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NEW ORLEANS.

A Letter From a Bloomsburg Lady Residing in the South—Mardi Gras the Event of New Orleans.

A Visit to New Orleans Not Complete Until You Have Seen it During the Carnival Season.

Just as the Columbia County Fair marks an epoch in the history of Bloomsburg, so is Mardi Gras the event of New Orleans. It is true that a visitor to the south has not completed his visit until he has seen New Orleans during the Carnival season.

Mardi Gras is the French expression for "Fat Tuesday" and always occurs the Tuesday before the beginning of Lent. It corresponds, in date with the Eastern "Pancake Day." This is the close of the winter festivities and a special effort is made to have the grand finale.

In former years the young people would mask, dress in fantastic costumes and go around the streets throwing flour, playing jokes of various kinds and disturbing things generally. Because of some damages and trouble which followed the celebration of the day, the citizens of New Orleans decided that it would be best to have some system about it, consequently about 1878 an organization was formed of the business men. A king or Rex was appointed to preside over the festivities and a parade and ball were planned. On the Monday before Mardi Gras the king goes out of the city to the mouth of the river, where he is met by a yacht which brings him to the city wharf. There is deep mystery about it all. The children suppose that like Santa Claus, Rex comes from far off, and to carry out the delusion a wagon full of trunks follows him when he enters the city. He, with all his followers, is masked. He is met at the wharf by the different military organizations of the city, bands and many prominent citizens, who escort him to the City Hall where the mayor gives him the keys and the full charge of the city. From that time until the ending of the next day, New Orleans entirely surrenders herself to pleasure.

On the morning of Mardi Gras, Rex has a grand procession consisting of about twenty large floats. In front comes the Boeuf Gras or fat beef, a sign of feasting. Following this is Rex float, on which is seated Rex, handsomely attired in royal robes. The subject car follows Rex. Each year some subject is taken such as "Tales of Childhood," "King Arthur's Court," "The Golden Age," or "Human Passions." Illustrations of the subject come next in order. For example, the subject of Rex parade this year was Terpsichore, or the muse of the dance. The floats represented the Maypole Dance, in which gaily dressed figures danced around a tall ribbon bedecked pole. Dance of the Snowflakes, where snow covered figures danced through a snowy forest; Dance of the mosquitoes—which appealed to a southern heart, for the kingdom of those musical insects is certainly along the banks of the Mississippi; the Minuet; Bacchanalian Dance, etc. The figures on the floats are usually masked members of the organization. As they pass they throw "favors" of candy, paper ribbon etc., and to some special favorite they may throw a large bouquet, but unless the young lady is well skilled in the art of guessing she may never know the donor. At night Rex gives a grand ball, where he is joined by his queen—some society belle.

Since the organization of Rex, various others have been formed. There are now five organizations which parade—Rex, Proteus, Comus, Nerus and Momus. These parades extend over a period of five or six days, known as "The Carnival." The cost of a parade and ball are about twenty or thirty thousand dollars.

To a person entering New Orleans on Mardi Gras the sight is bewildering. All the buildings are festooned with the Rex colors—green, orange and purple, and from the coat of every one flutters a bow of the same colors. Masked boys in brilliantly colored costumes are seen here and there through the crowd, and that crowd! Every spot on the pavement is filled and even out in the street, although

New Orleans crowds are not disagreeable ones—there is very little jostling and pushing, people are not in a hurry; then at night the buildings are brilliantly decorated with hundreds of incandescent lights and one thinks that the city is a dream of loveliness, especially after looking at one of the night processions. Should one remain in the city for any length of time he will still consider it a beautiful quaint old city, for it is built on an entirely different plan from northern cities. Instead of the rows and rows of brick houses, where it is a wonder one does not lose his own residence, there are streets of separate little houses—neat and pretty with a little yard around each. The residence street of the city is St. Charles Avenue where there is one succession of beautiful homes.

New Orleans is really two cities—American and French. The dividing line is Canal street, the business street of the city. Upon crossing that street from the American city one finds a new country—even the names of the streets change and they become very narrow. One's visit is not complete unless he spend a day or two exploring the quaint little houses, painted in some delicate color, with shutters to both doors and windows, the curious people and historical buildings. Some of the interesting spots are French Market, where one may see all nationalities and get a cup of delicious Creole coffee; St. Louis Cathedral, the oldest church of any size, the materials of which were brought from England and the place to which Andrew Jackson's army repaired before the battle of January eighth, 1815; St. Roch's Chapel, where one goes to request a special favor—this is the girls' favorite resort and they say if the wish is for a husband it is granted; Ursuline Convent a very old school founded by the first nuns who came to Louisiana; and so it goes on with duelling grounds, prisons etc.; but the crooked streets, which have no twinges of conscience at turning several corners, the dark little Creole children, the two wheeled mule carts and the dirt, which is everywhere, leave a deeper impression on one than the historic spots.

New Orleans was formerly a swamp and even now the children have real wells in their play by digging down a foot or two. For this reason it is very difficult to build a massive building, for they sometimes sink as much as a half or whole story. For the same reason, there is no underground burying, except by the Jews, but the cemeteries are filled with beautiful vaults, those who cannot afford vaults are buried in "ovens," which are really openings in a stone wall.

To find pretty girls, courtesy, hospitality, delicious cooking, French customs and charity towards all, New Orleans is the city to visit, though a northern person will find that there is still a great deal of feeling on that subject which almost broke our union. In one of Irvin Russell's poems the negro expresses this feeling admirably.

"Dem folks in de Norf is de heaviest lot I
Wid all de brass buttons and fixin's dey got—
You needn't tote me! dey all dresses in
blues;
I seed 'em de time 'at Grant's army come
froo.
Dey libs up de country whar ellyphant
grows,
Somewhar 'bout de head ob de ribber, I
s'pose;
Whar snow keeps a drappin, spring, winter,
an' fall,
And summer time don't nebber git dar at all.
Dey puts up supplies for us Christas to eat,
De whiskey, de flour, de meal, and de
meat;
Dey's drefle big feeling, and makes a great
fuss,
But dey can't get along widout wukin' for us,
I wouldn't be dem, not fur all you ch'd gib;
Dey nebber taste 'possum as ign'ani can be
Dey w'd 't know gumbo, ef put in dey
mout—
Why don't dey sell out an' come to de Souf?
But laws! dey's ign'ant as ign'ani can be
An' ain't got de 'presence ob min' fur to see
Dat ol' Marassippi's jes ober de fence.
Dat runs aroun' hebben's sarcunfermyence!"

Another home has been rendered sad and gloomy by a visitation of the pale charger. Bertha Albertson, aged nearly nineteen years, a daughter of her parents, at the Rohrsburg Hotel, Friday morning. The deceased was a very promising young lady, highly esteemed, and admired by all who knew her, and why she should be called away so early in life, is beyond comprehension of man. The funeral took place on Sunday, with interment in the Rohrsburg cemetery.

C. W. Eckman, of Millville, agent for cream separators, has been promoted. He will have his headquarters at Sunbury hereafter, and will have seventeen counties as his territory, with several sub-agents under him.

FOREST FIRES

Raging All Over the State—Valuable Lumber Lands Being Destroyed—Losses Almost Inestimable.

In Many Sections People Are Compelled to Fight the Destructive Element in Order to Save Their Homes.

Fires, the most disastrous which have visited the forests of Pennsylvania, for many years, are raging all over the mountains, and timbered hills, and on the level too, in every section of the State. The Catawissa mountain on the south side has been burning fiercely since Saturday, and the loss will be heavy.

From a subscriber at Shickshinny we are informed that the flames on the hills thereabouts are spreading rapidly and property to the value of thousands of dollars is being consumed.

Forest fires are menacing valuable property near South Williamsport and a large force of men are working to prevent the spread of the flames. The Sulphur Springs Hotel is in danger. The town of Waterville, twenty-five miles northwest of Williamsport, is surrounded by fires.

The mountain fire near Hamburg, raging nearly a week is still unextinguished. After traversing over the entire mountain side for a distance of twelve miles it is now approaching a gap in which the village of Port Clinton is located.

For the last few days the forest fires have been very destructive, and are spreading very rapidly on every mountain in Center county, although hundreds of men have been out fighting, night and day. The towns of Lemont at the end of Nuttany Mountain, and Scotia, in the lower barrens, are in great danger. The entire territory of the Nuttany Rod and Gun preserves is threatened. On the Seven Mountains, between Potter's Mills and Milroy, there is nothing but one sheet of flames, and thus all travel and communication have been cut off.

Forest fires are raging all around Lewisburg. The town is full of smoke. Twenty men, who were fighting a fire below town, were hemmed in by the flames Tuesday night and had to fight their way out. A hundred men fought the flames in Lewis township all day Wednesday, in order to save the large Orwig mill. Frank Nogle, a Lewisburg jeweler, who was on a fishing expedition, had a hair-raising experience, being compelled to drive for his life through the flames. Much valuable timber and many fences and small buildings have been burned.

The fire on the mountains of Monroe and Pike county is of extensive proportions. Fifty men spent Sunday fighting the flames near Egypt Mills, where they destroyed the Broadhead tract of timber. It is thought the flames were started by some person carelessly dropping a lighted match. Forest fires crept within ten feet of Cresmont Inn, the new hotel being erected at Eaglesmere at a cost of \$50,000. The popular resort is surrounded by fire. A large force of men are carrying water from the lake to save the buildings.

Forest fires were started on the mountain, near Bear Creek, Luzerne County, by incendiaries. Albert Lewis, who owns valuable timberlands in the vicinity, put a large force of men to work, and the fire was finally extinguished. Mr. Lewis offers a reward of \$300 for the arrest of the incendiaries.

A Worthy Promotion.

General Superintendent I. A. Sweigard, of the Philadelphia & Reading Railway Company, has appointed John S. Gilbert as Chief Clerk of his department. The appointment fills the vacancy caused by the death of the late Charles J. McDougall. Mr. Gilbert entered the Reading service in 1882 in the Division Engineer's office in Catawissa, and in 1889 left the Catawissa Division Superintendent's office to take up the work of assistant to the Chief Clerk in the General Superintendent's office in this city.—Philadelphia Telegraph.

Mr. Gilbert's many friends in Bloomsburg, are glad to hear of his promotion, and wish him continued prosperity.

FOUND DEAD IN BED.

William Giger, who for many years past has conducted what is known as the Railroad House, located at the corner of East and Sixth streets, this town, was found dead in bed Tuesday morning. He retired at his usual time, about half past ten Monday night, without making any complaint of feeling unwell. It had been his wont for years past to be first up in the morning. Tuesday morning, however, he was not heard to arise, and his brother, thinking that he had overslept himself, went upstairs to awaken him. He opened the door and discovered his lifeless body lying in a natural position on the bed. To all appearances there had been no suffering.

William Giger, had he lived 'till the coming July, would have been sixty-four years of age. He was born July 15th, 1831, and has resided in Bloomsburg for nearly thirty years. He leaves to survive a wife and nine children, all of whom reside here, with the exception of Mrs. Peter Kehoe, who is living in Wilkes-Barre.

The funeral services will be conducted at the house to-morrow (Friday) morning, at ten o'clock, and will be in charge of Rev. J. D. Thomas, of the Reformed Church.

Brennan—Gain.

The first wedding celebrated in St. Ignatius' Church, Centralia, since the passing of Lenten season, was consummated Monday morning, when Mr. John Brennan, a prominent Mt. Carmel young man, led Miss Annie Cain, a popular young lady of Centralia, to Hymen's altar, and there took the vow which made them forever one. Rev. T. W. Hayes officiated, and the ceremony took place at seven o'clock, many friends of the contracting parties being present. After the ceremony a reception was held at the bride's home and the day and evening was merrily whiled away. The bride received many valuable and useful presents.

Governor William A. Stone and a party, including Auditor General McCauley, Dr. J. T. Rothrock, State Forestry Commissioner, and Mr. E. C. Gerwig, Secretary to the Governor, arrived in Bloomsburg on a fishing expedition, on the 2:30 train Monday afternoon. They immediately boarded the B. & S. train for Jamison City, and from there will go to Colonel R. B. Rickett's place, at Ganoga Lake. The party will whip the famous streams in that region for several days. The party was joined here by A. Z. Schoch, Joseph Ratti, L. E. Waller, Samuel Wigfall, Capt. H. J. Conner, C. W. McKelvy, and James C. Brown. The train which conveyed them to Jamison City was a special and was in charge of Superintendent, D. W. Campbell. Returning the Bloomsburg contingent stopped off at Orangeville and partook of the hospitality of Landlord F. L. Ricketts.

Druggist Armstrong has just placed a fine glass counter and show case in his drug store on Broadway, which is not only a thing of beauty, but a great convenience, both to the store and the customer. The soda fountain is now in full blast and dispenses the most delicious ice cream sodas in town.—Milton Standard.

Mr. Armstrong is a Bloomsburg boy and conducted James H. Mercer's drug store during the life of the latter's commission as postmaster—from 1892 to 1896.

Work on the Montour-Columbia Electric Railroad, which will connect Danville, Riverside, Bloomsburg, Espy, Berwick and Nescopeck, will begin shortly. The surveys have been made and bids for its construction are being invited. Messrs. B. F. Meyers, Ellis F. Mumma and M. F. D. Scanlan, of this city, are largely interested in the road.—Harrisburg Telegraph.

It was reported on the street Saturday evening that a serious accident had occurred at Rupert, and that Calvin Demott, of near Eversgrove, had been killed. The rumor proved false. The story was wholly unjustifiable, as there wasn't a sign of an accident.

F. D. Dentler increased his lead for the prize offered by the Wheelmen, at the party at the Club House Tuesday night, winning 17 out of a possible 22 games.

William B. Taylor has sold his bottling works to William H. Gilmore. The purchaser has already taken charge.



Good Dressers

You will not see any men dressed as well as the men who wear Hart, Schaffner & Marx suits and top coats. The nobby style and neat fit of these clothes recommend them to every man who knows what good clothes are and who likes to wear the best.



They're the kind advertised in the leading magazines and worn by good dressers everywhere.

GOOD CLOTHES GAIN PRESTIGE

Everywhere. "You'll take into consideration your spring looks" at once if you've that enviable characteristic "up-to-dateness."

BEN. GIDDING.

Come in and see us—we'll treat you right.

The Leader Department Store.

Springs.

Before the advance in prices we placed an order for springs. This was nearly a year ago. They are all in—150 of them—and we are willing to give you the benefit of our early buying. The sizes are 4x4 ft., and 4x6 ft., full length. In fact, size to fit any bed.

Our special leader is a full-sized spring, woven wire top, \$2.20. It would be cheap at \$2.75. We can give you a coiled spring, full size, for \$2.50. Higher prices for better goods.

Mattresses.

We are sorry to say that we have a larger stock of mattresses than any other store in town.

We can hardly understand how it was done. We placed an order for 150 and received 300. Manufacturer says we gave an order for this many, but our memorandum showed only 150. However, we kept them at a price. From \$2.50 to \$10.00 the prices run, and if you need a mattress come and make us an offer. The stock must go down to normal.

10-Wire Brussels, the 60c. kind. Have only 100 Yds. Left.

WOOL VELVET CARPETS, Made, Laid and Lined, 90 cts.

Onyx Carpets, 20c. Just Left, 50 Yards.

Furniture.

It is probably useless to tell you that our stock of furniture is new and fresh. Every dealer tells you that. We wish we could talk to you personally, right in our rooms, with the furniture before you. We could show you wherein is the difference between our stock and that quoted at lower prices. We aim first at quality. We don't want the stuff to fall apart within the first month after you get it.

We carry furniture for every room—from the kitchen chair, at 50c. apiece, to a dining room table at \$30. Also, all between.

THE LEADER STORE, CO., 4TH & MARKET

Furniture.

Here are a few things we want to close out:

DINERS.—They were \$8. We will sell what we have of them for \$6 a set.

We have a heavy box diner, which we sold regularly for \$14.00 the set. Just a few left, and they will go for \$9.00.

We have a full-sized white enamel bed, which we have been selling for \$8.00. We will sell a dozen of them at \$6.50 apiece. And you know white beds are white beds in these days of high prices.