

Sunday Mirror

WILMINGTON, DEL. JULY 25, 1880.

Bathing at Coney Island.

We've been here at Coney Island just two weeks, dear, and the reason...

First, the bathing! I have never bathed, you know, because Aunt Maggie...

And the stockings—highest, surely, style of decorative art. No, not stockings even the custom; dress cut short and really gaudy.

Yes, and never mind the lack of what's called "embroidery."

As for all the world we look like ancient spinners balled dancing.

Or a lot of wretched ornaments such collapsed and out of joint.

Oh! such things! I such things! such things! If the poet had but seen us...

Who got up the antique myth, (don't ask me who) it could not be...

Even in his wildest dreams, he ever would have thought of Venus rising (in red stockings?) rising slowly from the foam-clad sea.

We're horrid, the men are something worse. I fairly tremble when I see a dripping swimmer coming when I've known on shore.

How all look, mistake all strings—on the handsome, reasonable swimming dogs, their hides all clammy; "only this and nothing more."

As to modesty—don't name it. The Apollo Belvedere wouldn't make us change opinion, art or art. Yet I bet that you will not mention what I will you: but the work!

There's no beauty in a wet, uncovered human foot and leg! Yet these men think of coming, bare below the knees and walking.

On the sands, where all the tide of fashion daily ebbs and flows, knowing, smiling, quite unconscious of their legs, and even talking.

To the girls, gaudy, gaudy, gaudy, with their wet, bare backs, it is awful! For I'm sure, at least among the upper classes, toes were always, like some verbe, those ungraceful but not exposed.

'T would be well to post up where this bare-legged crowd of bathers passes, "Man never is" (you know the line) "but always to be dread."

Yes, it's awful, or so it is! and but one man I've discovered. In whose garb there's nothing that our sense of delicacy shocks:

He's a clergyman, who, all in flannel, (dark blue) nicely covered. Head to foot, wears studs and collar, necktie, hat and dark blue boots.

Just too lovely! That's the style of bathing that I call artistic! Quiet, comfortable-looking as you do on shore, you know; all the rest are, I confess, dead-end to wet and realistic. Endless groups of legs and arms, with flesh tints after Bongerona.

Herzog's Banner. SKETCHES OF AMERICAN FICTION. Written for the Mirror by F. T. H.

Sketch No. 1—Mother Hubbard. Who has not heard of Mother Hubbard? That great good-mother of the nursery, who, aided by her god-headed sister, Mother Goose, has done much to gladden childish hearts.

To the shame of the American Nation, he it said, that no record of her birth, or even this place, has been preserved, and this distinguished celebrity has passed along with the current of time, without even a death-notice in the newspapers. Certain it is, she was a Massachusetts woman, for no other could originate such wonderful subtleties, and her works no doubt comprised the bulk of the best part of classic Harvard's first library.

As a reward for her extraordinary literary labors, which have delighted her country people for many years, she enjoyed a long life, and died in full hope of a restful sleep. Indeed she still lives, for like the deeds of all good mortals, her works live after her. But modern ladies, envious of her enduring fame, have endeavored to excel her efforts, and have partially succeeded in obliterating her monumental glory. So that it becomes the pleasant task of your humble servant, the writer, to rescue her name from fast approaching oblivion. Of her early productions, but little is known. She first aroused the world by that electric poem, entitled, "Mother Hubbard's Dog," one stanza of which, is as follows:

Old Mother Hubbard, West to the cupboard, To get her poor dog a bone, But when she got there, The cupboard was bare, And so the poor dog had none.

Only equalled in sweetness by these lines of her amiable sister:

Hi,iddle,iddle,iddle, And the cat's in the fiddle, The cow jumped over the moon, The little dog licked the line apart, And the dish ran away with the spoon.

What the People Say. EDITORS OF MIRROR:—One of the Committees of the Board of Education had a contest for its Chairman. Now, gentlemen, be careful. What will the school boys think of their guardians, if they use the language that was uttered during a discussion between two gentlemen at said meeting. Shame on you. Be men, not boys, and stick to Lindley's grammar, not street conversation.

Thompson. The Cold Water Brigade. From indications it seems that the total abstinence army of Wilmington is again recruiting itself into activity. Meetings are being held with a degree of regularity that has a decidedly business aspect, and some of the sanguine ones predict an early revival on this subject. Meetings will be held this afternoon at 4 o'clock, at Rosendale Park, under the auspices of the W. C. T. U., and at Maple and Linwood Street, West Wilmington, under the auspices of the M. S. R. A. David Frost, an Evangelist of some note, was expected to address a meeting at the Opera House this afternoon, but the meeting has been postponed for one week, as Mr. Frost was unable to leave New York until that time.

On Wheels. Bicycle riding and racing is more popular now than ever before, and threatens to soon rival all other amusements. The race which is to take place at the Schuylkill Park on Saturday next, July 31st, will be the most interesting of the kind that has ever taken place in this city, and will be well attended, and will doubtless awaken a decided interest in the bicycle business in Wilmington. The contest will be for the professional championship of Delaware, and the manner in which it will be conducted is decidedly novel. Persons from other places, well known bicycle riders, are the regular contestants and any Delawarean who beats them wins the championship.

DELAWARE WITCHCRAFT.

Interesting Reminiscences About a Superstition of Recent Date.—The Delaware Law on the Subject.

Written for the Mirror by ex-City Treasurer, Francis Vincent.

About fifty years ago, Kent County, in this State, had a gentleman for Sheriff, John Reed by name, who was remarkably shrewd and enterprising. Few, if any, could get the advantage of him in a bargain. In after years became, probably, the most extensive merchant in the town of Dover. He was a most enterprising, useful and valuable citizen, and I believe was the only one who ever lived in that county, and sent them to get freights in Europe. Some of his ships sailed up the Mediterranean Sea, and brought cargoes from there to New York and Philadelphia. He died about 35 years ago, and the richest man in Kent County.

His widow, a most excellent and refined lady, died in Dover some four or five years ago.

Living at that time within about ten miles of Dover, was a colored man, whose family was greatly troubled by sickness. His residence was close to a mill pond, and this affliction to his family was undoubtedly caused by the malaria arising from this body of water.

He was once excited by the information, however, it was brought about by conjuration, and suspected an old negro, who lived near, of afflicting his family by his wiles in this manner.

There was another colored conjuror, named Milford, and he determined to go and consult with him upon the matter. Accordingly he went to Milford, saw the conjuror, and made known to him his suspicions.

The conjuror told him that the disease of his family undoubtedly arose from conjuration, and described the old colored man, whom he suspected as being the author of it.

He went home excited by the information, and upon entering his house found two of his children in convulsions. Acting on the impulse of the moment, and filled with revengeful feelings against the supposed injurer of his family, he seized his axe, and rushing to the old colored man's house, he at once, with this terrible weapon, clove his skull. He was immediately arrested, and as the laws of Delaware did not acknowledge conjuration as an excuse for murder, the prospect appeared to our worthy sheriff, who had a great repugnance to take life, that he would have to hang him. This he desired to get out of, and he was equal to the occasion.

At that time in all portions of our State the belief existed (amongst a number) in conjuration and witchcraft. The Sheriff then, according to our law, selected the jury. One Sheriff, therefore, in accordance with this law, summoned a body of very respectable and substantial citizens, but every one of whom believed in witchcraft and conjuration.

The lawyers who defended the accused, shaped their defense accordingly, and, to the astonishment of every one, he was acquitted by the jury. They believed the old colored man caused the death of his children by conjuration, and that "killing" him "was no murder."

The belief in witchcraft and conjuration was quite prevalent in Delaware not more than 25 years ago. Amongst the whites it was witchcraft. Amongst the colored people it received the name of conjuration. In some portions of Brandywine Hundred the belief was very strong, and numbers of hardy people were greatly annoyed by that charge being brought against them.

A fortune teller named Roback, living in Philadelphia, drew a great deal of money from a certain class who held this belief. About ten years ago an old woman named Jaquette did quite a business at fortune telling in Wilmington. Her charges were 12 cents for a lady and 25 cents for a gentleman.

She would call to see her, some with a long faith, others simply for amusement. She always gave a first rate fortune for the money. Her visitors were, generally, the young, who desired to know whom they were going to marry. The ladies were always foretold they were to have rich, handsome husbands. The gentlemen, generally, beautiful ladies with good doweries. Who would not pay from 12 to 25 cents for such predictions?

During the first years of my publication of the Blue Hen's Chicken newspaper, a fortune teller sent me an advertisement from Philadelphia. I, of course inserted it, and similar advertisements were then inserted in all the papers of the country. Visiting Philadelphia, I called upon him to receive payment. I was first shown into a backroom where the poor creature appeared to be working women, both old and young. Each was waiting her turn. I sent my card as requested by the girl in attendance. Upon her coming down she took me into a front room where alone was a young lady with beautiful and classic features, almost distracted with mental pain. What her grief was I of course never knew. Immediately afterward the girl, again came down and took me up to the "sanctum sanctorum" of the conjuror. He told me of his immense business and how it was increasing. The women came one day, and then he fixed the hour of their appearance for another day. My bill amounted to a good round sum. After paying me he informed me that his was a "higher art," and that he was "superior" to ordinary fortune tellers. They told "by the cards." He told by "inspection of the stars." And evidently not liking so much money to go away without getting some back, he informed me that he "had consulted the planets in my special case," and that he had a great deal to tell me. They had foretold to him "that I was coming," etc. Then I did not mind so much a little humbug, for I had seen a great deal of it, and got used to it. Accordingly I asked him his price. If it had been a dollar or so I would have paid it. But he told me my affairs were "weighty," and the price would be \$15. This I thought was paying too much for a card. I accordingly told him "I knew some little (just a little) of astronomy. I was in hopes he would take the hint, and think that I was afraid that the planets, rushing upon their swift courses, would not vary their speed, and turn aside from their path in the least, to take cognizance of the poor affairs of such a thing, the planets) an insignificant individual as myself. As I said before, "I am a little of an astronomer. But the trouble was he knew nothing of that science, and did not take the hint. So I bowed myself out and declined to present to get a knowledge of my future. I have had my fortune often told in my life by various fortune tellers, but no two of them ever agreed as to what was to happen to me hereafter, and this discrepancy has shaken my faith a little in prognostications. But at this time several believed in them, and these charlatans made a great deal of money.

Whist Alderman of Wilmington, I had several cases before me concerning the colored man complained of another colored man for charming his wife away, and after receiving five dollars to charm her back again, she was charmed, but he wanted further payment for the exercise of his power in bringing her home. In the midst of a trial before me for assault and battery, an old colored man suddenly got up and said to the witness then being examined, in an exciting manner, "tell him she buries bottles," "This burying of bottles was a species of

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Another case, complaint was made by a respectable and educated young white lady of a colored man taking from her, ten dollars, for conjuring her brother home, and then not complying with her promise. These were only a few of the instances of a similar nature, occurring 12 years ago. Even in this short time the community has made great advances, and the belief in conjuration and witchcraft is being greatly lessened. In a few years it will disappear altogether.

To practice conjuration is against the law of Delaware. Section 7, Chapter 132 of the old revised code, says: "If any person shall pretend to exercise the art of witchcraft, conjuration, fortune telling or dealing with spirits, he shall be fined not exceeding one hundred dollars, and shall stand one hour in the pillory, and may be imprisoned not exceeding one year."

FROM THE CHESAPEAKE. Random Notes from a Wilmingtonian on the Eastern Shore—Things Interesting About Peaches and other Matters.

BARNARD'S LANDING, CHESAPEAKE BAY, July 24.—When any of your many readers who are fond of Steamboat riding desire a change from Cape May and other points on the Delaware, let them go up on the Felton to Philadelphia and get aboard one of the Steamers of the Ericsson line to Baltimore which leaves at 4 p. m. just half an hour after the Felton arrives, next wharf above Chestnut. The ride through the canal and down Chesapeake Bay is very enjoyable of a moonlight night, and on board you will find good meals and a good berth if you prefer to moonlight on the water. After leaving the canal and passing through Slackwater river, you enter the Bay proper, and on your left, or Eastern shore, lies Kent Co. Md., one of the best agricultural counties in the Peninsula—a country as little known to most Wilmingtonians as the Slopes of the Sierra Nevada. If you desire to explore it, step ashore at Betterton, or Barnard's, and you will soon discover that you have invaded the far-famed peach region. Kent county, Md., has more peaches this year than any other of the peach growing counties in either State. As many as five thousand baskets are shipped from this point daily, to Baltimore and Philadelphia, during the height of the season, and about the same number from Betterton, the next shipping point. At both of the above places are good accommodations for boarders, and the bathing is good and fishing and boating all that could be desired in that line.

The peach growers of Kent have become alive to the importance of evaporating a portion of their large crops, and "fruit driers" of various kinds are going up in every direction. This is the only sure road to profit, for any one who grows fruit largely, and the comparative merits of the various "driers" are being brought to the front by those interested. The tendency seems to be toward low priced machines, for that will not require a whole crop to pay for, or much capital to lay idle in seasons of failure. "Fruit driers" of various kinds are going up in every direction. This is the only sure road to profit, for any one who grows fruit largely, and the comparative merits of the various "driers" are being brought to the front by those interested. The tendency seems to be toward low priced machines, for that will not require a whole crop to pay for, or much capital to lay idle in seasons of failure. "Fruit driers" of various kinds are going up in every direction. 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