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The American farmers depend largely upon foreign markets for the sale of their products.

Massachusetts spent last year \$4.65 on each 1000 of its valuation for the public schools, the total amount paid being \$11,829,911.

Ex-President Bartlett, of Dartmouth College, says that Japan is filled from end to end with all the apparatus of the latest civilization, down to the electric car and the international exhibition.

Statistics recently published by the Spanish Government show that out of 19,000,000 inhabitants 8,727,519 persons are not engaged in any business. Many of this class have been supported by the enormous taxation levied on the colonies.

The Augusta (Me.) Journal says: A Gardiner man who works in the paper mills at \$1.75 a day and supports a family of children subscribed to the shoe factory fund. A man with ability to do that in the circumstances ought to have financial management of the new concern.

The one hundred and twenty-seven savings banks in New York State report an increase of resources of nearly thirty million dollars during the last year, while deposits exceed withdrawals by nearly a million dollars. The New York Herald thinks the "condition of these institutions is a good indication of the condition of the people, and optimists will find encouragement in the report just issued."

Professor Monk of the University of Berlin, famous for his discoveries in the physiology of the brain, says it is a great mistake to suppose that gymnastic exercises sandwiched in between school hours rest the pupils. On the contrary, he says, they still more fatigue the brain, which ought to have absolute rest. If both studies and gymnastics are to be indulged in on the same day, he says, they should be separated by intervals of rest.

Farm, Field and Fireside believes it would be well for every State to set its convicts to work in making good roads. This would remove their competition with other labor and other manufacturers, and, of even more importance, it would result in permanent improvement of the roads. No class of people are so much interested in this result as are the farmers. To them it means money saved, money earned and added comfort to their families with all the civilizing influences which come from case in meeting together socially at all periods, all seasons and in all kinds of weather; ease and comfort in reaching the school house and the church. In fact, the blessings of good roads are simply the blessings of a higher civilization."

At the dinner of the Whitefriars' Club, London, which includes the best-known authors and newspaper writers, United States Consul Genra Collins was the guest of honor, and over one hundred persons were present, including Messrs. Henty, Farjeon, Christie Murray, Poultony Bigelow and Mr. Lowe, editor of the St. James's Gazette. Replying to a toast, the Consul General made a speech of refreshing candor, in which he good-naturedly criticized the English and praised America. "You have so much time at your disposal," he said, "as to be able to devote much of it to the regulation of the affairs of other countries. You hold your meetings, appoint your committees and denounce Lynchings in America; yet you kill more monthly in Africa than we have done in our history."

Nobody knows how many vessels have been wrecked on Cape Cod since the bleak December day when the Soudier rounded Race Point and sought shelter in what is now the harbor of Provincetown. The number is very great, however, and the loss of life on this most dangerous part of the whole New England coast has been something appalling. A list, admitted to be incomplete, of the wrecks since 1873 shows that 151 vessels, including three steamers, have gone to pieces on the pitiless sands of the Cape, and had not the waves always hastened to remove the evidences of their work, the shore all the way from Chatham, at the elbow of Massachusetts's elbow, to the crook of her bent hand, would be piled high with the ribs and planking of shattered vessels. A large proportion of the Cape's victims are coasting schooners, with only an occasional bark or brig. These disasters, therefore, rarely attract much attention, but they are tragical none the less, and almost every storm adds to the number of dreadful stories which the lighthouse keepers and members of the life-saving service have to tell.

HOPE'S PROMISE.

While the life of a man
Moves smoothly along
And his walks he spars
From the sorrowing throng.
He may sooty deary
Faith's "unreasoning prayer"
And assert with a calm,
Philosophical air
That the grave is the sum
Of humanity's gains—
The reproach and reward
For its pleasures and pains:
But Philosophy sees
From the presence of Woe
Like an ally abashed
In the face of the foe.
O, parent whose eyes
Deathless longing revealed
In that glance ere by Death
They were silently sealed,
O, babe that has passed
To the presence above,
Art thou gone for all time
From the presence of love?
And thou who wast more
Than all mortals also dear,
Art thou lost to the soul
That was one with thee here?
Ah! 'tis false, sophists turn
From the lowly that grieve,
But the Father sends hope
Unto them that believe,
And their hearts in the years
They thereafter shade
Are the sweeter because
Of Hope's promise made.
—Frank Putnam, in Chicago Times-Herald.

IRMA'S BETROTHAL.

N one of the turret-rooms of Reitzenberg Castle a young girl, arrayed in a simple dress and white apron, sat sewing industriously. At the sound of footsteps she paused in her work; at the sight of a beaver officer in uniform she reddened with vexation. Yet there was nothing in Albert von Reitzenberg's appearance to annoy her; on the contrary, he was young, very good-looking, tall, and of dignified bearing. "Will you allow me to come in?" he asked, standing on the threshold. The girl took up her work again. "You can come in if you wish" she said, indifferently. He walked across the room. I have a proposal to make to you, Baroness Irma. Will you give me your attention for a little while?" She looked at him indignantly; she had a sweet oval face and deep gray eyes. "I prefer not to listen to you, Count Albrecht." "It thought that you would say so!" (there was something like a ring of triumph in his voice), "but indeed my proposal is very harmless. Let us come to an understanding." There was uncertainty, distrust, in her eyes. "Yes," continued the young officer, "I know that you have every reason to be offended. You have been most unfairly treated." "I have been invited to this house under false pretences. I came because I thought that the visit would give pleasure to Fran von Wolde, who fills, or is supposed to fill, the place of my mother. I am sorry to speak disrespectfully of your cousin, but—" "Not at all. You are perfectly right, and my relative Fran von Wolde is in the plot, and has been from the beginning. I know all about it now. My old uncle has just enlightened me. I am the heir of Reitzenberg Castle—you will excuse my mentioning my name first—have received orders to offer my hand and my debts, in marriage, to the Baroness Irma von Buchow, who, on attaining her majority, will become possessed of so large a fortune that she could fee the Reitzenberg estate with a stroke of her pen. Nay, hear me out; this lady was to have been kept in ignorance of the plan, but that her friend and chaperone could not resist the temptation of giving her a hint as to how matters stand, after she had become the guest of the castle. Is this so?" She stood by his side now, and the sunlight just touched the coil of her auburn hair. "I have been deceived, cruelly deceived." "Under the circumstances, nothing remains for me but to give you the opportunity of expressing your opinion as to this tyrannous family compact even more decidedly than you have done already. Baroness Irma of Buchow, will you consent to give me your hand in marriage?" "Count Albrecht of Reitzenberg, I thank you for the honor which you have shown me. I will not." They stood facing each other, and as Irma looked at her strange wooer she saw a faint smile in his eyes. Her own anger was beginning to evaporate; he really was behaving well, considering that the Reitzenbergs were renowned for their hasty tempers. "You admit," she said, after a pause, "that I have been awkwardly pleased." "I admit that you have been indignantly abominably treated! I binah to think that a member of our family could have dreamed of such a scheme. In order to show you how penitent I am, now that I have received my dismissal, I will immediately leave this house and rid you of my presence." "If you do that, Count Albrecht, I shall be worse off than ever. You don't know your cousin, Fran von Wolde. She will insist upon my remaining here for three months as was arranged, she will reproach me for your absence, she will argue and make me dislike you more than ever, if—"

"If possible?" His good humor was irresistible; she burst into a merry laugh. For another half hour the rejected suitor remained in conversation with the heiress, and at the end of that time they, too, had a plot. Albrecht was to remain at the castle, he and the Baroness Irma were to pretend to be on amicable terms, and the two conspirators (the Count and the chaperone) were not to learn until the last day of the visit expired that their hopes had failed. "I will endeavor to make your visit as little irksome to you as possible," explained the heir of Reitzenberg; "and we can behave as if there were no animosity between us." "Yes" (there was still a little doubt in her voice and manner), "I think that I can trust you." "Come," he said gently, "Baroness Irma, is it a truth between us signed and sealed?" He took her hand in his, and, bending over it, raised her fingers to his lips. The master of the Castle was the first to begin hostilities. One day, toward the end of the three months' visit, Irma came into the drawing room to find the whole party awaiting her arrival, and in an instant she perceived that something was wrong. Fran von Wolde had been shedding tears, the old Count's brow was clouded with anger, and Albrecht—Irma hardly dared to look at him, so changed was his aspect. It was too clear that the termination of the pleasurable companionship of the last few weeks was to be war. "My dear Baroness Irma," said the Count, advancing to meet his young guest with ceremonious politeness, "you exceedingly pleased to see you, your visit here has given me great satisfaction. You honored this house with your presence, with the full consent of your guardian and my esteemed cousin, Fran von Wolde. I had hoped, not without grounds, that the friendship between you and my heir was gradually ripening into a deeper and more lasting feeling. The alliance is one which must give satisfaction to all interested in our families. Imagine my distress on hearing to-day from my nephew that you have refused his proposal of marriage."

Irma looked toward Count Albrecht; something that she read in his writhing face made her hesitate as she answered: "It is quite true; we are friends, and nothing more." "It cannot be, my dear young lady, that so young a maiden should have given away her preference without the consent or knowledge of her guardian? Answer me candidly: are your affections already engaged?" The color surged into Irma's cheeks and left them pale again. She glanced at Fran von Wolde. There was no help for her there. "This is a question which you have no right to ask, Count Reitzenberg, and which I refuse to answer. I must beg you to excuse me."

The Baroness Buchow was right! burst in Albrecht. "She has suffered enough at our hands already. She shall not be thwarted in her will. If she honors me with her friendship, I accept it gratefully. Listen to me, my uncle, I refused to be a party to your scheme." He rose and held the door wide open. There was no smile on his face now; his eyes were full of trouble as they rested on hers. He did not offer to take her hand in farewell. He stood there in mute distress as she passed by—a fair, girlish figure in her white dress, her laces and blue ribbons—and she passed him without a word. The truth between them was over.

A Frightful Record.

The old French convention lasted three years, one month and four days, says the New York Tribune. It had 749 members and passed 11,310 decrees. Of its 749 members fifty-eight were guillotined—Duray, June 26, 1793, being the first and Bishop Hagnot the last, October 6, 1796; eight were assassinated and two shot; fourteen committed suicide; five died of grief; six perished in a violent fire; three died on the highway, to be eaten by dogs; one, Armonville, the last member of the red cap, perished in a drunken fit; four died mad; two were killed in the army; one was carried away by the Prussians and never heard of; three died suddenly; one expired in prison; one fell dead of joy on learning that Bonaparte had disembarked at Fréjus; 135 perished in exile or in penal settlements, twenty-three were never heard of from the date of the eighteenth Brumaire; sixty-five vanished after the coronation of Napoleon, and twenty-five died in poverty and obscurity. The convention had sixty-three presiding officers, of whom eighteen were guillotined and eight transported; twenty-two were outlawed, and six sentenced to imprisonment for life; four died in madhouses and three committed suicide.

Italy's Deserted Cities.

No more romantic places exist than the deserted cities of Italy. They are to be found all over the country, but chiefly in the marsh of Ancona and the old grand duchy of Tuscany. In these you may see great marble palaces, to which a bit of string does for a bell-rung, and, if you enter, you will find a corner of some grand saloon, often with a ceiling by an illustrious artist, screened off for the inhabitant to live in. The inhabitant may be some Italian or English lady, who has the smallest possible independence, and she may get such a palatium, where some Cardinal or Marquis formerly lived, for a very few pounds a year. Trapped a Bear in His Cart. William Delong, a Carmel (Penn.) butcher, while returning home from a trip to a neighboring town saw a big bear standing in the road ahead of the wagon. The brute ambled to the rear of the wagon, raised himself into it and proceeded to feast on a ten-pound leg of mutton which was hanging inside. One of the bear's paws accidentally struck a lever and the doors flew shut. Delong lashed the horses and drove toward Carmel, four miles away. The bear tried to get out and stuck his head through a glass near Delong's face, but could not get out. Reaching Carmel the bear was shot.—New York Press.

A Three-Legged Rooster.

Garret Dalton, who lives between Carbonado, Penn., and Honedale, is the owner of a three-legged rooster. The third leg is used principally as an instrument of battle, and it has caused many a game cock to crawl its last crow. The bird has another peculiarity—it will crow only at certain hours of the day—at 6 o'clock in the morning, at noon and at 6 o'clock in the evening. Mr. Dalton's eating hours.—New York Press.

THE MERRY SIDE OF LIFE.

STORIES THAT ARE TOLD BY THE FUNNY MEN OF THE PRESS.

Weak Little Suggestion—A Bad Break—A Give-A-Way—A Firm Grip—Overshot the Mark, Etc. I had called her my gem and my jewel, and pet names to lovers well known, but she smiled and peacefully asked me: "Why don't you call me 'your own'?"

A BAD BREAK. "How did you get on with your skating?" "The One Who Got In—'Oh, swimmingly.'—Life.

BADLY PAIRED. "You can't expect any good to come of these ill-assorted marriages." "No, indeed! And she had a very poor assortment."—Puck.

ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE. First Spanish Soldier—"The insurgents have attacked the rear." The Other—"Caramba! Let us hasten to the front!"—Life.

THE DEAR. "Dear girl!" "She's like ice to me." In other words, she was not especially dear at this time of the year.—Puck.

OVERSHOT THE MARK. Elmore—"What makes Harlan so hard up just now? Lost his job?" Dayton—"Oh, no. He has a big raise in his salary and is trying to live up to it."—Truth.

JUST THE OTHER WAY. Western Transient—"Did you ever live on the border, madam?" Landlady—"No, indeed, sir, but I've had a good many boarders live on me."—Boston Courier.

A GIVE-A-WAY. "She says she's twenty-five, but she's thirty-five. I can read it between the lines." "What lines?" "Those on her face."—Harper's Bazar.

FORSHOFT. "Do you think Julia will accept the offer of her foreign lover?" "No; her father says when they go abroad they may get something cheaper and just as good."—Chicago Record.

COURTEOUSNESS AGAINST HER. Frederick—"That photographer is certainly chasing after the impossible." Willy—"How is that?" Frederick—"He asked Miss de Millions to look pleasant."

EXPLAINED. "You say he hugged you like a bear." "Yes." "And you found it sweet?" "Well—er—yes. It was like a cinnamon bear, you know."

EVOLUTION. His Wife—"And you are to defend that shoplifter?" The Lawyer—"My dear, she isn't a shoplifter. She was, formerly; but she has saved so much money in the last ten years that she has become a kleptomaniac."—Puck.

SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL.

A fish with nine months was captured in California the other day, and ichthyologists are in doubt what to name it.

A London scientist has invented a mirror of celluloid which accurately reflects every object. The celluloid mirror is unbreakable, and is cheaper than glass and lighter. The lighting of certain of the London prisons by electricity is under consideration, and it is proposed to erect a special description of tread-wheel to supply the motive power. Machine telegraphy has been so perfected that now 8000 words per minute have been transmitted with one instrument. This astonishing rate requires that the armature register 2600 impulses per second, the tape moving twenty-seven feet per second. Soil air is usually contaminated with a number of gases, and is on a par as to quality with sewer gas. Loss of appetite, resulting through the winter, with tendency to boils and pimples, can be traced to ingress of soil air into the house air from the cellar.

For measuring cloth a device recently patented has two rollers, between which the cloth is pulled, one of them being connected with an indicator to show the number of yards reeled off. It also has a trough for holding the bolt of cloth and a knife for cutting the cloth. A new propeller for steamboats consists of a central hub, a broad inclosing rim and the usual propeller blades, the ends of which are fastened to the rim, which revolves with the propeller, thus lessening the liability of breakage by the blades coming in contact with other substances.

France is about to take the lead in adopting the decimal system of reckoning time. This provides that ten hours shall constitute a day's work, one hundred minutes an hour, and one hundred seconds a minute. This will greatly simplify all calculations of time. The universal use of this system will then be urged.

To prevent nuts from slipping and coming off a new device has a small threaded bolt projecting beyond the main bolt, the threads of which run in opposition to the latter. The nut has two opening arms threaded to fit the small bolt, on opposite sides, which can be sprung away out of line when the nut is to be unsecured. In continued use of the eyes, in such work as sewing, typesetting, bookkeeping, reading and studying, the saving point is looking up from the work at short intervals and looking around the room. This may be practiced every ten or fifteen minutes. This relieving the muscular tension rests the eyes and makes the blood supply much better.

Quaker Customs of the Costa Ricans. According to Harry C. Lowrie, an American engineer who has recently spent several months in Costa Rica, they have some peculiar customs down there. The towns have no jails, but murderers are placed in the old fashioned stocks, where they remain until the authorities have time to hang them. The dreadful weapon of the Spanish-American is met everywhere in the country—the machete. With it the native can cut his way through the densest tropical underbrush, chop down trees, shave you, open a can of beans, chop off your head, or whittle a toothpick. It is a straight, thin blade, about two and a half inches wide and thirty inches long.

President Rafael Iglesias is a very active and progressive man and quite a shrewd politician. Just before the "election" he jailed the principal leaders of the opposition for pernicious activity and announced himself President.—Kansas City Star.

Chased by Gray Wolves in Dakota. Reports from the Northwest and the timber districts lying along the Red River indicate that the gray wolf is giving settlers more trouble than usual by menacing their flocks and herds. Ordinarily the gray wolf is not a dangerous creature for a man to meet, but it frequently happens in the winter that it is driven desperate by hunger, and then heaven help the living creature that happens to cross its path.

Augustus Stockdale, a drummer, who has traveled through the Dakotas for years, tells of a thrilling experience he had one night while driving from Lidgewood to Wahpeton. He was in a sleigh with a driver when a pack of wolves gave chase. He shot and killed one, but the others continued the chase until the Red River was reached. The horses plunged into the water and were drowned. The drummer and the driver saved their lives by climbing into a tree.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

A Privilege of British Generals. British Generals have privileges not accorded to peers in the English police courts. Sir Reginald Gipps, who was recently summoned for riding a bicycle on a footpath at Aldershot, sent his servant to pay his fine of five shillings and to tender an apology, which the magistrate accepted. Several peers' wives who were guilty of carrying ununzipped lapdogs in their carriages were obliged to attend court in person last year.—New York Sun.

Blankets. In the reign of Edward III. there were at Bristol three brothers, who were eminent clothiers and woolen weavers, and whose family name was Blanket. They were the first persons who manufactured that comfortable material which has ever since been called by their name, and which was then used for peasants' clothing.—Tit-Bits.

AN OPTIMIST.

I know as my life grows older, And my eyes have clearer sight, That under each rank wrong somewhere There lies the root of right; That each sorrow has its purpose, By the sorrowing oft unguessed; But as sure as the sun brings morning Whatever is—is best.

I know that each sinful action, As sure as night brings shade, Is somewhere some time punished, Tho' the hour be long delayed. I know that the soul is laid Sometimes by the heart's unrest, And "to grow" means to suffer, But—whatever is—is best. I know there is no error In the great superlativ plan, And all things work together For the final good of man. And I know when my soul speaks onward In its grand eternal quest, I shall cry as I look back earthward, Whatever is—is best.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

The question is this; does a hen oogle because she lays an egg, or does she lay an egg so she'll have something to oogle about?—Truth.

"She says she's twenty-five, but she's thirty-five. I can read it between the lines." "What lines?" "Those on her face."—Harper's Bazar.

"Do you think Julia will accept the offer of her foreign lover?" "No; her father says when they go abroad they may get something cheaper and just as good."—Chicago Record.

Under the spreading chestnut tree The village poet stands, And hammers out his poetry Of "snow" and "springtime" brands. —Cincinnati Tribune.

"I believe you men think more of your wheels than you do of your wives." "Why not?" "We can get an improved make every year."—Chicago Record.

Mrs. G. (as her husband departs for a club meeting)—"If you're any later than midnight I shan't speak to you." G.—"I hope you won't, dear!"—London Figaro.

"I love to have you come and see sister, Mr. Thompkins." "Why, Dickie?" "Cause she never likes that candy you bring her, an' gives it to me."—Chicago Record.

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WROTE HIS FUNERAL SERMON.

Dr. William Ellery, who was one of the pioneers of Madison County, Indiana, died lately at his home near Frankton. The sermon which was delivered at his funeral he wrote himself three years ago for the occasion. Besides being a farmer and practicing as a physician he was an Adventist preacher. In recent years he had suffered persecution from some unknown foe who burned his barn and wrote threatening letters to his family.—New York Sun.