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R. DON McLEOD, Jr., - - Editor.

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EDITORIAL NOTES.

The American system of checking baggage has been adopted for the benefit of travelers from the United States by several European railway companies. A London road was the first to accept the innovation, and hereafter all luggage passing through New York may be checked to almost any point in Europe.

Notwithstanding the fact that more than 10,000 towns and villages have been added to the list of beneficiaries of the government weather bureau service during the last twelve months, the expenditures have been less than for any twelve months during the past fifteen years, except one, in which they were substantially the same.

The total number of blind in the United States is nearly 49,000, or 976 in each million of population. The number of blind reported as receiving instructions is given as 4691. The number of blind who are also deaf mutes is: Whites, 84 males and 107 females; colored, 28 males and 29 females: blind and idiotic, whites 595 males, 463 females; colored, 66 males, 62 females.

According to the New Orleans Picayune, hard times have set nearly everybody trying to get federal appointments, and senators and representatives friendly to the administration have not as yet been able to catch up with their correspondents. Clerks in the postoffice department at Washington have to write more than 100,000 letters to ambitious people to notify them that their applications have been received.

The Novoe Vremya says that the Russian census gives a population for the empire of one hundred and twenty-seven millions exclusive of the Grand-duchy of Finland, which takes its own census. Some other figures have still to be added from the uttermost parts of Siberia, as well as the nomad tribes of the Steppes and the mountaineers of the Caucasus, where an exceptional snowfall delayed the work till the spring. The full total is expected not to be under a hundred and thirty millions.

Chattanooga, Tenn., stands as a shining light to all American municipalities. October 1, 1893, the city had a floating debt of $72,000, but no outlook for paying it, except resort to increased taxation. The city authorities adopted the method of retrenchment instead of increased taxation. Headed by the mayor, they wrought so wisely and well that in two years they brought this debt down to $5000. They not only did not increase the tax rate meantime, but actually reduced it. This story teaches that other city authorities can do likewise if they are as honest and shrewd as those of Chattanooga.

United States Senator Penrose of Pennsylvania, doesn't believe in tipping waiters, and he has the courage of his convictions. When in Washington, relates the Detroit Free Press, he boards at a fashionable hotel, where the practice of tipping is general. The senator, of course, refused to follow the example of the other guests, and for several days the alacrity of the waiters in serving him was steadily decreased. Sunday morning when he entered the dining room the waiters completely ignored him. The head waiter told a man to take the senator's order, but the man refused and was discharged on the spot. Three others who were called on refused and were likewise discharged, and then the entire force of waiters struck. They made their mistake in so doing, however, for instead of losing one man's tip they are losing everyone's, for an entire new force of waiters was secured, and the Pennsylvania senator is now being waited on promptly, and he isn't tipping the servant, either.

"O LIFE, O BEYOND!"

Strange—strange, O mortal Life,
The perverse gifts that come to me from you!
From childhood I have wanted all good things:
You gave me few.

You gave me faith in One
Divine—above your own imperious might,
O mortal Life, while I but wanted you
And your delight.

I wanted dancing feet,
And flowery, grassy paths by laughing streams:
You gave me loitering steps, and eyes all blurred
With tears and dreams.

I wanted love,—and, lo!
As though in mockery, you gave me loss.
O'erburdened sore, I wanted rest; you gave
The heavier cross.

I wanted one poor hut
For mine own home, to creep away into:
You gave me only lonelier desert lands
To journey through.

Now, at the last vast verge
Of barren age, I stumble, reel and fling
Me down, with strength all spent and heart athirst
And famishing.

Yea, now, Life, deal me death,—
Your worst—your vaunted worst!... Across my breast
With numb and fumbling hands I gird me for
The best.

—James Whitcomb Riley, in the Arena.

"JANNIE."

BY GEORGE J. SOUTHWICK.

Little Jannie was lost.

Down through the valley they carried the cry, over the snow-drifted hills toward Munster, into the bleak ravines of Quakerton where the fox finds refuge from the pitiless winter and the scarce kindlier hunter's prowlings, and where the waters sullenly roar on under the tons of overhanging ice. Jannie was lost—little Jannie the lime-burner's son, the joy of the little world of Macklin, enshrined in many hearts.

The wise ones were gathering in the village forums of consultation—the hotel office, with its great sheet-iron stove ablaze with good cheer, the post office grocery, with its convenient seats of counsel on cracker barrels and soap boxes—but the usual banter and chatter of the hour was forgotten. A soul-stirring alarm possessed all, a touching fear, and a resolution to act and with instant promptness. Somewhere through the wildness that walled them in with ice-crowned battlements on every side, little Jannie had wandered away, none knew whither. The night was coming on—the dread, bleak night of a northern winter, moonless and starless, with grim black spaces between swallowing up human atoms like snowflakes. Never seemed a task so hopeless as when a score of strong souls, generaled by the heart-broken father, plunged into the great drifts toward Esperence, calling, calling, the shrill shrieks reverberating through the pathless valleys, answering each other with demon echoes through the low chorus of the winter wind, each time the cry more despairing, more expressive of a losing hope.

For, who within the reach of that rumor of tragedy but suffered as for the loss of his dearly own? Poor old Williston Marlowe! What would become of him now? How had his many hardships been crowned by one annihilating blow! A little tinge of rebellion against the decree of Providence sprang up in many a bosom, and it was but human. Why was the old lime-burner scourged beyond his due? For many years in their midst this strong soul had labored faithfully, and had made himself a home worthy of her whom he loved and took to his heart to become the mother of this her only child. Then one summer's night the flames from a forest conflagration rained upon it a baptism of fire, and within an hour that home of peace lay a ruin. Soon came the little child like a benediction of heaven through the sorrowing night, but the joy seemed too great. The patient mother lingered a day, and then went out on that long journey whence her little son had come like glad tidings from afar.

And now little Jannie was lost. Now and then on that blind search the father paused in the difficult way so that his small army of followers, armed with staves and lanterns, unflinching under the winter's scourging, might catch up with him. They found the old man raving, with hope all but dead in his heart, remorse eating at his soul like a poison. Yes, remorse. "Boys," he would plead and plead again, "we must find him—we must find little Jannie tonight. For, if we don't—if we don't, by the God of our fathers I swear that I shall never go back to Macklin—never! never! I shall lay down the cross here and never look upon the face of heaven again." And when strong, comforting hands were laid upon his great shoulders and tender encouragements came brokenly, he would chatter on vaguely: "You see, it was all Pinto, little Jannie's shepherd dog. The playful little beast had scratched him with his teeth—just on the dimpled fingers; but the sight of blood angered me. I vowed to kill the brute, and little Jannie must have understood my meaning, for within an hour they were gone—both of them—I don't know whither—probably toward Esperence, where the boy's grandfather lives—and Esperence is eighteen miles away. If he started thither, he will perish on the way." Then, with untold bitterness: "You see it is all my fault. The lad loved the little beast, and I was angry, God forgive! But that little stain of blood across the chubby fingers—I couldn't stand it, that's all; for Jannie is all the world to me now. It was love that erred—more love in this bosom than I ever dared confess to heaven, for fear that the dear child should be taken from me, just as his mother was, because of this over-fondness. Cry out again, boys! Louder! louder! My voice is all gone—he would never hear me now; but you"——

Hush—hark!

The scattered little battalion halted as one man. On that desperate march; while the monotony of dread was broken only by the father's ravings, a keen ear at the extreme left caught the echoes of a strange wail borne upon the mournful winds—shriek of a beast, yet with a voice more than half human, so pitiful, so despairing. With wide, staring eyes the little band peered into the depths, moveless, listening. Again that low, drawn wail, fainter, more hopeless, ending in a broken yelp, like a death-cry. The stricken father heard it, and raised his hands above him, plunging through the darkness in the direction of the precious call to rescue. "It's Pinto! it's Pinto! They are there—yonder—on the other side of the ravine. Quick! quick!"

These wild shouts seemed to exhaust the old man, for his throat was swollen with calling. There was no seconding voice. Like brave soldiers to their commander's bidding the whole body flung pell-mell over the steep declivity, each hoping to be the first to take the little child in his rescuing arms. In their rear, panting and utterly broken, the father struggled, once or twice prodding them with a shrill cry, though they needed no spur to their duty. Then suddenly stumbling over the ice-bound rocks, he fell at full length and lay there, stunned and panting.

It seemed a long time; but at last the shout from afar, "We have found him—thank God! We have found him." The old man regained his feet, raising his hands to heaven, uttering a broken prayer. Then he started on, but soon paused, for he saw that the little group of lanterns about the precious spot on the hillside beyond was strangely still. What had happened? A new and terrible wonder came into his heart. Was the boy dead? He tried to call out, but there was no strength in the fluttering bosom. Sinking to his knees in the driving snow he waited, his heart in his throat.

At last, after this maddening pause, there was a stir about the little group, and then came the triumphant shout, "He is alive, Marlowe—little Jannie is alive! It is nothing short of a miracle." They had lifted the little treasure and were bearing him hither tenderly, triumphantly; and in the hush between the wind wails, the father heard their commingling chatter, like men from whom a death sentence had been lifted at the ninth hour. "It is a providence Marlowe. The dog alone saved him. He was lying across the child's body, his heavy coat covering him like a blanket. It is nothing short of a miracle." Then the bearers of good tidings approached the thankful father, laying the still unconscious child in his great arms; and with many blessings from the broken heart that hour made whole the grateful band started back toward the village.

Some time later little Jannie lay upon his pillows in the white cot by the south window of the homely cottage in Macklin. His father was kneeling at the side of the couch, clasping the chubby hand, through tears watching the return of consciousness to the stunned brain. Poor Jannie had been hovering very near the border-land of the eternal; and the old doctor's assurance that he would recover this shock was by no means positive. But at last the quivering eyelids parted, and a smile of light illuminated the cherub face. There was a hush in the somewhat crowded chamber; and through the silence was heard the sound of distant chimes.

"The bells, father; what are they ringing for?"

"Glad tidings my son," responded the old man with a sort of exultation.

"For what? What has happened? These people—all these people; why have they come here?"

"They have come to welcome you back to life again, my boy," was the earnest reply.

"Me? Where have I been? What has happened?" Then, after a strange pause: "Oh, papa! I remember, I remember. Pinto and I were going to grandpa's away over in Esperence. I did not know it was so far—and the snow was so deep—and I got tired and laid down in the snow and went to sleep"——But the little reverie was broken with another thought and a look of pain spread over the infant face as he struggled upon the pillows. "Pinto!" he cried anxiously, "where is poor Pinto, father?"

The kneeling man drew a deep breath, recoiling without a word. True, true! Where was poor Pinto, the rescurer, the saver, without whose sheltering warmth the child would have perished, without whose wailings they would never have found him? A deep spirit of guilt came into the listener's heart, and he turned his face away, for the child's look was like a judgment.

The little one saw the uncertainty of the parental aspect and put forth his hand, touching appealingly the flowing white beard. "Father, father!" he moaned, "you have not killed him—you have not killed my Pinto?"

"No, no!" answered the trembling culprit after a struggle. "Never fear. I will go and bring him to you.

"Go, father, please—please!" pleaded the little one; and the old man sprang up to do his bidding, as if it were the command of an angel.

Down the lone stair and out through the darkness to the barn old Marlowe hurried. There he hastily bridled his horse, and without even throwing a blanket over the beast's back mounted and started at full speed down the valley road toward Esperence. How mean he felt within him—how selfish! That dumb brute became a human creature in his eyes now. He felt that if he returned to the little one again without the faithful dog to vindicate him, he would feel himself guilty of some great crime. Besides, the child's restoration to life and health depended upon it. He divined the truth from the earnest appeal and from the ominous look upon the silent physician's face. He must find Pinto and save him; for that haunting white visage of the little sufferer stood everywhere before him on the snow-swept night.

Soon the lone searcher left the trackless highway and struck through the bleak fields and guardedly down the declivity where the old man himself had fallen in his mad haste scarce an hour before. There before him was the ravine, and the glad heart leaped. Crossing the depth, he urged his horse up the incline, peering into the thick night. Just beyond him there was a dark object in the snow. The old man slipped from his mount, then with quaking limbs led the beast forward till at last they stood beside the faithful lover of his little master, half buried in the drift. "Pinto!" called the old man breathlessly, "Pinto, old boy, get up, get up!" Then as no answer came as of old, the lime-burner dropped to his knees, ungloved his hand and thrust it under the kindly coverlet of white, laying it upon the poor beast's heart. Then he turned away, moaning.

Ah, little did old Williston Marlowe know that the very moment after the faithful shepherd dog had given into the keeping of his rescuers the dear little master whom he loved and sheltered to the last with his own warm body, crying out through the lonely hours and darkness until succor came, when he saw the group of searchers moving in triumph away, with his own limbs frozen, unable to follow, he watched the moving lights afar; and when the darkness closed forever between, he made not a moan, but laid down like a true hero who gives up his life for his master, and slept.—New York Journal.

SCIENTIFIC SCRAPS.

There is an electric scrubber.

A captive bee, striving to escape, has been made to record as many as 15,540 wing strokes per minnte in a recent test.

On a globe thirty miles in circumference it would take the strongest known microscope to find a man were he to be reduced proportionately.

Electricity is used in recording the speed of vessels, the log being fitted with revolving flanges which make and break the current, the recorder being placed on the ship and connected to the log by wires.

A new method of testing the hardness of steel balls has been devised. The balls are dropped from a fixed height on a glass plate set at an angle; if properly tempered, they rebound into one receptacle, and if they are too soft, they drop into another.

A deposit of carbon by electrolysis—that is, in a manner analogous to electrotyping or the usual method of plating with copper and some other metals—is claimed by M. N. Fradin, a French electrician. Seeking to verify the statement that carbon oxide and carbonic acid are evolved on passing a current through sulphuric acid between carbon electrodes, he was led to the conclusion that the carbon actually dissolves in the acid. As a test of this theory he plunged in the acid a cathode of platinum, which after a time became coated with a compact layer of carbon.

By breaking open rotten logs one can find in midwinter the grubs or larvæ of many of the wood-boring beetles, and beneath logs and stones near the margins of ponds and brooks, hordes of the maggots or larvæ of certain kinds of flies may often be found huddled together in great masses. The larvæ of a few butterflies also live over winter beneath chips or bunches of leaves near the roots of their food plant, or in webs of their own construction, which are woven on the stems close to the buds whose expanding leaves will furnish them their first meal in spring.

A SONG OF BLOSSOMS.

There is never a blossom that blooms for Love's bosom
As sweet as my blossom—my sweet;
And not in God's skies any stars like her eyes—
Like the eyes of my blossom—my sweet!

Like her beautiful eyes, where my destiny lies—
All bright with the blue and the dew of the skies;
She is wonderful sweet—she is wonderful wise—
My beautiful blossom—my sweet!

And not for the queens of the loveliest lands
Would I give her—my blossom, my sweet;
Not a kiss of her lips not a clasp of her hands
For the loveliest lady you'd meet.

For the loveliest maid in whose honor a blade
Hath flashed where the battle made foemen afraid;
Her lips to my own! May God's tempests be stayed
For my blossom—my blossom—my sweet!

—Atlanta Constitution.

HUMOROUS.

"Did the play have a good run?" "No, but the actors did. They were chased out of town."

Eva—Does your new dress fit you well? Vera—Oh, splendidly. I can hardly move or breathe in it.

He—Why are you so cold to me today? You weren't yesterday. She—Malaria, my dear; I have a chill every other day.

Hoax—Do you believe that 13 is an unlucky number? Joax—Well, all the people who lived in the thirteenth century are dead.

Attorney—Are you a married man? Humble Witness—No; I was hurt in a sawmill last week—that's what makes me look so bad."

"Every woman has a fad," said the observant lady to the one who had buried three husbands. "Hm! I'd like to know what mine is!"

Mrs. Henry Peck—I read here that a Western state proposes to tax bachelorhood. Mr. Henry Peck—A good idea. All luxuries should be taxed.

"Do you believe his interest in the state is as deep as he pretends it to be?" "It is several thousand feet deep, at any rate. He has a lot of gas and oil wells."

Teacher—Now I have explained to you the difference between good and evil, tell me what sort of little boys go to heaven? Billy Snooks (promptly)—Dead 'uns.

Benedict—Do you think a man will have bad luck if he gets married on Friday? Bachelor—Oh, I don't think it makes any difference whether it's Friday or not.

Would-Be Poet—What's the best time to write poetry? Has-Been Poet—Just after you secure a situation from which you get enough salary to live comfortably.

"But, madame, I can't pay your boy four dollars a week when I can get any amount of boys for two." "Ah, but they're not like Micky. He'd be a companion for ye."

Mr. Howland—I tell you, Maria, you're worrying over nothing. I can stop smoking any time I want to. Mrs. Howland—Well, then, stop now. Mr. Howland—I don't want to now.

"I sent a dollar last week in answer to that advertisement offering a method of saving half my gas bills." "And you got——" "A printed slip directing me to paste them in a scrapbook."

"Placehunter expects to get a position in the war department." "What does he know about the war department?" "He knows the salary attached to the office he's looking for."

Stranger—But I hear that your New England climate is exceedingly variable. Native—Not a bit of it; quite the contrary. It is pretty much the same all the year round, continually changing.

"Listen!" he hissed. "No," she answered, and, turning upon her heel brusquely, she left him there alone. For she was a telephone girl by profession, and it was not her wont to listen to anything, unless she was sure it was none of her business.

Dusty Dolan—Providence is a great blessin', Corney. It takes appertite from the rich, who would give anyt'ing to regain it. Coldfeet Corney—Yes, an' gives appertite ter de poor, who would give anyt'ing ter git rid uv it, an' can't. Don't tork ter me; I'm chock full uv de emptiness uv dat gift.

Cabin Outfit of a Liner.

For the first cabin of a big Atlantic liner there must be 3000 spoons, 2000 forks, 1000 napkin rings, 300 knives, 500 finger bowls, 300 salt cellars, 200 tumblers, 1000 cups and 1000 saucers, 6000 plates of various kinds and 12,000 napkins. In the outfit of the cabins there will be required at least 2000 blankets, 1000 counterpanes, 500 mattresses, 800 pillows, 7000 sheets, 1000 bath towels and 10,000 other towels.

Like a Building.

Life is a building. It rises slowly, day by day, through the years. Every new lesson we learn lays a block on the edifice which is rising silently within us. Every experience, every touch of another life on ours, every influence that impresses, every book we read, every conversation we have, every act or our commonest days, adds to the invisible building.—City And State.