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LETTER FROM BILKINS.

The Major Gets Orders to Report at Home and Obeys—A Dissertation on Women in General—Zeke at the Summer School—Gets Frosty Reception at Home.

Mr. Editor:—Well, I am at home at last. Betsy found whar I wuz at an' that ended my picknick. Az you haint never bin married, Mr. Editor, you don't know a gude meny things. One iz that you can't fool a woman. How Betsy found whar I wuz iz more than I will ever be able ter tell. An' here iz a pinter fer awl married men: You may git erway outen site ov your wives an' think that the signs are just rite ter sow a small crop ov wild oats an' that your wife won't find it out. Rite thar you saw off the limb betwixt yourself an' the tree an' you are agoin' ter fall so hard that you'll never entirely git over it. Wimin' hev whut sum folks call "seckond site;" they kin see more out ov the back ov their heds than we kin with our eyes. They awlso are afflicted with mental tilipathy. They kin read your mind an' tell whut you are doin' an' thinkin' erbout when you are two hundred miles erway. Maybe they wont say a wurd erbout it, fer they hev a way ov keepin' silint in several differint languages when they wanten. Sumtimes they will kick up a riot erbout a little nonsense an' keep quiet erbout somethin' that is breakin' their hearts. Every young feller thinks he knows hiz sweetheart like a book. After he iz married a little while he iz sartin that he knows hiz wife. After he hes bin married erbout forty years he finds that he hez only bin slitley erquainted with hiz wife awl the time.

I guess Betsy knowed whar I wuz an' whut I wuz doin' awl the time. But she wouldn't let on. But I got a letter the other day frum her. She intermated that it wuz time fer the war ter end an' that I'd better surrender an' bring in the prisoners an' ax fer mercy. I reckon I would hev tried ter argy the case with her if I hadn't a knowed better. So I pulled down the flag an' began ter pack up my duds. I bid farewell ter the fair damsels an' the mermaids. They axed me ter stay, but I tole them that duty called me ter another part ov the State. When duty takes the shape ov a woman weighin' over two hundred pounds it don't hev ter call oftin till I anser.

When I got ter Raleigh an' herd erbout the Summer Skule an' the purty girls, I concluded ter take a peep at them an' sorter git erquainted before I'd go out home ter find Betsy an' git my curtin lecter. I looked eround for my ole friend Graham Haywood, who haint never conjugal explisity. After I found conginal explisity. After I found him he seemed powerful glad ter see me, but fer my life I couldn't git him ter go ter the Summer Skule. He sed he wuz too busy. So I went out by myself an' sashayed eround. One ov the gurls sed ter me that they hed bin a readin' my letters frum the seashore an' that she guessed I'd think a sighclone wuz blowin' when I'd git home. I tole her I wouldn't care fer I'd hed seven mil-lun bushels ov fun in the last four weeks, an' a few sighclones will be refreshiu'. "Did you go in bathin'?"

sed the gurl. I tole her I did forty times a day an' that my bathin' suit wuz worn down till it iz not much bigger than a ten cent piece. She 'low'd surf bathin' iz the most deliteful an' exquisit experience she had ever enjoyed. Nothin' will beat it, sez I, unless it iz eatin' green an' white striped water millin with black seed an' yaller heart.

After stayin' at the Summer Skule just long enuff ter find out that if I didn't go at once, I mite never go, I went out home. Betsy hed bin back home frum Fuquay Springs two days an' wuz busy puttin' up preserves. I thought she orter meet me at the train, fall on my neck an' tell me that the fatted calf hed bin killed. But she didn't. She hadn't even killed a chicken, an' didn't seem a bit exsited, in fack, wuz plum frosty. I tried ter call her sum pet names an' sorter make up ter her, but she froze me. She 'lowed "git off your store rags an' git inter your everyday clothes an' bring me sum fruit frum the orchard." So I've passed frum the sublime ter the rediekulous. But we'll kiss an' make up purty soon.

Betsy looks a lot better an' I tole her so. That water at Fuquay Springs makes lean people fat or fat people lean an' a heap healthier. Betsy looks az fresh az an' apple blossom. I'll keep on talkin' that way till she will make up an' then the millenium will begin.

Yours at home,
ZEKE BILKINS.

The American Man With the Hoe.

Last year the farmers of the United States, after laying aside from their crops an abundance of food for their live stock, had remaining a surplus of products amounting to the colossal sum, measured in money, of \$4,500,000,000. Of this surplus Europe took about 20 per cent, the balance being consumed in the United States. If the farmer had no market abroad for his products the exports of this country would be about \$600,000,000 annually, instead of \$1,500,000,000, and American prosperity would not be the grand and glorious thing of which Uncle Sam is justly proud, and of which he never tires of boasting. Eighty-five per cent of our exports of farm products consist of cotton, grain and grain products, and meat, meat products and live animals. Cotton is still king in the sense that it brings more foreign gold to the United States than any other product which we sell to the Old World. Americans have long cherished the belief that whatever may happen to our industries, Europe cannot dispense with the meat, grain and cotton with which we supply the trans-Atlantic peoples. Perhaps this belief may rest upon a solid foundation, but Europe is not convinced that it will always be dependent upon the Western Republic for food and for raw materials for its textile industries. People in the Old World have been doing a great deal of thinking of late years and wondering whether it would not be possible to find other sources of supply, and thus make themselves independent of a nation which is not willing to exchange commodities with them on a fair basis.—Baltimore Sun.

WASHINGTON NEWS.

The Question of Men and Women in the Departments — Some Women are Paid Better Salaries than Men.

Washington, D. C., July 26.
Correspondence of The Enterprise.

The question of the relative efficiency of men and women clerks in the various departments of the General Government has been a vexed one for many years. It has been discussed and the battle of the factions waged back and forth, but never decided. Recently the discussion has sprung up afresh.

From all over the country, for some unexplained reason, have come the denunciation of the men clerks and praise of their co-workers. The advocates of the mere men in this latter-day establishment have been not less busy, and they have replied in kind.

The exact figures as to the number of clerks employed in the District of Columbia show a total of 25,675, of whom 6,882 are women. Most of these women are employed in the Treasury Department, Census Bureau, Library of Congress, and Pension Office. In these bureaus they very nearly always get work which they can accomplish faster than men. This is indicated in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, where 1,700 women are employed as counters and examiners of currenry. So much more expert have women been found in this capacity that in the Treasury Building itself requests are made for women counters from this department, they being furnished to the Loans and Collection Division, the Auditor of the Post-office Department, where many money orders are counted, the Treasurer's Office, and similar divisions.

Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, A. H. Taylor, who directs the affairs of some 3,000 Government clerks, expressed his views on the question diplomatically:

"It is hard to draw any line as to the relative efficiency of the two sexes," he said. "In this department there are kinds of work in which the women are particularly adept, and then, again, the men have the advantage in certain other lines. It has been proven by experience that the women give better service in the counting out of bills, and they do particularly valuable service in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing."

Curiously enough, though the Department of Justice only employs a few women clerks, some of the women in that department are drawing higher salaries than the male clerks. In the Solicitor-General's office one woman makes \$1,800 a year, and not only does stenographic and clerical work, but has assisted in making out briefs. Still others in the department have manifested a legal turn of mind and have shown themselves to be not totally out of touch with their ponderous surroundings. Twenty of the chiefs of bureaus prefer men clerks because they feel they can give them a greater variety of work and will have no hesitation in asking them to work on Sundays and at night, should occasion demand. Then some men clerks do not like to be in rooms where there are women, because the women sometimes object to smoking or do not like to have them men take off their

coats. Small matters of this sort rather than ability, seem to prejudice many bureau chiefs in favor of men.

The women who are conscientious about their work far outnumber the conscientious male clerks. This can be explained by the fact that most women employed in the departments regard their work as a life work, while the men, especially the young men, in the departments regard their clerkships merely as a means to an end. In many of the departments few women, comparatively, receive over \$1,400. In the Department of Agriculture a number of women clerks are carried on the rolls at \$1,600 and \$1,800, some of the latter acting as chief of divisions when occasion demands. There is probably no department under the Government where woman's work is rated as high as in the Department of Agriculture, and this has been induced by the results of their practical work in the duties assigned them.

Facts Worth Knowing About the Panama Canal.

Estimated cost of the Panama Canal, \$200,000,000.

Amount paid French Company for the title, \$40,000,000.

Amount paid Panama Government for perpetual lease of canal lands, \$10,000,000.

Length of canal, 46 miles.

Canal width varies from 250 to 500 feet at the top, the bottom width being 150 feet.

There will be five twin locks of concrete masonry, each lock 738 feet long and 82 feet wide, with a lifting capacity of 30 to 32 feet.

Lake Bohio (artificial) covers 31 square miles.

Alhajuela Lake (artificial) covers 5,900 acres, and will furnish motive power for operating the locks and lighting the canal from ocean to ocean.

Distance from New York to San Francisco by old route 13,714 miles; by the route through the canal, 5,299 miles.

Distance from New York to Manila by present route via San Francisco and Yokohama, 19,530 miles.

Distance from New York to Manila by Panama Canal via San Francisco and Yokohama, 11,585 miles.

Distance saved in a sailing trip around the world by the new route through the Panama Canal, 2,786 miles.

The Panama Canal was practically begun in 1883 by the French Company. They had completed about two-fifths of the length, when because of fraudulent management the company failed, and the work ceased in 1889.—June Woman's Home Companion.

The committee says the State built a depot at Goldsboro at a cost of \$9,345.10, when \$1,200 or \$1,500 would have been sufficient. But, then, you know, Goldsboro is the home of the governor of Eastern North Carolina.—People's Paper, Charlotte.

Senator Tillman predicts "hell raising by the niggers" in the event of Mr. Roosevelt's election. Still, the Tillman family cannot reasonably expect to have a monopoly of that sort of thing.—Milwaukee Sentinel.