

PAYING THE CHURCH DEBT

"Oh! husband, I heard such a sermon to-day, By dear Mr. Stiggins, who said we would pay Next Sabbath the debt on our church, and, said he,

"Whoever subscribes—Oh! how happy he'll be."

"And all may this glorious privilege share By naming the sum he surely can spare; You just sign a slip and you weekly can pay— Oh! can you imagine an easier way?"

"And dear Mr. Stiggins said all can afford To give back what only belongs to the Lord, Who will repay tribune—besides if we should Just sacrifice something, we'd feel the more good."

"Yes, wife, of that privilege all should partake, A sacrifice for such a cause we must make; I, being unselfish, will let you, I guess, Feel good—s' will sacrifice your new silk dress."

"Oh! husband, I couldn't. My six won't suffice. Our pastor meant you would with joy sacrifice

A few of your pleasures. I thought you'd be glad To give up your pipe and your papers so bad."

—Norristown Herald.

ONE YEAR AGO.

What stars have faded from our sky, What hopes unfolded but to die? What dream so fondly pondered o'er Forever lost the hues they wore! How like a death knell sad and slow, Toils through the soul "one year ago."

Where is the face we loved to greet: The form that graced our fireside seat, The gentle smile, the winning way, That blessed our life path day by day; Where fled those accents, soft and low, That thrilled our hearts "one year ago."

Ah! vacant is the fireside chair, The smile that won, no longer there; From door and hall, from porch and hall The echo of that voice is gone; And we who linger only know How much we lost "one year ago."

Beside his grave the marble white Keeps silent guard by day and night; Serene he sleeps, nor heeds the tread Of footsteps o'er his lowly bed; His pulseless breast no more may know The pangs of life "one year ago."

But why repine? A few more years, A few more broken sighs and tears, And we, enlaid with the dead, Shall follow where his steps have led; To that far world rejoicing go To which he passed "one year ago."

—Mrs. John M. Conway.

A RAFFLE FOR FREEDOM.

The subjoined account of an incident alleged to have occurred on a Mississippi steambot a short time before the war is from a German sketch of American travel. I ascended the Mississippi, says the writer, on a steamer, on board of which were Judge J.—and General K.—, of Pennsylvania, with both of whom I was slightly acquainted. "A hard set, these Natchez men," said the captain, who met us on the cabin stairs. "There's some of them down in the saloon playing a high game. How men can be such fools, I could never see!" "Let's go down and look on awhile," suggested the judge. In the saloon we found four men seated at a table, around which a crowd of spectators were gathered. The four were the "heavy players." The game was "poker," and the money changed hands rapidly. We had not been looking on long, when one of the players, a middle-aged man, who, I learned, was a cotton planter, bet his last dollar against the hand of one of his antagonists. The latter showed four kings, while he had only four queens. He was "cleaned out," and rose as though he were going to leave the table. "Are you broke, colonel?" asked one of the men. "Dead!" was the laconic reply. "Never mind; I'll lend you." "No; I can make a raise, I reckon. Here, Pomp!" "Here, massa!" responded an old negro, as he emerged from one corner of the saloon. "Bring that girl and her youngster here that I bought in Natchez. Wait a few minutes, gentlemen, I'll raise some money." The old negro went on his errand, and soon returned with the "girl and her youngster." The "girl" proved to be a stately mulatto woman, about thirty-five years old. Her "youngster" was a fine, intelligent-looking boy, eleven or twelve years old, whose complexion showed him to be much more nearly allied to the white race than the black. "Here, gentlemen," said the planter, as they entered; "You see this girl and her boy—two as fine niggers as you can find anywhere. I paid eight hundred dollars for them yesterday in Natchez. Who will give me six hundred for them?" "Will you sell them separate?" asked some one. "No, can't do it; I promised not to. The girl swears she'll take her life if she's separated from her boy, and her old master said that he was sure she'd keep her word. But don't you all see that the girl is worth more money than I ask for both of them? Come, who'll give me six hundred for both?" The planter waited for a reply, and then said: "Well, I must have some money. Come, what say you to a raffle—thirty chances, at twenty dollars a chance? Out with your cash, gentlemen. The first on the list has the first throw!" This proposition created a decided stir among all present. The three players at the table led off by taking three chances each. Their example was followed by the spectators, and twenty chances were taken as rapidly as the planter could write down the names and take the money. Then there was a slight pause.

The planter himself now took two chances, and he was followed by his three fellow-players, who each took one chance more. Finally, three more chances were taken by the spectators, when the planter cried out, "Two chances still, gentlemen! Who will have them?" General K.—whispered something in Judge J.—'s ear, and then went to the table and laid two ten-dollar gold pieces on it. "Name, sir, please." "Never mind the name. Put it down for the woman." "Eh—what! for the girl herself?" "Yes, certainly, let's give her a chance." "All right! One for Ninette. And now"—"That's for the boy," said Judge J.—quietly, as he laid twenty dollars on the table. "Good! bravo! bravo!" cried the planter and several of the bystanders. One for Tommy, which makes the thirty. Now, gentlemen, let's see whom luck favors." The dice were brought, and the throwing began. Each chance entitled the holder to three throws. Thirty-six was the highest throw until the holder of the eleventh chance threw. He scored forty-two. Then a less number was thrown, until No. 21 scored forty-nine. The excitement now became intense. Forty-nine was hard to beat; the highest throw possible being nine sixes—fifty-four. Again and again the dice rattled in the box, until it came to No. 29. "Come, Ninette; it is your turn now!" As the poor woman came forward, her hands crossed and pressed convulsively against her breast, it was truly painful to witness her agitation. "Won't the gentleman who took the chance for me please throw?" she asked, in a low, tremulous tone. "No; let your boy throw," replied the gentleman; "perhaps he would have more luck than I." "Come, Tom," said the planter. Tom came forward and picked up the box. The woman pressed her lips firmly together, and clasped her hands as if in prayer. The boy trembled like an aspen-leaf, but shook the dice, and threw—three. For a moment he stared at the dice as though he could not believe his eyes, then he put down the box and stepped back, pale and dejected. "Come, Tommy, throw again," urged the planter. "It's no use, master; I couldn't throw forty-nine now." "Very true, but you have your own chance. Throw that." "Certainly," said Judge J.—. "That one was your mother's. Now throw for yourself on the chance I gave you. Have a stout heart, my boy, and may heaven smile on you." Again the boy returned to the table, and took up the box. He pressed his lips together, and did his best to control his trembling limbs. Not a sound was to be heard in the saloon but the rattling of the dice. For a moment every man seemed to hold his breath. He threw. "Two fives and a six—sixteen," said the planter, putting down the number, while a murmur of satisfaction ran through the crowd. One of the bystanders gathered up the dice and put them in the box, and the boy threw again. "Two sixes and a five—seventeen." The excitement now knew no bounds, and the "bravos" resounded on every hand. The boy, as he took up the box to throw for the third and last time, was as nearly colorless as it was possible for him to be with his yellow skin. Out rolled the dice and up came three sixes, which made fifty-one. "Tommy, my boy, I congratulate you," cried the planter. "You are your own and your mother's master! Fill up the necessary papers, captain, and I will sign them. These gentlemen will be the witnesses."

I will not attempt to describe the scene that followed. In the general satisfaction, one of the men in the crowd proposed a subscription for the freed negroes. The proposition was received with such favor that in less than five minutes fifty dollars were collected.

Twilight Phenomena at the Equator.

Twilight phenomena of a similar character to the appearances lately so prevalent were, according to letters, observed in the island of Mauritius. This is especially remarkable as in that island, situated twenty degrees above the equator, night, as a rule, follows the day without any noticeable transition. On several evenings, however, there was a splendid glow in the west quite half an hour after sunset, and when night had fairly set in this glow soon extended over the whole sky, being reflected on the clouds and covering the island with a purple tint. The sea is described as apparently on fire, the vessels and their masts looking black, and standing out in bold relief. The same phenomenon was observed before sunrise.

A Lady Made a Citizen.

Mrs. Emily S. Smith, a widow, has been made a citizen of the United States in the municipal court at Milwaukee. Mrs. Smith was born in England in 1840, and came to America when eleven years of age. She has resided in Milwaukee for the past twelve or fifteen years. The lady went to Dakota last spring and took up a homestead near Harold, and in order to acquire a perfect title to the land she was advised to renounce forever all allegiance to Queen Victoria and become a naturalized citizen of the United States, her husband having neglected to take out his second papers. The clerk of the court says this is the second instance of the kind during his incumbency of the office—six years.

The Value of the Farms.

The farms of the United States are worth \$10,197,000,000, while all other real estate, including the dwellings and warehouses of the city, the capital employed in business and the water power besides, is but \$9,881,000,000; railroads and their equipments are worth but \$5,536,000,000; and mines including petroleum wells and gold and silver bonanzas and stone and other quarries, are worth but \$780,000,000.

THE HOME OF KING COTTON.

VARIOUS COUNTRIES IN WHICH THE STAPLE IS GROWN.

The American Cotton Raising Industry—Cultivation and Preparation of the Staple for Market.

What is cotton; why does it spin, and who can compete with us in the production of the fiber? asks Edward Atkinson in his paper on the cotton manufactures of the United States, printed in the United States Census Report, and then tells us what it is. He says: Cotton is the wing of the seed of one of the plants belonging to a variety of which the hibiscus and mallow are well-known specimens growing elsewhere. It is indigenous in many parts of the world, both in tropical and temperate regions, but the useful sorts are those which grow in the Southern part of the temperate zone. A tree cotton is found in the tropics, producing a fiber very silky in appearance, resembling in structure the fiber of the asclepias, but useless, like the latter, for spinning purposes, for want of the form and structure which makes it possible to spin the cotton of commerce. A vine cotton may be found in some of the West India islands. In China and Japan are found varieties producing a short, clean and very white staple, practically useless, except it be spun and woven by hand. In India many varieties are to be found, commonly known as "Surats," a name which belongs to a district, but which is often applied to all East India cotton. East India cotton is, as a rule, short in fibre and rough in its character, adhering closely by its end to the seed, and is therefore difficult to remove, except with great waste. There is, however, one exception to this rule: In the Dacca province a long and fine staple is grown, which is produced by a class of people with whom its cultivation is an hereditary employment, and from which the fine muslin known as "woven wind" is manufactured. In Africa are to be found several varieties; but the only kind known to commerce is the cotton of Egypt, next in quality to our Sea Island staple. Aside from this, the cotton of Africa is short and woolly. There are large areas of land, formerly irrigated, but now a desert, upon which 7,000,000 or more bales of the most valuable cotton could be annually grown, if Egypt were well governed and labor had its true reward. In Brazil a considerable quantity of useful cotton is now produced, but slavery stands in the way of any great increase or improvement of the staple. There are vast tracts of land on the Paraguay and Parana rivers capable of producing the best varieties, but as yet these places lack good government and that security to property which can alone assure adequate labor and good cultivation. The same may be said for the present of Mexico, but the conditions are so rapidly changing in that country that Mexico may yet become an important factor in the cultivation of the cotton crop of the world. Cotton has been raised in Asia Minor, Turkey, Italy and the islands of the Pacific; in fact, the area of land adapted to its growth in some degree is practically unlimited; but the area which produces the most useful varieties is at present substantially limited to the southern portion of the United States. No treatment of the manufacture of cotton can rightly begin without giving the reason why cotton spins. Nature begins to twist each fiber upon its own axis, else man could make no use of it. Is it the only fiber, either vegetable or animal, with the exception of silk, which can be worked without any preparation or machine just as it comes from the boll or fleece. It can be imagined how some Indian woman in Central Asia first gathered the fiber as it hung from the boll, twisted it with her fingers into a strand, as one may now do; then, holding it by the middle with her teeth, doubled it and made a strong, rough cord; and then, making a bobbin of a bit of bamboo reed and tying the ends of the cord to other reeds, interlaced them, and made the first web of cotton cloth. Any one can do this to-day with cotton, and it would be difficult or impossible to perform this work with any other fiber. The next step in the process might have been the one which is even now practiced in making the finest fabric ever spun and woven in the world—the Dacca muslin, previously referred to and known as the "woven wind." The cotton is separated from the seed by a hand machine known as the churka, of which the modern roller gin is but a modification; and no invention has ever yet displaced the roller gin in the treatment of the finest fiber, like that of Dacca and the sea island cotton of America. Next may have been the application of the fishbone to the carding of the fiber, which is still in use, and of which the modern card is but a modification. Twisting upon a distaff, in the same way as the cotton is spun in India and flax in Italy, may be the next step in the progress of the art, and at last the weaver may have constructed such a loom of reeds as is pictured upon the walls of Babylon, while the weaver, sitting under a palm tree, as she does to-day in India, and weaving only in the morning, when the dew makes the handling of the fiber possible, may have brought the art slowly and gradually to the perfection of the woven wind. In the whole treatment of cotton, as it is now practiced in the finest factory of modern kind, there is but one original invention; all else is but a change or modification of these prehistoric methods. That one invention was the one which Sir Richard Arkwright borrowed from a previous inventor and put in use about a century ago, namely, the extension of the strand prior to the twisting by the spindle. This was accomplished by the use of several pairs of rollers, one placed in front of the other, and those in front working at a higher speed than those behind. Yet Arkwright's invention itself is im-

perfect; and whoever discovers a substitute for the leather covering of the top rolls which are used in this process may add from five to ten per cent. to the capacity of every spindle and loom now in use in the world. The only other original invention ever applied to the cotton fiber was that of Eli Whitney, whose raw gin, afterward improved and developed by Carver, made the preparation of cotton for the spinner quick and at the lowest cost. The process of what is called manufacturing the cotton fiber into yarn and cloth begins with the process of ginning, which must of necessity be carried on near the field where the cotton is grown. It is the most important department in the whole series of operations to which the cotton fibre must be subjected; and, as yet, there has been less of science and art, and less of the modern system of division of labor, applied to this department than to any other. But progress has been made even here. Machines for cleaning the cotton in the seed and preparing it for the cotton gin, which had hardly been heard of before the Atlanta cotton exposition of 1881, have been introduced and sold in large numbers. Cotton ginning establishments, in which as much art and science have been applied as in those of Egypt, established by English capitalists, have been set up in several places, and the old methods, by which the cotton has been depreciated after it had been picked, are rapidly going out of use. Cotton is also in a great measure becoming the product of the intelligent farmers dwelling upon healthy uplands, and by improvements which have been introduced during the last few years its cultivation has been carried further north in latitude and higher up on hill and mountain slopes than was ever thought to be possible in former days. The great Appalachian chain of mountains, extending from the northeast to the southwest, marks a line on which the moisture brought in by the gulf stream is condensed, falling in frequent showers, but seldom in heavy storms, over the Carolinas, Georgia and Alabama, on whose uplands healthy homes for white cotton farmers are being established almost without limit. To the west of this chain the great valley of the Mississippi and its tributaries, bordered by bottom lands of untold fertility, offers the boon of great crops to compensate for the less healthy conditions of climate; and to these rich river bottoms colored laborers, who are more free from danger of malaria, are tending in ever-increasing numbers. In Texas the melting snows of the far-distant Rocky mountains, flowing into the arid regions of the northern part of the State, burst forth from the ground as rivers fully grown, lending moisture to the soil over vast areas, even before the rivers appear in great springs. Over all this vast area is found a climate which is not tropical, and in the largest part of this area white men, as well as blacks, can live in comfort and health. To Italians, French, Spanish and the inhabitants of Southern Germany, who are accustomed to the climate of warm countries, these portions of the South offer homes and work where a comfortable subsistence can be gained more quickly than elsewhere in this country, and where there is more than an average opportunity to create wealth. The use of the seed is adding profit to the production of the fiber. When all the parts of the plant are worked, as they may be, either into fodder or directly into fertilizers, the cotton field may become richer every year; and land which has only produced one bale to eight acres, like Farish Furman's farm in Georgia, will be brought in a few short years to two or three bales to the acre.

People Who Make Buttons.

According to the recently published statistics, there is a village situated near Paris where from 5,000 to 6,000 people are employed in making agate buttons alone, a surprising number when it is considered that in the year 1851 there were only 9,938 button-makers, all told, in England, of whom 4,950 worked in one town. Pearl buttons come principally from Birmingham, while those made of glass are produced in Bohemia. America manufactures good of this designation valued at from \$8,000,000 to 10,000,000 per annum, but not at such a cheap rate as Germany, which runs France very close with novelties. In Bohemia, it is said the men engaged in the glass-button industry earn from 1s 8d. to 2s. 1d., the women from 15d. to 20d., and the children 5d. a day of our money. American wages are very much higher, and consequently many of the kinds imported from Europe could not probably be made in the United States. —London Telegraph.

Diving for Fresh Water.

One of the hottest regions of the earth is along the Persian Gulf, where little or no rain falls. At Bahrin the aid shore has no fresh water; yet a comparatively numerous population contrives to live there, thanks to the copious springs which burst forth from the bottom of the sea. The fresh water is got by diving. The diver, sitting in his boat, winds a great goat-skin bag around his left arm, the hand grasping its mouth; then he takes in his hand a heavy stone, to which is attached a strong line, and thus equipped, he plunges in and quickly reaches the bottom. Instantly opening the bag over, the strong jet of fresh water, he springs up the ascending current, at the same time closing the bag, and is helped on board. The stone is then hauled up, and the diver, after taking breath, plunges in again. The source of these copious submarine springs is thought to be the green hills of Osman, some 500 or 600 miles distant.

Jay Gould Outwitted by a Journalist.

Jay Gould was never fairly outwitted by a reporter but once, and the exceptional incident occurred at the time Gould was in Denver after having just purchased the Kansas Pacific railroad. The financial world was agog for information as to Gould's intentions and plans, and the Denver newspaper offices were overwhelmed with telegrams from Eastern dailies asking for special dispatches regarding the railroad magnate and his movements. Mr. Fred Skiff, who is now manager of the Denver Tribune, was at that time city editor of the paper, and he detailed three of his best reporters to get at Gould and interview him by hook or by crook. About 9 o'clock at night these reporters showed up with the information that Gould could not be seen; that his sentinels were posted all along the hall leading to his rooms in the Grand Central hotel, and it was impossible to run the gauntlet of these wary creatures. Perhaps with a view to showing his subordinates what genuine enterprise could accomplish, Skiff announced that he would secure access to Gould's apartment, and would literally beard the lion in his den. Accordingly, he hustled around, borrowed a Pullman car conductor's coat and cap, and stalked boldly into the Grand Central. "Look here," said he to the first sentinel he met, "what does Mr. Gould propose to do about that car? I must know right away, for if he isn't going to use it to-morrow, I've got to take it back to Chicago. The sentry knew nothing about the car, of course, and advised Skiff to see Gould about it himself. So Skiff successfully ran the gauntlet of the half-dozen lackeys, growling all the time about the bother of being compelled to attend to other people's business. Judge Usher, one of Gould's attorneys, was in consultation with Gould when the bogus sleeping-car conductor was shown in. He immediately recognized Skiff, having known him back in Kansas. "When did you get out of the newspaper business?" inquired the astonished lawyer. "I ain't out of it," replied Skiff, "but I had to put on this disguise in order to get in here to interview Mr. Gould." "Young man," said Mr. Gould, sternly, "if you're a reporter you can take yourself right out of the room, for I am not to be interviewed." Skiff argued the point, and, not being invited to be seated, coolly sat down on the floor. "Unless you put me out," said he, "I shall stay here till you tell me what your plans are." The audacity rather pleased Gould. He looked at Usher, and, seeing that party chuckling heartily, he broke out into a hearty laugh. "Well, what do you want to know?" he asked, finally, in the tone of a man who is weary with objecting. Skiff knew he had triumphed. He produced his notebook, drew up to the table at which Gould sat, and set industriously at work plying questions and noting the replies. The result was a reliable forecast of the immense railroad enterprise in which Gould subsequently embarked, and of which the public would not have been forewarned but for the audacity and wit of the dauntless Skiff. —Chicago Daily News.

Powerful in Prayer.

"One of the most remarkable and original prayers I ever heard," said a gentleman to a Herald reporter, "was just after the war closed, and I was taking a run down through Georgia in hope of finding a desirable cotton plantation. One bright summer night found me at the cabin of an old negro who had once been a slave, but who located on the old plantation after the war, and was his own master. He gladly welcomed me to his humble abode, and to such bed and board as he could provide.

Supper over, and a most excellent one, too, the old man regaled me with stories of plantation life, until his son, a good chunk of a boy, came home from a neighbor's. Before retiring, the old man asked me to read a chapter in the Bible, when he would pray. He said he couldn't read, but was powerful in exhortation and prayer. After reading a chapter from Job and part of a Psalm, we knelt down, and the sable brother let his soul flow out to God. He prayed for the President of the United States, all his cabinet, the army, the navy, the governors of all the States, for me, his guest, for his neighbors, for absent children, for himself and family. He asked forgiveness for many sins and thanked the Lord for many blessings.

"Well, I began to get tired. I had rested my knees the best I could, but wanted to get up badly, and, at the same time, did not want to give offense to my kind host. The boy reclined next to me, with his head in the chair, sound asleep. Touching him gently, I whispered: 'About how soon will your father get through?' 'Has he got to the place whar Moses crossed de Red sea?' Being assured that said point had not yet been reached, the boy yawned and continued: 'Well, when he gets to whar Moses crossed de Red sea, he's jist half done,' and he relapsed into unconsciousness." —Dayton Herald.

How frequently is the honesty and integrity of a man disposed of by a smile or shrug; how many good and generous actions have been sunk into oblivion by a distrustful look, or stamped with the imputation of proceeding from bad motives by a mysterious and reasonable whisper.

Correspondents' Club is the name of an organization in Paris, composed of English and American newspaper men, who meet once a week at an informal dinner.

There's one waist that the most amorous poet doesn't care to hug. That is the waste basket. —The Judge.