

THE JASPER NEWS

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Divorce in America.

Society protects itself from epidemics of smallpox and cholera; it should adopt some safeguard against marriages that shall burden it with generation after generation of physical weaklings, moral degenerates and criminals. Experts tell us that one-half of the insane now confined in asylums have hereditary tendencies to insanity. We cannot tolerate the Spartan law of exposing weakly children, but, says Judge E. R. Stevens in the Outlook, we ought to protect ourselves by preventing improper marriages and by putting an end to such improper marriages as become a menace to society. The success of the Jews as a race is largely due to their regulation of marriage. Some of the higher class in Brazil, by self-imposed rule, require the proposed spouse to present the certificate of a physician that he is not afflicted with certain diseases. Recently a women's congress at Paris voted to require such certificates as a protection to their daughters. In America we need more of the English idea that marriage is a life settlement, in which parents and guardians should play a larger part. If this idea prevailed, we should have fewer homes in which such scenes are enacted as those that have been rehearsed under oath upon the witness stand.

Healthfulness of Fruit.

If people ate more fruit they would need less medicine and have better health. There is an old saying that fruit is golden in the morning and leaden at night. As a matter of fact, it may be gold at both times, but then it should be eaten on an empty stomach and not as a dessert, when the appetite is satisfied and digestion is already sufficiently taxed. Fruit taken in the morning before the fast of the night has been broken is very refreshing, and it serves as a stimulus to the digestive organs, says New York Weekly. A ripe apple or an orange may be taken at this time with good effect. Fruit, to be really valuable as an article of diet, should be ripe, sound and in every way of good quality, and, if possible, it should be eaten raw. Instead of eating a plate of ham or eggs and bacon for breakfast, most people would do far better if they took some grapes, pears or apples—fresh fruit as long as it is to be had, and after that they can fall back on stewed prunes, figs, etc. If only fruit of some sort formed an important item in their breakfast, women would generally feel brighter and stronger, and would have far better complexions than is the rule at present.

The Old Testament Idea.

The Old Testament idea was much more what may be called the common-sense idea, that strength is strength, that cunning is cunning, that worldly success is worldly success, and that Jehovah uses these things for his own ultimate purpose, just as he used natural forces or physical elements, says G. K. Chesterton in Putnam's. He uses the strength of a hero as he uses that of a mammoth—without any particular respect for the mammoth. I cannot comprehend how it is that so many simple-minded skeptics have read such stories as the fraud of Jacob and supposed that the man who wrote it (whoever he was) did not know that Jacob was a sneak just as well as we do. The primeval human sense of honor does not change so much as that. But these simple-minded skeptics are, like the majority of modern skeptics, Christians.

A German girl who crossed the ocean to marry a man with whom she was acquainted only through correspondence, was repudiated by him when she arrived in New York the other day because she did not look like the photograph she had sent him. What calamities would result if everybody was expected to live up to the pictures of himself, that the photographer has retouched until they really look attractive?

Now that the United States is sending great quantities of cornmeal to Europe a Paris paper warns its readers that danger may attend its use. "It is now acknowledged," it says, "that pellagra, a disease often mortal, rages particularly, and perhaps solely, in countries where the people use maize for food." A good deal of maize is used in Indiana, remarks the Indianapolis Star, but who ever heard of pellagra?

SIGNS FOR PAST SHOWS.

Mark Twain Regrets Vanished Joys of Other Days.

Where now is Billy Rice? He was a joy to me, and so were the other stars of the nigger-show—Billy Birch, David Wambold, Backus—and a delightful dozen of their brethren who made life a pleasure to me 40 years ago and later. Birch, Wambold and Backus are gone years ago; and with them departed to return no more forever, I suppose, the real nigger-show—the genuine nigger-show, the extravagant nigger-show—the show which to me had no peer and whose peer has not yet arrived, in my experience. We have the grand opera; and I have witnessed, and greatly enjoyed, the first act of everything which Wagner created, but the effect on me has always been so powerful that one act was quite sufficient; whenever I have witnessed two acts I have gone away physically exhausted, and whenever I have ventured an entire opera the result has been the next thing to suicide. But if I could have the nigger-show back again, in its pristine purity and perfection, I should have but little further use for opera. It seems to me that to the elevated mind and the sensitive spirit the hand-organ and the nigger-show are a standard and a summit to whose rarefied altitude the other forms of musical art may not hope to reach.—Mark Twain, in North American Review.

INSURANCE INVESTMENTS.

How One Company's Assets Are Distributed in the South and West.

In connection with its withdrawal from Texas, along with many other companies, rather than to submit to the new law which requires that 75% of the reserves on Texas policies shall be invested in securities of that state, which securities shall be deposited in the state and subjected to heavy taxation, in addition to the large tax now imposed on life insurance premiums, the Equitable Life Assurance Society has made public the distribution of its assets, at the end of the second year of the new management. The Equitable now has \$10,958,000 invested in Texas, which is twice as much as the new law requires, but the management decided that to submit to the additional taxation would be an injustice to its policyholders in other states, which impose no such penalty on the thrift of their citizens.

The Equitable's report shows that more than 37% of its total reserves are now invested in the southern and western states, while only 35% of its total insurance is carried in these states. Its investments are distributed as follows: Ala., \$3,099,000; Ariz., \$974,000; Ark., \$4,038,000; Cal., \$5,142,000; Col., \$5,222,000; Fla., \$4,924,000; Ga., \$4,048,000; Idaho, \$5,197,000; Ill., \$12,617,000; Ind. Ter., \$443,000; Ind., \$6,836,000; Iowa, \$3,690,000; Kansas, \$11,637,000; Ky., \$2,631,000; La., \$3,054,000; Md., \$2,207,000; Mich., \$6,009,000; Minn., \$2,065,000; Miss., \$767,000; Mo., \$8,197,000; Mont., \$1,890,000; Neb., \$7,526,000; Nev., \$640,000; New Mex., \$1,376,000; N. C., \$1,649,000; N. D., \$677,000; Ohio, \$11,634,000; Okla., \$1,066,000; Ore., \$1,158,000; S. C., \$975,000; S. D., \$1,305,000; Tenn., \$1,909,000; Utah, \$2,134,000; Va., \$6,592,000; Wash., \$1,802,000; W. Va., \$5,523,000; Wis., \$2,342,000; Wyo., \$3,367,000.

Targets for Anglers.

Not long ago several wood disks, one foot in diameter, painted white, and each provided with a line and a lead weight, were placed in the pool in Central park, this city, by the Anglers' club, for targets for fly and bait-casting. As a granitoid walk adjoins the eastern end of the pool, and the targets furthest from the casting platform are near this walk, thousands of park visitors worry the lives out of the policemen and park employees with questions relative to the purpose of the white disks. They have been asked if the strange things are early lily pads and everything under the sun an idle lounge can imagine. One of the patrolmen told me the other day that his naturally sweet temper had been ruined since the appearance of "them things." But the most curious questions of all was fired at me one day as I watched the anglers practicing.

"Are those tin cans used in fish breeding?" asked the visitor. "What cans?" I queried, not grasping his meaning. "Why, those tin cans in the lake?" "Oh! No, those are targets."—Forest and Stream.

Encroaching.

Magazine Editor—Seems to me our verse contributors are getting mighty particular.

Assistant—They are?

Magazine Editor—Yes; here's one who insists on having his poem run next to pure advertising matter.—Puck.

To watch the corn grow or the blossoms set; to draw hard breath over ploughshare or spade; to read, to think, to love—these are the things to make men happy.—John Ruskin.

Women Who Have Ruled at Capital

Of All the Charming and Stately Mistresses of the White House, Mrs. Grover Cleveland Is the Only One Now Living.

The passing of Mrs. William McKinley appreciably depleted the list of surviving White House ladies, to the point that they have become almost as few as living ex-presidents—and of this latter there is only one. While Mrs. McKinley, by reason of the continuing illness which had for many years beset her, could scarcely be looked upon as an active figure in social life at the executive mansion, her influence on the American nation, through the thoroughly sympathetic relations she enjoyed with her husband, was not slight.

There have, in the course of our comparatively very brief history, been gay White Houses and quiet White Houses. To the latter class belong the administrations of William Mc-

Kinley like this the other day: 'There is no healthy thought without labor, and thought makes the laborer happy.' Perhaps this is the way I have been able to climb up higher. It came to me one morning when I was making bread. I said to myself, 'Here I am, compelled by an inevitable necessity to make our bread this summer. Why not consider it a pleasant occupation and make it so by trying to see what perfect bread I can make?'

"It seemed like an inspiration, and the whole of life grew brighter. The very sunshine seemed flowing down through my spirit into the white loaves, and now I believe my table is furnished with better bread than ever before; and this truth, old as creation, seems just now to have become wholly mine—that I need not be the shrinking slave of toil, but its regal mistress, making whatever I do yield me its best fruits. You have been laughing at me for having lived so long without my crown, but I am too glad to have found it at all to be entirely discontented, even by your merriment."

Mary Lincoln's Ambitions.

Mary Todd Lincoln, wife of the other American president to meet death by assassination, held from early youth the ambition to marry a man who should rule the nation. She picked out as her choice Abraham Lincoln and this at a time when her selection seemed to have little of recommendation in it. She refused the offer of marriage of Stephen A. Douglas, and wedded the man she was sure was to go to Washington as the chief of America. She realized her ambition and went to the capital, holding her first reception



Martha Washington.

Kinley and Theodore Roosevelt and of some earlier executives. Of the former, Dolly Madison is generally looked upon as the most notable example, with the period of Grover Cleveland's occupancy of the throne as a close second by reason of the great public interest which attended his marriage with Miss Frances Folson.

The Roosevelt Regime.

Certainly, of recent years, the Cleveland regime must stand out as the most socially important, in any consideration of the activities of the ladies of the White House. Mrs. McKinley, practically an invalid, had not the strength necessary to the prosecution of a vigorous social campaign. Mrs. Roosevelt has not the inclination. She has been ever a retiring woman, content with her family and her home life, caring nothing at all for the pomp and circumstance that go with high office.

Whatever gaiety of the sort Washington expects from the executive family has been, in the main, due to Mrs. Nicholas Longworth, formerly Alice Roosevelt. That young woman enjoyed a national popularity which few ladies of the White House have ever exceeded.

An Everyday Heroine.

Lucretia Rudolph Garfield was essentially a homebody. She had been a school teacher in Ohio before she and James A. Garfield were married. She took no highfalutin notions to Washington, when she went there as the first lady in the land. She was a farmer's daughter, and her ways were plain. The Hon. A. M. Pratt, of Bayou, O., telling of the lives and loves of the Garfields some years ago, said:

"Mrs. Garfield sought and taught scholars in painting and drawing to me, then very insignificant, village. She did not get very large classes and lived in my house, the guest and friend of my then wife. The future president was frequently entertained at my table; he a young, strong, great-hearted, large-headed youth, but two years from college, hopeful, full of life and push; she graceful, sweet, amiable, retiring, with a disposition as lovely as a starlit sky—both poor. Their fortune was their youth, health, hearts, intellects, hope and, glad am I to say, love."

Mrs. Garfield before her elevation, was very often compelled to do much of her own housework. Ten years before she went into the White House she wrote her husband, from their farm home, a letter which shows the lines of her character, and which, in part, is as follows:

"I am glad to tell that out of all the toil and disappointments of the summer just ended I have risen up to a victory; that silence of thought since you have been away has won for my spirit a triumph. I read something



Dolly Madison.

March 9, 1861. This is how an old-timer recalls that occasion:

"Mrs. Lincoln stood a few paces from her husband, assisted by her sisters, Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. Baker, together with two of her nieces, and was attired in a rich pink moire antique, pearl ornaments and flowers in her hair and hands. She is a pleasant looking, elegantly appearing lady of perhaps 40, somewhat inclined to stoutness, but, withal, fine looking and self-possessed."

It was the proudest day of Mrs. Lincoln's life. Laura C. Holloway, in speaking of the influence of Mrs. Lincoln of official America, is inclined to the belief that much of unfortunate effect was due to Mrs. Lincoln's lack of tact.

Plucky Dolly Madison.

Of a happier tone was the White House experience of Dorothy Paynes Madison, wife of the president of that name. Her family came from Virginia, and she, herself, despite the fact of her North Carolina birth, always took pride in referring to herself as a daughter of the Old Dominion. When her family removed to Philadelphia and joined the Quaker sect, Mistress Dorothy was brought up in that severe doctrine. She married, very young, John Todd, a Philadelphia lawyer, and was a widow at 22. Her second marriage—to the then Congressman Madison—took place less than a year after the death of Mr. Todd.

Mrs. Madison's disposition was of the sunniest. She proved an invaluable ally when her husband was elected president and moved to Washington. At that early day of our history, Washington was little less than a wilderness. Steamboats were just coming in, railroads were unknown. Five hundred mile trips on horseback were frequently taken, even by women. The times were rough. Mrs. Madison, however, with the softening influences, which were hers from birth, made of the president's home

a sort of palace, of fashion and charm. She made for her husband friends by the hundred and was never happier than when presiding at the parlor cabinet. That was her history for awhile—the mainspring in the scheme of happiness. Then came the darker side of things, wars and rumors of wars, the bayonets of the British gleaming in the Washington sunshine—and American officials in danger of sudden death. Just how the volatile lady bore herself under these changed conditions is well shown in a letter she wrote to her sister at Mount Vernon:

Tuesday, August 23, 1814.

"Dear Sister—My husband left me yesterday morning to join Gen. Winder. He inquired anxiously whether I had courage or firmness to remain in the president's house until his return on the morrow or succeeding day, and on my assurance that I had no fear but for him, and the success of our army, he left me, beseeching him to take care of myself, and of the cabinet papers, public and private. I have since received two dispatches from him, written with pencil; the last is alarming, because he desires that I should be ready at a moment's warning to enter my carriage and leave the city; that the enemy seemed stronger than had been reported, and that it might happen they would reach the city, with intention to destroy it."

"I am accordingly ready; I have packed many cabinet papers into trunks in to all one carriage; our private property must be sacrificed, as it is impossible to secure wagons for its transportation. I am determined not to go myself until I see Mr. Madison safe and he can accompany me—as I hear of much hostility towards him. Disaffection stalks around us. My friends and acquaintances are all gone, even Col. C., with his hundred men, who were stationed as a guard in this inclosure. French John (a faithful domestic) with his usual activity and resolution, offers to spike the cannon at the gate and lay a train of powder which would blow up the British should they enter the house. To the last proposition I positively object, without being able, however, to make him understand why all advantages in war may not be taken."

Rachel Jackson's Sad History.

A very sad history was that of Rachel, wife of President Andrew Jackson. Early in life she had contracted a marriage which had resulted unfortunately, and, on a divorce being granted—or, as was thought at the time, granted—she married Andrew Jackson. The repetition of the report that this marriage took place before a divorce had positively separated the woman from her first husband, Roberts, so worked upon Mrs. Jackson as to aggravate a heart affection which had given her much trouble.

The fact that a second ceremony positively united Jackson and the daughter of Col. John Donelson, was ignored in the gossip attendant upon the lives of the parties, and in the campaign for the presidency made by



Rachel Jackson.

Jackson, his enemies made much capital of the situation. Just as she was preparing to leave for Washington to take an mistress of the executive mansion, Mrs. Jackson overheard a gathering of women in a room adjoining hers in a hotel discussing her with a freedom and malice that resulted in her complete prostration and subsequent death.

Other Ladies of the White House.

Other women who have graced the White House have, each, their places in history. Martha Washington, Lucy Webb Hayes, Julia Dent Grant, Martha Patterson, who aided her father, President Johnson; Mrs. Andrew Johnson, Harriet Lane, the beloved niece of President Buchanan, Abigail Fillmore, Mrs. James K. Polk, Letitia Christian Tyler, Angelica Van Buren, Mrs. Martin Van Buren, Louisa Catherine Adams and Martha Jefferson.

Their impression on their country's future has been scarcely less defined than was the mark made by the distinguished men whose names they bore. For the social influence is every bit as important as the political influence, and its victories, though unofficial just as pronounced.