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Henry Labouchere, editor of London Truth, declares that there are over a million girls in England unable to secure husbands.

The year 1888 was a critical period in railway history, not only as affecting the United States, but as regards the rest of the world.

The Cincinnati Register facetiously predicts that if Utah comes into the United States she will probably be called the Matrimonial State.

Northern Maine, which is perhaps the oldest lumbering district in the country, still contains a supply of timber that is said to be practically inexhaustible.

The Garfield Monument at Cleveland, Ohio, will not be dedicated before Decoration Day. It is said that an admission fee will be charged, permanently, to all visitors.

It is thought by experts that the next census, to be taken June 1st, 1890, will show a population in the United States of 61,000,000—an increase of 14,000,000 over that of 1880.

The Cape Argus Weekly says that big game is getting scarce in the accessible parts of Africa. Trader hunters say that although occasionally they meet a lion, it is very rarely that an elephant or giraffe is seen.

During the French Republican celebration in Paris this year an international labor congress is to be held. A number of American organizations, including the Central Labor Union of New York city, will send delegates.

The Pittsburg widow who is suing one Frank E. Buffon for \$25,000 for the loss of her husband through a practical joke, deserves, asserts the New York Telegram, both sympathy and encouragement.

The assets of the Panama Canal Company at this time, as scheduled by the Philadelphia Press, consist of \$100,500,000 worth of machinery, \$150,000,000 of uncollectable claims, \$50,000,000 worth of ditch, a fractured credit and a large stock of gloomy prospects.

The cultivation of the grape has been greatly developed of recent years in Algeria; so much so that it seems possible that France may recover through her colony the profits of the industry which insects and decay were consuming in the home vineyards.

A Pennsylvania Member of Congress is looking up the question of parcel-post, with the view of introducing a bill to compel the adoption of the system in this country. The opposition of express companies is said to have something to do with the neglect of the American authorities to introduce a system that has been found of great benefit in all European countries.

A summing up of the iron and steel trade of the United States during 1888, as made by the Bulletin of Philadelphia, of the American Iron and Steel Association, shows that this was not a particularly prosperous year for the iron trade, and in many respects fell below 1887 and 1886.

The people of Dakota are looking for a new name by which to call one-half of that Territory. The present name will fit one of the new States which are to be carved out of it, but the other is said to be christened. Among the names suggested are Winona, Sanona and Pembina, but none of these is wholly satisfactory.

The study of fires in large cities shows that a considerable percentage is due to incendiaries, and the insurance companies, suggests the San Francisco Chronicle, should devise some method of swift and thorough investigation in order that incendiaries may be made too dangerous for criminals to take a hand in. It is probable also that in most States the penalty for arson could be increased, if it were shown that the present penalty was too light.

The San Francisco Chronicle's annual review states that 1888 was the most prosperous year in California's history. The present population is estimated at 1,400,000. Many counties have doubled, some tripled their population during the year. Mineral productions for 1888 are valued at \$170,000,000, orchard products at \$21,000,000, and cereals at \$35,000,000; hay and vegetables, \$6,000,000; wine and brandy, \$8,000,000; wool, \$7,500,000; saving bank deposits, \$175,000,000, or \$7,000,000 over 1887; assessed value of all property increased \$132,000,000; raisin product, 1,250,000 boxes; orange product, season 1888-89 estimated, 1,200,000 boxes; bean product, 70,000,000 pounds.

THE FARMER'S DECISION.

'Well, wife, I have studied it over, I've given it a good deal of thought. I've reckoned the costs and requirements, the trials which at last will be fought; I've looked over the pages of trouble, and jotted the items all down. And at last I've decided we'd better be movin' off to town.

'I know the old place is a relic that we always intended to keep. And we shall, for we'll rent it to some one who knows how to plow and to reap; yes, we'll rent the old homestead, not sell it, so you needn't begin with a frown. Then, after the thing is all settled, we will take our departure for town.

'This matter I long have considered, and now then I think it is best that we rent out the lands and the houses, and seek this new Eden of rest. We must try to be up with the fashions—O, jehaw! we're not any too old. I'm sixty and you're about fifty, not a very big figure all told.

'I've purchased a house of a townsman, 'tis fully two good stories high. I got it at a purty low figure, so I thought it would be best to buy; there's every convenience we're wantin' both inside the mansion and out. The whole thing was bought at a bargain, for I think I know'd what I was about.

'You see we can take up our quarters, and you, if you'll attend, can put on your best new apparel and call on your fashionable friends; while I, with my latest-out trousers, and you, with your new pig-bacon—why, the papers are bound to take notice and say we're residin' in town.

'To be sure, we'll be ever so 'tany—I guess that's the word that they use; they'll invite us to dinners and suppers, and be mad if we dare to refuse. We will rent a new church-pew and buy new books, and should the good people desire, our assistance will lend to the callin', and send forth our notes in the choir.'

'So the farmer, good soul, found a tenant, a man that 'could see to affairs.' And he rented the premises safely and dropped agricultural cares. He drew up the rentable papers and copied them off in his book. And now that the business is settled, let's go into town for a look.

'Why, Solomon! what is the matter, is there anything out of the way? I've been thinkin' I'd tell you of somethin' and I guess I will do it to-day. You know I intended the social—they didn't give me an invite, and my feelin's were never so shattered as they were on that very same night.

'I heard one proud feminine critter make dif'rent remarks 'bout my face, and one of 'em said how my speeces didn't fit in their natural place; I never did sleep with a grammar, so I tried to be perfectly cool. But I guess how if I dared say it, I could do it which of us was the fool.'

'And the farmer agreed with his helpmate, he'd a trial of a similar kind. He said it had badly hurt him, and was 'preyin' his jaw on his mind.'

HOUSEROLD AFFAIRS.

Patting Down Pork. This is the season when in most farmers' homes pork and beef are packed for use during the year. It requires some care to do this so as to certainly avoid loss. The bloody pieces, and all parts in which a particle of blood is attached, should be put one side for immediate use, by boiling for nine minutes or used for sausage. Blood will cause the whole barrel to spoil and become worthless.

It was while making my rounds one morning that I picked up a small volume which appeared familiar to me. I knew its shape, its color and its title, for had I not myself parted with it after profound misgivings? I read it, and there in my familiar characters, was the inscription that I had placed there years before.

To MRS. MARY HEATHCOTE, From her Friend, Milton Cape. It was a rare edition of the songs of George Herbert, and I had underscored the lines: 'Only a sweet and virtuous soul, like season'd timber, never gives; But though the whole world turn to coal, then chiefly lives.'

O faithless womankind! I recalled those melting eyes, those trembling hands, and called myself a fool for treasuring a memory of the inconstant one. I was over with much force all the poetical metaphors which, from the beginning of time, have been hurled at woman. No doubt she had sold my gift, and it had strayed hither, to make food for the unfeeling eyes of a city multitude. I questioned the bookseller, but he knew nothing. I was too poor to purchase the volume, but begged him to put it aside until I could claim it.

It was now I remembered that I had never written home, for I had a romantic notion that I would be famous within six months after my departure. I intended to announce myself to my parents and to Mary with a flourish of trumpets, filling the one with remorse, and the other with pride. Then, after tears and reconciliation, I would be king of home and love, and—

That volume upset me. It made me angry, it made me sad. I had begun an article on Bibliolatry, but could not finish it. In the midst of a brown study I heard a knock at my door, followed by the curt announcement: 'A lady to see you.' The statement staggered me; it almost induced a fit of laughter. For five long years the only intercourse I had had with womankind was the monthly meeting with my landlady. But before I could control my astonishment, in stepped Mary Heathcote. Remembering the book, I greeted her with moderate warmth, while the effusiveness of her 'O Milton' bewildered me.

I was more than troubled. As I gazed upon her I could not believe she would practice deceit. She was taller, fairer, and more beautiful than when I left her, with a sweet, angelic look which stilled the rebellious words upon my tongue. I gradually learned that my father was very ill at D—, that, by expressing an earnest desire to visit him, I had been advertised for. That, obtaining no information, Mary, prompted by love, and thinking that because of the narrowness of my purse, I had sought the nearest large city, B—, started out bravely in search of me, with but a few dollars to aid her, and my treasured volume of songs to console her. Seeing her money fast away, and yet hopeful of meeting me, she reluctantly parted with my offering.

At this I started up and embraced my darling. How I cursed myself for my doubts! How I blamed myself for questioning one of the purest, noblest spirits that ever lived! I dried her tears with kisses, and told her how unworthy of her I was.

Mary then proceeded to relate how she found my address. Knowing me to be a lover of books, she naturally inquired about me at the stalls. Before I had succeeded in getting some literary work to do, it seems that I had left my address at one of the booksellers in case he at an time should be in need of one well up in Latin and Greek. So, she, my dear, and so with new joy in my heart, and accompanied by Mary, I bade good-bye to my landlady, who really seemed sorry to part with me. I approached the home I had not seen in five years with a tumultuous spirit. Remorse tinged my feelings, and when, shortly after, my father died, my sorrow knew no bounds.

To-day the only book store in the thriving town of D— is mine. Mary is at my side, and she has imbued some of that insidious bibliomania which makes books the be-all and end all. Every now and then, in remembrance of blood, we take out of its secluded nook a dainty volume upon whose fly-leaf is the inscription: TO MRS. MARY HEATHCOTE, From her Friend, Milton Cape. I went to B— and purchased it immediately after my father's funeral.—New York Journalist.

THE SOBBING RAIN.

The night grows dark, and weird, and cold; and thick drops patter on the pane; There comes a wailing from the sea; the wind is weary of the rain. The red coals flick beneath the flame; and, with slow and silent feet, The hooded shadows cross the woods to where the twilight waters beat; Now fanwise from the rusty fire, a brilliance sweeps athwart the floor.

As, streaming down the lattices, the rain comes sobbing to the door; As, streaming down the lattices, the rain comes sobbing to the door. Dull echoes round the casement fall, and after through the empty chambers go. Like forms unseen whom we can hear on tip-toe stealing to and fro; But fill your glasses to the brim, and, through a mist of smiles and tears, Our eyes shall tell how much we love to toast the shades of other years!

And hither they will flock again, the ghosts of things that are no more. While, streaming down the lattices, the rain comes sobbing to the door; While, streaming down the lattices, the rain comes sobbing to the door. The tempo-trodden wast-lands moan, the trees are thrashing at the blast, And now they come, the pallid shapes of dreams that perished in the past; And, when we lift the windows up, a smothered whisper round us strays, Like some lone wandering voice from graves that hold the wreck of by-gone days.

I tell you that I love the storm, for think we not of thoughts of yore. When streaming down the lattices, the rain comes sobbing to the door; When streaming down the lattices, the rain comes sobbing to the door. We'll drink to those we sadly miss, and sing some solemn songs we know. Since they may chance to hear it all, and miss on friends they've left behind, Why know'st if souls in bliss can leave the borders of their Eden home— But that some loving one may now about the ancient threshold roam! Oh, like an exile, he would hail a glimpse of the familiar floor, Though, streaming down the lattices, the rain comes sobbing to the door. Though, streaming down the lattices, the rain comes sobbing to the door. —Henry Kendall.

Humor of the Day. A course of sprouts—Celery. A plain man—The ranchero. Maid to order—A servant girl. Words in season—Sea and sou. A beastly show—The menagerie. A slow match—Four years of courtship. A middleman must be a center in trade circles.

All the pawnshop patrons wants is to be let a loan.—Herald Mail. It is claimed by old hunters that a rabbit trail is merely a hair line. Marble statues are noted for their stony expression.—Pittsburgh Chronicle. 'While you are around this way drop in,' says the weighing machine to the nickel. Senator Edmunds believes in bringing the French domination at Coloa to a full stop.—London Post.

'What is the best position in which to sleep?' Doctor—'I usually lie down.'—Boston Courier. We pity the Waterbury Watch Company if it ever has to wind up its business.—Burlington Free Press. Only in the case of a tavern can a coat of paint on the outside be also on the inside.—Binghamton Republican. The poet who says he worves fancies 'light as zephyr's play,' probably used an air-loom.—Binghamton Republican. It is one of the peculiarities of things in general that the freshest men generally tell the staliest stories.—Bangor Commercial.

'Never allow yourself to get out of anything,' says a writer in a household journal. How about debt?—Burlington Free Press. Many men who gloomily ask: 'Is life worth living?' will not eat hot biscuits through fear of injuring their health.—Atholon Under. A German has discovered a process for covering cucumbers into sponges. The doctors are camping on his trail.—Burlington Free Press. The man who thinks he can leave in a few toddlers, and go home and deceive his wife into an idea that he is quite sober, is worse fooled than he thinks she is.—Milwaukee Journal.

Jack—'Mr. Slopps wants to know if you'll open a running account with him.' Dealer—'No; tell him I'm afraid I have too much running to do before we'd collect it.'—Detroit Free Press. 'I say, Jones, that was a shabby trick you played me about those trousers.' 'What's the matter, didn't they reach you all right?' 'Naw; they come O. O. D.; drat 'em.'—Detroit Journal. 'Time, 11:13 P. M. She—'Mr. Tiresum, what is your favorite exercise?' He (enthusiastically)—'Walking.' She—'I am glad to know it. I was afraid you had forgotten how.'—Burlington Free Press. 'Jinks (at the opera)—'What's that?' De Music—'The score.' Jinks—'Hello! Didn't know a score could be kept on a guitar like this. Which side is ahead in the battle of the singers?'—Philadelphia Record.

Miss Bruce (who has heard that her friend Miss Peering has had a falling out with Mr. Towney)—'Why, I thought, Eugenia, that you and Dick were solid.' Miss Peering (gliding)—'Oh, dear, no—only plated.'—The Casino. At the concert—'Do you call that music? Nobody can tell what they are playing.' Waitress—'If you please, sir, the playets have had a quarrel to-day, so you see they are quite angry with each other still, and every one is playing what he chooses.' Mrs. Blenkins (time, midnight)—'Horror! Husband, husband, I hear some one burrowing through the wall.' Mr. Blenkins—'Well, well! It must be that book agent. I knew we'd all be in bed by 11 o'clock, and I told him to call at half past.'—New York Weekly.

PRISONED WITH A COBRA.

AN EAST INDIAN TRAVELER'S HORRIBLE FIGHT IN A PIT. Slaying the Deadly Viper with a Hunting Knife—Then Narrowly Escaping Drowning. A party of globe trotters were gathered around a table in a cozy corner in one of Gotham's best-known restaurants a few nights ago, exchanging bits of biographical adventure. Two or three stories had been recited when one of the younger members turned to a grizzled old fellow, whose bronzed and wrinkled face bore witness to long exposure to sun and weather, and said: 'Pecos, won't you tell 'em that story about your experience in a tiger pit when you were in India?'

After a pause of sufficient length to arouse the curiosity and impatience of the group, the old fellow plunged into his tale much as he would have plunged into a jungle. 'I was hurrying along a slight track, when, bang, all at once, down I went into the concealed pit. The curious part of the affair was that I went plump straight down into a deep, dismal hole, and at the bottom landed right up to my waist in a deposit of tenacious, clayey mud. Regular 'pank' it was. In fact when I tried to struggle and free myself, I found I was held as firm as if I had been bidrinded. I shuddered as I noted the dismal surroundings. There were several great, gaunt-looking, yellowish-green frogs peering at me with curious eyes, and then, as I turned my head around a little, I made a discovery that made my very heart cease beating for a minute and sent every drop of blood in my body bounding back in my veins.

'There, right on a level with my face, its length half concealed in the crumbling sides of the pit, its hood half expanded, its forked tongue quivering as it jerked it out and in, and its eyes glittering with a baleful glare, I saw a great cobra. I felt utterly helpless and despairing, and for a moment my heart whispered to me that my end had come. Then came a sort of nervous recklessness. I suppose it was the fury of despair that we read about. I know I uttered a savage curse, and snatching my hard helmet I hit the brute a smashing blow in the face, and then began a fight for life. It was a big, powerful snake. The blow had only maddened it. Its hood expanded, its hissing filled the pit, and swaying and rearing its clammy length it launched full at my face.

'My gun was lying choked up with dirt and half buried in the 'pank,' but I had my hunting-knife with me, and while I parried the fierce darts of the infuriated brute with my helmet I made quick snatches at it whenever I could get a chance, and after a short, exciting struggle it succumbed and tried to withdraw behind the crevice, but with a slice of my knife I nearly severed its head from its body. And then for a while—you may laugh at me or not, as you will—all was a blank. I must have fainted.

'The weary hours dragged along. It was intensely still and sultry above. I conjectured, for even in the deep, dark pit the air was stifling and oppressive, and I could not detect a sound or rustle in the vegetation that overhung the mouth of my living tomb. I could now see that the day was waning. The heat had become, if possible, still more sultry and intense, and once or twice I had fancied I heard a low, muttering rumbling sound as if of distant thunder. The clouds were hurrying up in tremendous solid masses, and soon a big drop or two of rain began to come hustling through the overhanging grass, and another dread began to take possession of my mind. I knew what was coming. From a hundred tiny crevices and gaps in the edge of my pit the troubling, turbid rain water began to trickle down, crumbling the clay away, and I was soon drenched to the skin, and felt with alarm the water beginning slowly, but surely, to mount up the sides of the pit. I thought then it was all up with me. I can hardly describe to you my thoughts. I knew I thought of home. I reviewed my life. I made desperate rushes at the again and again to free myself. I shouted and screamed for help. I believe I prayed and swore. In fact, for the time, I believe I must have gone demoralized, but I found myself utterly powerless. The my clay and treacherous 'pank' held me firm, and then again I must have relapsed into unconsciousness.

'When I came to myself it was light; it was still raining heavily and steadily; it was the dull drops plashed down; I could see dull leaden skies above, and I knew the 'nullahs' and watercourses would soon be full. The battle of the elements had ceased, and but for the continuous crash of falling rain all was still. The water in the net was now rising up to my shoulders. I felt I was doomed to die, and a sort of sulles, despairing stupor took possession of me. I had now given up all hope, when, hark! I thought I heard the sound of a human voice! With all the agony of despair I raised a cry for help.

'I heard with an awful pause, and then I heard my faithful hanka crying in my ear. Again I cried out, and I soon saw his dear, old wrinkled face peering down at me from the edge of the pit.' 'Well, how did they manage to get you out?' asked one of the raconteurs. 'Oh, that was not easy, but they managed it. Some of them cut down saplings and managed to make a sort of ladder, and the backs came down with a long ladder, and loosened the 'pank' round my body sufficiently for me to do the rest myself. Then they tied their 'puggree' and 'kummerbunds' together, and I knotted those around my waist and under my armpits, and with that help, they toggling away at the free ends, I managed to clamber out.'—New York Star.

The Cobra Plant. The cobra plant of Himalayas, belonging to the family Aroid, so strikingly resembles a cobra with its head erect, that persons coming upon it unaware instinctively recoil with horror. The half moon shaped markings on the cobra's head and the lines on its neck are imitated in the flower sheath of the plant, while the tongue like elongation of the pistil and of the midrib of the flower sheath serve to increase the resemblance of the plant to a living animal. An ordinary elephant produces 120 pounds of ivory.

The First Lightning-Rod. If we are to believe an Austrian paper, the first lightning rod was not constructed by Franklin, but by a monk of Seutenberg, in Bohemia, named Protop Divisch, who installed an apparatus the 15th of June, 1575, in the garden of the curate of Predrita (Moravia). The apparatus was composed of a pole surmounted by an iron rod supporting twelve curved-up branches, and terminating in as many metallic boxes filled with iron ore and closed by a boxwood cover, traversed by twenty-seven sharp iron points, which plunged at their base in the ore. All the system was united to the earth by a large chain.

Preparation of Trippe at Home. To prepare trippe, have the refuse emptied out and the stomach rinsed off in cold water; then with a sharp knife cut it up in pieces eight or twelve inches square. Have a tub or large kettle with six gallons of water, in which a quart of unslacked lime has been well stirred; if the lime has been air-slacked it will require twice the quantity. Throw the pieces of trippe into the solution and stir occasionally and let it stand in this ten or twelve hours; then take a piece of board and rest upon the edge of the tub or kettle, with one end in the water. With a sharp knife scrape off all the slime and colored secretions, which will come off very easily. As each piece is scraped clean throw it into a pail of clean water and rinse it so that no impurities remain on any part of it. Now put it into a large pan or jar, dissolve two table-spoonfuls of baking soda in three gallons of water and pour over it and let it stand a day or two; then boil in fresh water until tender. Drain off and put into a crock and pour sharp vinegar with half a lemon juice over it, so that it stand a couple of days and it will be ready to use either fried, boiled or uncooked, and is very nice and palatable. Lye made of hardwood ashes may be used in place of lime, and it will be just as clean and good, but will not look quite as nice as when cleaned with lime.—New York World.

Fat For Frying. Just here let me tell thee how to prepare fat for frying that will not have the disagreeable taste or smell that lard has, neither will it be so expensive. Have thy butcher reserve it for thee, say about ten pounds at a time, of the best beef fat, and cut it up into small pieces. When it is brought into the kitchen, put it into a large pan, and cover it over with cold water, and let it stand a day or so, as convenient. Then take it out, putting it into a broad kettle over the stove to gradually fry out. When done strain it off into pan with some cold water in the bottom. All impurities will settle in the water or on the cake of fat, and the next day it can be melted over and poured into jars for use. For frying I prefer deep fat for many things, also the kettles for that purpose, consisting of a double kettle, the lower one for the fat, with a side handle for allowing the upper one, which has holes in it, to be hung upon it, and so drain off all superfluous fat from the articles fried. Have all pieces of fat from steaks or roasts of beef saved, fried and strained. Chicken fat as it is taken from the chickens before they are cooked, is very nice for making molasses gingerbread, and, by some, considered nice for shortcakes and biscuits. Mutton fat I know of no use for (as it is impossible to disguise the taste) except for clapped hands and the like, but all such scraps are good for soap grease, and it can be easily made and is very useful for cleaning purposes. Fat from sausage meat is good for frying potatoes, also for gingerbread. Just try it if thee feels disposed to doubt it.—Housewife.

SOFT GINGERBREAD.—Three teaspoonfuls of four, one of sugar, one of molasses, one of milk, quarter pound of butter, an even teaspoonful of soda, two eggs, a large spoonful of ginger, put all together and beat till light, then bake one hour. MANCHESTER SPONGE CAKE.—Beat the yolk of two eggs, with one cup of powdered sugar, add one teaspoonful of lemon extract, one cup of flour, one teaspoonful of baking powder, the whites of the eggs beaten stiff, lastly four tablespoonfuls of hot water. MUSTARD KETCHUP.—Take one table-spoonful each of mustard and flour, one teaspoonful of black pepper and salt and two teaspoonfuls of sugar. Moisten all with good vinegar. Have on the stove one pint of vinegar to come to a boil, then pour in the mixed ingredients. Let it boil and keep stirring, then pour it into a wide-mouthed bottle. When cool it's ready for use. CRUMBS PREADING.—One quart of sweet milk, one pint of bread crumbs, three-quarters of a cup of sugar, yolks of four eggs, butter size of an egg, flavor with