confined to the sand, and one often sees the young folks paired off and walking far away from the crowd, or seated on the sand in such lonely places that when a waist is squeezed or a kiss is stolen no harm is done, since no one sees it.

But there are so many other and better places for love making at far Rockaway that if all the girls and boys knew of it, and could manage to get there, it would become the most crowded spot on the coast by next summer. It's a big village with many streets, and not one of them sufficiently lighted to prevent a man with ordinary sight on a dark evening plumping into an open gate at one place, colliding with a pair of lovers further on, and badly bruising a horse post on beyond. The consequence is that there are as many strolling couples of young folks in those streets as there should be lamp posts. And has it been noticed that whenever a person passes a pair of lovers who are cooing very softly, either by night or by day, the girl raises her voice, looks the passer-by in the eye, and remarks very slowly: "And—er—then, you know." It is a fact. It is a part of the freemasonry of the sex. They learn the device from one another in talking among themselves, for when something not to be heard by everybody is being told and an outsider approaches the narrator breaks the thread of her story with "And—er—then, you know." It's a very clever phrase. It betrays nothing, means nothing, interferes with nothing, costs no mental effort, and lasts just long enough to carry the intruder past and out of hearing.



ROCKAWAY STYLES.

But Far Rockaway has other charms for the young in the season of mating and flirting. Its beer saloons have dimly lighted covered parts or tables in the open air, under vines that screen the customers from public gaze. And then the boats, those with the covered cockpits, we mean. It is very dark in these cabins. Only the feet of the skipper on deck can be seen, and he cannot see in the cabin at all. It is no wonder the boats all do a rushing business. Far Rockaway Inlet at night is melodious with the voices of young girls in song and in laughter, and for every girl one hears be sure there is a young man, not making any melody, perhaps, but happy all the same.

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