

THE CHRONICLE.

WILKESBORO, N. C.

This is the centennial year of the Democratic party, which became a National organization in 1796.

London has gone into the renovating business in earnest. The city is spending \$2,500,000 in cleaning and rebuilding one slum.

"The typewriter is a blessing to business men, it is death to the charm of all private correspondence, and its extensive use in original composition would inevitably dilute literature beyond the selling point," declares Charles Dudley Warner.

Says the Lewiston (Me.) Journal: A corporation was running behind under the management of a man who was paid \$5000 a year. What did the directors do? The didn't hire a cheaper man. They found a better man and paid him \$7500 a year, and now, as a result of his skilled improvements and intelligent economies, the corporation is making money. This is a frequent experience in the commercial and industrial world.

The result of Mrs. Langtry's suit against a London bank which delivered up her jewels, worth \$175,000, on a forged order last summer, is somewhat out of the usual order of decisions. She gets \$50,000 from the bank and the continued ownership of the jewels on condition that when they are found they must be sold and that any sum over \$125,000 realized from the sale shall go to the bank. "This," says the Springfield Republican, "is forcing Mrs. Langtry to share with the bank the consequences of the latter's failure to perform its functions properly in case the jewels are never recovered."

We are certainly more civilized than the Europeans in the matter of dueling, exclaims Harper's Weekly. Dueling in the United States is out of date, and nowhere is it necessary to the comfort of any American that he should fight a duel. In Germany, Austria and Russia, and to a less extent in France, men in military or court service must fight one another with deadly weapons in certain cases, whether they want to or not. If they quarrel with too much energy in the presence of witnesses a duel must result. They may both be averse to it; they may repent of having quarrelled at all, and be most anxious to go about their business and let the matter drop, but that privilege is denied them. They must fight or lose caste and standing, and even military rank. The German Emperor, who is charged with being the greatest upholder of dueling in Europe, is of course exempted by his rank from ever being subject to the working of his own medicine.

The death of Cornelius S. Bushnell, of New Haven, Conn., recalls to the Chicago Times-Herald one of the most celebrated naval battles, which led to modern warship construction and revolutionized naval warfare. Mr. Bushnell was the man who supplied the money to build the famous Monitor, planned by John Ericsson. The arrival of that remarkable vessel in Hampton Roads at the moment that the Confederate ram Merrimac was playing havoc with the Federal wooden warships stationed there is one of the most dramatic scenes in all history, and the duel between the two vessels that followed, though a drawn battle in appearance, marked an epoch of the war. From that time it became impossible for the Confederate Government to organize a navy. Had not the Monitor appeared at the very time it did, so as to bar the way of the Confederate war vessel, the Merrimac, after destroying the United States warships, the Cumberland and Congress, might have proceeded down the coast and raised the blockade. Had that been done in 1862 no power on earth could have prevented the establishment of the Southern Confederacy. It was that blockade more than any other one thing that isolated the seceding States from Europe and shut off their supplies. At that time armored vessels were as yet a dream, and what they would be in the actual collision of war an entirely unknown quantity. Every naval Power in the world, therefore, was interested in that fight, and it marks the beginning of the modern naval era. In truth it may be said that the brave little Monitor, that afterward sank in a stormy sea like so much pot metal, was the beginning of the splendid navies of today. To this Mr. Bushnell contributed, and his memory is deserving of honor.

SPOKEN AT SEA.

All men go down to the sea in ships. With a trembling hand and faltering lips. We spread our sails on the deep unknown, Each for himself and each alone. The strong tide floweth unceasingly, And only knows our destiny. And ships may meet, as yours and mine; With a tender gleam, the deck-lights shine; There are wide-swept words of kindly cheer A song, a smile, perchance a tear; Then on, for the ever-hurrying sea, Singing of the shadowy yet-to-be!

And the light dies out of each shining track: The course was chosen, we turn not back; No hands are clasped o'er the soundless blue, But hearts though severed may yet be true; And a sweeter story never shall be Than of memory's ship-lights spoken at sea. —Emma Huntington Nason.

"NUMBER FIVE."



HAUNCEY WARD was a confirmed bachelor. All his friends so affirmed and he himself admitted the indictment. "I suppose I am entirely too particular," said he to himself as he mused over his bachelorhood. "Now, there was Katy Deane, very pretty, womanly, musical, and all that, but she wore number five shoes. I could not endure to have a wife whose shoemaker I would be ashamed to meet. "Nellie Keene's weak point was her hands. I should have said strong point, for her technique on the piano was masterly, but her hands were so large; why, I am sure she could reach ten notes as easily as I can an octave. To see such hands offering me my cup of coffee every morning would render me absolutely miserable. Susie Hunt was perfect until you heard her speak, but her voice! A half hour of it gave me a headache for all day. What would a lifetime of such screeching have done? Driven me wild, I'm afraid. It doesn't seem to me that I am so very unreasonable after all. I only want a woman with a fine figure; a pretty—no, I mean an intelligently beautiful face; fair complexion, fine eyes—I'm not so particular as to color; and blonde, naturally waving hair; a soft, low, womanly voice; good musical ability and a delight in classical music. A woman of mind, of course, not too literary, and a good housekeeper. That is all. I certainly ought to be able to find such a combination, and I won't marry until I do. If I asked for money, or were in any way unreasonable, it would be different, but I ask no 'impossible' she. It is true I am thirty, and have never yet seen my ideal, but I'll wait another thirty years before I marry a woman who does not meet my modest requirements."

Chauncey Ward was a business man. His sign and cards read L. D. Ward & Company.

His place of business was simply an office, and his corps of employes were principally "on the road." Opening out of the office was a suite of pleasant rooms, where Mr. Ward kept bachelor's hall. One of these, which served as a private office as well as parlor, held a fine upright piano, and near it on the wall was a bell telephone. "A streak of economy putting it in here," he explained to a friend. "Saved just fifteen dollars."

"How is that?" inquired his friend. "A telephone in the office would have been sixty dollars a year, as that is the price of one's place of business. At one's residence it is forty-five dollars a year, and this is my residence, you know."

"Ha, ha!" laughed the friend, "Quite a dodge. I'll remember it."

One blustering April day Mr. Ward found himself a victim of influenza, and surrendering the office to his clerk, withdrew to the seclusion of his parlor, where he sneezed and snuffled in lonely solitude, growing hoarser as the day wore on. He felt too miserable to play the piano, his eyes were weeping so constantly that he could not read, and he was listening dolefully to the airs played by his magnificent music box, when a call came from the telephone. He stepped to the door of the office, but Smith was put; there was nothing to do but to answer the call himself. It proved to be from a customer in an adjoining village. The man was a little stupid as well as a little deaf, and with all his efforts Ward could not make him understand. The matter was an important one, and so in spite of trembling limbs and aching head, and the accompaniment of sneezes and flourishes of handkerchiefs, the poor fellow strove to make the business intelligible to his distant customer. He was almost despairing when a musical voice spoke through the telephone. "Let me assist you, Mr. Ward," Chauncey started. "Who is that? Ah, the girl at the Central office. What a sweet voice!" These were his thoughts. His words were, "I shall be most grateful if you can do anything to help me, I am so hoarse."

"I understand," said the musical voice, "and I can hear you with much less effort than the gentleman in B—." Tell me what you want to say and I will repeat it to him."

Following this suggestion, Ward found that the girl was quick to hear and comprehend, and he could hear her clear musical tones repeating with an enviable distinctness of enunciation his word of directness or explanation. The customer, satisfied at last, closed his part of the conversation, and Ward expressed his thanks to the girl for her kind assistance. "No thanks are necessary," was the reply, and the circuit was at once broken and further speech made impossible. All the rest of the evening

one tones of the unseen girl rang in his ears.

"The sweetest voice in speech I ever heard," he mused. "I wonder how she looks. She must be blonde; no brunette could speak so softly."

It will be surmised from our friend's admiration of blondes that he himself was a brunette. His reveries were interrupted by another call through the telephone. This time it was from a young friend who was in the hospital suffering with a broken leg. "I say, Ward, old boy," said the poor fellow, "can't you do something to cheer me up a little?"

"Can't talk a bit, Charley," roared Ward hoarsely, "but I'll wind up the music box for you." So the box was wound, and began playing its cheery melodies to the hospital patient, who apparently was charmed by the sweet tones, for after a time came the call, "Good night, Ward, I'm just going off to sleep."

Several times during the next day or two did the sweet voiced telephone operator assist Ward in his efforts to communicate with distant friends and customers, and it may safely be imagined that his delight in hearing her melodious repetition of his own words was so great that his convalescence was consequently delayed. But the tantalizing thing was that she persisted in declining all thanks and in closing the conversation as soon as it came to be between her and Mr. Ward alone. He was not satisfied, and when he once persisted, after she had broken the circuit, and called her back to thank her, she said, "If you feel under obligations, you can repay me by letting your music box sing to me."

Ward did not wait for further words, but instead of winding the box he seated himself at the piano and poured forth his thanks in an improvisation. He was a skilled musician, but his chief delight for years had been to give expression to his own unpremeditated thoughts upon the piano, and this silvery voiced girl was an inspiration.

He had never played more brilliantly, and he was therefore disappointed to find, as he ended his rhapsody and went to the telephone, that no word of acknowledgment came for his efforts to please his unseen friend. "Coquettish, I fear, after all," mused Ward, and he was surprised to see how much this thought grieved him. Unconsciously to himself he had endowed this unknown telephone girl with all the sweet womanly qualities her voice had seemed to indicate, and he could not bear to have the illusion destroyed. Yet why should he care anything about a girl whom he had never seen, of whom he knew nothing, save that she had a musical voice and worked for her living? That last thought was not wholly agreeable to him. He had not outlived the old idea that a woman must be supported by some one, and that to labor for her own subsistence was in a degree lowering to her dignity. She was ignorant, perhaps, of the necessity of making any acknowledgment for his music, and yet she had seemed to know what belonged to good manners. He had been very foolish to think of her at all. No doubt if he should see her the disillusion would be complete.

With these thoughts he tried to dismiss her from his mind, and was provoked at himself to find that it was not altogether possible. After an hour or so there came a ring of the telephone. "It this Mr. Ward?" asked the well known voice. "Yes," was the reply, rather gruffly given. "I am afraid you thought me very ungrateful for your magnificent music," said the girl, "but there came a very urgent call which took me away before you were through, and prevented my saying how good you were to spend so much time and skill on poor me."

The words were enough to prove to Ward that his improvisation had been fully appreciated, but as here was a chance for a little conversation with her, he determined to improve it. "You have never allowed me to thank you for your kindness to me," he said. "Why should I expect you to thank me for that which was only a payment of a debt?"

"If you did not expect it of me," said the girl somewhat falteringly, "I certainly expected it of myself."

Our friend felt that his remark had not been quite kind in tone, and hastened to say, "Please do not misunderstand what was a lame attempt at a pleasantry. I acknowledge that I feared I had bored or offended you by my long winded musical communication, but now that I know I was mistaken I am well pleased. I have only one wish now, and that you can easily satisfy."

"And what is that wish?" "To know the name of the young lady who has proven herself of such great assistance to me."

There was a sound of laughter in the voice that now asked, "Why do you call me young?" It was a thought that had not before suggested itself to him. To be sure it was not inevitable that she should be young. He felt his face flush hotly in thus betraying himself. But he collected his thoughts and replied gallantly, "Youth is not a matter of years, and both your deeds and your voice prove that you have a young heart."

The laughter was not now subdued, but rang out in a clear, silvery peal, that was even more musical than her speech. After waiting a moment he asked, "Are you not going to tell me the name of my assistant?"

"Oh," replied she carelessly, "I am Number Five."

Mr. Ward shuddered. "Number Five, like a convict without a name." He could not call her simply a number. "That will not do," he answered. "If you do not tell me your name, I shall call you Mother Hubbard." Again that merry laugh. Then a moment of hesitation, and after that she said coldly, "My name is Lester." "Miss or Mrs.?" asked he, but in re-

sponse came the words, "That's all, good-bye."

It was but a few days after this that Ward again attempted to open a conversation with Miss or Mrs. Lester, but could obtain no answer. His call for "Number Five" was responded to in the shrill feminine tones with which shop girls generally call "Cash, cash," and which are such a terror to a sensitive ear.

"Has Miss Lester left the office?" he inquired. "I don't know any such person," was the reply screeched in his ear. "Where is Number Five?" was his next attempt. "I'm Number Five. What do you want?"

"Nothing," growled he in his gruffest tones, and thereafter kept away from the telephone, putting upon Smith the task of all communications.

It was early in September, and Chauncey Ward was beginning to think of his semi-annual visit to New York, when one day Smith at the telephone began to carry on a conversation with some one without asking his employer what to say. Half of a conversation is always amusing, and piques the curiosity to know what the other half might be. Smith's share in this conversation was:

"No."
"No."
"I don't know."
"No. Who are you?"
"Number Five?"

At these words Mr. Ward started up. "Who is talking?" he asked.

"I don't know; it is a girl who says she is Number Five and asks if you are sick."

Ward rose with some excitement. "Has she a shrill, screechy voice?"

"Oh, no, indeed; she has a very nice voice, I think."
"Let me hear it," said Ward, pushing Smith rather rudely away.

"Is it Miss Lester?" he asked. "It is Number Five," was the reply with the remembered sound of laughter in the tones.

"Where have you been this long while?" inquired Ward eagerly. "I have been very ill."

"Are you sure you are quite well now? Are you able to be at work? Ought you not to have stayed at home another week?"

Ward was amazed at his own anxiety in asking these questions.

He was surprised at the solicitude he felt as he noted the evident weakness and weariness of the woman in her voice, as she replied, "I am not very strong, but I could not afford to be idle any longer."

"Have you no one to take care of you?" he asked.

There was now a sound of tears in the voice that sadly replied, "There are several who are depending upon me."

"Please, Miss or Mrs. Lester, I don't care which it is, do not be offended with me, but I must say what is in my thoughts, you are too weak to be permitted to go home alone. Let me call for you and take you home in my buggy. I can come at any hour."

A pause. "You can trust me. Indeed, you can. I make the proposition with only a feeling of humanity. You are sick, you need a little of the attention and care which an old, forlorn bachelor like myself can give honorably, and simply in the case of common brotherhood. Say that I may come."

There was a silence. Ward fancied he heard a smothered sob, and his heart beat rapidly at the thought that she was suffering, but he would not urge her further. It certainly was asking a great deal of her, but if she trusted him she should not regret it. The answer given, with hesitation, was, "I am not sure that I am doing right, but I am really very weak, and I will trust you. You can come at six. How will I know you?"

Ward described his horse and carriage, and the place at which he would be waiting for her, and at the appointed hour was promptly on hand. One after another, girlish and womanly figures came down the stairs and took their various ways, but no one looked as if expecting him.

"Has she fooled me after all?" thought he; but just as he was concluding that he was the victim of a hoax, he saw a light figure come wearily down the stairs, and after hesitating a moment, cross the sidewalk to where his carriage stood. She was rather tall and light, her face was hidden by a veil, but all doubt as to her identity was dispelled by her approaching and saying in the well-known voice, "Is this Mr. Ward?"

In a moment he was on the pavement and assisting her into the buggy. As he took his place by her side he inquired, "Where shall I drive?"

"Forty-seven, Carroll street," was the reply.

They drove in silence until the busy portion of the city had been left, and then, turning to his companion, he said, "I have missed you a long time. Have you been ill long? And when did you come back to the office?"

"Yes, I have had a serious illness, and I only returned to the office work regularly yesterday. I was very weary last night when I reached home, and to-night was feeling that I should never be able to get there, when you made your kind offer. I believed you to be a gentleman, and I accepted it."

"I believe I am a gentleman, Miss—Mrs.—which is it?" he asked abruptly. "You surely will tell me your name now."

"I am not married," she answered. "And now one more kindness. Let me see your face?"

Without a word she raised her veil and disclosed a pale, thin face, which even in health lacked elements of beauty, and yet which bore, even in illness, traces of modesty, intelligence and sweetness of disposition. Having trusted him, thus far Miss Lester seemed disposed to trust him still farther, and a very few queries sufficed

to put him in possession of her history and present circumstances.

Her father was a disabled soldier, with a slim pension, her mother a partial invalid, and there were several younger children; and all were largely dependent upon her exertions for support. The father did such light work as offered itself, suited to his strength. The mother could do nothing but keep the children out of mischief.

"They are all waiting for me to come and cook their supper," said she, smiling wanly. "Poor child!"

As the tears sprang to her eyes at the pity and commiseration expressed in his tones, he felt as if he must take her, like a tired child, in his arms and soothe her grief. He thought nothing about the size of her hands or feet, the color of her hair or complexion, he only felt that she was an overtired, brave little woman, struggling along under burdens which even his broad shoulders would find too heavy to be borne. How could he help her? This was the question that puzzled him day and night. He thought not of her hands calloused and brown with toil, not of the fact that her hair was neither golden or wavy, nor that she was a working woman. He only remembered that she was a delicate, brave, true hearted woman, sorely needing sympathy and aid. How could he help her? He answered the query satisfactorily to himself for several evenings by being ready at the close of the day to drive her to her little home.

Then she quietly said that she was well now, and needed not to further impose on his kindness.

"But I want to do it," she persisted, adding that it would only place her in an embarrassing position in the eyes of her neighbors, whose good opinion she highly prized.

"I will not annoy you any more," said he, "for I am going to New York to-morrow; but when I return—"

The sentence was not completed until his return, when he discovered that Mr. Lester was just the man he needed in his office. He then discovered a stout German girl who needed a good home and insisted upon placing her in Mrs. Lester's household as maid-of-all-work. His final discovery was that he needed the sweet voiced telephone girl so near at hand that telephone communication would be needless.

"What number shoes do you wear, my dear?" said Mr. Ward to his wife as Christmas drew near.

"Number five," was the smiling reply.

Mr. Ward did not look at all horrified, but as he took his wife's hand, no longer callous and brown, but smooth and shapely, in his own, he said, "I should have been disappointed if you had made any other reply. Five is to me the dearest number in the world."—Womankind.

Modern Weapons Against Savages. In an article entitled "The Italians in Abyssinia," General Cosseron de Villenois says: "The battle of Adowa, where Menelek's troops overthrew well-armed European forces, attacking the infantry in hand-to-hand fight, and taking entire batteries without their being able to fire a single round, has disconnected those who hitherto insisted that it would be impossible to get anywhere near troops equipped with modern arms. This is because firing in actual warfare and in peace practice have nothing in common. While in the latter case the target is clearly discernible and the distance readily estimated, in war the enemy keeps well out of sight, and there will always be slight undulations of the ground, hedges, bushes, or maybe even herbs or tufts of grass, which more or less obstruct the view, and hence the fire is aimed at random, and almost invariably too high. There is always a dangerous zone at some distance, where the bullets fall thick and fast, and by advancing beyond this the enemy can avoid most of the danger. This is what happened at Adowa, and what will always be fatal to young, impressionable troops, while the fire will have its full effect in the case of calm and experienced, that is to say, old soldiers. Napoleon's words still remain true that 'A man is not a soldier.'"—L'Avenir Militaire.

Helgoland Soup. What do the Helgolanders do with their birds? Some are sent away to the Hamburg market, and the rest kept for home consumption. Roasting before a slow fire, with the tail on, over toast, is practically an unknown art or at least one rarely practiced. Everything goes into the pot for soup. "Trossel soup" is an institution much lauded. Mr. Gatke tells us how it should be prepared. Take care to commit some forty or fifty thrushes, according to the requirements of the family, to the soup pot, and do not have the fattest birds drawn, and if the cook is a true artist, no one will fail to ask a second helping. A favorite Helgoland dish is kittiwake pie. In November and December these gulls are very fat, and when prepared in Helgolandish fashion are considered a delicacy, although a somewhat fishy one. The gray crow is also a very favorite dish.—Chamber's Journal.

Shell Masonry of Westminster Abbey. There is a singular feature in the early masonry work of Westminster Abbey, as when removing or repairing any of the more ancient stonework of the abbey, it is always found that the large stones are set or leveled with oyster shells. The shells are very flat and thick, measuring four and a half inches in diameter, and retain the small shell incrustations on the outside. As the story of the abbey's foundation points to its association with fishermen, the oyster shells were probably used for special religious reasons.—Chicago Inter-Ocean.

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Wilkesboro, - North Carolina.

R. N. HACKETT,

Attorneys at Law,

WILKESBORO, N. C. Will practice in the State and Federal Courts.

ISAAC C. WELLBORN,

Attorney - at - Law,

Wilkesboro, N. C. Will practice in all the courts. Dealer in real estate. Prompt attention paid to collection of claims.

T. B. FINLEY. H. L. GREENE.

FINLEY & GREENE,

Attorneys - at - Law,

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The State Department officers feel that the Consular reports which are prepared at infinite pains, and in some cases by much labor and research, by our consuls in all parts of the world are not fully appreciated at home. These reports aim, under the present system, to point out to American merchants and manufacturers the best markets for their products. Complete data are furnished by the Consuls, and it is made available at once for the newspapers. It has been found that American newspapers care very little for such news, and even the trade papers use the material sparingly. The reports are published periodically in volumes which are distributed generally to business men whose addresses are on the State Department list. By the time this publication reaches them, however, the information is old and in some cases its value is lessened. The department officers think that greater consideration should be paid the reports of our Consuls, especially as they mean dollars and cents to many business houses in all parts of the country. The subjects treated of are as varied as the lines of commerce, and both exportation and importation are dealt with. It was remarked recently in the State Department that the London Times awaited with apparent interest the publication of the Consular reports, and made regularly an abstract of the information. It is the only paper in the world, so far as the department officials know, which makes this use of the commercial reports of American Consuls.

LOGICAL He: And so you wish to break off our engagement, long as it is? She: The longer a thing is, the easier it is to break off.

Michigan has \$5,000,000,000 feet of pine standing.