

The Valentine Democrat

ROBERT GOOD, Editor and Prop.

VALENTINE, - NEBRASKA

Why doesn't that St. Joseph man with eleven wives organize a comic opera troupe.

And now in London they are fighting the long hat-pin. The editors don't seem to be "stuck on it."

And now scientists have discovered microbes in ink. They should be sentenced to the pen at once.

Gen. Weyler's faithful, trusty, speedy, indefatigable, ceaseless, eternal typewriter is still hammering out victories.

If, as the British scientists say, India is the cradle of the human race, Greece recently demonstrated who could run with the baby.

King Humbert of Italy is described as a great hunter, but he isn't going to Abyssinia again to indulge his hobby, if he knows himself.

Public officials will do well to remember when the interviewer is around that an ounce of keep-your-mouth-shut is worth a pound of never-said-it.

A great deal of wheat, it is true, is raised on the Chicago Board of Trade; but that isn't a good place to raise it unless you know how to do it. And who does?

A New York young man writes to a Gotham paper to inquire how he may "avoid the worry of being hopelessly in love." Marriage is said to be a good cure for that sort of thing.

Great Britain would rejoice more in the fact that "we are the two great English-speaking nations," if we did not occasionally insist on making our English so much plainer than hers.

The author of "Robert Elsmere" makes great use of the phonograph in composing her stories. One would suppose, after reading the average modern novel, that the phonograph made great use of the authors.

The custom of that St. Louis husband of putting his wife in the ice-box when they quarreled has not the dramatic qualities of the Chicago plan of putting wives through a sausage-mill, but it is less trying on the wife.

The Indian rebellion might be a popular topic of conversation were it not for the unpronounceable names of persons and places that make themselves unpleasantly conspicuous in the accounts of the doings of the rebels.

Senator Morgan says he "confidently expects war between this country and Spain, and that very soon." Of course, if the Senator has his heart set on war, the only thing for this country to do is to go over and swat Spain a clip across the face.

An exchange says: "What do you think of an artist who painted cobwebs on the ceiling so truthfully that the hired girl went herself into an attack of nervous prostration trying to sweep them down?" There might have been such an artist, but never such a hired girl.

The widow of Ferris, the inventor of the great Ferris wheel, is reported to have married a "healer." Mr. Ferris is not able to turn over in his wheel, but it is possible that he'd kick the end out of his coffin if he knew that his widow's broken heart had been so speedily "healed" by a traveling faker.

President Faure of France goes about with a guard of soldiers to protect him from bomb throwers. This may not be comfortable for the President, but it certainly must now and then afford the bomb throwers a sense of amusement which in people who are not bomb throwers would cause a smile.

There would seem to be some sense in the application of the X-rays to the discovery of gold in the Klondike region. There will no doubt be many people there who will stand in need of an "X" now and then, and if they can't get that a "raise" for even a smaller sum will be acceptable.

The following sign on a farmhouse not far from a certain Massachusetts town is possibly responsible for the vacant rooms and the complaints of the owner. "Boarders taken in." George Washington, in his best estate, could not have been more truthful than the author of the sign.

The Queen's letter of thanks to her people for their manifestations of loyalty upon the occasion of the jubilee celebration, plainly intimates that she has no intention of abdicating. "I shall ever pray God," she says, "to bless them (her people), and to enable me still to discharge my duties for their welfare as long as life lasts."

The New York Times says: "An Alabama poet has written over a thousand poems and has never published one of them. Give him a monument." Why? The fellow who doesn't print his poems may be tolerated much more easily than the one who does. The poet who persists in printing is the one who should be put under a stone.

The bald fact that a large horse of unprepossessing appearance succeeded

in pulling a pair of pneumatic tires over a mile of track in less time, by one and a quarter seconds, than any other pneumatic tires were ever pulled over a similar distance may not at first blush appear so very important. The majority of people, even of those who are fairly busy, could spare the odd second and a quarter in each mile traveled without being sensible of a very great difference at the end of the day. Even if the old record involved a total loss of full thirteen seconds per day in the goings and comings of the average man, still he would have the satisfaction of knowing that his tardier locomotion was comparatively safer. This, however, is a superficial view, and the fact is that the lowering of the pacing record is an important matter.

No one can have too many friends. One can easily have too many acquaintances, who are glad to call him friend for the sake of his influence, but these fair weather "friends" are not friends at all, and probably would not know you if fortune should put them where they could gain nothing in a material way from you. The hard and fast through thick and thin friends, who are friends in need and friends in deed, are the kind of which no man ever yet had too many. They cannot be bought or hoodwinked. They are tried and true, and place the proper value upon what in life is most worth while.

The farmer that grows wheat and sells it is safe, but the farmer who attempts to increase his good fortune by gambling in wheat will soon or late curse the day that excited his desire. The manipulation of the wheat market is managed by some of the shrewdest gamblers on the face of the earth. They know just what kind of bait will draw country people into their nets and they know that thousands of farmers, elated by their good fortune in selling their own crops, will be eager to put their money into the wonderful multiplying agency that has so enriched certain speculators in grain. Let all such beware.

An English critic says of the "Book of Beauty of the Victorian Era," published not long ago, that the most agreeable types are the American ladies, who, by dint of dollars, have made their way into the peerage; while the English beauty of the present day "looks discontented, almost disgusted, and bored to death," because she has "a wearisome sense of the uselessness of shining before noblemen whose dreams are all of dollars." But what is to prevent these ennobled English girls from catching rich American husbands? Nothing apparently, if the American girls will agree to a fair division.

In the State of Illinois one branch of human endeavor is bound to remain dry and unenriched howsoever much other industries may be soaked in the wave of prosperity. This is the creation of corporations. The law passed two years ago has in effect made an invidious distinction between the poor and the rich, so that nowadays a man must have at least \$50 before he can get himself created into a corporation with a capital of \$1,000,000,000 or 1,000,000,000 times that if he chooses. Formerly any tramp with \$7 could in a few hours become a duly constituted corporation, with a capital seven times larger than the Bank of England. Now he must pay a fee of \$1 for every \$1,000 in his corporate capitalization. This, of course, bears very hard on the poor. Three young men, we will say, having accumulated the price of a month's desk room in a small office, desire to be made into a Klondike mining company and to put themselves on a par as to capitalization with the First National Bank. They find that the fee ruthlessly demanded by the State would absorb their entire assets and leave a deficit at least 1,000 times greater than the whole sum of money they have to invest in their enterprise.

Amid the universal satisfaction which must inevitably follow the announcement from San Francisco that the Davis will case has been decided, it may be well to supplement the brief press dispatch with a word of explanation concerning this peculiar and popular Western institution. Some forty years ago a bright young man named Davis went West and laid the foundations of the Davis will case, which has been one of the most flourishing and important industries of the trans-Missouri region. At first, like all who depart from the beaten track, young Davis was laughed at by the thoughtless and shortsighted. But he was possessed of indomitable courage and of uncommon energy and, year after year, despite the scoffs of the light-minded, toiling often in hunger and cold, he worked on and on, preparing the ground and sowing the corner-stones of the Davis will case. In the fullness of time he died. Then it was seen that he had bided better than his neighbors knew. Here and there a sorrowing widow, here and there a batch of sons and daughters and first cousins and uncles appeared, and season by season, even as the wheat blossoms out in full head, a brand new regiment of lawyers came into the scene. The courts ground and ground. Decision followed decision, until from Butte, Mont., to the coast you could not go anywhere in the dark without running into a large ripe sheaf of judgments in the Davis will case. The magnitude of the growth may be gauged from the simple fact that the annual report of the Northern Pacific road for 1895 shows that 14.67 of the entire freight revenue and 43.92 of the entire passenger revenue were derived from transporting law books and affidavits and decisions and lawyers and witnesses and plaintiffs and defendants connected with the Davis will case.

FRAYNE'S FATAL SHOT.

American Parallel to the Recent Shooting on the German Stage.

The conviction of a German expert marksman in a Berlin court of the crime of "pandering to the public lust for excitement" was the result of an accident almost identical in every detail with a tragedy that occurred some years ago in this country. About six weeks ago in a Berlin music hall a marksman attempted to shoot an apple from the head of a young girl. He had frequently accomplished the feat before with success. But through some inaccuracy in aim the bullet, instead of passing through the apple, struck the woman in the head and killed her instantly. He was sentenced for this to six months' imprisonment. There was no charge of negligence or criminal intent. So the charge that he had attempted to "pander to the public lust for excitement" was invented to fit his case.

The victim of the American tragedy was Annie Von Behren, and the man who shot her was Frank I. Frayne, who, when he retired from the stage, had made a fortune through his expertness as a marksman. For many years he had traveled through the United States acting in a play called "Si Slocum." It was a rough-and-ready piece, devised chiefly to exhibit his skill in shooting and in the management of wild animals. He carried a whole menagerie about with him, and this method of exhibiting his talents had been adopted after an unsuccessful career as an actor. His wife, Clara Butler, who used to sing in his plays and act the part of Mrs. Slocum, was for a long time the woman on whom his feats of shooting were tried. One of the best known of these was that in which, standing with his back to her, he shot an apple from her head, and as in the story of William Tell, this incident was a crucial one in the play. When his wife died, a young Brooklyn girl named Annie Von Behren took her place in the company. The apple-shooting feat was successfully continued for three years. It was done every night and frequently twice at the many matinees given in the cheap theaters at which Frayne appeared.

Toward the end of November, 1882, the company reached a theater in Cincinnati known as the Coliseum. It had been opened only two weeks when "Si Slocum" was acted there. On Thanksgiving Day there were more than 2,000 persons in the theater at the extra matinee. The play progressed to the scene in which the apple was to be shot from Mrs. Slocum's head. The apple was placed on the girl's head and Frayne took aim and fired. As they heard the crack of the rifle, the spectators saw Miss Von Behren fall to the stage with a spot of blood on her forehead. The actor turned and, seeing what had occurred, ran to the spot where the girl lay and fell fainting by her side. The curtain dropped immediately, and the manager appeared before the curtain to announce that the play would be brought to an end immediately. Some of the audience had supposed that the scene was a part of the play. But it was soon whispered about that the girl had been killed. The holiday crowd in the streets heard the report, and before long several thousand people had gathered in front of the building, although nobody knew certainly of the tragedy inside.

The girl died within a few minutes after the bullet struck her over the left eye. Frayne, who was frantic with excitement, was locked up. The apple was four inches above her head on a hat, and the accidental use of a defective cartridge was the cause of her death. Frayne protested that there was no danger in the backward shot, as it had repeatedly been done without serious results. The coroner's jury released him and he declared that he would never shoot again. But after a brief retirement he returned to the stage and acted in his drama for nine years longer, although he never repeated the backward shot with a woman, and indeed abandoned the play in which the accident occurred.

It is said of the German that he was about to marry the girl he killed, and the same story was told of Frayne and Miss Von Behren. He died about six years ago, and the shock he received when he killed the girl is said to have impaired his health seriously.

The shot that killed Miss Von Behren seems to have had a fatal effect on plays of this class. Twenty years ago they were highly popular, and they continued so down to a very recent date. But they have almost wholly disappeared from the stage now.—New York Sun.

The Fraternal Orders.

The recently published statistics of the fraternal and benevolent associations of the United States present some facts that may be surprising to persons who have never looked into the subject. The total membership of these orders is 7,350,000, of which number about 1,000,000 are Free Masons, more than 800,000 Odd Fellows and about 500,000 Knights of Pythias. The rest are scattered throughout many organizations, the best known of which are the Ancient Order of Foresters and the Ancient Order of United Workmen. The size of this fraternity army can be better appreciated when it is considered that at the last presidential election the total vote cast in the United States was about 14,000,000, scarcely double the size of the fraternity membership.

The development of these fraternal and benevolent organizations has been largest in recent years because of the extension of what is known as the "system of sick benefits." Members have been guaranteed a certain means of support in case of sickness and a proportionate return in the way of life insurance for the money paid in when they die, and these features have served to popularize the various orders to

an extraordinary degree. In this respect also the organizations have been a marked benefit.

The aid which is given to members is in no sense a charity and does not depreciate the recipient's self-respect, while at the same time the public is relieved of many burdens which would otherwise be imposed on it. These orders, in caring for their sick and providing for the families of their dead, are really doing much of the work that formerly was done by the church, only they have enlarged this work to an immense extent. They are wholesome factors in every community, and besides the direct financial benefits they distribute they exert a moral influence which cannot be overestimated.

DANES IN AMERICA.

They Are Industrious, Economical and Make Good Citizens.

The State of Iowa has one Danish settlement of 5,000 people, says a writer. Most of these Danes have been in the country less than twenty years. Many of them came without a cent and hired themselves out to American farmers.

It has been an interesting study to watch the steady rise of these young men, some of them in time buying their employers' farms. In Jackson Township, Shelby County, within a radius of about two miles, can be found five farms of 200 or more acres each, belonging to Danes who, twenty years ago, were considered very poor. In the settlement are a number of Danish farms of over 500 acres each. When we consider that these men came here unable to speak our tongue, unfamiliar with American customs and laws, unused to the products of Yankee inventive genius, and withal, lacking the almighty dollar and the Danish krone, their success must be declared phenomenal.

The secret of their advancement seems to lie in their unceasing industry and rigid economy. Every nook and corner of their land is carefully cultivated. Unproductive "points" and ridges upon which so many farmers shower nothing but curses are treated to load after load of fertilizing elements. Nothing is wasted. Sometimes, however, this spirit of thrift reaches a degree not sanctioned by aesthetic horticulture. On a certain road leading through the settlement lives a man whose home life seems to be no less a "glad, sweet song" from the fact that his front yard is planted to onions!

No less rapid has been the reward of Danish talent engaged in pursuits other than agriculture. Every town of any size in the district in question has flourishing stores managed by Danish merchants. Nearly all trades have some Danish followers. Many of our teachers are Danes or Danish-Americans, the county superintendent of Shelby, for example, a graduate of the Iowa State Normal School, being a Dane.

As regards good citizenship, no fault can be found with the Danish people. They are a thinking class, as a rule, and know something of current events and the issues of the times. The average Dane votes as intelligently for a member of Congress as he votes for a member of the Danish Rigsdag. As to party allegiance, the Danish voters are almost evenly divided between the Democratic and Republican parties. There are also a few Populists among them.

Naval Mishaps.

We have a good navy, and we do not appreciate it. As a matter of fact, casualties to our new armorclads and cruisers have not been particularly frequent when their size and their number are considered. In this country every trivial mischance is caught up and exploited by the sensational newspapers, but nothing is said of similar accidents in foreign navies. Barring the destruction of Admiral Kimberly's fleet by the Samoan hurricane in 1880, which no skill or foresight could have prevented, our naval service for many years has been remarkably free from really serious disasters.

There is nothing in our records to compare with the capsizing of the British frigate Captain with half a thousand men in 1870, or the fatal collision of the British ironclads Vanguard and Iron Duke in 1875, or that of the German ironclad Kaiser Wilhelm and Grosser Kurfurst the year following, when 300 men perished, or the loss of the British training ships Eurydice and Atlanta in 1878 and 1880 with 603 officers, sailors and apprentice boys, or the sinking of the British flagship Victoria, with Admiral Tyron, twenty-two officers and 330 sailors, by collision with the Camperdown on June 22, 1893, in the Mediterranean, or the wreck of the Spanish cruiser Reina Regente, on March 10, 1895, with 420 officers and seamen.

The list of minor accidents to foreign naval vessels in the past few years would be too long to enumerate. But the standing of the British ironclads Howe and Anson, the flagship Amphion and the cruiser Sultan were far more grave affairs than any such accidents which have occurred to any of our own heavy vessels within this period. We have had our fair share of troubles, perhaps, but no more than that.

Circumstances Alter Cases.

Doctor—"Are you wealthy enough, madam, to spend the summer in the upper lake regions?"

Madam—"We have a very small income, sir."

Doctor—"On closer examination I find that yours is not a case of hay fever, but only a bad cold in the head."—Detroit Free Press.

Beatitude.

"How do you like your wings?" The angel with the baby stare beamed radiantly. "Very much," she replied. "They rustle almost exactly like a silk petticoat."—Truth.

IN A COATING OF ICE.

A Flock of Fowls Entirely Encased in the Crystals.

"The Last Three Soldiers," W. H. Shelton's story in St. Nicholas, contains many unusual situations that develop from the unique plot. Three Union soldiers, who are on a mountain top in the South, cut off from all communication with the rest of the world, lead a regular Crusoe existence.

On the evening of the fourth day the thaw was followed by a light rain, which froze as it fell, and developed into a regular ice storm during the night. When the three soldiers looked out on the morning of the nineteenth they found their house coated with ice, and the mountain top a scene of glittering enchantment. Every tree and bush was coated with a transparent armor of glass. The little limbs of the birches and young chestnuts were bent downward in graceful curves by the weight of the ice, which, under the rays of the rising sun, glittered and scintillated with all the colors of the rainbow. Every rock and stone had its separate casing, and every weed and blade of grass was stiffened with a tiny shining overcoat. The stalks on the plantation stood up like a glittering field of pikes.

Despite the difficulty of walking over the uneven ground and the slippery rocks, they made their way, not without occasional falls, to the western side of the plateau to observe the effect in the Cove. Philip was in raptures over the prismatic variety of colors, picking out and naming the tints with a childish glee and with a subtle appreciation of color that far outran the limited vision of his comrades, and made them think that Sherman Territory had possibly defrauded the world below of a first-rate artist.

As they turned back toward the house Bromley remarked that it was strange they had not been awakened as usual by the crowing of the cocks. Indeed, the stillness of the hour was remarkable. It was strange that while they had lain in their bunks after day-break they had not heard the cocks answering one another from one end of the plateau to the other.

Usually they heard first the clear, ringing note of some knowing old bird burst loud and shrill from under the very window, and then the pert reply of some upstart youngster who had not yet learned to manage his crow, drifting faintly back from the rocks to the west; then straightway all the crows of all ages, and of every condition of shrillness and hoarseness, tried for five mortal minutes to crow one another down; and when one weak, far-away chicken seemed to have had the last word, another would break the stillness, and the strident contest would begin again.

In leaving the house, they had been so enchanted by the hues of the ice-storm that they now remembered that they had not so much as turned their eyes in the direction of the mill. When they came upon the brow of the hill which overlooked the mill—which was a silver mill now—the limbs of the trees which stretched along the bank beyond were crowded with the fowls, at least four hundred of them, sitting still on their perches. Philip, who fell down in his eagerness, and rolled over on the ice, remarked as he got upon his feet that it was too knowing a flock of birds to leave the sure hold it had on the limbs, to come down on to the slippery ground.

As the soldiers came nearer, however, they noticed that their fowls in the sunlight were quite the most brilliant objects they had seen; for their red combs and parti-colored feathers made a rich showing through a transparent coating of ice which enveloped them like shells and held them fast to the limbs where they sat. Whether they had been frozen stiff, or smothered by the icy envelope, they were unable to determine; but they could see that all the fowls had met with a very beautiful death, except five or six of the toughest old roosters, who had managed to crack the icy winding sheet about their bills. One of these, who had more life in him than the others, made a dismal attempt to crow when he caught sight of the soldiers coming to the rescue.

Queer Justice.

It is not to be expected that perfect justice will be done under laws that are made and administered by imperfect men.

In Arizona, says the Philadelphia Inquirer, a man was sentenced to pay a fine of ten dollars or go to jail for ten days. He had only three dollars, and the court accepted that sum in lieu of three days' imprisonment.

By some carelessness on the part of the jailer, however, the man was kept in jail for the full ten days. Naturally he made objection and demanded redress, to which demand the court replied that it was no doubt just, but there seemed to be only one way in which it could be granted. If he would commit a second offense he should be sentenced for ten days as before, and then be allowed a three days' discount or rebate.

The Grand Banks.

Gustav Kobbe writes an article entitled "On the Grand Banks and Elsewhere" for St. Nicholas. Mr. Kobbe says:

The Grand Banks of Newfoundland are the great fishing ground on this side of the Atlantic. Other fishing grounds near these are Western Bank and Quiro; but all the year round you will see vessels on the Grand Banks. If you have ever crossed the ocean on a swift liner, you will have noticed that when about two days out you ran into a chilly fog. You were off Cape Race, Newfoundland, crossing the Banks. It is usually cold and foggy there, and in winter frequent gales and snowstorms add to the dreariness and danger.

Western Bank is near Sable Island, a long sandbar off the coast of Nova

Scotia, and an ocean graveyard, literally strewn with wrecks. The English Government placed a flock of sheep there because there had been instances of sailors wrecked on the island starving to death; but the sheep died. The island was too barren even for them. A herd of ponies was tried, and these hardy creatures flourished, but became in time so wild as to be unapproachable; and a shipwrecked sailor hardly has the strength to scamper after a wild pony. Now, however, there are several lighthouses and life-saving stations on the island, and in the spring innumerable gulls nest in the sand and lay their eggs. In May it is not unusual for dories belonging to the Western Bank fleet to get lost—at least for a while; for the gulls' eggs are good eating during that month. I once asked an old fisherman if he had ever been on Sable Island. He told me he had landed there once when he'd been lost in a dory.

"How did you get lost?" I asked. "On purpose, I guess," he answered.

Needless to say it had been in May.



The title of Mrs. Cragie's new novel is "The School for Saints."

The American Monthly Review of Reviews is the new title of the periodical edited by Albert Shaw. In course of time it will doubtless come to be known more briefly as the American Monthly.

John Kendrick Bangs is now vice-president of the Yonkers Board of Education and to the duties of this office he devotes a large part of the time left from his writing and from golf, in which he is an enthusiast.

The most northern paper in the world is printed at Godthaab, in Greenland, and is called Laestof. It is a missionary sheet, made for the Eskimos, and has been the means of teaching many of them to read the Danish language.

The third and last volume of the new London edition of Burns' works has now been completed by W. E. Henley, and his collaborator, Mr. Henderson. Included in it will be an essay on the genius of the poet by Mr. Henley.

A new element has been introduced into the problem of the origin of our cats by the discovery in Brazil of a tortoiseshell wildcat, of which the late Prof. Cope had the only known museum specimen. This animal will be described from Prof. Cope's specimen in Appleton's Popular Science Monthly, by William H. Ballou.

Four O'Clock has a new fund of light, short stories, after the graceful model of those of its editor, Charles Fletcher Scott. The art work, from the poster on the cover to the last pasted-in tail piece, is remarkably good. Gibson never made a more graceful and effective picture than the one by McCutcheon entitled "And Then Broke Down." The magazine shows many signs of prosperity, and if its founders do not make the foolish mistake of changing its character in imitation of something else, they have every chance of holding permanently the wide patronage due to the novelty of their enterprise.

Jim the Penman.

A few months ago a Chicago man who has written a play called upon a New York manager at a Chicago hotel and sent up his card. The theatrical man received him very graciously, and the Chicagoan said he had a play which he would like to have the Gothamite consider.

"Sit right down and read it to me now," said the manager. This was done, and at the conclusion of the hearing the New Yorker said that he could not see enough in the play to warrant him in producing it.

The Chicago man expressed his thanks for the courtesy of a hearing, and added that he was somewhat surprised to find a New York manager so easily accessible.

"Well," said the Gothamite, "I make it a point always to dip into every play which comes along, sufficiently to learn its possibilities at least. I had an experience once which taught me a lesson. I was in London one summer on business, and as I was about ready to return a theatrical broker handed me the manuscript of a play and asked me to place it for him if possible in America. He said I might have the American rights for \$500 and he would give me 10 per cent commission for placing it."

"I threw the manuscript into a trunk, and when I reached New York handed it to a well-known manager and asked him to look into it. He soon reported that the piece was 'absolutely worthless.' Of course I gave the matter no further thought. I took the manuscript back across the water next summer and surrendered it."

"But a year or two later the author of that play produced it in London and made a hit. The very New York manager who had indorsed it as 'absolutely worthless' secured the American rights by cable, and for many years paid thousands of dollars for the right to present 'Jim, the Penman' in this country—a play which was offered to me outright for \$500 and which I never even read. Since then I've been reading plays."—Chicago Times-Herald.

In the Trolley Car.

The Fat Lady (sweetly)—Beg pardon! Did I sit on you, sir?

The Lean Man (crankily)—You did, madam.

The Fat Lady (bridling)—Oh, well, I dare say you needed it.—Puck.

When a man gets a job, after loafing a long time, about the first thing he does is to monkey around, and see if he can't lose it.