

The Morganton Star.

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MORGANTON, N. C.

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A. L. BRIGHT,

Glen Alpine Station, N. C.
April 3, 1885. no51y.

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desires to state to the public that she is prepared to do hair braiding of an exquisite quality. She has taken the premium at the State fairs, and is the only person in this section that can do such work. Address

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June 19, 1885. 6m.

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MORGANTON, N. C.

USED UP BANK NOTES.

How They Are Disposed of in the Treasury Department.

When the national bank notes have tramped about the country until they have become ragged and vagabond, and have reached the lowest depths of degradation, they are bundled up and sent to the treasury department for redemption. Many millions of these vagrants are received at the department each year. They have to pass in review through the national bank redemption agency, where those that are utterly depraved and good for nothing are sentenced to be chewed up, and those that have got in through the force of association, but are still not so far gone that some good may not be got out of them, are sent back into the service. In the place of those that are condemned nice, new notes, crisp and clean, are sent out. The experience of these notes is varied, and in some cases very novel and interesting, but their tale is told only by their ragged and dirty appearance when they get back to the department. The average length of time that a new note can keep up a respectable appearance is about three years. Some have been found at the end of twenty years to be as crisp as on the day of their issue, but these are exceptional cases, where they have fallen into the hands of people who made pets of them and carefully guarded them from rough usage. The wandering note soon becomes a tramp. It rapidly goes to pieces if it starts out for the West, stopping along at the crossroad inns, or if it frequents drinking saloons and falls in with low company. Bad habits tell on a bank note very quickly. It is in hard luck when it falls in with a bloody-fingered butcher. Some have been known to become good for nothing under such circumstances in a few weeks. They are subject, too, to all sorts of misfortune by fire and water.

Many thousand get burnt up. Then their charred and blackened remains are sent to the treasury for redemption. One lady in the controller's office in this case has charge of them, and they are sent to her for identification before they can be redeemed. Her name is Fitzgerald, and she is said to be very expert, seldom failing to identify a note, giving its proper name, date and classification, no matter how badly burnt it is. Sometimes packages of the issues of several hundred, done up to be expressed, are sent in all stuck together and burnt clear through to a black crispy mass. She then separates them one by one with a very thin bladed knife, and places the charred remains of each one separately upon a glass slab and examines it very carefully with a magnifying glass. She is familiar with all peculiarities of the issues of the various banks, and a note must be reduced almost to ashes to be beyond her recognition, though to an experienced eye it might not be distinguished from a piece of grocer's paper which had gone through the fire.

All those notes otherwise mutilated go directly to the redemption agency. The degree of expert efficiency displayed there is something remarkable. This branch of the service was organized about eleven years ago by General Spinner. Prior to that there was no systematic redemption of the paper currency as it became too worn for circulation, and a good many ragamuffin notes were wandering about the country. The service began with about 152 people employed in counting and assorting the notes that came in for redemption. Very nearly the same amount of work is now done by fifty-seven. The counting in and assorting of the notes requires great care, and it is only after long experience that it can be done rapidly. There is an average of about 150,000,000 notes per year handled, and they have to be counted about five hundred times if

there is no hitch in the count, and often if any mistakes are made.

The force of fifty-seven, all except two or three of whom are ladies, can handle just half a million notes each day. This is very expert counting. The notes when they come to be judged have first to be "counted in." This requires the "counter-in" to go over them twice, and she must make no mistake and pass no counterfeit, or the loss thus caused will be deducted from her salary. She is given from six to ten thousand notes, for which she gives a receipt; then she counts them in; then she counts them back, and if the two counts agree she is given credit for them when she settles up in the evening, turning in the money bound and labeled with her name and amount on each package. If the packages, or any of them, are found short she has to make good the deficiency. Next, the notes have to be assorted, those in good condition from those in bad condition; then they have to be grouped as to denomination; then distributed into banks of issue, and then into denomina-

tion, under the heads of banks. Then they are "counted out." The counter-in" has to handle them twice and the "counter-out" thrice, but the former has the most responsibility, and must be more expert. The counter-in handles from 6,000 to 10,000 notes twice, or counts 12,000 to 30,000 per day, while the counter-out handles from 5,000 to 7,000 three times, or counts from 15,000 to 21,000 per day. This is provided they make no mistakes, which makes a recount necessary and doubles the work. To do this requires constant attention and is a great strain on the nerves, as each note has to be scrutinized very closely to see that it is not counterfeit, and the "counter-in" must know the name of every bank that has a counterfeit upon it, and have in his mind a full description of the false note so as to be able to detect it at sight. The superintendent says counterfeit notes are thrown out by these experts without hesitation every time they come to them. They have a line of notes passing before their eyes at the time, and any flaw or defect they notice on the instant.

Two hundred and forty appointments have been made during the eleven years of the agency's existence, and forty of the fifty-seven employees now there have served from the first. A new hand is doing remarkably well if he or she learns in six months to count five hundred per day on the assortment, which is the easiest, while these old hands will count ten thousand a day, if the notes are fairly good. Women are employed for this business because of the delicacy of their touch and on account of the fact that they are not so apt to have bad habits, or when they do, it is more quickly discovered than in the case of a man. They must be young, quick and healthy and well educated, and their salaries, which are paid in through the treasury by the banks, for the three grades of work are rated at \$900, \$1,000 and \$1,200. The cashiers and two or three of the counters are men.

To witness the silence and system in the office is a remarkable sight; the eye of the counters cannot for an instant be taken from the notes, and their fingers fly through the money like fine machinery: one greenback following another in a never ending procession all day long. It is said that three counters (or counteresses) see every line of engraving on the face of a note at a glance as it passes through their fingers.—Washington Star.

Favorite Dogs.

At this time there are more than 180 distinct varieties of the domestic dog, but for convenience they are generally classed in six grand groups, wolf-dogs, greyhounds, spaniels, hounds, mastiffs and terriers; and each of these classes has in turn, and recurringly, too, been held in exceptional favor. The sheep dog was an early favorite, and the European type is large, handsome, somewhat resembling the Newfoundland, but without the benevolence and kindly intelligence of head that characterizes the latter. These two dogs have respectively been rulers of fashion. The great St. Bernard dog, which occupies a somewhat uncertain position, first became popular at the time of the crusades, when the devotion and intelligence of one in saving the life of a knight who had taken him to the Holy Land brought the whole breed into immense repute, and these majestic animals have ever since been nobly esteemed, and frequently choice specimens have sold for sums as high as \$10,000.

The spaniel was an early English favorite, and its elegance and beauty as well as its bright intelligence have served to maintain it a pet with those who prefer delighting the eye to securing a material benefit. From the spaniel to the mastiff was a long step, and yet the fashion changed very rapidly. The mastiff has all the courage, while in strength, intelligence, and mildness of disposition it excels its near ally, the bull-dog. It is one of the largest breeds, and is now an expensive luxury, so that the breed is more fashionable than popular. Hounds of the various types had their reign as the sport for which they were particularly bred was more or less cultivated. Only nobles were permitted to keep the old English greyhound, and to kill one of those animals was a felony punishable by death. When the restriction was removed the dog became a universal demand.

The celebrated Karst region in Austria is remarkable for its underground rivers, which communicate with the surface here and there by vertical shafts. These rivers are subject to periodical overflows, converting large areas into temporary lakes, and an attempt is now to be made to prevent such inundations by enlarging the underground channels.

ACROSS NIAGARA ON A ROPE.

The Man Who Rode on Blondin's Back Recalls His Emotions.

Harry Colecord, artist, now of Chicago, ran away from home and went to sea. Before he got through with his adventures he rode across Niagara Falls three times on the back of Blondin on a tight rope.

"In the year 1858," he said, "I joined Blondin in Boston. He was of the Francoona troupe, including Martinetti and the famous Ravels. I was their scenic artist and painted scenes with a whitewash brush. We disbanded in Cincinnati, and there it occurred to Blondin to cross Niagara on a tight rope, and I went to the Falls with him. We had no end of trouble getting the necessary permits to extend the ropes. Blondin only spoke a little English; that was one difficulty, but finally we succeeded in getting them from Porter, who owned the American side, and the rest was easy. Blondin wanted to carry the rope from Terrapin Tower and across to Davis's Hotel, which would have led over Horse-shoe Falls, through the mist and the spray of the great cataract. They objected because Blondin was sure to fall, they said. The spray would keep his rope damp, and I, who had engaged to go on his back, was very glad of it. Finally we stretched the rope from White's pleasure ground across to the Clifton House. Not far away from the place there is now a suspension bridge. There was 2,000 feet of the rope. It was of manilla, three inches in diameter, made in a New York ropewalk, in two pieces. Blondin joined them with a long splice which, when the rope was extended, was in the centre of the span. It took us nearly five months to stretch the rope and to get guy lines in place.

It was 250 feet above water at its lowest point, which was fifty feet below the highest—in other words, there was a grade of fifty feet in each 1,000 feet. There were 75,000 feet of guy line altogether. Each of them was weighted with a ten-pound sand bag to drop them out of the way of his balance pole, and in putting them up Blondin crossed a score of times. At last we were ready to make the first ascension; that was what we called it. Before I went over he made several public ascensions. It was advertised through the papers that I was to ride on his back, and I was the subject of all kinds of attacks and criticisms. I was ready to back out, except Blondin began to taunt me, and I got into that corner of pride and vaingloriousness which I could not escape from. Meantime Blondin had coached me as to what I should do. I was to put my weight on his shoulders by my arms, and clasp his body about with my legs. But I could not put my weight on his legs; that would encumber his movement. I had to keep all the weight on his shoulders. In July, 1860, we went across. I took my place on Blondin's back, and he began the descent from the Canadian side on the rope. By reason of the fact that I had to bear my weight on his shoulders, and had to use my arms and with main strength to support myself, frequent rests were necessary. I told Blondin when I wanted to rest, and then I dropped down on the rope on one foot and waited till my arms were relieved, when I would spring up again, using only my arms to lift and hold myself in place. There was a great crowd there. I did not see them at first. I do not remember what I thought. From my place on Blondin's back I could look out to the other shore and see below me the stunted pines thrusting their sharp points up from the edge of the foaming water, ready to split us if we fell. I remember, too, that I was anxious to get over, and I recall, too, that the great rope before us made swings from side to side. We afterward knew that the rope swung forty feet at

the center, and I felt the necessity of preserving my self-possession, and I did it. There was a forty feet length between the guy on one side and those of the other that it was impossible to make steady. It was the middle span. Below us 250 feet roared the river, and over it we swung from side to side, moving on steadily, however. Blondin never trembled. When we had gone about ten feet on this middle span somebody on the American side pulled the outer guy line. We afterward found out it was done intentionally, and the rope was stopped in its swing. Blondin stopped, and his pole went from side to side in a vain effort to enable him to secure his balance. At one time it was up and down on the right side, at another up and down on the left, and I recall now with wonder that I was only curious to know whether he would succeed in getting control of himself or not. I didn't feel any fear. Failing of getting his balance, he started to run across the horrible span, and we safely reached the point where the guy rope came out from

the American shore. Then to steady himself Blondin put his foot on the guy rope and tried to stop, but the guy line broke and with a dash of speed he ran swiftly twenty-five feet further to the next point, where the guys met the main rope. There he recovered his balance, and whispered rather than said: "Decendez vous." The perspiration stood out on his neck and shoulders in great beads, and we balanced ourselves on the swaying rope. Presently he said, "Allons, and I raised myself to his shoulders and we went on in safety and without incident toward the shore.

It was not until we landed that I appreciated what had been done. Then it occurred to me that the man who pulled the guy line was one of those who bet that the feat could never be accomplished, and my indignation mastered any reactionary feeling of fear. You see many thousand dollars were bet upon the ability of Blondin to carry a man over, and human cupidity stops at no sacrifice. Then there were the congratulations and the praise of pluck and the rest of it, so that in my foolish boyish elation I forgot everything else. I do remember as we approached the shore the wonderful tableau of the 100,000 people who stood gazing at us. Thousands of them turned their faces away, or half turning, cast glances over their shoulders at us. I remember their white faces, their strained positions of anxiety—women who stared, white and motionless, and men who wept, and as we drew near the bank the crowd surged toward us, and Blondin stopped, fearing they would push each other over the precipice. Then the crowd was still again, and with a quick run we came to the shore and sprang to the ground. I remember one man seizing me in his arms and lifting me high in the air, saying, "Thank God, this thing is over!" From the other side there was a cheer, and then we were thrown into a carriage and drawn to the International hotel by the people.

"I crossed again twice, the last time under the patronage of the Prince of Wales. He congratulated us personally, and gave us each a purse of £100. N. P.

Willis was present and wrote a wonderful sketch of the affair.—Chicago News.

Sires and Lignatures.

The congregation of birds about light-houses is nowhere so strangely illustrated as at Helligoland, off the coast of Denmark, says a writer in the Philadelphia Times. This bleak and barren rock lies in one of the great lanes of bird migration, and in the spring and autumn the island appears to be fairly alive with birds. At night they present a marvelous spectacle, sweeping about the light in great clouds, whirling, curving, rising up as they approach the glass, or again, in seeming bewilderment, dashing fairly at it and falling by hundreds dead and dying to the ground. Thousands of birds are killed in this way during these seasons. Flocks of all kinds are continually alighting to rest, rising again to continue the journey, their places being taken by others, so that the spot is a sort of a bird half way house between the north and the south.

The fact that even the young, delicate birds fly over great bodies of water is borne out by many observations. The writer has seen hundreds of the smallest and birds alight on the extreme outer keys of the Florida group that had undoubtedly flown over the Gulf of Mexico or perhaps from Cape Florida, two hundred miles away, and the nearest land to the south was Cuba, sixty miles. How these delicate creatures can endure such long-continued flights is a mystery indeed.

Grant and Beecher.

General Grant had a full appreciation of a good story or a well-turned joke. One bit of his quiet humor at the expense of Rev. Henry Ward Beecher was recalled by Mr. Beecher the other day. The preacher had prevailed upon the soldier to visit Brooklyn as the guest of the Thirtieth regiment, which had planned some sort of a celebration. Mr. Beecher, as chaplain, carried the proud title of captain, and he made this plain in a neat little speech with which he unexpectedly pricked up the general to "a few remarks." Grant met Beecher soon after at the New England society's dinner in Brooklyn, and referred once or twice to Major Beecher. The Plymouth pastor credited this to a slip of the tongue, but his eye was opened a little later, when, at the New England society dinner in New York, he found himself heralded by Grant as Colonel Beecher not once, but again and again. Then he began to protest, but Grant would not have it. "Next time it shall be general," he said to the preacher; "and if you don't keep on going higher it will be because the titles give out." Little by little he was paying Beecher for putting him there he had to make that speech to the Thirtieth.—Boston Transcript.