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Touches of Nature.

[Wm. C. Prime, in New York Journal of Commerce.]
In the Abbott collection of Egyptian antiquities, in possession of the New York Historical Society, is a bundle of wax tablets, looking not unlike school-boys' slates of our day. They were the tablets (serving the same purposes with modern slates) of the school-boys in an Egyptian school in the Ptolemaic period. How they came to be placed in a tomb we have no time to conjecture. Perhaps they were an offering to a dead schoolmate. They are the record of many interesting things; but I am writing now about the perpetuation of records of little things, of small thoughts, trifling and unimportant mental actions. One of the boys had a copy, a line of Greek, set by the master across the top of the tablet. (Young readers may need to be told that the tablet was wood, covered with a black waxen composition, in which the boy could make marks with a sharp stick, like a pencil; and he would erase a mark by smoothing down the wax with the blunt or flattened end of his stick.)

AN ELEPHANT EXECUTED.

Chief, Forepaugh's Wickedest Mastodon, Strangled by His Companions.
PHILADELPHIA, Pa., December 17.—Chief, the most vicious elephant in America and the murderer of seven men, was executed yesterday afternoon in the winter quarters of Forepaugh's circus, at Lehigh avenue and Front street. Chief was 40 years old, and had been in this country nine years. He crushed a man to death shortly after his arrival and since then he had gone from bad to worse. He was known all over the country as the most wicked elephant that ever crushed a man. Though always closely watched he would go on periodical rampages.

On the 8th of October last Chief broke from the winter quarters on Lehigh avenue. He was in a rage and was driving men, women and children before him and creating a panic, when the police were called out to stop the mad rush of the elephant. He made such a desperate fight that ten policemen opened fire on him, but it was only when eight bullets had been planted in his left leg that he was forced back to the winter quarters. Chief was at once chained, but broke from the chains that night. He was chained again, all his feet being fastened to the end of heavy iron cables. He was quiet for a few weeks, but lately he made repeated struggles to burst his chains. Chief tried to kill his keeper on Saturday morning, and as he threatened to get loose at any moment and clean out the winter quarters, it was decided to execute him.

Three o'clock yesterday afternoon was the hour of execution, and two other elephants were the executioners. A good sized but quiet crowd gathered to see Chief die. As the big beast stood glaring at the crowd a noise was made in the center of a piece of rope half an inch thick and ten yards long. As two men tried to put the noise around his neck the doomed elephant got in a rage and tried to toss one of the men against a wall. By hard work the noise was finally pulled over his trunk and placed behind his ears with the knot directly under his throat. Then Basil and Bismarck, the most powerful elephants owned by Forepaugh, were fastened to an end of the rope on either side of their murderous comrade.

As Chief stood waiting to meet death he wore more heavily chained. Then young Adam Forepaugh gave the word, Basil and Bismarck were given a prod with iron hooks, and the death line began to grow taut. Another signal and the elephants pulled with all their mighty strength in opposite directions. Chief began to totter. In twenty seconds he dropped to the ground a dead elephant. Bismarck and Basil had strangled him.

At 7 o'clock this morning a big force of men will begin to load the body of an antelope, with the aid of a derrick. Ten horses will then haul the body to the University of Pennsylvania, where it will be skinned and stuffed, while the bones will be set up by Dr. Joseph Leidy, the eminent zoologist of the University. The elephant's skeleton and stuffed skin will be placed in the museum of the University.

Chief was ten and a half feet high and weighed over 10,000 pounds. He was an Asiatic elephant and was bought from Carl Stenback, the noted animal dealer in Hamburg, nine years ago. He began life in America by killing a man just after the ship came into port. A year later he caught a keeper and dashed him against a telegraph pole. Since then he had murdered five more men and had tried to kill scores of others. He was a terror when he started out on his rampages, and swept everything before him, even the lemonade, purple candy and peanuts of the circus butchers. He tore down a wooden house at Grand Rapids, Michigan, and when he had finished a visit to a side show one fair summer day at Topeka the fair looked as if it had been struck by a Kansas cyclone. He took possession of the town of Akron, Ohio, and was finally arrested by a country constable on the charge of disorderly conduct and malicious mischief.

He was again arrested in Cincinnati for chasing a saloon keeper and a hundred patrons out of a place on Vine street in that city. He had been employed to appear in a spectacular play a few years ago, and had done good work until the second act, when he lay down on the stage and refused to let the play go on. While on a "tear" down near Cairo, Ill., he grasped a canvasser of the circus and threw him in the Mississippi river, and was ducking him until he was almost dead, when fifty men attacked the elephant and saved the man. He was the only elephant that Adam Forepaugh, Jr., could not conquer.

AN ECCENTRIC MILLIONAIRE.

Some of the Peculiar Personal Traits of Isaiah V. Williamson, of Philadelphia.
[Philadelphia Record.]
Who is Isaiah V. Williamson? People scratch their heads and ask this question. Every now and then the name pops up in print, but the owner of it is so modest that only his most intimate friends know much about him.

Isiah V. Williamson, who has given one-sixth of his fortune of \$15,000,000 to establish the Free School of Mechanical Trades, and intends to double his gift if the money shall be needed, has been one of Philadelphia's most energetic capitalists and philanthropists for years. Old merchants who have known him for half a century do not know where to find him if he is not at his dingy little office at No. 30 Bank street. He has remained a bachelor all his life, and now in his eighty-fifth year he has founded an institution which, like Girard College, will always remain an enduring monument to his princely liberality and the high purpose for which it was founded. Mr. Williamson is of Quaker origin, and was born in Bucks county in 1803. His father was a hard working farmer in that section, and the son in early life became imbued with those economical principles that in later years enabled him to roll up his immense fortune. It is said of him that the guiding principle of his money-making ventures has been not to do a thing to-day that can just as well be done to-morrow. To this he attributes his success in the commercial world. He used to be fond of rational amusements, and for twenty years spent every summer at Saratoga. Though an old man he was passionately fond of dancing, and was always on the floor at the fashionable balls and hops at that famous watering place. He was never at a loss for a partner, for he was known to everybody at Saratoga as the "rich bachelor from Philadelphia."

Many were the adroit little schemes concocted by ambitious mammas with marriageable daughters to rescue the old gentleman from bachelorhood, but they all failed, as the object of their attention slipped through their hands. To this day, in the sunset of his life, the aged philanthropist delights to gossip with his ever-narrowing circle of acquaintances—for he makes but few new friends—about the gay times he used to have at Saratoga. Long ago, a quarter of a century perhaps, he drove a good team, but he dispensed with his carriage and horses because he grew tired of them.

A gentleman who has known him for forty years said yesterday of this peculiarity: "It was easier for Mr. Williamson to give away \$10,000 than to purchase a suit of clothes for himself." He has carried the same umbrella for fifteen years or more, and stuck to it because he says he likes it. He moves about frequently, and generally stays at the house of a relative. He has no furniture to speak of, and can move about at his pleasure. He does not care to have many people know where he lives, and the city directory only gives the location of his office on Bank street. He is not, and never has been, a mean man; and the crowning act of his life—the establishment of the proposed school—has been undertaken with the view of re-establishing the old apprenticeship system, which flourished so extensively in his youth and manhood.

In personal appearance Mr. Williamson is rather a small man, weighing about 130 pounds. He has a very pleasant face, and some people say his features are somewhat of a feminine cast. He has a bright eye, and his whole countenance is suggestive of firmness and decisive character.

THE WAR IN THE SUDAN.

A Great Battle Fought Near Suakin.

LONDON, December 20.—A dispatch from Suakin says: A combined force of British and Egyptians have made an attack upon the rebel position. They stormed the redoubts and trenches, and after a brilliant engagement, lasting half an hour, drove the enemy into the bush. The rebels are reported to have lost a thousand men killed. The British loss was slight. The British are encamped in the rebel position. The victory was complete.

A later dispatch from Suakin says: The British lost four men killed and two wounded during a gallant cavalry charge. The Egyptian and black regiments charged the trenches and carried them brilliantly, losing two men killed and thirty wounded. The only officers wounded in the attacking force were two Egyptians. The rebel loss is now stated to have been 400.

HOW THE BATTLE WAS FOUGHT AND WON.
SUAKIN, December 20.—Before dawn this morning the British man-of-war Starling and an Egyptian steamer moved up the coast, with orders to cover the rebels at Handoub. At day-break the forts opened fire upon the trenches and the troops advanced to attack, the black brigade on the right flank and the cavalry and mounted infantry covering. The Scottish Borders, the Welsh regiment and the Egyptian brigade occupied an embankment between the forts, the British infantry being held in reserve. The forts shelled the trenches, keeping up a terrific fire. The enemy held their ground with intense courage until the black brigade charged the trenches, which fell after half an hour's hard fighting. The rebels fought with fanatical bravery. Two of the enemy's guns were cap-

STATE FARMERS' ALLIANCE.

A Called Meeting of the Organization in Columbia.
[Register, 20th.]
A called meeting of the Executive Committee of the State Farmers' Alliance and one delegate from each county where there is a local organization, was held in this city yesterday, the three sessions being held in the old Senate room of the agricultural building.

The following delegates were in attendance: Anderson—J. W. Norris. Chester—J. H. Hardin. Chesterfield—E. N. Redfern, G. W. Baker. Darlington—E. R. Melver. Fairfield—Samuel McCormick. Greenville—W. W. Keys. Horry—J. P. Durham. Kershaw—J. R. McGinn. Lancaster—R. S. Hicklin. Marion—J. D. Montgomery. Marlboro—J. B. Green. Newberry—Jno. F. Banks. Oconee—E. E. Verrier. Pickens—R. A. Hester. Spartanburg—R. A. Lancaster. Sumter—R. M. Cooper. Union—A. C. Lyles. Williamsburg—Josiah Codefield. York—W. N. Elder.

Besides the regular delegates named above, there were in attendance most of the officers of the State organization, six or eight of the county business agents and a number of members of the Legislature, who, being members of the local Alliances, dropped in at the meeting yesterday.

The first session was called to order at 10 o'clock a. m. by the president, Gen. E. T. Steckhouse, of Marion. Mr. J. W. Reed, of Spartanburg, the secretary, officiated in that capacity, being assisted by Mr. W. W. Keys, of Greenville.

The meetings of the Alliance being held with closed doors except to members, a detailed account of the proceedings is impossible.

The object of the meeting was to make arrangements for supplies for the ensuing year, and to perfect the organization. By supplies are meant provisions, dry goods, etc., and the Alliance are considering the feasibility of forming a joint stock company and buying supplies as such.

The report of President Steckhouse was very encouraging, and shows the Alliance to be in a very prosperous condition, the membership in the last twelve months having increased fourfold. There are about 440 subordinate Alliances with an aggregate membership of about 15,000. The order was introduced into South Carolina only a little over a year ago, and has made wonderful progress.

THE TIME-BALL.

In large cities, and especially in those which have large shipping and trading interests, it is always very desirable to have time which shall not only be exact, but official, and accepted by everybody. In several of the large cities of the United States this official hour is fixed by an ingenious, and yet simple and easily visible apparatus, called the time-ball.

At Washington, Philadelphia and New York a ball, placed upon a staff on some central and lofty building, is dropped by a common electric current from the observatory at Washington.

The New York time-ball is at the top of a tower three hundred and twelve feet high, which is a part of the Western Union Telegraph Company's building. At a distance it looks like a solid ball. It is really hollow, and made of twelve strips of sheet-copper. It is placed upon a metallic platform thirty feet high, so that the ball itself is three hundred and forty-one feet above the level of the sea.

It falls about eight yards; and when it has reached the end of its fall, it is held fast by an apparatus which prevents it from bounding.

Every morning the ball is drawn up to the summit of its pole, and when exactly twelve o'clock is marked upon the clock at the observatory at Washington, two hundred and twenty-eight miles from New York, an electric current, automatically operated from this observatory, acts upon an electromagnet which draws a lever in such a way that the ball falls by its own weight. The ball is thus dropped in New York and Philadelphia by a machine at Washington, and in the former city its fall is visible seven miles away.

A great many people besides those who have need to know the exact time once every day watch the fall of the time-ball, in order to see how closely their own time-pieces are running, and set them if they are wrong.

The time-ball does not finish its work merely by falling. Not every one can take the time or the trouble to watch it fall. A number of clocks have been connected electrically with it, and are automatically regulated by the fall of the ball.

A Remarkable Umbrella.

Among the many curio collectors in New York city there is one old gentleman who declares his umbrella to be his greatest treasure. It is his inseparable companion, and accompanies him wherever he goes. The handle is made from a piece of the Charter Oak, which is set a small triangular piece of stone clipped from Plymouth Rock; the stick is made from a branch of the old elm tree at Cambridge, under which Washington assumed command of the colonial armies; the brass cap on the lower end of the stick is made from the trimmings of a sword scabbard once used by General Grant; the green covering originally served as the lining of a coat worn on State occasions by the snare and courtly Aaron Burr; the ribs, springs and other metal trappings were manufactured from a small steampoint captured by the Americans from the Hessians at the battle of Bandywine. Eight oblong pieces of brass have been inserted in as many sides of the octagonal handle; they were made from buttons cut from the military coats of eight generals famous in the Revolutionary war. The owner of this unique umbrella values it at three hundred dollars, does not believe in keeping his treasures under lock and key, but makes free use of his interesting possession.

An Old Bale of Cotton.

Aiken, S. C., December 20.—Hahn & Co., leading cotton buyers at this place, bought yesterday from the plantation of the late Earl Sawyer a bale of cotton fifteen years old. It showed up a fine sample and brought 9 cents. Considering the price when ginned, and compounding interest on the money till the present time, it is worth 45 cents per pound.

SLEEPLESS NIGHTS, made miserable by that terrible cough. Shiloh's Cure is the Remedy for you.

question of the color line be settled by forcing the negro to his level? There is a cry, the Chinese must go. A supplemental cry is slowly being founded. Perhaps as yet it is only in the process of incubation, but there is no danger of it not being hatched. Negro cheek and negro forwardness will furnish the heat. It is recognized that the above is at variance with the usual order of things, but we believe we express the sentiment of the majority.

How Cycloramas are Made.
The popular idea of how the war cycloramas, like the Battle of Gettysburg, Battle of Shiloh, Battle of Chickamauga, etc., are painted, appears very laughable to a person who knows how the work is accomplished. The Battle of Gettysburg and the Siege of Paris have been shown for several years, and the stock paid large dividends. Each was advertised as the work of celebrated French artists, father and son, and the popular idea is that these gentlemen painted them. The fact is that, beyond a general outlining of the work, which was probably faithfully made after maps procured from authentic sources, and a general direction of the plan of the work, the artist-in-chief had very little to do with it.

No man engaged in a battle sees it, and an accurate painting of two armies in combat is impossible. The general features only are known. For instance, in the Gettysburg painting there are accurately defined the roads, Crown Hill, Little Crown Hill, the wheat field in which a memorable charge was made, one or two buildings which were headquarters of the leading generals, and with reasonable accuracy the topography of the country is depicted with excellent perspective. But the details of the battle, the actual clash of arms between this and that division or brigade, is left a good deal to the imagination. The artist-in-chief hires some men to put in the sky, other men to put in the trees and foliage, other men to put in the men in action. Attention is paid to developing this or that memorable incident, as in the Gettysburg painting, the death of the cannoneer, the amputation of the soldier's limb beside the haversack. Take it all together, it makes up a picture that is thrilling enough to arouse the most intense interest on the part of the old soldier.

A veteran at the Chicago picture of Gettysburg was explaining to a companion the details of the fight, in which he had borne an honorable part. "Say, Bill," said he, "at that stonewall there I lost my hat, and, by gosh! if there ain't the old hat lying there yet!" In painting pictures of battles shrewd artists never fail to bestrew the field with lost hats, muskets and canteens.

The editor of the Christian Statesman, published in Milwaukee, says he was lately informed by a railroad official that he transported over his road at one time four tons of cockle seed, to be ground up and mixed with black pepper. A confederator of that city received a letter with a handsomely lithographed head from a New York firm of "importers, manufacturers, and exporters," whose business was "established in 1820." The letter says: "Inclosed find samples of refined French terra alba which we offer at seven-eighths cents per pound, barrel included. Packed in handsome new barrels, all branded, 'California Beet Sugar.' Freight to Chicago \$3.70 per 100 pounds. Shipped as sugar." Terra alba is merely a finely powdered white earth. This earth is largely mixed with the cheap candies. Some of the baking powders are made of this earth and ammonia. There are mills in which nothing is ground but terra alba. Gypsum is also largely used. Shiploads of this article are sent to China to be used in making green tea.

Another letter, also from an enterprising New York firm, says: "If you use terra alba, we can sell you goods like the enclosed sample at one and a half cents per pound. It is put up in sugar barrels, and each barrel is stenciled 'Imported Potato Starch,' and shipped as such." A firm of Philadelphia druggists show equal enterprise. They offer through their agent 100 pounds of an article they call "California Powdered Sugar," for 90 cents for which they have a large trade among confectioners. It is sweetened dirt cheap. It is no wonder that our people are afflicted with dyspepsia and debility and that children die young. Until laws are enacted and energetically enforced we shall have to eat not only the proverbial "peck of dirt" but no end of nastiness, and there is no telling what poisons.

During the year just closed \$59,231.45 was contributed by the white Baptists of this State to the various benevolent objects in which that denomination is interested, as follows: For State Missions, \$10,314.40; for Bible and colporteur work, \$549.01; for church buildings, \$14,325.20; for Home Missions, \$4,312.69; for Foreign Missions, \$8,737.55; for ministerial education, \$3,638.83; for endowment of Furman University, \$16,133.87; for cottage on the University grounds, by the ladies, \$1,100. In its annual report the State Mission Board says: "During the past year more men have been employed; more work has been done; more fruit gathered and more money raised than during any year of the Board's existence."

The low price that Flynn is selling goods at is astonishing every body. If

THE CHARLESTON EAGLE.

Bill Nye's Remarks in Reference to the Market Street Buzzards.
[From the New York World.]
I attended the other day a meeting of the Charleston Board of Health. The buzzard of Charleston is rightly regarded with awe and veneration. He is the city scavenger. The buzzard is not a pretty bird, and his song is almost destitute of melody. His face is as plain as the clear-cut mouth and retreating forehead of the catfish. He has a raw-looking head and neck, and he is willing to eat and drink what even the boarder at a second-class hotel would disdain to enjoy.

A heavy fine is imposed on one who kills a buzzard. This makes him the eternal enemy and admiration of the negro. Charleston regards the matter from a local standpoint mainly and says virtually: "The buzzard helps himself to what we do not want, but the nigger gathers in just exactly what we do want to eat, and so in the case of the killing of the nigger we remit the fine."

The buzzard has a very reprehensible stage walk, I think. It is something between the hop, skip and jump. It looks like the stride of a frozen-footed tragedian playing a New York engagement after walking in from Omaha. His stage presence is bad. The tragedian's stage presents are also bad sometimes.

The buzzards roost all the time on the old market at Charleston and keep the streets nice and clean. Now and then a butcher throws a tenderloin steak to them and they try to pull it apart. An ordinary, durable tenderloin steak will last them several days. Sometimes one will have it and sometimes another. Interested spectators watch them for hours and bet on the result.

A buzzard must at times feel depressed, especially when he wakes up in the morning with that tired feeling and a disagreeable taste in his mouth which generally precede a general breaking down.

Buzzards do not seem to think much of the future. They live in the gloom but fleetly present. The motto of the buzzard is: "As we journey through life let us live by the way."

They are poor poets and do nothing but the joys of the table. They do not care for the works of the Creator. They prefer the works of a dead horse. A buzzard is low and coarse. He goes to bed hungry and he wakes up even more so. He takes no interest in life, but death fills his soiled bosom with joy. He follows the Northern invalid around Charleston for hours, enjoying his hollow cough. Frequently you will see a flock of buzzards following a prosperous physician for miles and asking him for his handiwork.

A BAY STATE SAMSON.

There is a broad-shouldered, dark-complexioned man in Chelsea, who, it is claimed, is the strongest man in the County, if not in the State. He has been a physical giant from boyhood. When a mere youth he used to amuse himself by lifting a barrel of flour, putting it on his shoulder and carrying it around the block. Later he would shoulder a barrel of sugar and carry it up two flights of stairs and bring it down again, just for the fun of it.

When he was 21 years of age he celebrated his coming of age by lifting a set of quarry cart-wheels, including axle and pole, and lugging the whole lot, weighing 1,100 pounds, a quarter of a mile. After that, his feats of strength were numerous. He held two men, weighing 160 pounds each, at arm's length, holding one on each hand. Sending big crowsbars and pulling up bending trees six inches through by the roots were ordinary pastimes for this young Samson.

The crowning feat of his life happened a few years ago, when he was a carpenter and worked on a new block then building in Chelsea. The workmen had been trying to hoist a big iron girder into its place on the second story. The girder had square edges and weighed 1,800 pounds. The ropes which had been placed around it were cut in two by the sharp edges as soon as the tackle was hauled taut. Finally, in desperation, the foreman sent for a chain. While the man was gone Mr. Houston shouldered the girder and took it up the ladder and placed it in position.

"It hurt my shoulders some," said he, when telling of his performance, "but outside of that I felt no inconvenience. I have never lifted in harness and do not know how much I could take up, but I have an idea that I could lift as much as Dr. Winship ever did if I tried. I am a working-man and have no time for such fooling." His muscles are as hard as knots, and he looks the picture of manly strength and muscular perfection.

A Good Thing for Boys.

Manual training is one of the few good things that are good for everybody. It is good for the rich boy to teach him respect for the dignity of beautiful work. It is good for the poor boy to increase his facility for handling tools, if tools prove to be the thing he must handle for a living afterwards. It is good for the bookish boy to draw him away from books. But, most of all, it is good for the non-bookish boy, in showing him that there is something he can do well. The boy utterly unable, even if he were studious, to keep up book-knowledge and percentage with the brighter boys, becomes discouraged, dull and moody. Let him go to the work-room for an hour, and find that he can make a box or plane a rough piece of board as well as the brighter scholar, nay, very likely better than his brighter neighbor, and you have given him an impulse of self-respect that is of untold benefit to him when he goes back to his studies. He will be a brighter and a better boy for finding out something that he can do well. Mind you, it is not planning the board that does him good; it is planning the board in the presence of other boys who can no longer look down upon him when they see how well he can plane. He might go home after school and plane a board in the bosom of his family, or go to an evening school to learn to plane, without a quarter part, nay, without any, of the invaluable effect upon his manhood that it will have to let him plane side by side with those who in mental attainments may be his superiors.

BALTIMORE, Dec. 19.—A boiler maker named Charles Howe astonished the epicures at a swell up-town restaurant last night by eating five dozen raw eggs, shells and all, on a wager of \$5. The eggs were placed before him on the eating bar half a dozen on a plate. He stood up in front of the ten plates of eggs, and, taking one after another, broke the point, sucked the contents and then deliberately chewed up and swallowed the shells.

After finishing the first dozen he asked for some spirits. Whisky was offered, but he preferred alcohol, and took a big drink from the bottle that supplies the spirit lamps. He repeated the dose after every twelve eggs. In half an hour half the eggs and over a pint of alcohol had been consumed.

After swallowing the last of the eggs he pocketed the \$5, buttoned up his vest, remarked that he had often eaten nine dozen eggs in the same manner and left the group of astonished men wondering whether the boiler maker had an iron plated stomach.

Howe is alive and well to-day.

The Laurens Municipal Election.
LAURENS, S. C., December 19.—The election for City Fathers, which was held on yesterday, passed off very quietly. The contest for Y-tendant was between J. F. Martin and L. E. Irby. Captain Irby was elected by a majority of 52.

Earthquake in New York.
TROY, N. Y., December 19.—Earthquake shocks were felt in Washington and Warren counties this morning. Buildings shook violently.