

LEXINGTON WEEKLY BUDGET.

VOL. 2.

LEXINGTON, MORROW COUNTY, OREGON, THURSDAY, JAN. 9, 1890.

NO. 15.

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY EVENING

BY
SNOW & WHITSON,

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION:

One Year, \$1.00
Six Months, 50 cents.
Invariably in advance.

RATES OF ADVERTISING:

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Mashed by a Marchioness.

I've lately gone and lost my 'art, and where you'll never guess; I'm regularly mashed upon a lovely Marchioness!

"Twice a fancy fair we met, inside the Albert 'All! So affable she smiled at me as I came near her stall!

At titles and distinctions once I ignorantly scoffed. As if no bond could be betwixt the tradesman and the Toff!

I held with those who'd do away with difference in ranks. But that was all before I met the Marchioness of Manx!

A home was being started by some kind aristocrat. For orphan kittens, born of poor but well-connected cats. And on the swells who planned a fete this object to assist. The Marchioness of Manx's name stood foremost on the list.

I never saw a smarter hand at serving in a shop. For every likely customer she caught upon the top! And from the form her ladyship displayed at that bazaar. You might have took your oath she'd been brought up behind a bar!

In vain I tried to hid her that my purse had been forgot. She spotted me in 'alf a jiff, and chafed me precious hot!

A sov' for one regular she gammoned me to spend. "You really can't refuse," she said, "I've bitten off the end!"

"Do buy my crowd work," she urged, "it goes across a chair; You'll find it come in useful, as I see you 'le your 'air!"

So I handed over thirty bob, though not a cony I could't tell a Marchioness how nearly I was broke!

A raffle was the next concern I put my rhino in: The prize a talking parrot, which I didn't want to win. Then her sister, Lady Tabby, showed a painted milking stool. And I bought it, though it's not a thing I sit on as a rule.

The Marquis kept a-fidgeting and frowning at his wife. For she talked to me as free as if she'd known me all my life! I felt that I was in the swim, so wasn't over-awed. But 'ung about and spent my cash as lavish as a lord!

Next time I meet the Marchioness a-riding in the how. I'll catch her eye and raise my 'at, and up to her I'll go. And tell her next my 'art I keep the stump of that cigar. She sold me on the 'appy day we 'ad at her bazaar!

SHE WANTED TO MARRY.

On a wild mountain road between the Yackin river and Scalsbury, N. C., I came upon a humble cabin in which resided the Widow Watkins and her three children, the oldest being a boy of 15 and the youngest a girl of 5. I had heard of the widow while ten miles away. Her husband was a Justice of the Peace and something of a religious exhorter, and what he didn't know about the history of America wasn't worth looking up. His mule ran away with him one day, says M. Quad in the *Detroit Free Press*, and fell into a ravine and both were killed. The widow, as one of the natives expressed it, was "the well fixedest woman in four counties," having a small farm all clear and considerable personal property. Half a mile from the house I met Jeremiah, the boy spoken of. He was bareheaded, barefooted, coatless vestless, and so freckled that it was hard to say what his natural complexion was. He rose up off a rock as I approached, made an awkward bow and said:

"Cribbins, stranger."

"Cribbins to you, my boy. And who may you be?"

"Jerry Watkins."

"Son of the widow, eh?"

"Yas. He you'n he 'un?"

"Yes."

"From the no'th?"

"Yes."

"Cum to see ma?"

"Yes; I'll stop for dinner."

"Glad on't. Gwine to hev' chicken. Ma sent me out to meet you 'un."

"Many thanks to both of you."

"Say!" he continued, as he trotted along beside me, "I like you 'un; you 'un wears white shirts and clothes, and I'll jigger (bet) you 'un know roots from tree-tops. Hev' you 'un cum to marry ma?"

I laughed, and he was much put out for a moment. Then he said:

"Wish you 'un would. Then I could hev' a gun. If you 'un will I'll mind everything you say."

"Perhaps your mother doesn't want to marry again."

"Mugs! She'd marry you 'un like lightning. Say if you 'un has her, you 'un will git me a gun, won't you? Say! I saw a bar yesterday. Say! I know whar I could shoot a powerful lot o' 'cons. Say! I'll speak to mam fur ye if you 'un will promise the gun."

The widow was at the door to give me welcome. The second child, who was a 10-year old girl, was barefooted and freckled and towheaded, and the younger one had on only a single garment and was rolling in the dirt.

"Cum right in an' squat," said the widow as we shook hands. "Pete McCoy was saying last night that you was headed this way and would stop. Ar' ye thirtable? May, jostle him over a glass of buttermilk. We'll cribbins (eat) in about an hour."

We talked about the weather, the state of the roads, etc., as she bustled around to get dinner, but pretty soon Jerry went out of doors and called—

"Ma! ma! Cum outer yere!"

"Jerry, you shet!" replied the mother.

"Ma! will you 'un marry he 'un?" continued Jerry.

"Now, Jerry, if yer don't stop yer guzum I'll skin yer alive!" she exclaimed, as she stood in the door and flourished a skillet at him.

Jerry made off and sat down on a log, and the widow turned to me to explain—

"Don't pay no seriousness to he 'un, sir. Jerry wants a new pop right bad, and I de say that I'm dun tired of this yere gittin' along alone. But I'm not gwine ter offer myself to anybody."

Just before dinner the oldest girl made friends with me, materially assisted by some candy, and she suddenly bawled out

"Ma! ma! gwine to marry him!"

History of Forks.

A silver plater says, "In only one mediaval record is there any mention of the use of a fork after the fashion of modern times. The heroine of this record is a Byzantine woman, who married a Doge of Venice many centuries ago. In Venice this Byzantine woman continued to eat as she ate at home. She cut her meats in very small bits on her plate and carried each bit to her mouth on a two tined fork. The people of Venice regarded this unusual manner of eating as a symptom of morbid luxury."

"In all probability, as this incident indicates, the modern use of the fork originated at the cultivated Byzantine court, and spread gradually to the West. The Western people did not take kindly, however, to this instrument of new-fangled Eastern table manners. Many centuries were required for its general introduction and adoption. The famous Byzantine who ate with her fork in Venice lived in the eleventh century. Not till the seventeenth century did the great folk of Europe begin to follow her example."

"In 1652 the use of forks, according to modern ideas, was generally known but not generally adopted. Heylin, an English writer, mentioned it then as the custom among dandies. In a French book printed in 1673 are these words: 'When a person helps himself from the platter he should take care not to take his piece before the most distinguished persons have taken theirs. A person should take all he wants at one time, and not keep sticking his fingers into the dish to pull out piece after piece.' Earlier in the century a princess of Conde was still eating with her fingers. Louis XIII. ate with a fork, but his wife, Anna of Austria, who was educated at the Spanish court, ate with her fingers, although she was very proud of her beautiful hands."

A Remarkable Timepiece.

On the desk of Edison B. Braze, in the navy department, is a little rosewood case which contains a watch of extraordinary precision. It is in the form of a cube, and contains a chronometer such as is used on all naval vessels. This little instrument has quite a tragic history and is held of considerable value. It was the ship's chronometer of the unfortunate *Polaris* that was sent out on an Arctic expedition in 1871. When the *Polaris* was nipped in the ice Captain Hall saved this instrument and some other things from the vessel. As long as Captain Hall survived he kept the chronometer with him. When he perished it was buried in the Arctic snows and abandoned. This was some time in 1872. For four winters it lay buried in the snow and ice.

In 1876 Captain Nares, of the British navy, now Sir George Nares, discovered this chronometer at Newman's Bay. He dug it out of the snow and took it to England with him on his return. It had then been buried in the snow for four years in a region where the mercury sinks to 104 degrees below freezing point. It was found to be in perfect order, and was wound and ran all right as soon as taken from its cold bed. On returning to England Captain Nares turned the instrument over to the British admiralty office, from whence it was sent to this government. With all this experience it loses only a single second in twenty-four hours.

Wine at \$2,000,000 a Bottle.

Wine at \$2,000,000 a bottle is a drink that in expense would rival the luxurious taste of barbaric splendor, when priceless pearls were thrown into the wine-cup to give a rich flavor to its contents; yet in the city of Bremen just such a costly beverage may be found. In the wonderful wine-cellar under the Hotel de Ville, in the Rose apartment, there are twelve cases of holy wine, each case inclosed with the name of one of the apostles. This ancient wine was deposited in its present resting-place in the year 1624, 265 years ago. One case of this wine, consisting of five oxforts of 204 bottles, cost 500 rix-dollars in 1624. Including the expense of keeping up the cellar, interest on the original outlay, and interests upon interests, one of these oxforts would to-day cost 555,557.540 rix-dollars; a single bottle, 2,723,812 rix-dollars; a glass, or the eighth part of a bottle, is worth 340,476 rix-dollars, or \$272,380; or at the rate of 540 rix-dollars, or \$272, per drop.

A Novel Refrigerator.

A young friend of mine, who has for several years each summer gone with his father on a camping trip on the south shore of Lake Superior, tells me of a novel expedient they often employed for preserving their venison in warm weather. In that country some of the streams are flanked by long rows of sandhills, whose composition is so loose that they shift about continually under a wind of any force. In the winter time the high winds often blow the sand over the great snow banks which lie upon the north side of the sand dunes, covering up the snow to a depth of several feet. The snow is thus kept unmelting, and even in the middle of summer one can dig down through the sand to it and find the best imaginable sort of a natural refrigerator. In this way, said my young friend, they buried their deer and trout, and found they kept entirely fresh so long as they cared to leave them. This is certainly a new instance of nature's bountifulness with the sportsman.—*Forest and Stream.*

A lawyer, while arguing a case in a Louisville court, was attacked with rheumatism of the heart, and calling out, "What, am I dead?" fell lifeless to the floor.

Precious Stones.

Gems Only Prized for Their Vulgar Worth, Not for Their Natural Beauty.

The very small catalogue of precious stones popular with us may be one cause of our poverty in design; another in our few forms, says the *Contemporary Review*. A brooch, ear-rings, finger-rings—many people have no idea beyond those—a locket, rows of something round the neck, studs, stars for the hair—voila tout! These orthodox "set" cast and polished and machine engraved, are as deadening as bad laws. Where there is no liberty there is no enjoyment, and what becomes of the joyous, the joyous grand? It seems there are only a certain number of things one can do with diamonds. After the diamond comes some half-dozen well-known names down to the dismal garnet.

Perhaps the eminent lapidary and mineralogist, Bryce Wright, has done more than anyone in the present day to increase the catalogue of our possible ornaments, as he has materially aided science by introducing a number of hitherto unknown minerals. At his museum in Saville row, a haunt of ever-increasing splendor and interest, specimens of extraordinary beauty may be seen—not only the largest diamonds and sapphires, the purest crystals and lapis in the world, and other things that delight the merely rich, but curiosities—white sapphires, colored diamonds, black pearls, pink emeralds, and exquisite specimens of novelties, such as hiddendite, Australian opals, and scores of beautiful materials which most of us only know from the Revelation of St. John; fabulous glories such as five children's dreams in Mme. d'Aunoy's fairy tales—where entire tables of emerald, miniature covered with a sheet of diamond, and bracelets cut in a single ruby are quite common—just such exquisite and rare objects may be seen at Bryce Wright's, along with many beautiful historical antiquities, worth any length of journey to view.

In my opinion there is no material so beautiful as opal for cameo-cutting, an art revived by Bryce Wright with extraordinary success. I have a specimen of its native matrix treated with antique grace and ingenuity by Elser, a well-known gem-cutter. Its color is as vivid as I have seen in opal—it glows like a blue flame; on close inspection Venus and Cupid start out from the mouth of a gleamy cave with pillars of ivory. This is in the true spirit of the old designers. I have an ancient coral pendant carried in a graceful figure of Our Lady surrounded by cherubim, and mounted in arabesques of blue and white enamel. Mrs. Alma-Tadema has a graceful seventeenth-century necklace of the blue enamel, an interlary of true-love knots—probably Italian. These are jewels as opposed to the vulgar, "noisy," concentrations of diamonds—distinguishable from glass only by the dichroscope, though costing a fortune—which we connect with women of wealth but no training.

How Johnnie Caught Rattlers.

A little boy was very fond of rambling in the woods in southern Georgia, and every time he went out he would capture a rattlesnake and bring it home alive.

"How do you catch them, Johnnie?" said the mother.

"Jes' so," said the boy, and he showed her the operation. He would take a large candy jar and place the mouth of the jar in front of the "rattler." Then he would firmly fix his gaze upon the snake and hold him spell bound. He would then punch the snake's tail with a long stick and shove him along until he had him secure in the bottle.

In this manner he captured thirty rattlers, and placed them on shelves in the kitchen.

The curious collection remained there for some time. One morning the mother missed the snakes and also the boy. She looked around the house and found them nowhere. Finally she heard laughter in the front yard. She went out and beheld a fantastic spectacle. The young kid was dancing around the front yard, while the thirty snakes were twisting around flowers and bushes, and had converted the flower yard into a regular snake-dome.—*Atlanta Chronicle.*

A Jewel in Great Demand.

It is doubtful whether Shakespeare's tomb, ugly and venomous, but there is a belief current in all parts of India that a certain variety of snake, called Shesh Nag, when it attains the age of 1,000 years has a precious jewel formed in its head. This jewel, it is affirmed, possesses the quality of sucking up the poison of the deadliest snake if applied to the wounded part. Strangely enough, a Parsee gentleman is reported to possess this invaluable jewel, according to a correspondent of a Gujarati weekly published at Wadhwa, in Gujarat.

The correspondent says that when the present owner, who by the way is now 63, was 23 years old he found a snake of the above-mentioned variety, which he killed. Then he found the jewel in its head. It has already saved several lives. Last year when Mr. Vidal, the collector of the district, was there it was shown to him. The jewel is said to contain a thin crescent-like fiber, which unceasingly oscillates in the center. His Highness the Maharajah of Baroda, his Highness the Maharajah of Kolhapur, and several other native princes are said to have offered more than 100,000 rupees for this unique jewel. The name and address of the owner are Framji Dadabhai Govekar, Tarapur, Bombay Presidency.—*Southern Weekly.*

Boring a Breech-Loading Cannon.

At last the cannon is turned down, and is ready to be bored inside. In this operation it must be bored so straight and true that the boring tool, entering at the exact center of the small end of the cannon, will come out precisely at the center of the large end, seventeen feet away. Those of you who have tried to bore a straight hole lengthwise through even a short bit of wood will know that this work requires not a little skill and care.

When any of you boys have a job of boring to do at your work-bench, you make fast the article to be bored and turn the boring tool. It is just the other way in boring a cannon. The boring tool or "bit," is held firm and motionless, while the great mass of steel to be bored turns around. This plan is found to insure steadiness of the "bit." It would be almost impossible to make this bit firm and solid enough to do its difficult work, and yet free to turn around in the cannon. So if you had been at the side of this gun-lathe when the work was begun you would have seen that the bit was motionless—except for a slow advance into the gun.

The bit attends strictly to business, and steadily bores its way through the steel. Most of you have been to the country and have seen a pig "rooting" in the ground. Imagine, then, the pig to be standing still and the ground to be slowly passing under the pig's snout and being "rooted," and you will have a case much like that of the bit and the cannon. In fact, the boring tool is called a "hog-nosed" bit, and it roots up that cannon as if it enjoyed the operation. No long, graceful curves come from this boring, but small, crisp shavings that are removed as fast as they accumulate in order that the boring tool's work shall not be interfered with. The bit is going into the steel at the rate of three-eighths of an inch for every turn of the cannon, and it is making a round hole almost large enough for a boy to put his head in—five and three-quarter inches in diameter. As the round hole grows deeper, the heavy bar, on which the bit is fastened, advances into the cannon steadily, moved by a number of wheels and screws that form part of the lathe.

I must not lose sight of the shavings, the little ones that come from the inside, and the long, spirally twisted ones that are turned from the outside of the cannon. A military-looking man, standing near the table, does not lose sight of these shavings or trimmings, either. For this man's business is to carefully inspect the borings and trimmings. That is what he is paid to do. Uncle Sam pays him, and expects him to earn his salary. The cannon is being made for Uncle Sam, and he intends to find out all its qualities, whether good or bad. So the man eyes the boring carefully. Now, if with a plane, or your knife-blade, you will cut a thin shaving from a bit of wood, it will show you little flaw existing in the wood from which it was sliced. The finest knot-hole or crack will show in the shaving much more plainly than in the wood itself. So it is with a cannon's shaving. It is a dreadful tell-tale, and the fault-finding man beside the gun knows this perfectly well. He examines the spiral turning, or the little piece of boring, and finds no evidence of a flaw or crack. The long spiral strip is as smooth as glass and glossy as your sister's curls.

Into the solid steel the hog-nosed bit roots its way, until it is in so far that a little electric light must bear it company, to show the workmen how matters are progressing in the heart of the cannon. After eighteen days of steady boring, the bit lets daylight into the bore of the cannon by emerging at the other (or larger) end seventeen feet away.—*G. F. Stuller, in St. Nicholas.*

Economy in Shoes.

A woman who understands the economy of dress will never buy a cheap pair of shoes. No poorer investment can be made, for besides giving out in shorter time than a first-class article, it will look shabby and worn long before it should do so. But any shoes, no matter how costly or well-shaped in the beginning, will lose its freshness speedily if not properly cared for. This is especially applicable to those made of French kid, which every little bruise and touch turns purple. A rule observed by many women, and a good one it proves, too, is never to wear a street shoe in the house. It receives harder treatment, strange to say, from numerous inevitable collisions with articles of furniture than it would in double the amount of street wear.

Another sensible custom is to reserve a pair of boots for wet weather wear, leaving them to rest in a comfortable log between times. Nothing tells against the beauty of footwear so much as getting it wet, and even with rubbers no amount of diligence will prevent the dampness of the skirts reaching the ankles. Shoes should be removed immediately on arriving at home, the dust and soil wiped away with a clean, soft rag, and then they should be placed together in a separate pocket of the shoe bag until wanted again. If this course is invariably pursued a considerable saving of money, time and temper will be added to the increased service derived from even an inferior quality of leather.—*Detroit Free Press.*

Young lady (in great store)—"Let me see a bonnet suitable for an old lady." Salesgirl—"For your mother?" Young lady—"No; for myself. I don't expect to get the change from my purchase until I'm old enough to be a grandmother, so I shall be prepared."—*N. Y. Herald.*