

LEAP YEAR LEGENDS.

A VARIETY OF PEASANT SUPERSTITIONS AND FOLK LORE.

The Year's Unpropitious Influence on Farming Operations—A Bit of Tuscan Superstition—Traditions in the Early Days of the Church—A Demon.

The break in the regular order of days is naturally a matter of great apprehension for the peasant mind. We accordingly find, in nearly all the old countries, a variety of superstitions clustering around leap year.

In Belgium the peasantry maintain that this year is not only too frequently unpropitious for farming operations, but that throughout it the young of no domestic animal will thrive as at other times.

The ancient Romans considered the bi-sexual, or "leap day," a critical season, reckoning it among their unlucky days.

A variety of this superstition prevails on the continent, and, according to a piece of Tuscan folk lore, when a child is born in leap year, either it or its mother will die before the year has expired.

Referring to this month, Mr. Chambers remarks, in the "Popular Rhymes of Scotland," that "it appears to be considered by some people as the most important."

But again, leap year is not without its tradition and legendary lore. St. Augustine, for example, writing of it, says: "The almighty made it from the beginning of the world for a great mystery, and it is passed by untold, the first course of the year will be pervasively altered."

In France there is a popular tradition among the peasantry in the environs of La Chatre of a different kind altogether. It is said that every leap year a particular sort of evil demon makes its dread appearance, whose "only pleasure is to be displeased."

What Say the Purists? A new verb, "ante-pono," has become a claimant for public adoption. It evidently avoids the roundabout way in which, by several words of a sentence, we have been in the habit of expressing the idea which is the opposite of that contained in the accepted word "postpone."

A Small Boy's Modest Request. "Grandpa," said Bertie, "you like to see young boys enjoy themselves, don't you?" "Why, yes," replied grandpa.

Masks for Valuable Gems.

A richly dressed, handsome young woman attracted considerable attention in the box of a fashionable theatre one evening this week.

"How has she changed her earrings?" "No, she still wears them," she has merely covered them up with those gold masks.

Here, as we turn a corner, we meet one of the queerest looking professions in the world. It is a small company of men, their heads perfectly covered with white mantles, with holes for the eyes and mouth.

A feeling of indignation comes over us as we glance at this strange walking group, but when we know what they are, it turns into a sentiment of fervent love. They are the Misericordias—an association formed to comfort and relieve misery wherever they can hear of it.

Burman's Indifference to Death. Three Burmans were led out to suffer death by being shot. They were perfectly apathetic, not seeming to care a bit, talking and smoking the never absent cigar.

Facts Concerning Cold Waves. There are many other curious facts connected with the progress of cold waves. Many instances occur, says Lieut. Woodruff, where the temperature at a given station, at the time of the appearance of the cold wave in the northwest, is lower than the minimum afterward produced by the cold wave.

Delicately Flattering the "Freshies." A certain barber in this beautiful city has been vexed in spirit because some of his trade seemed in a fair way to slip away from him.

British Postoffice Girls. In one respect the employment of females in the British postoffice is acting in a way not quite foreseen by the department—namely, in the promotion of marriages.

IRRIGATING LANDS.

DESCRIPTION OF THE BIG DITCHES OUT IN COLORADO.

Construction of Canals for Irrigation, Tapping the River or Creek—Flooding the Crops in a Dry Season—Surprising Results—Profits.

The great system of irrigating lands in dry sections for crops is as yet in its infancy, but wherever tried it has done well, and irrigating ditches have yielded a large return to the investors in them.

How do they make irrigating canals? Easy enough and quite rapidly. First is the construction of the main canal.

After the main canal is completed, the laterals are laid out. These laterals are taken out from the main canal, and these sublaterals too have head gates and water measures.

EXPENSE OF IRRIGATION. Root crops can always be kept moist, and require five or ten times as much water as cereals.

Germany's Army Commanders. The emperor of Germany is the commander-in-chief of the army, whose motto is "God, King and Fatherland."

Take Time at the Table. Americans live at too high a pressure. No man has any business having functional dyspepsia.

The Rule of Three. First Medical Student—Aw—doctor, what is the subject selected for discussion at our next meeting of the Medical Scientific society? D've know, doctor?

HE BESTED MORRISSEY.

John Fisk's Office Boy's One Round that Led to His Success in Life.

C. N. White, chief paymaster of the New York, Lake Erie and Western railroad company for many years, has resigned.

One day Fisk gave orders to Peter, who sat at the outside door of Prince Erie's office in the Grand Opera House building, that he would be engaged in some particular matters, and must be out to every applicant, no matter who it might be.

"How's that?" said Morrissey. "Mr. Fisk is busy and can't see anybody," replied Peter Donohue.

With that he swept the diminutive office boy aside and strode toward the door. His hand was on the knob, but he did not turn it.

Morrissey's anger quickly gave way to admiration of the boy's pluck and faithfulness, and he launched heartily over his defeat, he went away. He told Fisk next day about his encounter with Peter, and how the latter had "downed him."

Talking of politeness, the Japanese have that article in their composition to a very extraordinary extent. Men are always excessively polite to one another.

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The Year 1888

Will be one during which the subjects of national interest and importance will be strongly agitated and the election of a President will take place.

Political, Commercial and Social Transactions

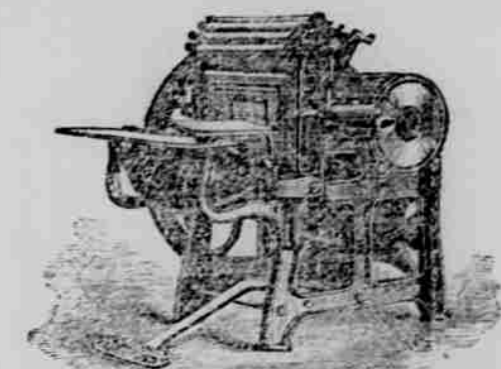
of this year and would keep pace with the times should

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Now while we have the subject before the people we will venture to speak of our

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