

Opelousas Courier.

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE PARISH OF ST. LANDRY.

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DPELOUSAS, LOUISIANA.

The Mexican Government has lately ordered 1,000,000 grape cuttings from California, and will distribute them free to all who wish to plant them in Mexico.

The French Chamber is considering a new law for entirely suppressing public executions. The only spectators would be those designated by the law, and a few whom the authorities might invite at their discretion.

Very few of the members of the Italian colony in Philadelphia were seized with la grippe. This, it is said, is accounted for by their free consumption of garlic, and many of the people in the Quaker City tried it both as a preventive and as a remedy.

A Boston reporter has canvassed the penal institutions in Massachusetts without being able to find a prisoner who would admit his guilt of the crime for which he was arrested, tried and square-jawed convicted. Each and every one claimed prejudice or unfair ruling, and each one considered himself a martyr to the cause of justice.

A native congress, recently held at Bombay, has agreed upon a plan of political organization for India, which is to be presented to Parliament. The essential features are that there shall be a popular electoral or representative body, formed upon the basis of twelve members for every million of the population; this great body to be controlled by an inner one formed of selected persons from its own number, and an imperial council constituted upon the basis of one member for every 5,000,000 of the population. Provincial councils are also proposed.

The news that cholera has broken out in central Persia and is spreading eastward and northward in that country, does not justify anything like panic, but it does suggest to the Hartford Courant the wisdom of timely precautions. "The trouble is that it won't scare the right people, or won't scare them in the right way. A general thorough clearing up in all towns, the suppression of air-polluting nuisances of all kinds, and the adoption of rational habits of individual living would be a great thing for us, whether cholera comes this way next summer or not."

The members of the Board of Police in New York city received a distinguished mark of consideration from an inhabitant of Great Britain recently in the shape of the following epistle, which was evidently indited after the writer had taken a few lessons in Volapuk: "I write these few lines to ask you if you have any place for the Hangman billet I say the elect. shock is no good for execution I have a good knot to hang murderers on. I wish to noh if you by so kind and let may noh I noh I shall suit in the Billets hangman I will show you the knot on the paper so good all I know so I have no more to say and I are your obligent servant."

The New York Commercial Advertiser makes a very vigorous and sensible defense of Americans against the criticism that has grown out of the fact that so few of our public men are able to speak to the delegates of the Pan-American congress in Spanish. The conditions of European life are such as to make the command of more than one language natural and almost necessary. In this country, on the other hand, it is but a few years since English was universal, and the overwhelming preponderance of the purely American influence is certain to counteract that of incoming foreigners and bring them to our own tongue. The command of a foreign language is an elegant accomplishment, but the Detroit Free Press thinks it not a necessary part of the equipment of an educated American.

According to the New York Witness, "A German traveler just returned to Berlin from West Africa takes quite a different view of African slavery from that commonly entertained. He says that the slaves in the western part of the continent, at least, are as well off as their masters and have no desire to change their condition. Slave and master eat, sleep, labor and enjoy themselves together on terms of equality that one might live for weeks in a village without being able to decide who are in bondage and who are free. A proclamation of emancipation would not be welcome to these slaves, and were their freedom purchased for them they would simply continue in voluntary servitude. This description may be, in a measure, true enough of certain parts of West Africa where the slave driver with his chains and scourge is unknown, but we have it on the word of missionaries who testify to the things their own eyes have seen, that the evils of the Arab slave trade in the regions about the great lakes of Central Africa are beyond the power of exaggeration—are in fact only a little less deplorable than the iniquitous run traffic carried on by Christian nations in Africa.

TURKEY'S CAPITAL.

SOME PICTURESQUE FEATURES OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

A Turkish Lady at Home—Oriental Domestic Life—Dress of the Poorer Classes—Odd Street Scenes.

There has been a great change for the better in Constantinople, says a correspondent of the Chicago News. Not many years ago the streets were the worst of any ancient city in the world. It was exceedingly difficult to navigate a carriage through its tortuous windings and among the army of impudent sidewalk vendors, who claimed the right to blockade traffic pretty much as they pleased. With a donkey and a good guide you might possibly have got through with some delay; but on horseback, or afoot unattended, such a thing was out of the question. Even the pashas had their footmen to run ahead and clear the way for them through the fezzed and turbaned population. And then there were many curious and purely Oriental sights to be seen that are rare now. On the street you would run across a cobbler mending the shoes of the pilgrims while the latter waited humbly by; while over yonder might be seen a procession of long-robed,



TURKISH STREET COSTUME.

white-fuzzed and bearded priests, or perhaps, if it were the days of the Baki festival, a jolly company of Mussulmans in gaudy robes enjoying their holiday. Perhaps the most picturesque and attractive feature in the Ottoman capital to a stranger, because the most exclusive, is the women. The western European gazes with curious eyes on the cloaked and hooded figures he sees on the streets, and wonders how they would look if garbed like the wives and maidens of the Arabs. Some of the women one sees are dressed with rare neatness, and their fine, lustrous, vari-colored silks shimmer in the sun as they move by. They are from Broussa, the old capital, where all their vanity is apparent in both dress and walk, and it would also seem that the seclusion attendant on the domestic life of the Turkish ladies does not suppress the natural tendency of the sex to coquetry. The pairs of eyes that flash out from over the top of the transparent yashmak are well drilled and very eloquent.

In the household the Turkish woman is a charming, simple creature. She is not unlike the natives of Louisiana and Florida. I observed the same dark, rich complexion, regular features, and deep, luminous eyes one finds in the Southern States of America, with the finest of penciled eyebrows and long, sweeping lashes. It is a nature of surprise to the visitor to some Turkish homes to find the mistress and her daughters so fair-skinned. Their complexions are of that rich, transparent type one sees in southern Europe, all the way from Madrid to Florence.

During our visit to the house of Ben Ali Bei, situated near the margin of the blue Bosphorus, we were introduced to Fatma, the principal wife of the official.



A TURKISH HOUSE COSTUME.

She came into the salon and stood before us unveiled and brilliantly attired in the dress of a Turkish lady of rank. Instead of the customary fezz, she wore a Greek cap, and in her small ears were enormous ornaments that might have served for old-fashioned brooches. The scarlet jacket was a magnificent affair, covered with lace in which the heavy gold thread was prominent, and the sleeves were embroidered with the same rich material. Her sash was of vari-colored silk and hung in a large bow behind. The national costume was completed by the bifurcated trousers, which were simply appalling to western eyes in their gorgeousness and dimensions. Gathered at the ankles, they disclosed an exceedingly neat pair of shoes of a white and silver material that looked like burnished silk, and which were decorated with red silk pictures. The whole costume was highly picturesque and added not a little to the brilliant effect of the vivid colors in the salon, the furniture in which was beautifully carved in dark woods, somewhat like rosewood or old mahogany. After our greeting coffee was served in cups little bigger than walnuts. They were the tiniest vessels ever placed to my lips. Still, their contents dark,

strong and odorous, with a thick sediment—were most refreshing. Then we drew up to the marble basin in the middle of the room, and each took a whiff or two of the narghileh; for the Turk never considers you his guest till you have smoked a pipe under his roof. After that you are at his disposal. Such is the hospitality imposed by the Koran. These candies were handed around on curiously wrought trays of silver, and we all fell to chatting again. The ladies of the household were not so shy at first. One beautiful girl—Zalve, the daughter of our host—sat in a graceful attitude on the divan and chatted in an amused way with my companion, who acted as interpreter, casting occasional glances of curiosity at the visitors—two Americans and a German—and was evidently interested in the dress of our little party.

This Turkish demoiselle was robed in a long, flowing house-gown of silk that reached below her knees. A jaunty, tasseled fez of crimson plush sat on her dark hair, and in her left hand she held the unfailing narghileh, or water-pipe, which she had been smoking as we entered. All the talk was of the festivities attending the visit of Emperor Wilhelm, in which the ladies evidently took quite as much interest as the men. The girl was about fifteen, although she was as well developed as an American miss of eighteen.

On the street the Ottoman dame is less distinctly Oriental in appearance than at home amid her servants, and were it not for the ever-present yashmak, she might pass in a crowd of Europeans without attracting much attention. Indeed, the higher class of Turkish ladies dress quite a la Parisienne. French shoes, a handsome Parisian parasol and a long silk cloak gathered about the shoulder and reaching to the feet, entirely concealing the dress beneath, complete the costume. The white veil swatches the face and neck and serves the double purpose of a modest concealment and a cool neckerchief. It is only fair to say, however, that the yashmak is gradually becoming more and more transparent, and that every lineament can easily be traced through its gossamer folds. So light a face covering does not impose any restraint on conversation or breathing, and in the dusty and unwholesome streets of Constantinople is a positive benefit, keeping the dirt from the lungs.

Among the wives of the poorer class of Turkish citizens the yashmak is even more of a make-believe. It becomes simply a meager covering of muslin or some gauzy stuff, generally white or grayish, and is the merest shadow of its predecessor, which was a formidable affair of many folds, entirely obscuring the whole face, with the exception of the eyes. The head-dress is usually white, and covers the



AN ARMENIAN PORTER.

hair together, leaving only the eyes free. While among the ladies of wealth the black cloak has been superseded by the more fashionable dolman or pelisse, among the middle-class women and the poor the somber garment still holds its own. One meets baggy-looking creatures hidden in its folds from head to foot, and not a feature visible except possibly a single eye that shines out from the black hood like a dusky lamp. It will be many years before the ungainly cloak retires before the more fashionable garments of western Europe, for all the Turks, except save the official class, are very poor, and the big cloak hides a multitude of shortcomings. Diaphanous veils, high-heeled shoes and slippers, fine dresses and European styles belong to the owners of palaces and villas, whose mistresses never leave home unattended, and whose Nubian girls trotting behind remind the American visitor of the custom of the Southern States in antebellum days.

A picturesque feature in the streets of Constantinople and Pera is the wandering musician. He is generally a bashi-bazouk—a Moslem from the Caucasus. Groups of these odd-looking fellows, in their queer, outlandish dresses, may be seen on the street-corners and near the public squares waiting to be hired to play for the delectation of some official's household. Carrying as many weapons as musical instruments, it is puzzling to a stranger to decide whether they mean to play or fight, for they look equally ready to do either.

They come from Asia Minor, and belong to a race that was at one time the terror and scourge of the whole Ottoman Empire, but they are subjected now. A Persian head-dress, a Turkish jacket, immense sashes of many folds of colored cloth, in which are stuck daggers and yataghans and pistols. Leggings like those worn by Swiss mountaineers and coarse cowhide shoes complete the uncouth garb of these wild-looking men. Their music is as wild as their appearance and can only be endured by the Turks themselves. It reminded me of the discordant strains I once heard in a Chinese theatre in San Francisco, or of a war song among the Apache Indians.

Among other odd characters to be met here are the candy seller, the Armenian porter and the street scribe. The first is an institution especially favored by the ladies, for the average Turkish miss, and even the matrons, eat candy continually. They are fonder of sweets than the gum-chewing and bonbon-loving American girls. The result of this is that, what with fig paste, sugared almonds and plums, the teeth of the fair subjects of the Sultan are in a very bad way. Not five per cent. among the Turkish women have sound teeth at twenty, and they paint them black with henna to disguise the disfigurement.

The street scribe is a person of importance. You can find him on every other corner, writing to the dictation of some official, or it may be, some veiled and hooded female who wishes to send a message to her lover. Very few of the population are able to either read or write, and this ignorance exists even

among the official class to a surprising extent. A lady goes shopping, and she takes the opportunity to send a note to some acquaintance while she is out, or to add another link to some lovers' intrigue; a man wishes to tell his friend that he cannot meet him as arranged, and he does it through the same channel. The scribe is both secretary and messenger, for he has to deliver the note, and read it to the person to whom it is addressed. He is a man of secrets, and being an Armenian, he keeps them well, for it is characteristic of the Armenians that they are to be trusted above all others.

The street porters are all Armenians, and very honest fellows they are, too. One who carried my baggage nearly four squares on his back made the very most exact charge of one lire for the service. "We can send them anywhere with gold or valuables," explains an official, "and they never go amiss. If a banker wishes to send a bag of money across the straits he sends it with the address to the porter and Yusuf will deliver it sacredly, without the loss of a coin."

The most detected, yet not the least servicable, persons are the eunuchs. "A eunuch more or less makes no difference," they told me. "You might kill one without any fuss being made about it."



AN ARMENIAN PORTER.

it, but you may not even touch a dog." And it is true. There are still quarters both here and in Pera where a stranger may not venture lest he be eaten alive by the thousands of evil-looking curs whose lives are held sacred. The dogs are protected by the koran. Some parts of the city is fairly given over to them. Between dogs and dirt and begging dervishes, who spring at you from hidden corners, and who may be seen performing in a fanatical and frenzied way whenever a crowd can be attracted, there is little to attract a visitor to the thickly populated sections of the town. They are not quite so bad at Pera, but here they are a nuisance.

An Eight-Year-Old Bride.

The picture published herewith is that of the daughter of an American consular agent at Fez, Morocco. She is only eight years old, but is already engaged to be married and will soon be a bride.



THE EIGHT-YEAR-OLD BRIDE.

In all warm climates the marriageable epoch is exceedingly advanced, and a system of child-marriages has prevailed during many generations. Infantine brides are simply bought and sold to suit the convenience of the interest of their parents.

A Remarkable Potato.

We have been called upon of late to notice some big potato stories, vouched for by American growers, and now we have an English contribution to swell the list.



A CURIOUS POTATO.

The remarkable sample, a genuine one, that cannot be matched, and shown in the cut here presented, was dug by an English gardener and originally photographed by the Mark Lane Express. This is unlike most potatoes in that it is a perfect likeness of a man's head. In most potatoes the eyes are well represented—too much so for the thrifty housekeeper; but in this we have the nose, mouth and chin (double). The illustration is a correct reproduction of this sample of the genus solanum tuberosum, reduced about one-third in size.

Medicinal Rings.

Medicinal rings were at one time very seriously believed in. Physicians were wont to wear finger rings in which some stones were set, and these stones were credited with the possession of many virtues. Sometimes the patient was simply touched with the ring; sometimes he put it on his finger for awhile. Many a patient has worn such a ring to stop hemorrhage. If the desired result followed, the ring was unreservedly regarded as the healing agent; if the cure did not follow, we are told nothing about it.

MONEY IN MANY LANDS.

PECULIARITIES IN BANKNOTES OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

Picturesque Currencies of France, Russia, Austria and Italy—China's Gilt-Edged Bank Bills.

It was a quaint little old man whom I met some days ago in a little foreign-looking money-changer's shop near Bowling Green. I found him peculiarly apt in the information I asked. He had handled money in nearly every Capital in Europe. "This," he said, as he picked up a Bank of England note, "is the plainest of currency to be found in any country in the world, and it is good for gold in any land under the sun where white men or yellow live."

The Bank of England note is about five inches by eight in dimensions, and is printed in black ink on Irish linen water-lined paper, plain white and with ragged edges, which lacks the oily smoothness of our own bank notes. "It looks easy enough to counterfeit," remarked my ancient guard, "but, in fact, the Bank of England suffers as little from counterfeiters as any similar institution in the world. The notes are never reissued, but are burned as soon as they come back to the bank, and the paper is made for that sole purpose, and that is the greatest safeguard. In sending a note by mail or express, the note is always cut in two and the halves sent separately."

The showiest currency to be found outside of China are the notes issued by the Banque de France," he continued, as he picked out a piece of paper that resembled a small show bill. The paper itself is white water-lined, printed in blue and black, with numerous mythological and allegorical pictures, and running in denominations from the twenty-franc note to the 1000 franc.

"Not easy to counterfeit, but far from artistic," was the remark of the man, as he pulled out a variety of Italian notes of all shapes, sizes and colors. The smaller bills—five and ten lire notes—are about the size and shape of our own old twenty-five cent "shin-plaster" fractional currency, and printed on white paper in pink, blue and carmine inks, and ornamented with a finely engraved vignette of King Humbert. The larger notes are about the size of our "greenbacks," and are elaborately engraved, but to my eye they are neither beautiful nor artistic. They are worth more away from home than they were a few years ago, though, owing to King Humbert's very rule.

"But here is your elaborate bank note," continued the old man, as he brought to light a gorgeous piece of paper about four inches by ten. It was the two-hundred-ruble note of Russia. The note was barred from top to bottom with all the colors of the rainbow, bleached as when thrown through a prism. In the center, in bold relief, stood a large, finely executed vignette of the Empress Catherine I. This was in black. The other engraving was not at all intricate or elaborate, but was well done in dark and light brown and black inks.

"The Russians look upon that as the height of artistic work," said Shylock, "and it has a merit. The paper is made by a secret process and the note has never been counterfeited. It is also worth its face value in every capital in Europe and Asia. The smaller Russian notes, the twenty-five and fifty ruble bills, are about one-third smaller and not as gorgeously colored. The smallest denomination in Russian currency is five rubles, about \$2.50 in United States currency. "Here is a peculiar bill, but a very good idea," as he showed me another bill. "This from Austria, and like all his Majesty Francis Joseph's currency, is in two languages. On one side it is Austrian and on the other Hungarian, for the benefit of the Magyar."

The bill was printed on a light-colored thick paper, which showed none of the silk fibre marks or geometric lines used in our own currency, as a protection against counterfeiting. But, like the German currency, each bill bears upon it a terrible warning—threatening punishment to any one who shall make, sell or have in his possession any counterfeit or fac-simile of this bill. The engraving is profuse with angel heads and artistic scroll work. The lowest denomination in currency is the one florin, worth about forty cents of our money. The highest bill is the one-thousand-florin note.

The German currency is rather artistic. The bills are printed in green and black upon paper lighter than our own gold certificates, and about an inch wider. They run in denominations from five marks to 1000 marks. Their later bills are being printed on the silk-fiber paper. The Norwegian have a curious currency, but it is rarely seen here for the reason that it circulates very little among the common people, and the class that comes here as immigrants. These stick to their copper and silver coins and shun the little cinnamon-brown bills of their Government, which are about the size of our old "shin-plasters."

The Chinese paper currency is in red, white and yellow paper, with gilt lettering and gorgeous little hand-drawn devices. The bills, to the ordinary traveler, might pass for wash checks or pryer papers in a Joss House, but they are worth good money in the Flowery Kingdom. South American currency, in most countries, is about the size and general appearance of our own bills, except that cinnamon brown and slate blue are the prevailing colors, and the Spanish and Portuguese languages the prevalent languages engraved on the face.—New York Star.

A Grasshopper Story.

A reformed car driver who worked for the Street Car Company, of Mobile, Ala., in the days when paper currency was all the go, says that the company introduced the patent boxes, which for a time headed off the boys effectually in their "knocking down" fares. But the victory of capital over labor was short-lived, for the drivers supplied themselves with large grasshoppers, which they tied by the wings with a string and shoved down into the box, and when Mr. Grasshopper grabbed on to a dime they jerk him back out of the box. This was kept up for some time with great success, until one day the string broke and left the bird in the box, which gave the snap away.—Texas Siftings.

There died at Anglesey, England, a short time ago, a woman aged ninety-eight years, who had recently cut three new teeth.

SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL.

The longest time thus far reported for an incandescent lamp to burn is 10,608 hours.

Professor Newbury declares that he has discovered signs that a man lived 80,000 years ago. Silk thread is soaked in acetate of lead to increase its weight, and persons who pass it through the mouth in threading needles, and then bite it off with the teeth, have suffered from lead poisoning.

Strangers traveling through or sojourning in districts known to be abounding in malarial fevers and ague, should dress in flannel clothing, avoid raw fruits, open-air bathing and night air, and drink tea and coffee, or only water that has been previously boiled.

The relative values as foods of the grains named below are given by Professor Wiley as, first, wheat; second, sorghum; third, maize; fourth, unshelled oats. Sorghum-seed furnishes a flour like buckwheat, that makes passable bread, and is coming into considerable use.

Vermilion wood has recently been used to some extent in decorative art work, being of a finer grain and darker color than mahogany, and taking a polish equally beautiful. A large size of Sumatra, it does not grow to a large size, and as the supply is limited, its commercial value is consequently enhanced.

A compound of one part Greek pitch and two parts of burnt plaster is approved by French electricians as an insulating substance, having the advantage of being unchanged in its insulating property by great heat and moisture. When hot it can be applied with a brush, or it can be cast, turned and polished.

Crushed slag is said to be greatly superior to dry earth as an absorbing and deodorizing material for earth closets, both on account of its extreme porosity, which makes the use of a smaller quantity possible, and from its value as a fertilizer, which is vastly increased by using it for the purpose suggested. It is also cheap and plentiful.

It appears that tempering drills need no longer be a painstaking and protracted process. According to the discovery made by a workman in the Carson (Nev.) Mint, drill points may be so tempered, electrically, that they will penetrate the hardest steel or plate glass by being heated to a cherry red and then driven into a piece of lead.

Experiments by Dr. Pinel show that hypnotic patients will obey the directions conveyed to them mechanically by the phonograph as readily as they will obey living words. Hence, he argues, the theory of animal magnetism—that is, of a magnetic current passing from operator to subject—is baseless, and the real cause of the phenomena of hypnotism is a disordered mental state.

Bosworth Smith, in a report on the Kolar gold field, in Southern India, records some finds of old mining implements, old tinners, fragments of bones, an old oil lamp, and broken pieces of earthenware, including a crucible, the remains of ancient mining operations. He expresses astonishment at the fact that the old miners were able to reach depths of two hundred or three hundred feet through hard rock, with the simple appliances at their command.

The brilliant and beautiful white satin enamel applied to some of the French papers and cards is a composition consisting of twenty-four parts by weight of paraffine and one hundred parts of pure kaolin, very dry, and reduced to a fine powder. Before mixing with the kaolin the paraffine is heated to the fusing point, and, on cooling the mixture forms a homogeneous mass, which, when reduced to powder, is worked into a paste in a paint mill with warm water; this is the enamel ready for application, and can be tinted as desired.

WISE WORDS.

It is impossible that an ill-natured man can have a public spirit; for how should he love 10,000 men who never loved one.

It should seem that indolence itself would induce a person to be honest, as it requires infinitely greater pains and contrivances to be a knave.

An indiscreet man is more hurtful than an ill-natured one; for the latter will only attack his enemies, and those he wishes ill to; the other injures indifferently both friends and foes.

The chief secret of comfort lies in not suffering trifles to vex us, and in prudently cultivating our undergrowth of small pleasures, since very few great ones, alas! are let on long leases.

A good inclination is but the first rude draught of virtue; but the finishing strokes are from the will; which, if well disposed, will by degrees perfect it; if ill disposed, will by the superinduction of ill habits, quickly deface it.

We can be thankful to a friend for a few acres, or a little money; and yet for the freedom and command of the whole earth, and for the great benefits of our being, our life, health and reason, we look upon ourselves as under no obligation.

Good manners are the blossoms of good sense and of good feeling. If the law of kindness be written on the heart, it will lead to that disinterestedness in both great and little things—that desire to oblige, and that attention to the gratification of others, which are the foundation of good manners.

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