THE AVANT COURIER.

"Melican Man."

Not many people are aware that there is a genuine Chinese laundry in Des Moines, owned and operated exclusively by some almond-eyed Orientals that speak only pigeon English and are but six months distant from Pekin. Such is the fact, and no small amount of sport the queer language there spoken furnishes to the people living near the laundry. Yesterday afternoon a coal miner, black in face and garment from the dust of the mines, tumbled into the building and curiously eyed the Orientals. He was uncommonly heavily laden with beer. It might be an exaggeration to say that the froth from the numerous glasses he had drank was visible in his ears, but he was extremely well filled. After scanning the Chinaman and fixtures a short time, he inquired:

'What kind of store's this?'

'No understandee,' responded a disciple of Confucius.

'What doing here?' continued the miner.

'Muchwashee, cheap washee, Melican man, said the Chinaman.

Wash him, how much?'

'One dollee one dozen, Melicanman.'

'How much for one?' said he miner.

A little rapid figuring on the apparatus used by the Celestials for mathematical purposes furnished an answer. 'Ten cents,' was the response.

The miner slowly and carefully explored his pocket and finally fished from its depth a paper dime which he handed to the launder, and said: 'Here, wash me.' Suiting the action to the word he disrobed himself. At first the Chinaman failed to comprehend his meaning, but by the time he was ready they fully understood it, and, seizing him so quickly that he could make no resistance, they pitched him into a stationary tub, and ere he could protest or think, they had turned a stream of hot water on him. He bawled and kicked; swore in underground and over ground; made desperate attempts to escape, but was firmly held by three Chinamen, while a fourth played on him with a cold water pipe. All the while, too, the water faucet was at work, so that he was alternately boiled and chilled. They then soaped him thoroughly and gave him another dose of hot and cold water, and permitted him to emerge from the tub, a cleaner man than he had probably been for years. As he started for his garments an honest Chinaman seized a sad-iron and said: 'Waltee, washee and iron ten cent.' The miner concluded that he had his money's worth and declined anything else. Thoroughly sobered, he clad himself and left the laundry. The next time he feels inclined to joke he will probably select some other kind of a victim.—[Des Moines (Iowa) State Register.

Family Discussions.

[Burlington Hawkeye.]

Yesterday noon a bold, bad boy who lives on Columbia street went home from school and said: "Dear mother, mayn't I go in my bare feet this afternoon? None of the boys wear shoes in the spring." But his mother said: "No, my darling boy; I cannot let you go bare-footed, and if you tease me about it I will wattle your tender cuticle with the unkind end of a cheerful ekate-strap." So the bold, bad boy closed the debate with a sigh, and, when the yeas and nays were called, his motion did not prevail, and the house took a recess. But the boy went out of the yard by the alleyway, and took off his shoes and stockings, and hid them behind the woodpile, and scudded merrily off to school, and everybody admired his flat, muddy, bare feet. But when he got out of school the ground was covered with snow, and he had a very solemn time hippity-hopping back home, and when he got there he couldn't tell the woodpile from a haystack, and his shoes and stockings might as well have been in the middle of the ocean for all the good they did him. So he went into the house, and, after a great deal of filibustering, he made his report, which was tabled, and the house went into a committee of the whole on the state of the boy. His mother took the floor, and after an exciting and highly interesting session the committee rose and the house adjourned, while the boy rubbed such portions of his anatomy as he could reach, and framed a bill for the more perfect prevention of chilblains.

Romance of the Rebellion

[From the Indianapolis Herald.]

Sixteen years ago a wealthy Indianapolis gentleman had a daughter who was the pet of the household and a society belle. A young man, son of another prominent citizen, wooed the daughter, and, failing to find favor in the eyes of her father, conspired and carried to a successful an elopement. The young couple were married and located in Texas. At the outbreak of the war the young husband enlisted in a Confederate regiment, and the wife, disguised in male attire, enlisted in the same regiment and followed her husband to the field. During one of the engagements in which the regiment participated the wife was wounded by a minnie bullet, and the husband, still ignorant of her disguise, helped to carry her from the field. In dressing the wound the sex of the dashing trooper was discovered, and she was discharged from the regiment and came north. The husband was killed in a succeeding engagement. Her relatives never forgave the marriage, and refused to recognize the wife when she returned. The father still lives in a neighboring county, and is counted one of the wealthiest citizens, while the wo[illegible] broken in health, lives in a miserable little house in an unfrequented alley of this city.

An enterprising grocer in the town of Santa Cruz, California, has adopted an original method of business. Each side of the store is fitted up for business on its own account. In the general arrangement each side is a duplicate of the other, the difference being that one side is a cash and the other credit. When a customer comes [illegible] he first queries, "Do you wish to buy for cash or on account?" If a cash customer the goods and prices on the cash side are shown, but if it is one who wants credit he is shown the other side, and made to realize the value of ready money.

Outwitted.

An amusing story is told of how a rich banker gained a son-in-law. Like many men of means, while he was extremely civil to those beneath him in social status, he allowed no lovers to approach his daughter, unless they were wealthy men. A favorite clerk of his, however, was admitted to his house on favorable terms, and being thrown into the society of the beautiful daughter, naturally became enamored to her. As a consequence the youth knowing the hopelessness of his passion, grew pale and ill though he declared himself, the banker shook his head. 'I tell you what it is, my boy, you are in love, he said to him. Whereupon the clerk confessed his passion for the daughter of a wealthy and haughty gentleman who would never consent to the union, 'Well, my boy, I'll give you a bit of advice. If the daughter is fair she is worth running a risk for. Look here! there are $500 and two months leave of absence. Run away with the girl. Bah! don't look so stupid. I did the same thing before you, and it never hurt me.' The clerk fell on his knees, and was on the point of making a confession when the old gentleman left him, to avoid a scene. The young man considered and acted, and the consequence was that the next day week there was no daughter at the dinner table of the banker at the country house. The house was in consternation, and search was made in every direction. A note, however, was found on her dressing table, conveying the customary prayer for forgiveness, and one enclosed from the young clerk stating that, believing that, ere his father-in-law received the letter, he (the clerk) would be his son-in-law. The pill was a bitter one, but the banker was wise enough to swallow it in silence, and receive the runaway couple with a good grace.

Why it Failed.

Col. Finnigan, was a Florida planter, wealthy and hospitable. To the poor he ways always kind, and even the shiftless he would not turn coldly away. A man who had often been the object of his bounty was named Jake Hartroff. Jake was a squatter in the woods, where he had a log cabin and a small clearing. Upon this land he had sometimes raised corn, and with his gun captured game. Of the game he ate the flesh, and the skins he traded for whisky. Long before the winter was over he was sure to be out of corn, in which emergency he would bring his bag to the Colonel for a supply, which was generally furnished. Once upon a time Jake came with his bag very early in the season—in fact the winter had just set in.

'Why, how is this, Jake?' demanded Finnigan. 'Seems to me you are rather early in your call for corn.'

'Well, Colonel, fact is my crop failed this year season.'

'Failed! How it that? I thought this had been an uncommonly good season for corn.'

'Yuas, I s'pose it has, Colonel. But y'see I forgot to plant.'

The Man That Scares Blaine.

[New York Tribune Letter.]

It is a noticeable feature of the canvass that the fear of an entirely new candidate starting up ghost-like in the midst of the revels at Cincinnati haunts the politicians here in Washington, whereas throughout the country such an occurrence is rarely spoken of as possible. There is a story told of Mr. Blaine, which is characteristic enough to be true. Judge Jeremiah Black, meeting the ex-speaker one day, asked him if he felt apprehensive that Senator Morton would defeat him. 'Morton will have a fair strength in the convention,' replied Mr. Blaine, 'but it will not represent a single electoral vote. You see it would never do to nominate such a candidate. I'm not at all afraid of him.'

'Are you afraid of Mr. Bristow?'

'No; Bristow has a good deal of strength among the people, but it is not organized. I don't see how he can possibly get a majority in the convention.'

'Well, are you afraid of Senator Conkling?' asked Judge Black, going on with his catechism.

'He cannot carry his own State in the convention or at the election, and his candidacy is an absurdity. No, I'm not afraid of him.'

'Is there anybody you are afraid of?'

'Yes, there is,' replied the ex-Speaker, with a serious air.

Well, who is he?'

'The Great Unknown.'

Independence Square.

The lamp posts at the entrance to Independence Square, Philadelphia, are not only quite pretty, but appropriate also. On the base of the posts appear the names of the original thirteen States, and above them on a part made in imitation of the independence bell is the inscription "Proclaim liberty throughout the land," etc. Each lamp, of very beautiful design, has four representations of the bell upon it, surrounded by thirteen stars. They add much to the appearance of the square so greatly improved by the changes that have been made since last spring.

Another Sad Picture.

The wife of Wm. O. Avery, late chief clerk of the treasury department, is an applicant for a position under Secretary Bristow. She is in a very poor pecuniary condition and suffers mentally over the downfall of her husband. A few short months ago she stood proudly beside her husband 'mid the "upper tendom" of Washington society. How surely the bad deeds of men come flying back to the overthrow of the perpetrator, and how sadly are the innocent oftentimes engulfed in the ruin created by the guilty.

A Most Remarkable Story.

[Cuthbert, (Ga.) Messenger.]

One day last week some negro children were playing near a creek in Quitman county, when an alligator crawled out and swallowed one of the children. Next day a party caught the alligator, cut him open and took the little negro out alive. This is no newspaper lie, but was reported to us by a lawyer, who substantiates the statement by two negroes who saw the child.

An old fellow, sixty-nine years old, is "going to school" in Susquehanna. He didn't think much of school until a lightning-rod man made him believe that fifteen six were thirty-five.—[Wilkes Gleaner.

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