

Humorous Department.

THE BISHOP AND THE TRAMP.—The experiences of Bishop Talbot, long the "Cowboy Bishop" but now bishop of central Pennsylvania, have been many and varied, and his book, recently published, "My people of the Plains," gives a fascinating picture of life in the earlier days of the great west.

Miners, cowboys—all loved him, and they still tell a host of stories about him. "Once while the bishop of Wyoming and Idaho, he went to St. Paul to attend a meeting of dignitaries of the church. There, one noon, on the porch of the hotel, a tramp approached a group of bishops and asked for aid.

"No," one of the churchmen replied, "I don't think we can do anything. But down there is the youngest bishop of us all," (pointing to Bishop Talbot,) "and he's a very generous man.

The tramp went to Bishop Talbot and the others watched with interest. They saw a look of surprise come over the tramp's face—they saw that the bishop was talking eagerly, earnestly—they saw the tramp look perturbed—but they finally saw that something passed from hand to hand.

The tramp tried to get away without speaking to those of the group, but the former spokesman called to him.

"Well did you get something from our young brother?"

The tramp grinned sheepishly. "No, I gave him a dollar for his blamed new cathedral at Laramie!"

NO SUBJECT FOR CONGRATULATION.—A young lawyer, not noted for intelligence, succeeded in having a client acquitted of murder. Meeting a friend a few days afterward, the lawyer was greeted with warm congratulations.

"Yes," said the lawyer, mopping his brow, "I got him off, but it was a narrow escape! How?"

"Ah, the tightest squeeze you ever saw. You know I examined the witnesses and made the argument myself, the plea being self defence. The jury was out two whole days. Finally the judge called them before him and asked what the trouble was.

"Only one thing, my lord," replied the foreman. "Was the prisoner's counsel retained by him or appointed by the court?"

"No gentlemen, the prisoner is a man of means," said the judge, "and engaged his own counsel."

"I could not see what bearing the question had on the evidence," continued the lawyer, "but ten minutes later in filed the jury, and what do you think the verdict was?"

"What?" asked the judge.

"Why, not guilty on the ground of insanity."—Memphis Commercial Appeal.

HIS NEEDS.—The records in the war department in Washington are, as a rule, very dry; but occasionally an entry is found that is humorous.

An officer of engineers, in charge of the construction of a road that was to be built through a swamp, being energetic himself and used to surmounting mere obstacles, was surprised when one of his young lieutenants whom he had ordered to take twenty men and enter the swamp said that he could not do it—the mud was too deep.

The colonel ordered him to try. He did so, and returned with his men covered with mud, and said: "Colonel, the mud is over my men's heads. I can't do it."

The colonel insisted, and told him to make a requisition for anything that was necessary for the safe passage. The lieutenant made his requisition in writing and on the spot. It was as follows:

"I want twenty men eighteen feet long to cross a swamp fifteen feet deep."—Harper's Weekly.

THE SUDDEN SHIFT.—Mr. Ferguson, two of whose down town friends had just dined with him, had taken them into the library for a smoke.

"I must tell you a good one on my wife," he said. "She's been roasting me because I look at the headlines in the papers often in awhile to see if anything important is happening in the Thav trial. Well, the other afternoon, while the girl was away, she put a pan of biscuits in the oven to bake, and while she was waiting she picked up a paper and began to read the stuff herself. She got so interested in it that she let the biscuits—"

"At this moment Mrs. Ferguson came into the library for a book.

"And the joke of it was," continued Mr. Ferguson without a moment's pause, "that they found the cow next morning in a forty-acre lot."

Miscellaneous Reading.

IN COUNTIES ADJOINING.

News and Comment Clipped From Neighboring Exchanges.

LANCASTER. News, April 13: A new roof is being put on the A. R. P. church, and other improvements being made in the building. The First presbytery of the A. R. P. synod of the south will meet in Chester on May 6th. Mr. Charles Steele of Dwight, is certainly the champion hawk slayer of Lancaster county. He has killed ten large hawks since the first of January, and he now has them all hanging in an apple tree on his place. The council of Lancaster held an important meeting last Tuesday night. A move in the direction of obtaining a system of electric lights for the town was made, and a survey was ordered of the territory it is proposed to embrace within the corporate limits. The survey, of course, is only a preliminary step. The whole matter has to go to the people before anything definite is settled. Mrs. Polly Cook, the aged widow of the late Amos Cook, died last Wednesday night at the home of her son, Mr. George R. Cook in Flat Creek township. She survived her good husband very nearly nineteen years. Mr. Cook having died April 23, 1888. Had she lived until next July, Mrs. Cook would have been ninety-two years of age. Her death was due to the infirmities of old age, hastened by injuries received by a fall last winter, from which she never fully recovered.

CHESTER.

Lantern, April 12: Mrs. R. A. Foard of McConnellsville, spent Wednesday night in the city on her way to Wedgefield to attend a house party given by her sister. From here she will go to Columbia to spend several days. Mr. C. Fudge of Clover, came down Tuesday evening to attend the Red Men's banquet, and spent the night with his father, Mr. J. M. Fudge. His little son, Marlon was with him. Mrs. R. L. Brown has returned from a visit to her mother, Mrs. Castles at Smyrna, York county. A barn belonging to Mr. David Wade of Williamsburg, was struck by lightning during the storm Monday afternoon and burned. A quantity of feed stuff was burned with it. The stock was out on the farm when the storm came up and therefore was saved. Mrs. J. G. Hall arrived from Cuba this morning to spend a while with her son and daughter, Mr. J. R. Hall and Mrs. M. S. Lewis. Mrs. Hall has been doing missionary work in Cuba and has been there the last time since the first of November. The following cases have been disposed of by the court: H. T. Carter was given a verdict for \$250 against the W. U. Tel. Co. Rev. J. W. Neely was given a verdict for \$300 against the same company. In the case of Sam'l McKeown against the C. & N.-W. Ry. Co. for personal injury, the jury made a mistrial.

Reporter, April 11: Married at the Baptist parsonage, Monday evening, April 7, 1907, Mr. Jas. H. Orr and Miss Estelle McDowell. Rev. J. S. Snyder officiating. Mrs. J. D. McDowell of Yorkville, was in the city Tuesday. While here she rented Mr. J. T. Perkins' house and will be prepared to move here as soon as Dr. McDowell returns from Baltimore, probably about May 1st. The State Council, I. O. R. M., which met in this city Tuesday morning, adjourned yesterday at noon after a session, which was highly enjoyed by the visiting delegations and the citizens to whose lot it fell to entertain the members of this rapidly growing order. It has been definitely decided to hold another horse show this spring. The date has not been definitely fixed, but it is likely to be about May 15th. A small track will be built just in front of the grand stand at the ball grounds, it being the plan of the Driving and Athletic association not to build the big track here late in the summer. Last night Henry Smith, white, an operative at the Wylle mill, fired a pistol shot through the brim of his hat while in the rear of Letner's pharmacy, but whether the shot was fired with suicidal intent or merely for lack of something else to do we are not informed. Smith had been drinking more heavily than usual for the last few days and some incline to the opinion that he had become so thoroughly ashamed of himself that he resolved upon self destruction. Smith went home shortly after the shooting, and it hasn't been learned whether he was shooting at himself or some other object.

GASTON.

Gastonia Gazette, 12: Miss Emma Clinton and Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Page of Clover, were among the out-of-town people here last night to hear the Killers band. Among yesterday's visitors in town were Mr. B. B. Riddle, Mr. William Barnett and Mr. R. J. Davis of the Bethel neighborhood. Miss Helen Riddle returned yesterday morning from Gaffney, S. C., where she witnessed the performance of "The Clansman" company on Wednesday night. At the home of the bride's father, Mr. L. Harkey, near the Ozark mill, Wednesday evening at 6 o'clock Miss Nettie Harkey was married to Mr. Walter F. Kincaid. Both of the contracting parties has a large circle of friends who will congratulate them on the consummation of this happy event. Of the \$500 which the fire department started out to raise for the purpose of buying a pair of horses for the fire truck, \$335.50 have already been subscribed, leaving only \$164.50 yet to be secured. The people of the town have subscribed liberally to this fund and the firemen anticipate no trouble in raising the small balance. Dr. W. Y. Campbell of Clover, examining through Gastonia yesterday en route to Charlotte. He was accompanying a patient to one of the Charlotte hospitals.

The Pyramid of Cheops contains 4,000,000 tons of stone.

The Story Teller.

THE CHARCOAL BURNER.

A Peon's Tale In a Mexican Market Place.

In a certain place in Spain there once lived a hard working charcoal burner, or carbonero; but he was married and had six very young children with great appetites. So, all he earned they together ate; not always in peace and the grace of God, for the poor man sometimes found himself at night very weary and supperless. One day the carbonero said to himself: "When I can double my day's earnings and have sufficient money I am going to eat an entire hen by myself alone."

That day so much wished for arrived. The man collected his double wages, bought a hen and put it to cook in a puchero in the depths of a forest.

Soon a gentleman rode up, dressed in garments resplendent with gold and precious stones. "God keep the carbonero," he said. "God be with the caballero," replied the man.

"Willst thou give me a bit of the hen thou art cooking?" "Diantre! How didst know it?" "I am fortunate and I go over all the world; take advantage of this opportunity."

"Thou art Fortune? Well, thou shalt not eat of my hen, for I hate thee. Thou art unjust; to some thou givest all, and from others takest all away. God, and God be with thee."

The rider spurred his fiery mare and disappeared. In a little while there came an old man with wrinkled face, dressed in black and mounted on a poor horse covered with scars.

"God keep the carbonero," he said. "God be with the gentleman," replied the charcoal burner.

"Willst thou give me a little of the hen which thou art cooking?" "The devil! All the world knows that I am cooking a hen, and yet I could swear I have told it to no one. Who art thou?"

"Death art thou? Well, you shall eat of my hen, for you are justice incarnate. Dismount and dine with me."

The old man dismounted, seated himself on the ground with the carbonero and ate of the hen, the two conversing amiably together. When they had finished, Death said to the charcoal burner:

"Ask me what thou wishest and it will be granted thee for thy good treatment of me."

"What I need is money." "Ask for what thou wishest." "Give my household full of gold money."

"Granted," said Death. With a lightness no one would have suspected in the old man, he mounted his nag and disappeared.

The charcoal burner went home, the door was tightly closed, his wife and children being away. He tried to enter, but could not, for the house was full of golden money.

He remained on guard at the door and when his wife and children returned he turned he gave them money enough to go buy the richest clothing they could find for him and themselves. He ordered also a palace to be built and spent much money in coaches and servants.

One day when the charcoal burner was leaving his palace, he met the old man with wrinkled face, who said to him:

"Dost thou know me still?" "Perfectly, thou art Death. What dost thou wish of me?"

"To notify thee that thy money will soon give out, and it will be well for thee to take some position. In this neither read nor write and am too old to learn."

"Take that of a doctor." "A doctor? Poor me, who can neither read nor write!" "Yes, a doctor and I will tell thee how to manage. When thou goest to see one sick if thou seest me sitting at the head of the bed give him up for dead; all the resources of human knowledge will be in vain, and the way thou wilt come to thy fortune; thou canst predict the cure of many of the most famous physicians who will have given over."

The old man disappeared. So the old charcoal burner offered himself to the public as a great doctor and soon became universally famous. When he was called he examined the patient and at once pronounced sentence. He seemed to carry with him health or death.

His wealth increased, for all the high dignitaries of the kingdom and the princes called him in for consultation. One day he was sent for in great haste to go to the house of a great man who had suffered an attack of apoplexy when his family least expected it, and the unhappy man was lying, leaving his wife and sons in profound sorrow, greatly increased by the fact of his affairs being in complete disorder.

On entering the house of the patient his eldest son called the charcoal burner apart, saying:

"Senior doctor, thou art welcome, give my father health and thou shalt have nothing to complain of from me."

Reentering the sick room, where all was as they left it, the doctor's orders were carried out in haste and in a few moments the old man with the wrinkled face was at the foot of the bed. Then the doctor hastened to say:

"I assure you the sick man will not die of this illness."

All present embraced the old carbonero with expressions of sincere gratitude, and he smiled full of satisfaction. In the meantime the wrinkled old man slowly left the room.

"Thou art the one who has deceived death, and I deserve it, because I trusted in the loyalty of the charcoal burner."

It is true he could not deceive him again, for another time the hour came for the carbonero who left a brilliant fortune to his wife and children.

OUR WARSHIPS.

To Penetrate Armor at Six Miles Nothing Now.

The warships of today are, as most people know, armored, but, contrary to the popular idea, they are not protected all over, says a writer in St. Nicholas.

A recent authority has said that the improvement in rapid-firing guns in late years has resulted in armor-protection more of the side of the ship, and in increasing the number of guns protected by the armor.

The armor is not so thick as formerly, but this is made up for by an improved kind of material, whose resisting power is greater. The modern battleship is intended to combine in one vessel the most powerful offensive and defensive weapons of floating warfare.

These battleships may be divided into three portions, namely, the part under the water; the part near the water line, and the upper works. In the first-named parts are carried the machinery and boilers, coal, the steering gear, the submerged torpedo tubes, the ammunition and the greater part of the stores.

Attempts have been made to armor the bottom of battleships, against explosions of torpedoes, but they have not been generally successful, owing to the fact that to have the armor effective it would have to be very thick, and, therefore, very heavy—an objection which has not yet been successfully overcome.

To prevent the penetration of projectiles from above there is a protective armor deck, usually from two to four inches thick, the middle part of which is a little above the water line. This deck slopes down at the sides to the bottom edge of the armor belt from four to six feet under water.

There is sometimes a second protective deck below the first one to catch fragments which might pass through the "splinter deck." The part of the ship immediately above the protective deck, in the vicinity of the water line is sometimes called the "raft body." It is protected from the enemy's projectiles by a heavy armor belt. In modern battleships this armor belt extends over the whole or over the greater part of the length. The gun positions are all well armored so is the conning tower, which is the place from which the captain directs the fighting.

This tower is connected by all important parts of the craft. The guns mounted by a modern battleship are generally two big 12-inch ones at each end, protected by armored turrets, and a large number of eight and six inch ones, in casemates also armored. Just now there is a constant battle between guns and armor.

As the penetrating power of the guns is increased so is the resisting power of the armor. On the new British ship Dreadnought, and in 6-inch guns have disappeared, and instead we see a battery of ten 12-inch guns. This vessel is supposed to have been constructed in consequence of the lessons learned during the late war between Russia and Japan.

The nervous patient is hard to please. The man, who, occupying the room next to one of these, was asked to make as little noise as possible when he came home at night, really did try to carry out these instructions.

When he took off his boots, he placed them both at once on the floor, instead of flinging them separately in opposite directions, as was his wont; he went away thus with a battery of ten 12-inch guns. This vessel is supposed to have been constructed in consequence of the lessons learned during the late war between Russia and Japan.

When he found he had forgotten to put out the gas, he might have been the traditional mouse that no one has ever met. As he closed his eyes a growl came from the next room. "When on earth are you going to put down the other boot?"—The Bellman.

HUDSON BAY ROUTE.

It Would Save 1000 Miles in Transportation to Europe.

The Canadian government and people are greatly interested by the possibility of a short haul of Canadian grain to Hudson Bay, whence it could be taken to Europe by ship.

The alternative routes all involve either long railroad hauls or a combined railroad haul and a long steamboat carriage down the river.

The Dominion government has just published a description of the cruise of the Neptune to gain information as to the possibilities of a northern route as an outlet for the grain crop.

The conclusion is that Hudson Strait is navigable for ordinary iron steamships from July 20 to November 1, and this period may be increased, without much risk, by a week in the season and by perhaps two weeks at the close.

The same dates apply to the navigation of Hudson Bay from the strait to Fort Churchill.

Fort Churchill is practically the only available harbor at a terminus for railways from the northwest or from Ontario, if the proposal to extend the government railways to tidewater is carried out.

The Hudson Bay route would save 1,000 miles in transportation, writes Consul Seyfert from Collingwood, besides a considerable amount of delay and handling which now take place in the transportation of grain from Fort William to the seaboard.

The report points out that the question of grain storage presents no real difference, because 20 per cent of the grain at present reaches the year following that in which it is harvested.

QUEER SUPERSTITIONS.

That Are Prevalent Among Our Mexican Neighbors.

Mexicans enjoy the well-earned reputation of being one of the most superstitious races of the world. Superstition exists wherever there is a human being, but Mexico seems to be the place where all human superstitions are centred.

To such an extent is this true that superstition has become every act of the people. Take the average Mexican of the poorer classes, and you may hear from his lips hair-raising stories of ghosts and fairies and devils. He will tell you of the rare qualities of many animals, plants and stones, of the things you can do and those you cannot do on certain days of the week or the month, and, finally, he will invite you to make the sign of the cross to drive away the devils and the ghosts that may have been attracted by the conversation you have had.

From their earliest childhood the peons are taught to make the sign of the cross before going to sleep at night and before touching the floor with their toes in the morning. Maidens, until they become brides, are urged by their mothers to put their shoes point against point under their bed at night to bring happy dreams, and this will even enable them to converse with the Virgin during their sleep.

When dressing, the right shoe (never the left) is put on first. The buttons of the suit are buttoned upward, that is, starting with the lowest and ending at the top. This is to signify that we are very low here in this earthly planet, but that during the day we will try to go upward. Furthermore, this practice, if faithfully and constantly observed will lead us very high, to heaven when we die.

The contrary will take us down to inferno. After one is ready to go out of his room, one must always move the right foot first. If it happens that you find at the door of your house a bunch of hair or hemp it is a proof that a witch is after you with some ill purpose, and you must at once bring some salt and throw four handfuls as far as you can, one to the east, another to the west, the third to the north, and the last one to the south. Then you have nothing to fear from witches in the course of the day. But at night when you retire, you must take two very fine sticks, make a cross with them and nail it to your door. No witches, ghosts or devils will bother you thereafter.

If before taking breakfast you happen to see a black cat, three lame fellows on one and the same street or a corpse, it would be better for you to go back home and stay indoors for the day, because something wrong is in store for you.

If, on the contrary, you meet a humpback, it would be good for you to shake hands with him, pat his hump and give him some money; if he is a beggar that will bring you good luck. Humpbacks are exceptionally good omens for those who buy lottery tickets. If you buy one, do not see its

number until you have rubbed it against somebody's hump; then you are sure to win a prize.

Numbers 7, 15 and 27 are lucky; 3, 7 and 41 are unlucky. No. 13 especially is one that never fails to bring trouble, so never live in a house or room numbered 13; be very careful when you ascend a staircase with thirteen steps, never ride on a car No. 13, and under no circumstances eat, drink or wear anything that has cost you 13 cents or dollars, or that you have bought on the 13th of the month.

Tuesday and Friday are very bad omens days, and there is a common saying that means do not marry or start on any business on Tuesday or Friday.

Black cats, spiders and owls are very bad omens. Never keep a black cat at home, be sure to kill all spiders you see crawling about your bed and always close tight your ears when you hear an owl howl. Indians abhor owlets, they say: "When an owl sings an Indian dies; it may be untrue, yet it always happens."

Butterflies are good or bad omens, according to their color. White ones bring happiness; yellow ones advise us to be cautious and to hope of love or fortune, and black ones announce that death is stalking around us or our relatives.

The dog is the greatest friend of man, no doubt about that, as he is endowed with the power of seeing ghosts, or evil spirits. When you see your dog howling it is a proof that he is warning you against some evil event.

One thing of apparently small importance, but which brings fatal results, is the lighting of three cigars or cigarettes on the same match. One of the three persons lighting their cigars will die within the year.—Mexican Herald.

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