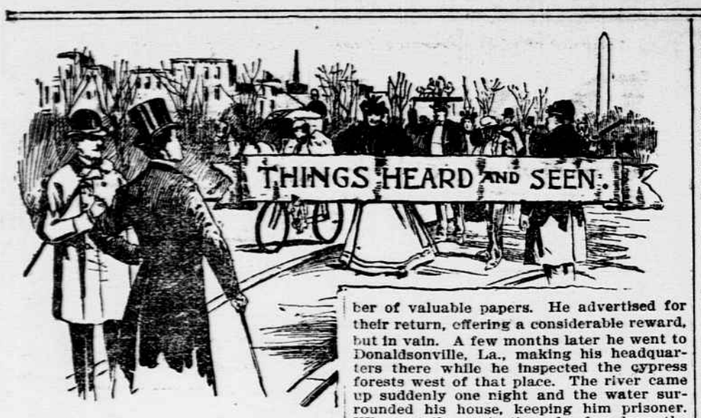

The other evening a trio of Congressmen sat among the audience at the Ice Palace, watching the skaters. They were evidently old chums, as they slapped one another on the back and used only their first names. In front of them were two forlorn individuals struggling with the initial movements of skating, falling and sprawling all over the ice.

Suddenly one of the Congressmen burst into a hearty laugh and inquired of the one furthest from him:

"Tom, do you remember the time I taught you to skate?"

"Yes, and I guess I'll never forget it."

Of course the third M. C. wanted to know the joke and it was narrated by the first speaker.

"You see, I used to be one of the best skaters in my neighborhood, and Tom kept nagging at me day after day to take him to the pond and teach him. My brother had an old pair of skates, and I took them and filed the edges perfectly round. I gave them to Tom and we started for the ice, he under the impression that the more like a sled runner the blade of the skate was the better he could glide along. Poor fellow. Tom put on the skates and I gave him a shove. Well, sir, he no sooner struck the ice than his feet shot up and he came down with a bump that sounded like a cannon shot. He got up and bravely struck out again, but only to get a harder fall. This performance he repeated until he had struck about every square inch on that pond. All the time I sat on the bank roaring with laughter. Finally, Tom fell down in the middle of the pond almost helpless, and I, as a fitting climax, fell off the bank and broke through the ice. Tom fished me out and turned the laugh on me. I had to compromise with him by taking off his skates. We returned home, he covered with bruises, I covered with mud and icicles, but each enjoying the joke on the other."

* * * * *

There is one young man in this city who possesses a truly patriotic soul. He is often complimented on his neat appearance and one of his weaknesses is neckties. The other day he went into a leading furnisher's to lay in a supply. After his desire was made known, the clerk arranged many boxes on the case to display the stock.

"Here is something in the latest French designs," the clerk said politely.

The face of the purchaser assumed a dissatisfied expression and he turned to something more domestic looking.

"Here we have the newest from London."

"I don't like that either."

Again that shadow of disgust flitted over the young man's countenance, and again the poor clerk, thinking that the tastes of his customer demanded something more aristocratic, brought out several boxes more.

"This is the best Scotch goods on the market, and these are some more English novelties which—"

"Oh, ——— your English goods. Give me something red, white and blue, with an American eagle on top."

He shocked the clerk, but got what he wanted.

* * * * *

Miss Absent-Minded recently rented one of her rooms to a well-known physician, and agreed to answer the telephone in the absence of the doctor or the servants. This was an agreeable duty, and was cheerfully performed until she was awakened one morning, early and still quite dark, by what seemed to be the familiar call. Then she rebelled and refused to get up out of a warm bed and go down two flight of stairs a cold morning for any doctor or any telephone. But her conscience troubled her. She did not hear anyone respond to the call, and the thought forced itself into her mind that perhaps some very sick person needed a physician's care. She tried to persuade herself that perhaps it wasn't the telephone, after all, but only an imagination of hers. Still, she wasn't quite satisfied, and resolved to do differently if the occurrence were ever repeated. The opportunity came sooner than she expected. Early next morning, when it was just as dark and just as cold as before, there sounded the whirr of the bell. Reluctantly she arose to respond, and hastened to the first floor to answer "Hello." There was no response. Her repeated efforts to extort a message from the other end of the wire were unavailing, so, hanging up the receiver, she trudged back upstairs thoroughly disgusted. And to this feeling were added those of anger, and wrath, and all the others in the category when it dawned upon her that the alarm clock in the servant's room had been faithful to its trust of awakening the boss of the household.

* * * * *

They had been talking about various subjects, when the conversation turned to funerals. "The funniest funeral I ever attended," she said, never heeding the shocked look the other gave her, "was one at which the girls of the household seemed impressed with the idea that they ought to make loud protestations of their grief, so that they continually interrupted the service with their laments and hysterical sobbing. One kindly-disposed soul who wished to impart some ray of comfort to the bereaved, leaned over to them, and in a whisper which could be heard over the whole room, said: 'Never mind; you can go out to the cemetery as often as you like.'"

* * * * *

In one of the government departments there are six male clerks, who work in the same room, five of whom have overcoats so much alike that a great deal of confusion has resulted therefrom, so much so, in fact, that recently three of the five have provided themselves with private coatracks, leaving the main coatrack to the remaining two, in order to avoid these unpleasant mistakes. After this change, everything went along very smoothly until the other day a mistake occurred, which caused more trouble than all the past ones put together, and which, for a time, created no little amount of domestic unpleasantness. One of the two clerks who used the main coatrack received a note from his wife the other day to the effect that she would do a little shopping that day, and to save her trouble and annoyance, requested the husband to take dinner with her at an eating house uptown. After reading the note the gentleman went to the rack and placed the note in the inside pocket of an overcoat which he supposed was his own—but it happened to be the "other fellow's." Nothing more was thought of the matter. On the following morning the wife of the clerk in whose pocket the note had been placed by mistake discovered it in her husband's pocket, and of course trouble followed, both sirnames being the same and the signature to the note bearing only the first name. When her husband came down to breakfast the wife asked, indignantly: "How did you enjoy that little dinner uptown yesterday, dearest."

"What are you talking about?" replied the husband, a little nettled.

"Oh, I expected you to deny all knowledge of it, but I have the note, which I think justifies my suspicions," retorted the wife.

After looking at the note, the husband tried to explain the matter of how he thought it came in his pocket, and told her all the funny things that had happened, owing to the similarity of the coats of the men in his office, but even that failed to pacify the indignant lady, and a trip to his office was the only thing that convinced her of her husband's innocence. There are now coatracks for each and every man in that office.

* * * * *

A friend of mine told me of an experience he had that was most peculiar. He is a lumberman and was formerly engaged in business at Stillwater, Minn. A freshet occurring, his office building was swept away and with it a wooden box containing a number of valuable papers. He advertised for their return, offering a considerable reward, but in vain. A few months later he went to Donaldsonville, La., making his headquarters there while he inspected the cypress forests west of that place. The river came up suddenly one night and the water surrounded his house, keeping him prisoner. When, at the expiration of a few days, the river subsided, among the debris in front of the house was the box that had been lost in Minnesota. It had been lined with metal and this fact kept the contents intact. When opened, nothing had been very seriously damaged by the water.

* * * * *

An attorney from Springfield, Ill., was at the Capitol the other day, and the subject of sensitiveness about age came up. "The most remarkable instance of that," he said, "was a man—not a woman—and a very able man mentally, too. Judge Sydney Breese, for many years one of the justices of the supreme court of Illinois, died at a very advanced age, but no one ever knew how old he was. Upon one occasion the judges of the supreme court of Iowa visited the Illinois supreme court. Judge Wright of Iowa was at that time very old, and he had gone west from Ohio, the state of Judge Breese's nativity. At the banquet table Judge Wright said to the venerable Illinois jurist:

"'Judge, we must be about the same age. We left Ohio in the same year. We have served on the bench an equal length of time. I wonder how much further the coincidence extends. I would not be surprised if we were born during the same year. If not an impertinence, I would ask how old you are? I am seventy-eight.'

"Judge Breese arose from the table, his face livid with anger, and saying, fiercely, 'I would consider it the height of impertinence, sir,' left the room and would not appear again when Judge Wright was present."

* * * * *

Politeness and gratitude are both rare in this world, but I heard a true story, illustrating both. Wm. E. Bridgeman of Lowell, Mass., a wealthy banker, lately deceased, was well known in Washington, where many friends still sincerely mourn his death. Five years ago he went to the Pacific coast. On the same train was Michael Foley of Los Angeles, who depended upon his labor for daily bread. During the journey Mr. Bridgeman was taken ill, and Foley nursed him as though he had been his son. No pay was asked or given. A few months later Mr. Bridgeman returned east and sent a gold watch to Foley. A year ago he died, and in his will was found a bequest to Foley of $5,000. It was hard to find the man who had been kind to the old gentleman, but about a week ago he was located and the money paid to him. It reads like a romance, but every word is true.

* * * * *

"It is remarkable what an important part the kodak plays in maritime transactions, as well as others, these days," observed Capt. Tanvers, an old whaler, to a Star man. "You may not know it, but no big ship ever leaves port now without a kodak and a supply of photographic materials. This is especially the case of whalers and other ships who go out on long cruises. The day of listening to yarns of whalers has passed. Today the whaler must show the photograph for everything.

"As a whale is worth from three to five thousand dollars, and as it costs from twenty-five thousand to seventy-five thousand dollars to send out and maintain a whaler and her crew for her catch, yarns, interesting as they may be, are not regarded by the men who furnish the money for the enterprise as a sufficient remuneration. They want the facts, or photo of them, if they lost the facts—nothing else will do. It won't do any more for a party to go off on a loafing cruise and return in nine or ten months, empty, after having eaten up several car loads of provisions and ran up the wage bill into the higher thousands.

"Every place the ship touches has to be photographed, and a photographic transcript has to be shown of every important incident of the cruise. The whale is rather a particular bird these days, and you have to go away up into the arctics to even get a sight of him. As he becomes scare he becomes tricky, and he gives all who are after him a race for their money. There are any number of substitutes for whalebone, but somehow the demand for the bone still continues. It brings all the way from $1.75 to $3 per pound. The modern whaler cares little or nothing for whale oil. The cheaper mineral oils, petroleums, etc., supply the demand for lubricants, so that there is no money in whale oil and it is gathered only as an incident of a cruise."

SPEAKERS AND GAVELS.

A Great Many Are Presented to the Presiding House Officer.

"Ordinarily," remarked an old official at the Capitol, "a Speaker will have presented to him about a half dozen gavels during a session. These presentation gavels are too fancy for general use. They are, as a rule, made of handsome woods and are bound in silver or gold clasps with all kinds of ornamentation. Some are made of wood that has served its use in famous war vessels, and others, as in the one most recently received by Speaker Reed, of timber that was used in construction of the Blaine residence in Maine.

"Some of them intrinsically are very valuable and others are of more value even by historical associations. These gavels are generally used on the day they are received by the Speaker, and after that they go to the wife of the Speaker. Mrs. Reed has a fine collection of them, the greater portion of which were given Mr. Reed when he was Speaker of a former House. He has received four or five this session so far, the California one being the handsomest and most valuable on account of its silver and gold ornamentations.

"I saw Mrs. Cox of New York recently. She has a collection of goods that were presented to her husband when he was Speaker, and she says she thinks of presenting them to one of the public museums in New York. Mrs. Blaine has at least twenty in her collection, and Mrs. Randall comes next with fourteen. Mr. Colfax had the goods given him handsomely framed and he regarded the collection as the most interesting feature in his house. But for ordinary use, as I said before, the presentation gavel is not in it. For plain all-around work a gavel like that Speaker Reed uses now is the proper thing."

Sure to Be a Likeness.

From the Chicago Record.

"There's a photograph of Grumpers in the window back here."

"Good one?"

"Excellent."

"Well, I knew he wouldn't look pleasant, even for a photographer."

A Neighborly Spirit.

From Life.

"Mamma, can I invite Freddy Sanborn over to slide down our cellar door?"

"Won't you enjoy it just as much alone?"

"No, there are too many splinters in it now."

IN HOTEL CORRIDORS

"The business of fresh water pearl fishing in the United States is growing," said R. L. Allerton, a leading jeweler of Chicago, at the Shoreham. "The first pearls of commercial value found were, I think, in the Miami river, in Ohio. The next, in the Clinch river of Tennessee. But wherever they were discovered, it is a fact that there are now very few states that at least a few of them are not found in. As a rule, they are not altogether pure or of the most valuable size or color, but they are beautiful gems nevertheless, and find a ready market. One man on the Miami river has been especially successful, and one of the less fortunate hunters of that section told me a most interesting though improbable story of how he succeeds in finding so many. It is a disputed point as to whether pearls are caused by disease or the result of injury inflicted by foreign substances introduced into the shell. The story goes that this man has found out just what causes pearls, plants a bed of clams, inoculates each one, and then raises pearls. It is certain that he finds more than any one else can."

"I have just returned from a trip through the south," said A. P. Haines of Cincinnati at the Ebbitt. "Among other towns I visited was Elizabethton, where the Co-Operative Town Company is having trouble winding up its affairs. Elizabethton is the county seat of Carter county, and at the edge of the famous Cranberry magnetic iron ore beds. It is beautifully situated on the Watauga river, and is the oldest town in Tennessee, it being in existence when the state of Franklin was organized. It seems to have every natural advantage as a town site, but the fates appear to be against it. The south as a whole seems to be recovering from the effects of the financial depression, but the boom towns are not. I saw one man cultivating a tract of ten acres on which there were a number of electric light poles. He formerly owned a thousand acres there, but sold it to a land company, took stock in the company, selected ten acres in lots, and these are all he owns now. There are a good many towns where every house is vacant, but the country is, nevertheless, prosperous, and the people are hopeful of even better times."

"I am told that the shad will come up the Potomac in a few days," said P. R. Turnley of Ogdensburg, N. Y., at the Riggs. "The shad are not accompanied by the shad flies as they are on the St. Lawrence. Shad season up there brings with it a host of flies of a peculiar species, universally known as 'shad flies.' No one who has never seen this swarm of insects would believe it if I described the number that come. They only last a few days, but during that time they make themselves a very great nuisance. I have seen them so thick in the air that they appeared like a snow storm, and boys stood inside hotel doors to brush them off the guests. They do not bite or sting, and are only annoying because they come in such great numbers and stick so closely to the clothing of all persons who venture on the streets while they are there. Business is as seriously interrupted as it would be by a heavy storm, and the top of the river is covered with them. The shad devour the flies by thousands and fatten on them."

"I see that there have been some extensive white marble quarries discovered in Colorado," said Geo. E. White of Rutland, Vt., at the Metropolitan. "At least such an item is going the rounds of the newspapers. I have been connected with the marble business for thirty years, during which time marble has been discovered in almost every state, and I have gone to inspect a great deal of it, in a good many localities. It is a singular fact that while there is plenty of good building marble and good stone for furniture tops in several different states, yet there has never been any found except in a very limited section of Vermont and Massachusetts that is suitable for monumental purposes. There is always something the matter with the marble discovered elsewhere, and it is fortunate that what is being quarried in New England is seemingly inexhaustible.

"By the time a heavy stone is shipped across the continent it makes it cost a good deal of money, but Vermont and Massachusetts furnish practically all of the monumental marble used in the United States that is not imported, and less is imported each succeeding year."

"I was amused at the answer I received to a question on a Chicago and Alton railroad train," said E. P. Chapman of Peoria at the Howard House. "At Bloomington two men entered the train and took a seat immediately in front of me. I did not see them come in and paid no attention to them until one of the men went into the smoking car. It then occurred to me that I wanted to know something about Bloomington as a business point, so, leaning forward, I commenced a conversation."

"'I see you got on at Blomington. How is it as a business point?'

"'Fairly good.'

"'Were you in business there?'

"'Yes.'

"'What line?'

"'Making money.'

"'Are you going to Chicago?'

"'No, I am moving to Joliet. It is not so good a point for me as Bloomington, but I had a chance to take a steady contract there for five years, and I took it. There is too much uncertainty in the money making business.'

"Then I noticed that he was handcuffed to the seat. He had told me the exact truth—he was going to Joliet penitentiary five years for counterfeiting."

Some of the colored laborers in Louisiana are not more than half civilized," said R. C. Flanders of New Orleans at the Cochran. "During slavery times it was the custom to sell insubordinate slaves to the sugar planters, until Louisiana became a sort of penal colony. It is remakable how well the colored people have come out of a state of such degradation, but back on the sugar plantations can still be found men who are but little removed from beasts. Near Franklin, on the line of the Southern Pacific railroad, is an old man they call 'Uncle Ben,' who has the hardest head in the state, and he furnishes amusement to the class who delight, in sanguinary contests. I saw him, much to my disgust, as I had no idea what I was invited to witness, fight a large and strong billy goat. The goat and the man rushed at each other head first, coming together so hard that the sound could be heard for a great distance. Both were staggered, but they butted each other again and again, until finally the skull of the goat was crushed and 'Uncle Ben' was rewarded with a collection, amounting to less than $5, with which he proceeded to get drunk. When he sobered up, his head was no longer sore, and he was ready for another fight."

"One of the most amusing sights I ever witnessed was near Beatrice, Nebraska," said B. T. Barnes of Omaha at Willard's. "There are a few Otoe Indians near Beatrice, their reservation being down the Elue river a short distance. A New York man has a twelve-year-old son who has become addicted to novel reading, and the boy ran away from home two or three times in order to fight Indians. The father found that whipping did no good, and concluded to send the boy to an uncle who lived in Beatrice, which he did, together with a letter asking the uncle to devise some means for so thoroughly frightening the boy that he would never want to fight Indians again. The uncle concocted a plan. He had some friends in the Otoe tribe, and he arranged with them to attack a party that would come down the river next day, go through the war dances, give war whoops, and fire blank cartridges. The boy was invited to go fishing, the uncle remarking that they might find some hostile Indians, and had better go armed. The lad was delighted, and a party of half a dozen, including me, started down the river. Suddenly we were attacked from ambush by the Indian braves. We returned their fire, and with blood-curdling whoops they started for us. We started and ran, leaving our boat tied to a tree. All of us retreated except the boy. He stood on the bank of the river. He had discarded the empty Flobert rifle we had supplied him with, and taking a revolver he was not known to have out of his pocket, he was fighting the whole party of Indians. The first shot grazed an old chief, and with wild cries of dismay they ran into the woods. Then the boy taunted us with being cowards, and the whole population of Beatrice knew the next day that we had been attacked and would have been killed but for the prowess of the youthful warrior."

IN A NEWSPAPER OFFICE

THE EXCHANGE editor was musing. For at least five minutes he had been sitting motionless on the sawhorse, which he preferred to a chair, staring into vacancy. The other members of the staff were all turning out copy with the degree of activity that usually marked the first working hour of the day, before the reporters started out on their regular assignments.

The click of the typewriters was interrupted by an ejaculation from the uptown department man, who had noticed the condition of the exchange editor. "Gosh de swish," he said, making use of his favorite expression. "Falsglen's in a trance."

"Come back, old man; come back," added the court reporter, snapping his fingers, and thus admonished, the person addressed turned around with a smile.

"Sorry I disturbed you, gentlemen," he explained, "but a paragraph I just ran across in a Denver paper recalled a highly exciting experience I once enjoyed, and which I had almost forgotten. Was turning it over in my mind when our friend spoke. The affair was a real adventure, such as novelists imagine. If you have the time and inclination I'll try to describe the incident for your benefit."

"Railroad collision?" inquired the court reporter.

"I'll bet it's a ghost yarn," spoke up the administration end of the force, with a sigh of weariness.

"No, it isn't either," knowingly declared the congressional man, removing his eyes from the girl in the window across the street, at whom he had, through force of habit, been gazing. "There's no railroad smash-up or ghost in this, I'll wager. Two to one he thinks we have forgotten that nightmare he used to spring repeatedly a couple of years ago about the whale."

"What, you don't recall it?" said the speaker, in response to an inquiry. "Well, it went something like this, as near as I can remember:

"Falsglen, you know, used to have his abode somewhere out in the northwest, in Michigan, or perhaps it was Minnesota. Anyway, it was near one of the great lakes; Michigan, I am quite sure. In those days he was doing sporting work for his paper, and on one occasion was assigned to accompany a party of prominent men on a cruise of a fortnight around the lake in search of game and fish. According to his story—story is a genteel way of saying lie, you know—the party found what it was looking for, especially fish, and big fish at that. In telling this romance, as I recall it, Falsglen would put in a lot of gush about the big bears, boa constrictors and the like that he captured on the islands of the lake, but I'll drop that and come to the feature of the trip at once.

"The party had been out four days, I think, when this truly remarkable incident materialized. It was midnight, the full moon of autumn was flooding all creation with its silvery light, there was a dead calm, the little vessel was motionless, all were asleep in their bunks, no sound was heard save the soft tread of the lookout man, and all that sort of thing when suddenly everybody aboard was awakened by a terrific jar. For a moment consternation prevailed, but when the fears were somewhat allayed efforts were made to discover the nature of the trouble.

"A theory that the vessel had run aground was dispelled by the lookout man, who expressed himself as willing to take oath that not a breath of air was stirring and that the vessel was absolutely motionless at the time the shock was felt. After a few moments a vibration occurred, followed by a fearful thrashing of the water several yards astern. Thereupon the vessel started off and passed through the water at railroad speed, the pace being so rapid that it took away the breath of many of those on board. I believe Falsglen maintained that the breath of but few were recovered, although life preservers were thrown out without delay.

"Now boys," continued the congressional man, "would you believe it of him? Falsglen had the nerve to declare that a whale was shoving that schooner. Just think of a whale in Lake Michigan. Yes, he would relate with much seriousness that an examination showed that an adult sperm whale had run against the stern of the schooner, head on. The collision was marked with such force that his whaleship proceeded one-third of his length into the hull and became fastened there.

"Well, to make a long and vivid story short, it soon became apparent that the schooner was leaking badly, but all fear of danger from that source was quickly dispelled, for the captive proved equal to the emergency. As soon as the leakage assumed sufficient depth, Mr. Whale set his blow-holes in operation, and when, after an aperture had been cut through the deck, two streams of water constantly ascended, thus keeping the hold clear.

"If my memory serves me right the party indulged in a shower bath daily, and, all in all, rather enjoyed being pushed about the hitherto unexplored portion of the lake. Finally, after a week or two the vessel really did run aground, the force tending to spread apart the timbers and thereby set free the whale, who without bidding formal farewell dashed off never to be seen or heard of again. Of course the schooner was a wreck, but after a series of more or less perilous happenings the party regained civilization, none the worse for the outing."

An intense silence followed the recital. The court reporter rested his head on his hands as though in pain, and the administration man hastily sought the water cooler.

The silence was broken by Falsglen, who had not stirred from his original posture. "With the elimination of about 75 per cent of exaggeration," he remarked dryly, "I'll admit there is some truth in the incident so ably related by our friend from the Capitol. The experience I referred to a while ago is, however, of an entirely different pattern and was an actual reality. If necessary I could secure affidavits in support of every detail."

"I don't think I could stand another like that just now," said the general assignment man, hastily reaching his hat and leaving the room.

"Excuse me, if you please," remarked the police reporter with emphasis, also departing.

The others lost no time in an effort to breathe the fresh air of out doors, and, finding himself minus an audience, the exchange editor resumed his official duties.

Hurt His Business.

From Harper's Bazar.

"Say, boss, haven't you an old overcoat you can give a feller?"

"Why, that's a fine coat you have on."

"Well, dat's de trouble, boss. It's too fine. Nobody will give me anything on account of me fine coat."

HEARD AT THE CAPITOL

"If time is money," said an economical woman in the gallery the other day, "why does that reading clerk 'mister' every member when he calls the roll? Would it hurt their official dignity to be called plain 'Smith' or 'Jones,' especially as they fail to answer to their names half the time anyhow? Why do they call the roll a second time? Why do they not call it as they do in the Senate, and then let the members who want to play during roll call ask to be recorded, or left out in the cold?" And the man she was questioning smiled grimly, and said: "Ask me something easy."

* * *

One of the "gentlemen from Colorado" understands symphony in color. His hair is Titian red, with a bit of carmine added, and his tie matches it.

* * *

During pension night in the House a week ago, Gen. Curtis of New York brought in a bill to give a persion of $8 a month to a poor widow up in New York. The bill was made the target for all the wit and sarcasm that the objectors could muster, and it was only by the skin of his teeth, so to speak, that Gen. Curtis got the bill past the breakers piled up in front of it, and got it favorably recommended for passage. Saturday morning a yellow message was laid on the desk of Gen. Curtis. It contained but a few words: "Susan Wright died last night." It is only one case in many.

* * *

"This place is exclusively for ladies who wish to see members of Congress," said an obliging guide, pointing to the corner in Statuary Hall. "Ah, indeed!" said the sightseer. "Quite a pleasant arrangement. Think I'll try it myself." And he calmly lighted a cigar and took up a position on one of the sofas.

* * *

Speaker Reed is up to date on the pronunciation of Arkansas. The prudest purist couldn't object to the inimitable manner in which he refers to the gentleman from "Arkansaw."

* * *

The cloak room doors ought to be screened off from view of the galleries, unless the members want to make themselves the butt of a good many jokes. Tuesday a member whose dome of thought is like unto polished alabaster was busied for nearly half an hour trying to get the few wisps of long hair brushed up from the side to cover at least a little of the expanse of bare scalp. He had a tiny pocket mirror, and he viewed himself from all sides, as well as front, and his face expressed great anxiety. He got it fixed to Caesar's taste at last, and the expression on his face was almost angelic as he came out and joined in the fight against the charities of the District.

* * *

Col. Blue of Kansas has been suffering many rheumatic twinges in his wounded leg and foot, and Tuesday had to succumb to exhaustion, and stretched himself out on one of the couches on the republican side. A visiting constituent leaned over the gallery coping, and seeing the grizzled veteran, remarked to his friend that "Dick" must be pretty bad off.

Just then the blind chaplain came along, and was placed in a seat at Col. Blue's side, where he engaged in an earnest conversation with him. Pretty soon the constituent leaned over again. One look sufficed. "Good heavens!" he exclaimed, "he must be awful bad; they have sent for the chaplain. I must go and inquire for him," and off he rushed.

* * *

Johnson of California has tied his love to a pink carnation, and never is seen without it. Not many of the members wear flowers. Mr. Pickler sometimes appears with a small rose, and Mr. Quigg has a fondness for violets. Mr. Richardson of Tennessee sometimes wears a carnation or a rosebud, and Mr. McMillin quite often supports a handsome boutonniere, but generally speaking, few flowers are worn. Not that the members are averse to flowers, but odd as it may seem, very few men on the floor are without decorations of some order. Those wearing the G. A. R. or Loyal Legion button, or the confederate button—and there are many of each—do not care to cover them up with flowers, and they are worn in the lapel where the flower would have to go. No man would think of wearing his rose on the right lapel.

* * *

A guide and a party of sightseers were standing on the west terrace of the Capitol one day this week, and the Man of Information was pointing out the objects of interest. "What are those queer-looking stone things out there?" asked a fair member of the party. "They look like windmill tanks." "Oh, there is where the air that is used in the Capitol is manufactured," replied the courteous Man of Information. "You see, the air about Washington is considered very unhealthy, so at great expense the government has had constructed a machine for manufacturing air. It is gathered in those stone tanks, and then passes through purifiers into the Capitol, where it is distributed." "How nice!" exclaimed the fair member of the party, and the Man of Information smiled benignly.

* * *

Two small girls who seem to know a great deal were standing on the steps of the east front of the Capitol discussing the points of view, when one, who was evidently a stranger and a guest of the other, said: "What is under that box out there?" pointing to the wooden jacket over the statue of Washington. "That's 'Hoodoo's' statue of Washington," was the quick reply. "You see, it is done in the altogether, and they cover it up when Congress is in session!"

* * *

They were standing close by one of the book cases up at the library. He was thin and studious-looking, and she was buxom and brainless, but evidently bent on impressing her escort. "How do you like 'People We Pass?'" he asked as he turned over the leaves of a book of stories of life among the masses of New York city. "Well, you know," she began, "I really don't pay much attention to them unless I see a real handsome dress, or some man more distinguished than another. I expect I am rather heedless," she added, hurriedly, as she saw a tired look come into his face. Then he picked up another book. "I am extremely fond of 'Beauties of Ruskin,' aren't you?" "Indeed I am," she replied heartily, feeling that she was at last on safe ground. "But I don't know yet which I most admire—his eyes or his hair!" And then he said, "Let's go."

An Astronomer.

From London Punch.

Mrs. S.—"By the way, I hear Jupiter—the Evening Star—is worth seeing just now. Can either of you girls tell me where to look for it?"

Bertha—"Yes; I can. It's exactly two yards and a half to the right of the Great Bear."

Mrs. S.—"Two yards and a half! What on earth do you mean?"

Bertha—"Well, I've measured it carefully with my umbrella."

Fate of the Hero.

From the Newport Mercury.

Twitterly (to Snitterly, reading novel)—"And what becomes of the hero?"

Snitterly—"I don't know his final fate, but on page 205 it looks as if the heroine had him treed."

Twitterly—"Treed?"

Snitterly—"Yes; the author states that 'at her glance he stood rooted to the spot.'"

Might Have Known.

From the Detroit Free Press.

Young Wife—"Hubby, dear, do you love me better than your pipe?"

Young Husband—"What a foolish question to ask, dear."

Young Wife (sadly)—"Yes; I might have known without asking."

His Way of Putting It.

From the Chicago Record.

"Is there one fountain pen better than another?"

"Well, no; I should say, however, that there are a good many fountain pens worse than others."

On His Life.

From Truth.

She—"If you had never met me, would you have loved some other girl as much as you do me?"

He—"My darling, if I had never met you I believe I should have committed suicide."

ALKALI IKE AND HIS TOWN

"Don't know whether I enjoy it or not," replied Alkali Ike, in response to the query of the guileless tourist, who was rapidly accumulating an interesting mass of misinformation which he intended incorporating in a lengthy manuscript to be read upon his return to Massachusetts before the Back Bay Society for the Dissemination of Useless Knowledge. "Hain't never tasted it. I don't go much on these yere fancy French drinks, anyhow; most of 'em is a heap too weak an' pindlin' for a grown man."

"Pardon me, but golf is not a beverage," said the tourist, politely. "It is a game."

"H'm! Say it is? I reckon that's a hoss on me," answered Isaac, magnanimously. "Aw, wal, a man can't be expected to know everything. Golf? Believe I've read suthin' about it; it's that thar walk-around whurin the players rig up like circus clowns an' go peroozin' across the scenery, chasin' a little ball with a crooked stick. Eh-yah! I hain't never indulged in no golf; I hain't that kind of a man!"

"But, my dear sir, it is a great favorite in the east—the reigning fad, in fact."

"I hain't seein' no pungent reason why it shouldn't be; them people in the east shore indulges in some mighty quaint an' fantastic freaks in the name of sport. I'm sanguine it's due to the way they are raised, or mebby it is in the air. They gits relaxation out of pursoodin' of a frenzied bag of aniseed across the face of nature, or playin' long tennyson or hurlin' little sacks of beans at each other. But out yere in the west we hain't that badly dried out yet. 'Course we have our relaxations, but we don't indulge in no homypathic frivolities. When we play ary game, you bet your neck it is a man's game! The nearest thing to this yere golf doin's that we mingle in is what you might call the merry pastime of progressive tar an' featherin'."

"Tar and feathering!" exclaimed the tourist, in astonishment. "Why, my dear fellow, I never heard of that—er—ceremony being regarded as a pastime. It is, in reality, a punishment, is it not, and a painful one at that?"

"Depends a heap upon the position you occupy in the game," returned the veracious narrator, cheerfully. "If you are one of the parties of the second part, an' not closely related to the party of the first part, you most generally feel that it is indeed good to be thar. But if you happen to be the party of the first part you are liable to entertain symptoms that are radically different. I've had the pleasure of officiatin' in both capacities, an' I speak by the card.

"One time, goin' on three or four years ago, down in the Panhandle country, I becomes so popular with my feller men that they whirl in an' present me with a robe of tar, buttoned on with a swipin' brush and trimmed with hen hair, an' triumphantly escorts me out of the settlement on the top side of a saw-edged rail. Aw, wal, thar wasn't no speshul features worth recallin' about this yere exodus, except that I got sorter shot up by a near-sighted eastern sportsman who mistook me for a cassowary, or suthin' of the kind, an' afterward fell out of a tall tree into the midst of a Sunday school picnic who we're eatin' their picnic dinner below. Some of 'em 'peared to mistake me for the devil, an' others didn't, an' I made my escape while the superintendent an' the little boys were revivin' the members of the young ladies' Bible class, who had very properly swooned. It didn't amount to much, after all, but it was fully a year afterward before I laughed about it.

"Takin' all the tar an' featherin's that I ever mingled in I never knowed but one whurin the party of the first part got much good out of it, except in the way of an object lesson. This yere man I'm recallin' 'peared to glory in his shame, as they say in stories. I forgit what we decorated him for, speshul; mebby it was simply burcuz the regular tar-an'-featherin' day had come round—which was every third Saturday, weather permittin'—an' thar was nobody handy who was more deservin'. It don't matter now, anyhow. His name was Hoon, an' so we warmed up the tar.

"We didn't feather this yere man, literally speakin', bercuz Mizzus Lopdick, the genial and accommodatin' landlady of the Cosmopolitan Hotel, announced that business was business, an' she wasn't goin' to denude no more piller ticks for to array gents who weren't guests of the hotel. Accordin', we rips up an old buffalo robe, an' it hain't so bad a substitute for hen hair as you might think.

"Wal, Mr. Hoon is decorated all accordin' to Hoyle, Col. Handy Polk gits off a few well-chosen remarks, and the party of the first part defuncts in a southwesterly direction, kickin' the scenery behind him at the rate of about forty miles an hour.

"Some time next day, as he is ambilin' along, he meets up with an Italian with a hand organ cinched on his hump. This yere furriner don't speak much English, but he makes himself clearly understood by hoppin' out of a gully and knockin' the tarred gent down with a club. They exchange compliments, pow-wow for a spell an' put up a scheme for conquerin' the world. The Roman had been bereaved of his dancin' bear a few days before, an' he orgynizes what you call a copodnership with the tarred man to act as the late lamented bruin's successor.

"Also he done it. The Roman warmed his feller conspirator up before a bonfire, grafted patches of jack rabbit fur on the places we had neglected to cover, an' had an elegant bear that hain't never been duplicated in the history of the world. The tarred man was plenty docile an' cunnin', an' after a few lessons he danced a hirangaho to the inspirin' strains of the organ that made the Roman throw up his hands in admiration.

"Wal, durin' the next two weeks or so them conspirators drifted around from one settlement to another, creatin' a furor whurever they appeared an' simply coined money, speshully from tourists from the east, who wasn't intimately acquainted with bears nohow an' admired this yere one exceedingly for his accomplishments. I reckon, likely as not, the copodnership would have been existin' yet if the man-bear hadn't got purse proud with prosperity an' become too high toned for his business.

"He insisted upon havin' a tail, an' he wanted it to be a long one. The Roman took a day off and reasoned with him, sayin' that since the foundation of the world thar hain't never been no bears with tails. The man-bear swore he didn't give awhoop for precedent; this yere present Annie Dommerni was the age of progress, by jing, an' he'd have a tail or he wouldn't dance another lick. He knowed his rights, an' would stand up for 'em to the bitter end, let the chips fall whur they happened to. No tail, no bear!

"An' so they parted, the Roman losin' his bear, but retainin' his self-respect, an' the tarred man goin' on the hunt of a tail. His record is plenty brief after that. He gits his tail, but only finds himself a mock an' a laughin' stock. He can't git along successful without his business manager, an' goes to ruin prompt an' unanimous, draggin' his tail behind him.

"An' thus he passes off from the map an' is gone like a puff of smoke. An' that is the last I ever hears of the haughty man-bear."

A JUSTICE'S SILK GOWN.

A Member of the Supreme Court Decided a Disputed Point.

It is reported that one of the justices of the United States Supreme Court recently decided a case on sight, and without hearing or reading a word of evidence or law bearing on it. This would seem surprising without a qualification went with the statement. It came about in this way: In a parlor gathering a young lady remarked that she had just finished, with the aid of a lady relative, a silk gown for her uncle, who is one of the leading bishops of the Episcopal Church. To this a reply was made, by another, that she had only recently seen a gown that was made for a judge of the supreme court of Ohio. She added that all the gowns recently donned by the Ohio supreme court were made in this city by the lady who has made so many for the justices of the United States Supreme Court.

"But," insisted the first talker, "you know a judge's gown is by no means as extensive an affair as that of a bishop, though just now I forget exactly how many yards of silk it took to make the gown."

The other replied that she was satisfied that there was more silk in a judge's gown. At this moment the portly form of a justice of the Supreme Court appeared on the scene, and one of the ladies appealed to him to decide the case. In a good-natured way he answered that he always hesitated before considering a case which involved in any manner the question of church and state, unless it was presented to him in the most formal way, but that he would go so far as to decide one branch of the proposition, as he, by a circumstance, happened to have the figures in his mind.

Then, assuming the judicial voice, he replied: "It takes thirteen yards of double or twenty-six of single width silk to make the gown I wear. Now, go and catch your uncle and measure his gown, and you have the whole matter."

IN LOCAL STUDIOS

Mr. E. H. Miller has been recently dividing his attention between a number of portraits and a water color of children watching a train. He expects to hold an exhibition later in the season, where many of the water colors made last season in the Catskills and at Manchester-by-the-Sea will be brought to light.

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Edward Siebert will send to the Cosmos Club the portrait on which he is now at work if it be finished in time; failing of this, he will exhibit in its place some of his broadly handled out-door studies.

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The statue of Pere Marquette, which the state of Wisconsin obtained permission to place in Statuary Hall, is being cut in Italy, and is expected here before long. Some time ago Congress passed the necessary resolution granting Pere Marquette a place in Statuary Hall, for though each state is allowed by law to place two statues of eminent citizens in the Capitol, Pere Marquette, while closely connected with the history of Wisconsin, was a French subject. A statue of the late Senator Kenna will before long be placed in the Capitol by the state of West Virginia.

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The full-length portrait of Senator Voorhees, which Mr. E. F. Andrews has just finished, will be exhibited in the Corcoran Gallery for a short time until a place is ready for it in the new Congressional Library, where it is destined to hang. Senator Voorhees is shown standing in an easy attitude at the head of the Senate steps, with the new Library building, which he so zealously championed, rising in the background. Mr. Andrews has completed the portrait of Senator Blackburn,