

LADIES' DEPARTMENT.

President Polk's Widow.

The widow of James K. Polk, now more than eighty years of age, was recently visited by a correspondent of the Louisville Courier-Journal, who thus describes her:

I was surprised to find in Mrs. Polk a lady of active movement, bright and animated face, clear and firm voice and quick and responsive memory. She is of medium height, rather stout, but not obese; has a bright and most pleasing face, without the lines and furrows usually accompanying great age, and her gray or dark-blue eyes are even yet sparkling, and full of sweet animation. In her beaming countenance there still remains abundant traces of the rare and radiant beauty, lit up by earnest vivacity, which made her so attractive and conspicuous thirty odd years ago as mistress of the presidential mansion, and by courtesy or ex officio, "first lady in the land."

Pretty Women.

It is not the smiles of a pretty face, nor the tint of her complexion; nor the symmetry of her person, nor the costly dress or decorations, that compose woman's loveliness. Nor is it the enchanting glance of her eye, with which she darts such luster on the man she deems worthy of her friendship, that constitutes her beauty. It is her pleasing deportment, her chaste conversation, the sensibility and purity of her thoughts, her affable, open disposition, her sympathy with those in adversity, and above all, the humbleness of her soul, that constitute true loveliness.

How the "Jersey" is Made.

The circular frames used to produce the long tubes of wool and cotton that are afterward cut up and squeezed to shape as marketable stockings, have been enlarged in size until they can produce a tube of wool thirty-six inches in circumference, known in the factories as "Jersey cloth." Miles of it have been woven already—miles upon miles. When each tube is detached from its frame, in lengths of forty or fifty yards, it is slit from end to end, that it may be folded open and dressed and pressed like other cloths for use. Then the pattern of the jersey is laid upon it (in sizes, say, for shoes), the jerseys are cut, are sewn, are pressed flat again, are in a fit state for the lady who enlazes them in song.

Already, while the cloth is still in its open state, folded in its large smooth rolls, it is suggesting purposes to which it can be advantageously applied. Long curtains have been made of it; outside cloaks and coats; and as the weaving women sit in their long, light shops, among the whirr of the machinery and their own snatches, now and again, of country song, it can be seen that they make bags for their implements of spoilt ends of it, that they utilize it as dusters, that they cover pincushions with it for their pins. Any way, a new article of commerce has been introduced that is sure, in some form or another, not to be swiftly laid aside.—All the Year Round.

Interesting for Wives.

The wife has been much advanced by the general tenor of legislation of late years in respect to her own property. She has acquired a pretty independent position as to title, control and disposition, but this relates to her property, not to his. The law has not yet raised her to the station of superintendent of her husband's contracts and probably never will. He is bound to support her and the children which she bears to him, and in order to fulfill this obligation he ought to have as much freedom in the management of his business affairs of the world as unmarried men are allowed to exercise. In taking a wife a man does not put himself under an overseer. He is not a subordinate in his own family, but the head of it. The law assigns him that position, not for his own advantage alone but as much for the real good of his wife and children and somewhat for the general interest of society. A husband left free to lead and govern in his own family is the most useful husband to all who may be concerned in the results of his conduct. That exception to this rule may be pointed out is no objection to or disproof of the rule itself. Human institutions are all more or less imperfect, and their complete efficiency in practical working cannot be expected in every instance. It is enough if they produce beneficence to the great means and in the great majority of cases. A subjugated husband is a less pleasing and less energetic member of society than one who keeps his true place yet knows how to temper authority with affection. The law does not discourage conjugal consultations or free and voluntary co-operation in all transactions which affect or may affect the welfare of the family. But the law does not undertake to secure this delightful harmony by coercion, but leaves it to issue spontaneously from the holy relations of matrimony.—Georgia Supreme Court.

Fashion Notes.

Gold tablecloths are fashionable for dessert. The fans now in use in Paris are enormous in size.

The new gingham are nearly all in large, gay plaids.

Turkeys' claws are found among the new ornaments.

White brocaded plush is used for trimming bridal dresses.

Bonnets covered with spirals of silver lace are promised novelties.

Black straw lace bonnets will take the place of lace bonnets next season.

Schoolgirls are wearing their hair in what is termed the emigrant twist.

Night-dresses embroidered in red and blue are termed nocturnes in color.

Small figures on dark grounds are the rule of the new spring cotton prints.

Heavy silk trimmed with crape is the usual dinner dress for ladies in mourning.

Next to white, old gold and pale blue are the favorite colors for evening bonnets.

House dresses of white wool made in Greek patterns are much worn by young ladies.

Wonderful productions in the way of artificial flowers will be worn on spring bonnets.

Ladies' neckties are tied with only one loop and with the ends carelessly arranged.

Surahs are printed in small set patterns of white on a black surface, for mourning.

A chenille fringe tipped with jet is used to trim the necks of the rich brocade waists.

Flannel dresses have deep tucks in the skirts, and waists made in the shooting-jacket shape, with two rows of ivory buttons down the front.

Ribbons are made to match the piece-goods and come in extreme widths running from five to seven inches.

Children's cloaks are long and close fitting, and the most fashionable are trimmed with beaver rather than with chinchilla and sealskin. They all have wide collars.

Some Facts About Mexico.

Considering its geographical nearness, Americans know but very little about Mexico, nor can much be said for our facilities for acquiring information, even if our desire for it were stronger than it is. A writer in a German magazine gives some interesting particulars about the country and its people. Mexican society, according to this writer, is composed of two races, governed by different laws and ideas, and, when they come in contact, mutually hostile. The bulk of the population consists of Indians devoted to the church, which has always been at odds with the republican government, and living in village communities, which, since the end of the Spanish rule, have been constantly encroaching on the private property lying near them, which they claim rightfully belongs to them, and which they seem likely ultimately to possess through the inability of the government to protect the lawful owners. They are, moreover, comparatively healthy and fruitful, while the Creoles, even with annual accessions from Spain, are diminishing in number. The author is, therefore, of the opinion that the country, if left to itself, will become a dictatorship of the Paraguayan type, founded on primitive socialism and the church. The Creole population consists of a small minority of absentee planters and a large majority of persons who, in one way or another, get their living out of the government. The States have tariffs against each other, which, though the revenue fails to pay the cost of collection, afford plenty of places for "workers," that is, the governorships and other higher offices, are practically filled by the politicians of the capital. "Like the Orientals, the Mexican regards the office not as a post of duty but as a piece of property." While the Creoles monopolize the civil service and the army, the Indians the agriculture, such as it is, and Germans, French, etc., the foreign trade, the most flourishing class in the community is the Spaniards. They rule its industrial life, and are described as not only industrious, but able to amass moderate fortunes, which their children, in sinking to the Creole level, invariably dissipate. As to education, "the acme of culture is to speak as many foreign tongues as possible. French is especially favored, and in the book-shops one sees more French than Spanish works. Recently English has become fashionable. The Americans are hated, but they are also feared, and the English are respected." As to the projected railways, our German resident says the country does not need them, and that they will not pay, which is also the case with the telegraph lines already built.

We have received a copy of the Congressional Record, a paper published in Washington, which is evidently a paragraphic sheet, but we have failed to find anything funny in it. As an evidence of this, "laughter" is written in various places in parentheses, to inform its readers where they should smile. We don't believe in any such "funny business," and we must beg the Record to excuse us from exchanging with it. Why doesn't it add a calendar, and come out as a comic almanac?—Staubenville Herald.

TRAINING A CIRCUS RIDER.

Interesting Reminiscences of a Veteran in the Ring.

James M. Melville, the famous bare-back circus rider, said to a New York reporter: "In training boys for riders we first give them all the experience we can on the ground, or on hard cushions; teach them to turn tip-flaps, somersaults, jump through paper balloons and throw a somersault, and all that sort of thing. Then we show how to slip and tumble while going through their acts, and hit wherever they may, but striving always to save their heads and back. This teaches them how to save themselves from serious injuries. Why, I had lots of boys who thought no more of falling or being thrown off a horse than many schoolboys think of a fall on ice when out skating. When the boys get so they can turn a somersault from a board raised two or three feet from the ground, and fall without danger of doing themselves any harm beyond hurting a bit, then we put them on horseback. First we put them on a good, steady old nag, without a saddle, but with a belly-band with handles instead. On these the boys ride a-straddle; then sideways, like a lady, changing from one side to the other, the horse beginning with a walk, and winding up on the full gallop. Then begins the upright riding. The horse carries a broad, hard stuffed pad. The beginner has a strong belt about his waist; in the center of the ring 'the mechanic' is placed. I suppose you have seen it, as it has been shown in a number of circuses. It is an upright log, with an arm running over the performing track. A strong rope runs along it to the end of the arm, then through a pulley down to the ambitious youth who wants to be a rider, and fastened to the belt around his waist. The other end is held by a man at the center-pole, so, you see, the boy cannot fall to the ground if he misses his footing or loses his equilibrium, and so falls off his horse. The man—who was giving him plenty of rope to dance about—simply brings him up with a short turn, and he swings around in mid-air until he catches up with his horse and gets another foothold. 'The mechanic,' you know, goes around the ring at the same speed that the horse keeps up. But when the aspirant gets so far advanced that he can do without 'the mechanic' and pads, and ride a little on bareback, and when he commences his somersaults, vaulting through paper balloons, etc., he gets many a hard knock, I tell you. There are not a very great number of riders who get that far ahead in the profession. First, the bare-back rider must find out the center of gravity of the circle, and then, and most of all, he must know how to fall. The shaking of a paper, a child's cry, or many other little trifles may distract a horse's attention for a second, but, short as that time is, if the performer happens to be in the air it means a fall. If he is too long coming down to catch the horse, why all right; but if he can only touch him with his foot he gives himself a push toward the center of the ring, rolls himself up in a ball as quickly as possible, tries not to strike on his head or spine, and the very instant he feels the earth, to let everything go, relax all muscles, and fall well; as near as I can describe it, fall as nearly like a drunken man as he can."

"But have you not in your daring and seemingly reckless riding received some serious injuries?"

"Oh, yes, I have broken that arm twice, but it is just as good as new now. I had that ankle knocked out of joint, which laid me up for weeks; I have sprained my legs, ankles and wrists when I didn't fall just exactly right, and I have got more dents in my head than a skillet has holes, but a man must not mind little things like those if he expects to be a champion. Look at my boy, Frank Melville, who is now so great a favorite; why, he was the most daring young rider you ever heard of and he got lots of hard knocks, but he didn't scare a bit, and now for him to fall or be thrown from his horse is a very rare thing."

"My treatment for performing horses is simply kindness and rewards. If a horse is afraid of his master he is unreliable, and if the horse knows that, as he has performed his part well, he is sure of a good hearty meal and a little of something he is particularly fond of, and knows just as well that if he does his work in a careless or slovenly way he will not get it, he will do his act the best he knows how, you may be sure. It don't make him feel happy to see his companions enjoying some little luxury, while he has to content himself with simply a good square feed. Horses are very fond of sugar, I tell you. I remember perfectly well the old days, when circuses were dragged from town to town in wagons, drawn by pretty well-fagged-out horses, and I remember, too, when steam cars were first introduced. Then the advance agents of the horse-wagon companies tried to get up a cry that the car companies could not be worth much, for the owners had not money enough to buy horses, but it didn't work, and the wagon shows have about died out. Yes, I have had some curious experiences, too, but I cannot

think of them all now. I remember the first time I was in Chili I had a fine show. The archbishop of the place, whom I went in advance to see, was very much pleased, and advised all his people to attend, and they did, too, but they evidently had no use for the ticket office. They marched in like a solid army, but no money, not a cent. In my despair, for I had spent my last dollar in getting up the show, and I didn't know how to get out of town, I posted off to see the archbishop again, and I told him all about it. Wasn't he mad, and didn't he get down to that show in a hurry? Why, he had hardly got in sight of the people and spoken a dozen words, when the men went down into their pockets and paid their admissions in a hurry. Many of them wished to pay more than the regular prices, but that was of course refused. I had a splendid run there, and before I came away gave a grand benefit for the church, which netted a handsome sum."

Two Inauguration Stories.

A Washington correspondent says that the Boston Lancers who assisted at Grant's inauguration hired their horses in Washington. A contract was made with a livery-stable keeper to furnish the requisite number of horses, and he obtained about half of them from a horse railroad company. With those lancers who thus appeared mounted came a delegation of past members—heavy-weights—bent on having a frolic. On the morning of the inauguration one of them went to a hardware store and purchased a large spring hand-bell, which he put in one of his overcoat pockets and went to that part of the column where the lancers sat in their saddles, wearing their scarlet coats, and carrying their lances, with fluttering crimson pennants attached. Soon the word "Forward," was given, and the troops moved slowly along, but in a few moments the sharp sound of a bell-stroke was heard, and every horse which had been used on the railroad stopped short. The lancers were thrown into confusion, and it was some moments before every man was in his place again, and moving "forward, by fours!" Again the stroke of the bell was heard, again the railroad horses stopped at the familiar signal. Finally it was discovered who was striking the bell, and he was asked to desist, but he refused point-blank, until it was agreed that a case of champagne should be sent to his room. When this was done the bell was heard no more, and the lancers covered themselves with glory.

When old General Harrison was inaugurated he was so full of the progress of the old Roman emperors along the Appian way that he refused to ride down Pennsylvania avenue in a carriage, but rode on horseback, hat in hand, bowing acknowledgments for the cheers which greeted him. The weather was very cold, with a sharp northeast wind, yet he wore neither overcoat nor gloves. Arriving at the capitol, he delivered his inaugural address, which occupied an hour and a half, from the platform built over the eastern steps, standing bareheaded, while those around him, although covered and well wrapped up, were nearly frozen. When he had concluded he remounted his horse and rode to the White House, escorted by the military. It was evident that he wished to show that he was not feeble if he was old; but all the physicians expected to hear that he was seized that night by pneumonia. He did not apparently suffer any ill effects, but a month's overtaxing of his physical powers was too much, and his lifeless remains were escorted along Pennsylvania avenue with great pomp. "The path of glory leads but to the grave."

Effect of Liquor on Pigs.

Two French savants have, for the last twelvemonth, been keeping nine pigs in a state of habitual drunkenness. This has been done with a view to testing the effects of different kinds of alcohol on these animals, and the prefect of the Seine last year kindly put some styes and a yard in the municipal slaughter-houses of La Villette at the disposal of the savants, in order that they might conduct their interesting experiment at the smallest cost to themselves. The experiment is interesting, because we are told that the pig is the animal whose digestive apparatus most closely resembles that of man; but then drunkenness does not act on a man's digestion only, and the behavior of a tipsy pig furnishes but a slight indication of what a tipsy man would be who had drunk of the same liquors. However, we learn that the pig who takes absinthe is first gay, then excitable, irritable, combative, and finally drowsy; the pig who has brandy mixed with his food is cheerful all through till he falls asleep; the rum-swilling pig becomes sad and somnolent almost at once, while the pig who takes gin conducts himself in eccentric ways, grunting, squealing, tilting his head against the stye door, and rising on his hind legs as if to sniff the wind. Dr. Decaisne, writing on these intoxicated swine in the France, remarks that they are none of them the worse for their year's tipping, which may be regarded as satisfactory or the reverse, according to one's point of view.—New York Sun.

FACTS FOR THE CURIOUS.

Ten millions of cattle are annually slaughtered in this country to supply the home demand for meat, which is valued at \$400,000,000.

In the year 1900 February will have but twenty-eight days, although a leap year. This phenomenon occurs only in 200 years, and always in the odd 100.

London has 93 King streets, 99 Queen streets, 78 Prince, 109 George, 87 James, 151 Church, 129 Union, 116 New, 90 North, 90 South, 50 East, 50 West, 88 William, 113 Grove and 191 Park.

Logwood was first introduced into England in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, but as the dyers of that time only produced a fugitive color from it, its use was forbidden by law, and it was ordered to be burned wherever found. This prohibition lasted for a century.

The chamois, bounding over the mountain, are indebted in no small degree to a species of pheasants. The bird acts as a sentinel; for as soon as it gets sight of a man it whistles—upon hearing which the chamois, knowing the hunters to be near, sets out at full speed.

Many of the deserted Ophir and Mexican mines contain great quantities of fungus matter, which are principally found on the old timbers in the warm moist lower levels. Some of the fungi are several feet in height and look like sheeted ghosts. Their rank growth has almost closed some of the drifts. Stones of from ten to a hundred pounds weight are raised by these growths and held in a state of suspension. The fungi does not resemble in any particular that found above ground.

Sentences Making Sense Whether Read Backward or Forward.

It has not been thought necessary to give the backward as well as the forward reading of the following sentences, save in those in which there seemed some special reason for printing the two versions. In going through the sentences backward the requisite changes in the punctuation must be understood by the reader:

Does slowly fading day; winds mournful sigh
Brightly stars are waking.
Flies owlet, hooting, holding revel-high,
Nightly silence breaking.

Breaking silence nightly,
High owlet hooting, hooting owlet flies.

Waking are stars brightly;
Sigh mournful winds; day, fading slowly, dies;

Adieu, love. Part we must. Stay,
Oh! stay, said she, weeping piteously.
Now, indeed, sorrow is mine. Alas!

Solomon had vast treasures—silver and gold—things precious. Happy, and rich, and wise was he. Faithfully served he God.

Men like fighting; though often beaten are they.
She sits lamenting sadly, often too much alone.

Dear Harry: Devotedly yours, remain I. Have you forgotten £20 check? Reply immediately please, and hand to yours, Grace Darling.

Darling Grace: Yours to hand, and please immediately reply. Check £20, forgotten, you have. I remain, yours devotedly, Harry dear.

A DOCTOR'S ADVICE TO A DYSPEPTIC.
Play with work blend, keep warmish feet,
Away drive trouble, slowly eat;
Air pure breathe and early rise;
Beware excess, take exercise.

Exercise take, excess beware;
Rise early and breathe pure air;
Eat slowly, trouble drive away;
Foot warmish keep, blend work with play.

Float they gayly side by side,
Pausing, fearing, doubting never;
Laughing, singing, on they glide,
Hope and youth companion ever.

—Otc.

A Porky Story.

"On this day seventeen years ago," remarked a New Yorker the other day, "I shipped 1,000 barrels of pork to Washington. I was an army contractor then, and wherever I heard of a barrel of pork I went for it, and bought it at some price. I remember this particular shipment because a serious mistake was made."

"How?"

"Well, I counted the barrels at the depot myself, and there were only 990 when there should have been an even thousand. Men were ready to roll the barrels into the freight cars, and to make my number good I took ten barrels of lard from a stock ready to ship to Baltimore. They mixed in all right, and, of course, I expected to pay for 'em. A whole day went by before I saw the owner. These were stirring times, you remember. He had found himself short, and he cribbed ten barrels of beef to make good his number of barrels, and hustled the shipment away."

"And who did the beef man crib from?"

"Well, his beef was for the soldiers, and he made himself good by buying three barrels of vinegar, two of crackers, and stealing five barrels of apples from a lot in the depot."

"And did it go any further?"

"Yes. The most curious thing of all was that the man I took the lard from sued the man who stole the apples, and got judgment against him for the worth of the lard, and none of the rest of us were out a cent."—Wall Street Daily News.

Cradle Songs.

The most popular of German lullabies is a truly Teutonic mixture of piety, wonder-love and homeliness. Wagner has introduced the music to which it is sung into his "Siegfried Idyll." We have to thank a Heidelberg friend for the text:

"Sleep, baby, sleep—
Your father tends the branches small,
Your mother shakes the branches small,
Whence happy dreams in showers fall—
Sleep, baby, sleep.

"Sleep, baby, sleep—
The sky is full of sheep;
The stars the lambs of heaven are,
For whom the shepherd moon doth care—
Sleep, baby, sleep.

"Sleep, baby, sleep—
The Christ Child owns a sheep;
He is Himself the Lamb of God;
The world to save, to death He trod—
Sleep, baby, sleep."

In Denmark children are sung to sleep with a cradle hymn which is believed (so we are informed by a youthful correspondent) to be "very old." It has seven stanzas, of which the first runs, "Sleep sweetly, little child; lie quiet and still; as sweetly sleep as the bird in the wood, as the flowers in the meadow. God the Father has said, 'angels stand on watch where mine, the little ones, are in bed.'" A correspondent at Warsaw (still more youthful) sends us the even song of Polish children:

"The stars shine forth from the blue sky;
How great and wondrous is God's might!
Shine, stars, through all eternity,
His witness in the night.

"Oh, Lord, Thy tired children keep;
Keep us who know and feel Thy might;
Turn Thine eye on us as we sleep,
And give us all good-night.

"Shine, stars, God's sentinels on high,
Preambles of His power and might,
May all things evil from us fly;
Oh, stars, good-night, good-night!"

—Frazer's Magazine.

A Romance in Real Life.

In all great cities some strange characters may be found. In one of the principal thoroughfares of New York may often be seen the attenuated, shabbily clad figure of a woman past the middle age. The noticeable feature of the face is constituted by a pair of abnormally large and liquid gray eyes, but the whole contour is remarkably delicate and spirited. She will pause and talk for minutes at a time to a vase of flowers or a plot of green grass. By marriage this lonely woman is allied to an old and distinguished English family. In her youth she married a handsome young Englishman of fortune, without settlements or preliminaries, being herself one of the heirs of one of the princeliest fortunes of that time. The young Englishman lost his fortune in rash speculation; hers was consumed in litigation and compromises before it could be disentangled from the interest of relatives. After migrating for fifteen years from one garret to another in this city, the husband inherited a small property by the death of a relative in England, and had just time to settle the income thereof upon his wife before want and worry finished their work. He died of heart disease within six weeks after the notice of his good fortune was received. But the habit of flitting from garret to garret was too strong to be overcome, and the widow, famed for her eccentricity, adheres to the old mode of life after the necessity for it has passed.

The Baroness Burdett-Coutts.

The personal appearance of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, whose recent marriage in her sixty-seventh year to her young American secretary, Ashmead Bartlett, created such a flutter in English social circles, is thus described: She is tall and graceful, and has dark-brown hair and hazel eyes. Her energy and vitality are extraordinary, and when she is well she defeats her age by a dozen years. Her hands are very small and delicate, and have been modeled as specimens of perfect beauty. She usually dresses in dark velvet or silk of a well-chosen and subdued color. She wears no head-dress in the morning, but in the evening she is to be seen in an Angot cap. She has an abundance of most rare and costly jewelry, but she rarely makes any display of it on her person. Occasionally she wears a tiger's claw, richly set, as a pendant to the gold chain round her neck. It was presented to the baroness by Sir Garnet Wolseley, and she values it highly. The baroness is a good horse-woman and is fond of exercise, and she walks with an elasticity that many a younger woman might envy.

They had women doctors in Egypt over 3,000 years ago. Who knows but the obelisk may be a petrified M. D.—New York Commercial.

Manufacturers of glass cloth claim that by the new process building blocks can be made of glass that will be as desirable as stone or iron.

A chivalrous exchange thinks when a man marries a widow he should give up smoking. "She gives up her weeds;" he should be equally polite.

Facts to remember: Some men are good because goodness pays best; some men are good for nothing.