TAKING A DRIVE

The hostler, as he handed Mr. Creamly the reins, looked dubiously at his gold-bowed spectacles, and asked him in rather a pertinent (impertinent, according to Mr. Creamly, would perhaps be the better adjective) tone, if he was used to driving; and it was with vivid recollections of the family horses over whose backs he had flicked the braided lash in boyhood's sunny hours, that he assumed a look of lofty surprise as he answered:

"Certainly, my man—let go of his head."

There are horses and horses.

The geometrical steed of Mr. Oliver Creamly's childhood, whose back bore a singular resemblance to the venerable hair trunk in the attic, was impervious to flagellation, and indeed Oliver though he used rather to enjoy it, except when it roused him from the sweet slumbers in which he often indulged in conveying him to town.

But this horse of which we now speak was an equine fiend, and Mr. Creamly had hardly given the order to the hostler, as above stated, before he repented his rashness, and but for pride would have exclaimed, "Catch hold of his head!" For he immediately took occasion to erect himself in a sudden manner upon his hind legs, and the thought flitted through Mr. Creamly's agonized brain, what if he should fall over backward and break me somewhere?

Mr. Creamly's wife was with him, and it is a characteristic feature of her sex that her first remark, after she had ejaculated the words, "Land of compassion!" were, "There, I knew it would be just so!"—a remark by no means calculated to soothe the dominant passions surging beneath Creamly's single-breasted waistcoat.

But when the gallant steed had once more retouched his native earth, in a slang but expressive phrase, he "got up and dusted" to that extent which reduced Mr. Creamly's skill as a driver to merely a frantic holding on with the hands to the reins, and letting him "dust," which he did most liberally.

Mrs Creamly, with the usual sublimity of heroism that developes itself in the sex under the most trying circumstances, said she guessed that she'd get out, as she saw that her spouse didn't appear to know much about driving; but, as he braced his feet anew and said, "Whoa—gently—good horse!" he indicated to her, with unmartial sternness, that if she didn't keep her mouth closed, she might lose her false teeth.

Creamly concluded he must have been going about seven miles a minute when the dreadful brute stopped suddenly and unexpectedly, at the same time executing a sidewise jump, which is called "shying." The cause was a wheelbarrow by the roadside, propelled by a small boy; the effect was a propulsion of Mr. Oliver Creamly's frame toward the dasher of the carriage, and the contact of his wife's head with his spinal column.

Her remarks, for obvious reasons, we forbear to repeat, but they were suggestive of a total loss of temper. One of the flowers of speech she used was "idiotic old fool." Perhaps she referred to the horse; but, judging from subsequent personal allusions, this might be open to doubt.

And then the horse stood still in the dry ditch by the roadside, occasionally looking around as Creamly remarked, "Back! back, sir!" with a pendulous motion of the under lip which was the nearest approach to a horse laugh that was ever seen, and which, at the same time, suggested derision.

Then Creamly pulled on the reins, at first gently; and as his angry passions surmounted his fears, he pulled with a vehemence which if the reins did not break, gave fair promise of drawing the beast through the dasher.

"Take the whip to him," said Mrs. C., with irritability apparent in her voice; and he did so, not without misgivings, however, as gratuitous advice from the same source had occasionally brought him to grief. Fortunately his wife sat down on the side of his head as the buggy went over. Perhaps she had a vague idea that he was the horse and she was holding him down, but she was mistaken, for that sagacious animal was making excellant time toward the livery stable, and had the remains of the vehicle which he was propelling been right side up, we have no doubt but that he would have reached that haven of repose before the news of the mishap.

"I hope you're satisfied now!" said Mrs. Creamly, with an intense calmness born of suppressed wrath and despair, as she shook the dust from her garments and felt of her back hair. Creamly buttoned up his coat to hide his shirt bosom, which was in rags; scooped a thimbleful of mud from his left eye, and shook some loose gravel from his left ear; wiped the blood from his nose with his torn coat sleeve, and said that he was, perfectly, and asked her, with a show of asperity and a scratched face, what she would have done if she had been with an unskillful driver, a question she was too much dazed to answer, though the matter has been referred to by her several times since; but as she is somewhat given to hasty figures of speech, we will drop the subject.

The stable-keeper drove up, with a team, and asked Creamly if he knew what he'd done, as he helped him in. Creamly thought the question superfluous, as he looked at his damaged clothing, and thought of the topics of conversation his wife would indulge in during the long winter evenings after he had retired; but he calmly said he thought he knew, and asked the man why he gave him such a horse to drive.

The stable-keeper was a man fluent of speech and with an unpleasant readiness of profanity—but the gist of his conversation was just this—that he thought any—— fool could drive a stable horse that wimmen had driv for nigh seven year.

As Creamly remarked in the beginning of the discourse, he thought so too, and so he told the man of the stable, but still he did not appear to be satisfied.

Creamly has borrowed $100 and paid the bill, but is more and more convinced that walking is healthy exercise, and that to so much driving and riding are due the lastitude and general debility of the bloated aristocracy.—*Boston Commercial Bulletin.*

HOW A CONFEDERATE EARN HIS FREEDOM.

The Knoxville Press and Herald of a recent date has the following:

In conversation the other day with a merchant in this city, who, during the War, was a member of the immortal Stonewall brigade, he told the following, of which he was an eye-witness:

In April, 1864, he was among the large number of Confederate prisoners confined in Camp Douglas prison, the commandant of which was Col. B. J. Sweet, a kind-hearted officer and true gentleman. When the news of the assassination of President Lincoln was received the flag was lowered at half-mast as a mark of respect; but owing to the great height of the staff, the banner of which was of the largest size, was it blown so far out that there was imminent danger of the lanyard giving way, when it would come down with a rush.

To obviate this it was determined to send a man to the top of the staff and remove the pulley, and a volunteer was called for among the guards to perform the patriotic service. The danger was great, and the commandant offered a discharge from the service to the man who would climb the giddy height. With this inducement a young man stepped forward and announced his readiness to make the attempt.

He was then furnished with a pair of leg-guards, containing small, sharp projections something similar to those worn by telegraph constructionists and with a stout belt buckled around the waist and encircling the flag-staff, he commenced the toilsome ascent. Slowly he proceeded, stopping at intervals to tighten his belt, which was rendered necessary by the gradually diminishing size of the mast. Onward and upward he went, with the eyes of every man inside the walls fixed upon him with an eagerness almost painful in its intensity. Still the daring man continued, growing smaller and smaller, until from his lofty altitude he seemed no larger than a child. He had almost reached the top, and reached out his hand to seize the lanyard, which fluttered in reach just above his head. In an instant the cheers of thousands of anxious spectators would break forth in admiration and encouragement, when the cord eluded his clasp, he lost his balance and fell!—down, with lightning rapidity, the belt tightening every inch of the way, until the tension became so great the faithless band, worn by the rapid fraction and the momentum of decent, gave way. The unfortunate soldier fell headlong, striking the platform at the bottom of the flag-staff, and crushing through the heavy planking of which it was composed.

His horrified companions at once ran to his assistance and picked up the mangled form, but the injuries the unfortunate man had sustained were fatal, and he died in a short time.

The commandant, though deeply regreting the accident, still wished the position of the flag changed, but the tempting offer of $500 dollars in green backs and a discharge from the service could not induce any of the garrison to make the attempt, with the fate of their comrade still fresh in their minds.

Col. Sweet then made the same offer to the Confederate prisoners and one daring fellow, a young artilleryman, announced his willingness to try the dangerous feat. The proper equipments were furnished, and with a steadfast nerve he slowly made his way upward till he reached the top. The lanyard was removed from the end of the staff and secured properly lower down, when the unshaken Johnnie safely returned to terra firma once more, when, with the commendations of the soldiers on duty as well as of his comrades, he received his discharge from prison and five crisp $100 greenbacks, more than sufficient to pay his traveling expenses home, while the flag floated at half-mast in honor of the dead President, fanned by the breezes from the great Northern lakes.

Through a collision of two freight trains on a Western railroad, a car containing barrels marked "mess pork" was destroyed, when it was discovered, by the smashing of the barrels, that instead of pork, they had been filled with whisky. It is supposed to have been shipped from Louisville, and the case is now in the hands of revenue agents for investigation.

The late Henry Wilson is credited with having said, at a London dinner one time, that in the course of a trip through Ireland he had not seen a drunken man, never heard a boy swear nor saw him smoke, and that he found that all the nations of the earth Ireland loved America the most.

WASHINGTON LETTER.

Where the Money Comes From—The Bureau of Engraving and Printing—Eight Hundred Female Employes—Their Moral Disabilities.

Special Correspondence Bismarck Tribune:

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 20, 1876.—Everybody knows the way the money goes, but it is not so well known whence it comes. In these days of financial depression and politico financial schemes and remedies, Congress has turned its attention to the discussion of war questions and the cruelties practiced in military prisons. We will hear, alas! too much of these before the close of the Centennial year, and I am sure you will excuse your correspondent for having left the reporters gallery, above the heated arena, to spend an hour in the place whence the money comes—the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. This bureau has eight hundred female employes. "There are two things," says Jean Paul, "that a woman cannot do; she can neither train a dog nor command an army." He might have added, nor steal a large sum of money. Perhaps this last mentioned good disability is what recommends here. One of them passed me with twenty-five millions of dollars in her little hand! What if Katie King should find employment here and dematerialize with that amount in her hand!

The initial step in the organization of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing was taken in 1862, under the administration of Secretary Chase. I was an attempt which proved eminently successful, to apply machinery to the trimming and separating of the Treasury notes, that work having been previously executed by manual labor.

At this period the public issues were printed by the Bank Note Companies in New York City, and forwarded thence to Washington for signature by the proper officers, the Register and Treasurer of the United States. A change of system, however, soon ensued, for it was a physical impossibility for the officers to perform so large an amount of clerical work in addition to the more important duties involved upon them, and by authority of Congress they were authorized to employ other persons to discharge the mere ministerial duty of affixing their official signatures. But the impracticability of this system soon became apparent; not only was the cost of issuing public securities very much increased thereby, but, in the multiplicity of signatures, there was found an element of insecurity seriously affecting the public credit. Mr. Chase gave to the subject a prolonged and deliberate attention. It having been suggested that mechanical agencies for this work might be adopted, he was favorably impressed by the idea, and was the first one who inaugurated the policy of printing, together with the signatures of the proper officers, the seal of the Treasury upon all forms of the public issue. This policy was also approved by an act of Congress February 25, 1862, and, according to its provisions, steps were taken to procure the necessary machinery, and quarters therefor, assigned within the Treasurer's building. There soon followed, as the needs of the public service became manifest, inventions which enabled the trimming and separating of the notes to be performed by machinery instead of by hand, and with a very great saving of expense. Urged by considerations thus suggested, and stimulated by the success of the work then prosecuted in the Department, it was determined that an effort should be made to do, under official oversight, the entire mechanical work upon public securities. By an act of Congress June 11, 1862, this was also granted, and prior to the passage of this act none of the public securities of the United States had been engraved or printed otherwise than by private contract. The Secretary of the Treasury was prompt to act in accordance with the authority thus conferred, and at once secured first-class engravers and all necessary machinery to accomplish all printing required by the Government independent of outside corporations. Thus it will be seen that while at the outset the Bureau of Engraving and Printing was an administrative necessity, its subsequent development into its present proportions has resulted logically from the pressure of public exigences and demands, especially those by which security and economy have been demanded as chief considerations, in the issuance of public securities.

Respecting the relative merits of a system relying upon engraved safeguards, it seems to be settled that a distinctive paper, similar to the one now in use in the manufacture of public securities, the production of which is guarded by governmental authority, is the most essential element of safety. The most important feature of this paper, and that by which it is distinguished from all other bank paper, is a localized fibre ingrained at the time of manufacture, into the texture of the article and so distributed as to give it a distinctive feature. This paper is easily recognized and the sole right to manufacture the same belongs exclusively to the Government.

The excellence and superiority of the Government's engraved work is attested by the fact that at the Vienna Exhibition, 1872, where specimen vignettes were exhibited, the first premium was awarded the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

The engraving division of the bureau has from the outset produced work of the highest art and merit, and to this division belongs also the distinction of having made several important inventions whereby the art of engraving has been advanced and signal economies introduced into public service.

The following date will give a general view of the engraving process: A piece of decarbonized steel, one-eight inch in thickness and somewhat larger than a bank-note, being selected, the preparatory work is that of softening it by artificial means. This being done, it is ready for the engraver. The principal engraved work by the bureau consists of vignette portraits, and the ornamental work upon bank-notes, with which all are familiar. The denomination counters, consisting of a variety of oval and circular forms interlacing each other in a series of lines and elongated dots, thus forming curious and complex figures which are executed by a geometrical lath, a complicated and ingenious mechanism, having almost kaleidoscopic power. When the engravers' work is finished, the steel plate is next subjected to a hardening process, after which it is placed on a transfer press and a decarbonized cylinder roll being adjusted over it, and then submitted to the pressure, the roll being moved backward and forward until it has received an impression of the original plate. This roll is again hardened and made to repeat as many times as desired the original plate engraving by means simply of a transfer press. It may, perhaps, be interesting to know that Jacob Perkins, of Massachusetts, was the inventor of the transfer press which revolutionized the art of engraving, changed all its former conditions, and gave it a practical and popular recognition.

During the last fiscal year the Bureau of Engraving and Printing finished and delivered to the Treasurer of the United States in notes, bonds and other securities, the amount of $426,971,137, and to Commissioner of Internal Revenue, 105,620,000 stamps. It is due to the management of this great establishment to mention, that in producing this enormous amount of work, not a fraction of a ten cent note has been mislaid or unaccounted for!

Neither ex-Governor Davis, in his farewell message, or Governor Pillsbury in his inaugural address, mention the importance of fostering the trade with Manitoba and British North American Provinces, although every other less important feature of the State's greatness came in for a mention.

The history of the Army of the Cumberland has been completed, and is the first history of the war which does anything like justice to the western army. The northwestern states of Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin were very largely represented in the Army of the Cumberland; indeed nearly a third of its force was from these states. The history was written at the request of Major General Thomas, chiefly from his private military journal, and is intensely interesting, especially to his old soldiers. It is published by Robert Clarke &Co., Cincinnati.

IMPERFECT PAGE