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There are a great many people in this world to whom truth is a greater stranger than fiction.

South Carolina is the only state in union which has no divorce laws. A marriage lawfully contracted in that state is dissoluble except by death.

In Mexico women are not allowed to attend funerals. They are, however, magnanimously accorded the privilege of being present at all weddings.

The residents of Dublin are going to show their appreciation of the deed of O'Donnell the avenger, by erecting a memorial to him in that city.

Ex-Speaker Randall has made Speaker Carlisle a Christmas present of a shake of his right hand, and the two have agreed hereafter to walk together

The discussion between France and China and the interrogatories which they are constantly addressing to each other seem somewhat akin to that old question. "Who'll tread on the tail of my coat?"

Henry Ward Beecher calls Mormonism "the stink pot of the nation." Well, Henry has expressed it right, if the language is not so elegant as it might be. Concentrated lust, avarice and hatred. Mormonism will make nothing else.

The immigration records at Castle Garden show over 370,000 arrivals for this year up to Dec. 1. Taking the numbers entering at Portland, Boston, Philadelphia, Charleston and the Pacific ports and over the Canadian border, it is probable that the completed statistics will show three-quarters of a million accession to our population from this source for 1883.

The French are banging away in Tonquin. Admiral Courbet has captured the principal outposts of Sontay, and with an army of 7,000 men is making himself generally disagreeable. This is an actual state of war, and if the Chinese government intends to maintain its protectorate over Annam it is time for its armies to be doing. But Marquis Tseng proposes, if protected, he will broken the winter with a fresh compromise. Muslin curtains, government, which means barns, and he thinks are not particularly considered in war.

The policy of the western Republicans with regard to the admission of new States is very strongly accented by the course of the National Committee in reference to the Territories of Dakota and Washington in allowing them to be represented as States, on the ground that they are clearly entitled to admission and ought to have been admitted by the last Congress. This question will doubtless come up very conspicuously in the course of the ensuing Presidential campaign.

Superintendant Walling of the New York police force says he never carried a revolver but two days during his forty years' service on the force. It's very kink in Superintendent Walling to tell the thieves and cut-throats that now that he is not an ordinary patrolman, and if the New York policemen now take his advice and don't carry a revolver, the scoundrels of all kinds who infest New York will have a chance of shooting them down as they would so many stuffed figures. If the New york police want to go without revolvers they shouldn't tell everybody about it.

A New York policeman has been convicted of murder in the first degree and sentenced to be hung. The usual motion for a new trial has been denied, and unless the Governor interferes with a pardon the offending officer will be hanged on February 18. It is hardly probable that the ex-policeman will be respited under present circumstances, and his execution can but have a salutary effect upon the class of officers who act upon the principle that it is their first duty to club or shoot somebody. Policemen who cummit cold blooded and unprovoked murder should be punished just the same as anybody else guilty of the same crime.

Astronomers have not yet agreed upon the cause of the recent red sun sets, though they have succeeded pretty well in disproving the several theories advanced to account for the phenomonen. There is the more hope, however, of getting the conundrum answered eventually from the fact that the rare display appears to have been observed all over the world and the scientific men everywhere have had their attention drawn to it. We have heard of the wonderful glow at points so far remote as London and Rome, and it is learned that the rosy glow has excited the whole peninsula of India and numbers of "holy men" are going about preaching coming disaster.

A telephone on a new principle has been invented, by which conversation has been carried on at a distance exceeding 500 miles. Considering that the means whereby the power of the telephone has been strengthened can be further increased, and that the resistance on the land lines with which experiments have been made exceeds that of the ocean cables, it is hoped that eventually conversation may be carried on across the Atlantic. The telephone thus employed might not offer many advantages over the present method of transmitting messages, but it would be a very remarkable [illegible]

[illegible] cows which [illegible] eping? If so, [illegible] sell them, any- [illegible] s its owner in [illegible]

science to make conver- [illegible] ween continents sep [illegible] 2,400 miles wide.

Locals.

[illegible] *Times* in speaking [illegible] ins murder trial at Woodbury [illegible] says: "He was indicted for manslaughter and his counsel having neglected the defense of delusional monomania, he was convicted. Stern Jersey justice has sentenced the brute to pay a fine of five hundred dollars. That is the Jersey penalty for killing a wife. It is a mockery of justice. Far better have discharged the man with a reprimand than to hold him accountable for his crime and enable him to expiate the murder of a wife with a paltry fine, such as might have been imposed for cruelty to his horse or dog.

The deaths in Philadelphia during the past week numbered 375, being an increase of 11 over the previous week, and a decrease of 38 as compared with the corresponding week of last year. Of the entire number 202 were males, 173 females, 101 boys and 31 girls, 193 adults and 132 minors, 55 being under 1 year of age. The principal causes of death were: Apoplexy, 4; Brights disease, 4; cancer, 6; casualities, 3; congestion of brain, 7; ditto lungs and consumption of lungs, 47; convulsions, 18; croup, 17, diptheria, 28; disease of heart, 17; scarlet fever, 18; typhoid fever, 17; inflammation of the brain, 12; ditto lungs, 20; old age, 10; paralysis, 10; suicide, 2, and smallpox 3.

WASHINGTON LETTER.

Washington, D. C., Dec. 25, 1883.

We are having just now a pretty fair illustration of the sincerity of the politicians of either party on the subject of civil service reform. Each side is scoring the other for doing precisely the same thing. The Democrats in the Senate lecture the Republican majority for turning out the old officials who are Democrats, while their friends over on the House side have already made a clean sweep of the Republican officers of the Republican officers of the last Congress. The Senate Republicans put on a virtuous air and talked of civil service reform at first, when in fact those who were on the inside knew that the only reason the Senate officers were not changed at once was the fear of trouble on account of Gorham and one or two absentees. So it is. Teither party has any regard for civil service reform. What the doliticians want is the offices, and they will have them when they get a chance. The enactment of the present law was forced upon them by public sentiment, and they are heartily sorry for it. In the department Congressmen are not as potent as once were, and while a few are glad relieved to some extent of the annoyance and pressure, others regret the their influence in this direction. The civil service law went into effect was a common taing in the department circles to hear a clerk who wished to be promoted, transferred or appointed in some other department, say: "Well, I'll just fix that when my member of congress returns to the city." Such remarks are not indulged in now, but a Treasury official informs your correspondent that Congressmen are daily endeavoring to secure appointments on individual account, as though they were totally ignorant of the civil service barrier. Of course those able applicants are regularly referred to the commission, "and," said my informant, "if they get an appointment through without complying with the law its a frigid day. Just now there is a great deal of scheming going on in Congressional circles to evade the civil service law in the matter of departmental appointments, and although the movement has not yet fully developed it will become arrarent enough after the holidays, when Congress is regularly in session."

Whether the contry will hail with profound satisfaction the advent of another National bankrupt law, depends some upon what sort of a law it is. The principal bill now before Congress simply revives the law which was repealed by act of June 7, 1878, the only modification being that the compensation of the assistants in the district courts shall be fixed salaries instead of by fees. This is a good amendment, provided the salaries are not placed too high. It will be remembered that the fees paid to the court officers under the old law, constructive and otherwise, generally obsorbed the poor debtor's estate, leaving nothing to be divided up between the creditors. If we are to have a bankrupt law, this bill is as likely to go through as any other because it has been subjected to the scrutiny of the courts in all its parts, and has been the instrument by which more than one thousand [illegible] of dollars has been saved to the [illegible] the side of the business men of the [illegible] peop[illegible]

The Demo[illegible] down Congress are very playful, and [illegible] story [illegible] a good deal more of the atmosph[illegible] a certain relaxation about their cloak-rooms [illegible] is to be breathed in the retiring rooms on the Republican side. When a Republican Senator gets tired of business he goes over to the Democratic side to have some fun. The Democratic Senators play practical jokes on one another, and perhaps the most persistent joker of that body is Senator Garland. Not long ago a Senator who owed Garland one for previous pranks, got hold of some "April fool" caramels and placed them carelessly on his desk. Garland spied the deceptive chocalates, and carelessly sauntered by, picked up one of them, and said: 'What are these, Senator? They are caramels. Take one Thank you, I will,' and he took one. Now the caramel was filled with soap, and the jokers expected to see Garland spit out the nauseobs stuff. That was wuere the laugh was to come in. But Garland disappointed them. He ate the whole thing, soap and all, and never made a sign. The perpetrator became frightened and ran out into the cloak room, exclaiming, Good Lord, I'm afraid the man is poisoned. Oh, you needn't be alarmed, said Butler, of South Carolina, Garlands got an Arkansus stomach. To this day no one knows whether Garland tasted the soap or not.

Speaker Carlisle has been going through a trying ordeal in the formation of the House committees, but at this writing it is understood the work is about complete and ready for announcement. Of course everybody is not going to be deprived of [illegible] to a standst[illegible]

—The sev[illegible] Indians in the [illegible] ber about 4,000 [illegible] not Milesian Indian [illegible] red from their na[illegible]

pleased, but the general impression is that the result will be about the best that could be produced. The holiday recess will extend over to the second week in January practically, whether it does nominally or not. Notwithstanding the absence of a good many Congressmen it will be a lively season here, as the holiday season always is, and the business of peddling cards, as a Senators wife expresses it, will be carried on to a considerable extent. Usually the departments close for a half holiday each afternoon of Christmas week, but civil service reform has knocked that pleasant practice in the head and the clerks will this year get only Christmas and New Years days. I may take a holiday my self this week, the better to prepare for the hard winters work to follow.

DOM PEDRO.