The Port Tobacco Times

AND CHARLES COUNTY ADVERTISER.

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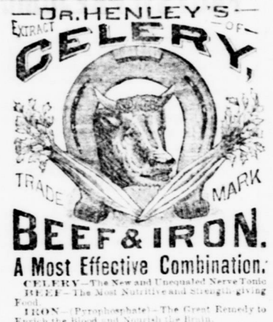

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The safety fund renders the payment of every policy to the very last man, an absolute certainty.
A man of forty years old can carry one thousand dollars on his life, and thus secure that amount to his family at his death, by the payment of about ten dollars a year, and when he has paid his ten dollars additional into the safety fund, and has been a member for five years, his payments will be greatly reduced by dividends declared every six months. The safety fund is already over $400,000 and is rapidly increasing. They have a cash capital of $250,000 and assets amounting to over one and a quarter million.
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JNO. T. DIGGES, Examining PHYSICIAN.

Select Reading.

A SUSPICIOUS LETTER.

"She's a powerful good girl—good as gold!" remarked Miss Rebecca Bellflower, with an air of satisfaction. "I never had a girl before that kep' the pantry as clean an' the dresser a lookin' so neat; all the shelves scoured and kivered with papers cut in notches an' holes, as nice as you please. An' the pots an' kittles, the milk pans an' strainers, allus clean and bright and the brass dog irons an' cannel sticks kep' rubbed and scrubbed till they look as shiny as gold. Yes, Lura's the best girl I ever had, an' I don't keer a pin if brother Basil has tuck a notion to her. He couldn't find any other girl I'd sooner he'd have than her."

"And if Miss Rebecca was satisfied pretty Lura Gaines was no less so; and she went singing about the old farm house, washing dishes, sweeping floors, and the like, the very type of a busy country girl described in the old song.

"Up in the early morning,
Just at the peep of day,
Straining the milk in the dairy,
Turning the cows away,
Washing the breakfast dishes,
Making the beds upstairs,
Sweeping the floor in the kitchen,
Dusting the parlor chairs."

Lura was pretty, too; so it was no wonder if handsome, stalwart Basil Bellflower had taken a "notion" to her, with her sloe black eyes and hair to match; her dark olive-hued cheek, and her mouth, soft and scarlet as a sunripened Indian peach.

"Is—is Basil going to marry, then?" ask Miss Zerelda Mugwort, who had been making an afternoon call upon Miss Rebecca.

"I dunno as he is, an' I dunno as he ain't," was the sententious answer; "but as I said before, if he wants her, and she'll hev him, I shan't hev nothin' to say agin it."

"But I shall!" thought Miss Zerelda, malignantly, though she kept her thoughts to herself. "A poor hired girl like her to git the best to do young man in the neighborhood! Its outrageous! But—we'll see!"

In truth, Miss Zerelda evidently considered herself a better match for Mr. Basil Bellflower, though possibly he may not have viewed the subject in exactly the same light himself.

* * * * *

"Lura!"

The sloe-black eyes flashed, and a rich crimson dyed her olive cheek, as Basil quickly made his way to her side.

"Have you lately lost anything, Lura—a letter?" he asked, with assumed carelessness. "A letter? No, I think not. Why?" asked Lura, innocently.

He handed her the letter.

"Is this yours, Lura?"

His voice was calm, though his heart was beating like a sledge hammer.

Lura glanced hastily at the missive, and looked up with a smile into Basil's eager face.

"Oh, yes, I dropped it, I suppose; but it is not important. Amos Skinner stopped in yesterday on his way to the mill and got me to write it for him to his brother in the city. You know Amos lives in that little cabin up on Hemlock Hill, and he says his brother always declares he will bring an Indian ladder to climb up to it. This is the draft I wrote, and then copied it in ink."

"Humph! I don't believe a word o' it!" muttered Zerelda, listening from behind the kitchen door. "Anybody could make up such an excuse as that! But if he's fool enough to believe it, let him!"

And, with quick, angry steps and a scowling brow, she wended her way toward home.

And she utterly failed in her determination to "git the best lookin' man in the neighborhood," for Basil's faith and confidence in his wife Lura, has never yet diminished.

A Hollow Tree Full of Trout

A week or two ago a singular occurrence transpired at the wood camp on Wolf Creek. The land on which the timber is being cut is extremely rugged. Over these rocks the little streams which form Wolf Creek come tumbling down from their snowy sources on the mountain tops. Near one of these streams a couple of sturdy woodsmen set to work to fell a large pine tree which stood close to a high, smooth wall of granite. About thirty feet from the foot of the tree, at which point it seemed to be decayed, the trunk divided into two large branches, one leaning over against the perpendicular wall of rock. A small stream of water poured over the rock, and falling upon the limb fell in spray down along the sides of the tree. The water made the woodchopper's position very uncomfortable, but they kept at their work, and soon the tree began to totter, and fell with a resounding crash and broke in twain. The men followed its course with their eyes, but their gaze turned to a stare of wonder and their surprise found vent to a loud shout, which ran from mouth to mouth and sent its echoes ringing through the mountains. "Fish! fish in the tree!" cried the workmen, for from the top of the tree poured a volume of water as it fell, and with it a hundred or more mountain trout, which were left squirming and wriggling helplessly upon the stony ground. The excited woodchoppers crowded around and began to pick up the fish as they could, all at a loss to account for the presence of the trout in the tree top. The most plausable theory is that the water caused the tree to decay and become hollow, and the fish, being swept over the rock, fell down into the tree. In whatever way their presence there may be accounted for, the sight of the tree emptying itself of its lively contents was wonderful, if not say startling.

Telegraph Ignorance.

"Would you believe it possible," said a telegraph official, "that there are thousands of people in existence to day who haven't the slightest conception of what a telegraph company is? No? Well, it's a fact, I assure you. Scarcely a mail is delievered but what it contains some strange request that indicates such ignorance. Some people believe the telegraph company is a department of the postal system, and send inquiries about letters. Others are imbued with the idea that we run a railroad, while not a few imagine that we conduct a general store. Here is an example," and the official held up a letter which had been delivered a few moments before. It was dated from a place in Houghton county, Mich., and read:

"'Will you kindly give me some information about the fare from the Western Union depot in Chicago to Deming, N. M., where my husband lives? I am a poor woman with seven children—one is 10, one 9, two six, and three younger. I am not used to travelling, but I want to take my children to their father, and I want to go on the Western Union line. Now please answer soon and oblige.'

"That is a sample of the letters I speak of," concluded the official, "and they are getting so numerous as to make life oftentimes a burden. What do we do with them? Well, in such cases as this we turn them over to the parties that can give the information, but the bulk of them go into the basket."

A FAMOUS OLD LINE.

Mason and Dixon's Old Boundary.

INTERESTING FACTS CONCERNING ITS ORIGIN—WHAT THE STONES, USED TO MARK THE LINE, LOOK LIKE—CURIOUS INSCRIPTIONS ON THE OLD RELICS.

Along the boundary line of Maryland, which separates the State from the States of Pennsylvania and Delaware, are a lot of curious looking tones, planted solidly in the ground. They are battered and weather beaten by the unfeeling hand of Time, and that worse than worthless vandal, man. Some of them are marked on one side with the letter M, while others are carved with elaborate coats-of-arms. The country folks living on the borderland, from habits of long association, gaze at the hoary old veterans with indifference, and when of the stone soldiers are uprooted by the running of a road or the like, and falls prostrate, he is left to lie ignominously in the mud, with no Old Mortality in homespun to restore his moss-covered glories. The stones, however, are of great interest to antiquaries, students and strolling sketchers, because they mark not only the boundary line of the State, but some important historical transactions way back to the year 1760. The stones on the east and west line, between Pennsylvania and Maryland, mark the famous Mason and Dixon's Line, which has passed into a proverb. This line is the line of demarkation between the North and South. Back in 1685 the disputes began to get very bitter between the borderers, and in several instances bloodshed was the result.

In 1739 a temporary agreement as to the boundary line was adopted, but the work was not fully accomplished until the 4th of July, 1760, when Lord Baltimore and Thomas and Richard Penn entered into an agreement. The commissioners appointed by Maryland were Governor Sharpe, Benjamin Tasker, Jr., Edward Lloyd, Robert Jenkins Henry, Daniel Dulany, Stephen Bordley and the Rev. Alexander Malcom, and those who acted in the interest of Pennsylvania were James Hamilton, Wm. Allen, Richard Peters, Benjamin Chew, Lynford Lardner, Ryves Holt and George Stephenson.

On the 19th of November, 1760, they began their arduous work. Eight years later they reported their work completed. Mason and Dixon's Line derives its name from two mathematicians and surveyors—Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon, both of London, England, who were employed to make a boundary line between the two States by Lord Baltimore when he was abroad in 1763. They came to this country in the middle of November of the same year. When two hundred and forty-four miles from the river Delaware, the superstitions very prevalent there stopped their work. Subsequently the work was completed by other surveyors.

The five mile stones have engraved upon them on the side facing Pennsylvania the arms of Thomas and Richard Penn, and on the side facing Maryland the coat-of-arms of Lord Baltimore. The intermediate stones have the initial letters for Pennsylvania and Maryland engraved in similar style.

The Maryland Historical society has had for years in its possession a plaster cast taken of the Baltimore arms with the significant bar sinister across it from one of these old stones.

Mr. William J. Burton, of Baltimore, has a very handsome farm, named "Fulton," which he purchased from the late Charles C. Fulton, on the Northern Central Railway, just on the border line, which had one of the old stones planted near the centre of the front gate. Not long ago he presented it to the Maryland Historical Society, and it will doubtless form an exceedingly valuable addition to the relics of "ye olden time."

Mr. Burton, in speaking of the stone said: "It was taken up by workmen who were building a new road, and thrown on the side of an earth bank. There it remained for fourteen years. Finally I had it planted on the lawn in front of my house, and surrounded it with an iron railing. The workmen who undertook the job, planted the relic head downward and I knew nothing about it until I visited my farm the succeeding summer."

All of these stones were cut in England shipped to this country.

Why is a bald-headed man like a grey-hound? Because he makes a little hair go a great way.

Frank Hurd is writing a novel. Some punster will step in pretty soon and ask what Frank Hurd?

He (after surveying the company:) "Mixed lot! Hardly a gentleman in the room!" *She* (innocently:) "Not one—that I can see!"

A somewhat weather-beaten tramp, being asked what was the matter with his coat, replied: "Insomnia; it hasn't had a nap in ten years."

She: "And that scar, Major. Did you get it during an engagement?" *He* (absently:) "Engagement? No; the first week of our honeymoon."

"I understand our friend, Miss Highnote, is singing with considerable success in South America." "Is, eh? Glad to hear it." "That she is singing?" "Yes—in South America."

"Love, think of me when the lilacs bloom," sings Alice Stone Blackwell in the New Orleans *Times Democrat*. Alice seems to be easily satisfied. Lilacs bloom but once a year, and then only for a few days.

A Congressman's Romance.

A Washington correspondent says that the story of the marriage of Congressman Stone, of Kentucky, is a strange and interesting, and proves that there are as interesting romances in real life as are told in story-books. Stone was a Confederate soldier, and at a battle at Cynthina, Ky., was badly wounded. As he fell his hat went one way and his musket another, and he found himself unable to move to regain either. It was a scorching summer day, and he was obliged to lie on that hot hillside exposed to the intense heat of the blazing sun, unable even to protect his face, except by throwing his arm across his eyes. His life blood was rapidly running away, and he became weaker and weaker, and soon was unable to speak or move. The blazing sun which fell on his head and face was adding untold suffering in his feeble condition. After the fight he was left with the dead and dying, for it was supposed he could not live more than a few minutes or hours. After the troops had withdrawn some of the people living in the vicinity of the battlefield passed over it, relieving the necessities of the wounded so far as possible. As they passed near where Stone lay suffering in the hot sun, unable to speak, a young lady in the party noticed him and the sufferings the sun must produce if he were still conscious. Telling her companions she believed he was still alive, she procured ths ramrods from four muskets lying near by, and, sticking them in the ground by his head, fastened over the top a scarf from her shoulder, to break the rays of the sun. When the wounded were gathered from the field it was found that Stone was still living, and he was sent to the hospital. There was a long struggle between life and death, but he finally rallied and slowly regained strength, after the amputation of his right leg. The residents of the town and vicinity did all they could for the sufferers in the hospital, sending them food and delicacies and often visiting them. One day after he had gained sufficient strength to speak and notice those who visited the hospital, he saw among the visitors the young lady who had probably saved his life by her kindness when he lay helpless and speechless on the battle-field. When opportunity offered he spoke to her of the occurrence and thanked her for her kindness. The acquaintance then begun ripened into love, and she is now his wife.

Some Points to Young Men.

Select the girl.

Agree with the father in politics and the mother in relation.

If you have a rival keep an eye on him; if he is a widower keep two eyes on him.

Don't swear to the gal that you have no bad habits. It will be enough for you to say that you never heard yourself snore in your sleep.

Don't put much sweet stuff on paper. If you do you will hear it read in after years, when your wife has some especial purpose in inflicting upon you the severest punishment known to a married man.

Go home at a reasonable hour in the evening. Don't wait till the girl has to throw her whole soul into a yawn that she can't cover with both hands. A little thing like that may cause a coolness at the very beginning of the game.

If you sit down on some molasses candy that little Willie has left on the chair, while wearing your new summer trowsers for the first time, smile sweetly and remark that you don't mind sitting on molasses candy at all, and that "boys will be boys." Reserve your true feelings for future reference.

If, on the occasion of your first call, the girl upon whom you have placed your young affections looks like an iceberg and acts like a cold wave, take your leave early and stay away. Woman in her hours of freeze is uncertain, coy and hard to please.

In cold weather finish saying good-night in the house. Don't stretch it all the way to the front gate, if there is a front gate, and thus lay the foundation for future asthma, bronchitis, neuralgia and chronic catarrh, to help you worry the girl to death after she has married you.

Don't lie about your financial condition. It is very annoying to a bride who has pictured for herself a life of luxury in her ancestral halls to learn too late that you expect her to ask a bald-headed parent, who has been uniformly kind to her, to take you in out of the cold.

Don't be too soft. Don't say: "These little hands shall never do a stroke of work when they are mine," and "You shall have nothing to do in our home but to sit all day long and chirp to the canaries," as if any sensible woman could be happy fooling away time in that sort of style; and a girl has a fine retentive memory for the soft things and silly promises of courtship, and occasionally, in after years, when she is washing the dinner dishes or patching the west end of your trousers, she will remind you of them in a cold, sarcastic tone of voice.

Creased trousers are fashionable among the New York swells. Now, if they will only put the seal of approval on baggy knees, they can count us in with them.

"Ullo, Jones! You in Paris?" "Yes; I've just run over for a holiday." "Where's your wife?" "Couldn't come, poor dear. Had to stay at home on account of the baby?" "Why your holiday will be half spoiled!" "Yes. Mean to stay twice as long, to make up!"