

THE CHRONICLE.

WILKESBORO, N. C.

They figure it out that England spends \$900,000,000 a year for drinks.

Our army is amply provided with Brigadiers, there being no less than sixteen.

F. W. Putnam, of the Peabody Museum, Boston, denies that the mound-builders were in any way related to the Indian tribes of the country.

A Japanese priest defines "Shintoism" as the "worship of the Emperor and other great men of the Nation." It is the most prominent religion of Japan.

The United States has all kinds of climate, from that of Sahara in the sandy deserts of Arizona to that of the Amazon in South Florida and that of Greenland in Northern Idaho and Montana.

The Chicago Chronicle says: "The signs continue to multiply that the new commercial era which is to make the United States the richest and most powerful Nation of the globe has already begun. The manufacturers of the country are rising to the occasion bravely, and are making an energetic and a winning attempt to secure a footing in the foreign market."

It is surprising that the great river which Professor Bell claims to have discovered in Northern Quebec should have received no name from the natives. The African tribes lowest in intelligence have names for their rivers, but it may be that the Esquimaux named this stream the great river because of its majestic size. When explored it will probably add another Arctic route for tourists.

In no other country in the world is there so much money appropriated by Government and donated by private citizens to the cause of education as in the United States, boasts the Detroit Free Press. And as a result there were gathered during the past year into our schools, colleges and universities 15,520,268 of the youth of the land. This is equal to nearly one-fourth of our entire population.

Several eminent German physicians are agreed that in about ten per cent. of the cases of supposed idiocy among children the affliction is caused by an abnormal growth in the canal back of the nose. This growth, seldom visible, is indicated by the nasal speech and defective hearing of those afflicted; the mouth is kept nearly always open, and the little sufferer makes scant or no progress in school. Nothing but an operation by a skillful surgeon will effect a cure, but then a cure is assured.

A noted ex-burglar is employed as a private detective in one of the largest retail dry goods stores in New York, and a member of the firm says that the ex-convict's services are invaluable. He was engaged on account of his wide acquaintance with shoplifters. Already he has shown a remarkable adaptability for his work. He is almost continually walking about the store, keeping a close watch on the entrances. A number of professional shoplifters with whom he is acquainted are aware of the position he holds and consequently keep away from the building.

Mr. Sam Heller, of Raleigh, N. C., knowing that there was no limit to the weight of first-class mail packages, ordered a box of shoes, weighing 125 pounds, sent to him by mail. With only a 2-cent stamp affixed. There were on the box when it arrived \$40 worth of postage due stamps. There were fifty of the denomination of fifty cents, for which he says he can obtain from the dealers \$1.25 each, and fifty of thirty cents, worth seventy-five cents each; so by this calculation he makes \$60. This is the heaviest package of the kind which ever passed through the mail in Raleigh.

The Boston Transcript's "Listener" grows extremely aesthetic in his criticism of the modern iron building. Says he: "A large building is going up in Boston in which a great weight is apparently being supported by columns so slender that they must surely be crushed. But no one need be alarmed—at least not at present. These columns are not of stone, but of iron encased in a 'composition' of stone, decoratively treated as if it were stone. Every one of these graceful pillars—for the details are throughout beautiful—is a monument to a lie. They are so brazenly false to their purpose that common laborers, passing by, are struck by their ugliness and comment upon it."

LIFE'S MASQUERADE.

And what is life but one gay masquerade, In which the masked figures come and go, Where all the brilliant scenes dissolve and fade, As fleeting shadows, passing to and fro, And all the people in the merry game Keep well their masks before their hearts and lives, Though some seek honor, wealth or power or fame, Each one's a masker, while he works and strives. The maiden with a coy and timid grace; The youth more bold, but yet an actor still; The dame, the grandaunt, keep before their face The mask of life, which they hold firmly till, Death comes to end the senseless masquerade, Then over all the mask of death is laid. —Albert Hardy.

A JUDAS IN PETTICOATS.



HERE was a intense excitement in the court when Lucia Morelli, alias Princess Turpini, alias Mme. La Comtesse de Villars, alias Mme. Delilah, was tried for obtaining goods under false pretenses, same goods being gems, drapery, millinery, bijouterie and many other things far, far too numerous to recapitulate. Mme. Delilah, in short, had (under various pretenses) obtained samples of most of the great world's merchandise.

Fair, slim and seductive was this same evil siren, instead of being fat, fat and forty, as some sirens are. Her red gold fringe was of the tint which Titian loved and painted, and (marvellous quality in a fringe!) it hid the wrinkles time and thought had made. Her eyes were of deep and liquid brown, her oval face was of a creamy white, with red lips which mutely invited kisses. For the rest, she had the easy, quite-at-home manner of a woman who had seen much of many cities and of many men.

The counsel for the prosecution had given it as his opinion that the notorious impostor ought to be made an example of, which opinion Mr. Justice Mallaby had indorsed by his sentence—a sentence which condemned her to five years' work in a penitentiary. The prisoner heard her sentence pronounced without any sign of emotion; she simply bowed, said "Merci, Milord," in a clear and emotionless voice, and then quitted the scene in which she had made her final appearance in public.

As Delilah left the court a voice near her murmured: "She was not tried for her worst sin. She is a Judas in petticoats, a traitress in black satin and fur. God forgive her her manifold misdeeds, for I scarcely can. When I look at that smooth-skinned, smooth-tongued woman I am almost inclined to turn misanthrope and live in a tub, but then I remember my Jeanette, my wife, and recant."

"As you well may, Monsieur," I replied, and as I spoke I turned and smiled at the speaker, who was none other than M. Jean Drincobier, a teacher of French and Italian, with whom I was on terms of friendly acquaintanceship.

"Come, come, Drincobier," I said, "pull yourself together, man, and when the court adjourns in a quarter of an hour or so we will take a turn in Melton Park together and have a chat about Mme. Delilah."

"Agreed," he said, "agreed! I'll wait for you in the porch Holden." This he did, and, when the barristers were discussing the news of the town at luncheon, I left the court and joined Monsieur in the Elizabethan Court. The great cause of the day was over; the long gilt hands of the Louis Quatorze clock pointed to 1 o'clock. I had breathing time before my lord once more sat under his crimson canopy. "Welcome, Drincobier," I said, as I hooked my arm in his. "Let us leave brief, wigs and robes for a while, and spend half an hour with Mother Nature."

"So be it," he replied, and we went straight to the fair, green pleasure gardens and sat down on a garden seat under a linden full of yellow-scented blossoms.

Neither of us spoke for a few seconds—and then the silence was broken by my companion.

"Holden," said he, "you have doubtless heard many strange stories. Are you ready to hear another?"

"Yes; both ready and willing."

"Well, then, I'll open the sealed book of the past, and read you a chapter from it—in confidence, of course. Now listen."

This was what I did; and I am going to tell you the tale I heard in Melton Park, when the birds sang in the trees, the pleasure boats went up and down the miniature lake, and a German band played airs from "Cohenrhen" in the distance. You must think that Drincobier is speaking.

"In the famous city of Avignon, which has earned the name of La Ville Sonante (or the Ringing Town), in old chateau, called Mon Plaisir, which has for ages belonged to the La Roche family. I am the last of this family—the last leaf on the old ancestral tree! For my real name is Jean Drincobier La Roche.

school and lived by herself in a neat little room at the very top of the hotel in which we lodged. She was like a little brown nightingale, was Jeanette Boudeau, because she always lived in the twilight of obscurity, and yet was bright and cheery, even as the sweetest of feathered songsters sings in the night.

"She pitied my mother in her own gentle way, and often brought her a fresh bouquet of flowers. Sometimes she gave poor madame a few carnations, mixed with sprays of mignonette; sometimes she gave a few marguerites and violets, but how simple soever her gifts, her words were as sweet as honey. By and by she became our frequent visitor, and often took tea or coffee with my mother, who soon loved her like a daughter. I should have fallen head over ears in love with her had I not met my Judas in petticoats at a fancy ball and became infatuated with her.

"Very fair and winsome and seductive was this woman, who then styled herself Princess Vanloo! She lived in good style, had apparently plenty of money at command, and knew the great world as well as she did her alphabet, and had a partly sympathetic, partly protective manner, which completely enchanted me. Her nationality was a secret; for she spoke the tongue of several Nations, and claimed none as her fatherland. It is true that she said her mother had been an Englishwoman, and this I believed, for she showed emotion when speaking of her, as she did to me one wintry night when the rain beat on the long, brightly lit boulevards, as well as the window panes. We were having a tete-a-tete together in her dainty reception-room, wherein taste and wealth had done their best to shut the winter out.

"'Tis a dreary night, Madame," I said. "She smiled as she answered: 'It is, but rain is better than snow; nature's white velvet is only appreciated by the rich, who can skate in it, soft costumes and furs. They see the whiteness of the snow, but the poor only realize the discomfort it brings.' "She glanced round the sumptuously furnished room with a sigh and a shudder, and I wondered if she would deem me poor, and then and there declared my love.

"She listened to me with an amused smile, called me a poor, silly boy, and ended by asking if I would do anything to prove my love.

"Anything and everything," I replied, with passionate fervor.

"That is well," she said caressingly. "I do not like the lukewarm adorners. Will you trust me, mon brave, entirely? Then do so; let me see the plans of the new fortifications which you keep upon your person as amulets." I hesitated, because you know that I was in the artillery department, and being an AI draughtsman, I had been given some plans of fortifications (designed to act as bulwarks against an unfriendly Continental power) to copy—and honor forbade my acceding to my mistress's request. "That I cannot do," said I. "Ask me for something else." "Yes, exactly like a man." "Ask me for something else." "Yes, ask me for something I do not want, you mean. How exactly like a man. Well, so be it. You do not really love me. An revoir, monsieur." She rose as she spoke, and touched a handbell which stood on the table by her side. I hesitated, wavered and was lost. "Madame," I stammered out, "why can you so strongly desire to glance at these military plans? There is nothing interesting in them, I assure you."

"There is not, but I want to feel that my Jean (she called me "my Jean"—think of it!) places his honor, which is dearer to him than life, in my keeping. It has ever been my pride to be trusted. I may trust you "till death do us part" as my husband. Surely you will trust me for a single night."

"The soft, bright eyes and caressing voice did the work they were meant to do. I drew the papers from a concealed pocket and handed them to her. Her cheeks were as crimson roses as she touched them, and her ripe lips trembled, but she smiled as she held them behind her back and cried, "Proved, thou lovest me after all, my Jean." "I do," said I. "Now, please give me back the plans. They never quit my possession. I carry them about in the daytime and sleep with them under my pillow." "That is well; you are both brave and prudent," was the merry reply. "Well, tonight I will take care of them. You can come for them in the morning. I shall be sure to see you."

"To cut the shameful story short, I acceded to her request, gave into her whim, as I thought it, and, for a few short hours, lived in a fool's paradise! But for a few short hours only, for when I went to see the Princess in the morning, she had gone; the dainty nest was empty, the bird had flown, and I was simply a disgraced and ruined man. Had it not been for my mother I would then and there have put an end to my existence. As it was, I went back to our hotel, to the room in which she was sitting with Jeanette, and told her the shameful story. She listened in silence, but when I had ended she drew my head down to her bosom, and wept over and comforted me as if I had been a little lad in a blouse and cap. And the little governess, bless her! she comforted us both. And then as I did so, my heart turned from the traitress who had betrayed me to the working girl who pitied me!

"I went of my own accord to General Siever, the chief of my department, and told him all. He heard my statement in silence with the frown on his forehead growing ever deeper, and when I concluded he pressed the tops of his fingers together and he said: "You have been a Judas in uniform, and have given the plans to a Judas in petticoats, who will sell them to an agent of that Government which uses

her as a spy. You have been a simpleton; do not prove yourself a poltroon." He pointed, as he spoke, to a pistol which lay near him ready loaded.

"The temptation to take it and by its means end my misery was exceedingly strong, but I resisted it. There in that neat cabinet I seemed to see a sweet, pale face and to hear a sweet, young voice say plaintively: 'Endure, but do not die. You may be styled a coward; you may be disgraced and exiled, but you will still be in the land of the living. Do not, do not, let your mother weep for her dead!' I turned to my superior: "Monsieur General," I said, tremblingly, "do with me what you will. I cannot live for France; but my mother is a widow, and I am her only son—I will live for her." "So be it," was the chief's reply, and he then and there gave me into custody.

"I was tried by court-martial and sentenced to five years' imprisonment in the Isle of Sainte Veronique in a military prison. Severe, you will say. Well, yes, maybe so; but before I was expatriated I had to pass a severer ordeal still. I had to be publicly disgraced. And this I was! One cold, sharp February morning I was led into the parade-ground of the Ecole Militaire. All night long the detachments from the various regiments around Paris had been marching to the scene, and 5000 men at least were on the ground. There were bearded recruits as well as bronzed veterans; boys who wore the pom-pom and beat the rataplan; and men who had smelt powder on many hard-won fields. Outside the parade-ground, facing the school, were hundreds of spectators, who had come from all parts to see a traitor punished. There was Pierre, the wine-seller, with madame, his spouse, on his arm; Gros Jean, the butcher in his work-a-day blouse; Lorrit and Louise, from the fish market and Alfred and Alphonse, from the students' quarter. All, all were there! And so was a slight, pale young woman in mourning who smiled as if to say: "Be brave as I am!" as my eye fell on her. Yes, Jeanette had come to help me with her presence as I passed through the seven-fold heated furnace. "Death to the traitor!" cried the crowd, as I was led up to the General in command; and even as the yells broke upon my ears I thought of Jeanette's smile!

"The Adjutant took the sword from my hand and broke it across his knee, as the Commander said: "La Roche, you are unworthy to carry arms," in a clear, cold voice, which seemed to cut me like a whip, or a strong northeast wind. Yet through it all I seemed to see the brave young face with the smile upon it. Button after button was cut from my uniform and cast upon the ground, with the insignia of my rank, and, though I longed to cry, "I am innocent," I could not. Then again the shouts of "Death to the traitor!" went to the sky, and the trumpets began to blow and the drums to beat! Before me was that shameful parade which is called in military parlance the parade of execution.

"When I had marched round the entire square the gendarmes led me to the barrack-gate and gave me into the hands of the civil authorities as a convict. But before I stepped into the prison van Jeanette stepped forward and handed me a bunch of violets, saying: "Keep up, monsieur, the dear mother is bearing up bravely, and we will come and visit you directly the authorities permit." This, my friend, they did.

As I sat on my pallet bed, musing bitterly, on the day succeeding the execution parade the cell door opened and a turnkey said: "La Roche, madame, your mother, and mademoiselle, your fiancée, have come to pay you a visit." I rose and greeted them both, and then I turned to Jeanette and said: "My little friend, my mother will be all alone, and her sight is growing dim. I have sold the old chateau, and the money which I gained by its sale has been settled on her. She can live in England now. Go with her, my more than sister, and be a daughter to her. I am a convict, an ex-soldier, indeed! and not even a Frenchman, so I dare not ask you to love and wait for my release. I dare not ask you to make such a cruel sacrifice."

"The girl's face flushed brightly as she laid a trembling hand on my arm.

"Monsieur Jean," she said, "love delights in sacrifice, and I—I love you. If it would make you happier I would become your wife before you go to Sainte Veronique."

"I took her in my arms and kissed her then and there, and my mother, with tears of gladness, gave us both her blessing. Ours was a strange wedding—stranger, I should say, has scarcely, if ever been seen. Four gendarmes escorted me to Mairie, where I met a pale girl in black and white, with a breast-knot and bouquet of snow-drops, and a dim eyed gray-haired woman. My handkerchiefs were removed, and the Mayor of Paris performed the civil ceremony; then we drove to an antique church in which, in days of yore, Marie Stuart and the Dauphin had plighted their troth, and there my fetters were once more removed, and a white haired priest made Jeanette my wife.

"After the marriage I was deported to Sainte Veronique, where I worked on a desolate island in a military fortress for five years. When I was once more free I came to England to my wife and mother at Basingham. Here I assumed my second name of Drincobier, and, being a fair linguist, became a teacher of languages. I let the dead past bury its dead. When this woman was tried I knew her for the so-called Princess Vanloo, the Judas in petticoats who had betrayed me—whose hand had signed the doom

which made me an exile. Do you wonder at my agitation now?"

"Indeed, I do not," was my reply. "I shall never hear lovers sing of Jeanette and Jeannot, without thinking of your thrilling love story, monsieur. Truly, your Jeanette was a wife worth winning."—St. Paul.

WISE WORDS.

A coming man must keep going. Selfishness is a hard snake to kill. No man likes to order things for the house.

A man hates everybody's dog but his own.

Do your part faithfully, and fate will do the rest.

You always enjoy a laugh even at your own expense.

We all make the mistake of depending too much on our friends. Criticism is sometimes most wholesome but it isn't always safe.

The home rule question has wrecked the happiness of many a family.

In making our good resolutions we are apt to forget how long the year is.

One of the great satires in society is to hear some women spoken of as chaperones.

Shun idleness; it is the rust that attaches itself to the most brilliant metals.

According to the tombstones cemeteries contain more good people than ever lived.

Young folks tell what they do, old ones what they have done, and fools what they will do.

Consider how few things are worthy of anger, and you wonder that any but fools should be in wrath.

The man who attempts to play a practical joke on a vicious dog should engage a surgeon beforehand.

Innocence is like a flower which withers when touched, and blooms not again, though watered with tears.

The man who says he welcomes death rather than a life of sorrow has four doctors when he has a headache.—The South-West.

Action of the Rain.

The rain falling on the rocks sinks into every crack and crevice, carrying with it into these fissures surface material which has been degraded by the weather, and thus affording a matrix sufficient to start the growth of vegetation, and afterward to maintain the plants. The fibers and roots of these plants, bushes and trees thus brought into life, growing and expanding, act as wedges to split up the surface of the rock and to commence the process of wearing away. From this quality of destruction a large class of plants derive the name of Saxifrages, or rock breakers, from their roots penetrating into the minute fissures in search of water, and so assisting in the process of disintegration. In winter the water collected in the hollows and crevices becomes frozen, and expanding as it changes into ice, acts like a charge of blasting material in breaking up the rocks. The pieces thus detached become further disintegrated by frost and weather, and, being rolled over and over and rubbed against each other, as they are carried away down the mountain currents, are ground gradually smaller and smaller, till from fragments of rocks they become bowlders, then pebbles, and finally sand. As the mountain stream merges into the river the pebbles and coarse sand continue to be rolled along the bottom of the channel, while the argillaceous particles and salts become mingled with the water, and flow on with it either in suspension or solution. —Longman's Magazine.

The Boss of Balmoral Castle.

The ruler of Balmoral Castle is not the Queen Victoria if report is to be believed, but the housekeeper, a Mrs. Mussens, a typical personage of her class, gowned always in rustling black silk, lace-trimmed apron and white cap. She and the Queen are said to be excellent friends, and many a gossip have they had together when affairs of State had been laid aside. Mrs. Mussens also stands high in the favor of the little Battenburgs, who seek her out as soon as they have landed at the castle, for she fairly idolizes the youngsters and keeps many a goody in her apartments with which to regale their inner man. To the world at large Mrs. Mussens is a holy terror; her word is law, and she enforces it at the point of the bayonet or the broomstick. It is said that once the Queen wanted a certain maid, to whom she had taken a fancy, detailed to the care of her own room, but the housekeeper remonstrated telling Her Majesty it was quite out of order, and she really must not spoil the servant by undue notice. The Queen was wise enough not to insist, and "dear Mrs. Mussens" won the day.—San Francisco Chronicle.

Uncle Allen Advises.

"I notice, my dear," said Uncle Allen Sparks to one of his nieces, "that when you have a toothache it is the worst you ever had. The young man who was here last night was the ugliest fellow you ever saw. According to your statement a little while ago, it took you forever and a day to learn how to make a sponge cake. The house, you say, is full of flies. You have just declared that the room is as hot as an oven, you have the dreadful headache you ever had in your life, and the boy across the road is making the fearful racket a boy ever made. Don't you see, my child, this sort of thing won't do? Some time in your life you will really have an experience requiring the superlative degree to describe it, and you won't be able to convey any idea of it. You will have used up all your adjectives. That is all. You can go on thumping the piano again."—Chicago Tribune.

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Fish Ten Thousand Years Old.

In making railway tunnels, and in sinking wells and pits in Nevada, Utah and Arizona, salt strata are often struck at varying depths, sometimes as much as a hundred yards beneath the surface. Hundreds of fish, perfectly preserved, are found in blocks of this pure salt.

These salt fields are supposed to occupy what was once the bottom of a lake thirty miles long, fifteen miles wide and many hundred feet deep. The fish found resemble the pike species and are wholly unlike the fish found in the lakes and rivers of that region at the present time. The specimens found are not petrified, but are perfectly preserved in the flesh as those but recently frozen in a block of ice.

When taken out and exposed to the heat of the sun they become as hard as blocks of wood. Occasionally workmen at the salt works have eaten these antediluvian relics. Men of learning, who have investigated the matter, say that these salt preserved fish are at least 10,000 years old.

Bluefish Towed a Boat to Sea.

A remarkable catch of bluefish was made in the ocean off Blue Hill life-saving station, Long Island, by Robert and Charles Smith, of this place. A school of bluefish was sighted about a mile off shore, and, working to the eastward, the fishermen set a gill net. The rush of the fish was so great that the boat was carried two miles, to Water Island, before the fishermen could get control of the fish. At least half of the fish escaped, yet over two tons were caught in the net.