

The population of France, it is claimed, is increasing somewhat more rapidly than it was 10 years ago. France is not a dying nation.

The United States is rich enough to have anything it desires, a college of heraldry included. But coats of arms will have to figure in American civilization as mere matters of decoration for some time to come.

A railroad automobile has been put into operation on one of the French railways. It is a combination of engine and passenger car. Its total length is 88 1/2 feet. The engine is located in the middle and has 125 horsepower, and the vehicle will carry 80 passengers.

Paris leads the world in dressmaking. It is estimated that there are 75,000 persons employed in the dress-making establishments of the city, and if one includes the workers who design and make the materials used by the dressmakers, about 1,400,000 persons are engaged in the struggle to satisfy woman's love of chiffons.

Italy is now sending more emigrants to the United States than any other country; Austro-Hungary next and Russia third. The percentage of the total number of immigrants from these three countries, in the order named, is 27.9, 23.2 and 17.4. Germany sent 31.7 percent in 1882, but now it sends only 4.4 percent. England sent 10.3 percent in 1882; now it sends only 2.5 percent.

Of the population of the United States 47.1 percent live in incorporated municipalities, of which there are 10,602 in the country. Of these, however, 6019 have a population of less than 1000 and are really rural communities. The states differ greatly in their policy with regard to permitting small towns to incorporate. Massachusetts, for example, has but 33 incorporated towns, while Delaware, with only one-fiftieth of the population of Massachusetts, has 35. Illinois heads the list with 930 incorporated municipalities. California has 116.

A locomotive on an English railroad, built in 1870, has just completed 4,000,000 miles of service, breaking the record. But no company in the United States would be willing to confess that it was using locomotives built 30 years ago. A high speed engine here makes about 100,000 miles a year. Before 20 years have passed it is out of date and is replaced with one with modern improvements. English pride in the present performances of locomotives 30 years old tends to account for the supremacy of American locomotives throughout the world, and for the fact that English colonies prefer them to the English machines.

It seems highly improbable that rice will ever be regarded as a very important food staple in the United States or in many of the countries of Europe, remarks the New York Sun. The most significant fact in relation to breadstuffs in all countries where wheat is important either as a product or an import is the rapid increase in the number of wheat eaters. We are the greatest maize growing country in the world, and we appreciate highly the value of maize for human food, but our consumption of the grain as a breadstuff is insignificant in comparison with our consumption of wheat. It has often been said in recent years that the opening of every new railroad in western countries increases the number of wheat eaters. The estimate in 1871 that the wheat eaters of the world numbered 371,000,000 has steadily increased for later years, and three years ago attainable data seemed to show that wheat was the bread staple of 516,000,000 souls.

This unusually good example of the retort courteous comes from a German source: A distinguished traveler entered the railroad restaurant at Cassel, and waited patiently for his time to be served. Study of the bill for fare showed nothing appetizing. The waiter was taken into counsel and recommended, with enthusiasm, dish after dish, only to meet a shake of the head, and finally the discouraging answer: "Only that?" Wounded in his professional pride the waiter expostulated: "Pardon me, sir, but I have served the best people here, and they were satisfied with our bill of fare; you should be so, too." The stranger in his turn answered: "But do you know who I am and to whom you are talking?" "No," said the waiter. "Well, then, I am the Prince of Bulgaria." "Only that?" said the waiter promptly. And the anecdote concludes with the suspiciously conventional ending that the bold waiter was immediately taken into the princely service.

THE MINISTER'S YOUNG WIFE.

"Well, now, for my part, Miss Post, as I was telling them two ladies, I always liked your husband's preaching."

Mrs. Dale measured out two yards of lace and counted three dozen pearl buttons, large and small, before she looked up into the sweet face of the pastor's young wife. The rosy cheeks were pale now and the pretty mouth was slightly drawn. It seemed as if it would not take much to cause Mrs. Post's blue eyes to fill with tears.

Mrs. Dale shrewdly guessed as much, but she said nothing, except to wish her customer a pleasant good morning as she went away.

Delia Post knew well enough what to surmise from the remarks made by the purely widow. Somebody must have been criticizing Homer's sermons, or Mrs. Dale would not have defended them.

Into the door of the pretty gabled cottage which the good people of West 15th had provided for their pastor the young wife went and straight into the tiny study where her husband sat at his desk.

"Has something troubled you, Delia, dear?" he asked kindly, laying down his pen.

"Nothing much," but as if to contradict her words she sat down in an easy chair and commenced to cry.

"What can it be?" thought the minister, as he vainly tried to soothe his wife.

In a few moments the story came out, for Delia Post was very young indeed—only just 19—and she had not learned to keep her troubles shut up within her own heart, rather than add another burden to the one who was so dear to her.

Mr. Post's face cleared. "Is that all, child? I certainly thought you had had news from home. Of course, everybody does not like my preaching. How could that be possible? I do my best, and, with the Lord's help, I trust that some word may comfort or cheer a longing lonely soul."

"You are so good," replied Delia, "and Homer, I do not help you at all. I was never cut out for a preacher's wife. Do you remember how I laughed that day at Sister Hathaway's, when she was telling about her son's misdeeds? Wasn't it awful? And how she glared at me!"

Mrs. Post's tears had quite disappeared now, and her husband looked down lovingly at the sunny face.

"Oh, dear, I entirely forgot those biscuits. They'll be all burned up."

With a gay laugh she sprang down the stairs singing, and the minister turned again to his work.

"She little knows how much she helps me with her sweetness and cheeriness," he murmured. "But I must be more particular about my sermon next Sunday. I noticed that Brother McPherson spoke coldly to me last week and I fear that I do need Sister Dale's kindly words."

Mr. Post had married Delia Harold about a year before. She was the daughter of a wealthy merchant and entirely without the experience needed for a preacher's wife, although she was a happy Christian and loved her husband dearly.

"Mr. Post is not a brilliant preacher," said Brother McPherson that evening at an informal meeting held at his own house. "He is sincere and good. I believe we could get along with him if he were alone, but his wife—"

There was an expressive pause, and then Brother White took up the tale.

"Yes, Brother McPherson, it's the wife that is the trouble. Not that I see much amiss in the little girl, myself. She's just the age of my Mary, and I doubt if I should dare to recommend her to any one of our young preachers—but all the women are against her."

At Mr. White's remark, Mrs. McPherson sniffed audibly.

"I don't know as it's more the woman than the man; but I do think that the way she wears her hair in that sort of pug on top, and then curls around her face, is a shame and disgrace for a preacher's wife, or at least for our preacher's wife."

There was a general chorus of dissent from the women but Mr. McPherson added, with a sly look at his wife:

"It's very becoming to her, Margaret."

To this frivolous statement his wife vouchsafed no reply.

As the conversation became general bits of criticism might be heard.

"She has four silk dresses."

"And a hat to match each one."

"And a sealskin cloak."

This last item of attire seemed to be particularly objectionable and the talk was waxing warm when Mrs. Harper, a little pale-faced woman who had hitherto kept silence, said quietly:

"Mrs. Post was very good to my David when he was sick. It was she who was with him when he—"

The poor mother could not say more and the meeting was most effectually broken up. However, it was settled between the men, nearly all of whom were leading members of the church, that a change would be desirable.

To this end a committee was appointed to wait on the pastor a week later determined to—as gently as possible—acquaint him with their decision.

When Mrs. Post came to West End she had found a square parlor with four low windows, a brilliant scarlet carpet and several stiff chairs. With good taste and the judicious use of a little money she had transformed it into a pretty room. In subdued colors hid the objectionable carpet. Soft inexpensive curtains were at the windows, and a few good engravings and choice photographs gave character to the white walls.

After a moment's delay the minister entered, and to the annoyance of all, after him tripped his wife, who drawing a low chair nearer to the light, commenced some embroidery, listening, meanwhile, with deep attention to the conversation.

It was a discomfited committee which issued from the low porch an hour later.

"Why didn't you say something?" asked Brother McPherson, impatiently, of Brother White.

"How could I, with the minister's wife sitting there so smiling and cheerful?" returned Mr. White, justly indignant at the question.

"So good of them to call, wasn't it, Homer?" said Delia, enthusiastically, as she put away the precious Venetian glasses in which she had passed lemonade to the guests. "It shows how fond they are of you."

Mr. Post was leaning on the mantel and did not seem to hear the remark. He knew very well that those five men had not come in to make a friendly call. There had been something at the bottom of it. But if there was something wrong, why had they not mentioned it?

As the months passed by Mrs. Post went on her way with a calm and undisturbed spirit. It never occurred to her that people did not approve of her. Everybody had loved her at home.

There was one place where Mrs. Post's actions were above reproach, and even strict old Brother McPherson acknowledged that. This was in the Sunday school, where the minister's wife was very successful.

There were four girls in her class. One was Mary White, another was a young woman from Mrs. Dale's store, the third was a girl about 13 and the fourth, the one person whom fastidious Mrs. Post disliked, although she tried hard to combat the feeling, was Katie Mason, the maid-of-all-work at the hotel in the town, the place where men went insane and sober and from which they emerged fiends. It was not because Katie was a working-girl that Mrs. Post did not like her—not at all. Delia would have loved any one, without stopping to think whether they washed dishes for a living or spent their time in elegant leisure, if they were only clean. This unfortunate girl was not only untidy in her person, but she was repulsive in her appearance. Try as she would, Mrs. Post could not bring herself to touch her. But she soon learned that the one joy of Katie's life was to come to Sunday school and to hear the beautiful lady. The gentle voice, the well bred manner, the perfect toilette, were new to her, and seemed to lift the minister's wife into the sphere of an angel. Each Sunday Mrs. Post prayed that she might be able to say something to help this poor girl, whose eyes had first seen the light in a workhouse, and whose miserable life had been passed in hard labor and the lowest surroundings.

Ryan's hotel stood on a corner of the main street of the village, and its flickering lights burned all night long, while from within came the sound of huffing cards and clinking glasses. Katie often worked till midnight, and was up again at dawn doing the heaviest drudgery.

One day Mrs. Post came in with her arms full of the spring blossoms and turned the parlor into a bower of beauty.

"Isn't it lovely?" she exclaimed, hearing her husband's footstep behind her.

"Very," he replied absently. "Delia, there's a man here who wants you very much to come down to Ryan's hotel. There has been an accident, and Katie, the girl in your Sunday school class, has been hurt—badly, I judge."

"She's a-going fast," responded the man, touching his hat awkwardly. He was the barman at Ryan's. "But," as he said to a crowd of friends later, "I know a lady when I see her, and that there preacher's wife's one, you bet. She turned as pale as a rag, and the minister, he says, 'Now, darling, you don't need to go, I'll go.' Of course I'll go," she says, and I says kind of quiet like, 'She's a calling for you, mem.' But you better believe I didn't tell her how she was hurt, nor how she looked. I just couldn't."

So it was that Delia Post went into the presence of the dying girl without knowing that she had tripped on the cellar stairs with a lighted lamp in her hand and that she was burned beyond recognition.

It was an awful sight that the inexperienced girl saw when she entered the garret where the drudge was permitted to sleep. There were good rooms in the house; but although the innkeeper's wife had no wish to be unkind to the injured girl, it had not occurred to her to have her carried into one of them.

"Oh, Homer," exclaimed the minister's wife, clinging in desperation to the man's strong arm.

Then there came a moaning cry from the shapeless figure upon the bed:

"Bring Mrs. Post. Oh, bring my teacher. I love her so."

Without another moment's hesita-

tion Delia went forward and gathered the poor disfigured head in her hands. She had shrunk from touching Katie's hand before; now she stooped and kissed the bit of forehead which was not covered with bandages.

"I am here, Katie, and I am going to stay with you," she said.

In spite of her husband's protest, Delia remained in that dimly lighted room all night. The pain which poor Katie suffered was indescribable, and her moans were so piteous that Mrs. Ryan retired to the kitchen, where she could not hear them, leaving the minister's wife alone.

Mr. Post waited down stairs, and his brave wife sat by the sick girl's bedside, holding one bandaged hand in hers, while she murmured comfort words or sang in a low, sweet voice. Her husband heard it in the middle of the night and thanked God He had given him such a wife.

It was not until the next evening that Katie's weary feet slipped over the brink of time into eternity. As her sufferings grew worse, she clung more tightly to the soft white hand and listened to the loving words which the minister's wife spoke. Mr. Post hardly recognized Delia in this woman whose tender ministries helped the wounded, stricken, homely girl to die in peace.

Mrs. McPherson and some other ladies of the church came in during the next day, and they were amazed at the bearing of the woman whom they had criticized for having four silk dresses and a sealskin cloak. These things seemed so insignificant in this chamber of death—and such a horrible death.—Waverley.

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

The use of the "E Pluribus Unum" on coin was never authorized by law. Its first known use was on a New Jersey cent struck off in 1776.

In a village of Germany a blind old woman was led to church every Sunday by a gander, who used to take hold of her gown with his bill.

It has been calculated that something like 1,250,000 pints of tea are consumed yearly by Londoners, and that the teapot necessary to contain this amount, if properly shaped, would comfortably take in the whole of St. Paul's cathedral.

The greatest number of men ever employed on one structure was on the Gizeh pyramid, where 7,000,000 men were in forced labor. This pyramid is 450 feet high, and covers an area of 13 acres, twice the dimensions of any other building in the world, in one instance taking 2000 men three years in bringing a single stone from the quarry.

A curious wedding procession was that of Eleanor Linler, an American bride, who, in 1887, married her sixth husband, the other five having been divorced. But they evidently did not consider that she had trifled with their affections, for each followed her in a separate cab to the church, and one went so far as to present her with a substantial wedding gift.

A singular fire occurred recently at a dwelling house in Philadelphia. Underneath the parlor window was a dresser upon which was a glass globe, which, it is supposed, became so heated by the sun's rays that it ignited the window curtains, the flames extending to the dresser, which with its contents and the curtains, were destroyed before the fire was extinguished. There was no fire in the parlor grate, nor was any person in the room where the fire originated.

Brittany has a strange burial custom. Bodies are buried as in this country, but when the flesh has disappeared the skeleton is exhumed and the skull detached and placed in a tiny coffin. These skull coffins are little boxes painted black or green, shaped like a dog kennel, with sloping roofs. They are about two feet long, one foot deep and one foot broad and have an oval or heart shaped opening at one end, surmounted by a cross. The opening is fitted with glass so that a portion of the skull is visible and appears to scowl at the curious spectator. The boxes are arranged on ledges and corners of the churchyard walls. It is a great and costly privilege to have these coffins find so sacred a resting place.

Failed at Baby's Street.

W. S. King, a blacksmith, living at Myerville, was playing baby and dislocated his hip, says a Bowling Green, Ohio, special in the Cincinnati Commercial Tribune. He was watching his little child put his great toe in his mouth, and the ease with which the youngster did the trick astonished the father, who became so interested that he put away his tools, and sitting down on the floor of his shop, took off his shoes and tried the stunt. He found his joints rather stiff for such fun, but at length, with a tremendous effort, he triumphantly seized his big toe with his teeth, and just then his hip slipped out of joint.

The doctor was called and matters adjusted, but pa will miss a few week's work. While the limb was being put back to its place the baby continued placidly to suck its toe.

A Heart-to-Heart Talk.

"It must be nice to be sarcastic and clever," said the young woman admiringly.

"Not at all," answered Miss Cayenne. "It is an accomplishment that causes you to get rid of all your friends excepting those who are too dense to see the point of your remarks."—Washington Star.

SPIRIT WRITING ON SLATES.

Easy When You Know How—Here is One Method.

Spiritistic slate writing, if cleverly done, always makes a marked impression on a magician's audience, because it utterly baffles their efforts to detect the trick. They see a small cabinet suspended above the stage by means of cords or ribbons. It has an open front and is empty. The magician turns it around so that every part of it may be seen and taps it inside and out with his wand to show that it is hollow.

On a stand near by he has a small easel, a common school slate, a bottle of India ink with a quill pen in it and a few sheets of ordinary white writing paper. All these he passes around among the audience for examination. Then he fixes a sheet of the paper to the slate by means of wafers, places the slate on the easel and the bottle of ink, the latter having the pen still in it.

Having allowed the audience to see the articles thus arranged in the cabinet, he throws a large silk handkerchief over it. Mysterious sounds are immediately heard, and the cabinet shakes as if some living thing had entered it. When the sounds and the shaking cease he removes the handkerchief, showing an inscription written in bold black letters on the paper, and the pen not in the ink bottle, but lying on the bottom of the cabinet. He then removes the paper from the slate and passes it around for examination, when the writing is immediately recognized as having been done with India ink.

The explanation of the trick is simple. The writing was done in advance by the performer, the fluid used being a solution of sulphuric acid of the purest quality. To make the solution 50 drops of the concentrated acid are added to one ounce of filtered water. Writing done with this solution is invisible until exposed to heat; when so exposed it comes out perfectly black, looking exactly like dried India ink.

The heat is applied by means of an electric current running over a wire with which the slate is wound. The cords by which the cabinet is suspended conceal copper wires, which conduct the current to the slate. Black silk threads, suitably attached, enable the performer to make the sounds in the cabinet, to cause the cabinet to shake and to jerk the pen out of the ink bottle.

Several sheets of paper are prepared in advance, each with a different inscription, the performer telling one inscription from another by secretly marked pin pricks.—Chicago Record Herald.

Amusements of the Russian Soldier.

How simple are the Russian soldier's amusements. Their only games are of the most primitive character, like our Aunt Sally. Their greatest pleasures are singing, dancing, and playing on the banjo, a musical instrument like a monika, or on the balalaika, a national musical instrument something like a banjo, which will keep them amused for hours. If he can only play two or three tunes, Ivan Ivanovitch will be able to enjoy himself rapturously.

Singing, however, is his greatest pleasure, and chorus singing is a great feature in the Russian army's amusements. Their number of songs are ordinary soldier's songs beyond belief. Singing is encouraged by the officers, and the men with the best voices are especially rewarded. Among illiterate people, the singer will always be able to exert a great influence. One has only to see a Russian regiment on the march to understand what moral power the singers can give the soldiers.

Ivan Ivanovitch stands greatly in need of cheap forms of amusement, for he is wretchedly paid. He is the worst-paid soldier in Europe, and therefore has a very hard time during his four years of service, unless his good folks at home are inclined to be generous.—Pearson's.

You Good to Be True.

"I have a complaint to make." It was a guest at the seaside hotel who spoke.

"What is it?" asked the polite proprietor.

"My room," said the angry guest, "is comfortable and the bed is soft."

"But, my dear sir—"

"The bathing is actually good and the London newspapers reach here in three hours."

"Why, then—"

"The table is good and the waiters do not stir to be tipped."

"But, sir, I don't see—"

"In fact, the place is delightful, and your bill last week didn't bear a single thing that I had not had. I can't stand it."

"But what do you mean? I have purposely arranged everything for the comfort of my guests, and thought I had done all in my power."

"That's the whole difficulty. Everything's so good that I can't believe it's true, and I lie awake all night for something to happen and my dream to end. I'm fretting myself ill over it, and if you can't give me something to grumble at pretty soon I'll have to pack up and go home."—Tit-Bits.

Air Braking on Street Cars.

In the thriving little city of Columbia, S. C., the street cars are equipped with air brakes, making it possible for a car to be stopped from full speed within its own length. A newspaper man who has been keeping tab on the matter declares that "not less than 20 lives have been saved" by the power brakes since their introduction a year or so ago.

BUFFALO, ROCHESTER & PITTSBURGH RY.

CONDENSED TIME TABLE IN EFFECT SEPT. 1, 1891.

Table with 4 columns: NORTH BOUND, and 4 columns: SOUTH BOUND.

Table with 5 columns: EASTERN TIME, and 5 columns: WESTERN TIME.

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