

SEMI-WEEKLY



WEST SIDE

TELEPHONE.

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WEST SIDE TELEPHONE.

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BATTLE OF CHICKASAW BAYOU.

A Desperate and Gallant Charge—Made
by Gen. Frank Blair's Brigade.

A charge made by Gen. Frank Blair on Monday, the last and bloodiest day of the battle, was one of the most desperate and gallant feats recorded in history. Separating him from the steep bluffs occupied by the enemy was a cottonwood grove, which had been felled by the Confederates, and which was an entanglement through which an unarmed, unnumbered man could pass with only the greatest difficulty. On the side of the cottonwood maze, next to the enemy's position, was a deep bayou, whose opposite bank was some ten feet in height. On this bank was a series of abatis, whose pointed limbs barred the approach of a hostile force. Just beyond the abatis was the first line of rifle pits. Gen. Blair, with four regiments, was assigned to carry the position in front of him. He must make his way through the dense fallen cottonwoods, he must then descend into, cross the deep and muddy bayou, climb its steep bank beyond and then break through the deep abatis that crowned it on a level, uncovered space swept by rifle pits, scores of guns and other lines of defenses which covered the foot of the sloping bluff beyond.

One would fancy that the feat of charging across this space, every inch of which was swept by riflemen and artillery, would be an utter impossibility. Mounted and in full uniform, the gallant Missourian led the charge. How he ever forced his way through the fallen timber, descended into and climbed out of the bayou, gained a passage through the abatis, and all the time covered with a tempest of shell and bullet, and escaped annihilation cannot be told. But he did it all, and accompanied by a single man, also mounted, he rode into the first line of rifle pits. His regiments struggled after him, and secured lodgment in the first line of works, and held them for a time, but, being unsupported they had to return to their original position.

Blair was a most interesting man in every respect. Tall, well formed, with a "sandy" complexion, light gray eyes, heavy mustache, clean shaved face, and a fine forehead covered with a mass of reddish hair, distingue in style and bearing, he was handsome and commanding. He was slow and deliberate in speech, like one accustomed to addressing large audiences; he was versatile, doing everything well, from leading a charge to uncorking a bottle, and in all instances characterized by a calm, dispassionate manner and a manner full of dignity. He never seemed to have the slightest knowledge of the composition of fear—if he did, he concealed the fact so completely that on no occasion was its existence discovered. In conversation he was a polite, attentive listener, and an engaging, unassuming talker. Beneath all his outward calmness he had a tremendous force, a fact which was demonstrated by the momentum with which he threw his columns against the bristling, deadly heights of Chickasaw bayou.—"Folio" in the Chicago Times.

The Baby King of Spain.

To interview an aghast emperor, king or full fledged president is not very extraordinary, but to look up a majesty only 6 months old implies that the force of interviewing can no further go. Alphonse XIII of Spain and his nurse Raymunda have been subjected to that Nineteenth century inquisition. The baby king is well and is engaged cutting his first teeth. All his entourage when alluding to him say "His Majesty." His mamma and wet nurse adopt a familiar title of "Baby." Indeed Raymunda—a name of Madagascar origin—occasionally alludes to him as her micoche. There was once a Bourbon princess interred at St. Denis at the age of 2 days. She was alluded to in the court circulars as "The high and mighty princess," with a string of et ceteras that would crack the brain of even a Spanish lord chamberlain to remember.

Alphonse eats, sleeps and laughs and plays well. Raymunda's sole duty is to give him the breast. The couple are visited twice a day by the doctors, the baby is weighed every ten days and the nurse's milk analyzed weekly. There may be death in the breast as well as in the pot. His majesty has his own household: quite an army of maids comes to attend to his slightest wants. A special guard of beefeaters watch the nursery, which is close to the queen regent's chamber, and for sixteen years still the same precautions will be taken. On that depends the stability of a throne and the happiness of a nation.

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MARTHA WASHINGTON

NOT AN EDUCATED WOMAN IN THE SENSE OF TO-DAY.

She Was a Poor Speller and Her Grammar Would Hardly Pass Muster—Indiscriminate Use of Capital Letters in Writing—The Home Sphere.

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THE FASTER'S FIRST DINNER.

Merlatti's Knife and Fork Idle Even After the Fifty Days' Fast.

Merlatti, contrary to expectation, accomplished his extraordinary fasting fast, which commenced fifty days before. There has been some doubt as to his having completely fulfilled the terms of his engagement, since he began to take a little chowder prepared wine at 5:30 o'clock one afternoon, the stipulated time being 6:30. He was also given some pepsum and meat powder, but his stomach rejected them. The wine, however, did him good, and he was able to swallow it in repeated gulps and with infinite relish. According to the opinion of some of the doctors he will be unable to eat any solid food for twenty-five days to come.

Those who flocked to the Grand Hotel recently for the purpose of seeing the Italian take his first installment of nourishment were rather disappointed at finding, not the corpse-like form which they expected, but a man still apparently in health and spirits, although languid in body and enemic in feature. Merlatti was propped up on pillows and reclined on a couch, near which were exhibited some of his drawings. A long counter kept the frequent and inquisitive crowds of men and women who thronged to see him from approaching too near his resting place. The comparative healthiness of the man's appearance after so long a fast can only be attributed to the fact that the pangs of hunger are mitigated and intermittent after the first five or six days. Thus, when I first saw Merlatti there was a strong expression of pain on his face, and his eyes were of an unnatural brilliancy. These symptoms were quite consistent with his case, because the agony of hunger is more acute in the earlier stages of suffering. Since then he has been in a state of languor and exhaustion, varied occasionally with feverishness, pains in the head, frenzied dreams and touches of madness.

Latterly he had begun to suffer more severely in the head and stomach, but his energy has enabled him to persist in his determination to the bitter end. Efforts were made to make him break his fast a fortnight ago, yet there is every reason to believe that he has done his best to abstain from nothing during the fifty days but the filtered water. I left Merlatti this evening at the banquet, over which he presided, in the Grand Hotel. Every seat at the tables was full and nearly one hundred guests, among them being some women and children, were present. The Italian sat among the members of the medical committee, a lady being on his left. He seemed to regard the rich viands, appetizing sauces and sparkling wines spread out in profusion before him with a half sad, half emused air, but his knife and fork were silent amid the clatter of plates and the popping of champagne.—Paris Cor. London Telegraph.

Banish the Railroad Stores.

For the last forty years, since railroads have been equipped with heavy cars and run at high rates of speed, scarcely a year has passed without the loss of life from burning car wrecks. The method of heating cars now is substantially the same as it was forty years ago. Each car has a stove, and the only improvement yet made is a better system of securing them more firmly and putting them in a sort of metal casing. But the beginning of the present year has shown again, and with horrible emphasis, that the precautions against the burning of wrecked cars are totally inadequate, and that the present system of heating should be superseded by something radically different.

The method employed upon the elevated railroads in this town shows that a train of cars can be perfectly heated without the possibility of fire in case of accident. That method consists in a pipe furnished with steam from the locomotive, and it serves the whole train, each car being heated equally from end to end. It is a very simple plan, and it should be adopted upon all railroads.

There would be another very great advantage in the use of this system. As it is now, the brakeman tends the stove, and as he has other duties, he piles on all the coal the stove will hold and lets it go. The usual result is that when there is any fire at all it is a roarer, enough to roast anything as far away as the sixth row of seats and to give all the passengers headache. But if the engineer controlled the heating he would be able to regulate it with more constant attention and more disinterested judgment. By next year there should not be a single stove in use in a passenger train in this whole country, and if the present engines are not big enough to supply the additional steam required bigger ones should be put in their places.—New York Sun.

New Method of River Mining.

A novel way of river mining is now being carried on near the Garibaldi Mining company's property on the Stanislaus river, two miles below Robinson's Ferry. The plan consists of a scow twenty by sixty feet in which is placed a steam engine and boiler of fifteen horse power with a powerful suction pump attached. The pump not only throws an immense stream of water, but at the same time draws the sand, rocks and gravel from the bed of the river at the rate of fifty tons per hour. The pump discharges into the head of a flume running the entire length of the scow, and drops the material, less the gold, some ten feet away from the stern of the boat. Any large rocks that may obstruct the free working of the pump are hauled out of the way in short order by a powerful dredge. As the Stanislaus river is noted for its heavy gold deposits the results can hardly fail to meet, if not greatly exceed, the anticipations of the Chinese capitalists who have it in charge.—Calaveras (Cal.) Prospect.

Mechanical Traps for the Sucker.

A good many people think that most of the gambling houses in Chicago are run "on the square," but Hendrie, the expert clock and model maker, tells me that he is often called in by gambling gentlemen to make some contrivances for their use.

He says he has made for certain well known gambling shop proprietors in Chicago, "hold out" devices for use in poker, as well as "stripper" attachments for faro boxes. The roulette wheels, he says, he never heard of being tampered with, probably because the odds against the player are about as three to two, and that gets away with his money quite fast enough.—Chicago Herald.

A Satisfactory Test.

"Must be pretty cold out your way," he observed to a farmer who came into our market one morning with his whiskers full of frost. "Yes, tolerable." "What did your thermometer register?" "I hasn't got none." "I should think you'd want to know how cold it was." "No, I don't care much. I kin tell by touchin my tongue to the ax whether it's summer or winter."

It is estimated that there are 325,570 telephones in use in this country. Nine years ago there were only 870.

WOMAN AND HOME.

CORNSTALKS FOR INTERIOR DECORATIONS.

Pug Dogs vs. Little Children—Economy and Self Denial—Life in the Country. Happiness Without Wealth—Hygienic Hints—Paragraphs—Notes.

In log cabin farm houses, and even in still humbler homes, it is possible to introduce aesthetic effects by a free use of cornstalks for interior decorations. No one can have failed to notice the rich golden color and satin sheen of cornstalks in the late autumn season. Their lightness of weight fits them admirably for the purpose we just indicated, while in the mere matter of exterior finish they are scarcely inferior to bamboo.

Let us illustrate by taking the simplest log cabin, with unplastered walls and bare rafters, upon which the floor of the second story

—perhaps a mere loft—rests, thus answering the double purpose of floor and ceiling. In order to conceal the unsightly chinking of mud or plaster which fills the interstices between the logs, a dado is the first device, or rather wainscoting.

The stalks are selected of uniform thickness, and are then cut into such lengths as may be desired for the height of the wainscoting. The cutting must be done with great accuracy; it is best to cut each stalk by laying it against a pine stick selected as a gauge.

Another set of stalks is now to be cut, and these form the ceiling decoration. The width between the rafters will determine the model for the length of these stalks, for we are now speaking of the most primitive form of log cabin—one which has not even a plastered ceiling.

If paper is not too expensive for the upper wall surface, the cheapest quality of muslin can first be tacked around the four sides of the room above the intended wainscoting, and a low priced wall paper of desirable tint applied; or coarse muslin of some pretty shade may furnish the covering without the addition of paper. The cheapest quality of crimson cheese cloth makes a handsome background in contrast with the yellow cornstalks.

For the wainscoting these are applied simply by means of long brads driven through the stalks immediately into the logs around the four walls. The upper ledge will of course be perfectly smooth and even if the sticks have been carefully cut. As a finish for the top, cornstalks are to be laid along this ledge transversely, and also secured by long brads. This finishes the wainscoting, unless one wishes to add to the security of the part next the floor by a thin strip of pine wood.

Since it costs nothing except a few hours' labor, one may well try the experiment, if only for the sake of the beautiful effect. If preferred, a narrow shelf may run around the room at the head of the wainscoting, particularly if it be sufficiently high not to interfere with the furniture. On such a shelf bits of bric-a-brac may be arranged to great advantage. The polished surface of the stalks easily prevents the accumulation of dust.

The sticks for the ceiling are laid between the rafters, and secured to the planks by brads, making a solid surface, and repeating the effect of the wainscoting, except that the stalks are to be laid along this ledge transversely, and also secured by long brads. This finishes the wainscoting, unless one wishes to add to the security of the part next the floor by a thin strip of pine wood.

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