

THE COLUMBIAN AND DEMOCRAT, BLOOMSBURG, COLUMBIA COUNTY, PA.

THE COLUMBIAN.



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BLOOMSBURG, PA.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1884.

A CLEVER BRIGAND.

The "Confidential Times" has a good story about a famous Italian brigand chief. He was, as usually is the case, fond of gay costumes, could sing good songs and relish good jokes, principally as are of a practical kind. A celebrated Italian physician who, not satisfied with the legitimate game of his profession, was a keen sportsman and an unerring shot, met an albergo near Milan and was very dissimilar from the signor with whom the Torinese counts became immediately acquainted. A conversation sprang up, in which bands and their proceedings were discussed, and the doctor, alluding with some natural pride to the position of his chief, said that he made no secret that one of them would cross his path. Armed with his trusty gun and pistol, he walked at large, and should like to see the man who would dare to molest him. Eventually, on and his new acquaintance—the noted brigand chief—got started from the inn first by half an hour. Proceeding, in the direction the doctor was to take, he broke off a branch from a chestnut tree, and fixing it in the middle of the road, suspended from its top a small lantern he carried with him. Presently the doctor saw a horse approaching with his driver, military style. On coming to a turn in the road he suddenly perceived the light, and halting, called out to know "who comes there?" A broad-shouldered chestnut branch, and the lantern moved.

"If you advance another step you are a dead man," cried the doctor.

The wind, however, took no notice of the threat, and the lantern continued to swing.

"If you don't answer I shall fire!" shouted the doctor; and, suiting the action to the word, he raised his gun, took aim, and—

"Basta!" said a voice to his ear, and he found himself pinioned by an iron grasp from behind. "You must not waste your powder," said the brigand, "because I want it, and I also require your trusty gun and pistols. And now?" he continued, relieved him of the articles in question, "you need not be alarmed, for I do not intend to shoot you, but I shall take away your arms and ammunition, as you do not seem to me to make a good use of them."

CUTTING GLASS WITH SCISSORS.

Many persons may not be aware that glass can be cut under water, with great ease, to almost any shape, by simply using a pair of shears or strong scissors.

Or to incise in successive points may be attended to—first and most important, the glass must be kept quite level in the water, while the scissors are applied; and, secondly, to avoid risk, it is better to begin the cutting by taking off small pieces at the corners and along the edges, to reduce the shape gradually to the required, for if any attempt is made to cut the glass to shape, as we would often do on a card-board, it will be most likely to break, just where it is not wanted. Some kinds of glass cut much better than others: the softer glass is the best for this purpose.

The scissors must not depend on the state of the edge presented to the glass.

During the Tudor period, with the exception of "still Christmas" 1525, King Henry was ill, the sacred season appears to have been regularly celebrated with joyous music, songs, and feasting.

After the Restoration, Christmas again exhibited a hearty, cheerful, and even joyful character.

But since the accession of the House of Hanover the festivities, which were formerly appropriate to the occasion, have much fallen off.

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NEVER DINE.

The London "Lancet" discusses the subject of rising at the end of sleep. Doing, it declares, is not admissible from any health point of view. The brain is the first asleep, and is followed by the active organs, and it is only perfect and natural when shared by all the several parts of the organism. All the parts of the system are not equally exhausted, and those least fatigued soonest wake, while those most exhausted are aroused with the greatest difficulty. The several parts of the organism should rest at the same time. To bring this about a person should "wake early and feed ready to rise; that fair and equal start of the sleepers should be secured, and a wise self-manager should not allow a drowsy sense of the consciousness, or weary sense, or an exhausted system to bequeath him into the folly of going to sleep again when once his consciousness has been aroused." The writer declares that a man who will not allow himself to doze, will, in a few days, find himself almost unconsciously an "early riser."

RAGS IN RUSSIA.

The rags which the Russian peasants wear have struck all travellers who have visited Russia. Sufficient to say that boots are considered as objects of luxury, and until now, in little Russia, the girl buys one pair of boots, and must wear them throughout her life. On Sunday, when she goes to church, she walks barefooted in the cold mud of the road, and only when she has arrived at the church she washes her feet in a pond of water, puts on her boots, and enters full dressed.

THE MAN MONKEY.

The gorilla are the terror of Africa. In the gorilla country no lion will live. They are man-haters, and kill them for the love of it, leaving the body, never eating them. When they spy a negro, they come down from a tree, hit him on the head with a club, which they wield with their claw hand, or carry him up into the trees, there to maul him. Their strength is so great that they will bend the barrel of a rifle. Only one live one was ever brought to England, and that soon died. Several have been shot, but they are tough customers, and the natives dread them more than any animal of the African forest. The gorilla makes a bed like a hammock, and swings in the trees. The gorilla is the sworn enemy of the elephant, because each derives its subsistence from the same source. When he sees an elephant pulling and wrenching down the branches of a favorite tree, the gorilla steals along the bough, strikes the sensitive proboscis of the elephant a violent blow with his club, and drives off the clumsy and startled giant, shrilly trumpeting his pain and rage through the jungles of the forest.

ANIMAL INSTINCT.

MERRY CHRISTMAS.

In every country in the civilized world, except in Scotland, perhaps the 23rd of December is a day of rejoicing and festivity; this is Scotland celebrate New Year's Day instead.

The first traces of the celebration of Christmas are found about the time of the Emperor Commodus (180-192 A. D.). In the reign of Diocletian (284-305), while that ruler was keeping court at Nicomedia, he learned that a number of Christians were assembled in the city to celebrate the birthday of the Founder of Christianity, and having ordered the church doors to be closed, he set fire to the buildings, and all the worshippers perished in the flames.

It does not appear, however, that there was any uniformity among the early churches in celebrating the Nativity; some held the festival in the month of April or May, others in January. It is nevertheless certain that the 25th of December cannot be the anniversary of the birth of Christ, for it is then the height of the rainy season in India, and shepherds could hardly be watching their flocks by night in the plains. The custom of celebrating the Nativity on the 25th of December we derive from the heathen who regarded the winter solstice as a most important point of the year, as the beginning of the renewed life and activity of the powers of nature and of the gods who were originally merely the symbolic personifications of these. At the winter solstice the Germans held their great Yule feast in commemoration of the return of the dry sun wheel, and believed that during the twelve nights preceding from the 23rd Dec. to the 25th January they could trace the personal movements and interferences on earth of their great deities, Odin, Thor, &c. The church sought to combat and banish this deeply-rooted heathen feeling by adding its grandly-dramatic representations of the Birth of Christ and the first events of his life. Hence sprang the so-called Manger-songs and a multitude of Christmas carols. Hence also originated, at a later period, the Christ-trees, or Christmas-trees, adorned with lights and gifts, the customs of reciprocal presents, and of special Christmas meats and dishes, such as Christmas rolls, cakes, dumplings, &c. Thus Christmas became a universal social festival for young and old, high and low, as no other festival could have done.

It is related that Lord Coleridge sprang into eminence as a lawyer by accidentally seizing a simple incident while he was pleading the cause of a man on trial for murder. In the course of his long argument a candle in the jury box flickered and went out, leaving the court room in darkness. He stopped speaking, and the silence in court for a moment was oppressive. The scene with dark shadows, its grim faces, the scarlet robes of the judge, and the haggard face of the murderer was worthy of Rembrandt. The usher replaced the light, and Coleridge resumed his address: "Gentlemen of the jury, you have a solemn duty, a very solemn duty, to discharge. The life of the prisoner at the bar is in your hands. You can take it by a word. You can extinguish that life as the candle by your side was extinguished a moment ago. But it is not in your power, it is not in the power of any of us—or any one in this court or out of it—to restore the life when once taken, as that light has been restored."

The tone in which the words were spoken, the cadence of the voice and the action of the orator, with the inspiration of the scene and the hour, produced a thrilling effect. The jury acquitted the prisoner, and Mr. Coleridge's fortune was made. He was never without a brief after that.

THE FIRST BANK.

It is one of the most remarkable of phenomena that the first bank ever established won a success unequalled in later times. The Bank of Venice had its glass broken twice from the scissors in small pieces in a straight line with the blades. This method of cutting glass is often used, when a diamond is to be avoided, to avoid risk, it is better to begin the cutting by taking off small pieces at the corners and along the edges, to reduce the shape gradually to the required, for if any attempt is made to cut the glass to shape, as we would often do on a card-board, it will be most likely to break, just where it is not wanted. Some kinds of glass cut much better than others: the softer glass is the best for this purpose.

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FEMALE INVENTORS.

The inventions made by women have not been very numerous, and they have generally been in a direction one would least expect. But since women were the inventors of the deep-sea telescope, the horse-shoe, a machine for separating the cotton from the seeds, one for the weaving of silk, and a life boat such as that recently exhibited at the Fisheries Exhibition, which it is impossible to swamp, it is not surprising that the metal trade a woman should have perfected an invention which has no doubt a great future before it, and which has earned for her in addition to the numerous medals mentioned, the first laureate crown ever offered to one of her sex by the Central Society of French Architects in Paris.

Search others for their virtues, and thyself for thy vices.

NEGOTIABLE NOTE.

Any person who comes into possession of a negotiable security of this class for without notice of its loss and in good faith can collect it of the maker, whether it was lost or stolen.

Publishing a notice will do no good unless the buyer sees it, and stopping its payment at the bank will not help the matter any.

Of course if the loss is widely advertised in papers that circulate in business circles, it makes it more difficult for the holder to establish his title, and the presumption of good faith in the purchase is not as easily assumed.

POSTAGE STAMPS.

Making postage stamps is an elaborate piece of work. In printing, steel plates are used, on which 200 stamps are engraved. Two men are kept at work covering them with colored ink and passing them to a man and girl who are equally busy printing them with large rolling hand presses. Three of these small squares are employed all the time. After the small sheets of paper upon which the 200 stamps are engraved are dried enough, they are sent into another room and gummed. The gum used for this purpose is a peculiar composition, made of the pulps of dried potatoes and other vegetables mixed with water. After having been again dried, this time on the little racks which are fanned by steam power, for about an hour, they are put in between sheets of pasteboard and pressed in hydraulic presses capable of applying a weight of 2,000 tons. The next thing to do is to cut the sheet in half; each sheet, of course, when cut, contains a hundred stamps. This is done by a grid, with a large pair of shears, cutting by hand according to the size of each stamp.

Why isn't a turkey like a girl? Because a dressed girl will walk about and a dressed turkey won't. And vice versa.

The orator who gets "drawn" didn't think he cut a pretty figure. What is stranger in death than life? An old yellow-legged hen.

When the types are made to say that the world is the mobious work of God, it is time to throw glass bombs into the composing-room.

A tortoise man waited until he was eighty-three years old before he got married. That's like running three miles to get a good shirt for a fourteen-inch jump.

ABSENCE OF MIND IN DETROIT.

YESTERDAY.

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