

An Author's Jamb in Rural France.

On his head, he wore a smoking cap of Indian work, the gold lace pitifully frayed and tarnished. A flannel shirt of an agreeable dark hue, which the satirical called black, a light tweed coat, made by a good English tailor; ready-made cheap linen trousers and leather gaiters complete his array. In person, he is exceptionally lean; and his face is not, like those of happier mortals, a certificate. For years he could not pass a frontier or visit a bank without suspicion; the police, everywhere but in his native city, looked askance upon him; and (though I am sure it will not be credited) he is actually denied admittance to the casino of Monte Carlo. If you will imagine him, dressed as above, stooping under his knapsack, walking nearly five miles an hour with the folds of the ready-made trousers fluttering about his spindly shanks, and still looking eagerly round him as if in terror of pursuit—the figure, when realized, is far from reassuring. When Villon journeyed, perhaps by the same pleasant valley, to his exile at Roussillon, I wonder if he had not something of the same appearance. Some thing of the same preoccupation he had beyond a doubt, for he too must have tinkered verses as he walked, with more success than his successor. And if he had anything like the same inspiring weather, the same nights of uproar, men in armor rolling and resounding down the village streets, the wild bull's-eye of the storm flashing all night long into the bare inn-chamber—the same sweet return of day, the same unfathomable blue of noon, the same high-colored, halcyon eyes—and above all if he had anything like as good a comrade, anything like as keen a relish for what he saw, and what he ate, and the rivers that he bathed in, and the rubbish that he wrote, I would exchange estates to-day with the poor exile, and count myself a gainer.

They Will Have to Wait. The waiting Territories will not be admitted into the Union at this session of Congress.

The Republican Senators have labored with ingenious skill to create the impression that they favor their admission and the Democrats of the House are against it. At one of their summer caucuses they put the admission of Washington and Montana on their order of business, as though they intended to pass enabling acts before taking up the tariff. Any such purpose, if it was ever seriously entertained, has been abandoned, and Washington and Montana will have to wait. New Mexico was not even mentioned in the Senate programme. It is a Democratic Territory.

The House has on its calendar a bill admitting Dakota, Montana, Washington and New Mexico, and it has under consideration a bill organizing the Territory of Oklahoma. The latter measure was taken up first by the House Committee on Territories because of the imperative importance of giving laws and courts to a district now without them. The bill has failed to get through owing to the stubborn opposition of a few members and the absence of a quorum.

The Senators have skillfully selected to send to the House only those bills on which there is a difference between the two houses. They are willing to admit South Dakota as a State and organize North Dakota as a Territory, both being strongly Republican, but they refuse to admit Dakota in its entirety, although a bill for that purpose would probably pass the House almost unanimously. In other words, the Senate is willing to make two Republican States out of one existing Territory, but it would rather keep the Territory out of the Union than lose the two extra Senators the Republicans are looking for, and as Democratic States it has no use for them.

Retreat of Niagara Falls. Prof. N. S. Shaler, Scribner's Magazine.

Although the retreat of the fall is slow, it will in a very brief time, in the geological sense of that word, lead to certain momentous consequences. When the hard layer of Niagara limestone passes below the bed of the river, the stream will then cut upon rocks of another constitution, making for a time certain small falls at a higher geological level; but in the course of ages, much less long than those which have elapsed since the birth of this waterfall, the gorge of the river will extend up into the basin of Lake Erie, draining away a considerable portion of that fresh-water sea. We shall then, if the continent retains its present height above the level of the sea, have another system of cataracts, in the passage between Lake Erie and Lake Huron, which will also in time be worn away. Other cataracts will then form at the exit of Lake Michigan; and thus the lower lakes of our great American system would be diminished in area, or perhaps even disappear. At a yet later stage, we may look for diminution in the size of Lake Superior, though that basin, owing to the strong wall which separates it from the lower lakes, is destined to endure long after the last named basins have been diminished or entirely drained away.

Weight of Locomotives.

The size and weight of locomotives have steadily been increased ever since they were first used, and there is little reason for thinking that they have yet reached a limit, although it seems probable that some material change of design is impending which will permit of better proportions of the parts or organs of the larger sizes. The decapod engines built at the Baldwin Locomotive Works, in Philadelphia, for the Northern Pacific railroad, weigh in working order 148,000 pounds. This gives a weight of 13,300 pounds on each driving-wheel. Some ten-wheeled passenger engines built at the Schenectady Locomotive Works for the Michigan Central railroad, weigh 118,000 pounds, and have 15,666 pounds on each drive-wheel. Some recent eight-wheeled passenger locomotives for the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad weigh 115,000 pounds, and have 19,000 pounds on each driving-wheel. At the Baldwin Works, some consolidation engines are now in progress which, it is expected, will be still heavier than the decapod engines.

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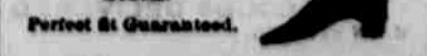
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