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Wednesday, March 2, 1887.

SPEAKING of the railroad commission the Chicago Herald explains the nature of the duties of the commission to be appointed under the inter-state commerce bill, and what is expected of them. Not more than three of the five shall be members of any one party, and no one shall be appointed who is in the employ of any common carrier, or who may have any financial interest in such company. The salary of each commissioner is placed at \$7,500, and every member of the board is to receive from the government whatever money he may need for legitimate traveling expenses. In view of these provisions it will occur to most people that the elaborate recommendations which so many have forwarded to the President, favoring the appointment of certain railroad officials to the commission have been entirely misdirected. The resignation by a railroad man of his position in the employ of a carrier would, no doubt, leave him eligible to appointment on the commission what man in high position is likely to leave the employ of a railroad company to accept a place at \$7,500 a year? Railway presidents and managers receive all the way from \$10,000 to \$30,000 per annum, and there are many things incident to their position which are more pleasant than the immediate surroundings of any political post can possibly be. The proposition that any railroad man of a less exalted rank than president or manager be selected for the commission will not strike the majority of people very favorably. If the general manager of one railroad can earn all the way from \$10,000 to \$30,000 per annum, what is to be thought of the proposition to pay one of the five men who will be general managers of all railroads in the country only \$7,500 per annum? The acceptance of the commissionerships by railroad presidents and managers being out of the question, it is evident that the President must look elsewhere for men to make up the national board of control. Under the law this board will have almost despotic powers. It can do what no other power in America is permitted to do. It can suspend an act of Congress at its own pleasure, and set up in place a new act on its own responsibility. Its success in the lines marked out for it ought to have a very depressing effect upon the salaries of individual railroad presidents and managers. If the government can obtain these officials for \$7,500 a year, perhaps the railroads will conclude that they can also.

THE bill which Mr. Holt has under consideration, relating to the protection of beaver, is a good one. It is a shame that the noble game and fur-bearing animals have been so ruthlessly slaughtered. For over one hundred years Montana has been noted as the home of the buffalo and the beaver. The former is about beyond protection and there are plenty of Montanians to-day who could no more describe the appearance of a buffalo than could a Sandwich Islander. The beaver we still have with us, but fast disappearing. It is not only as a fur animal that it is valuable, but the work of these industrious creatures has a far greater value. They dam up the streams and the water is held in large pools in all the range and mountain streams and a supply is thus kept during the dry season. Kill them off and the dams will decay, the streams dry up and the lives of the stock be in danger. The intelligent rodent now proves to be the stock raiser's benefactor and to protect it is now the desire of all ranchers. As the price of beaver fur is raising, the law should be ample and severe or the beaver will with the buffalo be a thing of the past.—Helena L. S. Journal.

OUT of the four hundred votes in the new parliament of Germany the chancellor will have a majority of only thirty-three over the combined opposition, and there are two prominent features of the election which seem to indicate that the policy of Prince Bismarck cannot dominate the country long after his master mind has had its time on earth. One is an enormous increase in the socialist vote. The other is the defiant attitude of Alsace, which, despite arbitrary and vigorous action by the government, has again returned a delegation unanimously antagonistic to the annexation which was accomplished fifteen years ago.

BICYCLIST STEVENS IN MEXICO.

Hard Roads to Travel—In the Midst of a Dangerous Mob.

Starting from Canton on Oct. 13, I had expected to reach Kingkiang inside of twenty days; but calculations based on my experience in other countries failed me entirely in China. I found it a totally different country from any of the others I have traveled, both as regards roads, people, accommodation, and experience generally. It would be little exaggeration to say that the only roads in south China (the north may be a little different) are the rivers, and no exaggeration whatever to say that the only proper way to travel is with a boat, in which one can travel as in a house. Strictly speaking, there are no roads at all, as we understand the term; only narrow foot-paths, leading here, there and everywhere, and yet nowhere in particular; an intricate mass of tracks about the rice fields, in which a stranger finds himself hopelessly bewildered to commence with, and invariably lost at last.

The first day out from Canton, after traveling, I should think, thirty miles, I found myself in a village about thirteen miles out. Neither are these pathways that asphalt like smoothness for which an experienced cyclist naturally yearns, who sees the pleasant autumn weather gradually gliding past, and the distance ahead still great. On the contrary, boulders and rough slabs of stone, once laid level, but now more often sloping at angles that render their precarious footing for anything but a goat or a bare-footed Chinaman, are the chief characteristics. In addition to this they are often not more than two feet wide, and often rise several feet above the waving paddy, so that traversing them is a feat really equal to the performance of walking on a wall. Under these circumstances a person frequently thinks of swapping his bicycle for a "pariah yaller," and riding the pup with bullets.

So-so was the first city where the authorities saw fit to favor me with an escort. They sent a couple of soldiers with me to King-gang-foo. They evidently knew what they were about, for I should have fared badly had I reached King-gang-foo alone, not knowing the direct route to the Yamen. The soldiers betrayed anxiety as we approached the city; the mob collected, and, while yet several hundred yards from the Yamen, the stones began to come, and wild yells for the Fan Kwae rent the air. Missiles that would have knocked me senseless had I been wearing an ordinary hat only made dents in the big pith solar topee I had worn through India, and which effectually protected my head and shoulders. I escaped into the Yamen with but a few trifling bruises and one spoke broke out of the bicycle, but one of the soldiers got badly hurt on the arm—probably a fractured bone. The soldiers warned them that I was armed, and until we reached the outer Yamen gates, they confined themselves to yelling and throwing stones; several then rushed forward and seized the bicycle, but the officials came to the rescue and hurried me into the che-hsien's office. It was pandemonium broke loose around the Yamen gates all the evening, the mob howling for the "foreign devil," the shouts of the soldiers keeping them at bay, and the officials loudly expostulating and haranguing them from time to time, as the din seemed to be increasing. Proclamations were sent out by the che-hsien, and, toward midnight, the mob had finally dispersed. I was then placed aboard a sampan, and, with a guard of six soldiers, spirited off down stream. After this the authorities never allowed me to travel by bicycle, but passed me on down stream by boat from town to town, under guard, until we reached Wu-ching on the Poyang Hoo, when, by much persuasion, I obtained permission to take a short cut across country to Kingkiang, but still with an escort.—Thomas Stevens' Letter.

How Men Die in Battle.

When we got into the Brock Road intrenchments, a man a few files to my left dropped dead, shot just above the right eye. He did not groan, or sigh, or make the slightest physical movement, except that his chest heaved a few times. The life went out of his face instantly, leaving it without a particle of expression. It was plastic, and as the facial muscles contracted it took many shapes. When this man's body became cold, and his face hardened, it was horribly distorted, as though he had suffered intensely. Any person who had not seen him killed would have said that he had endured supreme agony before death released him. A few minutes after he fell another man, a little farther to the left, fell with apparently a precisely similar wound. He was straightened out and lived for over an hour. He did not speak. Simply lay on his back, and his broad chest rose and fell, slowly at first, and then faster and faster, and more and more feeble until he was dead. And his face hardened, and it was almost terrifying in its painful distortion. I have seen dead soldiers' faces which were wreathed in smiles, and heard their comrades say that they had died happy. I do not believe that the face of a dead soldier, lying on a battlefield, ever truthfully indicates the mental or physical anguish or peacefulness of mind which he suffered or enjoyed before his death. The face is plastic after death, and as the facial muscles cool and contract they draw the face into many shapes. Sometimes the dead smile, again, they stare with glassy eyes, and jolling tongues and dreadfully distorted visages at you. It goes for nothing. One death was as painless as the other.—Wilkeson's "Recollections of a Private."

Gold and Paper.

A paragraph in one of the state papers as to the relative weights of gold coin and paper money has made a demand on druggists for the use of their scales. It appears that a question was raised as to the number of \$1 bills required to equal the weight of a \$5 gold piece. The guesses ran all the way from ten to one hundred or more, but the scales showed that seven bills will just tip the scales down on the side where the paper money is placed. Tests here in Hartford give the same results, their being a very slight variation when new bills are used.—Hartford Times.

What is commonly called friendship even is only a little more honor among rogues.—Thoraco.

Another Word Needed.

The government ought to offer a reward for anybody who will invent a word that will pleasantly, picturesquely, agreeably define a happy evening among friends. "Social" is one of the most horrible words in the language, used as a noun. "Party" means anything or nothing. It is absolutely unexpressive. "A good time" comes in for a big drunk, or a picnic, or a funeral, even, for there are people who enjoy, really enjoy, funerals. "A dinner party" seems to stop with the eating. Now if there is a time when people are unsocial, it is at a big dinner party. If you are fond of eating, conversation's a nuisance, and you can't get up any reasonable discussion that will not be broken by the courses.

You've either to devote yourself to the menu or to your neighbor. If she's pretty, you don't eat your dinner; if the dinner's good it requires a perfect self abnegation to pay any attention to her. A dinner party is neither one thing nor the other. But after dinner! Well, that's different. "Soiree" is an abominable word. The man that coined it should have been killed. Now, what can you call a happy, merry evening? You can't call it anything short and nice and pleasant. People talk about "spending the evening" just as if they had to put in the time somehow, and that was all they wanted to do. "Calling" suggests a straightbacked chair, your hat in your hand and the hostess in discomfort, wishing you'd go. And there's only one word in the English language that means comfort, and peace, and happiness, and enjoyment, and that word is "Home."—San Francisco Chronicle "Undertones."

Woman's Work in Early Times.

Prior to the American revolution every colonial farm house and every blacksmith's shop was a manufactory. For everything was literally manufactured; that is, made by hand. The blacksmith hammered out axes, hoes, spades, plowshares, scythes and nails. A tailor went from house to house to make up the winter clothing, and was followed by the shoemaker. The farmer prepared the leather from skins which had laid in the vat for a year, and his wife made ready the cloth. Spinning wheels buzzed from morning till night. Skins of woolen and linen yarn hung on the walls of every house. Seated on the loom sat the best woman of the family plied shuttles and treadles, weaving blankets, sheets, table cloths, towels, bed curtains, window curtains, flannels and cloth for garments. Every woman in the household manufactured something. The aged grandmother spun flax with the little wheel; the youngest daughter carded wool; and the oldest, if the men were busy, hatched flax. It was hand work that did it, and every hand did what it could best do. The women, whose "work was never done," not only carded, spun and wove, but they milked the cows, made butter, bread and cheese, soap and candles, cooked the food, did the washing, and in harvest raked hay, pulled flax and dug potatoes. The neighbor who happened in for an afternoon's gossip brought her work. The mother patched or knitted as she rested by the fireside, or quartered apples for the children to "string" and hang in the morning in festoons on the sunny outside walls. All were busy, always busy.—Youth's Companion.

Alma Tadema's Dwelling.

Mr. Alma Tadema, most versatile of artists, has added one more world to those he has already conquered. He has become his own architect, and M. Tissot's house in St. John's wood, which was considered a gem in its way when the French artist lived in it, has been transformed inside and out into something quite marvelous to behold. In the exterior are bits of nearly all the styles of all the ages, from the classic romantic down to the latest Nineteenth century development of art, or eccentric fashion and fancy.

Inside, the medley is still more bewildering, but always harmonious. Mr. Tadema was resolved that every nook and corner of his new home should have its picture, and each picture unlike its fellow. One vista suggests Greece, another Rome, a third the gorgeous and mysterious east. The room designed for the special use of the artist's wife will be one of the prettiest interiors in London. His own studio will also be unique in arrangement and decoration, and his friends are already looking forward to the enjoyment of his hospitality amid surroundings that will enhance, if possible, its well known grace and charm.—London World.

A Dress of Ancient Days.

From the most authentic authorities we learn that there was but little, if any, effort made to fit the garments to the body 450 years before Christ, and the chief and indispensable article of wear was called the "chiton," a linen bag-like affair, made in one piece and open at the top and bottom. It reached from the neck to the feet, and was so wide that the arms might be extended without discomfort. This particular style must have been all the rage, as we say nowadays, for the richer class likewise wore the chiton, but it was composed of silk instead of linen, and another similar costume called the "Himation," which was composed of some sort of woolen stuff.—Brooklyn Citizen.

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