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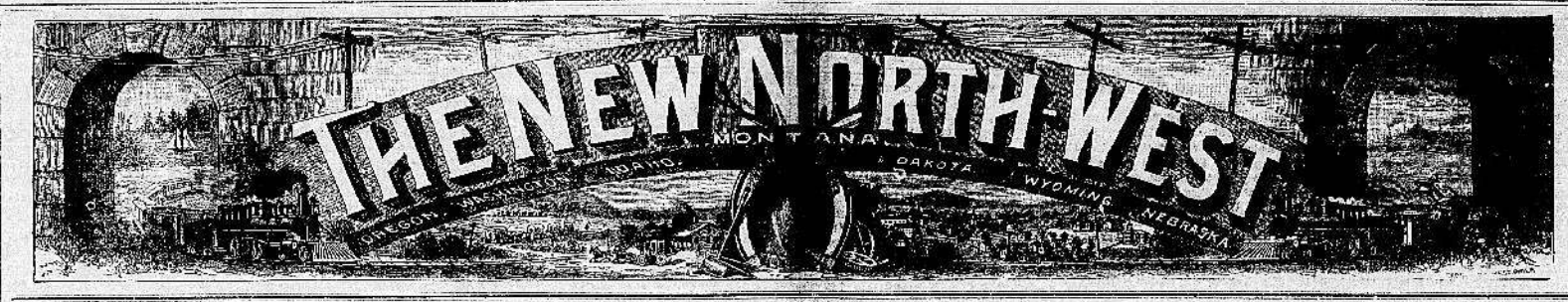

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Johnathan and His Continent.

By Max O'Rell, Author of "John Bull and His Island," "John Bull, Jr., Etc," and "Jack Allyn."

[Translated by James Paul Blonet. Copyrighted by Cassell & Co., New York, and published by special arrangement through the American Press Association. Paul Blouet (Max O'Rell) is a non-friendly cousin of Freeman, who has dived into the depths more yet subtle in the American race. The book from which the following extracts are made is his latest production, and dated from Washington during his recent visit to America.]

CHAPTER XXI.

Are the Americans good? Are they intelligent? Have they genius? Are they the right to be proud of a national literature which includes poets, historians, novelists, essayists and critics of a superior order?

In the domain of romance, we find writers whose reputation is the family patrimony of Europe as well as America. Who has not read in his youth the stories of Fenimore Cooper? Who has not thrilled over the wild exploits of Poe? Among the most famous names in fiction are also Washington Irving, N. Parker Willis, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Marion Crawford, Frank Stockton, George W. Cable, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Henry James, W. D. Howells, Julian Hawthorne, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Charles Dudley Warner, Bret Harte, which last a poet, Edward Eggleston, J. Brander Matthews. All these names are household words wherever the English tongue is spoken. The greatest success of the century has been attained by an American novel directed against slavery and instrumental in its destruction.

In the philosophical essay, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Robert Ingersoll are unimpeachable in their diverse styles. The first shines by its originality and a subtle power of reasoning, which puts you in mind of Pascal; the second by the grandeur of his language, his keen, clear reasoning power, and his humorous subjects.

History is, perhaps, of all the branches of American literature, that which has found its highest expression. Washington Irving, with his History of Columbus, Prescott with

*Eg manager, as the reader will remember, is one of the three Americans who have received the History of Ferdinand and Isabella, the History of the Conquest of Mexico and Peru, and the History of Philip II., Bancroft with his History of the United States, Hildreth, Sparks and others have produced a national history from the discovery of their country down to our own days.

It seems certain that the vast and picturesque regions they inhabit should not have inspired the Americans with very fine talent for description of nature. Fenimore Cooper is the only great scene painter evoked by the immensities of the great western continent.

Humorous writers in the United States, Artemus Ward and Mark Twain are two pleasantries perfectly famous at home and abroad. There is a "Joke" on the road that leads to similar celebrity. Bill Nye has the same droll way as Mark Twain of drawing out irresistible comicalities with that solemn sang froid which is not met with outside the frontiers of Yankeedom. When he mounts the platform the audience prepares to be dislocated with laughter.

Although the names of Charles A. Dana, Whitelaw Reid, Park Godwin and many others are well known to the reading public of America, it is in the large reviews, and not in the newspapers, that really literary articles are to be found.

Children—if there be any children in America—are not targeted by literature. It is safe to affirm that there is no country where children are so well written for, by authors who have the secret of instructing them while they charm and amuse them.

CHAPTER XXII.

The American stage boasts some excellent actors, but it owes its prestige rather to the talent of a few brilliant individuals than to the distinction of ensemble.

The plays are written for certain actors, and the secondary parts are made to serve the purpose of throwing up the "stars." This is why the French plays that are transplanted to the stage of America generally fail.

American theatres are not subventioned by the state, and private enterprises can scarcely afford to give the public the luxury of a whole company of talent. The "star" is usually his or her own manager, draws the public and realizes the profits. The theatre consists of two or three plays, which are performed before a New York audience for a month or two and then tour round to the chief cities of the States.

This twenty one year fresh companies nightly every week in half the theatres. Today a drama, next week comedy, opera bouffe the week after. Sometimes the change is still more irksome. Mr. Henry Irving and Miss Helen Terry gave a series of performances at the Star theatre, New York, during the month of March last. On their departure they were succeeded by a troupe of performing marbleys. The theatre was just as likely to have been filled by traveling revivalists.

The Americans have an unbearable trick of arriving late at the theatre. For twenty minutes after the curtain rises there is a constant hustling and rustling of newcomers, which debars you from the pleasure of following the actors' speeches. If the play begins at 8, they come at a quarter past; if it begins at a quarter past, they come at half-past, and so on. At the time appointed for the curtain to rise, the stalls are empty. This had habit annoys the actors and disturbs the spectators; but the evil is incurable, and managers try vainly to stop it. I know one who followed the advertisements of the play by this paragraph:

"The public are solemnly warned that, unless the whole of the first scene be witnessed, the enjoyment and action of the play cannot be understood."

His efforts were crowned with failure. Not to understand the play is pity, but not to create a sensation when one comes in, dressed in one's most killing attire, is out of question.

It is the same at concerts and lectures. Those who have booked their seats in advance come in a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes after the time fixed for commencing. When every one is placed, the concert or lecture begins. The early comers, who have to wait until the late ones have arrived, utter not a murmur. The patience of the American public is angelic.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Americans are Christians—that is to say, they attend church on Sundays. Like other Christians, they attend to business on week days.

In America, religion is served up with sauces to suit all palates. Independently of the Catholic religion, there are 189 different religious sects. England has only 135.

Every good preacher draws a full congregation, no matter to which sect he belongs. The church in itself is not the attraction, and the minister has no other influence over the people than that which he exercises by his oratorical talents. A religious or moral lecture is as popular as a literary lecture, a concert, or a play.

An American will go and listen to the minister of a sect differing from his own, rather than sit and be bored by a tiresome preacher belonging to his own denomination. He will rather go to hear Dr. McGlynn, the excommunicated Roman Catholic priest, or Dr. Felix Adler, the eloquent agnostic, religious rebels, as will sometimes regret that Col. Ingersoll does not appear in public on Sundays any longer. Protestant as he is, he has no scruple about going to hear a musical mass in the Catholic cathedral, in fact, you can see him everywhere except in the churches where dullness prevails and the mind waits in vain for fresh nourishment.

The churches advertise a preacher in the newspapers as the theatres advertise a "star." In default of a good preacher other attractions are put forward to draw the public. How radiant the two following appeals, posted at the doors of a New York and a Chicago church! I copied them word for word with great care:

Musical Evangelists
Hymns
Short sermons
The place to be happy and merry.
With music, music, music, music in it.
The other, more respectable, was worded thus:

Nobody asked for out evening
Free seats;
Cheerful services;
Books supplied to the congregation.

Religious sects multiply every day. No doctrine is too absurd to make converts.

The latest religions in vogue in America are Esoterism, which promises immortality to its followers—immortality, that's all! The doctrine of the Esoterists teaches that, if man wants to be happy, he must be pure and follow the precepts of the Gospel; the Esoterists may be right. To live forever, say they, you have only to remain virtuous, even in the married state. Celibacy must be embraced. Celibacy cures and shapes, however, is not sufficient, for where there is no struggle there is no victory. Devotees must therefore marry, but it will sooner remain celibate. If you succeed in making your passions to be unlady will attack you, and you will become miserable.

"But," you will probably say, "do the Esoterists never die?"

Yes, they die sometimes. But, according to them, this does not prove the fallacy of their belief. If they die it simply proves that they have failed to attain the necessary degree of perfection.

Now the Esoterists may safely continue with us, for either they will arrive at perfection and become immortal, or they will fall away from grace and will have children to carry their ideas. The head of this sect, which is not yet only about ten years old, claims that when the Esoterists attain perfection, not only will they be immortal, but they will have a clear insight into the future, a gift which will enable them to make great riches. And Esoterism, the utility of such an accomplishment on the stock exchange, for it cannot fail to be appreciated at a premium.

Another sect presumes to be able to cure all disease by faith. The faith of these faith healers is not shaken by the death of their patients. "If they had had more faith they would have recovered."

During my stay in America a well-known evangelist published a volume of sermons with the following preface: "God has been kind enough to put the words which I speak in them. I hope He will give life to these sermons, so that the same words appear in print."

Many books are published in France with the remark, "Nihil obstat approved of by Mgr. the Archbishop of N." A commonplace novel relaxing been overridden and blessed by the lord himself, ought to have a wide sale.

A truly edifying sight is that of the policy, dirty, disappointing sheet, which is sold on a Sunday morning outside Madison Square Garden, New York, on the eve of a "six days go-as-you-please walking match." From 6 to 8 in the morning, from ten to twelve, screaming match outside the gates. But the writing only begins when the morning's walking.

Not to take the name of God in vain the English have invented many expressions of some men, language. I suppose that the Deity knows enough names of swearing, and but English, contrary to the rule, is to say Jesus or Mon Dieu.

At this kind of thing the Americans are clever as the English. They have invented Great Scott!

Something admirable in all the many religious sects of America is their spiritual character.

When I hear it said that religion is the secret enemy of progress, enemy of its political activities, I turn to Americans and say to myself: "This is not true."

There is no minister of religion, from the archbishop down to the most sectarian preacher, of all the small lives, who would dare to tell his congregation that liberty is not the most precious of the things sacred of their possessions, and that the republic is not the most tolerable—the only possible form of government for America.

In France there is much indifference on the subject of religion, but a great deal of irritability is evoked to satisfy a political bias. I am certain that if, in France, you searched into the hearts of the people, you would find there much less atheism than in many other countries. Religious belief seems to be the appanage of the royalist party, and other people think they make a show of republicanism by throwing over the belief of the royalists. The religious man is rather looked upon as a political enemy than as a religious antagonist. This is the true explanation of much apparent agnosticism in France. It amounts to recognized that plenty of royalists only affect piety and go regularly to church as a protest against republicanism, and that many republicans seem to exceed for taking the display of religion for an act of hostility towards their political institutions.

This state of things is deplorable. Both sides are to blame for it.

In England and America, where the form of government is questioned by no one, religion does not clash with progress and liberty, but lives with democracy in peace and harmony, as becomes a faith whose grand precept is: "Love ye one another."

CHAPTER XXIV.

I one day asked one of the cleverest ladies of New York whether she had met Col. Ingersoll.

"No," she answered, "I never met him and do not wish to make his acquaintance."

"May I ask why?" I said.

She replied: "Simply because I am told that it is impossible to know him without admiring and loving him."

"Well?"

"Well, I don't want to admire or love him."

I had the honor of making his acquaintance, and, like all those who have approached and know him, I soon admired him.

He is one of the greatest figures of his great country. In a book on contemporary America one must needs speak of this celebrated advocate. He is a personality apart. He has little in common with the rest of his country men but the title of colonel.

Once more I say it: in this book of jottings I do not sit in judgment. I merely describe impressions. It is not necessary to endorse a man's theories in order to enjoy his society, and this is especially true in the case of Col. Ingersoll, who is many sided in his powers, and who charms theologians and agnostics alike when the subject of religion is not to the fore.

Col. Robert Ingersoll is a man of about 60, six feet high and strongly built, a colossal physically and intellectually. The eyes sparkle with wit and bend with the exuberant of life, the mouth is humorous and smiling; the head large and well planted on broad shoulders, the face shaven, the brain teeming with humanitarian thoughts; a man with the mien of a lion to fight the battles of life, but the heart of a woman in presence of human suffering.

He has sacrificed fortune for the love of religion, the religion of love and of the family. According to him religion should have but one aim—to teach us how to be happy in this life. He repeals with Carlyle: "Do your work and have nothing to do with what you cannot not have of to do to you." And he adds: "A God that is represented as weaving webs to catch the souls of men whom he has created is not adorable." As to a future life, the colonel does not commit himself. He says: "We do not know, we cannot tell whether death is a door or a wall, a speaking or parting to our or the falling of wings forever." In the eyes of good people his theories are abominable, and he is an Atheist, but the Americans are unanimous in admitting his extraordinary talents, and among the dear friends of the colonel and his family are many Presbyterians, some of them ministers.

Asked what is your will—that is if you can imagine such a personage without a will—every man and woman will reply: "Be happy."

In all presence men feel themselves small, and women put their hands over their eyes, being careful to keep the fingers well apart. A cordially disarming Atheistic.

Mr. Ingersoll's religion is the religion of humanity. He says: "Happiness is the only good, the time to be happy is now, and the way to be happy is to make others so." Live to do good. Live and be loved by those around and then be loved and sleep with the consciousness of having done your duty to man. Do not ask pardon of God for your injury done to man. Ask pardon of the man and will your relation to him for your offense.

"Dear Brother," exclaims Mr. Ingersoll in the inimitable language he is such a master of, "God forgives you. How does that help Smith?"

He maintains that the Christian religion has done less for mankind than humanitarian and rationalistic teachings, because it has given our eyes upon heaven, and has made us forget our fellow men. This charge is strong coming from a man who is a Christian, who is a statesman, a man of nature.

Of the old, old, old, and ever old controversy world.

The second commandment that if man has his friends, parents, brothers, sisters, wives to love, he has also a brain to think, a heart to love and intelligence to reason with.

He does not attack so much the Christian religion, which rests on faith, for faith is a religion which rests purely on faith is left a matter for reasoning and argument. But he other attacks a Protestantism which prides itself upon resting on reason as well as on faith.

The theories of Col. Ingersoll are the natural outcome of the introduction of reasoning into religious matters.

Things which are felt only cannot be discussed; things which are discussed cannot be felt.

Protestantism is a mixture of faith and reason, ingredients pretty badly together, it must be confessed. The Protestants believe the Bible for a book every word of which is inspired of God. He interprets it in his own fashion, and proves out of it every doctrine he requires to remain a new sect. The very Protestant sects are too to find an excuse for disbelieving, and turning to Indian Bible, he comforts himself with the "Behold, my servant shall prosper."

As he looks on at the Protestants squabbling over the signification of biblical passages, the colonel laughingly says: "It is to be regretted that your dear Bible not express himself more clearly."

Neither can any that he looks upon the Bible as an inspired book, but as a collection of literatures something akin to the "Arabian Nights," and that is what makes discussion with him difficult, if not out of question. How is it possible to imagine a discussion between faith and reason?

George Sand said that the Gentile loved Delilah, the discussion of man. Two theories of God, Jaqueline, Mme. Rodin as most of us are, verge upon fanaticism in the sense that they reach the love of mankind to the exclusion of him who so loved man. The colonel rules the point and sarcasing of that which helps them to endure their life, a belief in a future well to come.

Son of a Protestant minister, Robert Ingersoll early showed special aptitude for the discussion of theological questions. By the age 16 he had thoroughly studied the Old Testament, and it said years upon it from a doctor of divinity. The idea in vain drew Robert's attention to the beauties of the Bible, the son could see little in it but absurdities and inconsistencies. The old minister was heard to say: "It grieves me to hear my Robbie talk so, but I declare he is too much for me; I cannot answer him."

Who can answer Ingersoll? is a question often asked. Apparently not the ministers of the hundreds of different Protestant sects that flourish in America, nor Mr. Gladstone, student of the Bible and profound reasoner though he be.

For more than a year, the president of the Nineteenth Century club of New York was trying to get a Protestant minister to break a lance with this remarkable agnostic in public, but without avail. Not one felt equal to the task.

That which makes this man so formidable is not so much his eloquence, his quick repartee, his sarcasm, his pathos, his humor, it is above all the life he leads, the example he sets of all the domestic virtues. One must have the privilege of knowing him intimately, of penetrating into the sanctuary of conjugal happiness, his home, before one can form an idea of the respect that he must inspire even in those who abhor his doctrines. His house is the home of the purest joys: it holds four hearts that beat as one.

Mr. Ingersoll lives in one of the handsome houses on Fifth avenue. His family consists of his wife and two lovely daughters, Athens and Venice, as an American whom I met at Col. Ingersoll's used to call them. Instead one reminds you of the beautiful creations of Titian. The other seems like a mythological vision, a nymph from the banks of Eryman-thus. As you look at her, while she speaks to you with her eyes modestly lowered, she most seeming to apologize for being so lovely, you involuntarily think of "La Jeune Malade" of Andre Chenier, that last of the Greek poets, as Edmond About called him.

Authors, artists, journalists, members of the thinking world of New York may to met at the colonel's charming Sunday evenings. About 11 at night, when all but the intimate friends of the family have left, these latter draw around their host, and entice him to talk upon one of his favorite subjects, poetry, music, or may be the "Mistakes of Moses," while they listen with avidity. He knows his Shakespeare as thoroughly as the Bible, only he speaks of him with far more respect and admiration. He adores Wagner, whom he sets even above Beethoven. I mention this to prove once more that we have all our little faults, and that Col. Ingersoll, in some man with his fellow mortals, is not perfect. Between midnight and 1 in the morning, the last visitors reluctantly depart. On the way home, you think of all the witty things that have been said, the arrows of satire that have been shot at hypocrisy and humbug, the ennobling humanitarian opinions that have been advanced, and though you may not be converted or diverted or perverted or hoodwinked, you are sure to leave that house feeling better of good will toward all mankind and saying to yourself: "What a delightful evening I have passed!"

I was present one evening at a meeting of the Nineteenth Century club to hear a discussion on "The Poetry of the Future." Col. Ingersoll was to have taken part in it, but, being retained professionally at Washington, he was obliged to excuse himself at the seventh hour. The president immediately telegraphed to a well known minister asking him to take the colonel's place.

"I distinctly decline to take Col. Ingersoll's place in this world or the next," exclaimed the recipient of the telegram as soon as he had read it. The reversed gentleman immediately took part in the evening's debate, and began by repeating his regrets to the audience was greeted with hearty laughter and applause.

CHAPTER XXV.

I had just returned from America, and was sitting in the smoking room of the North Western Hotel, Liverpool. I was chatting with an American fellow passenger on the Atlantic voyage, while admiring St. George's hall, which stands opposite. This magnificent building, which serves as a palace of justice, is the finest modern edifice of the Empire's provinces.

A sudden we heard a flash of trumpets. A crowd rushed toward the hall, and dashed the flight of steps leading to the grand entrance. Bearers and lackeys, all bedizzened with tinsel and gold, promptly descended the steps, followed by police officers. Several carriages then drove up. From one of them there alighted a man arrayed in a scarlet robe and ermine lapelled wearing a powdered wig. The whole retinue followed by the carriage which had formed solemnly mounted the steps between the crowd, which stood gaping with open mouths and white eyed admiration.

"What does this mean?" I said to the American, in fact my guide, from the Yankee.

He replied: "I don't know."

"My dear sir," I said to him, "it is simply a judge going to try a thief or two. England belongs to the civilized world, where a judge of murderers is a thing of nature."

The American was silent for a few minutes. He was probably asking up the salaries of the judge, the police officers, lackeys and bearers, the lawyers' fees, the cost of the building, and was and show generally, and no doubt comparing the total with the pound or two stolen from his employers by a dishonest clerk, for whom all this grand representation was taking place.

Nothing is more single than an American's sense of justice. Some walls in consist of description of any kind, a few plain chairs or benches. No uniforms, no robes, no wigs, no ermine, no livery lackeys. The judge and the barristers wear in black frock coats. The colonel not quite so well dressed as the barristers, poor colonel, and that is all.

In France, as yet, a judge, a bar, rather of judges and police officers, to look after a criminal, and never should we think of judging them in the exercise of their functions. If a crime remains wrapped in mystery, we say to ourselves: "I pay the police, it is for them to discover the criminal, it is my business, and besides, the profession of magistrate is a very hard one by my trade." It is not the same in the United States. There, public opinion concerns itself with it.

The population of a town, for, discovered the perpetrator of a crime in their midst, they proceed to use the right to enter the criminal, form organize themselves into bands to search the country round. An assassin is tracked in the woods with bloodhounds and guns, like a wild beast. If he is discovered and offers every obstinate resistance, a bullet is lodged in his body, and the bearers go triumphantly home again.

Something which is much to be blamed, I think, is the precipitation of American justice. By giving the right way to work, a condemned criminal may often succeed in getting his case tried again and again, in lieu of murder, what good can it do to keep a poor wretch that is decided to hang, in jeopardy for a year or more? It is adding torture to death penalty.

I think we can do all.

In America such a philanthropist that he will difficulty makes up his mind to execute a fellow creature even legally. So, when he has kept a year in prison a criminal, whom he is at last forced to hang, he leads him to the scaffold, puts a rope round his neck, forbs him up in the air, and manages to take twelve or sixteen minutes dispatching him.

This is philanthropy with a vengeance, and it is to be hoped that execution by electricity, which has just been adopted by the governor of New York state, will put an end to such sickening proceedings.

It is to be hoped also that the Americans will some day do better than that. I, for my part, do not doubt that they will abolish death sentences before very long. They are too intelligent not to understand that the death sentence deters no criminal, and this for a very simple reason. A crime is committed under the impulse of passion, or it has been premeditated. In the first case, the criminal never thinks of the punishments to come, he is blinded by passion; in the second, he always believes he has planned his crime in such a manner as not to be found out.

To fighting this rather lugubrious subject, I will terminate with a little anecdote, which has recovered the light and which I think is too delightfully humorous and patriotic to be allowed to remain unpublished.

The scene was the smoking room of the Savage club in London.

A notorious criminal had been hanged in the morning. Several members of the club were talking of the affair, and each one described what his feelings would be if he were led to the scaffold to be hanged.

During this conversation an actor, well known, but to whom managers, I scarcely know why, never intrust any but secondary parts, sat silent in an arm chair, sending up long puffs of smoke curling to the ceiling.

"Hello, there is N., who has not given his opinion," said one of the group, suddenly noticing the actor; "I say, N., tell us how you would feel if you were being led to the scaffold."

The actor raised his eyes to the ceiling and, after another puff on his cigar, said quietly:

"Well, boys, I should feel that at last I was treated with a leading part."

CHAPTER XXVI.

Lynch law is a summary justice which, in several of the states, is constantly being dealt out to criminals who, either from the insufficiency of the ordinary laws, or because of the absence of a judicial authority in the neighborhood, might escape punishment.

Not the least semblance of a trial or even of examination, as a rule; the populace has taken it into its head that a certain individual is guilty of a crime, that suffices; he is sought out, torn from his family, led to the spot fixed upon for his execution, and there, without questioning or shriek, he is hanged, burned or shot, according to the fancy of his executioners. Sometimes the criminal is in prison, but the process of the law is slow and uncertain, and the people fear that he may escape justice. Again, there may be a chance of the indefeasible convincing the jury that he is innocent; this does not suit the humor of the enraged populace. They attack the prison, and demand that their prey be delivered over to them. If the governor of the prison refuses, the doors are burst open, and the prisoner is seized and forthwith led to execution.

It is to be hoped, for the credit of American civilization, that this blot will soon be removed.

Lynch law has its humors, as the westerners express it, in the cynical language which is so natural to them; it is when there has been a mistake made—in the victim, and the whole thing has to be gone over again, because the wrong man has been lynched.

Again I leave an American newspaper. The Chicago Herald, to speak:

"The little town of St. Helena is in a ferment. A party of lynchers entered it this morning, and went straight to the house of Mrs. Williams to appoint her that her husband had been lynched by mistake during the night. After having expressed their regrets, the men left to go in search of the real culprit. We do not attempt to describe the anguish of the poor woman. It is feared that she will lose her reason."

This took place in the year of disgrace 1888.

In the days of the "gold fever" in California San Francisco was overrun by scum—civilism of the most virulent type. Twice was the infant city reduced to ashes by incendiary hands. Then the leading citizens rose in their wrath, banded themselves together in the name of the "Vigilance Committee," and sent from every available lamp post dangled the body of a ruffian. By such treatment was the city purged of crime and the reign of law and order for the first time established.

CHAPTER XXVII.

As I have said elsewhere, each state of the Union makes its own laws. The result is that a thing which is legal in one state is not necessarily legal in the others.

Two most curious, and those which differ most, are the laws upon marriage and divorce.

It is easy to get married in the United States; it is still more easy to get unmarried.

In the state of New York, for instance, if you go to a hotel with a woman, and get down "Mr. Smith and Second wife" on the register, the law looks upon you as legally married to that woman, but the marriage is not recognized as valid in some other states. To obtain a divorce in the state of New York you must prove infidelity on the part of your wife, but just across the Hudson, in the state of New Jersey, it is to be obtained on proof of cruelty or incompatibility of character. If this is not easy enough for you, take the train to Chicago, where divorce is to be had for the asking, almost.

The court of divorce in Chicago called by the Americans "the divorce mill," decided 681 cases during the year 1887.

This institution is just as flourishing in the state of Indiana as in Illinois. The westerners jokingly pretend that, as the trains roll into the capital of Indiana, the porters cry out, "Indianapolis, twenty minutes for divorces!" so that couples who may have fallen out on the journey can part company for good.

Does the husband snore or chew; has he a disagreeable breath, or is clumsy manner of blowing his wife? Does that lady wear false hair or teeth, give her tongue too free play, or habitually take up the newspaper 65 soon as her husband leaves signs of dropping into sentiment? All these offenses are serious cases before the aforesaid tribunals.

Without troubling to go out of state in Utah, an American may set up a harem of legitimate wives. Each lawful spouse might be a concubine outside the state she was married in, but by carefully studying the laws of the different states Jonathan can, if he pleased, indulge in polygamy without fear of being prosecuted for it.

I have read in American papers divorce cases that were really most comic.

When a wife has to be administered matters other than very mixed up, can you may easily imagine. Who are the legitimate children?

Of course all these conflicts make work for the men of law, who naturally think American legislation the finest in the world.

The city of Chicago alone possesses seventeen hundred and sixty-eight lawyers, all living.

What a capital subject for an opera to offer might be got from some of those Chicago divorce cases. What merry quintet prospect! What amusing scenes! Choruses of lawyers choruses of lawful wives, with the refrain:

"We are Mrs. Jonathan in all!"

"DAPPEN VS. DAPPEN."

I extracted from a Chicago paper the following evidence, full of originality and humor: The plaintiff is the star, being examined:

"What is your husband's occupation?" asked his counsel.

"Habitual drunkenness, sir," said Mrs. Dappen.

"I refer to your husband's profession."

"He made cigars."

"Good cigars?"

"Cerniously."

Here counsel drew a cigar from his pocket.

"This, your honor, is one of the defendant's cigars."

"Mark it 'Exhibit A,'" said the judge.

"Had Mr. Dappen any other profession?" continued the lawyer.

"Not to my knowledge," said Mr. Dappen's wife.

"Never practiced as a dentist?"

"Not professionally."

"Now, Mrs. Dappen, on your oath, did not your husband extract six of your teeth?"

Mrs. Dappen looked timidly around. Mr. Dappen being evidently out of hearing, she whispered, "He did."

"Did he administer gas, or ether, or any anesthetic?"

"No, sir."

"Did he extract the teeth one after the other?"

"He extracted them all together."

"Had your husband any license to practice as a dentist?"

"I never heard of it. He used to say: 'I will allow you a dollar a day. Bring me the accounts every week, and if I ever find a cent missing I will knock your teeth out.'"

"Did he find any deficit in your accounts?"

"One Saturday night I could not balance the books. I was 13 cents short. Without a word my husband struck me in the mouth. Six of my teeth were knocked out. I swallowed two."

"Have you the other four in court?"

"Yes, sir."

"Mark them 'Exhibit B,'" said the judge.

Eventually the divorce was granted.

[*To be continued.*]

Slightly Mixed.

Talking of Mme. Modjeska, whose name in its present euphonious and pretty form is an anagram of Barton Hill's from the Polish, I don't think confusion could go much further than it did in the mind of the servant of one of her eastern friends, Mr. Gilder, of The Century. Her husband's name is, as everybody knows, Count Bozenta. Mr. Gilder's servant came to him one day and said:

"If you please, sir, would you mind asking Mr. Presenta if he will give me a pass to see Mme. Digesta play 'How Do You Like It?'"—San Francisco Chronicle.

Fishermen, Make a Note On It.

A quaint old book of folk lore, published at Dublin in 1740, says that if the wind blows hard upon St. Patrick's eve "it betokens a death among them that are learned, and much fish shall die in the following summer," a point that the United States fish commissioners would do well to "make a note on."

FOUR MORE STARS.

THE AMERICAN UNION WILL SOON CONSIST OF FORTY-TWO STATES.

South Dakota—North Dakota, Which Should Be Pembina—Montana—Washington, Which Might Better, Perhaps, Be Named Tacoma.

When the Fifty-first congress meets in regular session it will consist of eighty-four senators and at least 320 members of the house of representatives. If, however, the people of South Dakota assert their right to representation according to their numbers, there may be two more representatives, and there certainly will be four or five more after the reapportionment based upon the census of 1890; for no section of the great republic has ever increased in population so rapidly as

NORTH DAKOTA.

Dakota. California, in the first four years after the discovery of gold, excited the wonder of the world by her rapid development, and her total population eleven years later (1860) was but 379,994, while Dakota has jumped from 100,000 to 150,000 in ten years.

The astonishing growth of this northwestern territory was due to the conjunction of three causes: the enterprise of the Eastern states, our newly-earned railroads, the discovery that her high plains were extremely fertile, after a little cultivation had "overturned the tallgrass," and the development of her capacity to produce the now celebrated white wheat. Incidentally, the gold in the Black Hills, the extinction of the Indian tribe to large tracts of her territory and the force of "Canadian Liberals" into her northeastern counties swelled the tide. In 1870 the census enumerators enrolled in Dakota with less than 11,000 white people—far below that of the smallest state and exceeding only the territories of Wyoming and Arizona; in 1880 her population exceeded that of either of the latter, if not twelve, and is far beyond that of any other territory, while in the production of wheat she stands at the head of the list. This is the whole territory of 149,100 square miles, which is soon divided into two slices on the line of the "second standard parallel," which is now the forty-sixth parallel of latitude.

Adjusting the lower point between the Missouri and the Sioux rivers, the present Dakota has vast square reaching from the forty-third to the forty-ninth parallels. In one state it would be much the same as if Pennsylvania should extend from the southern line of Virginia to lake Ontario, and from the Hudson and Atlantic to Ohio. Only Texas and California are larger. Such mighty commonwealths as New York and Georgia are dwarfs in comparison. Enough this vast area has "three great valleys." The Missouri from northwest to southeast traverses it for nearly 1,100 miles; west of that stream the country rises steadily towards the Rocky mountains, but before reaching that the traveler crosses extensive barren tracts known as the "mauvaises terres, or "bad lands." Whether they are geologically young or old is a much disputed question, but as the "Great American Desert" in other parts of the Missouri valley has steadily receded before the cultivator, the result is to believe that the "Bad Lands" of Dakota will be reclaimed whenever the pressure of population makes it worth while.

Nearly two thirds of the whole territory lie west of the Missouri, and have a cotton loam and there in the spring, or a rocky ridge like Turtle mountain, the whole country is fertile. 150,000 square miles of the best soil in the world. In the broad valleys of the Sheyenne, the James and the Red river the black soil is from three to eighteen deep, and beneath it lies a porous subsoil extremely favorable to rapid crying out by spring while retaining moisture through the occasional droughts.

SOUTH DAKOTA.

The rapid settlement of the section, especially the northern part of it, is a veritable romance. The movement was like one of those vast migrations we read of in ancient history, when whole nations and races, driven by calamities or impelled by some common impulse, swept over a new region and changed all the subsequent history of the world. A single railroad line brought in 50,000 immigrants in one season. In many cases whole townships, thirty-six sections to the "township," were taken in a day by a single squad of settlers and in advance of the government survey. When that was completed they followed the line of stakes to the nearest land office and portioned their tides according to law. Contemporary with this movement from the eastern states was a movement of Scandinavians, including Icelanders and "Canadian Liberals" of British, Scotch and Irish origin, which filled all the valley of Red river. In the counties of Walsh and Pembina one may ride over the thirty-five miles from the river to the so called "mountains" in mere ridge, and not find a single quarter section without a substantial dwelling. In this under-cultivated valley on plots of 2,000 square miles or 5,000 congressional farms, it is hard to find a single acre that will not readily produce from twenty to forty bushels at the finest wheat or a corresponding amount of rye, oats, buckwheat, potatoes or turnips.

On the eastern border of Dakota is a lovely little valley, at the south end is Big Stone lake, dashing into the Minnesota river; at the north end Lake Traverse, the head of Red river. In the valley the eye perceives no divide, yet the water on one side goes off to Lake Winnipeg and Hudson's bay, that on the other to the Gulf of Mexico. Similarly, across the territory to the northwest, no divide is visible to the eye, yet the streams on one side flow down to the Missouri, and those on the north side seek the Red river. Their interlock is most curious. Thus the James and the Cheyenne flow parallel and but a few miles apart, through a hundred miles from near latitude 48 degs. down to the center of the territory, then the latter sudden