

## PHIL'S COMMISSION.

### INTERESTING INCIDENT IN GEN. SHERIDAN'S BOYHOOD.

Young Monkeys Who Were the Cause of the Village—An Envelope from the War Department—Army or Navy?

Years ago, while down in Virginia, about the time when Sheridan was making his famous raid through the mountains, a friend of his gave me the following interesting account of the general's boyhood, and how he came to get his "commission" in the army; and it was in this way that time Judge James Parker, of New Jersey's eminent jurist, and his position on the bench, and the most influential men in that part of the state. His residence was located on a hill at the bottom of that hill lived Mrs. Parker, and she was a woman of many accomplishments, as may be gathered from the fact that she took in the Parker family; but, although the position, she was highly respected, and in the friendliest terms with her more than one neighbor.

**TWO MISCHIEF MAKERS.**  
Judge had a son James, and Mrs. Sheridan had a son Phil, and these two boys lived in the closest intimacy, and while they were the prides, they were likewise the terror of the village, for two more mischievous monkeys never existed, Phil par excellence, for there was no devilry concocted in the village for which he was not given the credit. The boys both attended the village school until reaching the age of 10 or 12 when James was packed off to boarding school and Phil was apprenticed to the blacksmith.

One morning, when on one morning James being at home on a vacation, he received an ominous looking envelope from the war department at Washington. Of all the family assembled at the breakfast table was anxious to know its contents. The envelope was opened and it was found to be a commission in the army of the United States for James Parker, Jr. All the family were joyful and delighted with Jim, who had absolutely declined it, for the "commission" he always wanted to go in the army, and wouldn't be a soldier anyhow. The news was of no avail, so at last the father in desperation: "It will never do to send him to the department and decline what shall be done with it?"

**THE JUDGE'S HIGH HAT.**  
To Phil, said Jim, and this proposition met with great applause and was joyously carried down the hill to the door, and just as they were entering the door they saw Phil disappearing into the cellar steps with a molasses jug in one hand and a half eaten apple in the other. Jim, but he didn't see the judge; the judge was not to be lost, so he let drive the judge just in time to send the judge's hat flying out of the door into the road. Now judges, and especially judges, thirty years ago, were in with a certain amount of dignity in the ordinary routine, so that Phil's name naturally did not meet with the approval of the shopkeeper or of his father, and Master Phil, after having played and culled, was brought into the presence to apologize, previous to his dismissal.

It may be supposed, this was not being in the best of favor under the most auspicious, but as no one could resist the child's repentance, he was forgiven, and subject of the "commission" was dropped, and Phil's delight was even more than Jim's, for it was all that Jim could do to restrain him from going on his head, which was his usual mode of manifesting pleasure. He, however, calmed down sufficiently to make acknowledgments and to assure the father that if the government approved he would do him and himself credit. It was necessary to state that Phil had kept his promise, or to go further into his career; and now public property; but while Phil is lieutenant general of the United States, "Jim" is an ex-commander of the United States navy, and fought through the war and then rose now a prominent admiralty lawyer in New York.—Cor. New York Post.

**Evil Avoided Literary Suicide.**  
Anecdote may illustrate one cause of literary suicide. Col. Forney, editor of the Philadelphia Press, had an offer of \$5,000 a year, while he was in poor and unknown, to go to Philadelphia and write for him. He went to look at the ground. He found in the office of a literary gentleman of fine accents and a marked ability, whose name was in a faint and listless way, to most people of culture throughout the country. But to the great public the "wrote up" the paper was Col. Forney. Mr. Locke spent the evening with the writing editor, whose reputation had been about the kind enjoyed by Buchanan Read. This writer read with great pride and enthusiasm, an article which was to appear in the next morning. Nearly prepared to Mr. Forney's offer, Locke returned to the writing editor, and pointing to the article he had read the evening before, he said: "What a magnificent article by John Locke. What a wonderful writer that man is!"

Mr. Locke, in telling the story, said for me. Literary suicide was not his after.—Frank Leslie's.

**A New Kind of Dog.**  
About as big as a rat, with no hair on its skin and eyes as blue as sapphires. It was in charge of a nursemaid's small boy with more buttons on his small hairs on his head, and if he had young prince they could not have more solicitude about it. The small boy named me that this prize animal came from Honolulu, or somewhere out there, and that he was "one of them kind of people extra." Whether it is to deck the board on the avenue and introduce to a new delicacy he did not say. Alfred Trumble in New York News.

## ALL ABOUT MUSTARD.

**How the Seed is Made to Furnish Oil and Flour—The Different Varieties.**  
"Where does mustard come from?" replied a wholesale spice dealer to a reporter's inquiry. "Most everywhere. It is of two varieties. One is white and the other is black. The first is called English, and the other masquerades under a score of other titles. The English is full of flour, lacks pungency and is seldom used alone. The other kind contains a large amount of oil, said to average 25 to 30 per cent. The best variety comes from Italy and is known as Toieste. There are many varieties of this kind grown in California, of every shade of quality; also in other states. That known as Kentucky is very pungent."

"Do farmers generally raise it?"  
"If they don't it is their own fault. They can. It requires little or no cultivation, but most of it is not worth handling."  
"How is it prepared?"  
"Usually by compressing the seed to extract the oil, because the seed is much more easily worked when the oil is out, and because there is now a ready market for the oil as salad oil, it being in many respects equal to the best olive oil. To extract the oil requires very powerful hydraulic pressure, and a suitable press would cost from \$1,500 to \$2,000. Large dealers in the principal cities operate in the seed or crude stock and press it and supply the trade with what is known as mustard cake, formed by the process of extracting the oil, and which contains everything except the oil—the same precisely as linsed cake. After this the pressed seed is separated from the bran to extract the flour. Pure mustard cannot be ground in mills and unless it is very much adulterated it cannot be ground at all, on account of the oil retained in the cake. The usual process, therefore, is to take say 100 pounds and put a quantity of the broken cake in a pot or mortar and pound and sift it so as to extract about 50 per cent. The machinery used for pounding the mustard is a simple contrivance, called sometimes a stamp mill, being a battery of pounders ranging in number from two up to sixteen. The process is slow, but very simple. After passing through the pounders the mustard cake—now reduced to the consistency of soft middlings, is transferred to a series of sieves, the fine falling into a receptacle below. This boiled flour of mustard is strictly pure, and is as pure as it is possible to make it from the stock you have used, whether it is good or bad."—New York Mail and Express.

**Why Actors Hate Matinees.**  
"I hate matinees," said an actress to me at the close of a performance, as she walked into the lobby.  
"And why particularly?"  
"I hate them for a lot of reasons. You'd find it very hard to put your hand on the man or woman in the profession today who doesn't hate matinees. Everybody hates them, and I'm ashamed to say if it wasn't for a pack of women we shouldn't have to give matinees at all."

"But why do you hate matinees?"  
"Firstly, because I regard one performance a good day's work, and as much as any conscientious actor ought to do.  
"Secondly, because the daylight straggles into the theater and gets up a fight with the gas almost every time—and I'd like to see the woman who looks well under daylight and gaslight mixed.  
"Thirdly and chiefly, I hate matinees because at them the audience is almost always a cold, chilly thing, chary of its applause and scattered all over the house like a flock of dumb geese. The reason for the meagerness of applause always to be noted at matinees is that the audience is usually ninetieths women. Nature has built women for extravagant manifestations of delight in America; and the makers of gowns and applied machinery in dress have decided that what little disposition the American woman has for applauding shall be thwarted by innumerable and complicated devices. You can't expect a woman to crack her gloves or bring about an attack of heart disease to gratify an actress, can you? That's what she'd do at the very least, the average tailor made woman, if she clapped her hands and cried 'bravo' simultaneously."—Pittsburg Dispatch.

**When Emerson's Library Burned.**  
Those who are fortunate enough to have the entries to Theodore Parker's famous receptions in Boston, where congregated a galaxy of brilliant men and women, such as Emerson, Sumner, Phillips, Garrison, Mrs. Howe, may remember the tall, vigorous girl, with a mass of dark soft hair, framing a strong, resolute, frank, earnest face, with bright, eager gray blue eyes and firm, tender lips, sitting quietly in some corner listening with animation and interest. Her would the host invariably seek out, and, with a hearty hand shake and kindly smile, would ask, "Well, how goes it, my child? Keep your heart up, Louise," and the Concord dreamer, Emerson, would eventually find himself drifting into the retired corner for a little chat with this shy girl, for the friendship between them was beautiful and touching. He it was who helped her find Goethe, her life long admired author. "When Emerson's library was burning in Concord," relates Miss Alcott, "I went to him as he stood with the firelight on his strong, sweet face, and endeavored to express my sympathy for the loss of his most valued possessions, but he answered cheerily, 'Never mind, Louise; see what a beautiful blaze they make! We will enjoy that now.' The lesson was never forgotten, and in the varied losses that have come to me I have learned to look for something beautiful and bright."—New York Sun.

**Strawberry Short Cake.**  
Nice strawberry short cake is made with sour milk, as follows: To two cupsfuls of sour milk, add a teaspoonful of soda; then three-fourths of a teaspoonful of butter or lard, partly melted, and enough flour to make a soft dough. Roll it into thin cakes, large enough to fill the pan in which they are baked. When they are baked split them and butter them while hot. Lay half of the cake on a plate, spread with strawberries and sprinkle with sugar; then put on the other half; then mere sugar, and so on.

Cypert H. Gillette, of Kookuk, Ia., is a veteran of the late war who is now totally blind. For fifteen years he has been unsuccessfully applying for a pension. His claim has just been allowed, and he will receive about \$16,000 in arrears.

## A WINTER SANITARIUM.

### THE CHARMS OF THE SEA DURING THE INCLEMENT MONTHS.

**A Place for Health, Rest and Recreation—An Endless, Ever-changing Panorama of Human Life—Droll Looking Bazaars—The Sea's Fascinations.**

A midwinter respite of a few weeks from the distractions of social life, or the cares of business, has come to be, in this eager, pushing, restless existence of modern times, almost a necessity. If we will not, or cannot, "take it easy" on the way, we must halt and make a special business of resting—a method more in accordance with the American temperament. And so Lent, which ought to be, if it isn't, quiet and dull in the city, is the season of well earned rest for the fashionable world.  
The far away, sunny south, where the fescue never fade and the alligator's song is heard in the land, is a favorite retreat for many; yet within a few hours' ride of New York there is a charming city by the sea where every winter there is a gathering of fashion, wealth and beauty, representing the well known leaders of the best society in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington. They come for health, rest, recreation, or on pleasure bent; for, last though it may be, one is not supposed to entirely forego all amusement. Surely not. A hop every week, parties, even an occasional German, receptions, teas, etc., with a discreet, distinctly unimpeachable game of cards for the more staid patrons.

**CONVENIENCE AND COMFORT.**  
The hotels are numerous and thoroughly well equipped with every modern convenience and comfort. One of the most attractive features about the place is the "board walk," which extends along the water's edge for three miles and a half. This ocean boulevard fairly divides honors with the magnificent beach, which has become famous as one of the finest on the Atlantic coast. On the smooth, shining sands, made soft and hard by the pressure of the waves, whether walking, riding, driving or sitting still, one sees an endless, ever-changing panorama of human life. Up and down, laughing, talking, merry of sad, age and youth, weakness and strength, on they go, like the ebb and flow of the tide at their feet. What a study! Here a group of invalids, tempted out of doors by the clear, sapphire sky, which sees its own rare beauty reflected in the glittering blue depths below; the bright warmth of golden sunshine, the pure, fresh, bracing breeze that seems to bring vigor and hope on its fragrant breath. New life seems to creep into their veins, a faint color comes to the fair cheeks as they stroll along and listen to the chant of the waves.

There, a couple in whom health, strength and happiness seem personified, they too, are watching the bright, sun kissed waters; but if the expression of his face means aught the color on her cheek is not wholly due to the crisp breeze that is ruffling the dainty tresses of her dark hair, and the "wild waves" are telling a very sweet story—a story new as laughter; old as tears. A little further on comes a party of laughing, happy children. For them there is no "eternal note of sadness" in the song of the sea. They shout with glee at the merry, mad frolics of the huge, foam crested waves. They run and jump and play with hearts as light as the spray that crosses their bright, innocent faces, and know naught of the care and sorrow which have left their mark on many of the moving, changeful throng.

**DROLL LOOKING BOOTHS.**  
Along the board walk are pavilions, or sun parlors, where one may enjoy the warmth and brightness without being actually exposed to the outside air, and from whose sheltering windows the magnificent and fascinating spectacle of a storm may be safely and comfortably witnessed. There are droll looking booths or bazaars, at which everything that dwells in earth, air or sky may be procured. Things, eatable, drinkable, wearable, portable—all that has entered into the mind of man to conceive and invent—are here in startling array. One can have eighteen tintypes, three shaves and a dinner for fifteen cents.

Atlantic City believes in the adoration which bids us "be all things to all men." There is variety enough in the life here to suit each and all. For the votaries of fashion and pleasure there is gayety of all sorts. For the thoughtful student, or the seeker after rest and quiet, surely there cannot be a more congenial spot than this, where one is face to face with the grandest mightiest of nature's elements. And health has already established beyond dispute her claim to having set the seal of her own regeneration upon the city by the sea. Thus, well or ill, merry or sad, grave or gay, young or old, this favored spot hath charms for all.  
And what is the secret of the mysterious, powerful fascination of the sea? One thinks of the lines written about the woman whose fame for beauty and witching charms has come down through centuries, and will ring on through ages yet to come—"age cannot wither, nor custom stale her infinite variety." The last ten words seem to strike the keynote, for surely to nothing else on this fair earth can they be more appropriately applied.

Like a willful woman, the sea has its moods, changing and fitful as the wind that ruffles its calm, blue depths.—Atlantic City Cor. New York Star.

## CURIOUS THINGS OF LIFE.

A Nashville carpenter arose in his sleep and went into his shop and began filing a nail. The noise woke him up, and he was slightly puzzled to find himself engaged at such work at 3 o'clock in the morning in a dark shop.

Over four months ago a mass of molten iron, was forced by an explosion into the mouth and throat of Jacob Halenberger, of Reading, Pa.—The result was that the passage to the stomach was completely closed, and the man died of starvation.

The mayor of Hannibal, Mo., whipped out his red bandana the other day and gave a nasal blast, whereupon an unhitched horse, terrified at the great noise, dashed down the street, ran against an electric light tower 100 feet high, toppling it to the ground, and then into a coal wagon, from which it was rescued unharmed.

## PRODUCT OF THE POPPY.

### Nearly \$500,000 Spent Yearly for Opium in New York.

It was for the purpose of giving an accurate and interesting account of how 9,000 Chinamen spend \$468,349.75 annually just for the pleasure of "bitting the pipe," that the Chinese reporter made a thorough canvass of the various haunts of Chinatown.  
There are at present about twenty-five Chinese firms that deal in refined opium, both wholesale and retail. There are eleven private Chinese joints, where opium is sold at \$2.25 per ounce. These joints do not now admit white smokers, on account of the frequent raids made upon them by the police, but the stores sell to both Chinese and whites, although the latter must be well known smokers. Otherwise he has to suffer for the want of opium—much, according to all accounts, is even worse than to see "snakes." Great tears would gush out of his eyes, big drops of perspiration constantly moisten his brow, while his nostrils would act as if he owned a small sized fountain somewhere in his head. But the worst of all the ailments is an excruciating pain all over his backbone, as if he had been just run through a fine clothes wringer. Under such circumstances he would almost be willing to give half of his entire kingdom to be able to "hit the pipe."

Six pills, or pipes, about the size of a green pea, would restore him to his natural condition of life, which would last him for about as many hours. A regular "fend" will consume about an ounce per day, which is \$2.25.  
The sensation while smoking is indeed soothing. No matter how fatigued or oppressed in mind, a few whiffs of the pipe would put a man in the best of social spirits. It has strange medicinal properties, and is said to cure all kinds of fevers and ague, consumption and palpitation of the heart. Most Chinamen are driven to it through business reverses and other troubles, while not a few contracted the habit through sociability, just as an American would do on their "take a drink" with a friend.

It takes just about the same length of time to get the opium habit as to get the drinking habit. The latter destroys the mind, and makes a man irresponsible for his actions, while the former destroys the body but makes a keen thinker of the victim. It is estimated that there are something over 1,000 Americans in the city of New York who are now using opium in the same manner and form as the Chinese. Most of these are said to be well known and fashionable people, as indeed no other but people of means and of leisure could ever be able to contract such a habit.

The opium dealing firms sell from two to five cans per day, each can weighing about four ounces. Most of the wholesale orders come from towns and cities in and around New York state, and only now and then the native American customers from up town come in to buy their supply. Say they only sell an average of three cans per day. At wholesale rates, which is \$8.85 per can for China imported goods, but when retailed out by the fifty cents' worth at a time it would bring it up to about \$10 to \$11 per can. At \$10, which is the lowest possible price per can, sixty-six cans amount to \$660 per day, or \$240,900 per year.

There are eleven joints. The majority of these import their own opium, said to be direct from China, but the greater part of which comes from Victoria, B. C. One of these places, which is the best Chinese joint in town, sells at retail on Sundays alone from ten to twelve cans, while the second best place sells from eight to ten cans on Sundays. On an average these joints dispose of five cans a day. These places calculate to make from \$2 to \$3 on each can of Chinese imported opium, but they are able to make more when they mix the Victoria in with the pure. Thus it can easily be seen how nearly \$1,000,000 changes hands for opium each year.

According to Chinese San Francisco papers they paid over \$800,000 for custom house duties for the Chinese year just ended on opium alone.—Wong Chin Foo in New York World.

## The Decline of the Sailor.

Rather severe criticisms on our navy are appearing in the English journals. The critics admit we have as good naval officers as any, but say that what ships we have are manned by Englishmen, Irishmen, Germans, Scandinavians and negroes. This is true in time of peace; for first rate American sailor men can make more than \$21.50 a month ashore. But once the signal of war comes, and the promise of prize money and adventure, and there would be little room for much of the poor material now manning the yards. The great fleet that Farragut led past the Mississippi forts was manned with Gloucester fishermen—men who, unlike the average blue jacket, combine a keen intelligence with strength and daring.

The day of the "square rigger" is gone by, for the modern war ship has no sails, and a quick hand at the gun sight and block, tackle and gear is more in demand than one that can hand, reef, and steer. Indeed, it is a curious study to watch how, in the war ship of today, the sailor is declining and the engineer and machinist advancing. Perhaps in the future the crew of a war ship will be composed of three classes only—scientists, engineers and coal heavers or oil feeders.—Scientific American.

The five Methodist churches giving the highest contribution to the "million for missions" fund last year are: St. Luke's, New York, \$25.24; Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia, \$17.90; St. Paul's, New York, \$14.77; Madison Avenue, New York, \$12.91; and Washington Square, New York, \$10.81. This represents the average per member for each of the seven collections during the year. The entire amount raised was over \$1,300,000.

## Hot Milk.

People who can not drink cold milk often find it palatable and beneficial when taken as hot as possible. Upon some tired and overworked persons it has an exhilarating effect almost equal to a glass of wine. The milk should be fresh and scalded as hot as possible without boiling.

## RAINBOW FOLK LORE.

### ANTIQUARY FREQUENTLY ALLUDED TO IN THE CLASSICS.

**The Rainbow Drinks from Ponds and Rivers—Its Great Power for Good or Evil—Healing Potency—A Strange Belief—Hindoo Law.**

As a survival of the serpent myth, we find almost universally a belief that the rainbow drinks the water from ponds and rivers. This idea is found in antiquity, allusion to it being frequently made by classical authors. Slovaks say of one who drinks much, that he "drinks like a rainbow." Many European peoples think the rainbow drinks up the water. Throughout Russia it is generally believed to feed the clouds with the water thus drawn. In Little Russia it is called Veselka, and is said to be a maiden, who, with her bucket, draws water from the rivers and waters the earth with it. Estonians say it has a bull's head, which it thrusts into the water when it would drink. In Finisterre it is said to drink up fish, frogs, etc., from the shallow ponds. In Cornwall it is said to be the devil drinking up the water of the ponds and streams. In the Tyrol it is called the "drinking bow;" in Votlak the "drinker of water." Children are assured in the French department of Cotes du Nord that the bow drinks in the river or in the pond.

In many places the rainbow is said to be a great pump or tube, drawing water by mechanical means. So in parts of Russia it is called the "bent tube," and in Hungary "the pump," while in Slavonian dialect it is the "siphon." In one part of France it is said to come from the sea and to pump up the water in the streams. In the Charkov province of Russia the bow is likened to a tube, with one end in the sky and the other in the walls, while in the Sarotov government it is said to be controlled by three angels, one of whom pumps the water, the second feeds the clouds, and the third sends the rain. In Lettonia, showers of fish, frogs, etc., are believed to come from the rainbow, which has sucked them up from ponds and rivers. Similar beliefs exist among the Wends. In many parts of Russia it is compared to a water carrier, dipping its buckets into the ponds and streams. In the Charente department of France they saw the bow fishes in the streams, and prognostications are drawn from the selection it makes. Malay Nias say it is the net of Nadoja fishing in the streams.

The rainbow is frequently credited with great power for good or evil. It is a widespread belief that it hides great riches, or brings fortune or good luck with it. In Swabia, it is said to rest on bowls of gold; in Hungary, that cups of silver will be found where it touches the earth or water, and the finder will divine the future. It is quite likely that a shoe cast over it will fall on the other side filled with gold, as it is believed in Berne and among Swabian peasants. The difficulty is to get it over. In Carinthia it is a hat. Czech tradition says that if iron or other base metal be cast into the rainbow it will turn to gold, and similar things are recorded of it in the Tyrol. In many parts of Germany a golden key, or a treasure, is said to be found where the bow touches the earth; in Portugal, a silver hen, and in modern Greece, a curious Byzantine coin, called a Constantine coin. Any one finding this will be endowed with marvelous power.

In Norway, it is said that a cup and spoon, with a kind of gruel, will be found where the bow rests. It is also believed to bestow health. Among the Letts, if you can reach the bow and touch it you will have the healing power. The water found immediately beneath the arch will, it is believed, cure those afflicted with demencia. Old women keep this water in trenches dug in the ground or in a hollow tree, but not in the house, where it will lose its force or bring some disaster on the household. It is also said that flocks should not be pastured where the bow rests, or they will fall sick. German peasants say they touch of the bow will render plants odorant. On the other hand, in some departments of France the rainbow is said to injure plants on which it rests, to dry up vines and to ruin the harvest. In Bohemia also it withers the herbage, say the peasants. In the Ukraine, you must not put your tongue at the rainbow, or it will dry it up. In Hungary there is a Vila or fairy sitting on the water where the rainbow touches it, and whomsoever she sees first will die. Estonians say the bow is but the scythe used by the thunder to chase wicked souls. In Austro-Hungary the sick are not allowed to lie stretched at full length when the first bow of spring appears, for it is thought they would die if permitted to do so. Many ordinary tasks must not then be performed for fear of evil consequences.

Another strange belief has existed, that the rainbow has power to change the sex. This obtains in districts widely separated. A story from the Nago tribe in Africa relates the adventures of a young man so transformed. Slavonian peasants have a similar notion, and it is a general belief in modern Greece among the common people that any one jumping over the rainbow will have their sex changed. Among the Albanians, Serbians, and in Upper Loire, France, it is by passing under the rainbow that the sex is changed.

The notion that the luminous bow possesses so great power for good or evil has probably led to another curious belief, that harm will come to any one pointing at it. The ancient Hindoo laws of Manou forbade this, and it is said in the Hartz mountains that God will punish any one who points at the rainbow. In modern Greece and in Amiens you will lose a finger, and in Bohemia the same disaster will occur unless it immediately thunders. The Chinese say your hand will be attacked with ulcers, and German peasants tell you that you dig out the angel's eyes when you point at the rainbow. Ancient Peruvians said that the mouth must be kept shut when a rainbow was in sight or the teeth would be spoiled.

## Familiar with the Subject.

Magistrate (to witness)—Do you know the nature of an oath, Uncle Rastus?  
Uncle Rastus—I reckon I does, yo' honah. Ise owned a balky mule for foarshoon ya'—New York Sun.

## On the Court's Mercy.

Judge—Madam, what is your age?  
She—Your honor, I leave that to the mercy of the court.—Buffalo Commercial