Juniata Sentinel and Republican.

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VOL. XXXVII. MIFFLINTOWN, JUNIATA COUNTY, PENNA., WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 1883. NO. 3.

OLD TIMES.

There's a beautiful song on the slumbrous air
That drills through the valley of dreams;
It comes from a clime where the roses were,
And a tuneful heart, and bright brown hair
That waves in the morning beams.

Soft eyes of azure, and eyes of brown,
And snow-white foreheads are there,
A glimmering cross and a glittering crown,
A thorny bed and a couch of down,
Lost hopes and leaflets of prayer.

A rosy leaf and a dimpled hand,
A ring and a plighted vow;
Three golden rings on a broken hand,
A tiny track on the snow white sand,
A tear and sinless brow.

There's a tincture of grief in the beautiful song
That sobs on the summer air,
And loneliness felt in the festive throng
Sinks down in the soul as it trembles along
From a clime where the roses are.

We heard it first at the dawn of day,
And it mingles with matin chimes;
But years have distanced the beautiful lay,
And its melody floweth so swiftly away,
And we call it now "Old Times."

THE LEAF OF GER'NIUM.

It is very strange, when we come to think of it, on what small cogs and pivots the wheels of fate run, and what a slight jar will do towards changing the whole machinery and set it to running in an entirely different direction. It was a geranium leaf that altered the whole course of my life. But for the trivial leaf picked by a young girl in a thoughtless mood I should not be sitting here to-day in this pleasant dining-room, where the sun comes in through the vine-wreathed windows and falls upon the geranium pots inside; and this little girl would not be upon my knee, nor yonder red-cheeked maiden on the verandah with young Smithers; and neither would that very handsome matron who just passed into the parlor have been in her present situation.

If you will listen an hour or so, I will tell you my story. It was just twenty years ago this summer that I married Carrie Dean. She was twenty-one and I was twenty-seven—both old enough to know what we meant and what we were about—at least I was, but Carrie was such a coquette that I used to think she had no mind of her own.

Oh, but she was lovely! All rose colored and white and brown tressed, and pearly teethed, with the roundest, plumpest figure, as graceful as a fairy in every movement, and with beautiful, shapely hands that were a constant delight to the eyes.

I was just home from college and she was on a visit to my stepmother, her aunt, and my half sister Lilla, and her cousin.

I have seen a good many girls in my seven years at college, and some of the belles of the land; but I had never yet had my heart stirred by any woman's eyes as Carrie Dean stirred it when my eyes met hers in greeting; and the touch of her soft fingers completely set me afloat on the sea of love.

I was her slave from that hour—not her slave, either, but her passionate lover and worshipper. And of course she knew it, and of course, being a finished coquette, she queened it over me right royally.

There was Fred Town, the country physician, and Tom Delano, the handsome young farmer, both as badly off as I was; and a pretty time we had of it.

Fred and I—old chums in former days—were at swords' points now, and hated each other splendidly for a few weeks. And Tom I held in the utmost contempt, and railed at them both when ever opportunity presented itself, for Carrie's edification, after the manner of men, and was repaid by seeing her bestow her sweetest smiles and glances upon them the next time they met.

Fred drove a splendid span of bays, and almost every day they dashed up the avenue, and dashed out again with Miss Carrie's added weight. And Tom was on hand nearly every evening, and she was just as sweet to one as the other, and just the same to me; and that was what maddened me.

I was not to be satisfied with a "widow's third" by any means, and I told her so at last, and asked her how the matter was to be settled.

"I love you better than those brainless fops know how to love," I said, hotly; "and now decide between us."

She had listened to my love confession with blushing cheeks and downcast eyes; but when I said this she turned defiantly on me.

"They are no more fops than you are," she said, "even if they have not spent seven years in college. They are gentlemen and I can't say that for every man of my acquaintance."

And here she shut the door between us with a slam and left me to my pleasant meditations, and half an hour later I met her at the gate with Fred, going out for a ride, which was very aggravating, I must confess.

I thought over my conduct that night, and concluded that I had been a brute. The next morning I found Carrie at the dining-room window alone and sought her side. She had her hand among the leaves of a sweet-scented geranium, and just as I approached she plucked a leaf and twined it among her braids. I remember how bright and green it looked among the dark locks.

"Carrie," I began, "I fear I was very rude yesterday."

"I know you were," she said, looking indifferently out of the widow.

This was a bad beginning, but I went on:

"But, Carrie, I love you so, and when I see you with that Fred—"

But here Miss Carrie turned on her heel.

"I am not going to listen to you while you slander my friends," she said. "When you can speak respectfully of Mr. Town, I will return;" and here she left me again.

I left the house then, and did not return till afternoon. As I come up the path I met Tom Delano. Poor fellow, he looked like the last rose of summer after a rain.

"Good-bye," he said, gloomily; "I'm going away. She has sent me off, and I can't stay in the place. I hope you are the happy one—I do, honestly, Al. She said her heart was given to another, and it's either you or Fred. I hope it is you, and God bless you!"

Here Tom dashed away and left me staring after him in amazement.

"Given her heart to another!" I repeated, with a pain in my chest somewhere. "Well, it is evident that I am not the other, and that Fred is. Poor Tom—poor me! The best thing I can do is to follow suit and leave too. I can never see her the wife of another, and the sooner I am off the better."

So I went moodily up to my room and packed a satchel, and got all things in readiness for a speedy departure.

On my way up I met Carrie just emerging from her room, arrayed in her jaunty riding habit, and I could hear Fred's deep tones shouting "Whoa!" down in the yard below.

I watched her trip down the stairs and out of sight, thinking that it was the last time I should see her for years, perhaps forever.

When I had strapped the last buckle on my satchel and all was in readiness, I went down to say good-bye to father, mother and Lilla. Lilla was not indoors, and my parents looked at me in amazement.

"But, Allen, my son," pleaded father, "I had thought you would enter into business with me. There is a grand opening for you, and I have held the position in reserve."

"I thank you for all that, but I want to travel a year or two before going into business," was all I could answer; and my father gave up in despair.

Lilla was still absent; but it was quite dark, and the train would leave in half an hour, so I left a "good-by" for her, and passed out into the hall.

It was a long, narrow hall, reaching the whole length of the house, and with several rooms opening into it; but as yet it was unlighted and as dark as Egypt.

About half-way through it I heard the street door open and shut, and a moment later ran full against some one entering.

"It is Lilla," I thought, and reaching out my arms caught her between them. "Is it you, Lilla?" I said.

But she did not answer, only twined her two arms about my neck.

"Why, little sister," I said softly, "do you love me so much?"

For Lilla was not demonstrative as a usual thing, and I was surprised at her movement.

"Oh, better than all the world beside, Allen!" she said in a whisper.

And then, as I lifted the face to my lips, the sweet odor of geranium perfumed the air, and my heart gave a great leap.

It was Carrie, not Lilla, whom I held in my arms!

She was trying to disengage herself now, but I suddenly caught her light form in my two stout arms, and, opening the library door, I carried her into the brilliantly lighted room. Her face was hot with blushes now, and her eyes full of tears.

"You are too bad," she sobbed, "and I hate you!"

But just then she noticed my traveling attire and paused abruptly.

"Why, where are you going?" she asked with interest.

"I was going away, never to return," I answered; "but since you said what you did in the hall I have changed my mind."

Carrie pouted.

"I was only speaking for Lilla."

"Then I shall go, shall I, and leave you to marry Fred?"

"I detest Fred," she cried.

"And you love me better than all the world?"

"Yes."

So that flirt was conquered at last and I was the victor.

"But how did you know it was not Lilla?" she asked as we sat together.

"By the geranium leaf that I saw you put in your hair this morning."

"And out for that you would have gone away and not come back for years?"

"Yes, perhaps never come back, but for that tell-tale leaf."

"Then we will keep this leaf always," she said, taking it from her hair.

And so we have. I procured a golden box, and there it is to day one of our dearest treasures.

Of course I married Carrie, and of course that blooming matron is she.

Tom Delano did not die of a broken heart, but married a lovely girl out West a few months after his departure; and Fred Town is our family physician and has a pretty wife of his own.

An Angry Tree.

A gentleman of Virginia has a tree which is a species of acacia. It was grown from a seed brought from Australia. The tree is now a sapling some eight feet in height, and it is in full foliage, and growing rapidly. It is leguminous, and very distinctly shows the characteristics of the mimosa, or sensitive plant. Regularly every evening, about the time the "chickens go to roost," the tree goes to roost. The leaves fold together, and the ends of the tender twigs coil themselves up like the tail of a well-conditioned pig.

After one of the twigs had been stroked or handled, the leaves move uneasily, and are in a sort of mild commotion for a minute or more. All this was known about the tree, but it was only yesterday that it was discovered that the tree had in it much more life and feeling than it had ever before been credited with. The tree being in quite a small pot, one which it was fast outgrowing it was thought best to give it one of much larger size. Yesterday afternoon the tree was transferred to its new quarters. It resented the operation of its removal to the best of its ability.

Arriving at his residence about the time the tree had been transplanted, the gentleman found the house in grand commotion. On asking what was up he was told that they had transplanted the tree according to orders, and the operation had "made it very mad."

Hardly had it been placed in its new quarters before the leaves began to stand up in all directions like the hair on the tail of an angry cat, and soon the whole plant was in a quiver. This could have been endured, but at the same time it gave out an odor most pungent and sickening—just such a smell as is given off by rattlesnakes and many other kinds of snakes in summer when tossed. The odor so filled the house and was so sickening that it was found necessary to open the doors and windows. It was fully an hour before the plant calmed down and folded its leaves in peace. It would probably not have given up the fight then had it not been that its time for going to roost had arrived.

—Count Fitz James, of France, a direct descendant of Charles II, is keeping house in Washington.

White House Dinners.

Speaking of invitations to dinners in Washington, President Arthur, whose dinner parties will begin soon after New Year, will use the same style of invitation as last year, which was on a large card and read:

The President requests the honor of the company of——, at dinner on——.

Thursday was the usually the day of the week he chose last year for his dinners which was the day Washington preferred when President. I have before me, says a writer, copies which I have made from the original invitations of several Presidents.

First, of course, comes one of General Washington's. This I have copied from one in the possession of Mr. J. C. G. Kennedy, whose grandfather, Major Elliott, was one of the engineers who laid out this city. The invitation reads:

The President of the United States and Mrs Washington request the pleasure of ——Company to dine on——next at 4 o'clock.

——, 179—. An answer is requested.

Mr. Fillmore, while President, had one style of invitation on note-paper and another on a large card. Sometimes Mrs. Fillmore's name appeared with his and sometimes not. One style was worded:

The President requests the favor of ——'s company at dinner on Thursday next at 5 o'clock.

An answer is respectfully requested.

Another style used by him substituted the word honor for favor. One of Mr. Buchanan's, which Judge Black's daughter, (Mrs. Hornsby) has, reads much the same as Mr. Fillmore's:

The President requests the honor of Miss Black's company at dinner on Friday January the 8th, at 6 o'clock. An early answer is requested.

General Grant's dinner invitations generally read "the President and Mrs. Grant request the honor of," etc., but when they gave the reception in honor of the King of the Sandwich Islands, the invitations were worded:

The President of the United States requests the company of—— at the reception in honor of his Majesty, the King of the Hawaiian Islands on Thursday evening December 18th at 9 o'clock.

This is the only invitation of a President which I have found, except that of General Washington, where the form "President of the United States" is used. As has been mentioned, General Washington invited guests to dinner at four o'clock, Mr. Fillmore at five o'clock and Mr. Buchanan at six o'clock. President Grant's and those of President Hayes were at 7 o'clock, while for all that President Arthur had last winter half past seven was the hour named and the dinner usually began at eight.

General Washington's invitations were gotten up in a very fine style for that era, but he frequently, as I find from the writings of his contemporaries, extended verbal invitations, either in person or through one of his secretaries, to "official characters, members of Congress, strangers or citizens of distinction." John Adams, when consulted by Washington as to rules of etiquette soon after their inauguration, recommended this and said that 'such invitations should always be extended without formality." Nevertheless it was considered during the very first year of Washington's administration a mark of his favor when any one received an invitation to dine with him and an intimation that the course of a public man had excited his displeasure when no such invitation was tendered.

For instance, Senator Maclay wrote December 16, 1789, that Mr. Izard gave him "clear hints of his loss of character at court and of the direct influence of the President with members of Congress," instanced in extending invitations to them. Maclay had lost favor because he wanted votes by ballot in the Senate on Washington's nominations, and Senator Izard told him that all the other Senators had been to dine with the great man. A week later Washington attended a session of the Senate in person, accompanied by General Knox, the Secretary of War, to advise with the Senate about a treaty with Indians, and the day of his second visit to that body Senator Maclay was called out by the doorkeeper to speak to Colonel Humphreys, one of the President's household, and was by the latter verbally invited to dinner with the President on the following Thursday at four o'clock, that being Monday. Senator Maclay writes: "I really was surprised at the invitation. It will be my duty to go; however, I will make no inferences whatever. I am convinced all the dinners he can now give or ever could, will make no difference in my conduct."

"When the dinner occurred the company were President and Mrs. Adams, the Governor and his wife, Mr. Jay (Chief Justice) and wife, Mr. Dalton and a lady, perhaps his wife, and Mr. Smith, Basset and Maclay, Lear and Lewis, the President and Mrs. Washington sat opposite each other in the middle of the table. This custom has always been followed at a dinner given by a President who has a wife, but I presume few know how far back the precedent for it goes. The two secretaries, Lear and Lewis, each sat at one end of the table. It was a great dinner and the best of the kind I ever sat at. The room, however, was disagreeably warm."

This was in August. President Arthur has revolted against following this precedent, thought it is the general complaint that other host or hostesses here do have their rooms, even in winter, too warm. I heard President Arthur last winter when giving orders, just before one of his dinners was ready, to open the windows and cool the house. He added, laughingly, turning to another lady and myself: "There is an engineer here who has been so accustomed to overheating the rooms that, having remonstrated in vain, I feel tempted to order him to be slain and his body thrown in the river. But a man cannot do everything he wants, even if he is President!"

To return to Washington's dinner, the writer of the description continues: "First was soup, fish, roasted and boiled meats, gammon, fowls, etc. This was the dinner. The middle of the table was garnished in the usual tasty way with small images, flowers (artificial), etc. The desert was first apple pies, puddings, etc.; then iced creams, jellies, etc.; then watermelons, musk-melons, apple, nuts. It was the most solemn dinner ever I sat at," continues Maclay. "Not an health drank, scarcely a word said, until the cloth was taken away. Then the President, taking a glass of wine, with great formality drank the health of every individual by name round the table. Everybody imitated him—charged glasses, and such a buzz of 'health, sir,' and 'health, madam,' and 'thank you, madam,' never had heard before."

"The ladies sat a good while and the bottle passed about, but there was a dead silence almost. Mrs. Washington at last withdrew with the ladies. I expected the men would begin, but the same stillness remained. The President told of a New England clergyman who had lost a hat and wig in passing a river called the Brunks. He smiled and everybody else laughed. He now and then said a sentence or two on some common subject, and what he said was not amiss. The President kept a fork in his hand when the cloth was taken away, I thought for the purpose of picking nuts. He eat no nuts, but played with the fork, striking on the edge of the table with it. We did not sit long after the ladies returned. The President rose, went up stairs to drink coffee—the company followed." This precedent was followed at President Arthur's dinners last year.

Fancy Articles.

Fancy wares, and the new and pretty things in what may be called secondary jewelry that is small articles in silver and enameled or filigree wares that take fancy forms, are almost uniformly produced this season in some shapes of insect or animal life. Sporting men and women find inkstands, table-lamps, candle-sticks, pen-racks, paper-weights, watch-stands, table-bells, and many other things, all manufactured from hoofs so finely prepared, and so beautifully mounted with colored metals and silver as to be at once artistic and highly ornamental. One of the handsomest novelties of this description consists of hoofs forming the centre to a tripod, the double wax lights of the lamp burning clear under exquisite Venetian glass shades. This lamp costs from $120 to $200. A new form of pen-rests is a rustic garden seat made in olive wood, and furnished with penholders, paper-knife and the like. Sconces, or candle brackets, are no longer backed with mirrors but with brass plaques, chased, or worked in repousse. Brass ornaments are one of the great desiderata; a brass clock and small candelabra for side-pieces, or portrait plaques of Rubens, or Moliere, or Rembrandt, or Schiller for the hall. The cost of the first is beyond all but the rich, a fine brass clock with side-pieces being worth from $250 to $500, but the plaques are more practicable. Some of a moderate size may be purchased for $25, though the average is $50. The imitations of Benares brass turned out by machinery, are of course much cheaper, but we are speaking now of genuine hand-wrought articles. Brass burners, chandeliers and candle-sticks, brass fenders and grate fixtures, and brass clocks and plaques revive the burnished glories of the past, but require an amount of labor which the poor have not time to perform, and which the rich only can afford to pay for; so, naturally, the use is somewhat limited.

What is not brass is plush now-a-days, and still fashionable are the plush-covered frames which amateurs have found so convenient for exercising their brushes upon. But even here the new craze asserts itself. Instead of apple blossoms, an owl sits in the corner looking wise, or a small cockatoo is perched upon a rustic branch. The sides of the frames of pictures or small beveled mirrors are not equal, but much broader at the foot and off side than upon the other, and it is upon the off side that the bird or other decoration is placed.

The plush bag, or pouch, has become an institution. The bag is satin-lined and sometimes leather mounted; it is more durably finished than the pouch, and is carried in the hand. The pouch is suspended from the side, and forms a part of the looping of a dress; it may be of leather, but is often of embroidered satin or covered with a network of pearls ever silk. Velvet pouches, with engraved silver clasps and chatelaine to suspend it from the side, are sold as jewelry, and are sometimes set with precious stones, though usually the mounting is of wrought silver only. These cost from $35 to $50, and upward.

Jewelry, unless it is very rich, is now almost wholly confined to a fancy lace pin and earrings, to serpentine bracelets, and one or two bangle rings. The new pins are simple, but odd. The bar is a solid silver pin with enlarged head, which serves as a perch for a snail, a beetle, a tiny bird or a small row of flies. There is a small sunflower brooch which is very pretty, with a bee upon it; but these designs are easily coarsened and made common-looking by being executed in an inferior manner and with very cheap materials. A new flower series in lace pins has the charm of especial sentiment attached to each one; as woodbine, friendship; fern, sincerity; primrose, youthful affections, and periwinkle, remembrance.

The novelties in bracelets are the Helene, which is self-holding, and consists of a flexible coil which fastens itself to the arm; a shopping bracelet with pencil attached, and one of woven wire which also coils around the arm, and takes the place of the serpent bracelet. Small articles of real ivory, or shell, make charming presents to persons of refinement who cannot afford such purchases, and a fan never comes amiss to a lady. The three kinds of fans most approved are the rich feather fans with pearl or tortoise shell, or amber sticks; the fans of clear point lace, with gold wrought sticks, on ivory, pearl or amber; and the fans painted on satin by real artists and mounted in accordance with their cost.

Slowly Recovering.

"Sir!" cried a well-dressed man, whose face was purple with anger, as he walked up with head erect to another citizen on C street Virginia City, recently. "Sir, I understand you have been speaking of me as a fraud and a liar."

"Well," responded the person addressed—a man with a yellow sack coat and a big slouch hat, who was leaning against an awning post, "that's as true as gospel. I think you are a liar and a fraud if ever there was one."

"You do?" cried the other, growing pale and gritting his teeth, "You do, eh?"

"Yes, I do, and don't you forget it."

"In that case," retorted the well-dressed man, speaking with concentrated ferocity, "I must request you to consider yourself no longer on my list of exchanges," and turning upon his heel he strode away.

The man with the yellow sack-coat tottered into the nearest saloon, and at last accounts was slowly recovering.

Hospitality in a Cuacho Village.

For the last two miles our journey led through a dense forest, and it was necessary to march in single file so narrow was the path. We soon, however, noticed that we were approaching a clearing and no sooner, scarcely, had this fact dawned through our minds, than the village was presented to our astonished eyes. It consisted of about two hundred huts and around each of the huts were a number of dogs, all of whom came forward in a body and made such a horrible din with their yelping as would give one a very fair idea of Pandemonium. In the centre of the village stood a hut much larger than the rest, surrounded by quite a pretty garden. Differing from its neighbors, the entrance was large enough for a man to enter walking erect and was possessed of a door. There were several "bull's-eye" windows, evidently the remains of some unfortunate vessel, while over the outer walls of the hut vines had been trained and now covered them with a mantle of the most beautiful green. This was the residence of the Indian chief. A finely formed and intelligent looking negress opened the door of the hut for our admittance, and in broken Englis bade us welcome. The interior of the dwelling appeared almost as strange as the exterior surroundings, and its equipment was a sort of cross between a ship's cabin and a native hut. It was separated into two apartments, a palm-leaf matting separating the two rooms. On the walls were hung a number of articles peculiar to the country, such as antelope horns and quaint carvings—the product of native ingenuity—while upon a rough-looking table were displayed the tusks of elephant and rhinoceros, a few well-used volumes, a ship's chart and several trinkets, both of native and European manufacture. We hade been but a few minutes in the hut when we were aroused by a great noise outside, and upon going to the door we found that the natives were making preparations for a great barbecue in our honor. Immense quantities of yams, cocoanuts, dates and a variety of other fruit had been gathered, while a number of mountain goats and antelopes had been slain and their carcasses lay upon the sward where our dusky friends were engaged in removing their skins and otherwise getting them ready for the feast. From every tree on the borders of the village large crowds of monkeys looked down and performed gymnastic evolutions from bough to bough, evidently overjoyed at the prospect of obtaining a share of the good things that should remain after the people of the hamlet had retired to rest. By and by the din of a large horde of jackals, who had been attracted to the vicinity of the village by the savory smell of the roasting viands, was added to the songs of the natives, the discordant notes of the birds and the chattering of monkeys, and the whole combined to make one of the most infernal series of sounds that had ever grated upon the human ear.

Bricks.

The use of brick as a building material, both burnt and unburnt, dates from a very early period. Burnt brick is recorded in the Bible to have been used in the erection of the Tower of Babel. We have the testimony of Herodotus to the effect that burnt bricks were made from the city thrown out of the trenches surrounding Babylon. Statemen's of travelers show that the Babylonian brick is very much like a tile, being from 12 to 13 inches square, and 3½ inches thick. Most of them bear the name inscribed in cuneiform of Nebuchadnezzar, whose buildings no doubt replaced those of an earlier age. They were sometimes glazed and enameled in various colors. Semiramus is said by Diodorus to have overlaid some of her towers with surfaces of enameled bricks. Sun-dried bricks were exclusively used in ancient times, especially in Egypt, where the manufacture was considered a most degrading employment, and as such formed the principal part of the occupation of the Israelites during their bondage, after the death of Joseph. These Egyptian sun-dried bricks were made of clay mixed with chopped straw, which was furnished to the children of Israel by their Egyptian taskmasters, before the application of Moses to Pharaoh in their behalf. After this the obligation was put upon them to furnish their own straw, which appears to have been like the last straw upon the camel's back—too much to be borne.

It appears from the details given that the Israelites worked in gangs under the superintendence of one of their own nation, who was provided with all the necessary tools, and then held personally responsible for the labors of his men. Some Egyptian bricks were made without straw, and are now found as perfect as on the day when they were put up, in the region of Amonopolis and Thotmes, whose names they bear. When made of Nile mud they needed straw to keep them together, but when formed of clay taken from the torrent beds on the edge of the desert they held together without aid. Among the paintings at Thebes, one on the tomb of Rekshara, an officer of the court of Thotmes III (B. C. 1400) represents the enforced labors of captives, who are distinguished from the natives by the colors with which they are drawn.

Watching over the laborers are the "taskmasters," who armed with sticks, are receiving the "tale of bricks" and urging on the work. The process of digging out the clay, of moulding and of arranging, are all duly represented. The process of manufacture in Egypt was very similar to that adopted at the present time in that country. The clay was brought in baskets from the Nile, thrown into a heap, thoroughly saturated with water, and worked to a proper temper by the feet of the laborers. This appears to have been done entirely by the (light-colored) captives, the (red) Egyptian shunning the work which must have been oppressive and unwholesome as possible in that climate. The clay when tempered was cut by an instrument resembling very much an agricultural hoe and molded in an oblong trough. The bricks were then dried in the sun.

Burnt bricks were used in Egypt for river walls and hydraulic works, but not to any great extent. Enclosures of garden or granaries, sacred circuits encompassing the courts of temples, walls of fortifications and towns, dwelling houses and tombs; in short, all but the temples themselves were of crude brick, and so great was the demand that the Egyptian Government, observing the profit which would accrue from a monopoly of them, undertook to supply the public at a reduced price, thus preventing unauthorized persons from engaging in the manufacture. The Jews learned the art of brick making in Egypt, and that they used it greatly is proved by the complaint of Isaiah that the people built altars of brick instead of unhewn stone, as the law directed. The Romans used bricks both burnt and unburnt, in great profusion, leaving their sun-dried bricks in the air for four or five years to harden. All the great existing ruins of Rome are of this material. At the decline of the Roman empire the art of brick making fell into disuse, but was revived in Italy after the lapse of a few centuries. The mediæval, ecclesiastical and palatial architecture of Italy exhibits many fine specimens of brickwork and ornamental designs in terra cotta. In Holland and the Netherlands the scarcity of stone necessitated a substitute, and led, at an early period, to the extensive use of brick, not only for domestic but for ecclesiastical buildings. These countries abound in fine specimens of brick work, often done in two colors combined, with great taste, and producing a very rich result, as it is to be seen in the celebrated examples at Leenwardea, in Friesland. It is worthy of remark that in the fens of Lincolnshire and Norfolk, where we would naturally expect the same material to be used, the churches, many of which are exceedingly fine specimens of architecture, are built of small stones, said to have been brought a great distance upon pack horses. In modern times nowhere do we find greater perfection in the art of brick making and laying than in Holland, where most of the floors of the houses and the streets are paved with bricks.

Modern bricks are made of different materials; clay, sand and ashes make excellent bricks, while good brick-earth is found in some localities. Loam and marl in England are considered the best ingredients. Upon the materials employed depend the quality of the bricks and the purposes for which they may be used. They are pressed and dried by machinery to a great extent now, though yards are often started in the country where suitable clay is found, and bricks made by manual labor. The finishing and ornamentation, of which so much is done, is of course accomplished in larger places, where experienced workmen are employed. Details in the plans of buildings are often delayed until it is known what kind of brick is to be used. This being the case of course only in places where only a certain number of whole bricks can be placed, as between window ledges, sills, caps or stone quoins. The utility of brick as a slang word is not to be denied. To call a man a brick is to compliment him exceedingly. In one word you tell him he is useful, upright, absorbent, retentive, that his family history can be traced farther than that of most men, and, above all, that he is not made of "common clay."

Chased by Coyotes.

Major P. Russell, the sheep man, says that coyotes do not bother sheep much in Montana. They will, however, keep around the sheep at a distance and howl in the early morning and at night. The shepherd dogs he considers a great protection, as they will run the coyotes off, although they cannot whip them. Recently, however, the order of things was reversed, and a band of coyotes corraled a valuable shepherd dog and ran him off through the hills. The absence of the dog was afterwards, fortunately, soon discovered, and herders, mounted on fleet and sure-footed horses, followed in search. The dog was at length seen at a distance, completely surrounded by about ten of the cunning coyotes, who were successfully driving the poor faithful creature away from the camp. At intervals the dog would attempt to break his cordon of wild herders and return to his charge, but the fierce animals, anticipating the movement, would close their ranks and present a snarling unbroken row of shining ivory. At the approach of the horsemen the cowardly coyotes at once dropped their tails and disappeared almost as suddenly as if the earth had opened up and swallowed them.

Rabbit Shooting.

Rabbit shooting is always good fun, in woods, in gorse, in hedgerows, in rough grass, whatever the kind of cover, there is no more lively sport. In low wood, where you can see to shoot them as they get up in front of you, it is, perhaps, at its best. Capital sport is also to be had outside, after the covers have been well beaten, especially if the holes have been stopped; the rabbits then lie in the hedgerows, in the stubble, in the grass, wherever they can find anything to hide them, but mostly in the hedges, and a couple of men, one on each side, with a spaniel or terrier to find them, may have a day's shooting as good as almost any kind of sport which the gun affords. Rabbits forced out of a hedgerow by dogs go at their best pace, and any one who can kill them well may call himself a good shot, whatever his practice at other kinds of game may be. The chances are, however, that a good rabbit-shot is a good all-round shot, though the converse by no means holds good, for many men can kill pheasants and partridges very well who miss five rabbits out of six.

The Channel Tunnel.

In spite of the recent opposition to the channel tunnel on the English side, the work seems to be pushed rapidly forward from the French end of it. In fact, according to English journals of November 25, unusually good progress, had recently been made. Starting from Sandgate, the French company had bored to a distance of 467 yards, and was making a fair average daily advancement. In the early part of the work they experienced difficulty from the water they encountered while boring thorough the gault, but they had now got to the gray chalk, and the temporary dislocation had been overcome. Thus their greatest engineering difficulty was, therefore, now a thing of the past. At the English end the work is practically abandoned.

What To Eat And Drink When Traveling

Some riders choose to take no regular meals at all during their journey, preferring to carry with them some plain and simple food and drink, like a meat biscuit and a bottle of cold tea or milk, and to partake of a little very frequently as they go along not even caring to dismount for the partaking of the refreshment. We understand that this plan answers very well indeed when a long distance has to be made and there is little or no time for rest. It is better, nevertheless, to dismount take a light meal of mixed food, rest for a good long time to let digestion have full swing, and then on again, gently at first, briskly afterward. Such a plan gives good digestion of the food, quick and excellent distribution of it over the body for nutritive purposes, and a healthy and sharp appetite for the meal that is next to come. The diet itself can scarcely be too simple. Animal food should be fresh, not salted, and well cooked; light animal foods like fish and fowl and mutton are very good to work on; eggs and milk are very good. A couple of eggs beaten well up in a cup, mixed with hot water, sweetened moderately with sugar, and treated with a small quantity of milk so as to make from half a pint to three-quarters of a pint, is with a little biscuit, an excellent sustaining meal for those to whom eggs are easily digestible. To those who can digest it oatmeal porridge is very good to breakfast on; and to all who can digest milk, milk is lightly thickened with wheat meal is most substaining. Bread should be taken in moderate quantity, and fresh vegetables and fresh fruit are always in character when not taken in excess. Some fruits which for a moment seem extremely refreshing while on the travel become a cause of thirst if the day is very warm. I notice this particulary in regard to oranges, the most tempting perhaps and the most easily obtained of all fruits.

Of drinking during tricycle exercise I must speak with some care. It is not very difficult to learn tricycle without desire for too much drink of any kind. But if the beginner does not learn to breathe through the nose, if he acquire the habit of breathing through the mouth, he is sure to acquire also the desire to take liquids far too freely. He will become so dry in the mouth he will feel he cannot get on unless he has something to quench his thirst, and that is an evil habit even though the drink be as innocent as the purest water itself. The first point, therefore, is to drink as little as possible; to drink as much as will fill up the loss that is made by evoporating of the water from the body and not any more.

What the character of the drink shall be is not very difficult to answer, and what it should not be is answered with less difficulty, for certainly of all things again it should not be an alcoholic stimulant. On this last named point we who are advocates for total abstinence from all alcoholic beverages have secured, beyond any mistake, a fine score from tricycling experiences. Those who are to some degree in opposition to us on the general question, I mean those who still hold that alcoholic drinks are in their right place as luxuries and should not be denied as luxuries, are with us if they are practised tricyclists, in expressing that alcoholic stimulation is fatal to good, sure, and sustained work.

She Obeyed an Impulse.

Fifteen years ago the daughter of a rich and prosperous man, living in fine style on Fifth Avenue, New York, went out in a carriage ostensibly on a shopping expedition. At Stewart's store she left the carriage, and her coachman waited for over two hours, until finally, becoming anxious, he made inquiries. The young lady had disappeared, and though a great deal of money was spent and much effort made to discover her, there was no trace. The years passed and the detective who had worked on the case very faithfully and anxiously, rose by degrees to the rank of police captain. One cold night, just after Christmas, four or five of his officers entered the station with eight or ten intoxicated women in their custody. One or two were crying over their arrest, and the prospect of a prison; others were fierce in their oaths at the interference of the police with their orgie, while others again were sulky. Standing a little apart from the group of prisoners the Captain noticed a tall woman about thirty, and he saw that she had once been beautiful, though now her face was disfigured by a bruise on the cheek and a black welt under the eye. There was, however, an air of refinement about the woman that attracted the police captain, and he eyed her curiously while the sergeant recorded the names of the prisoners. Suddenly the woman beckoned to him.

"Captain do you know me?" was her question—"

"No."

"Didn't you once try to find Mis Grace ——?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'm her. I ran away just out of pure deviltry, and I've had my full share of it."

"Good heavens! Why did you do it?"

"Oh, I don't know. The notion came into my head, and I obeyed the impulse."

"And where have you been all this time?"

"Right here in the ward, under your very nose. You never suspected me though I saw you often enough.

"And have you not repented of the step?"

"Repented!" and the words thrilled in the captain's ear like the wail of a lost soul. "Repented! Oh, God, yes! But it was too late."

"It's never too late."

"Yes it is. But it's not too late to die." And before the Captain could prevent she had drawn a small pistol and shot herself. The poor creature lived for two days, and when she died it was in the arms of her father. The mother had died a few years before of grief. This is a true story and shows how much stranger real life is than fiction.

—A New Englander put an owl in his cellar to catch rats, and the rats ate the owl.

NEWS IN BRIEF.

—Twenty-seven women working in a chain gang were a sad sight at Atlanta.

—Europe must buy 793,000 tons of meat, and 345,000,000 bushels of grain abroad this year.

—The potato crop of Europe is reported forty per cent. below that of last season.

—Out of the 618,000 people of West Virginia there are 85,000 who cannot write.

—Baltimore is endeavoring to take the school commission out of the domain of ward politics.

—The Washington monument grew 90 feet during this year. Another quarter of a million is asked for to continue the work.

—Among the new drugs in use are pear seeds, corn silk, elephant's foot, and chewstick, in the form of fluid extracts.

—Two years ago Wesson, Miss., was only a pine forest. It has now a cotton mill employing 1,000 hands, and nearly 3,000 inhabitants.

—The youngest inventor on the records in Washington is Walter Nevegold, a lad 15 years of age, of Bristol, Pa., who has patented important improvements in rolling mill machinery.

—"That want of general courtesy and universal graciousness, which is a very real want among the English middle classes," is a phrase taken from London *Queen*.

—The exports of provisions from the United States during the eleven months which ended on November 30th last, amounted in value to $84,863,003 against $120,345,062 during the corresponding period of 1881.

—Two ninety-foot lathes, said to be among the largest in the world, have been made by the South Boston Iron Works. Each lathe contains 690,000 pounds of iron. They are to be used to bore out cannon.

—Manufactures of linseed cake in the north of France are alleged to adulterate their products with spent maize from distilleries, and that, of course, the usual percentage of oily matter is not present.

—Suit was brought by the city of San Francisco against J. C. Flood to recover taxes on $600,000 worth of mining stock in Nevada. He proved that the mines are situated in California and won the suit.

—A diver, at 600 yards distance from the persons communicating with him, can converse with ease with persons above water by means of the telephone, as was recently proved by Mr. Ware, of the River Meare Commissioners.

—The head-dresses of the ladies in 1776 were remarkable for their enormous height. The *coiffure* of a belle of fashion was described as "a mountain of wool, hair, powder, lawn, muslin, net, lace, gauze, ribbon, flowers, feathers and wire."

—Among the trees which grow in Alaska is one called the yellow cedar, which has a fragrance somewhat like that of sandal wood and nearly as marked. It is a grainless wood, of straw color, and the Russians formerly built many ships of it, for which purpose it is admirably adapted.

—New Jersey has 343,526 children of school age. The average attendance upon the public schools is 113,512; 44,560 children are in the private schools. The school receipts of the State during the past year were $2,140,704 84. Of the 3,508 teachers 2,594 are women. The value of New Jersey's school property is $6,270,778.

—In the year 1784 eight bales of cotton grown in the United States were sent to England, where, upon arrival, it was seized and condemned by order of the Privy Council, on the ground that so large an amount of cotton could not possibly have been raised in America. This year the cotton crop of the United States will be not far from 7,000,000 bales.

—Mark Twain failed to answer a letter written to him by Serjeant Ballantine. After waiting a reasonable time the latter was so exasperated at not receiving an answer that he mailed Twain a sheet of paper and a postage stamp as a gentle reminder. Mr. Clemens wrote back on a postal: "Paper and stamp received; please send an envelope."

—A Gridley (Cal.) farmer hunts geese with a cow. It is stated that he has trained the animal to walk out to where a flock of geese have settled down on the grain, browsing all the way along, he walking alongside on the off side from the geese, and when near enough the cow lies down and he shoots into the flock.

—Ex-Governor Horatio Seymour has given to the Clinton collection of MSS. in the New York State Library a manuscript deed of land from "George Washington and George Clinton, of the City of New York, Esquires," to Nathaniel Griffin, of Whitestown, Montgomery county. It bears date of July 22, 1790.

—At Rome a bronze votive lamp, three feet high, has been found with the names of four pious gentlemen, to wit: S. Tettius, T. Annius, L. Tattius and P. Tettienus. It is shaped like a cornucopia, with three wicks, is fluted, and has a large hole on top for pouring in the perfumed oil. The sharp end of the cornucopia fits into a kind of scabbard, to which it is fastened with a movable locket.

—Queen Victoria has at length consented to admit that "she is growing old," for the new Egyptian medal that she recently distributed represents her face of 1882, and not of 1842, as it has appeared on the stamp, coins and medals. In her own time she has distributed medals for six Indian campaigns, three for South African affairs, and one each for the Crimean, Chinese, Abyssinian and Ashantee conflicts.

The Big Woods.

The Big Woods of Minnesota are rightly named, for they cover 5000 square miles, or 3,200,000 acres of surface. These woods contain only hardwood growths, including white and black oak, maple, hickory, basswood, elm, cotton-wood, tamarack, and enough other varieties to make an aggregate of over thirty different kinds. This hardwood tract extends in a belt across the middle of the State, and surrounding its north-eastern corner is an immense pine region covering 21,000 square miles, or 13,440,000 square acres.