

CLOUD CHIEF

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RED CLOUD, - - - NEBRASKA.

THE CHAMPION.

Excellent, proud,
The hero bowed
To the eager, worshipping, countless crowd;
Then stood upright,
Like a victor knight,
A figure of virile grace and might.
From the Temple of Fame
The priestess came
To write on her tablet the hero's name.
And now behold
His name enrolled
On the virgin tablet in script of gold.
Then she asked: "O son,
What hast thou done
For the meed of glory thou hast won?"
"From sword and brand,
From traitor's hand,
That sought to ruin thy father-land—
"Twas thine to save?"
"Thine edict gave
Freedom and manhood to the slave?"
The hero bowed;
But never a word
Of his the listening silence stirred.
"An orator, then,"
She asked again,
"Thou swapest at will thy fellow-men?"
"Doth a poet's soul
Thy name enroll,
And crown thy head with its aureole?"
"Or dost thou bless,
By Heaven's grace,
With holy counsels a fallen race?"
His dull head hung
And his surly tongue
At the priestess' feet this answer flung:
"That's not my 'law';
'Tis in my way
To gabble, or scribble, or preach and pray."
Ill pleased, she viewed
The multitude
Adoring, and her quest renewed:
"Then hath thy hand
Wrought out some grand
Achievement by thy genius planned?"
His fierce eye shone
As it looked upon
His hand, a hammer of bone and brawn.
She understood:
"Thy hand hath wrought
In the blood of a slaughtered multitude?"
"Some warrior great,
Thou rulest fate
Of pope and emperor, church and state?"
"Well, men must die."
And her sorrowful eye
Gazed on his brute-like majesty.
No flush of shame
With his answer came:
"No, priestess; that is not my game;
"I say with pride,
These fists defied
The world—at a thousand pounds a side!"
Contemptuous burned
Her eyes, she spurned
Her tablet from her, then home returned.
And there she stood,
From her attitude
Scorning the man and multitude.
But a big, broad nose
With jewels shone
Round his huge bulk of brawn and bone.
—Edward P. Jackson, in Harper's Weekly.

THE NEW NEIGHBORS.

Unpleasant Anticipations That Were Not Realized.

"Well, now, Jed, what do you think old Mr. Sims has done! He has rented the little cottage next us. Manday Green told me so this morning, and that ain't the worst of it, either. It is let to a man with a wife and boy, and the boy is one of them smart ones. They can't abide with him in the city, and so they will bring him here to worry the life out of honest and peaceable folks."
"Is that their sole object in coming here, mother?"
"Manday says she is sure that it is, for she heard the man tell Sims that he must get his boy into the country, and what else can you make of it? Sims would rather die than sell you that property, Jed. Now he rents it to a man that owns a harum-scarum boy that will be our especial torment. It does seem too bad," and the old lady set down her cup, and looked as she probably felt, completely put out.
"Don't worry over it, mother; perhaps the mother of the boy may compensate for all his shortcomings, in being neighborly, and company for you. I am sure you need something of that sort. Mr. Sims' family being the only one near, and they choose to feel so bitter toward us, that seems to me a fine thing to have the cottage out here occupied."
"Well, here they'll be within a stone's throw of us, whether we will or wish it. I'm glad it's no widow to angle after my boy."
The boy colored slightly and laughed heartily.
"There now, you have found a crumb of comfort, mother. No one wants to angle after your great, awkward boy. I am sorry Mr. Sims feels so towards us. I would like to buy the little place, and add it to mine, as it joins us so nicely. It would save me the building of a new house, for this old one has served others well, and I can't expect it to do duty for us much longer. This dear old home of my grandfather, I feel like clinging to its walls, humble as they may seem to others."
"Yes, the home of Amos Johnson is good enough for us, Jed, or them that come after us."
"Did Manday say Mr. Sims had rented the cottage?"
"Yes, and the family will be here this week."
"Well, strange to say, I know more of the matter than Manday. The family have purchased, not rented. Their name is Orcutt."
"Bought it, O dear! Now there is no hope of their making a short stay," sighed the old lady.
"I don't know of only one lone hole, mother, and that is with Mr. Sims joining them on one side, and Manday Green prying around and making herself generally obnoxious on the other, they may get disgusted, and leave us to rural solitude again. But now, really, mother, I enjoy the prospect of having near neighbors, even if Manday has discovered an imaginary bad boy among them."
"There you go at Manday again, Jed. I do wish you felt more like a Christian should towards her. There is not another woman around here that comes in so often to see how I am gettin' on. Any other woman of her age would be settin' their cap for you, but that is not her way at all. She often remarks that herself."
Bachelor Jed smiled grimly, and rising from the dinner table, strolled out into the

yard, picked up his broad straw hat he had hung on the grass before going to dinner, and walking cheerily, took his way to the barn, while Mrs. Johnson looked after her handsome son with a fond pride.
It was a well known fact in the neighborhood, of which the Johnsons formed a good and prominent part, that the mother of Jed watched with a jealous eye all the unmarried ladies, and as the aforesaid Manday had so often declared to her that she thought it would be so cruel in any one to supplant Mrs. Johnson in the affections of her son, that good lady believed Manday free from any designs on her son.
"Well, mother," said Jed a few days after the arrival of the new neighbors, "I saw Manday sailing into the house over the way, and I suppose a call has been made."
"Yes, she dropped in here a few minutes and told me about it. I do think Manday is the most neighborly of any of us. She is the first one to go in there, and it was not from curiosity either, for she said so."
"It was very good of her, of course," drily remarked Jed.
"Manday says Mrs. Orcutt is a dreadful pretty little woman, and as pleasant and common like as need be. She says she don't look one bit worried over the idea of having a bad boy to manage. She didn't see with her boy; his mother said he was not well, and had kept his room most of the time. Mr. Orcutt will not be here often, for his business keeps him in the city. That boy will just run wild around here with his capers, you may depend on it, for Manday says Mrs. Orcutt looks too mild to hold him in."
"If the boy is sick I can not see any danger of our being overwhelmed with his pranks. Do go over and see them, mother; don't let her fool as if she was all alone with a sick boy and we so near."
"That I will. I don't want to feel as if I were intruders even if the boy is sick. Strange I should feel so put out about one boy, for I well remember when your mother was a lad, and I dare say this youngster's mother loves him as well as I loved mine, but then you was an extra good boy, Jed."
"Why did you allow me to grow up such a bashful booby then, mother?"
"Now do jest hear. Who ever would think of calling you such a name as that, pray tell! I know you have always kept shy of the girls around here, and I am right glad that that," and Mrs. Johnson spoke from the depths of her heart then.
None of the rustic beauties in that quiet farming district had succeeded in attracting the attention of Jed Johnson. At the death of his father he had come home from a distant college and taken charge of the farm. As he found his company among his books and with his mother, he was looked upon as a bashful bachelor, a title that would not disturb him any if he knew it.
"Jed," said Mrs. Johnson, "I called on Mrs. Orcutt to-day, and she is one of the prettiest little women I have seen for many a day. She seems dreadful taken up with her new home and says if Johnnie only improves, she will be perfectly contented. I don't know which she meant, his health or conduct. I dare say it's both. She thinks he will be out in a few days. I wonder if I called her name right! She opened them big blue eyes of hers when I called her Mrs. Orcutt, so wide and inquiring like that I thought may be I was wrong about her name."
"It might be, mother, for I noticed she looked surprised when I used her name in speaking to her to-day. A board was loose on the fence back of the garden, and I saw her trying to nail it on, so I walked over and fastened it for her. It is my opinion we have found some very nice neighbors."
In a few days Johnnie Orcutt was out, and, as nothing terrible seemed to develop in the neighborhood on account of it, Mrs. Johnson quite lost her fear of being terrorized by a bad boy.
"Just you wait until he is well, before you think him so tame," was the quieting remark of Manday.
Things seemed progressing finely with Mrs. Johnson and her pretty neighbor, who dropped in often and chatted so pleasantly, that Miss Manday grew quite jealous and told the old lady she was quite carried away by a pretty face.
"Dear, no, Manday, it's not her face as I know on, but it's her bright cheery ways that takes my heart."
"O, well," with a toss of the head, "I'm no hand to lay aside old friends for new, as you must know. How do you know she ain't fishing for Jed?"
"Mercy on us, Manday! how you do talk of Mrs. Orcutt."
"Hain't you ever heard of married women flirting! I have, if you hain't."
"I'll never believe any such thing of her, anyway; beside she never comes here when Jed is about home, and they have not got one bit acquainted yet."
"Well, why don't her husband come home often, I'd like to know."
"I am sure I don't know, Manday; for some good reason, I dare say."
"Well, I'd ask her, I would, but it's no affair of mine. Good afternoon, Mrs. Johnson."
The following afternoon Mrs. Johnson took her knitting and went over to sit with her little friend the intervening hour before supper getting. She found her busy mending a coat for Mr. Orcutt.
"I'm so glad to have you come in, Mrs. Johnson. It seemed so quiet here, for Johnnie is off to the woods this afternoon. I could not go with him for I had nearly forgotten this coat needed mending, and Edward is coming to-morrow. Johnnie can scarcely wait, he is so anxious to see his papa."
"I found it lonely to sit down without some one to talk to. You are spoiling me about being alone. I am getting childish, I am afraid, Mrs. Orcutt."
"Call me Jenny, will you please! I would so much prefer it. I always allow Johnnie to call me that."
"I see he does, but it don't seem to me the right thing for him, to be calling you Jenny."
"He always has since he could talk at all. Then too," and she blushing slightly, and laughing, said: "it does not make me seem so old to have Johnnie call me Jenny; I don't mind telling you, Mrs. Johnson, I don't like to appear older than I really am."
"None of us do for that matter. How cozy you look here. Young fingers have such a knack for fixing up things."
And the old lady's eyes traversed the room with its pretty adornments, and then rested on the fair form of her young friend, dressed with a good bit of taste, and then at the sweet face bending over her mending.
"Do you know, Jenny, I have thought a great many times since you came here how much I have missed in not having a daughter. Not that I wish Jed had been a girl, oh, no; I can't do without Jed, bless his dear, brave heart; but if he had a sister of your age, what a comfort and blessing she would be to me now. I have been so blessed that sickness is almost a stranger to me. I get to thinking nowadays over it, and I think a woman with no kin of her own sex is not very well prepared for sickness."
"None of us feel prepared for that, I think, let our surroundings be what they will," said Jenny; "but please don't go home so soon, Mrs. Johnson."
"O, yes, I must, for I find I am not swift in doing any more, and I somehow feel tired to-day. I always like Jed to find his supper waiting for him when he comes in at night;

but come over dear, and chirp up my old heart often."
"That I will, but I don't look for me to-morrow, for Edward is coming, you know."
Mrs. Johnson looked down to the gate with the old lady picked a bouquet of sweet peas and pinned on the snow-white kerchief Mrs. Johnson wore, and bidding her good afternoon, went shuffling back to the house, while the old lady went slowly back to her home, which, somehow, seemed quite cheerless and lonely to her this afternoon.
The following morning Jenny Orcutt answered a knock at her door. Jed Johnson stood there with a troubled look on his face, and she saw beneath the brown mustache the tremulous workings of his mouth.
"Will you come over and see mother, please? I fear she is very sick. I know nothing of it until this morning. She seemed well last evening. If you will kindly stay with her, I will go now for a doctor."
"O, yes, I will go now. Indeed, I am sorry to know she is sick; she seemed well in the afternoon, for she sat with me until tea-time."
In a few minutes Jenny was beside her friend, and Jed was flying on the road to the village. Mrs. Johnson had been seized with an acute rheumatic attack and lay motionless.
"It is so good of you to come to me, dear," she said. "Jed is almost beside himself, for he never saw me sick before."
"At the rate he went off, he will soon be here and bring relief to you, I hope," said Jenny. "I was greatly surprised to hear you were sick, for you were in usual health yesterday, were you not?"
"Yes; only I felt tired and childish," moaned the sufferer.
That day was but the beginning of many that Jenny Orcutt sat at the bedside of Mrs. Johnson, and nursed her until she was able to make it cheerful for the invalid, and when she became convalescent, prepared her tempting dishes with her own pretty, useful hands.
Mrs. Johnson declared that a glimpse of her face even did her a world of good.
Manday Green shook her head in a very "you'll-see-how-it-will-turn-out" sort of a way, and remarked to the woman in the kitchen while Jed stood conveniently near, that if she got sick she did not want a boy rushing in and out of the house at all hours, and she thought a woman that cared for her husband would keep her own house and not her neighbor's.
A very amused look came over the handsome face of Jed, and he very pleasantly said:
"A woman that has no husband can do as she pleases, eh, Manday?"
"Yes, thank Heaven," and the little old maid perked her head on one side and looked very independent.
"And very fortunately they are at liberty to do for others," said Jed, in a way that puzzled Manday, and the look on his face perplexed her more. "I don't know what she would have been doing the past few weeks without Jenny. Not that we would have wanted for neighbors, Manday, but mother and the doctor says she is one of the best of nurses, and it was very kind in Mr. Orcutt to insist upon her staying with us, and he was here, too, most of the time during his visit, for of course he could not get along at home without his little housekeeper."
"Dear me! some folks seem just bewitched over a new face," was the parting shot of Miss Manday, and she sailed out of the house and through the gate at her swiftest pace.
Alas, for poor Manday! Johnnie Orcutt was mounted on his bicycle and coming with all the speed he could muster; the curve in the road hid Manday until he was very near, and she was so full of jealous rage that she did not notice the shrill little signal behind her. In an instant down went the prim spinster and over her head landed Johnnie, while the green parashol left the roadside path and landed into the highway.
"O, you horrid little wretch," shrieked the female, as soon as she could get her breath.
Johnnie sprang after the parashol, captured it and handed it to her, saying:
"Indeed, I am very sorry, Miss Green. If you had only looked back when I gave the signal that I was coming, I think you could have stepped aside, but I could not stop the bicycle quick enough; I tried to do so, indeed I did, truly."
"What right have you to go around here with such a machine as that, I want to know! One of Satan's own inventions, I'll warrant, and none but his own imps would want to be hiarating around on it, either. The signal that you was a-comeing was sounded months ago, and I knew, then, just how it would be. But what are you standing there grinning with all your might and main for?"
"You look so funny, Miss Manday; indeed you do. There is some dirt on your face, your bow on the front of your dress is, I think, a little to one side, and something seems to have come off the top of your head."
Miss Green made a quick grab for her false foretop lying in the dirt at her feet, clapped her hat on her head, and skurried off, too full of indignation to utter another word.
"Well, now," said Johnnie, "I don't know what Jenny will say to this. I'll have to tell her, anyway. I am sorry it happened, and she will believe me when I say so, too."
Mrs. Johnson was pleased to see Jed, bashful Jed, so much at his ease of late in the presence of Jenny. In fact, she noticed they often sat apart, and talked so very friendly.
"Jed," said she one day when she had become quite herself again, and Jenny had run over to see her a few minutes, "I think I had not better get well too fast, for I will lose my nurse, and I don't like to think of that."
"Have been talking of a plan to keep her here with us, and she is waiting to know if you object."
"No, I don't object to any of your plans, Jed, you know that very well. But what is this one?"
"I have heard you say you wished you had just such a daughter as Jenny. Now you can have her for your daughter, but I want her for my wife."
At this proposal the old lady's cap nearly flew off her head, and the only thing that prevented her bounding out of her chair, was her rheumatism.
"Good heavens!" she gasped out. "Jed Johnson, what of Mr. Orcutt?"
"He's quite willing to allow his sister to do as she pleases."
"His sister! and I supposed all this time you was his wife, Jenny."
"Dear Mrs. Johnson," and Jenny leaned over the chair, and placed her fresh young cheek close to the pale one of the old lady, "I was not aware of the mistake you had made concerning me, until Jed told me during your sickness. You do not think I wished to deceive you, do you? And can't I have a place in your heart along with Jed?"
Mrs. Johnson drew her down to her in a clasp and said:
"Bless you, Jenny, you have a place there now, and nothing could please me better than to see you Jed's wife. But, dear me, I always said I would never let any woman take Jed from me, and here I be, a-comeing into that very thing."
"I am sure I would not wish to take him from you. You see, you are to take Jed and I."
"Yes, that is it, after all. But, Jed, how

in the world did you get over your bashfulness enough to—"
"To court Jenny, mother! You see you did all that yourself, and I am sure it was very kind of you. You have been courting her all summer."
"Well, I'm glad I made it out, at all events," said Mrs. Johnson.—*Yankee Blade.*

JACKSON CITY'S FATE.

An Eastern Town Which Virtually Died Before It Was Born.

Just across the Potomac, near the western end of Long Bridge, a tract of land containing 90 acres, was recently sold for \$18,000, which in President Jackson's time was fabulously valuable. A gentleman from New York, widely known as a popular inn-keeper of that day, offered \$5,000 for a lot 75x150 feet, upon which he proposed to build the finest hotel then south of Philadelphia. But the owners of the land wanted \$10,000, and that settled the business—no hotel was ever built. The land referred to—90 acres—was laid out during Jackson's administration and received the name of "Jackson City." It was owned by a company which issued \$100,000 in bonds, and the corner stone was laid by President Jackson with military and civil pomp. But it never made a spurt—never had a population of over twelve souls, and in a few years the corner-stone was dug up and used for years by an old colored "aunty" as a mortar to beat her hominy in.

Not far from the proposed hotel was nature's cause for the origin of the craze to build a city which was to rival Washington—Curtis Spring—which was famed as a picnic and excursion resort. Curtis Spring was the capital of Saratoga, and the little steamer took down thousands of pleasure parties annually. During the late war most of this ground was occupied as forts for the defense of Washington. The locality is now occupied by several brick yards. The only remaining structure of that city "laid out on paper" in 1837, is an old dilapidated brick building, almost directly in front of which is a square plot bearing these words: "Center of pike, 19,200 feet from junction." Nobody knows what the words mean nor why the plot was placed there, obstructing as it does legitimate travel.

By the way, a little to the north of this is Mason's Island, or Anlostian Island, as it is now called, which is separated from the Virginia shore by a small rivulet. This island is the birthplace of James M. Mason, who, with John Slidell, was sent by the Confederate Government to Europe, in 1861, to secure the recognition of the Confederacy by England and France. The ruins of the house in which he was born still remain upon the island.

And then Arlington is almost within a stone's throw of this island. Who has not heard of Arlington, the former home of Robert E. Lee, the chieftain of the Confederacy, and now the resting place—the silent home of more than 16,000 soldiers, who gave their lives for their country? But there is one fact connected with this spot not generally known. The iron flag staff from which the stars and stripes fly to the breeze stands upon the exact spot once occupied by a charming little summer house erected by Washington for his own use, and frequently occupied by himself and wife during the "heated term" in town. And it was on this spot that the Marquis de Lafayette stood on his last visit to this city about sixty years ago, and pronounced the view from it the finest in the world.—*Washington Letter.*

POLITE ETIQUETTE.

Some Good Points for Those Desirous of Improving Their Manners.

To bow to a friend or an acquaintance is a simple enough matter, yet all the grades of liking, all the degrees of familiarity, can be expressed quite as surely as by the signature to a letter, and more subtly. If you know people intimately, your bow and smile express intimacy and cordiality; if you have a very slight acquaintance, the bow is less smiling and more formal. A bow no longer requires that inclination of the body which the Turvedrops of other days used to practice—a mere bend of the head is sufficient. No man should bow to a lady without completely lifting his hat from his head.

If he has a cigar in his mouth he will of course withdraw it. It is never good form to smoke while walking or driving with a lady, unless it were in an after-dinner stroll in some quiet country neighborhood. In town it should never be permitted, even if the lady were one's own sister and had no aversion to the odor of tobacco. These facts concerning her would not be known to the people one might meet, and the smoking would to them have all the appearance of a discourtesy.

When walking with a lady a man lifts his hat to all the people whom she recognizes and who bows to her, whether he himself knows them or not. In thoroughfares a man should keep at the left of the lady he is walking with, thus protecting her from the pressure of the crowd and leaving her right hand free to carrying her parasol and lifting her dress. It is an obsolete absurdity for a man to be dancing around a lady whom he escorts, changing the side on which he walks with every crossing of the street. In walking or driving in a park or in any place where you meet the same person again and again, it is not necessary to bow each time. A cordial salutation on the first is quite sufficient.

It is a lady's privilege to be the first to offer her hand. Where an introduction is merely for dancing, there should be no shaking hands—nor indeed it is usual to shake hands on being introduced at a reception; but a married lady should extend her hand, by way of cordial welcome, to her own guests, and especially to any stranger brought to her house and presented by a common friend.—*Chicago Journal.*

PULLMAN'S PALACES.

The True Story of the Origin of a Great Public Convenience.

Various accounts of George M. Pullman's invention of the palatial sleeping cars that bear his name are afloat. They do not agree in general or in particulars. In order to get an exact and authentic statement, Assistant Superintendent J. W. Stockton, of the Pullman company, was asked for the facts. Mr. Stockton reflected a moment, and then said that Mr. Pullman told him the whole story some two years ago. His narrative was very interesting, not only in itself, but as an illustration of the possibilities of useful inventions when attention is once fastened upon them.

Mr. Pullman's statement, as Mr. Stockton recalls it, was substantially as follows: After the idea had been conceived and the patents obtained, Mr. Pullman went to Chicago and had his first car built there, putting all his money into the venture. The cost of the work was about \$18,000. In all its essential features the car was the model on which the Pullmans of the present day are constructed. The building was, of course, watched with the utmost care and impatience, but, curiously enough, it was found, after the car was done, that it was so wide that it would not clear the platforms of the stations on the line of the road where it was to run. As Mr. Pullman had put all his funds into the coach, and no one else was ready to contribute for constructing a new one on a smaller scale, he naturally lost heart in some measure. The car was stored at Chicago, and the enterprise was given up for the time being. No use was made of the vehicle until the assassination of President Lincoln finally gave the inventor the desired chance to enter on the road to fame and fortune. Mr. Lincoln's body was to be taken from Chicago to Springfield for burial, and the question of its transportation was brought up. Some one suggested that this unused palace drawing-room sleeping car be employed, and Mr. Pullman hurried to get it ready. The Chicago & Alton railroad, under the strain of the great excitement of the time, sent out gangs of men forthwith along the line to narrow up the station platforms and remove other obstructions so that the car might pass. This being done, the car was used as was proposed, and, as all the great newspapers of the world were intent on publishing every item of interest about the burial, Mr. Pullman's invention of course became the subject of universal comment. From that moment its success was assured.

The Pullman Company as it now exists, was founded in 1867 with a capital of \$1,000,000. Its stock to-day represents nearly \$16,000,000, besides \$2,000,000 debenture bonds. The Pullman cars are operated on nearly 80,000 miles of railway in the United States, Canada, Mexico and England, and in spite of some grumbling about charges, are universally recognized as the finest railroad equipment in any part of the world.—*Boston Globe.*

SWEET POTATOES.

How to Plant and Cultivate the Tender Young Sprouts.

The sweet potato can not be planted out before what may be called good corn weather, and as this will not occur before June, the middle of April is time enough to start the bed. Eighteen inches of manure, or just enough to give a gentle bottom heat, is sufficient, the sun under the glass doing most of the work. After the bed is made and heat started it is ready to plant. Lay over the manure six inches of sandy soil; if all sand, just as well or better. Halve the potatoes lengthwise and lay flat on the sand—they may nearly cover the ground. Sprinkle over the top just enough sand to barely cover the potatoes. After the young sprouts have started their roots into this sand and the tops are about six inches high, they are slipped off, and each shoot is a plant and ready for the ground. Only a light, friable soil will grow them profitably. This is thrown up by the plow into ridges four feet apart. The plants are dibbled out on these ridges one foot apart—the cut worm often destroys quantities of the sets, and must be watched for, destroyed when found, and other sets put out where needed. At least a couple of crops of sprouts can be taken from one set of tubers, and any time in June will do to plant them, so there is no danger of not having plenty of plants. It takes from 8,000 to 10,000 sets per acre. Stable manure is the best.—*St. Louis Republican.*

White Specks in Butter.

Your correspondent says in substance that white specks are occasioned by dry cream. With an ner precautions, if she will place in the churn with her cream a quantity of thick-soured milk she will find a corresponding quantity of white specks, as sour milk is the one and only cause of white specks. The sour milk forms a substance like cheese curd, which is separated only by the process of washing, while washing with a barrel churn the specks can nearly all be eradicated. She takes great stock in water setting, and here we will agree with her, on the ground that when milk is set in a creamer the cream is taken from the milk while the milk is perfectly sweet and free from any sour milk to form whitespecks, and from our experience we have become thoroughly convinced that no farmer can profitably conduct a dairy without a good creamery, especially a winter dairy, as the loss of cream in extremely cold weather will more than offset the expense of a good creamery.—*Country Gentleman.*

MISCELLANEOUS.

—If a man publishes a paper which is of no interest to its readers he had better offer some contemptible premium to induce people to take it.

—There is a New York man who frequently gets into difficulty through a habit which he has, when hard up, of pawing his wife's cork leg for money to buy drink.

—Texas is excusable for feeling big. The State contains 274,356 square miles, which is more than double the area of England, Scotland and Ireland combined.

—Some of the shepherds in the mountains of Bulgaria live for ten and fifteen years attending their flocks, and never knowing what it is to sleep in a house or to enjoy any of the comforts of civilization.

—An Indiana judge did not know what a cartoon was. A lawyer sketched the body of a jackass with his, the judge's head and face attached as a specimen, and was promptly fined \$25 for contempt of court.

—A very curious toast, the apparent irreverence of which disappears upon reflection, used to be common thirty years ago at commercial tables on Sundays. It was, "Rusty swords and dirty Bibles."

—An old log-cabin that was built by George Washington and occupied by him while surveying a part of the Shenandoah Valley, is still standing in a fair state of preservation a few miles from Winchester, Va.

—Miss Gushington—"Do you not find Dr. Smalltalk entertaining? He is such a mimic. Mr. Sneerington (who detests the doctor)—"I have often noticed that the doctor takes people off cleverly."—*Town Topics.*

—Smith—"I see you are keeping company with Miss Jones yet?" Brown—"Yes." "Does it mean business?" "Can't tell. I wouldn't be surprised, though, if I received a proposal soon."—*Biaghanton Republican.*

—The *Graphic* tells of a wealthy Western man who was about to visit New York City for the first time, and, wishing somebody to show him around, telegraphed in advance to secure the services of "an experienced bunko-steerer."

—Farmer Bascom—"I do wish the threshing machine would come around this way." Johnny Bascom—"O, pa, that reminds me. Teacher wanted me to tell you he was comin' to our house to board next week."—*Burlington Free Press.*

—In the office of the Recorder of Deeds, Philadelphia, is preserved a justice's docket over 100 years old. One of the entries in the volume is as follows: "Commonwealth agt. Stephen Blunt, July 24, 1778. Charged of drinking Damnation to General Washington and all his Army. Defendant held in £200."

—A woman in Newton, Kan., who is so poor as to have become an object of charity, kicked because a can of baking powder which she received was not accompanied by a prize, and another female beneficiary of the benevolent society sent back to the grocer a quantity of bacon and beans with which she had been supplied, stating that she wanted a turkey and some cranberries.

—The failure of the potato crop of 1887 was the worst that has befallen the country since 1881, when the average yield per acre was only 53.5 bushels. The disaster is attributable to two causes, opposite in operation but uniform in their ultimate result. The crop in the Western States was stunted for want of sufficient rain, and that in the Eastern States was rotted by a surplus of it.

—Illicit "cider brandy" distilling, it is claimed, is indulged in by some of the farmers in Litchfield County, Conn. The cider is boiled in a copper kettle with a tight cover, and a pipe conveys the steam outside which condenses into brandy in the winter air. If a spotter arrives the pipe is disconnected and the cover removed; the spy only finds the farmer boiling cider, which is perfectly legitimate.

THE POISONED KEY.

How Padua's Tyrant Disposed of Disagreeable Companions.

Another delightful relic of the life and times of the Tyrant of Padua is a simple key—about the size of an ordinary door key. It was the key of the Duke's library in his private room. When he wanted to get rid of any of his suite or any person in his household that he had a bitter feeling against, he used to ring his bell and ask for Mr. John to be sent to him (fancy name of course.) When John entered the Duke would say: "O, John, I wish you would go to the book-case in my private room and bring me the 'Dagonet Eallads.'" "Certainly, your Grace," Mr. John would say, and away he would trot with the key in his hand. When he got to the library he would put the key in the lock of the book-case and turn it. But directly he turned it, out of the handle of the key shot a long poisoned needle, which stabbed the hand of the holder and instantly shot back again. John would let go of the key and say: "What the deuce was that?" He would look at his hand and see only a small, dark blue spot. He would think nothing of it but all of a sudden he would begin to feel queer in his head. Presently some one would come in and find him in a fit on the floor and the household would be alarmed. "Mr. John has had a stroke of a fit," the people would say. A doctor would be sent for, but his services would be of no avail. In twenty-four hours Mr. John would be dead and everybody would think he had died through a fit. There were no bithering coroners' inquests to upset the plans of clever fellows like the Duke Francis in those days.—*George A. Linds, in Referee.*