

THE CHRONICLE.

WILKESBORO, N. C.

Train robbery is punishable by death in Arizona. The Supreme Court has just upheld the constitutionality of the statute.

Li Hung Chang is keeping a diary of his trip around the world. Whether the old diplomat will publish the result of his observations or not will probably be settled by the personage who manufactures the yellow jackets at Pekin.

A New York young man has found it necessary to apply to the courts for protection from a girl who is in love with him and who pursues him with attentions, relates the Washington Star. This incident invests the "new woman" with augmented terrors.

It was once said that there was little or no drunkenness in France, where the people indulged freely in light wines, but such seems to be no longer the case. A man's temperance association has been established recently in Paris, and there is declared to be great need for it.

Says Harper's Weekly: It was recently reported that the post of military attaché to the American Embassy to London was vacant, and had been offered to three officers, all of whom have declined it on the ground that their salaries could not support the dignity of the job. It is a very pretty place, and one that has not been used to go begging. It calls for an officer of the rank of major, and gives him little to do except to look handsome and to adorn London society with his presence. He is entitled to wear the most decorative clothes of any one connected with the embassy. When he rides out with the Ambassador he goes on the front seat inside, and not on the box seat with the coachman, as ill-informed persons have erroneously supposed. Opportunities to meet folks that really are folks come to him daily. He dines out nearly every night, and seldom is at loss for a hearty meal of nourishing food. His chief expenses are for lodgings and cab hire, but the hesitation of worthy officers to accept the place indicates that even those expenses may be too considerable. The real trouble must be that the majors in Uncle Sam's army are middle-aged men with families, and a salary that might maintain the attaché himself well enough in London will not also maintain his family, either at home in his absence or with him abroad. If lieutenants had rank enough for the place, it would probably be easy to keep it filled with young unmarried officers of the requisite stature and comeliness.

A very curious state of affairs is reported from France, where the population, which has been decreasing for some time, is growing at an alarmingly feeble rate. For some time the decrease among the French has been a cause of comment among European economists, but in most cases it has been ascribed to the tremendous destruction among the men who, during the Prussian war, were just entering upon the middle years of manhood. This excuse can be used no longer, and it is noted with mortification among the French leaders that the present trifling increase in the population is due chiefly to the immigration of people from other Nations. The wisest observers of the situation claim to have found the reason for this sudden arrest in National growth, and their explanation is both plausible and an important object lesson for people of other lands. It is pointed out that the increase of taxation in France to keep up the burden of the National debt has been such that people who, some years ago, were perfectly willing to assume the responsibility of supporting a household are now afraid to make the venture. The French peasant is proverbially thrifty, and one of the chief ends of his thrift is to supply his children with enough means upon which to make a respectable start in life. If he cannot support a family and leave it in comparatively easy circumstances he prefers to have no family to support. He would rather forego the attempt to keep up a household if he believes that possibly his attempt may be a failure. This fact is now offered in explanation of the remarkable falling off in the growth of French population, and the Chicago Record maintains "it is a plausible one. There could be no better proof of the intimate relationship which National legislation bears to individual and National prosperity. The laws which oppress the people of a Nation hurt it physically just as surely as they hurt it financially."

THE PLOW.
Our youth all to the city fly
And leave the country bare;
They like to view a murky sky,
To breathe a smoky air.
The flowers, the grass, the rippling grain,
The bird upon the bough,
Have lost their charms, and in the rain
Bust gathers on the plow.
In hardy toil which blessings won
Our fathers tilled the field,
From rising to the setting sun
The golden grain to yield;
The work was then the work of man
And not contented as now;
Nor fortune scorned the ancient plan
To sow and reap and plow.
Time was—'twas in our fathers' time,
History tells the tale—
How men did rise to heights sublime
Who worked with spade and flail;
With manly pride they tilled the land
With sweat upon the brow;
Nor did old Scotia's minstrel grand
Despise to hold the plow.
Our mothers' tastes now girls admit
These times would not become;
They loved to spin and sew and knit,
With care to make a home,
Where peace and sweet contentment did
Dwell,
With love to cheer their lot;
Ambition rarely called to tell
His dreams within the cot.
Those days are past—a sickly change
Subjects the heart and mind;
Toward a feebler race we range,
A race more dull and blind,
Oh, for those simple days again,
When humble faith did bow
To God and nobleness—and man
Took pride to hold the plow.
—Alfred Lavington, in Chicago Record.

KENTON'S AWAKENING.

BUSINESS is business, Miss Mathers, and hereafter your wages as copyist will be five dollars and a half a week. There are plenty of girls who own machines who are willing to do for five dollars the same amount of work for which I am now paying you six. However, considering your circumstances, I do not mind giving you five and a half. Shall I expect you next Monday on the new terms?"

Kate Mathers looked at her employer with a touch of scorn and pity in her blue eyes, then said, gently: "I shall be at my desk, sir, on time." Opening the office door, she passed out into the night. "Father, forgive him, for he knows not what he does!" That was her heart cry. And truly, Paul Kenton knew not what he did. Acting solely on business principles, he did what he had been taught from childhood was his duty to do—he considered the interests of the Kenton firm and worked for its pecuniary success. And in order to obtain that, must he not observe the petty details? Even as far back as Noah's time, when drops of rain combined to flood the world, the little things have gone to make the great. To save at the bungalow and lose at the spigot had never been his philosophy. What were Kate Mathers' private affairs to him? What if he had been told that she was an orphan with a sister and a brother younger than herself dependent upon her? Was that any reason why he should continue to pay her six dollars for work that he could get done for five?

He arose and reached for his hat. He had intended going through a lot of private correspondence that had come in on the late mail, but somehow he could not see about it. He did not admit the fact even in the "secret chamber of his soul," but the memory of a pair of blue eyes, scornful yet sorry, did in a certain way annoy him. And so he opened the office door and passed out into the night; and as he raised his face, cold, proud, stern in all its outlines, upward to the heavens, lo! the stars, like Kate's eyes, looked down in pity on him. Why? Because money is ours only for a little while; it is ours only by the law of outward physical possession; we can touch and hold and use it for a time, but we cannot take it within ourselves or make it a part of us. And there is other wealth in the universe besides gold—myriad things that gold cannot buy.

Night, night all about, but night made luminous by a thousand light. It was nearing Christmas, and all the city wore a look of festivity. Before one of the shops stood Paul Kenton, watching—what? The automatic toys in the window. There was something about these mechanical devices of human genius that fascinated him, and the interest he took in them was almost pathetic. It made one wonder if he never had a childhood, if in all the years of his youth he had but few joys. Do we ever thus yearn toward and strive to attain the things we have missed out of life? Was Paul Kenton's interest in the puppets before him humanity's avenger of approach to a soul unconscious of itself? The climbing monkey traveled up and down its string, the train of cars rolled swiftly along their track, the village blacksmith toiled incessantly, the group of dancers never paused, and the old woman in the corner kept nodding her muslin-capped head. "Midge," said a childish voice, "isn't it a beauty?" Paul Kenton turned toward the speaker, wondering what particular toy in the display had excited his admiration, and found that the little fellow was not looking at the brilliantly lighted window at all, but at some-

thing which he held in his hand. It was an orange, big, round and golden. The sunny face under the shabby cap was bent over it exultantly. "Kate will be pleased, sister," he said, with a long-drawn sigh of delight in the anticipated happiness of another. "Yes, she will be glad you remembered her birthday," said Midge, thoughtfully; "but somehow I think, Tim, she would rather you kept it and ate it yourself." "What?" cried Tim, in astonishment. "Eat it? Me? Why, I bought it for Kate." "I know," answered the girl. "But you earned the money for it by carrying coal up three flights of stairs for Mrs. Harmon, and it made you look so white and tired, and Kate would be sorry, Tim, and I—I think you better eat it."

"I don't want to," declared Tim, stoutly. "Yes, you do," urged Midge. "No, I—I don't like oranges very well, you know." "Why, Tim Mathers, what a story! You know you just love them." "No," slowly—the lie, after all, was hard to tell—"they don't seem to agree with me."

This last rendered Midge utterly speechless, and she could only stare at Tim in open-eyed wonder at this sudden depravity. Tim himself felt rather guilty, and hastened to excuse the baldness of the untruth by saying: "Kate has been so sick, Midge, and even now she says the fever in her veins often run like fire and that her tongue is dry and hot, and—"

Paul Kenton strode up to the boy and laid a hand on his shoulder. "She," he said, pointing to Midge, "called you Tim Mathers; and you speak of Katie; is she your sister?" "Yes," answered Tim. "She has been sick."

"How long?" "Three weeks." "With a fever?" "Yes." Tim hesitated a moment, then went on: "You see, sir, she used to write or do something like that in an office downtown, and they used to pay her six dollars a week. But one night she came home and said the man was only going to give her five dollars and a half after that, and she needed every cent of the six for our rent and food and coal, to say nothing of clothes. And Midge here, she thinks sister Kate just cried over it and worried about it until she was down sick, because the next day she had a fever, and she has just laid here ever since."

There was a lump in his throat, but Tim swallowed it manfully. "We haven't any father or mother, you know, or any who seem to care much about us, and Kate, I suppose, didn't see how she was going to get along, and—"

The little fellow quite broke down under the weight of it all, and his voice died away in a sob. "But your sister is better?" replied Paul, huskily. "Oh, yes, sir! Much better," replied Tim, with a child's quick transition from grave to gay, from despair to hope. "But she is still too weak to work, and that troubles her."

"How have you managed during her illness—I mean, how have you lived?" "The neighbors have helped us some, and I have earned a little money by selling papers and running errands and Midge washes dishes for Mrs. Harmon and sweeps her kitchen, and altogether we have not been very cold or hungry."

Paul Kenton's eyes darkened with horror. Not very cold or hungry—that meant how much? Then there were human beings in this world who had not enough to eat. He supposed everyone contrived somehow to satisfy hunger, and yet— "Tell me the name of your sister's employer."

"Kenton—Mr. Paul Kenton," said Tim. "I am he!"

The man said it, not audibly, it is true, but in mental articulation very slowly and distinctly, as if he wished the fact of the word announced to stand forever in his memory. Until now his hand had rested on Tim's shoulder, but he withdrew it, thinking perhaps if Tim knew he might instinctively shrink from his touch. "Here is a silver dollar, my lad," he said. "Go and buy one of those toys within." "No, I would rather give the money to Kate," was Tim's prompt answer. "Very well; then I will buy you a toy myself. It will be a new experience for me to purchase a gift." "Haven't you any little boy or girl or sister to buy birthday and Christmas gifts for?" asked Tim, wonderingly. "No one," replied Kenton. "And didn't anybody ever buy you a present?" "No." "Oh!" Tim felt very sorry for this desolate man. With quick resolve, and a child's blissful ignorance of any lack of propriety in what he did, he said: "Then you must come to our house to-morrow afternoon. It will be Kate's birthday, and we want to surprise her. Sally Mason—she lives next door to us, you know—has promised to pop some corn for us, and Mrs. Harmon will make some molasses candy, and altogether it will be nice and jolly. Will you come?" Paul Kenton stared wistfully at the eager face. "No—yes, I will come," he answered. "You live—where?" Tim told him, and Paul, hitherto so cold and proud and stern, felt the thrill of a new emotion within him as he repeated gently: "Very well, I will be there, Tim. Goodnight."

It was a cheerless looking place, and during the three weeks when Paul had accounted for Kate Mathers' non-appearance at the office on the ground of anger at the reduced wage, she had lain here all, suffering. The man looked about him more closely. How easy for a human life to burn itself out in surroundings such as these! He knocked at the door; Tim opened it, and let him with boyish delight into the little sitting room, and straight into the presence of Kate. "Mr. Kenton!" she exclaimed, startled to find that Tim's new friend was her former employer, but not half so overcome by the fact as was Tim himself, who grew red and white by turns, and finally sank on the nearest chair in speechless agitation. Paul was self-possessed and calm; advancing, he wished Miss Mathers many happy returns of the day, and hoped he found her better. She assured him that she was very much improved, but he, looking down at the wasted form reclining on the old sofa, at the wan face and shorn head, and the thin, white hands lying against the dingy blackness of her gown—so thin and white that he could see the blood flow in and out her fingers—felt how weak and helpless she was, and how long it would be before she would be able to take up life's battle again and earn the beggarly pittance that meant life to her and to Midge and little Tim. Five-fifty—even six dollars—think of it! The sluggish blood within him quickened, and creeping upward, dyed his cheek with shame, and Kate, seeing it, understood, and again was sorry.

Kind little Tim was the soul of hospitality, and it was not long before he rallied his forces and set about providing for the comfort of his guests. He took Paul's hat and coat, brought a chair for him, replenished the fire, that the bare little room might seem more warm and bright and cheery. A half hour's pleasant conversation followed; then, as the short winter day was drawing to a close, Tim lit the candles and spread a table with his little birthday feast. Besides the corn and candy, there was the orange he had bought for Kate, and another for Paul.

"I thought as you'd never had a present I'd give you one," said Tim, modestly; "it's all I could afford, you know." With an odd sensation Paul took the fruit and tried to thank the boy. But a mist had gathered before his eyes and shut out from their vision the fragile little boy that had known both cold and hunger, and yet was the earthly habitation of such a flower-like soul, and he could utter no word. Tamul without and a knock at the door. Paul hurried into the hall and gave some directions. Then there was confusion within, and a sound of heavy boxes being deposited and unpacked, and soon the little sitting room looked like a veritable shop, for there were stores of food and fuel, books and papers for Kate and toys for the children. Best of all to Tim there was a wonderful jackknife with seven blades. He had wanted a knife all his young life, and now that his ambition was realized he could hardly believe himself to be awake.

It was a wonderful time for the children—just like Christmas, they declared—but Kate was strangely silent. She continued unusually grave and quiet during the days and weeks that followed, and that found Paul so often in her humble home. But the soft pink of returning health, and the life and light of returning strength and spirits came slowly back into face and form, and one evening she told Paul she thought the would be able to return to her desk on the following Monday, provided he still needed her services as copyist.

"Will you come to me on my terms, Kate?" he asked. "And she, thinking he referred to the amount of wages she was to receive, made answer: "Yes, on any terms you desire."

In spite of all the novelists may say, there are few "set" offers of marriage. Lovers somehow come to a mutual understanding without knowing just how it happened. All Kate remembered about it afterward was that Paul bent his head and kissed her and that his proud eyes were strangely tender, and the flush on his cheek was of joy, not shame; for at last his soul had entered into its heritage of love and peace and gladness, and he would be a lonely man no more.—Farm and Fireside.

Two establishments for cultivating oysters in Russian waters have lately been opened near Sebastopol. There are many wild oysters in the Black Sea, which have a bitter taste; these are taken to the Sebastopol reservations and fed. In a few weeks they lose their disagreeable taste and are sent to market at St. Petersburg, Moscow and Riga.

SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL.

A new kind of waterproof dress goods is being manufactured in France out of the feathers of geese, ducks and hens, treated in a peculiar manner. Threads of shredded steel are used in Germany as a substitute for sandpaper. It is said to work more quickly and uniformly than sandpaper and does not clog.

A method of nickelling wood has been devised by the German chemist Langbein, the wood being covered by a thin coating of metal by either a dry or wet process. A French astronomer is of opinion that the red glow of the planet Mars is caused by crimson vegetation. He thinks that the grass and foliage there are red, not green, as they are on earth.

An English motor car manufacturer is building a two-story steel house to run on wheels, propelled by a motor under it. The top story is collapsible so as to enable the house to pass under bridges. The air after a heavy snowfall or shower is usually very clear, because the snow or rain in falling brings down with it most of the dust and impurities, and leaves the atmosphere exceedingly clear.

A submarine mountain range has been discovered in the southern part of Davis Strait by the Danish steamer Ingolf, which has been carrying on deep-sea explorations on the Iceland and Greenland coasts, for the past two years.

President Octave Chanute, of the American Society of Civil Engineers, has offered a prize of \$100 for the best monograph on the kite, giving a full theory of its mechanics and stability, with quantitative computations appended.

The French periodical L'Electricite has an article on some successful experiments of Dr. Dalmass in killing the phylloxera and other organisms dangerous to plants by means of electric currents, after wetting the soil with metallic solutions.

Balloons in France cost from \$400 to \$600 for those holding 500 cubic metres of gas and from \$1000 to \$1200 for those containing 1500 cubic metres, the largest size usually made. They are let at the rate of \$20 or \$40 a day in addition to the cost of the gas, which is about four cents a cubic metre, so that a balloon excursion costs from \$80 to \$100.

In Germany a new process of coloring leather is being exploited. Electricity is utilized as the active agent. The leather is placed upon a zinc table, which forms the positive pole. The dyeing material is poured over this and the negative pole connected to the leather. Under the action of the current the coloring matter penetrates the leather, and patterns may be designed upon the surface by covering it with a pattern plate connected to the negative pole.

The City of Damascus.

Damascus is the oldest city in the world. Tyre and Sidon have crumbled, Palmyra is buried under desert sands and Nineveh and Babylon have disappeared, but Damascus alone remains as it was in the days of Abraham, a centre of trade and travel.

Damascus is an island of verdure in a desert with martial and sacred associations extending through thirty centuries. It was near Damascus that Saul of Tarsus saw the light. The caravans come and go as they did 1000 years ago and the merchants of the Euphrates and Mediterranean still crowd the narrow streets.

From Damascus come the damson, our blue plums and the delicious apricot of Portugal called damasco, damask linen, the damask rose, which was introduced to England in the time of Henry VIII.

Every one has heard of the wonderful Damascus swords, the secret of the make having been lost when Tamerlane carried off the artists to Persia. The swords are remarkable for their keen edge and wonderful elasticity.

Painless Rifle Bullets.

Dr. Delorme, surgeon-in-chief of the French army, has been lecturing in Paris before the Academy of Medicine on the new steel-coated rifle bullets and their effects as projected from the modern magazine rifle, says the Daily News. The most remarkable fact in connection with them appears to be this, that they cause very little pain to those who are struck by them. At Fourmies, during the riots there, one man was wounded so badly that he afterward suffered from paralysis, yet he did not even suspect he was shot until he saw blood stains upon his clothes. Another man, who was shot through the leg, described his sensations thus: "I felt a slight shiver come over me." Another, who was shot through the arm, could only remember that his elbow twitched and that he involuntarily closed his fist. Dr. Delorme finds that when the bullet meets with an obstacle at a short distance, say from 100 to 150 yards, they are very apt to explode, and the pieces of metal are capable of doing serious mischief.

Surreptitious Photographs.

One of the most ingenious methods in the world for photographing persons and keeping them in ignorance of the fact is that of the Bank of France. The bank has a hidden studio in a gallery behind the cashier's desk, so that at a signal from one of the bank employees any suspected customer will instantly have his picture taken without his own knowledge. The camera has also become very useful in the detection of frauds, a word or figure that to the eye seemed completely erased being clearly produced in photographs of the document that had been tampered with.

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HER CLAIM TO HIS WHISKERS.

Little Alice gazed long and earnestly at her uncle's whiskers, and then broke out with: "Did you buy them all at once, uncle, or did you get them as fast as you could afford it?" "I did not buy them, Alice," he replied, "they grew there." She subsided for a while, and then impudently asked: "When you die, uncle, will you will them to me? I want to stuff a mattress for my dolly."

A KISS RATIO.

"Charley is a 16 to 1 man," said Ethel to Mabel, speaking of her fiancé. "I don't take any interest in politics," replied Mabel. "Oh, this isn't politics." "He's willing to give me sixteen kisses for every one I give him."

UNREMITTING.

"I must say," remarked the merchant, "that Mr. Fucash devotes the most unremitting care to his business." "He doesn't pay his bills, though," replied the bookkeeper. "That's what I have reference to. Whenever we ask him to please remit, he doesn't pay any attention to it."

A MUCH-SOUGHT WAIT.

Carruthers—"Yes; I wouldn't mind a situation that was quite laborious, in a way." Waite—"In what way?" Carruthers—"Why, where I'd have to work hard to convince myself that I was doing anything."

TAKEN LITERALLY.

Horton—"What would you do if I should ask you to lend me ten dollars?" Bixby (who thinks it is a conundrum).—Give it up. Horton—"Thanks, old man. That's very good of you. I'll pay you back at the first possible moment, 'pon honor."