

The St. Tammany Farmer.

"The Blessings of Government, Like the Dew from Heaven, Should Descend Alike Upon the Rich and the Poor."

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A SPELLING BEE.

"A spelling bee," then, is a contest in which the contestants spell words, and the winner is the one who spells the most words. It is a very popular amusement, and is often held in schools and in public places. The words are usually taken from a dictionary, and the contestants are given a certain number of words to spell. The one who spells the most words is the winner. It is a very interesting and profitable amusement, and is well worth the time and trouble spent in it.

A SPRING POEM.

Why the Editor of the Monthly Messenger Accepted It.

Elaine Gray, carrying in her hand the manuscript of a poem—the first fruit of her literary labor—entered the editorial sanctum of the Monthly Messenger with fear and trembling. A young man seated at a desk looked up and smiled appreciatively—for Elaine had written a poem—and her confusion made her positively charming. "Can I see the editor?" asked the girl, trying unsuccessfully to seem unconcerned, as if such visits were of daily occurrence. "I am the editor, at your service," said the young man, politely. "Pray be seated." "You," she exclaimed, then checked herself, and said, with flaming cheeks: "You see, I had supposed that editors were all old and wore spectacles. I don't know what gave me such a ridiculous idea, I'm sure."

FOREIGN GOSSIP.

There are few stranded actors in Russia, and they rarely have to count railroad ties on their homeward route. When a manager takes a troupe on the road, he must first deposit "caution money" with the government, so that in case of the venture proving a failure, the "caution money" can be used to convey the actors to their homes. "Safety matches that can be used without a box are to be placed on the English market by a German inventor. The idea is to tip the two ends of the wood separately with those compositions which in the ordinary way go on the box and the other on the match. To use, break the wood across the middle and rub the ends together. The greatest whirpool in the maelstrom of the Norway coast. It is an eddy between the main land and an island, and when the current is in one direction and the wind in another, no ship can withstand the fury of the waves. Whales and sharks have been cast ashore and killed. The current is estimated to run thirty miles an hour. The very newest fashion among the ladies of St. Petersburg is to arm themselves with long canes when they go abroad. Some of these canes measure six feet to seven feet in length and as the ladies stalk along they seem at a distance stalwart amazons who have supplied themselves with small scaffolding poles or plucked up young trees. Praying by machinery is usual among the inhabitants of central Asia. A large, hollow, cylinder-like drum is erected, and in it are enclosed the prayers that anyone may wish to have written out neatly. The cylinder is then made to revolve by wind or water-power, and every time that it goes round the devotee imagines to be equivalent to a verbal repetition of all the prayers it contains. There has been a relative decrease of the Jewish contingent in Germany in recent years. According to the latest statistical year book of the German empire, there are now 6,377 Protestants, 3,576 Catholics, 29 other Christians, 115 Jews and 37 other religionists in every 10,000 inhabitants. Ten years ago the proportions were 4,263 Protestants, 3,589 Catholics, 17 other Christians, 124 Jews and 56.8 adherents of other religions. The English papers tell the following story of a badly-uniformed lamb: W. Hewitt, of Harrington Mills, has a ewe which this spring yealed a lamb that is certainly curiously and wondrously made. It has two eyes, both in the center of the forehead and in a single socket, both covered with one eyelid. One ear is situated at the back of the head and the other directly under the lower jaw, near the hinge. It has no tail, but in the place of that very necessary appendage a fifth leg, almost as long as the other four, fully equipped with hair, hoofs, etc. It was living at last accounts, being almost three months old. The Rosetta Stone is a piece of black basalt, the most valuable existing relic of Egyptian history, inscribed in hieroglyphics and in Greek. It was found by Boscawen, a French officer, near Rosetta, in Egypt, in 1799. It is now in the British Museum, London. The stone is a trilingual slab or tablet, bearing an inscription in honor of one of the Ptolemies, written in Greek hieroglyphic and demotic characters. A comparison of the Greek letters with the other characters upon the stone enabled Dr. Young and Champollion to read the whole inscription, thus giving the clue to the deciphering of the ancient sacred writings of the Egyptians. The Rosetta Stone is fragmentary. Berlin newspapers publish the new anecdote of the late Duke Ernst of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and Prince Bismarck. One evening when the German troops were before Paris the duke began gambling in Bismarck's presence because the Iron Cross of the First Class, given for bravery in the field of battle, had been distributed too indiscriminately. Bismarck replied that the distribution of such decorations was always a delicate and difficult task; for, said he, conspicuous merit is to be rewarded, but in some cases conspicuous position, with or without merit, can not well be overlooked. "Now," he added, "Moltke has it; Roon has it; Blumenthal has it. Excellent! But then—your highness and I have it, too—and surely it is not or I should be grateful."

MAKING READY FOR SEA.

Scenes of bustling preparation aboard the War Ship Ordered to Sail. There is no more trying season on board a United States man-of-war than the time of pressing preparation for some hurried mission. It is a maxim with subalterns in the navy that nobody knows to-day what will happen to-morrow. Five days or weeks before an expedition ship puts to sea there are conflicting rumors touching the day and hour of departure, and even after everybody has been ordered to be on board for sailing at a definite time there is still a skeptical sentiment in the ward room. When a ship is under orders to make ready for sea as rapidly as possible and to hold herself in readiness to sail at a moment's notice there is a scene of bustle and activity. Only the most trustworthy sailors are then allowed to go ashore, and even officers find their going and coming more closely watched than usual. The paymaster, his clerk, his yeoman, and the Jack of the Dunt are busy all day looking after stores, paying such men as are to be transferred to other ships, and caring for this or that detail essential to the proper preparation for the ship for sea. The mess-cater is busy getting the stores on board, and every officer is making his last purchase ashore. Meanwhile the ship is besieged by the host of persons who have dealings with men and officers. There are tailors with garments to try on, agents for dealers in officers' uniforms and accoutrements anxiously inquiring as to the final wants of this or that officer. From bombast men of all descriptions offering wares, expressmen receiving final

SUPERSTITIOUS RAILROADERS.

The Effect Which Accidents Have on the Superstitious and Pious. Of the superstition of sailors, fishermen and others we have all heard, but that such a distinguishing characteristic should have attached itself to railway men does not appear to be generally known. It savors somewhat of the anomalous that such a pre-eminently practical class of men should be the victims of credulity regarding the supernatural. Such, however, is the case. I recently had occasion to interview a prominent railway official, and in the course of the conversation that ensued that gentleman incidentally alluded to two collisions which had lately occurred in the neighborhood, following up his remarks with the announcement that the local men would be in a state until a third mishap took place. Such is the superstition of the railway men. Upon expressing considerable astonishment it was assumed that this kind of thing was notorious among railway men in general, and in this particular instance it was known that the circumstances of the two previous accidents were the chief topics among the workmen in all departments, who were also counting on the possibilities of a third disaster. Curiously enough a touch of realism was lent to the information just imparted by the explanation that the second of the two collisions referred to was due to the driver of one of the engines, a reliable servant, noted for his alertness and precision, with an honorable record of some forty years' service, who was, it was believed, so disturbed over the "omens" of the first occurrence and so engrossed with what he felt would be two other catastrophes that he committed the slight error of judgment which caused his locomotive to crash into another coming in an opposite direction. The statement is given as the conviction of one who has spent upward of a quarter of a century among railroad men of all classes, and who has known the driver alluded to for a long period of years. So came about a second collision. Surely superstition could go no further than this. But here is a tragic sequel—a sequel which unfortunately, will in all probability do much to strengthen the reprehensible beliefs of these men. Two days after the interview above mentioned, within fifteen minutes' drive from the scene of the second collision, an express mail failed to take the place, a portion of the train with the tender of the engine was violently thrown across the rails and "one poor fellow killed." This is what the railway men will term their "third mishap." "There's the third," they say; and now perhaps they will breathe freely for a season.—London Tid-Bits.

ORIGIN OF WALL PAPER.

King William III. the One Who Probably Introduced it into England. In answer to a query as to the origin of wall papers an English antiquary states that the art of making paper hangings was copied from the Chinese among whom it has been practiced from time immemorial. Wall papers did not come into common use in Europe till the eighteenth century, but stamped papers for the purpose appear to have been made in Spain and Holland about 1555. The first allusion to wall papers known to exist is in the examination of Herman Schuckel, a painter of Delft, who was accused, in 1615, of printing books which were forbidden by the then prevailing laws. Being interrogated as to certain ballads, he said they had been printed by his servant in his absence, and that when he came home and found they were not delivered he refused to deliver them, and threw them into a corner, intending to print roses and stripes on the back to paper against. It is probably to King William III. that England owes the introduction of wall-papers into that country. Paper hangings of a sort, it is true, were in use in England before the time of William of Orange, but they usually consisted merely of maps of the world, as it was then known, with fantastic borders of Indians, negroes and elephants, and other natives of far-off regions. The art of paper hanging, in imitation of the old velvet flock, was new when William came to England. It was on the walls of the drawing-room at Kensington palace that these new hangings were first seen in Britain. They took the fancy of the fashionable of the day, and their cheapness being an additional recommendation, they steadily came into general use.—Harper's Young People.

QUEER THINGS DO HAPPEN.

How a Tall Man Worked a Stout Gipsy on His Fat Midget. A tall, slim man with a silk hat and a red nose, and a short, fat man, walked into an uptown bar-room the other day. The tall, slim man intended, it is said, to drink. He did buy a drink, and when it was ordered another. That was the end of the bar and began to talk. The tall man had checked for the drinks in his right hand. "Say," said the fat man, "you've got a great splootch of black on your cheek." "Where?" asked the tall man anxiously. "Under your right eye." The tall man unbuttoned his overcoat and searched through his pockets. "I declare," he said, "I haven't got a handkerchief with me. Let me have one, will you?" The fat man unbuttoned his overcoat and looked through his pockets. Finally he pulled out a white silk affair. He handed it to the tall man, and he wiped his hand as if waiting its return. The tall man took the handkerchief and wiped his cheek vigorously. Then he put it in his pocket, and placed the check for the drinks in his friend's open hand. He looked around the room, and said suddenly: "Excuse me; here's a man I want to see for a moment." He walked rapidly out of the room. The fat man looked at the check in a dazed manner for a moment, and then walked over to the cashier's desk and paid it. Meantime the tall man walked slowly down the street. The fat man rushed out and followed him. "Here!" he puffed, as he overtook him, "you've got my handkerchief." "What?" said the tall man. "You've got my silk handkerchief, I say." The tall man looked through his pockets. "Why, to be sure," he said, "so I have." Then he paused and thought a moment. "But," he continued, "didn't I give you something when I borrowed this handkerchief?" "You gave me a check for sixty cents that I had to pay," answered the fat man. "Ah, yes; I remember now. So I did. Where's the check?" "Why, I paid it and gave it to the cashier." The tall man looked annoyed. "Haven't got the check, eh?" he asked, coldly. "Then, sir, you don't get your handkerchief. I took it as security when I gave you the check. Good afternoon." And it was twenty minutes before the fat man could think where he was. Tom Much to Expect. Kitty—Did you enjoy the Saturday night hop? Tom—Oh, fairly. Kitty—But some of the girls told me they didn't have a bit of a dance with Tom—Oh, well, I couldn't dance with all of them, you know.—Truth.

PITH AND POINT.

—It is noticeable that the man who thinks he is a whole show by himself seldom draws a cord.—Milwaukee Journal. —"I always knew he was too timid to propose." "But he married a short time ago." "Yes; but he married a widow.—Life. —"Willis—Rowdies says he has a horse for sale." Wallace—"I don't want it." "I sold him one the other day."—Tit-Bits. —"See that man yonder." "What?" "Heen in congress ten years." "What's his record?" "Ten years."—Atlantic. —"Is this building beautiful?" asked the man with the glasses, as he looked at the new building. "It is a very fine building," replied the man with the glasses, "but it is not as beautiful as the old building."—Washington Post. —"I am not a philosopher," said the man with the glasses, "but I am a philosopher."—Washington Post. —"I can tell your fortune, and find out your future husband, the way you look," said a gipsy. "If you don't like me, as often as I find my present husband out," replied the lady, "I shall never marry again." —Visitor—"You oughtn't to keep the pigs so near the house." Countryman—"Who?" Visitor—"It's the healthy Countryman." "That's where you're wrong; these pigs ain't never had a day's illness."—Tit-Bits. —The Exact Location.—Mr. Benson (of Massachusetts)—"You say your friend was born near the boundary of Rhode Island; what boundary do you refer to?" Mr. Spouter (of Texas)—"All four!"—World's Fair Puck. —Bright—By dividing your duties into two squads you'd accomplish a great deal more." Burns—"What would I do that for?" Bright—"So one half could hunt crows while the other went after criminals."—Vogue. —A Scientific Agreement.—"Do you know that the doctors have decided that young men, such as real artists and spring chickens, are very unhealthy?" "Is that so? They must have told my landlady the same thing."—Detroit Free Press. —"Bob," said a grocer recently to a small customer, as he weighed out a pound of potatoes, "did you ever stop to think that those potatoes contained sugar, starch and water?" "No, I didn't," replied the boy. "But I've heard mother say you put peas and beans in your coffee, and a pint of water in every quart of milk you sell."

THEY WERE SKILLED MEN.

And Know Better Than to Hold up Passengers Returning from the Fair. "Oh, yes," said the mid-aged man for the twentieth time, "oh, yes, I was one of the passengers on that Lake Shore train the gang held up at Kendallville the other night." "Were you in the sleeper?" asked the reporter. "Yes, I had two dollars left when I reached the station in Chicago." "Ah, you had been at the World's Fair, then?" "Yes; what else would take a man to Chicago?" "Were all the sleepers full?" "Yes." "All returning from the fair, I suppose?" "Of course." "Did any of you hear the disturbance going on outside?" "I guess we all did; it was like a battle." "Were the passengers frightened?" "Not a bit; at least I wasn't." "Didn't you expect the robbers to go through the train?" "The mid-aged man's face showed a cloud of compassion for the reporter. "Young man," he said, "do you suppose those robbers stopped that train for fun?" "Of course not." "Then why do you ask that kind of a question? Don't you know they knoved the passengers were coming home from the fair, and that they might as well have gone through the poorhouse looking for gold bricks?"—Detroit Free Press.