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Miscellaneous.

A Missouri Boy as a Ready Reckoner.

A correspondent of the St. Louis Republican, writing from Tabo, Mo., says: We have quite a marvel of a man in our community, a natural mathematician. His name is Reuben Fields. Having heard of him frequently through farmers and others, who got him to do their counting, I determined a short time ago to make him a visit, and to ascertain for myself if the remarkable stories told of him were true.

I am free to confess that at first I was fully as incredulous as many readers of this paragraph will be, in fact, would not have believed statements concerning him had not the authority been undisputably good.

Proceeding to Fayetteville, the small village in which he lives, I inquired for "Reub," and was told that he was in town and was shown his residence, toward which I made my way. When nearly there I met a young man apparently about twenty-five years of age, walking a little lame, and seemed to be leisurely and vacantly gazing about, and accosted him with: "Does Reuben Fields live in that house yonder?" "Yes sir." "Well, I've heard that Reub was a great calculator, and I must go and see him," and I started forward, when he stopped me with—"I'm him."

"Well, Reub," said I, "I have a few questions I would like to have you answer, and will make it worth your while to do so."

Gazing around, he answered: "That's all right," and remarked that he could "count" anything he could understand.

I may here remark that he cannot read or write a letter or figure; he says if he could he should lose his gift. He cannot explain anything, but says he has a numeration table away on "beyond the books." "You commence at the bottom and work up—I commence at the top and work down; it is easier falling out of a tree than climbing one." He frequently observes: "If I could read and write, I shouldn't know any more than you do." It is said he never makes mistakes. Of all these questions I gave him, he made but one, and he corrected that on recounting. The following are some of the questions asked him:

If, to the time past noon, there be added its $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{3}$ and 2.5, the sum will be equal to 1.6 of the time to midnight; what is the hour?

Divide \$11.50 between two persons so that one shall have 75c more than the other.

A tree 136 feet long fell and was broken into two pieces; two-thirds of the longer piece equals three-quarters of the length of the shorter. What is the length of each piece?

What is the interest of 1 cent for 1 day at 6 per cent, per annum?

What is the exact length of one side of a square acre?

These questions were all correctly answered; his answer to the last being, "It can't be told."

I then said: "Reub, I hear that you can tell what day of the week any given date was, or will be; is that so?" "Yes, sir." "What was July 1, 1858?" "Wednesday." "Correct. What was the 22d of January, 1848?" "Sunday." "What day will the 4th of July come on this year?" "Saturday." "New Years?" "Friday." "All right." I have also heard, Reub, that you can tell the hour at any time of day or night. Is this so?" "Yes, sir." "What time is it now?" "It is 17 minutes past 2 o'clock, railway time—sun time is 13 minutes slow."

er." We walked around town and he gave me the hour several times, correctly each time within two or three minutes. Several times he called on citizens of the place to attest the truth of his statements, which they did. One of the leading citizens told me he had tried "Reub" on the time question on both clear and cloudy days, and also on dark nights, and he always gave the correct time. Reuben asked the gentleman we were talking with to write down a column of figures, which he did; they were then read to him, thirteen numbers, two figures in each number, and he at once gave their sum, and could repeat the numbers in the order in which they were written, either forward or backward.

The tax collector got Reuben to look over his work last fall, and Reuben said that he could remember the numbers in the column and the sum yet. County clerks have sent from Kansas for him to help straighten their books. A wholesale firm in Kansas City heard of him and sent for him to do some invoicing. He told them he could do the work of ten men in making computations. They told him if he could he should have the pay of ten men. He mounted a high stool with the clerks around him, and kept them giving the number of articles, price of each, and taking down his answers. The gave him \$45 for his day's work. A firm in Fayetteville selling out took an invoice of their goods. Reub was sick at the time, but they figured it out and sent it to him; he found a mistake of \$300.

The Widow's Protest.

One of the saddest things that ever came under my notice (said the banker's clerk) was there in Corning during the war. Dan Murphy enlisted as a private, and fought very bravely. The boys all liked him; and when a wound, by and by, weakened him down till carrying a musket was too heavy work for him, they clubbed together and fixed him up as a sutler. He made money then, and sent it always to his wife to bank for him. She was a washer and an ironer, and knew enough by hard experience to keep money when she got it. She didn't waste a penny. On the contrary, she began to get miserly as her bank account grew. She grieved to part with a cent, poor creature, for twice in her hard working life she had known what it was to be hungry, cold, friendless, sick, and without a dollar in the world, and she had a haunting dread of suffering so again. Well, at last Dan died; and the boys, in testimony of their esteem and respect for him, telegraphed to Mrs. Murphy to know if she would like to have him embalmed and sent home; when you know the usual custom was to dump a poor devil like him into a shallow hole, and then inform his friends what had become of him. Mrs. Murphy jumped to the conclusion that it would only cost two or three dollars to embalm her dead husband, and so she telegraphed "Yes." It was at the "wake" that the bill for embalming arrived, and was presented to the widow.

She uttered a wild, sad wail, that pierced every heart, and said: "Sixty-five dollars for stuffin' Dan, blister their souls! Did them devils suppose I was goin' to start a museum, that I'd be dalin' in such expensive curiosities?"

The banker's clerk said there was not a dry eye in the house.—*Mark Twain.*

A singular difference—Call a girl a young witch and she is pleased; call an elderly woman an old witch and her indignation knows no bounds.

Hank Monk on "Saratogas."

Hank Monk, the stage-driver who gave Horace Greeley his memorable mountain ride, in common with all his tribe, hates the sight of those ponderous specimens of architecture in the trunk line known as the "Saratoga bandbox." He likes a "Saratoga" about as well as a cat likes hot soap. He now drives on the stage line between Carson City and Lake Tahoe. He was driving on the same line last summer. A Virginia lady who was stopping at the Glenbrook House had a "Saratoga" at Carson which he wished brought up to the lake. It was about as long and wide as a first-class spring mattress and seven or eight feet high. The lady had managed to get it as far as Carson by rail, but the trouble was to get it up into the mountains. Hank had promised two or three times to bring it up "next trip," but always arrived without it. At last Hank drove up one evening, and, as usual, the lady came out upon the veranda to ask if he had brought her trunk. Like that great and good man, George, Hank cannot tell a lie, and so he said:

"No, ma'm, I haven't brought it, but I think some of it will be up by the next stage."

"Some of it?" cried the lady.

"Yes; maybe half of it, or such a matter."

"Half of it?" groaned the horrified owner of the Saratoga.

"Yes; half to-morrow and the rest next day or the day after."

"Why, how in the name of common sense can they bring half of it?"

"Well, when I left they were sawing it in two, and"—

"Sawing it in two! Sawing my trunk in two?"

"That was what I said," coolly answered Hank. "Two men with a big cross-cut saw were working down through it—about in the middle, I think."

"Sawing my trunk in two?—and all my best clothes in it! Sawing it in the middle! God help the man that saws my trunk!"

and in a towering passion she rushed indoors, threatening the hotel, the stage line, the railroad company, the town of Carson and the State of Nevada with suits for damages.

It was in vain that she was assured that there was no truth in the story of the sawing—that Monk was a great joker—she could not be made to believe but that her trunk had been sawed in two, until it arrived intact and she had examined its contents most thoroughly. Hank's "Saratoga" joke is still remembered and told at the Glenbrook House, but the ladies see no fun in the yarn.—*Virginia City Enterprise.*

POISONED BY CANNED FRUIT.—The *Wheatland Free Press* of the 11th instant says:

Mrs. O. E. Betz, of Wheatland, went with her husband, Mr. Isaac Betz, on a visit to some friends near Viola, on the 4th, and during the day Mrs. Betz ate some canned apricots, which had been put up in metallic cans last year. She was immediately afterwards taken with cramps and has since been very sick. Sour fruit, after standing a long time in metallic cans, has in some instances proved fatal to those who partook of it.

Another old pioneer gone. He lived at San Jose, and he "goned" with \$6,000 which did not belong to him, and took along the hired girl to comfort his old age.

Nothing is rarer than a solitary lie; for lies breed like Surinam toads; you cannot tell one but out it comes with a hundred young ones on its back.

A Wonderful Well.

A correspondent of the Chicago *Inter-Ocean* gives an account of a remarkable artesian well on the farm of Mr. T. Henryson, in Story county, Iowa. He says: Being short of water for his stock, Mr. H., in the fall of 1873, commenced digging a well, little dreaming of the ample supply of water he was about to obtain. After digging in the usual way till nearly thirty feet in depth had been attained, he commenced boring with a common two-inch carpenter's auger, attaching rods, till he had penetrated to the depth of ninety-seven feet, when, on withdrawing the auger, the water rushed up with such force and rapidity as to induce the workmen to seek the surface of the earth in the quickest possible time; indeed so rapid did the water rise that some of their implements were left in the pit, and have never been recovered. Mr. H. soon attempted to curb the well, but found much difficulty; he finally succeeded, and then attempted to find how high he could raise the water above the surface of the ground, using common wood pump tubing for the purpose. Attaining the height of twenty-four feet the pipe burst, but before that happened a pebble as large as a hickory nut, from the lower regions, had been buried up through the pipe fully fifteen feet in the air above. Mr. H. then conceived the idea of a mill, and to this end corresponded and consulted with those experienced in such matters, and was advised to wait at least six months before risking any outlay in that direction. After the expiration of that time finding that instead of diminishing the water increased in quantity, he procured from your city four-inch iron tubing, and securing the services of a competent engineer, introduced the pipe to the depth of one hundred feet. Upon opening the pipe the water issued, and still runs at the rate of nearly two hundred gallons per minute. Mr. H. informs me that it was the opinion of his engineer that the water could be raised to the height of forty feet or more, and would afford ample power for a good flouring mill, a thing we much need in this county.

IRON DAMS.—The *Elmira, New York, Gazette* urges a new departure in the method of constructing dams, saying: Masonry is but a little better than earthwork when opposed by rushing water. What is needed, it seems to us, is material which will not crumble or break up when attacked by rushing water. A dam might be constructed with a frame work of iron held by subterranean guys anchored beyond the reach of the water. The foundation could be planted in a rock bed, or in the absence of rock, against a system of piling, so as to be absolutely immovable. This strength would be attained. By planking the iron frame and covering the latter with earth or cement, tightness would be secured. This system would achieve one end at least. In case of a break in the dam, no disaster could follow to the region below, because only a small portion would give way and the water would escape comparatively slowly. The anchor could be so disposed as to render a complete giving way impossible, or at least improbable. The matter of cost and the process of rendering the iron durable as against rust, are matter for engineers and iron makers to consider. We believe that for dams as well as bridges, iron is destined to come into use.

R. C. McCormic, of Arizona, has declined a renomination as delegate to Congress.

Essentials of Washoe Butter.

It was our good fortune, a day or two since to hear the following rather interesting dialogue in one of our principal "hash-houses." The interlocutors were a daudified-looking, side-whiskered, lipping, middle-aged man from California, and a burly, round-headed, merry-eyed Comstocker, who were seated at opposite sides of the same table. The men were evidently strangers to each other. The conversation opened as follows:

Dundreary—Deal me, this is disgusting! (Holding up his knife and gazing fixedly at its point.) This is either the second or the third hair—I think it's the third—that I've found in this buttab!

Comstocker—You've not been here long, I judge?

Dundreary—No, sir; I arrived here yesterday morning.

Comstocker—I thought so, otherwise you would not have complained of hairs in the butter.

Dundreary—Not complain of hairs in the buttab! You suppose me, sir. How could I do otherwise?

Comstocker—Those hairs, sir, are just as natural to Washoe butter as butter is a natural product of milk. They are just as good and just as clean as the butter.

Dundreary—Impossible!

Comstocker—Not at all, sir. All our butter comes from the great valleys of our State where flourishes that most nutritious and truly wonderful plant the white sage. On this our cattle feed and fatten. This white sage has many virtues. Strange as it may appear to you, sir, from the white sage is manufactured a most wonderful and very popular hair restorative.

Dundreary—Ah, yes; I've heard of it—in fact I may say that on one occasion, when I thought I observed my hair growing a little thin, I used some of the preparation.

Comstocker—Well, then, sir, in a country where all the cows feed on the white sage do you think it likely that the butter will be bald-headed?

Dundreary turned red, pushed back his chair and left without deigning to answer the conundrum. *Virginia City Enterprise.*

PLAYED IT BACK.—Rather an amusing incident occurred during Court week in this wise: Two jurors were delayed by some means beyond the allotted time, and an attachment was issued for them. The truants appeared just as the formidable document, under the seal of the Court, was placed in the Sheriff's hands, and after a slight reprimand the good-natured Judge let them off upon payment of the costs of the attachment. The delinquents interviewed the Clerk and Sheriff upon the amount necessary to make good the fractured law. The Sheriff said he would break bread with the parties when he happened near their homes, and call it square. The Clerk, recognizing a "Bitter Root turn" as legal tender, said he would come to about three dozen eggs. The next morning, to the great amusement of the Court and bystanders, and to the consternation of the Clerk, one of the defaulting jurors walked deliberately into Court and deposited his three dozen eggs upon the desk of the worthy Clerk, and demanded a receipt in full.—*Montana Miss-soulinia, July 2d.*

"What was the picture on the cover?" asked the attorney. "Two Indians," was the reply. "What were the Indians doing?" "I didn't ask 'em," answered the boy. The attorney suddenly discovered that he had no further use of the youthful witness.