Ouachita Telegraph.

MONROE, LA., AUGUST 19, 1882.

ORIGIN OF POPULAR PHRASES.

[Written for the Globe Democrat,]

Many a Word. The following well-known quotation (generally rendered incorrectly) is from Walter Scott's "Lord of the Isle," canto v., stanza 18:

O! many a shaft, at random sent,
Finds mark the archer little meant.
And many a word, at random spoken,
May soothe or wound the heart that's broken.

"Excelsior."—The title of one of the best known of all of the short poems of the late Henry W. Longfellow. That one word happened to catch his eye one autum eve in 1851, on a torn piece of newspaper, and straightway his imagination took fire at it. Taking up a piece of paper which happened to be the back of a letter received that day from Charles Sumner, he crowded it with verses. As first written down, "Excelsior" differs from the perfected and published version, but shows a rush and glow worthy of its author.

Clincher.—Something that effectually settles a point or argument. This application of the word is said to have arisen from two notorious liars being matched against each other. "I drove a nail through the moon, once," said the first. "Yes," said the other, "I remember the circumstance, and I went round to the back and clinched it."

Draw It Mild.—This term was originally used by the leader of a metropolitan orchestra to violinists, when he wished them to play softly; "Come it strong" was another term used by the same party, when he desired the orchestra to play loud.

Come to Grief.—Browning has made this classical. In his poem, Herve Riel, he has the line:

"Not a speer that comes to grief."

Loot.—This word frequently occurred in the dispatches detailing the plundering of Alexandria, during and immediately following the recent bombardment of the forts protecting that city. It is an East Indian word, signifying plunder, robbery, pillage, etc. It was introduced into the English language at the time of the mutiny, 1857-'8.

Old Rosin the Bow.—Col. W. H. Sparks gives the following account of this once popular and still fondly remembered song: "In 1826 I located in Mississippi and began practicing law." After speaking of his neighbors, he says: "Among these were two equally remarkable, but very unlike. One was a school-master, who was quite old and had been teaching in that neighborhood over forty years. His name was James Rossum. He was peculiar in his habits. On Monday morning, neatly dressed and cleanly shaven, he went to his duties in the old school house, where two-thirds of his life had been spent, and assiduously devoted himself to the duties of his vocation until Friday evening. On the morning of Saturday he arrayed himself in his best and devoted the day in visiting the ladies of the neighborhood. He was a welcome guest at every house. This habit had continued so long that he acquired the soubriquet of "Rossum the Beau." The other's name was Cox, a rollicking, good fellow, and the best vocalist I ever knew. He was in song what Prentiss was in oratory, and they were boon companions. Both died young, Cox was frequently at my office, and upon one occasion when he was there Rossum walked by the door, and his age was apparent in his step. Cox looked at him, and, after a pause, turned to me and remarked, in quite a feeling tone, which he could assume at pleasure, and its eloquence was indescribable: 'Poor old Rossum! Some of these sunny mornings he will be found dead, when he shall have a noble funeral, and all the ladies will honor it by being present, I know.' Soon after he left the office, and, being in the humor, I seized the idea and wrote the lines. Soon after Cox returned and I handed them to him. He got up, walked and hummed different airs, until he fell upon the old hymn-tune in which they have ever since been sung. Here is the first verse:

Now soon on some soft sunny morning,
The first thing my neighbors know,
Their ears shall be met with the warning.
Come bury old Rossum, the Beau.

Bohemian.—The name generally given in France to the gypsies, from their supposed advent into that country from Bohemia. From this continual application the term seems to have found its way into England and America, and is applied to struggling and obscure literary men, artists, etc. Also (in a truer sense,) to one who wanders about without any ostensible means of livelihood.

Bombast.—A mixture of cotton and silk yarn, so called, was used in the time of James I. to stuff or pad the enormous breeches used at that time. Hence, bombast, or bombastical, is applied to anything spoken or written in an inflated style.

Griffin, Ga., has the largest peach orchard in the South, containing 50,000 trees and covering most of 600 acres. On the same farm are 4,000 grafted apple trees and 5,000 pear trees.

The Mississippi river commission will meet at St. Louis on the 14th, to commence active operations on the great river whose waters of late have been so much inclined to overflow.

During the last week in July 1,106,700 head of cattle came up the trail from Texas.

THE FRIENDS OF LONG AGO.

When I sit in the twilight gleaming,
And the busy streets grow still,
I dream of the wide, green meadows,
And the old house on the hill.
I can see the roses blooming
About the doorway low,
Again my heart gives greeting
To the *friends of long ago*—
Dear long ago!

I can see my mother, sitting,
With life's snowflakes in her hair,
And she smiles above her knitting.
And her face is saintly fair;
And I see my father, reading
From the Bible on his knee;
And again I hear him praying.
As he used to pray for me—
So long ago!

I see all the dear old faces
Of the boys and girls at home,
As I saw them in the dear old days,
Before we learned to roam.
And I sing the old songs over
With the friends I used to know,
And my heart forgets its sorrows
In it dreams of long ago—
Dear long ago!

How widely our feet have wandered
From our old home's tender ties,
Some are beyond the ocean,
And some are beyond the skies.
My heart grows sad with thinking
Of the friends *I used to know;*
Perhaps I shall meet in heaven
All the loved of long ago—
Dear long ago!

FAITHFUL TO THE LAST.

[From the Chicago Tribune.]

"Be brave, Beryl."

The north wind was howling fiercely through the cordage of a stanch vessel as she dashed madly through the seething waters that stretched away from her on every side in desolate fury. Now poised on the crest of a great green billow, and anon plunged into a watery depth that seemed to end only in the bosom of the earth, the good ship struggled bravely with the mighty forces of the tempest; but though her timbers might groan in almost human agony, there was no parting of the seams, no weakening of the bolts that held deck and bulwark together in so firm a clasp.

It was Beryl McCloskey's wedding trip. Two days agone she had been joined in wedlock's holy bonds to George W. Simpson, and her mother had consented to go with them on their bridal journey. It was her loving arm that supported Beryl now, her kindly voice that spoke the words with which this chapter opens.

"George cannot love me, mamma," the girl said, speaking in low, mellow, tones, "or he would be at my side now, when I need him so sorely."

"Do not junge hastily, my child," replied the mother. "George is pretty busy. Even now I see him leaning over the vessel's side."

"Is he then so very, very sick?" asked Beryl.

"Quite very," said Mrs. McCloskey.

"Has he thrown up his situation?"

"No, my darling."

"Then," said the girl, a holy love-light illuming her pure young face, "I will never leave him."

DEFECTS IN DEEP SEA CABLES.

The Scotia has now been about two months in the Atlantic repairing the Brest street Pierre cable for the Anglo-American Company, and she had recovered the cable in about 1,040 fathoms of water, repaired it, and put in sixty miles of new cable. She is now engaged in repairing the fault which has existed for some time in the cable near Brest. It is a great thing to do—to lift the cable which has been down for twelve years in mid-Atlantic and to repair it. The cable taken out was in very good condition considering the long time it had been down, but there were traces of defects at short intervals of the cable, owing to some chemical action at the bottom of the sea.—*London Times.*

What the New York papers think of the last Congress:

"The adjournment is a relief to the people."—*Herald.*

"The worst of all Congresses."—*World.*

"No Congress in many years made so bad a record."—*Times.*

"It seldom happens that a session of Congress, so long and so useless, is inflicted on the country."—*Truth.*

"A shameless Congress."—*Star.*

"The most profligate of all Congresses."—*Sun.*

"Guess we're all right now!" puffed the old gentleman as, mopping the perspiration from his forehead, he reached the steamboat landing with his wife, just in time to be too late; "guess we're all right." "Guess we're all right, do you?" rejoined she, catching a glimpse of the steamer as it disappeared around a bend in the river; "guess we're all right! Well, I guess we're all left." And they were.

A little dot of a girl coaxed two nickles from her father, saying she would spend one for candy and the other she would give to the missionaries. Before executing her expressed intentions she lost one while at play, and running to her mamma, said: "Oh, mamma, I have lost my missionary nickel."

The Prince of Wales is about the only married man of his age in London society who habitually goes to balls and dances. Few Englishmen are regular ball-goers after 35.

Queen Victoria invariably transacts her public business between breakfast and luncheon, and hardly once in a month does she concern herself with public affairs at any other time.

Bread made with sea water has been recommended as like to be of use in the treatment of scrofula.

A Georgia firm sells watermelons at a cent a pound. They ought always to de sold by weight.

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August 25, 1881.

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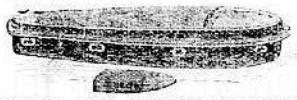

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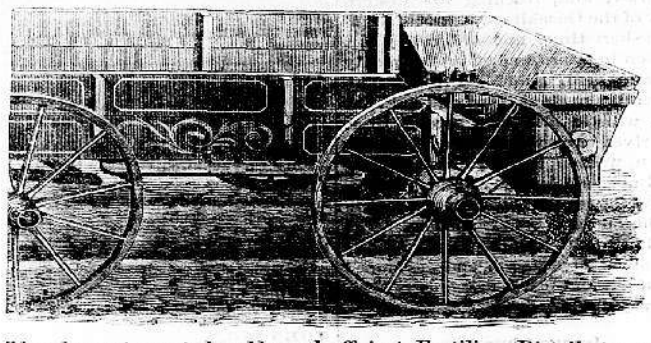

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