The Prison Mirror.

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THE MIRROR is a weekly paper published in the Minnesota State Prison. It was founded in 1887 by the prisoners and is edited and managed by them. Its objects are to be a home newspaper; to encourage moral and intellectual improvement among the prisoners; to acquaint the public with the true STATUS of the prisoner; to disseminate penological information and to aid in dispelling that prejudice which has ever been the bar sinister to a fallen man's self-redemption. The paper is entirely dependent on the public for its financial support. If at any time there should accrue a surplus of funds, the money would be expended in the interests of the prison library.

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THE circuit court of St. Louis has decided that the city can not be held responsible for damages in the death of the children who were inoculated with tetanus administered by the city physician. The court ruled that the city in administering the antitoxin was acting for the state of Missouri, and therefore is not liable. It was further decided that the board of health is a charitable institution; that the state is under no legal obligation to provide for the physical well-being of its citizens, and since no pay was received by the state for the antitoxin it can not be held liable for neglect. This is the first case of the kind on record and has aroused a good deal of interest.

The suit was a test case brought against the city by one John Fuerst whose 4-year-old daughter Flora was one of the tetanus victims last summer. The ruling of the circuit court is probably good law, but it seems a shame that one who has been injured by such gross carelessness as was responsible for the deaths of the thirteen little ones in St. Louis can find no redress.

THE French press is making very strenuous efforts to reconcile the reception of Prince Henry with its preconceived ideas of the sentiment of the United States for Germany. It finds the task tiresome as it calls into play a new set of muscles, so to speak. The "Temps" refers to the "latent and unconscious royalism which lies at the bottom of the heart of every citizen of the free and equal republic"—a nice, long, mouthy sentence that doesn't mean a thing. As a rule, the comment is friendly, the desire of our "sister republic" across the sea being to get on the band wagon and cultivate the people the rest of the world cultivates.

Emperor William's idea of ranking American newspaper men with German general officers has of course been the subject of a great deal of comment abroad. The disposition seems to be to treat it as a polite fiction. Indeed, that is probably what it was meant for, since there is no man—not even the president—in this country who occupies such an exalted position in the eyes of his fellow countrymen as an army officer does in the eyes of a German. A plain lieutenant is a little tin god in the Fatherland, and American newspaper men never get that high.

IN A lecture delivered before the students of Princeton university last week, Sir Henry Irving brought out a new point in the silly Shakespeare-Bacon cypher controversy that is always furnishing more or less "copy" for English and American newspaper writers. "I fear," he said, "that the desire to drag down Shakespeare from his pedestal is due to that antipathy to the actor's calling, which has its eccentric manifestations even to this day. Some people, I believe, are spiritually comforted by the notion that plays which they misread at home, but would on no account see enacted, were written, not by a vagabond player, but by a statesman, a philosopher and a judge, who was convicted of taking money from his suitors and degraded in his old age."

This is so true that one immediately wonders why it has not been said before. Even in this enlightened age there are plenty of people so narrow and bigoted as to think (if they ever do think) nothing good can emanate from the stage. But when it comes to the writings of Shakespeare, they are bound to admit the philosophy, religion, morality and breadth of vision contained in them, and since the man was an actor, as well as a writer, the idea is not pleasant. The same intollerant spirit that keeps good music out of certain churches impels admirers—unwilling admirers perhaps—of Shakespeare's genius to attribute his works to Lord Bacon.

AN OFFICIAL document that reads like a most imaginative romance was recently sent to congress for investigation by Secretary Root. It is nothing more or less than a charge that a steamer chartered by the government during the late war was used on a filibustering expedition to San Domingo while in possession of the United States. It seems that the steamship "Fanita" was chartered for the use of the quartermaster's department from James McKay of Tampa, Fla. When the government was through with her, Mr. McKay put in a small claim for alterations, the same being disallowed. Then he wrote to Major Bellinger, who paid the claim and is now trying to collect it.

It is Mr. McKay's letter to Maj. Bellinger that is such interesting and unusual reading. According to this document, "The quartermaster at Mobile loaded the steamer with munitions of war and instructed the captain to follow the directions of a secret service man who was then at Mobile, and by him the captain was ordered to follow the instructions of one Jiminez, who is now President of San Domingo."

The captain of the "Fanita," so Mr. McKay says, knowing the United States and San Domingo were on friendly terms, objected to taking part in the filibustering expedition, but was finally bribed to do so by Jiminez, and the vessel proceeded on her way.

The expedition, says Mr. McKay, was a failure, Jiminez being the only insurgent to escape with his life. When it failed, the vessel went on to Cuba and unloaded the supplies. The writer alleges these acts were performed with the cognizance of former Assistant Secretary of War Mieklejohn.

This is an unwritten, and perhaps untrue, chapter in the history of our country that would have been meat and drink to the "antis" in the last campaign. The matter should be thoroughly investigated by congress, and probably will be.

THE "retort courteous" in parliamentary debate, as conceived by the gentlemen from South Carolina in the senate of the United States, has invaded Europe—invaded is the *mot propre* these days. Last week Mr. Dillon—a fine, conservative Turkish name, Dillon!—interrupted Mr. Chamberlain who was speaking in the British house of commons to tell the gentleman he was a —— liar. Mr. Dillon was thereupon suspended and ejected from the house "amid the wild cheers of the nationalists," and the press of two continents has been having contortions of sheer virtue ever since.

These passages of arms have occurred before in parliamentary bodies and will doubtless occur many times in the future, and there is no use in being too much horrified by them. In calmer moments everyone will admit the absurd and weakening effects of profanity, blasphemy or blackguardism in any form, but some men cannot have strong emotions without expressing themselves in strong language, even tho they know they will regret doing so later. To call a man a liar, or a ——liar, is no sort of an argument—in fact it is a most futile form of amusement—even when the facts warrant the assertion, but there is a whole lot of satisfaction in it at times; and to condemn a man because he makes use of such an expression in the heat of passion savors of Phariseeism, even if the vituperation occurs in the British house of commons, the "most exclusive club in London." It always pays to keep cool, but it isn't always the easiest course to pursue.

ON another page of this issue there appears an article from the March number of the "Mentor," the periodical published by the inmates of the Massachusetts state prison. It is reprinted in full here because THE MIRROR hopes it may have a repressing and salutary effect upon the person to whom it is addressed.

For some time THE MIRROR has believed that the person writing under the pseudonym of "Strabo" was a collossal plagiarist, but until a very few days ago the proof was not sufficient to warrant denying the man in question its columns; for in this place, above all others, everyone should be entitled to more than the reasonable doubt before he is condemned by his fellows. THE MIRROR preaches this doctrine and tries to practice it. Now, however, the matter has been placed beyond question, and THE MIRROR wishes to state that it believes "Strabo" stole very nearly all, if not all, the articles that have appeared above his name in the past. This belief is not based upon the "Mentor" editorial, but upon what has been learned from several other sources. It is needless to say that no more effusions from the pen of "Strabo" and the brains of more worthy men will grace the columns of this paper.

This public washing of dirty linen is disagreeable business, but is sometimes necessary. "Strabo" has done all he possibly could in the past to discredit THE MIRROR; he has not only done his best to injure the paper, but in order to satisfy his silly vanity he has taken a backhanded slap at those prisoners who are working for its success, and the only way to reach him, and anyone else who might be inclined to follow in his footsteps, is to show him up.

STORYETTES.

A Great Storm Wave.

A great storm wave is peculiar to cyclones. At the center of the disturbance the mercury in a good barometer may be lower by three inches than that in a similar instrument on the verge of the cyclone. This is owing to the diminution of atmospheric pressure consequent on the rotation of the air wheel, and as nature abhors a vacuum the sea in the vortex rises above its usual level until equilibrium is restored. This storm wave advances with the hurricane and rolls in on the low land like a solid wall. In the Backerganj cyclone of 1876 the storm wave covered the land at the eastern end of the Ganges delta at heights varying from ten to forty-five feet, as measured by marks on the trees. One hundred thousand lives were lost on this occasion.—Chambers' Journal.

Sealskin Doesn't Come From Seals.

The beautiful product used for clothing and commonly known as sealskin is not furnished by the true seal, whose skin is almost useless except when used as an ornamental mat or stiff rug. They are the sea lions and sea bears—the eared seals, otaria—whose skins are so highly valued because so soft and warm. The true seal is common enough, but its skin is only prized as a trophy, and it may be added that sealskin when ready for clothing has not, as often supposed, the same downy appearance on the living animal, being covered with long, coarse, deep rooted hairs, which drop out when dressed by the furrier and leave the soft, woolly hair uninjured.—Ex.

The Skate Fish.

The ray, or skate fish, has a mouth set transversely across its head, and working with a rolling motion like two hands set back to back. In the jaws are three rows of flat teeth, set like a mosaic pavement, and between these rolling jaws the fish crushes oysters and other mollusks like so many nuts.—Ex.

EXCHANGES.

No baked beans were offered to Prince Henry in Boston. The committee on feed may have heard he had been reading the joke columns of the papers and might laugh when the brown beauties were placed before him.—Denver Post.

The opinion of Aguinaldo's former private secretary that the Filipinos will not be ready for independence within a hundred years, gives plenty of time for a careful wording of the document which formally turns over the island to a new nation.—Evening Wisconsin.

It would have been easy for the Hon. Joseph Chamberlain to have retorted, "You're another."—St. Paul Dispatch.

Art critics say that there are 20,000 bogus Corots in existence. It is hardly possible to tell the bogus from the genuine and one can keep house without either on a pinch.—Minneapolis Journal.

If Ben Tillman has been toying and dallying with Terrible Terry McGovern, it behooves Senator McLaurin to retain Mysterious Billy Smith or some other accomplished slugger without delay. If Tillman ever acquires as much "science" as he has "sass," he will be a dangerous man and his respected colleague should be prepared.—Minneapolis Times.

HELIOGRAMS.

BY THE "TRIPLETS."

Some people who assume a Sherlock Holmes attitude couldn't get next in a barber shop.

Traffic on the path of rectitude never becomes so great as to cause a blockade.

Dough is "needed" to make bread and must be raised.

Don't try to sharpen another's jokes. You are likely to spoil the point.

Many are wise, but more are otherwise.

The late style guns are hammerless, but there are many of the flintlock variety in here—at least they carry their hammers on the outside.

Every time a boy commits a misdeed he adds another brick of grief to the load of sorrow carried on the faithful shoulder of his mother.

The bearded lady became indignant when a visitor asked her if all her ancestors on the paternal side were populists.

Restful Tatters — Say Weary, wot does it mean by de strenus life?

Weary—Aw don't ye know dat? It's where dey trow bundles all day, wears a high choker on Sundays an' takes a bath onct a week.

A St. Louis man bought 40,000 barrels of rye whisky one day last week. He won't have to worry about where the next drink is coming from for a month or so.

An epidemic of laughter has struck the town of Wellington, Ill. Three young women and a man have been laughing unceasingly for five days. The cause of this hilarity has baffled the doctors. Probably they read that address on "How to Bring Up a Family," delivered by an old maid at a mother's congress.

A Kansas man killed his wife's pet dog, made himself a cap of the hide and tanked the carcass. If economy is wealth, that fellow will some day be a Rockefeller.

The barber out in front is celebrated for his rosebud mouth. Last Sunday he went up to see the dentist, and when his jaws were about half open, Dr. Lenox said: "That's enough for this time. I'm going to stand outside to fill this front one."

A Bachelor's Preference.

Society has many pets—now when I call on Charlotte
'Tis there I see an English pug, bedizened out in scarlet.

At Penelope's a terrier skips down the Moorish stairs,
A shaggy St. Bernard 'tween, with Loye's affection shares

Stately Phyllis on the pave—out for her beauty walk,
And by her side with solemn gait, a Russian hound doth stalk.

They'd chorus all, and madly cry, "Le mauvais connoisseur!"
Could they by art or strategem my real opinion lure.

For the thing that fills me with delight, transcends my dearest wish,
Is golden brown Welsh rabbit from Maud's new chafing dish.

At a banquet given recently in Paris by a French countess the guests received a most astounding surprise. In the center of the table was what appeared to be a huge pile of roses, and just before the soup was served the roses parted, disclosing a large birdcage. This suddenly opened, revealing a beautiful young lady adorned with wings. She remained in her strange position during the dinner and introduced each new dish by singing a couplet.—Ex.