

Daily Charlotte Observer.

VOLUME XXXIV.

CHARLOTTE, N. C., SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 20, 1885.

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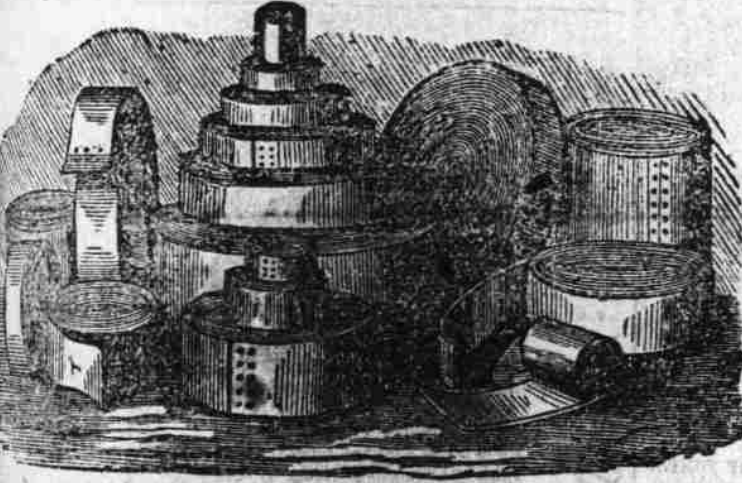
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Is now being received and placed in position for show and sale at our old and well-known stand in the First National Bank building, on West Tryon street, nearly opposite the Central and Buford Hotels.

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ALEXANDER & HARRIS.

The Charlotte Observer.

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THE CARRIER PIGEON.

Its Habits, Uses, Nature and Training.

Pittsburg Dispatch.

Pigeon flying is of such ancient origin that it is hard to say where it began. In Egypt their domestication goes back as far as 3,000 years before Christ, and in a coronation scene of Ramesis III. the King is represented as having assumed the crown of Upper and Lower Egypt, and a priest lets fly four pigeons, commanding them "to announce to the south, the north, the east and the west that the son of Isis has put on the splendid double crown of the upper and lower country."

The Romans at one time had the pigeon craze. Pliny says of it: "Many persons are insane in their love of these birds." White ones were the rage if they were good flyers, and that they were highly prized may be judged by the prices which were asked for them. There is one instance where a good price was offered for a fine pair, but the owner refused to take less than 400 demarii for them, a sum equal in our money to about \$65. It was their custom to carry pigeons to theatres and when out walking, and throw them into the air, rivals betting heavily on whose bird would get home first.

To become good and reliable they must be taken from the nest as soon as they are able to fly, and carried a short distance away, probably a quarter or a half mile. All those that get home quickly are further trained, and the slow ones are killed. In this way the best are preserved. When they find their way home from short distances they are taken further and further, until they cover any distance within the limit of power. They can fly about thirty miles an hour, but more is sometimes claimed. Instances are known where they have flown 1,000 miles without a rest.

As soon as they are thrown into the air they go to a considerable height, and fly around and around until some familiar landmark is seen, from which they take their course and start in a straight line for home. If no well known mark can be seen they are lost, and often come back to the starting place. In instances where carriers are let go from balloons and could not find their way, they have returned to the balloon, as the dove did to Noah when it could find no place to rest.

It is through no love of flying nor keenness of racing that makes the carrier return to its cote, but its love of home. It is this instinct that makes it fly with untiring wings for hours and hours, to rest at last in familiar places and among friends.

Among the Romans, and the Asiatics before them, it was the custom to tie letters around the leg or foot, and many a letter from distant friend and absent father or lover, was carried in this way. Travellers going from Rome in olden times, or soldiers departing for distant wars, frequently carried pigeons, releasing them at intervals that they might be the bearers of good tidings to the folks at home. Tying the message around the neck or wing had been tried, but both were found to impede the bird's flight. At present, when they are used, the message is tied around the leg, high up, where it does not interfere at all.

In England and France old writers speak of the frequent use of these birds, both for private correspondence as well as public, especially in time of war, when cities were besieged and there were no other available means. At such times the attacking party kept a large stock of falcons, and it was the duty of the falconers to keep a sharp lookout for carrier pigeons. As soon as one would be observed the falcons were let go, and away they rushed in hot pursuit. It is described as intensely interesting to see both pursuer and pursued cleaving the air like arrows; one flying for his game and the other for his life. The falcons frequently proved victorious, and would bring the dead dove back with information of great value.

To circumvent this the besieged sometimes let fly five or six birds at a time, which bore no message, and when the falcons were either engaged or too tired to fly fast, another bearing the letter would be let go, and run the gauntlet with ease.

During the siege of Paris this was a very common way of hearing news, and many were the letters which reached outside friends and military leaders far beyond the walls. Sharpshooters were on the lookout for them continually, but as a usual thing were of no avail. It was in this way that much news reached other countries of the condition within the city. The French, not wishing to encumber the pigeons any more than necessary, in order that they might en-

chance the chances of their getting through all right, made very small micro photographs of newspapers, letters, and military orders, the entire budget weighing but a few grains.

The only use they are put to at present is in flying matches. Birds belonging to different owners are kept long enough in the same dove cote to conceive an attachment for it, and taken a long distance away. At this "pigeon meet" books are kept with a description of each bird entered and who it is owned by. The owner's name and the exact moment of flight are stamped quickly upon the vane of one of the wing or tail-feathers and the birds sent off. At the other end of the "fly" a committee of judges are stationed to record the incomers. It is usually arranged that the entire distance may be travelled in daylight as the birds are apt to go astray if allowed to fly by night. Large sums change hands yearly in England and France at the pigeon fly.

How a Newspaper Man Surprised Folks.

A New York letter writer tells the following of a newspaper man, who will, it is the prophecy of his fellows, make his mark in Congress this winter: It will not do to say that novel methods of making a person known to the public are not often productive of valuable results. Col. Trueman E. Merriman will be in Congress next winter to represent one of the largest and most important of the New York city districts. A year ago he was a newspaper reporter, known among his fellow journalists as an accomplished man of wide experience and unassailable morals. Except in the writing of city political news he had no connection with politics, nor did he possess any of the influence which is usually deemed essential to political preferment. Moreover, he was notably a quiet, modest man, with the politeness of a Chesterfield. He remarked one day to the editor over him that he would rather like to be sent to Washington as correspondent of the paper. The reply was not acquiescent. "Well, then," said the Col. in a casual tone, "I think I will go as a Congressman." The remark was regarded as a joke. But within five days Merriman was out as a stump candidate. The politicians looked upon his exploit as nonsense. The incumbent of the office, Hardy, took a renomination and the other party put forward their man. No organization was behind Merriman, and his plan did not contemplate the expenditure of money other than in the smallest feasible quantity for legitimate purposes. But his campaign was the liveliest right from the outset that the district had ever known. All the newspaper friends of the Col. who could make speeches volunteered. Meetings were held in a dozen different places every evening. The name of Merriman was speedily made as familiar as it had been totally unknown. Nothing could be urged against him. He had no career in politics to assail, while those of his opponents could be torn to tatters. He was triumphantly elected with 2,000 votes to spare. This was such a feat in politics as probably, considering the circumstances of Merriman's lack of wealth, fame or any popular hobby, cannot be duplicated in the history of Congress.

A Great French Lawyer.

Maitre Lachaud's courage and eloquence never betrayed him before any tribunal. The defence of Bazaine was a memorable instance of the fearlessness with which he stemmed the tide of popular resentment against a marshal who had been selected as the scapegoat of national disaster. Maitre Lachaud never "held a brief." He defended a case according to his own view of the possibilities of defense. If a prisoner's guilt was admitted, or his innocence incompatible with any account of the evidence, Lachaud spoke as the advocate of mercy, and the force with which he urged this plea was irresistible; it came from the heart and went straight to the heart. An infinite pity for human frailties, springing from the depths of a loving and religious nature, gave him that power in which he was unrivaled, of revealing a human soul with whose woe sympathy was possible in the most inhuman wretch that appeared before a jury. He raised professional duty to the height of a special intercession on behalf of the degraded and oppressed; and the Court of Assizes, which he ennobled by the tone of his advocacy, recognized in him the St. Vincent of Paul of the bar. A commanding presence and rare personal beauty gave dignity to a delivery that was at once graceful and tender, grave and impassioned. The music of his voice persuaded without argument, and the saying has passed into a proverb that a letter read by Lachaud would convince a jury. With his perfect combination of mental and physical gifts, Lachaud realized the type of that ideal orator whom antiquity delighted in describing. Such was the opinion of no less a judge of oratory than Gambetta; and such, we may rest assured, will be the verdict of posterity.

Giving the Bride Away.

Chicago Rambler. A society paper in describing the order in which a bridal party passed down the church aisle, says: "The bride walked on the arm of her father." This may be all right, but it seems to us that a church was hardly the place for her to display her acrobatic accomplishments.

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Is presided over by an experienced man, with his competent assistants, it is the pride of our house, being supplied with first-class goods and governed with a thorough system.

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- BUSINESS MEN,
- RAILROAD MEN,
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WE DO NOT WANT YOUR PATRONAGE UNLESS WE DESERVE IT.

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—STILL CONTINUES.—

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100 Men's Suits at \$5.00,

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These are extraordinary bargains and cannot be gotten anywhere else for

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