

# THE KEYSTONE STATE.

Latest News Gleaned from Various Parts.

## MURDERERS CONFESS.

The Statements by Preston and Wireback are Made Public—Preston Pleads Jealousy—Wireback Claimed He Was Not Conscious of His Actions—Grangers Score Gov. Stone—Other Live News.

All doubt as to the mental condition of Jonas Preston, Jr., the wife-murderer who was executed at West Chester, was removed when the dead man's confession was made known by Deputy Warden John C. C. For fifteen months Preston simulated insanity with remarkable cunning until the day preceding his execution, when he revealed his mind to Deputy C. C. From the time of his arrest to that hour he had been in a state of lethargy and commotion with no one. "Jonas, why do you persist in acting crazy longer?" queried Deputy C. C. upon presenting himself at the doomed man's cell. "The governor has refused to grant you another respite, and you will surely hang." "Yes, I guess it's all up with me now," sighed Preston. "I have played my game and lost." "Why did you kill your wife?" he was asked. "Well, replied Preston, "maybe I was only jealous. She intended to leave me and the thought of it was more than I could bear. She wasn't contented. She insisted that she was going, and I got mad. After some hot words between us I grabbed an ax, and the rest is known." "Why have you acted so strangely since your arrest?" he asked. "Because I wanted to escape the gallows," resumed the murderer. "I would rather tie in a cell a lifetime than be hanged. It's fearful to think of." "Why did you decline heretofore to converse with your minister, Rev. Mr. Usher?" "Because until now I had hope of escape on the ground that I was crazy," he said. "I didn't know what that man might have gone out and said if I had talked with him."

**Wireback's Statement.**  
The statement which Ralph W. Wireback made has been made public. It is a lengthy and rambling account of his life and the shooting. He argues that he was unjustly convicted of murder in the first degree because the crime was not premeditated, and that when he barricaded the house he had no thought of doing Mr. Landis or any other person any bodily harm. He claims that he did not know what he was doing when he shot Landis, and that he was not in his right mind at the time.

**Grangers Condemn School Cut.**  
Pomona Grange, No. 5, composed of Columbia and lower Luzerne counties, met at Orangeville and passed unanimously the following resolutions:  
"Whereas, Real estate is paying a larger share of taxes than it should in comparison with other property; and  
"Whereas, The Governor of this State has made an attempt to take a part of the school appropriation from the already overburdened taxpayers;  
"And whereas, Equalization of taxation has been defeated by the machine power;  
"Therefore be it resolved that we emphatically condemn the action of Governor Stone as unwarranted, unpatriotic and unconstitutional.  
"We further resolve that we ask the State Grange at its next meeting to appoint a suitable committee to ascertain the constitutional power of the Governor on this vital question, and be it further resolved that we condemn the Governor for the removal of a faithful secretary of agriculture to make room for one who, while in a subordinate position, used his office for partisan purposes."

**Tragedy at Leeburg.**  
A double tragedy occurred near Leeburg. An Italian shot and fatally injured a woman, and then, placing the weapon to his temple blew his brains out. Mrs. Annie Aberlenti kept a boarding house in Leeburg, and among her boarders was an Italian named John Stevel. Stevel, it is claimed, owed her money, which he refused to pay. She went to a house about one-half mile below Leeburg, where Stevel was toting, and demanded the money. Stevel, who had been drinking, drew a revolver and shot the woman twice in the head. He then shot the weapon toward his own head and sent a bullet through his brain, lying almost instantly.

**Saved Lad From Awful Death.**  
Six-year-old William Jacobs was on the rack in front of a Lehigh Valley passenger train as it rushed out of Hasleton. He failed to hear the train approach, and Henry Lipple, the fireman of the locomotive, rushed out on the pilot and reaching out in front of the cowcatcher, seized young Jacobs, and with a powerful effort threw him out of the way of the engine. The boy was only slightly hurt.

**Thrilling Leap to Save Himself.**  
In order to save himself from a fall, Edward Trout, a fireman employed by the Delaware County Telephone Company, at Chester, made a thrilling leap from a high pole. While working on the pole his hand came in contact with a live wire, and he involuntarily started back, losing his hold. As he was about to fall, Trout jumped, falling a distance of 35 feet and alighted on a grass plot, practically unharmed.

**Horses Killed by a Train.**  
While Reuben Scheldy, postmaster at Sebeidy's was driving a double team the team was struck by a fast passenger train on the Lehigh Valley Railroad at Lauray's. Mr. Scheldy was thrown to the platform of the station. The only injury he sustained was a bruise on one of his legs. Both horses were killed.

**Girl's Dress Caught Fire.**  
Annie, the 3-year-old daughter of George French, of Concord avenue and Patterson street, Chester, was probably fatally burned while playing with matches in the back yard. She set fire to her dress and was seriously burned about the head and body. The girl was taken to the Chester hospital, where no hope for her recovery is felt.

**Crushed Under a Heavy Rock.**  
J. A. Tamm, aged 53, employed in the quarry of the Pittsburg Limestone Company, was instantly killed near Tyrone by the fall of a huge rock weighing nearly half a ton. He, with other workmen, were shoveling dirt, when, without warning, the rock gave way, and fell about 30 feet, striking in its side and crushing him, causing instant death.

## NEWS FOR THE FAIR SEX.

### ITEMS OF INTEREST ON NUMEROUS FEMININE TOPICS.

**Return of the Big Bows—Embroidered Muslin Popular—Famously Beautiful—Increase of Women Travelers, Etc.**

**Military Training for Girls.**  
It is said that the New Mexico Military Institute, at Roswell, was to have been an institution for the military training of boys only, but the New Mexico girls decided they wanted and needed a thorough knowledge of military tactics, and accordingly advanced upon the faculty and declared open war if their admission to the school was refused. The faculty, realizing that resistance was impossible, threw open the doors of the institute. It is reported that the chances of the girls are good in the way of scholastic prizes in drilling and institutional honors.

**Return of the Big Bows.**  
Big bows for the neck so much in vogue seem to be a reaction from the tiny cravats. One must have the bow small and the ends long and sweeping. Ribbon is, of course, the favorite, but silk, mousseline de sole, taffeta, lace and mull are some of the many materials employed. These bows and ends are not at all in keeping with the tailor-made effect of the shirt waist, with which they are too often worn, but fashion is a strange inspiration, and combines the most unlikely caprices of toilet with the utmost disregard for seeming. The long bows and ends have certainly the merit of covering deficiencies, which is, perhaps, their reason for existence.

**Embroidered Muslin Popular.**  
Embroidered muslin is becoming as popular as the overworked and overplanned chiffon, without which no wardrobe can exist nowadays. Most of the smart frockings from Paris have vests, yokes or collars and cuffs of muslin embroidered daintily with tiny sprigs and figures or simply tucked, as demure and dainty as the cuffs and collars of a widow's gown. White muslin chemisettes have quite taken the place of the linen shirt fronts and colored chiffon and lace fronts of last season. The muslin chemisette is a mass of fine tucks and coquette-like insertings or upstanding narrow frills of lace, but is almost universally becoming and strikes the happy medium between the too soft and frivolous chiffon front and the stiff linen shirt-bosom. Embroidered muslin, the dress makers say, has a tendency to make mademoiselle look like a debutante and madame look twenty.—New York Commercial Advertiser.

**Famously Beautiful.**  
The most beautiful woman in England, according to Mrs. Harlow Williams, is, without doubt, Lady Helen Vincent. There has never been any one to compare with her since she first appeared in society, and she was the most beautiful bride ever seen—in a white dress brocaded in lilacs, with golden yellow stamens and palest green leaves. She is exquisitely fair, almost fragile; and some of her freshness, doubtless, is due to the fact that she never wears herself out with late hours, as so many other London women do. Even when staying in other people's houses she manages to live her own life in her own way, walking out and resting during a portion of the day; while every night, no matter what the attraction, she invariably says good-night soon after 11 o'clock. No one in my time has made a greater sensation than she—not even her beautiful sisters, the late Duchess of Leinster, who was an ideal duchess, so splendidly handsome, and with such a proud, and yet so gracious, an air; Lady Cynthia Graham, who, with her rich coloring, is like a Rubens picture; or the unmarried sister, Lady Ulrica Duncombe, who is most like Lady Cynthia, but taller, slimmer and with a purity which lends an added charm to her young beauty.—Cassell's Magazine.

**Increase of Women Travelers.**  
As the world grows smaller the number of women travelers grows great. This is merely another form of saying that the greater security, economy and rapidity of travel have opened new opportunities for ambitious women. At the present time there are the traveling companion, the courier, the war correspondent, the foreign correspondent, the missionary and the student, who, paradoxically enough, is usually a teacher. I would leave out of consideration the traveling companion, because she is an annex or attachment to the traveler proper and is not a traveler per se. I might also add the woman explorer, because in the past ten years Mrs. Alice Le Plongeon and Miss Kingsley have won name and fame in this field of activity.

**Fads and Fashions.**  
Hydrangea blossoms trim the Summer hats, and when the pale blue tint is combined with the pink lilac shades the effect is charming.  
A silk gown of a golden brown, with a light stripe in which there is the faintest tint of pink and green, has a pink yoke and lapels and facings of the green.  
Dull finished crepe de Chine, lustrous Hernani, India crepe cloth, Henrietta cloth, drap royal, nuns' veiling, and Carmelite are the fabrics most fashionably used this season in preparing mourning outfits.  
A new matelasse silk shows a shadowy ground of pinkish mother-of-pearl gray, with figures of shaded flowers and shaded green foliage and a narrow line of stem-green satin crossing the lustrous surface.  
A beautiful prettiness is of white silk covered by embroidered dots in black, while the scalloped ruffle has insertions of black, and the trimming at the edge is of charming lace of combined black and white threads.  
White batiste, patterned with a design in Cashmere color and trimmed with Brussels lace insertion and edging, makes one of the smartest gowns of the season. It is made over white taffeta, and the skirt is ruffled at the feet with white batiste edged with lace.

Travel brings out the deep ethical difference between the two sexes. In London I have often noticed that the average American gentleman makes a beeline for the famous inns, pubs and music halls, while the average American woman goes to Westminster, St. Paul's and the Tower of London. In Paris the former patronize the cafe

followed; for the soldiers dare not use their rifles for fear of hitting one of themselves. This put them at a disadvantage, and, being taken by surprise, and also outnumbered, the convicts made short work of them, and at a signal from Chakoff, ran towards the river, and plunging in, all safely reached the other bank.  
The officer in command had been stunned by a blow from the butt end of a rifle in the hands of Ivan, which the latter had wrenched from the clasp of a wounded soldier, and, therefore, no instant chase was given; but the deputy governor was quickly on the scene, and he taking the command, a strong force set out in pursuit three hours later.

A band of fifteen hungry and weary men rested the night following the escape in a clump of woods. Seven men had succumbed to the horrors of the day's march through the broken country, and the remainder were sleeping, not caring whether they were recaptured or not.

Ivan was keeping guard over the camp, and, finding it a difficult matter to keep his eyes open, he walked to the edge of the wood, and looked out into the darkness. A tremor shook his frame, and he muttered a startled exclamation. In the distance, perhaps not a quarter of a mile away, he saw the camp of Cossacks.  
He returned and awoke his comrade.

"What is the matter?" asked Chakoff, standing up.  
"The soldiers are here," was the low reply. "They have ridden to the north of the wood, and, knowing we are here, will attack us to-morrow. Then we may expect no mercy; we shall be shot down like dogs."  
For a moment Chakoff did not speak. He was thinking of Clarissa, the woman who held such a place in his heart. Ivan seemed to know what was passing in his mind.  
"You are thinking of her," he muttered, brokenly. "And it was I who parted you. I, who in my blind hatred, spoilt two lives. And yet she was so beautiful that I would have done anything to win her for my wife. Chakoff, say you will forgive me!"

"What did I say when I told you my story last night? It is I who must beg for that. But why talk in that manner? We shall continue at once through the woods, where those brutal Cossacks with their horses cannot follow."

"You do not know the country," was the reply. "This wood only extends a few miles south, and if we followed it we should get to the mountains, where death would be slower, yet just as sure as from the bullets of our enemies' rifles! No, the only way is to vanquish the soldiers!"  
"Which is impossible," said Chakoff, with a sigh; "and, therefore, we die at break of day. Friends," he continued, to those around, for the conversation had awakened the sleepers, "the soldiers are very near to us, and are only waiting a while before attacking. There are about forty of them, well armed and strong; fifteen of us, unarmed and weak. If we become the attackers and do not wait for daylight, one or two might escape in the confusion and darkness."

"There is another way," said Ivan, stepping forward, "by which nearly all of you may escape."  
"What is it? Tell us your plan," said one standing near.  
"The dawn is near, therefore my plan cannot wait. So to the edge of the wood and watch. Then if a number of the Cossacks detach themselves from the main body and after an hour do not return, follow Chakoff's plan."  
"But what do you intend to do?" inquired Chakoff, anxiously.

"You can watch with the others," was the low reply. "But if you escape and once again see her"—he added, brokenly—"tell her I begged for forgiveness. You can take care of her better than I. Give me your great-coat, Chakoff, it is necessary. If you are successful you will get another; if not—well, you won't need one. Good-bye, and forgive me."  
"Come back, Ivan! come back!" cried Chakoff. But too late. He had disappeared in the darkness.

As the first rays of light broke from the horizon the watchers beheld a strange sight.  
A figure crept toward the Cossack camp, was challenged by the sentry and taken before the commander. An excited interview followed. Ivan was pointing towards the wood.  
"Is he a traitor?" the watchers wondered. No, that could not be; but it was evident something strange was on foot.  
The camp became a scene of bustle and activity, and a few minutes later three parts of the men were mounted. They formed in charging order, and with a wild cheer, dashed along the edge of the wood in a southeasterly direction. The sound of beating hoofs grew fainter in the distance, and at last died out altogether.  
Suddenly one of the anxious watchers started up and declared he heard a wild cry of terror; but he was the only one, and his statement was discredited.

An hour passed, and no sign of a return. The sun began to rise, and the remaining soldiers were becoming uneasy.  
Suddenly from out the wood dashed a band of wild-looking men, armed with chains, clubs and the one who is leading with a rifle.  
They fell upon the unprepared Cossacks, and, after a stubborn and deadly conflict, scattered them in all directions.  
Then the visitors, after eating of the food they found, followed in the path of the company of soldiers led by Ivan.  
For two miles they journeyed on, when they came to a stop before a

deep chasm, at the bottom of which they dimly discerned the mangled remains of horses and men.  
Descending, they searched among the gruesome mass, and at last found the body of a man, which they regarded with great tenderness. And they reverently buried him just as he was, in his large, gray coat—a look of infinite peace on his face.

In a cozy little room, in an English household, a man and woman were seated. On the knees of the former sat a little child.  
"And why did your brother Ivan jump over the precipice, father?" he asked.  
A tear came to the man's eye, and he looked tenderly at his wife.  
"When he went to the officer, Ivan, he must have convinced him in some way that we were escaping round the far end of the wood. He let him lead the men there, and, going at full speed, they jumped straight over the chasm. Clarissa, is it not his bedtime?"

### GLUTTONOUS FEATS.

**Authentic Instances of Abnormal Capacity That Seem Incredible.**

The Evening Standard of London gives in an article on gluttonous feats some instances of abnormal capacity that would appear incredible, were it not for the statement that they are sustained by unimpeachable record. Jerry Eke of Norfolk, England, according to Dr. Jessop, agreed to eat a harvest supper on a wager of £5 to eat an entire calf at one sitting, barring the hide, bones and entrails. The meat of the animal was cut in small pieces and made into seventeen great pies. Jerry attacked one after another until he reached the ninth, when he halted, much to the consternation of his backers, who thought he was about to give up the contest. He had stopped, however, to inquire when the calf was to be brought on. After explanations he proceeded to consume the remaining eight pies without further delay. Nicholas Wood in the seventeenth century held the title of champion eater of England. He ate at a single meal a whole sheep, an entire hog and a peck of damsons. He was defeated only once and then through a trick of a sportsman, who wagered that he could not "fill his belly with two shillings' worth of victuals." Wood took the bet and in addition agreed to finish with an entire sc loin of beef. The conditions were that he was to consume the two shillings' worth of food within a certain limit of time. The sportsman bought six pints of mighty ale in which he soaked twelve penny loaves of fresh bread. Wood attacked the mess, but the fumes of the concoction overcame him and he fell asleep and lost the wager. Rogerson, described as a gentleman of Gloucestershire, was an epicure the like of whom England never saw before or since. He paid his chefs \$40,000 a year, and every man employed on his place, even the stablemen, was a finished cook. A relay of messengers was employed to travel between the Continent and England to supply him with delicacies. His entire fortune of \$750,000 was expended in gastronomic indulgence. When it was gone, he cooked his last meal, which consisted of an ortolan, and then committed suicide. An eating contest between women, held at Portsmouth, England, early in this century, shows that the fair sex had both appetite and capacity. On this occasion a girl ate forty-three pounds of cherries and six penny loaves of bread. She distanced her competitors by eight pounds, but the effort killed her.

**Tommy Atkins and the Scouts.**  
"Well, in my opinion, the only bloomin' beggars in this bloomin' division won't 'ave earned their bloomin' pay in this 'ere campaign are them there Gurkhy scouts!"  
The above comment, overheard by an officer of one of the British regiments in the Tiah—and joyfully reported to the commandant of the scouts—was undoubtedly a grievous libel on many gallant fellows who had fought and suffered and endured to an extent for which even the luxurious pay of the British private can hardly be deemed extravagant. The pessimistic Tommy who gave utterance to the slander would have been the first to resent any such calumny from an outsider. Yet two points are thereby made clear—the marvelous amount of finished work put in, and the admirable manner in which most difficult and hazardous duties were performed by "them there Gurkhy scouts."

In a recent speech before the Military Society of Ireland Lord Roberts emphasized his appreciation of the utility of these skirmishers, and advocated the extension of the system for future operations on the frontier. That this new departure was the most successful and most striking feature of the expedition, and that the innovation was more than justified, have been generally conceded, and on the Gurkhy scouts has been ungrudgingly conferred the title of "The finest hill soldiers in the world."—Blackwood.

**Microbes and Tickets.**  
The question of the possibility of transmitting disease germs has been vividly brought up by an eccentric Frenchman who recently refused to let the conductor take his ticket to punch it, on the Western Railroad of France, on the ground of possible contamination. He stood out for his hygienic rights and insisted that the railroad should force the conductor to disinfect his hands before taking the ticket. The genius for microbes was finally arrested, taken before a magistrate and fined \$5 for his theorizing.—The Pathfinder.

A Y. M. C. A. has recently been organized in Iceland.

**One Who Failed.**  
He started out to make his name  
A household word;  
He has not won the bauble fame,  
And few have heard  
That there is such a man as he  
Upon this twirling sphere—  
He failed, but it were well if w  
Had more such failures here.

He missed the goal he had in view  
And grieves to-day;  
The grave lies just beyond him, too—  
He's bent and gray;  
Yet though he failed in winning fame,  
He's won a greater prize:  
Few men have ever heard his name,  
But they'll weep when he dies.  
—S. E. Kiser.

### A NIHILIST'S SACRIFICE.

The dark, heavy clouds were drifting slowly across the sky, driven by a steadily rising wind. The moon, shining through the rifts, lit up for a moment the grim, Siberian prison below, throwing the low buildings into strong relief, then leaving everything blacker than before as another mass of clouds obscured its face.

Here and there around the place, a light flickered feebly, showing the position of the sentries; and they, buttoned up tightly to keep out the biting wind, paced slowly to and fro. Inside the prison all seemed still, and in the outer block of buildings nearest the river, a scene of silent activity was taking place.

"Have you got your cursed iron off?" inquired a voice, in a whisper.  
"Almost, Ivan. But do not hurry; the guard will not be round for an hour yet. What a lucky thing it was you managed to secrete these files. Now, our comrades can escape with us. Give the signal gently, Ivan."

Ivan silently went to the wall of the cell and tapped three times, almost inaudibly. A moment later two similar taps were heard from the other side.  
"Yes, they are ready, Chakoff, and will await our signal. What a grand night it is for the attempt!"

"Providence is helping us to escape from this awful horror," said Chakoff.  
"Escape—freedom!" broke in Ivan. "Oh, what thoughts does freedom conjure up. Back to Moscow, whether in danger or not, to try and win a woman for my wife."

"What? Then that is another tie to bind us. Although we never met before being imprisoned here, we are joined by ties of friendship that nothing can break. Let me tell you my story," continued Chakoff.

"Five long, weary years ago, when I was a free man in Moscow, I loved a woman who loved me in return, and is still true to me.  
"But I had a rival, whom I never saw, nor even learnt his name, and he determined to rid me from his path."

"One night, while at my society's meeting, the police broke in and I was arrested. From what was said, I gathered that the information must have come from one who could be no other than his rival."

For a moment the men were silent; only their heavy breathing telling of their emotion. A strange recognition, indeed, to take place in the darkness of a prison cell—each to have been the cause of the other's imprisonment; to be taken to a Siberian hell to live together for many years, and then, just at the time they intended attempting escape, to suddenly discover each other's identity.

"And you were my rival?" said Chakoff. "And I told you my story, never thinking it—"  
Clank! clank! clank! The guard was approaching.

"To your place—quick!" he hoarsely continued, forgetting in a moment the exciting climax through which they had just passed, and only thinking of the promised liberty.

All unconscious of the danger which threatened, the guard walked slowly to the door, and, unlocking it, looked into the cell. A deep groan smote his ears.

"Shamming again," he muttered, with a Russian oath. "A taste of my knout will do him good!"  
Stepping forward, he was about to carry out his brutal intention when the figure on the floor, which the light of the lamp he carried revealed, suddenly sprang up, and seized him in a terrible grip round the waist. Simultaneously another sprang from the darkness, and stifled the cry for help which was rising. The lamp dropped to the floor and went out, and a rifle luckily fell on the rough bed of straw.

To and fro the men staggered, no sound being uttered. The emaciated frames of the convicts, desperate as they were, proved more than a match for the herculean strength of the guard, and slowly they gained the upper hand. A few moments later he was lying bound hand and foot on the floor of the cell.

"So far, so good," said Ivan, taking the bunch of keys. "Take his great-coat, Chakoff; it may be very useful to us."  
Proceeding cautiously into the open wind-swept square, Ivan arrived unseen at the next cell, and, selecting a key from the bunch, he liberated the overjoyed men inside.

A few moments served to release about twenty, who armed themselves with pieces of the chains they had so lately worn.  
Suddenly a loud cry for help, instantly answered by the nearest guards, fell upon their ears, and they realized that in some way the captured man had eluded the vigilance of Chakoff. Instantly a scene of wild confusion began. The prisoners, some of them there for a very little offense, were determined to make the most of the opportunity offered them for escape, and seeing they could not leave the precincts of the prison without fighting the soldiers, they rushed to meet them. A hand-to-hand conflict