

and feeds magpies just to torment that rooster. Recently he located a claim covering the Frederick dump, tunnel and buildings, on ore he found a few feet below the surface in the engine room, and he had the gall to call his claim "The Rooster." Fritz's wickedness to the poor bird is villainous. Yet he is, apparently, one of the best fellows on earth. For a quarter of a century he has been in Alta, and for years he has lived the winters through alone in the Frederick with only cats for companions. Even now that he has a rooster he contemplates killing it for Christmas. He has been in several snowslides, and some day, when the snow is deep on the heights, I may tell you his story.

CHARLES ELLIS

## STORY OF A LEAD PENCIL.

[From the Philadelphia Times.]

When James I. of England first saw an apple dumpling his eyes grew as large as saucers from wonder as to how the apple got inside the dumpling. He would have dropped dead had he seen a lead pencil, for while the dough grew around the apple, no tree could have ever been found that would consent to grow around the lead. To solve the mystery is the object of this story. One of the great factories and the head of that factory was sought by a reporter, and he said this about the matter, with every evidence of veracity, he having no occasion for deceit in this simple explanation:

"I have to laugh at the queer ideas some people have about pencils. You will scarcely believe it, but the opinions of people who know nothing about it seem to be divided between the melting of the lead and pouring it into the hole in the wood and cutting out the lead to fit the hole."

The great manufacturer laughed loud, long and heartily over his remark, and almost anybody else would who happened to be posted in the art. But there are those who may know how the hole got in the macaroni, who cannot imagine how the lead got into the pencil, and it is just possible that the pencil manufacturer does not know the trick about the Italian comestible. But he had his laugh out and went on to say:

"We don't do it that way. We have a simpler and less costly process. Bless me, how could we sell the best pencils in the world, in all shapes and quantities, for a cent apiece and less, if we had to carve them out of solid lead, or melt the lead and pour it in the hole? Few people know how it is done, but I will enlighten you. The part that goes into our pencils other than the lead is cedar, and comes from the swamps of Florida. It is obtained from the fallen trees that lie there. There are men there who make a business of supplying to pencil manufacturers this cedar in blocks, which are sawed to the length of the pencil, some thick to receive the lead, and others thin for the piece that is glued over the other containing the lead. The blocks are sawed for four pencils each. The groove is made by a saw, and in this the lead lies.

"I know," continued the manufacturer, "that not one out of 10,000 persons has the least idea of what this lead is. See, here is a fine black powder; that is graphite, and costs somewhere about 25 cents per pound. This white substance is German clay. It came across the ocean as ballast in vessels, and all it costs us is for freight. We mix clay and powder together and grind them in a mill, moisten the mass carefully during the process, until the two are thoroughly assimilated and reduced to a paste that is about the consistency of putty. Here

are the dies for the leads, into which we press this paste of graphite and clay. Each die is the size of a pencil lead, saving in length. There are four leads in one of these. After pressing they are cut into the proper length and baked in a oven kept at a very high degree of heat. That finishes the simple process of making the lead, and its hardness is regulated by the greater or less amount of clay mixed with the graphite—the more clay the harder the lead.

"These leads are kept in hot glue and are placed in the grooves as the blocks are made ready. When the lead is put in their snugly and forever, the thin block is glued to the thick and left to dry thoroughly. When dry the blocks are run through the machine that shapes and burnishes them, and then tied in bunches, boxed and sent out complete. The different grades in value are made by the more or less fine manipulation of the graphite. As to the cost of our pencils, here is a pencil found in business life. That pencil costs us a trifle more than a quarter of a cent to get ready for the market. We sell it to the dealer at 100 per cent profit, and he makes much more than that. An operator on one of our machines can easily make 2,500 of such pencils in a day. That is the whole story, honest and true. Now, what I want to know is, when pencils are so cheap and good and handy and useful, and all that, what excuse can a pencil stealer have for his awful crime?"

## TELEGRAPHIC NEWS.

Litchfield, Ills., Nov. 3.—Last night as the Buffalo, New York and Boston limited on the Wabash, due here at 9:48 o'clock, pulled out, two men without masks boarded the chair car and at a point of cocked revolvers demanded the passengers to give up their valuables. After going through the car, which was done at a lively rate, the robbers pulled the bell cord and as the train stopped the robbers got off, running up Third street and disappeared. The robbers got between \$70 and \$80 and a gold watch.

Cincinnati, Ohio, Nov. 3.—A cowardly attempt to assassinate Mrs. John Henry, a prominent and wealthy woman, in her home at Clifton, was made this morning by Lindsay Neighbert, a gardener whom she had recently discharged. While Mrs. Henry was at breakfast alone, Neighbert suddenly entered the room and began firing. A servant bravely seized the assassin after he had fired two shots, and pushed him out of the room. He fled to the woods, where, an hour or two later, he was found dead with a bullet through his head. Mrs. Henry's life was saved by the bravery of Delsine Barrett, who actually overpowered Neighbert. Mrs. Henry's wounds are in the arm and not regarded as serious. Neighbert had been suspected of theft and was discharged the next day after the marriage of Miss Henry to Mr. E. O. McCormick, of the Big Four, because a number of articles were missing at that time. He was 50 years of age.

Boston, Nov. 3.—The bark Gazelle has arrived here from Para and Barbadoes, and Captain Green reported that last Saturday, when 180 miles south of South Shoal lightship, he fell in with an immense amount of wreckage, apparently marking the spot where some large English vessel had foundered.

The wreckage included a portion of a vessel deck with knees attached, main ribs and stanchions, planking and pieces of deck house, besides the side of a boat upon which was plainly visible the word "London."

There was also about ten packages of

pitchpine deals in the midst of the wreckage but no spars or rigging were in sight. Judging from the decks and wreckage passed it is probable that the vessel would carry about twenty-five men.

San Francisco, Nov. 3.—The United States fish commission steamer Albattross has arrived from Alaskan waters. The report of Commander Moser will say that the Alaska salmon will disappear if there are not efforts made to propagate the fish and restock the waters. This is recognized by the packers and some of them are now maintaining private hatcheries to fill the streams from which they draw their supplies. Last year the output of the Alaska packers was 1,000,000 cases of 48 pounds each, or 48,000,000 pounds of canned salmon. This year there will be a material falling off. It is understood that Commissioner Brice will ask Congress for enough money to establish hatcheries, and thus keep alive the salmon in the northern waters. Commander Moser reports that many shad planted in these waters were caught in the traps of the Alaska canneries this year.

Chicago, Nov. 3.—Bodies of three men who had died by violence in lonely places far separated from each other were found a few hours apart in Chicago suburbs and opportunity for solving a trio of mysteries was given to the police. In each case the victim had not been identified. Murder or suicide caused their deaths. The cases are: Unknown man, body found near Winnetka, with a bullet in the heart; a dog beside it also with a bullet in its heart. Unknown man found hanging from a tree near Forest. Unknown man found in a field near Summit, on the drainage canal.

San Francisco, Nov. 4.—The twenty members of the North Fork Alaskan expedition who returned to this city on the steamer President from St. Michaels last night claim that they were brought here against their will. Finding that the old river steamer Mare Island was unable to carry them from St. Michaels to the mouth of the Yukon owing to the adverse currents, they decided to go overland to the gold fields, and when the President was preparing to leave, twenty of them made arrangements with Captain Nelson to take them from that port to Unalaklik, on the main land, whence they would continue their journey toward Dawson City.

On arriving at Unalaklik the master of the steamer refused to land passengers, claiming that it was impossible to force a boat to the shore on account of the ice that was forming along the beach, and also that by sending them ashore there to commence such a journey as they proposed, would be aiding them to their deaths. Therefore they were kept on board and brought to this city.

The schooner Bessie K. arrived at St. Michaels the day before the President sailed, with a party of fourteen gold hunters, headed by W. M. Coffee. The schooner will winter there and the party will proceed up the river in the spring on the steamer El Sueno.

Madrid, Nov. 4.—At the meeting of the Spanish cabinet yesterday it was decided to demand an explanation from Gen. Weyler of the remarks he made in his farewell address on leaving Havana on Sunday last.

Previous to embarking on board the steamer Montserrat, Gen. Weyler received a deputation of autonomists, and in his address to them he said in part:

"My release from my post and responsibilities did not surprise me. I have expected it from the death of Senor Canovas, not believing that any political leader would be strong enough to sustain me when the United States and the rebels were together constant-