DUCKS AND GUNS.

The Way the Wary Water Fowl Are Bagged on the Potomac.

THE RUSES OF HUNTERS.

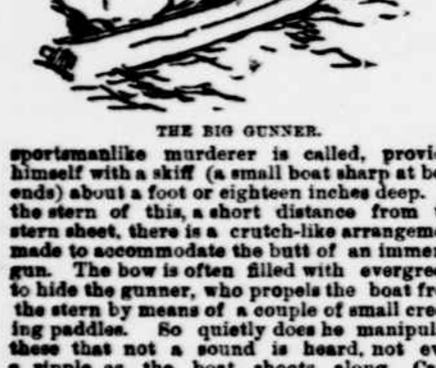
The Kind of Ducks Found on the River and in the Creeks and Marshes—Pot Hunters and the Destruction They Work With Big Guns.

DUCK SHOOTING ON the Potomac river is the recognized sport hereabouts and every year hundreds of wild ducks are killed within sight of the Capitol. Years ago there was no better hunting ground, but the march of civilization and the unrestrained pot hunter have scared the birds and now they only tarry long enough to rest.

But this brief stop furnishes considerable sport and all of the lodges down the river are occupied these days with sportsmen anxious to get a shot at a fleeting mallard or a wary canvas back.

Washingtonians are not the only ones who enjoy the sport the Potomac furnishes. There are several club houses owned by rich New Yorkers and Philadelphians on both shores of the river, and in the hunting season they are scarcely ever found empty.

Thus far the shooting has been poor. The continued warm weather is bad for ducks. A stiff northwester, however, followed by some rough weather will soon right matters and there will be an abundance of sport. That is if the sportsmen combine, as they have been talking of doing, and run the big gunners and the steam launches off the river. The steam launches referred to are not the innocent little ones that ply the river for pleasure, but those armed like a war ship, that stand up on the decks and kill one or two and scare the remainder off. The result is the ducks get scary and will not decoy and it is impossible to sneak on them. Then there are the big gunners, who steal upon the ducks at night and slaughter and maim hundreds sometimes at a single shot. The "big gunner," as this unsportsmanlike murderer is called, provides himself with a skiff (a small boat sharp at both ends) about a foot or eighteen inches deep. In the stern of this, a short distance from the stern sheet, there is a crutch-like arrangement made to accommodate the butt of an immense gun. The bow is often filled with evergreens to hide the gunner, who propels the boat from the stern by means of a couple of small creeping paddles. So quietly does he manipulate these that not a sound is heard, not even a ripple as the boat shoots along. Carefully he approaches the game and when within easy range pulls the trigger and several pounds of shot propelled by half as much powder speeds on a deadly errand. No sooner has the smoke cleared away than the hunter rises and picks up a small bore gun to settle the nearest "cripplers." He pays little attention to the wounded, however, and these poor maimed creatures swim away only to starve to death on the shore. This mode of shooting is unlawful everywhere, yet it is practiced every night on the Potomac river, and the Maryland and Virginia authorities apparently do nothing to prohibit it. If a law were passed and enforced making it a penitentiary offense to shoot a gun that could not be discharged from the shoulder, this slaughter would cease.



THE BIG GUNNER.

THE THREE KINGS.

The Potomac boasts of all the well-known varieties of ducks. First of all there is the canvas back, the recognized king of game fowl. This luscious duck is known the world over as the greatest of delicacies and prized more when killed on the Potomac than anywhere else. The reason of this doubtless is on account of the wild celery which grows in great profusion in the Potomac and its tributaries and which forms the principal food of the canvas back. It improves the quality of the meat and produces a large amount of fat. Too much cannot be said of this duck when properly cooked, and this is an art in itself, for many a canvas back has been utterly ruined in its cooking. At this season of the year this duck is in demand and brings large prices. Our markets have been hampered considerably of late by representatives from New York, who go down the river and buy up all the ducks.

There are many cunning devices arranged to bag the wily canvas back, red head, mallard and other ducks.

By far the most common is the blind. This is an ingenious device and consists of four stakes forced down in the soft bottom of the river and projecting about six feet above the surface of the water, with cross braces on outer and inner sides of the stakes, between which cedar bushes are planted. A floor is also constructed on the bottom braces, and in here, securely hidden from the game, the hunter sits. In front of the blind are placed the decoy ducks, arranged in a natural manner, while on shore a man awaits with a boat to pick up the ducks after they are shot. A good Chesapeake bay dog properly trained answers the purpose equally as well.

THE BLIND.

Should the day be cloudy and a storm brewing the chances for a day's sport are good, but if the day is sunshiny and the water calm the chances are poor, for the ducks bunch out in the river and apparently sleep all day. A few bushels of corn thrown in around the blind at a distance of about forty to fifty yards will draw the ducks. One old fellow finds it and the next day brings hundreds with him to enjoy the feast. The ducks shot from this kind of a blind are for the most part the black head or shuffler, the whistlewing and dipper. The king of ducks, the canvas back, and his two lieutenants, the red head and the mallard, cannot be tempted near a blind, so the sink box is brought into use. Now a sink box is anything but an inviting place. It resembles a coffin with a light framework of wood and canvas covering attached on all sides. These are called wings and serve when extended to keep the coffin afloat. In this, with the assistance of a man in a skiff (who also does shore duty), the gunner is posted. Then the weights are adjusted sufficiently to sink the box to a level with the surface, and then the decoys are placed. These look tempting to a passing bunch of ducks, and as there is nothing suspicious about they dive for them. Now is the gunner's chance. He rises quickly and shoots, and it is a poor gunner indeed who fails to bring down one or more. This method of shooting is also prohibited in some of the counties of Virginia and Maryland.

Shooting from a box, as the above described method is termed, looks easy enough from the shore, but it takes a man of nerve to practice it. Besides the inconvenient position the hunter is obliged to assume, which is cramped and doesn't admit of change, the coffin often fills with water and the gunner gets a soaking, which is not at all pleasant in cold weather. Then again one does not know how the day will pan out. Frequently when all of the prospects are bright for good sport the sun comes out, the water gets into a dish calm, and the hunter lays there for hours and does not get a shot.

THE SNEAK BOAT.

The early spring is the best time for box shooting. River blinds are of no use. This is not the case, however, with point blinds. They are erected at points along the shore, hidden with sage grass. Decoys are used and results are always satisfactory.

Mallard, widgeon, teal, &c., are not considered river ducks, as they usually feed in the small creeks. Among hunters they are known as marsh ducks. They are hunted principally by big gunners, who sneak on them at night or early in the morning and bang into them with a swivel gun, killing many at a shot and crippling many more.

It is this crippling that destroys the duck shooting.

"It's an ill wind that blows nobody good" runs the familiar quotation, and the eagles are heartily in accord with the methods pursued by the big gunners. It is not generally known, but there are hundreds of eagles along the river and they are daring in their attacks on the ducks. The "cripplers" are easy victims, but the sound ones dive to get away and give Mr. Eagle a peck of trouble.

The first canvas back the writer ever shot was stolen from him by the great American bird of prey. He was hunting at Whistlewing Cove and stationed in a river blind when a flight of canvas backs came by with a whirr. Bang, bang went the gun at the swiftly moving bodies. One dropped a hundred yards off and went floating off with the tide. The shore man had evidently strayed and all the yelling the writer could do did not bring him back. Looking toward the spot where the duck dropped he was horrified to see a large bald eagle swoop down, grab the duck and carry him off toward Virginia.

ALLIGATORS AND CROCODILES.

Some Truths About the Biggest Reptiles Which Grow in the United States.

"DID YOU EVER SEE AN ALLIGATOR catch flies?" asked a naturalist of a STAR writer. "I have watched the performance by the hour. The saurian lies on a muddy bank in the sun, with his mouth wide open. Winged insects, attracted by the saliva of the beast, gather in swarms upon its tongue, just as though it were a sheet of fly paper. When a sufficient number has collected it closes its jaws suddenly, and with a gulp the little torments have disappeared, affording at once revenge and an agreeable flavor. You have often heard, I dare say, of the little bird that enters the mouth of the crocodile without fear, in order to pluck therefrom certain parasites which the reptiles could not otherwise get rid of. That is a fact, although it failed to be recognized as such by science for a long time.

"On many occasions I have had opportunities of observing alligators in pursuit of prey. They will eat meat in any shape, from water fowl to fishes. Sometimes they moor themselves by their tails to the shore, with mouths agape, and silently absorb shoals of mullet and other comparatively small fry which pass along through the shallows. But a favorite way of theirs is to lie upon the surface of the water and quietly gobble any ducks or other animals that come within reach. Their heads are so constructed that when they are thus floating only their eyes and the tip end of the nose are above the surface. Thus they are able to breathe and to see at the same time, without exposing themselves to any extent. A snap, and all is over with the victim.

"Perhaps I have seemed to confuse the alligator and the crocodile. In fact, there are two kinds of crocodiles in the United States—the true crocodile and the alligator. The former is very rare, indeed, and it can only be distinguished from the latter by a difference in the shape of the head. Alligators have been found in rivers and estuaries as far north as North Carolina, though not within recent years. For a long time past hunters have sought them so persistently and have slain them so recklessly that they are rapidly becoming extinct. At present their numbers in Florida and on the Gulf coast are few. In the unexplored Everglades and other great swamps of those regions they still survive in numbers, awaiting the crack of the sportsman's rifle to announce their demise, preliminarily to sending their hides and teeth to northern markets.

"In times past and to this day, according to current tradition, alligators have been credited with being very ferocious; but the fact seems to be that they are sluggish and timid. In South America the natives often wade into the water where they are and pull them out by the tails. So it is said, at all events. When winter approaches, they embed themselves in the mud of the shallows, where they hibernate and lie dormant until spring. They breed in April and May, when the female seeks a sheltered spot on a bank and constructs a small mound of mud and other material, in which she deposits her eggs, to the number of 100 or 200. First she lays upon the ground a stratum of mud and grass, on which she deposits a layer of eggs; on this she places another stratum of grass and mud, then more eggs, and so on. The eggs are hatched by the sun, assisted by the heat which the decomposing vegetable material generates. As soon as they are hatched the infant alligators scramble for the water.

"Alligator leather is becoming dearer nowadays on account of the increasing rarity of the animals. Good hides are worth $10 each. The teeth are of an excellent quality of ivory, from which trinkets are carved. Of late there has arrived a fashion of making the skin of the feet, with the claws attached, into pocket books and hand satchels. The leather has the great advantage of being absolutely water proof. From glands in the lower jaw musk is obtained. It is not of very good quality, but it serves as a basis for certain perfumes. Oil, obtained from the fat, is supposed to have medicinal qualities. Hundreds of thousand of years ago there were crocidiles which measured as much as fifty feet in length, but there are no such giants in these days."

CAUGHT BY A TALKER.

A Voluble Salesman Paralyzes a Country Customer.

From the Lewiston Journal.

One of Waterville's dry goods houses has a head clerk who is a most accomplished salesman and is kept busy from morn till eve by customers desirous of being waited upon by him. Not long ago he was highly complimented He had a countryman in the store and was showing him a very handsome piece of dress goods, not with any hope of selling it, still there was some slight chance of so doing, and, besides, it is necessary, as our friend claims, to keep constantly in practice.

So he dashed ahead in fine style, praising the richness of the pattern, extolled the texture of the fabric, held it up to a favorable light, vouched its ultra-fashionableness for years to come and, in short, let loose a torrent of eloquence in which it was difficult to distinguish which was most flattered, the good taste of the admiring rustic or the quality of the magnificent stuff. The man's eyes flashed with pride at complimentary allusions to himself and with unconcealed astonishment at the development of beauty in the goods and fluency in the salesman.

Catching our friend by the arm he exclaimed: "Stay right here one minute!" and rushed out.

"Eloquence" stood still, a little bothered, holding the bolt of goods across both hands, just as though he had frozen in the attitude in which he had so thoroughly impressed the rural gentleman. Meanwhile this last-mentioned individual whisked two bouncing girls out of a carryall that stood in front of the store, and, half pushing, half pulling them, brought them up in front of him with the fluent tongue.

"Gals, stand there; right there, Sally. And now, mister, cut loose again. I just want the gals to hear you."

It is almost needless to say that our friend was utterly overwhelmed with his emotions and for at least once in his life failed in his utterance, to the great disappointment of both father and daughters. The man bought the piece of goods and no doubt will always think with regret what the daughters missed.

Why is This?

From the Chicago Tribune.

Customer (in Stringtown)—"Got any good flour?"

Stringtown Grocer—"Got the best there is." I take the entire product of the Jimtown mills."

"Don't you keep Stringtown mills flour!"

"Lord, no! Every pound they make goes to Jimtown."

CUTTING THE HAIR.

Curious Customs in Regard to It in Different Countries.

THE TOP KNOT IN SIAM.

The Ceremony of Its Being Cut From the Head of a Prince Described by an Eye Witness—Why Alexander Made His Soldiers Shave Their Heads.

Written for The Evening Star.

HAIR FROM REMOTEST AGES AND among all nations has occupied a certain amount of prominence, embracing all classes, that has by no means disappeared at the present day, as exemplified in the cherished scalp lock of the American Indian, the pig tail of the Celestial, the bangs and frizzes of the fashionable dame and the sacred top knot of the Siamese.

The development of the beard has been a matter of no small importance, and the cropping of Louis VII's chin brought on three centuries of bloodshed. Pedro IV of Dragon (1351), found himself compelled to prohibit his Catalonian subjects from wearing false beards, but the most singular substitute was the golden beards worn by the kings of Persia. The kings of France of the first dynasty wore beards entwined with gold threads.

WHY THE SOLDIER'S BEARD WAS SHAVED.

The custom of shaving the beard was enforced by Alexander of Macedon, not for the sake of fashion, but for a practical end. He knew that the soldiers of India, when they encountered their foes, had the habit of grasping them by the beard, and so he ordered his soldiers to shave. Afterward shaving was practiced in the Macedonian army. The Romans imitated the Greeks in this practice, as they did many other things, and spread it to the different European nations yet barbaric. In the middle ages, at the time of the renaissance, shaving was introduced and the habit retained, though classicism gave place to romanticism, and that in its turn, was replaced by realism. The beard was a source of trouble to Peter the Great, who, simultaneously with the introduction of his great reforms in Russia, tried to induce his people to imitate the shaving nations. This innovation was resisted by his subjects and they preferred to pay a heavy fine rather than suffer disfigurement, as they believed, of the image of God. To the Russians of olden times the beard was a symbol of liberty.

FORMER VALUE OF THE BEARD.

In olden times when every part of the body had its price the beard was valued at twenty shillings—a large sum for the time—while the loss of a leg was only estimated at twelve shillings.

Beards were at various times taxed in England, and the sheriff of Canterbury paid three shillings and four pence for wearing a beard. In the first year of Elizabeth's reign every beard of above a fortnight's growth was taxed three shillings and sixpence, but the law was too absurd to be enforced. Peter the Great imposed a tax of a ruble upon beards, but it was soon cancelled.

To descend to a comparatively modern date. In 1841 George C. Badger, then Secretary of the Navy, issued a general order regulating the uniform of officers attached to that service, in which was included his celebrated instructions: "The hair of all persons belonging to the navy is to be kept short, and no part of the beard is to be worn long excepting the whiskers, which shall not descend more than one inch below the tip of the ear, and thence in a line toward the corners of the mouth." These were nicknamed "Badger whiskers," and caused one officer (afterward celebrated in the civil war), who had a full beard under the chin, but could raise no hair on the upper part of his face, to wittily remark: "That his whiskers began just where the regulation ended and he would have to be content with a smooth face."

Midshipmen, who in the thirties were wont to return from the Mediterranean with European ideas concerning dress, were in the habit of wearing their hair very long, with Andalusian hats surrounded by a gold band, causing them to look like brigands. Gold bands being new as a part of naval uniform were sported with great freedom and caused a newspaper to remark: "Never had been seen so much hair and gold lace in the streets of Boston."

In Europe and a portion of Asia beards prevail until we go beyond India, when gradually beards disappear, as is the case with the Chinese, Japanese and Siamese.

THE SIAMESE TOP KNOT.

The Siamese have a quaint and picturesque custom, which is celebrated in every family pretending to wealth and fashion, when a child becomes of age of cutting the top knot. This top knot is a round patch of hair allowed to grow on the top of the head, while the rest of the head is closely shaved. The locks are wound round into a coil, fastened with a pin and surrounded on festive occasions by a tiny chaplet of sweet-scented white flowers. It is worn until the boy is to become in a measure independent, or in the case of girls till their marriageable age begins to draw near. The date is regulated by the fancy of the family, controlled in some instances by the family soothsayer, and ranges from nine, eleven and thirteen years; but the even numbers are avoided as less propitious. But when the day does come, the top-knot cutting is a great and gay ceremony. When the personage to be operated upon is a "Chow Fa," or celestial prince, the rite is elaborate and splendid, But when the heir apparent to the crown of Siam takes his turn at the hair cropping, the whole festal resources of the palace and the kingdom are exhausted in doing honor to the event, which occupies a week and more of the undivided attention of every prince and magnate within reach.

Some years ago it was the good fortune of the writer to witness the magnificent ceremonies attending the important service of shearing the top knot from the head of the Crown Prince of Siam. As a curious custom and one seldom witnessed by Europeans a brief description of the brilliant spectacle may not be devoid of interest.

A NOTABLE OCCASION.

There were assembled in the Siamese capital all the pendatory vassals of his most Buddhist majesty the Rajah of Kedah, the sultans of Potani, Kelastan and Tringano, the governors of Singons, Renong and Kroh and all the provinces of first, second and third grade. They all brought substantial presents for the prince.

The fete was ushered in, like most others in Siam, by formal state processions, and a Siamese procession is in itself a marvel and a wonder. The royal crown alone, worn by the king in his palanquin, is one mass of blazing jewels worth a fabulous sum. His jeweled uniform would run up into the millions, and the crown of the dark-eyed prince would go far toward making an American family happy and independent for life. Many thousands of pounds of pure gold garnish the belts and court uniforms of the odd-looking nobles and notables, while the display of wealth upon swords, daggers and finely wrought head pieces was sufficient to dazzle and bewilder the imagination.

The grouping and mixture of colors and costumes formed no small part of the pageant, and the lord chamberlain, or minister of the palace, aided by numerous drill masters and court costumers, had spent weeks in perfecting this portion of the ceremony for the honor and glory of the royal family.

MALE AND FEMALE BATTALIONS.

The feature of the procession was the appearance of battalions, male and female, representing the different states, either subject to Siam or connected in some way with her. Each band of forty or fifty, marching four abreast, sported the characteristic dress of their country, and the funeral black of the tall, lithe Shans, with their black hair reared up into a hideous cockade, was in striking contrast with the brilliant uniforms of the Maun girls, the gay colors of the feudatory Malays, and the graceful elegance and handsome dresses of the Siamese themselves. Five hundred girls, all marching in exact time, with a true military swing to their gait, formed the van of the main body, and displayed the costumes of white, black and yellow Shans, Laosians, Pequans, Mauns, Karens and Malays. Among the battalions of Siamese girls were full-fledged Amazonian warriors, armed with swords and rifles, marching steadily, eyes square to the front and with the bearing of those who had seen actual service. From four feet and less to nearly or quite five feet in height the ranks passed on in apparently endless array, their bare, noiseless feet seeming to glide over the mat-covered flag stones, their hands joined in suppliant attitude, and one rounded brown shoulder shining out like burnished bronze from the folds of bright scarf or gauzy, undulating mantle. In beauty of figure and in the lithe grace of their movements the Siamese maidens excelled all present, and their light, almost classic costumes, though more subdued in color and adornment than their neighbors, were in more perfect taste.

NOBLES AND SOOTHSAYERS.

At the sides of the procession marched nobles clad in green and blue, soothsayers in flowing white robes with tall conical pink and white hats, sprightly youths of high-born rank in close-fitting costumes of scarlet and accouterments blazing with precious stones. Then close at their heels followed the royal white elephants clad in gorgeous trappings and carefully attended by trained servants. The male phalanx came next in representative uniforms, which had evidently made a sensation in court circles and tickled the royal fancy. There were dark-skinned highlanders in kilts and trews, stumpy little grenadiers apparently top heavy neath their bearskin head gear. Sappers and miners in the uniform of the Prussian army, Goorkhas in national rig and Sepoys in fanciful regimentals, with scores of costumes and uniforms copied from all arms of military services and representing all the principal nations of Europe. The uniform of the United States armed forces was conspicuous by its absence. His majesty of Siam had evidently tossed the plates contemtuously aside as too tame and unpretentious for Siamese tastes.

Surrounded by the royal body guard was borne the royal palanquin, followed by white-clad angels crowned with ringed and pointed crowns and bearing a sort of thyrsus representing gold and silver flowers. A cloud of drummers, pipers and trumpeters were interspersed at intervals, making the air resound with their efforts, and half a dozen brass bands rendered European airs at appropriate occasions.

For three days in succession the processions accompanied the king and prince to the most sacred of the palace temples only to listen to the consecrating lectures of the priests. But on the fourth day, starting earlier, they filled the palace yard before noon. As the king and his son took their seats on raised thrones in the central facade of the pagoda the scene was both grand and unique. The entire space in front was occupied by the foreign ministers, in full uniform, together with naval officers and invited guests, all in full rig.

THE PRINCE'S TOP KNOT CUT.

As the Siamese national anthem pealed through the crowded space the king and prince passed into the pagoda, followed by the other princes of the blood. The locks forming the crown prince's top knot were severed with consecrated shears, and the prince—now no longer a child—was ready for the remaining formalities.

At the far end of the palace courtyard opposite the pagoda had been constructed an artificial mountain glittering with imaginary snows of Himaphan. Upon its peaks and ridges were seen angels and demons; the fabulous tree of Kalpapruk, bearing gold, silver and precious stones; mischievous apes and grandos, and the evil serpent Naga: and at the base, as well as on its summit, were peaked pagodas, carved, curtained and glittering with golden scales. To the foot of the mount the prince had to trudge after his top knot had been shorn off. In the sacred Lake of Anodak he takes a plunge and is carefully dried by the venerable head priest. He is then arrayed in regal attire and conducted by Vishun to the top of the hill to be received by Sira. Here the prince receives the five insignia of royalty—the sword, the crown, the fan, the slippers and the white storeyed umbrella.

Then follows the smaller procession thrice around the mountain, from left to right; and at length the poor fellow, pale with fatigue and excitement, is carried back after his father to the staircase of the grand palace.

This completes the pageant and ceremony of clipping the crown prince's top knot, and as the bands discourse various airs the spectators withdraw from the royal grounds.

PEOPLE WHO BORROW.

They Rarely Return What is Lent Them and Are an Annoyance in the World.

TWO THINGS IN THIS WORLD ONE should never think of borrowing—a razor or a shirt.

When a philosopher like Tubbs makes such a remark as that there must be some reason in it, and so the other fellows at the little drinking table near the club window became attentive while he went on to say:

"Both of those articles are too intimately associated with one's person, don't you know. One man will utterly disorganize another's shaving tools in a single operation and for some reason a borrowed shirt is never returned."

"Nor anything else that is borrowed usually," observed Noodles.

"Very true," admitted Tubbs. "Some people who borrow do really mean to return what is lent them, but it is comparatively rarely that they fulfill the intention. How much of the money that you have loaned in your life has ever been paid back? Not 25 per cent, I will venture to say. A man came to me yesterday and asked me for $2 for twenty-four hours. He invested the cash in stimulants, and today he applied to me for 25 cents to sober up with. Persons who drink to excess are, in my notion, the most interesting of borrowers. They always make light of what they call their 'infirmity,' seem to regard it cheerfully, as if it were quite excusable and evidently consider that they have a right to be supplied by others with the means of inebriation.

"There is no end to the cheek of borrowers generally. Sir Walter Scott speaks in his 'journal' of his experience with undergraduates at Cambridge and Oxford, who, having outgrown their allowances, would, though quite unknown to him, write and ask him for the loan of small sums, from five to fifty pounds. One stranger, an army officer, informed him by letter that he had dreamed that Sir Walter lent him £300, to which the author replied that this was an illustration of the well-known fact that dreams always went by contraries. I have understood that the President of the United States, members of the cabinet, Congressmen and other persons high in official position at Washington are constantly requested for loans. The case of the dynamiter in New York the other day, who demanded $1,200,000 of Russell Sage, is merely an extreme one.

"I have lent money on frequent occasions simply for the purpose of getting rid of the borrower, there being no such sure way of making him avoid you afterward. I have known a great many men who made a regular business of securing small loans from every fresh acquaintance. How familiar is the good fellow of the type I have just described, who goes through the world soliciting trifling contributions from whoever he can get a decent introduction to, never hesitating to sacrifice a friendship for 50 cents or $1. You find that type of individual at his lowest notch when he gets down to 5 cents as the amount solicited. By that time he has abandoned all serious attempts to appear respectable or to conceal his character as a beat.

"The most unique borrower I have met with lately was employed as a servant in my household for twenty-four hours. On the afternoon of her arrival she concluded that she was too fatigued to clean up the kitchen and so retired to her room, having obtained from her mistress the loan of a book of poems for perusal. The next morning she waked me up by pounding on my door and informed me that, inasmuch as her own bag had not arrived, she would be glad if I would lend her my comb and tooth-brush. On the other hand, I have known women to borrow money from their servants. I once had a colored man who was accustomed to borrow my dress suit whenever he attended a ball. I only found it out through the accident of discovering one night that the garments were gone, when I was attiring myself for a party.

"The sort of neighbors who borrow are sufficiently well known. They obtain the loan of cut glass, silver ware, jewelry and other finery, for the purpose of making a display on occasions. Lower down in life they send next door for a cup of tea, some flour, a little sugar, or what not. I have known cases where girls who called themselves ladies actually borrowed scarf pins and rings from admirers, never giving them back. Umbrellas, rubbers and waterproofs are articles which are rarely returned when borrowed. The only lenders who have a real advantage over the borrowers are the pawnbrokers."

It Was Accounted For.

From the Detroit Free Press.

An uptown minister's wife was reading to him one evening last week.

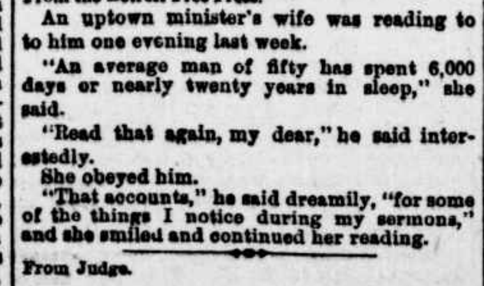
"An average man of fifty has spent 6,000 days or nearly twenty years in sleep," she said.

"Read that again, my dear," he said interestedly.

She obeyed him.

"That accounts," he said dreamily, "for some of the things I notice during my sermons," and she smiled and continued her reading.

From Judge.



Old Turk—"Now, I advise you young things to begin fasting, for about Christmas time great long two-legged things with hatchets come around and chop our heads off."

Young Turks—"Oh, go 'long! You think 'cause we're young you can stuff us."

Old Turk—"Well, just you keep on getting fat and you'll find yourselves stuffed clean up to the neck."

SECRETS OF STATE.

How Certain Important Government Matters Are Kept From the Public.

A PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE THAT WAS STOLEN AND PUBLISHED IN ADVANCE—THE CARE TAKEN IN SETTING THE MESSAGE IN TYPE—PROOF READER BROWN AND HIS REVISION OF THE DICTIONARY.

WHEN PRESIDENT HARRISON'S RECENT message was finally published a weight of anxiety was lifted from the minds of the public printer and his foreman. The annual addresses of the chief executive to Congress are always nightmares to the government printing office, and until they are formally received by the national legislature there is no sound sleep for the officials in charge. Their task is like the guarding of a treasure, for the possession of which a few hours in advance eager newspapers are ready to pay a fortune. Once, and only once, was a message stolen, and the incident has passed into history.

Sixteen picked compositors set up the last message. They were chosen as usual for their trustworthiness. So secret was their task that if one of them had even said when the job was done, "I have been working on the President's message today," discovery of the fact would have caused his discharge. Four hours were required for putting the document into type, and during that time the selected men, grouped by themselves, were held under the watchful eye of the foreman. The copy, received in type script from the White House, was cut up into "takes" so small that no individual could make head or tail of his own. No one was allowed to see any proof of other takes than those which he himself handled, and all the imperfect proofs taken were gathered into a bag as carefully as if they had been so much gold, and burned in the furnace. Not a scrap was permitted to escape.

GALLEYS PUT IN A SAFE.

The galleys full of type, as fast as they were made up, were placed on shelves in an iron room built like a safe. Whenever one was taken out a receipt was given for it, which was torn up when it was put back. Not less than two men were permitted to move a galley. Two proofs were taken finally of the completed message—one for the office and the other on fine paper for the President. The final proof was read by Arthur H. Brown. "Dictionary Brown" he is called, because of his marvelous accuracy about words.

Sometimes compositors in the government printing office have kicked at Brown's corrections of their work. Repeatedly they have called his attention to the dictionary and have shown him that Webster indorsed their own judgment. "So it does," Brown would say, calmly. Then he would correct the dictionary with pen and ink. His corrections were always right, too. Once he sent about twenty of them to the publishers of the dictionary, who accepted all of them and made him a present of an elegantly bound copy. He suggested, it is said, several emendations in Mr. Harrison's recent message and they were adopted by the author. Any President is fortunate in having such a critic of his work before it reaches the public.

When Mr. Arthur was President Public Printer Rounds was so anxious about the secrecy of the message that he took one of the cases himself, under orders from his own foreman. On the occasion referred to the manuscript of the address to Congress came into the office in scraps. It kept arriving piecemeal from Saturday afternoon to Monday morning. The chief magistrate presumably wanted to see how it looked when prettily printed, as he proceeded with his composition. With kindly consideration for the printers, he provided them, while they were engaged upon the task, with what they described as "elegant grub," sending his own steward from the Executive Mansion to serve it.

THE STOLEN MESSAGE OF HAYES.

The message which was stolen was the last one written by President Hayes. It was not obtained from the government printing office. For the sake of extra precaution it was set up in the branch office of the Treasury Department. Rumors that it would be obtainable in advance got about Newspaper Row somehow, and combinations were formed to purchase it in case it should be offered for sale. The price in such an event would necessarily be large and it was worth while to divide it. One of these combinations was formed by the New York *Times*, Cincinnati *Commercial-Gazette* and Chicago *Times*. On the afternoon of the Saturday before the Monday on which the message was to be placed in the hands of Congress the correspondent of the New York *Times* was sitting in his office on the row reading the evening paper. He had pretty well made up his mind by that time that there was nothing in the report which had been circulated.

A young man, but slightly known as a newspaper correspondent, walked in and asked in a jocular way what was the latest intelligence about the message.

"Nothing that I know of," was the reply.

"Do you care to buy it?" asked the youth.

"I shouldn't mind," said the *Times* man, imagining that the visitor was joking.

To his surprise the young man drew out from his pocket a package, which proved on inspection to be the much-desired document.

"How much do you want for this?" was asked.

"How much will you give?" said the youth.

"I'll give you a thousand dollars for it," said the *Times* correspondent.

The young man said that he thought he could get more than that, and, after a brief haggle, $1,500 was agreed upon as the price. It was understood that the money should be paid only on condition that the message reached no other hands.

No time was lost in communicating with the correspondents of the Cincinnati *Commercial-Gazette* and Chicago *Times*, and the representatives of the three papers hired a room in the Ebbitt House, procuring telegraph instruments and operators to send the dispatches from thence. This was done with the utmost secrecy, not a word being breathed to anybody, for fear lest some untoward accident should spoil the biggest scoop that was ever made from Washington.

So far as this end of the business was concerned things went admirably. During all that evening the telegraph instruments were busily ticking in the room at the Ebbitt House and the message was sent flying simultaneously to three cities. None of the other correspondents here had any notion of what was going on, but in New York word got out in some way that the message was coming over the wires. No one could tell what paper was getting it, but the rumor set the correspondents there on the alert. The men who represented Chicago papers in the metropolis wired to the home offices a warning. To prevent the happening of just what did occur the New York *Times* was held back from the presses for forty-five minutes after the usual time. As quickly as it was issued, however, it was seized and the entire message of the President, covering more than a page and a half, was telegraphed to the Chicago *Tribune*, the *Inter-Ocean* and other dailies in the same city. It is not surprising that the Chicago *Times*, finding its hoped-for "scoop" gobbled by its rivals, should have declined to pay its own share, $500, of the sum due as purchase money for the message.

Of course there was tremendous official agitation in Washington over the occurrence. It was proposed to prosecute the newspaper correspondents concerned as accessories after the theft, but that fell through. Skilled detectives were employed upon the case, and they declared that the printer in the treasury office who took the proofs of the message was the guilty party. There was never very much evidence against him, and, although he was discharged at the time, he was subsequently reinstated. Very likely the truth at the bottom of the affair will never be known, but there is no less interest on that account in the story of how the President's address to Congress once reached the people of the United States almost thirty-six hours before it was given to the national legislature.

The Mind's Mysterious Workings.

From the London Truth.

In the Marchioness of Dufferin's *Canadian Journal* there is an account of one of those "coincidences" which Dr. Weatherly is at much pains to explain away:

You remember that I told you that a poor man servant of ours was drowned at the Mingan. As we knew nothing about his people we were unable to communicate the news of his death to them. So D. ordered any letters that might arrive for him to be brought to himself. The first of these—which we have just received—was from a servant girl to whom he was attached at Ottawa, and was dated exactly seven days after the accident. In it she said: "I have been in my new place a week, and I like it very much, but I had such a dreadful dream on the day of my arrival. I dreamt that you and Nowell were upset in a boat together, and that Nowell was saved, but you were drowned." As the spot where the accident occurred is in an uninhabited region on the coast of Labrador, more than five hundred miles from Ottawa, without either telegraphs or posts, it was impossible that she should have had the news of her lover's death when this letter was written.

HORSFORD'S ACID PHOSPHATE
For Abuse of Alcohol.
It relieves the depression therefrom.

POST OFFICE MONEY ORDERS.

Some Curious Things About Them With Which Every One is Not Familiar.

POSTMASTER GENERAL WANAMAKER proposes almost immediately to double the number of money order post offices in the United States. He is going to extend the system so as to include all points where postmasters are paid $200 a year or over. This will add about 10,000 post offices to the system, which now embraces only 10,342 post offices.

There does not seem to be any prospect that the money order business can be made to pay a profit to Uncle Sam in future. It was started in 1865 with an appropriation by Congress of $100,000, and during the first eight months there was a loss of more than $7,000. As the system grew it became more remunerative to the government, until it began to show a margin of gain about ten years ago. For the last three years, however, there has been a loss on it, mainly because the average sum sent by money order has diminished. The average cost to the government of a money order, whether for a small or a large amount, is a trifle over 10 cents, while the average fee paid is now only a fraction more than 8 cents. However, the loss on domestic money orders is made up to some extent by a profit on international money orders. During the last fiscal year the Post Office Department cleared $189,000 on the purchase of bills of exchange to settle balances with foreign countries on account of money orders issued.

DRAIN FROM AMERICA TO EUROPE.

The enormous sums of money sent abroad from this country annually by money orders show what a big drain of cash there is out of the United States to impoverished Europe. Great Britain receives from us in this shape $5,500,000 yearly, while only about $900,000 is returned in the same way to these shores. Ireland, of course, gets most of the great sum named. Germany comes next in respect to the amount sent over from this side of the water. Nearly $3,000,000 are sent thither from America every year to help the folks at home and to assist them to emigrate. On the other hand the Germans help out their relatives on this side with very considerable remittances, forwarding from the fatherland nearly $1,500,000 annually to the United States by money orders. It is a curious and interesting fact that nearly three times as much money was sent to Ireland by money orders during the last fiscal year as was contributed through the same channel in the year 1880-1881. Of all the countries with which Uncle Sam has money order relations the least amount of business was done last year with Tasmania, whither was sent $505, for $3,775 received. A convention for the exchange of money orders with Chile was signed by Mr. Wanamaker several months ago, but that government has not ratified it yet.

THE HEART OF THE SYSTEM.

New York city is the heart of the money order system, the post office there being the central depository of funds. At many post offices in different parts of the country there is an excess of payments on money orders over receipts. In such cases the postmasters east of the Rocky mountains are allowed to draw upon the postmaster at New York, while on the Pacific slope they are similarly supplied from San Francisco and Portland. Postal notes are not so popular as they used to be. They are very convenient for sending small sums of money by mail, particularly where odd cents are concerned, and they have great usefulness in sections where silver almost wholly takes the place of paper as currency, but they afford no security, and people are apt to be reluctant to accept them as cash.

OLD MONEY ORDERS.

Sometimes money orders as much as twenty years old are sent into the Post Office Department to be cashed. Queer people stow them away in desks or other hiding places, leaving them to be discovered in the course of time by heirs. Of course they are invalid after one year from the date of issue, but duplicates are always issued and paid upon application. Actors, and particularly circus people, have a way of utilizing the money order system as a sort of banking and safe deposit concern. While traveling about the country, for example, a player will buy a money order for $100 on New York, making himself the payee. Thus he puts away the sum in a place where no one else can possibly get it. Before the year is out he may draw the money and buy another postal order with it, and so on, thus keeping the cash secure for an indefinite period. If he should get on a spree he cannot be robbed. Recently a circus clown was arrested in a town out west with $5,000 worth of money order receipts in his clothes. Had they been stolen from him he could easily have got duplicates.

DEPARTMENT PRINTING OFFICES.

They Have Important Work to Do, Particularly With Government Secrets.

SEVERAL OF THE DEPARTMENTS HAVE printing shops of their own, which are branches of the government printing office. The biggest of them is attached to the treasury, employing eighty men and women. Others are annexed to the War, Navy and Interior. The Department of State has the smallest of all, with only about a dozen employes. This last, however, does much important work of a secret nature, setting type for a great many documents which are kept most strictly from the view of the public.

The Department of State is the great depository of the secrets of the government. It does and knows many things which are not communicated to the people nor even to Congress. Obviously, there are numerous instances where the publication of diplomatic business would frustrate the purposes in view. For example, when negotiations were set on foot for the purchase of Alaska it would never have done to tell the reporters for the press what was the nature of Prince Gortschakoff's confidential reply to Mr. Seward's preliminary overtures. That might have spoiled the whole affair. Pending treaty matters even the Senate is not permitted to have knowledge of.

One function of the Department of State is to maintain the peace of nations. With a view to this end it usually preserves silence respecting breaches of diplomatic faith. Many a time when the United States has been treated with want of courtesy and even dishonesty by foreign governments all knowledge of the injury done has been kept from the public. The printing of the facts in such cases would merely have aroused popular indignation and inspired an unhealthy sentiment of hostility. On the other hand, Uncle Sam has more than once treated other nations with unfairness, and they have said nothing. He really purchased the Island of St. Thomas from Denmark a few years ago, the bargain being so far completed that the residents unfurled the American flag; but he crawled out of it rather discreditably at the end. Nevertheless, Denmark took it quietly and made no fuss whatever. Whatever has been written or printed on such subjects remains buried in the secret archives of the State Department. The question whether there could occur a case where the Secretary of State would feel obliged to refuse information demanded by Congress has been disputed. Probably he would be able to escape the dilemma by diplomatic evasion.

A rather important part of the State Department's printing is the system of consular reports. It is not generally realized that this branch of the government employs on its staff the finest corps of reporters in existence. They are scattered over all parts of the globe, and, being constantly in communication by telegraph with the office at Washington, they are ready to combine, at a moment's notice, in giving information on any conceivable subject. All the consuls, consuls general and even our ministers abroad are instructed to regard this as a portion of their duty, and thus Mr. Blaine is enabled to get out a number of publications yearly on whatever topics may be regarded as best calculated to afford useful information, most of them being of commercial interest.

Ivy on Walls.

From Meehan's Monthly.

A friend recently called attention to a case which he thought subverted our view, that the ivy growing on walls tended to make them dry rather than damp. On looking at the case, we find that the wall was covered with the ampelopsis veitchii, or as it is called, Japan ivy, and that the vines had been suffered to grow over the shingle roof of the house some four or five feet from the gable end, and that the spouts and other water conduits were completely choked by this growth of vine and filling up with leaves. It is no wonder that a house should be damp under such circumstances. It should not be forgotten that the vines on walls must never be allowed to reach the roof or clamber in the gutters, but must be confined entirely to the vertical surface of the walls on which they grow. The innumerable number of small rootlets absorbing moisture continually, generally make walls so dry and hard that it has been found at times in the old world, when necessary to take down a building, almost impossible to do so on account of the extreme hardness of the mortar, which has been kept dry for so many years through the agency of these roots. The case we have referred to shows how often a good idea may be spoilt by reason of the thoughtless manner in which the idea is carried out.

IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY.

But Rescued by His Own Troops From Imprisonment in Rebeldom.

From the Boston Globe.

It was while I was out on a foraging expedition during the war that I met face to face with Mrs. Grant Wetherbee, once Kate Cornell, an old flame of mine, who had almost broken my heart when she married, five years before.

When she invited me to enter the plantation for tea I forgot at once that I was in the enemy's country and readily accepted, sending my men away. The tea was dispatched and we returned to the parlor, but my fair hostess would not hear me speak of departure yet. I must play one game of chess and drink some of that superb sherry I was wont to praise five years before, when it made part of her father's cellar.

Chess and sherry, with one of the most beautiful women south of Mason and Dixon's line.

I was but a man and I yielded, though I knew that our line had passed on and that I should have a hard and, perhaps, a risky gallop to overtake them.

The chess had advanced but a little way and I was conscious of spending one of the happiest hours of my existence when the door of the room in which we sat was thrown open and five gentlemen in the uniform of officers of the confederate service entered.

As quick as lightning I glanced into the faces of the three ladies who were my entertainers and as quickly I became convinced they were innocent. Fortunately, I was enabled to preserve my presence of mind, and when Mrs. Wetherbee said, "Capt. Foote, allow me to present Col. Ashby," I rose quickly and, taking his hand, responded:

"I am happy to meet one of whom I have heard so much."

Then, with an introduction to the others of the party, we became seated. I cannot help admitting that there was a momentary embarrassment with all the party, and for a minute nobody spoke.

It required the tact of women to rectify this; it was rectified instantly, and the conversation flowed smoothly. Our chess was dropped, but our sherry was discussed, as well as every topic but that of war.

This was a tabooed subject, and not one word was uttered upon either side that would have led the most careful listener to believe that we were soldiers warring against each other.

It would be useless to deny that during this time my mind was running on all things besides those upon which I was talking. I knew that I was Col. Ashby's prisoner, though there was just the shadow of a doubt whether he meant to enforce the forfeit.

At last the time came when I must bring the matter to an issue, and I arose to depart. Whatever the end might be, I did not intend that Ashby or his friends should see it in my face or in my manner of taking leave that I for an instant suspected such a termination to our interview.

In fact I had made up my mind not to be taken without a struggle; and it was but a few nights before that two of our officers had been captured while upon a visit to some fair ones outside our lines, and the incident had served for some hard jokes on the now imprisoned amoratos.

I bade my fair entertainers good night, regretting that it would be so long ere I should see them again, and advanced to do the same by Col. Ashby and his friends, but found them on their feet and preparing also to depart.

I shall never forget the minute that it took us to reach the piazza. It seemed an age. I had picked up my sword by the way, having unbuckled and stood it in a corner of the room when I sat down to chess, and grasped it tightly by the scabbard in my left hand, prepared to use it on the slightest demonstration.

My horse stood fastened within a few feet, and I felt that if I once got over his back I had no fear of the whole party.

It was just dark and we all stood an instant looking out upon the landscape. Every moment I expected the words, "Captain, you are my prisoner," when I noticed a look of intelligence pass between the colonel and his adjutant.

I grasped my sword tighter and looked in the direction of their eyes, and with a great bound of the heart saw my own men coming slowly up toward the house.

Whether they were deceived and believed them a squad of their own in the dim light, or really knew what they were and trusted to my generosity, I could not tell, but after they had fairly emerged into the road I turned toward my companions, and, with one glance into their inscrutable faces, I extended my hand to Ashby.

"I must bid you good night, colonel; I see a file of my men coming up for me, and it would be unpleasant for you to meet them."

"Good night, captain, I thank you!" was all the response, and in a moment I was on my horse and had joined my men, who had returned that they might warn me of several wandering parties of "rebs" they knew to be out, and prevent me from being picked up.

EMPEROR OF ETHIPOIT.

An Enlightened Prince Who Can Work and Who Prays Two Hours Daily.

From the New York Tribune.

Count Pietro Antonelli, a member of the Italian parliament who has spent several years in Ethopia and has been sent many times as Italian ambassador to Emperor Menelik, has given an interesting account of that monarch in a recent issue of the *Riforma* of Rome.

Menelik, says the count, who was married to the Princess Taitu in 1883, is now forty-eight years old. He is a man of medium height and powerful body, with dark brown skin and coarse although not irregular features. He is not naturally cruel, and the signing of death warrants often makes him sorrowful and reflective. He understands his people and is able to gain their love and rule them wisely.

Although he now bears the title of Emperor of Ethipoit, commands an army of 130,000 men with 60,000 guns and displays at times oriental splendor, he is not ashamed to subject himself to physical labor. He saws wood, makes house models and superintends the construction of buildings. A short time ago a terrible disease carried away many of the oxen, and Menelik and his courtiers used rakes and spades in order to prepare the fields for the reception of the seed.

He worked also three months as a stone mason on a church which he ordered built not long ago. He understands the main facts about railroads and steamships and the principles of telegraphy. He would gladly acquaint his people with the technical advances in science and the arts, but his advisers will not consent to it.

Since the early eighties, adds the count, Menelik has kept up his connection with Europe. In mercantile affairs he is the equal of experienced tradesmen. In diplomatic matters he well understands the art of prolonging the discussion until he has reached a decision. One who has to carry on business with him must be observant and attentive. The emperor takes great interest in European newspapers. He is fond of talking with Europeans also, in order to increase his knowledge of Europe. He always receives Europeans in a friendly and flattering manner.

As a rule the emperor breaks his night's rest at 3 o'clock in the morning. He prays then for two hours. From 5 o'clock to 7 he dictates letters to his secretaries. At 7 o'clock he receives his ministers and visitors of importance and listens to their reports of the state of the empire. He gives his orders for the day after the reports and makes his appointments. During the day he also finds time to regulate watches, draw architectural plans, give medicine to the sick, and take care of his army.

Business and Grand Opera.

From the Chicago Tribune.

The hustling western merchant with a pretty good sized bank account and a credit that would make even a board of trade man hesitate to call margins on him was in the city to buy some goods and the traveling man had taken him to the matinee.

He fidgeted in his seat a little as the soprano sang her best number and seemed to be nervous while the tenor was doing himself proud with his plaintive song. In fact, all the singing seemed to trouble him. Finally his companion asked:

"Ever heard grand opera before?"

"No, I haven't," he said in a burst of confidence, "and I want to say right now that I'd like to have the management of this concern for about five minutes."

"What would you do?"

"I'd run it on business principles; that's what I'd do! I wouldn't let any of those people loaf on their jobs; that's sure! I'd make 'em toe the mark or I'd know the reason why."

"Why, don't you like the singing?" asked the traveling man in surprise.

"Oh, yes, the singing's all right, but it's too blamed slow. I've got an engagement for 4 o'clock, and they could finish the whole business by that time if they were pushed. But they ain't, they just take their time and draw the thing out. I'd cut down the time of that fellow with the waxed mustache five minutes, and if he couldn't hustle his song through in that time I'd discharge him. It's just a case of loaf and lack of live business management; that's what it is. I'd like to see some of my employes fool around that way once."

Ask for VAN HOUTEN'S COCOA—take no other.

VANDERBILT'S CRADLE.

The Old Commodore Himself Was Rocked in It.

From the New York World.

In the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward C. Lyons of No. 137 Broadway are two articles of furniture of small intrinsic value, but which as relics are highly prized by the owners and could command a large sum. Both of the articles, if gifted with speech, could no doubt tell strange and interesting stories.

One is a cradle in which Commodore Vanderbilt, when a child, was rocked to sleep. This piece of furniture is of mahogany and is built in the swinging pattern of cradles. There are two upright posts connected with each other by a square piece which runs horizontally beneath the cradle. This piece sets into grooves cut in the posts, and the whole thing can be taken apart by a child.

The cradle itself has a mahogany frame with caned sides. It is four and a half feet long and sixteen inches wide. At each end is a small piece of round iron set into a square flat piece which is fastened to the frame of the cradle. The projecting round pieces fit nicely into spaces in the posts and these form the means of swinging the cradle. A small piece of wood was at one time attached to the bottom of the cradle. This kept it in a stationary position when further rocking or swinging was to be dispensed with.

It is said that the cradle is one hundred and twenty-three years old, and its appearance leaves no room to doubt this. It was brought to this country from Holland, where it was constructed. The history of it, as far as can be learned, is that it came into the Vanderbilt family through the mother of the commodore. After each member of the family was rocked to sleep within it and eventually grew up the cradle was laid away, to be given to the eldest daughter after she became a mother. In this way it descended from mother to eldest daughter until at last Mrs. Kimble, a third cousin of the late William H. Vanderbilt, who resided in Brooklyn, became its owner. In 1881 Mrs. Kimble, when about to move from Brooklyn, left the cradle with Mrs. Lyons, who was to keep it until Mrs. Kimble sent for it.

About the same time Mrs. Lyons purchased a sofa from Mrs. Kimble that is said to have been in the Vanderbilt family for sixty-five years. It was presented to Mrs. Kimble by William H. Vanderbilt as a wedding gift. Composed of rosewood, it must at one time have been a very pretty piece of furniture. Since it came into the possession of Mrs. Lyons it has been covered with material fashioned after the pattern of a crazy quilt. The original covering was of a coarse sort of cloth, which to the touch feels like hair cloth, but is of a material and texture rarely seen nowadays.

It is intended to place both articles on exhibition at the world's fair in Chicago.

BIG HARPE'S HEAD.

A Gory Landmark of Early Kentucky Days Destroyed by Lightning.

From a Louisville Letter.

In conversation with some friends at the Louisville Hotel the other night Mr. John Young Brown spoke of a famous oak tree in Webster county, Ky., that was from 1811 till 1860 the object that marked the corner of Henderson, Union and Hopkins counties. The tree has a history.

About the beginning of this century two men and three women came into Kentucky from North Carolina. The men were the brothers Harpe, Micajah and Wiley. The elder was a man of gigantic stature, raw-boned, muscular and athletic; the younger rather small in size, but agile in his movements and hardy of physical constitution. Both were fiendish in disposition, passionate, ferocious and bloodthirsty. Robbery was their trade and murder their amusement. The women who accompanied them were wives—"Big" Harpe, as the elder was called, having two, and "Little" Harpe, the younger, one.

A few days after their advent into Kentucky, on the Upper Green river, they murdered a man named Langford, for no reason that was ever discovered except their passion for shedding human blood. They were apprehended for the crime and lodged in jail at Danville, from which they managed to escape. Soon after they murdered a small mill boy in Adair county, son of Col. Trabue. Pursuing their way to western Kentucky, they murdered in succession three men—Dooley, Gilmore and Hudgeon.

Finally they murdered a whole family of women and children named Stigall and a guest of the family, one Love, and set fire to the building. A posse under the lead of Capt. Leeper, a powerful and fearless man, pursued them, and a shot from Leeper's rifle brought down "Big" Harpe, near the root of the tree mentioned by Mr. Brown. He was desperately wounded, when Stigall, the head of the family murdered by the miscreants, came up and dispatched him. The younger Harpe escaped and was afterward apprehended and hanged for a murder he had committed in Mississippi.

"Big" Harpe's head was severed from his body, and some one ascending the tree spoken of, then a tender sapling, severed the trunk near the top, and, sharpening the standing shaft, stuck the head of the dead miscreant on it, where it remained for years. The tree was at or near the point where the roads from Henderson, Hopkinsville and Morganfield intersect, and the place is called "Harpe's Head" to this day. Soon after the head was gibbeted some one ascended the tree and carved the head of a man under Harpe's head, and the effigy yet remains. About four years ago the tree was struck by lightning and nearly all its branches destroyed. Some months ago it was again stricken by lightning and the current set it afire and all that remains of it is a charred trunk, a shaft twenty or thirty feet high, with the carved effigy still plainly to be seen.

TEN YEARS IN A REFRIGERATOR.

In That Time Mr. Bell's Turkey Lost Its Flavor.

From the New York Times.

It is not ordinarily considered to be in good form to cook and serve a fowl that has been dead longer than two week, but the guests at a dinner given in this city a few days ago ate a turkey that was killed ten years ago. The most singular thing about it, too, was the fact that the turkey looked as fresh as the tenderest bird of the class of '91 and was otherwise like any other recently killed turkey, except that the flesh had lost its flavor.

The dinner was given by Edward Bell, the broker. Ten years ago Mr. Bell acquired a Vermont turkey and took it to Knapp & Van Nostrand, 208 Washington street, and asked them to put it on ice. He expressed a desire to experiment in refrigeration with the view of ascertaining how long fresh meat could be kept on ice. It was agreed between Mr. Bell and Knapp & Van Nostrand that the turkey was to be kept on ice for ten years and then eaten. Accordingly the turkey was hung up in the back part of the big refrigerator. It was a small bird, weighing eight or nine pound, and had been killed by cutting into the neck. The head was not severed and the fowl was not "drawn." In the refrigerator that turkey dangled from 1881 to 1891. At long intervals it was taken out and shown to Mr. Bell and to customers of Knapp & Van Nostrand. Time and the continuous application of refrigeration did not seem to affect the turkey in any way. His color did not change.

At the dinner there were present, among others, besides Mr. Bell, the Rev. Morgan Dix and the Rev. Hasley W. Knapp, a Brooklyn clergyman and a member of the firm of Knapp & Van Nostrand. The turkey had been "drawn" and found to be apparently in perfect condition. It was then cooked and served. The guests ate the turkey with emotions of lively surprise and interest, but were not long in discovering that it had entirely lost its flavor. The flesh was almost absolutely without taste and was as dry as a bone. All the essential juices had disappeared during the ten-year freeze. The turkey had lost nothing in weight while on ice and was in fine color.

The dinner, while certainly unique, was not a success from a gastronomic standpoint. It demonstrated that it is possible to preserve fresh meat for a practically indefinite period in a refrigerated atmosphere, but it made it equally clear that food so preserved loses all the characteristics that make it palatable. Mr. Van Nostrand said yesterday that fowl preserved a year would taste as good as though freshly killed.

He Had His Eye on One.

From the Detroit Free Press.

A young man who, as advance agent and manager, has been in the show business less than two years, was learnedly discussing the single great danger which is at present confronting the progress of the drama. He was grouped with others in the sitting room of a hotel in this city as he said: "Yes, sir, this growing tendency in all large cities to indulge in clubs for the study of literature, history, art, music and the sciences—that is what is doing the work." One of the few great representatives of what we like to call the "old school actor" was in the group and he dryly observed: "I know a greater danger than that and I'm looking at one of him now." Of course, the old man had his eyes fixed upon the young one, and, of course, the young one saw the point. Not a bit of it. He thought it was an awfully good joke.