

An Unimpeachable Witness.

Solomon was called upon to decide some knotty cases of law and equity in his time, and the records of his court are esteemed pretty good authority. Among other cases he had to decide one about the ownership of a child which was claimed by two motherly women. A suit somewhat like this lately came before a Cincinnati justice, and was decided on similar principles. A railroad man had an educated mocking-bird in his office. The bird could do a great many tricks with his voice, and among other imitative utterances he could mimic a locomotive whistle, and turn himself into a full-fledged calliope upon provocation. He was a little lame in his left leg, and among some peculiarities of plumage he had one extra long feather in his tail.

The bird disappeared from his cage one day. The owner in a day or two visited the shop of a bird-man to look around among the tuncful prisoners. One fellow appeared to know him, but he had no recollection of the feathered acquaintance. He looked at him closely, and the bird seemed to say by the twinkling of his eye and the set of his head: "Don't you know me?" This bird appeared to be lame in his right leg, and had no particularly long-tailed feather. As the railroad man was turning away the bird got up steam and gave the shrill whistle of a locomotive, and danced round like a conductor threading the aisle of a car. There could be no doubt about it, but how changed! The railroad man asked the merchant where he got that bird? He had bought him, of course, but he could not tell from whom. The owner claimed his bird, but the railroad man recognized his claim, so the case was taken to court, and the bird too. The bird man and five of his friends all swore like parrots that the bird had just come up from the south, and could not, therefore, be claimant's bird. The railroad man's witnesses, even, could not recognize the bird in court as their old acquaintance, with a lame left leg and a long tail-feather. The owner was confident, however, and told the judge that if the bird would only speak he could settle the matter.

Then the bird, as if it knew the case was going against him, did speak, and the judge told the man to take his bird. It was found that his feathers had been pulled, and out, and stained, and that a toe-nail on his right foot had been twisted and pinched off, so as to make it lower than the other one. But the mocking-bird was not before the court before the mouths of half a dozen men. This case of evidence will never be found in any of the law books.—St. Louis Republican.

The Instinct of Imitation.

The history of religions from beginning to end is full of facts showing how men are guided, not by arguments but by examples, and exhibiting the tendency they have to reproduce what they have seen or heard, and to regulate their lives according to the bright and triumphant examples that stand before their eyes. Many victories, esteemed by apostles to be the effects of persuasion, are rather to be attributed to that recondite influence which leads men irresistibly to imitate their fellows. And does not this same agency of imitation appear in the body politic, transforming little by little, but yet radically, the habits, the opinions, and even the beliefs of men? Nothing is easier, than, for a man who has acquired an influence over the populace, to bring them over to his own sentiments, ideas and chimeras. And the observation is confirmed by daily experience in the education of children. In a school we often find the external characteristics—the tone, the gait, the carriage, changing from year to year. The reason of this is that some dominant spirits—two or three pupils who used to have an ascendancy over the rest—have left; others are now in their place, and everything wears a different face. As the models change, so do the copies. The pupils no longer applaud or jeer at the same things as before.

This instinct of imitation is especially developed in persons of defective education or civilization. Savages copy quicker and better than Europeans. Like children, they have a natural faculty for mimicry, and cannot refrain from imitating everything they see. There is in their minds nothing to offset this tendency to imitation. Every well-instructed man has within himself a considerable reserve of ideas upon which to fall back; this reserve is wanting in the savage and in the child; they live in all the occurrences which take place before them; their life is bound up in what they see and hear; they are the playthings of external influences. In civilized nations persons without culture are in the like situation. Send a chambermaid and a philosopher into a country, the language of which neither is acquainted with, and it is likely that the chambermaid will learn it before the philosopher. He has something else to do; he can live with his own thoughts; as for her, if she cannot talk, she is undone. The instinct of imitation is in an inverse ratio to the power of mental abstraction.—Perrin's Papillon, in Popular Science Monthly for December.

WASHINGTON dispatches note the fact that western congressmen who have arrived there state that for some time past there has been an active correspondence between Mr. Maynard, of Tennessee, and some Illinois congressmen, having for its object the organization of a combination between western and southern members of congress. Mr. Blaine for disapproval, unless the latter will pledge himself not to appoint congressmen implicated in the Credit Mobilier transactions to their old chairmanships of committees.

PROPOSALS.

PROPOSALS

FOR MAIL, LOCKS AND KEYS.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C., Sept. 17, 1873.

SEPARATE SEALED PROPOSALS.

Will be received at this Department until 12 o'clock noon, on the FIFTEENTH DAY OF DECEMBER, 1873, for furnishing, under separate contracts, two different kinds of padlocks and keys: one for the sole and exclusive use of registered through mails, and the other for the sole and exclusive use of street letter boxes.

Every proposal must be accompanied with duplicate samples of the locks and keys thereby offered to be furnished; one of each kind of sample lock to be riveted up and finished, and another to be open or unripped, so that its internal structure and arrangement may readily be examined. Each sample should be plainly marked with the bidder's name, and if the same, or any part thereof, be covered by a patent, the name of the patentee must be attached thereto. It must also be such as shall be warranted not to infringe on any patented invention of which the bidder is not the patentee or assignee.

The internal joint or arrangement of the locks offered, and the particular form of the keys requisite to open them, must not be like any now or heretofore in public or private use, and must not have been exhibited, described or exposed, in any manner tending to impair their security and usefulness for the mails; and it will be an important consideration in favor of any lock and key submitted if, being otherwise suitable, it shall have been invented especially for the purpose for which it is offered.

Locks suitable for the registered mails, or for the street letter boxes, should not exceed eight ounces each in weight, and should possess such degree of security, strength and durability. Every such lock, while it must be secure from being opened by any other means than by its peculiar key, (unless designedly broken by extreme and obvious violence,) must be devoid of any intricacy in opening with the proper key, and be capable of being securely shut without the use of the key. The shape or size of the locks for registered mails should be such as to make them distinguishable at a glance from the locks of the street letter boxes, and both should, by their external shape, be instantly distinguishable from the mail locks now in use.

The Registered Mail Locks should be made of hard and tough brass, excepting the shackle and rivets, which must be iron, the latter well-shouldered, countersunk, and headed at both ends. The shell or case of such locks must not have sharp angles, and must be free from any projections, or appendages likely to be compressed, battered, or knocked out of order by the peculiar hard usage of the service. Each lock to have outside upon its face, in letters sufficiently large and distinct, "U. S. Registered Mail," and also such number, (in figures, each, not less than 5/16 of an inch long,) as may be ordered; a different number, not exceeding four places of figures in any one lock, being required on each lock. Such words and figures are to be sunk by stamping, if the shell be made of wrought or sheet brass, or to be raised if the shell be made of cast metal. All the locks for registered mails are to be uniformly alike, excepting the numbers marked on them, and all their keys, which should be case-hardened iron and nickel-plated, are to be also alike, so that any one of such keys which may be furnished for them shall easily fit and readily open any one and all of the locks. The keys should have a shank nearly two inches long between the bit and the bow, and the bow should be sold, with a small hole through it, and have stamped on one side the words, "U. S. Registered Mail," and upon the opposite side such number (in figures not less than one-eighth of an inch long) as may be ordered; every key to have a different number, of which none will exceed four places of figures.

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The character which this Magazine possesses for variety, enterprise, artistic wealth, and literary culture that has kept pace with it, if it has not led the times, should cause its commendation to regard it with justifiable complacency. It also entitles them to a great claim upon the public gratitude. The Magazine has done good and not evil all the days of its life.—Brooklyn Eagle.

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TERMS--The "Country Gentleman" is published weekly, on the following terms, when paid strictly in advance: One copy, one year, \$2.00; four copies, \$7.00, and an additional copy for the year FREE to the sender of the club.

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LARGE STOCK OF HARDWARE, &c. AT PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA.

In the matter of Plummer, Young & Co., bankrupts. By virtue of an order in the above entitled cause from the United States District Court, for the eastern district of Virginia, and to me directed, I shall offer for sale at public auction, at the store of Plummer, Young & Co., at Petersburg, Virginia, on THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4TH, 1873, at 10 o'clock a. m., the entire stock of HARDWARE AND CHOSES IN ACTION, surrendered by said bankrupts, as an entirety. The stock is a large, well selected, and very valuable one, and presents a great opportunity to persons desiring to purchase.

TERMS OF SALE--One-fourth cash; with credit of six, twelve and eighteen months; notes to be satisfactorily secured, for the balance. No bid of less than fifty thousand dollars will be accepted.

Full information with privilege to examine the stock will be given upon application. DAVID B. PARKER, U. S. Marshal.

IMPORTANT SALE

LARGE STOCK OF DRY GOODS, &c. AT PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA.

In the matter of E. G. James & Co., bankrupts. By virtue of an order in the above entitled cause from the United States District Court, for the eastern district of Virginia, and to me directed, I shall offer for sale at public auction, at the store of E. G. James & Co., Petersburg, Virginia, on THURSDAY, THE 4TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 1873, at 10 o'clock a. m., the entire stock of DRY GOODS AND CHOSES IN ACTION, surrendered by said bankrupts as an entirety. The stock is a large, well-selected and very valuable one, and presents a great opportunity to persons desiring to purchase.

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Full information with privilege to examine the stock will be given upon application. DAVID B. PARKER, U. S. Marshal.

DISTRICT COURT OF THE UNITED STATES FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN--GARR-

Notice is hereby given, that on the 6th day of November, 1873, the Schooner "Mary J. Kennerly," her tackle, &c., was seized by the Marshal of the United States for said district, and the same is libeled and proceeded in this court for condemnation for the causes in the said libel set forth, and that said cause will stand for trial at the court-room in the city of Richmond, on the 24th day of November, 1873, when and where all persons are warned to appear to show cause why condemnation should not be decreed, and to intervene for their interests.

DAVID B. PARKER, U. S. Marshal.

DISTRICT COURT OF THE UNITED STATES FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA.

Notice is hereby given, that on the 11th day of November, 1873, two (2) boxes Cigars, valued at \$6.00, claimed by Thomas K. Roberts: one (1) empty ten-gallon Keg, valued at \$1.00; one (1) barrel Apple Brandy and one (1) Copper Still, valued at \$60.00, and claimed by Dr. William T. Thompson, was seized by the Marshal of the United States for said district, as forfeited to the use of the United States, and the same is libeled and proceeded in this court in the name of the United States for condemnation for the causes in the said libel set forth, and that said cause will stand for trial, at the court-room in the city of Richmond, on the 1st day of December, a. d. 1873, when and where all persons are warned to appear to show cause why condemnation should not be decreed, and to intervene for their interests.

DAVID B. PARKER, U. S. Marshal.

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DAVID B. PARKER, U. S. Marshal.

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