

WEST SIDE



TELEPHONE.

VOL. I.

M'MINNVILLE, OREGON, DECEMBER 21, 1886.

NO. 55.

WEST SIDE TELEPHONE.

Issued—

EVERY TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

—IN—

Garrison's Building, McMinnville, Oregon,

—BY—

Talmage & Turner,

Publishers and Proprietors.

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One year.....	\$2.00
Six months.....	1.25
Three months.....	.75

Entered in the Postoffice at McMinnville, Or., as second-class matter.

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H. H. WELCH.

At Mabionton, Ga., a yearling bull

was struck by a train moving slowly and knocked into a trestle, where it fell between the ties, but caught by its horns and one leg, remaining suspended in mid air three hours. It was finally pulled out and found to be unharmed except for a few bruises.

The Boston correspondent of the Springfield Republican says that talk about a statue to Wendell Phillips is renewed now that Mrs. Phillips has passed away, and it is understood that her objection to such a memorial was not deep-seated. It is possible that before long an effort will be made to start subscriptions for a fund.

—Prospective bridegroom (to prospective bride)—Would it be possible, you think, dear, to postpone our wedding until Monday? I am in receipt of a dispatch calling me to Buffalo on important business. P. bride—I'm afraid not, George, dear. The wedding presents, you know, are only rented until Saturday.—N. Y. Sun.

POPPING THE QUESTION.

Mary had a bushy beau
Who came long time ago wooling;
Then she, from pity of his woes;
Saw she must aid his wooling.

So, making crossroads of her mouth,
And with her hands a quiver,
She said her pu was going South
To see a lovely river.

Now, Charlie, guess its funny name,"
she told the youth, "and say,
And when he couldn't she, affame,
Cried "Kissimee," and waited.

Alas she waited all in vain,
The lover was so stupid.

"Ah, me," she sighed, "you must be plain:
Give me courage, Cupid!"

Then gayly laughed: "Key West you know,
What must I say if she should go
To warn him of it's dangers?"

"You tell me," smoke the lover flushed,
Afraid to make suggestion.

"Why, Charlie, I will say," she blushed.
"Won't you, Pop, the Key West shun?"

He popped "and she
Cried "certainly."
—H. C. Dodge, in *Tid Bits*.

RUSSIAN MARRIAGES.

The Good Wife Must Be a Smart Field Hand.

The Model Husband Should Show His "Authority"—Hunting for a Bride
—Sad Scenes at the Wedding
—To Work, at Once.

"It is not the walls that adorn the hut, but its contents," says a Russian proverb, which, simple though it is, implies a great philosophical and practical truth. The constant pressure of everyday necessities on the one hand and its direct result, the absence of higher interest and purposes in life, on the other, sufficiently account for the peasant being cool, calm and reserved, even on occasions when people of a higher civilization would undoubtedly display their better and softer natures. In selecting a "companion for life" the Russian parobok (young fellow) is generally guided by the advice of his parents, or elders, and by the conventional standard of what a peasant's wife should be. According to his ideal she must, in the first place, be of a strong and hearty constitution, not afraid of hard work, willing, industrious—in short, in every regard fulfill the hard duties which her future home may impose upon her. In the second place, she is supposed to become absolutely the slave of her husband. Whatever the lord-husband decides upon the slave-wife must consent to, else ill-treatment in its various brutal forms is sure to follow the poor woman till death puts an end to her wretched life.

A pretty face is a matter of secondary or no importance whatever to the peasant, who, using his own words, is "not put his wife on the market for sale." The promptness with which a girl binds the sheaves in the field is sufficient to enchant the wealthiest of the peasants in the village. It wins her a good many admirers among the paroboks, even of the surrounding villages. Such a girl, ugly though she may be, stands good chances of making a profitable and advantageous match—that is, of securing a home where she is sure that fresh rye bread, *borsch*, salt pork and such like delicacies will always adorn her table. A comparatively well-to-do peasant is often seen to marry a poor and rather ugly girl because the latter answers the ideal standard.

When once a parobok—with his parents' consent, of course, has made up his mind to marry a certain girl nothing can make him go back on his decision. Disregarding any obstacles that may be in his way, he is as firm as a rock in carrying out his purpose. Whenever an opportunity of seeing the sweet object offers itself to him it is generally taken advantage of, and thus something like a courtship springs up between the young lovers. This, however, is of no long duration, and is of the simplest character. The parobok frequently visits his dyevka, but this is generally done when the parents of the latter are in the land of dreams. A stable or a pig-shed, a corner of which is often found to be occupied by a peasant girl as a summer residence, answers the purpose of reception room or a parlor. It is there, in that improvised parlor, where young lovers reveal their hearts to each other. It is there, amid the darkness and silence of the night, with nothing to be seen and nothing to be heard, except possibly the snorting of a pig, which, upon such an occasion, falls like the sweet sound of music upon the ears of those engaged in amorous conversations, it is there that a peasant may for once in his life feel inspired. Indeed, that disagreeable and apparently inconsequential snorting of the pig is often a source of great pleasure and inspiration for the peasant. It is, in its way, an aria, which often reminds him of days gone by, an aria which fills his heart with hope and glory for the future! But here, too, practical talk about every day rural life predominates. The discussion of a day's work, or the good or bad qualities of a horse, a cow, a pig, and so on, is not at all unlikely to be the topic of conversation between lovers. When once the momentary inspiration has vanished, neither a word, nor an expression in the face of either the parobok or the girl signifies anything beyond the ordinary dry transaction of practical business.

As the reader can see for himself, the peasant enters the bonds of matrimony for no other reason on earth but that of securing a hard-working slave. But a

few wise sayings of his own will illustrate his views of married life more forcibly than mere description: "A hard-working wife is like a good milking cow; one supplies with milk, the other with linen." "A disobedient wife is like a wild horse; the more lashes she gets the tamer she becomes." "To love a wife is to strike her upon every suitable occasion." And to strike a wife upon every suitable occasion almost on the day after marrying her, is indeed no novelty among the peasantry. I remember a case where a peasant nearly choked his wife to death in his desperate anger because she allowed herself, after a year's hard saving, to buy some calico for a Sunday dress. I know an old couple, parents of a number of grown-up children, who at certain seasons in the year, as regularly as clock-work, are intoxicated. Every thing that is found in the house is taken to the tavern and exchanged for vodka, and thus by the time they begin to realize their horrid position, a good portion of linen, grain, flour and eggs is gone. The husband's anger then knows no limits, and the poor feeble wife, who probably is the least to blame, suffers from her lord all insults imaginable. I know a quiet and peaceful young peasant, who after being constantly ridiculed by his comrades for being too lenient with his wife, for allowing her to have too much to say, slapped her face upon one solemn occasion in the presence of his friends merely for the sake of denying this degrading accusation and establishing his reputation as her master. Such is the lot of a peasant woman. She is perfectly aware of the ill treatment awaiting her in her future home, yet she is satisfied, and re-signed to her fate.

Oftentimes, however, it happens that a peasant marries not only without having the faintest idea of the girl's character, but almost without having had a chance to exchange a few words with her. This is generally done at the time, when for some reason or other, there is no possibility of marrying any of the girls of his own village, and when marry he must. On a fine morning the bridegroom, dressed up in his best woolen svita, with the brightest red colored belt, high sheepskin hat and newest of boots, may be seen proudly starting out in company with a few elderly and experienced peasants engaged for this purpose by the bridegroom's parents, in search of a good girl. No house containing a girl is passed by.

Upon entering the house the wife-hunting party say a few words of customary salutation, such as "health to you, good people," and immediately, without bating around the bush, approach the subject. This business-like transaction, it is worth while mentioning, is often carried on in the absence of the girl directly concerned in the matter. The bridegroom upon such occasions is supposed to have but little or nothing to say. The conversation is carried on between the parents of the girl and those entrusted with this important mission. If the girl's parents, for some reason or other, do not intend to let their child be married at present the guests are politely told so, and after inquiring if there are any suitable girls in that immediate neighborhood they leave the house. As a general thing, however, the party experiences no difficulty in obtaining the object desired. After the parents have decided the girl is summoned at once, and here frequently ensues a scene worthy of an artist's brush. She takes her place by the stove and without lifting her eyes, biting her nails and assuming the most innocent face, frequently keeps the party waiting for a long while before the laconic "yes" (*da*) is extorted from her. There is hardly need of adding that when once the parents' decision is made no prayers or tears on the girl's part can alter it. A rope and strap brings the most stubborn tehdlo to terms.

On the following day the young couple, accompanied by some of their friends and relatives, start out to pay short visits to various friends in the village, where some scanty wedding presents are collected at the same time. After this is done all return to the home of the bride's parents, where an epicurean dinner, consisting of *borsch* with pork, is waiting for them. Then follows the scene of the bride's taking her leave of her parents, brothers, sisters and some girl friends, who come to see her off. This is one of the most touching scenes that I ever witnessed. The young couple standing in the middle of the room, with their heads bent, receive the blessing from the bride's parents. Upon such an occasion the bride, of course, is not able to control her tears, which flow like a stream from her eyes and the bridegroom looks pale and is apparently touched. Towards evening the bride may be seen on her way to her new home, where some domestic duty, such as milking the cow, may expect her that very evening.—S. Skidelsky in *Philadelphia Times*.

ALL HASH TO HIM.

An Ingenious Westerner Who Believes in Calling Things by Their Right Names.

The daughter of a Boston merchant of great wealth, wide mercantile connections and boundless hospitality was lately married. The Western agent of the merchant happened to be in town, and as the proud father was inviting about everybody to his daughter's wedding.

The Westerner came. He was uneasy, and shifted about from place to place in the house as if he were hunting for spots that fitted him better than those he had been in. He put his hands nonchalantly on things and took them off again suddenly, as if he found them hot, and grinned familiarly at people he had never seen before, and then suddenly drew his features back with a ghastly solemnity. It seemed to be an occasion of great and overwhelming novelty to him.

When the refreshments came around he was inclined to fight shy of pretty nearly everything. It was as if he proposed to take on a little Boston formality, now that he was in Boston, and require an introduction to every dish. His host saw that he wasn't eating much, and came around to see about it.

"Why you aren't eating anything, Mr. West," said he. "Can't I help you to something?"

"No, I thank you," said the Westerner. "I ain't very hungry to-night. I reckon I've eat enough."

Just then a waiter came along with some croquettes.

"Mr. West, take one of these croquettes; I th nk you'll like them; take one, take one."

The Westerner took one. He punched it with his fork, laid it open a bit, and examined it critically. Then he tasted it and exclaimed:

"Gosh! Hash!"—*Boston Record*.

—An alibi saved a negro in South Carolina on trial for purloining chickens. He conclusively proved that at the time specified he was in another county on his way home with a pair of chickens he had "found."

parents of the bride bridegroom and of all good people in general, as well as for the eternal peace of the dead, were heard upon all sides.

But here the ringing of a bell somewhat startled the crowd. "Ah, the bridegroom!" A few moments later three wagons, each with a troika, or span of three horses, stopped in front of the gate. As the bridegroom, accompanied by his parents and relatives, was about to enter the yard a number of paroboks, with a long rope in their hands, placed themselves on each side of the gate, thus signifying that not unless a ransom for the bride was paid would the party be allowed to enter. An offer of a tetchetvert (gallon) of vodka was made, but they declined to accept. One gallon more brought the paroboks to terms, and the bridegroom, led by his father and one of his relatives, entered the gate with triumph. After some difficulty, by closely following the bridal party, I succeeded in gaining entrance into the izba. The first sight that met my eyes was the bride sitting at the head of the table surrounded by her maiden friends and weeping.

"Farewell, sister;

Thy new home expects thee.

Farewell, sister, farewell."

It was a moment of both solemn sorrow and glory. The bridegroom was soon placed by the right hand of his sweetheart. After a round treat was made and some fellow, an improvised speaker, "made up a speech," one of the bride's brothers, a young boy of fifteen, bent her head and, with a pair of shears in his hand, threatened to cut off her locks. Another ransom of five or ten kopeks was offered and thus the bride's beautiful locks were spared.

The crowd at the same time amused themselves in the yard. The musicians, an old blind fiddler and two young fellows with drum and cymbals, were hard at work. The red-cheeked dyevkas, attired in their bright skirts and ribbons, as well as the paroboks, their Sunday svitas, kept on dancing and jumping till a very late hour in the night. Vodka was occasionally served and thus little by little the happy and glorious time of the old zaporog Cossacks began to arise before me. But time of parting came at last and the crowd dispersed apparently in the best of humor. Now and then, amid the deep silence of the night, a few words of cheer concerning the wedding or a scrap of song were still heard from various parts of the small village.

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