SECRET WEDDINGS IN WASHINGTON.

A Government Practice Indirectly Responsible for Many of Them.

Not infrequently a lead pencil inscription serves an entry in the marriage license books in the office of the clerk of the district court reads, "Please issue one this." At first equitable such a request has about it an air of mystery which would naturally lead the curious clerk to investigate; but after he has understands the whole thing he ceases to be curious.

Among the many thousand men and women employed in one capacity or another by the many departments of the government are formed acquaintanceships which ultimately find complete satisfaction only at the altar. The government has a confidential agent who disregards all civil service rules, never sets for a salary and never expects a pension. He is better acquainted with employes everywhere than any head of a department, and he is responsible for much of the trouble which arises now and then, though he does everything in good part.

If it was not for this miserable little rascal, she might forever enjoy many smiles of manifest; dandle the typewriter or manipulate the counting machine, and he might forever know nothing of the real joys of life beyond drawing his salary and drinking soft drinks at night in a drug store, but the confidential agent, Cupid, intervenes and the first thing he knows he is confronting Clerk Meigs, who, as he hands him the license, says: "I congratulate you. I have been married myself."

Then comes the rub. The large number of employes results in government being spoiled with a very large G in Washington. That government is supposed to be run on business principles, and as marriage, by long custom, which has no excuse in reason, frequently incapacitates one of the parties from serving the government longer, the couple, who are generally not well off in this world's goods, prefer to keep their marriage a secret from the government, so that their combined salaries may be used in giving them a comfortable home.

Again, the groom reasons: "The chief will say, 'How is a young man who is well enough off to marry.' I reckon when the time comes to raise salaries we will have to add to the salary of him who is not well enough off to marry.'"

Hence the desire for secrecy. This is only one of the terrors which surround the marriage of government employes, but it is a curious commentary on the growth of officialism in this country.—Washington Post.

Automatic Lubricating Bullets.

D. B. Wesson, of Springfield, Mass., has secured patents on an automatic lubricating bullet or projectile in all of the principal countries of the world. Previously it has been a question how to keep rapidly fired guns clean, the lubricant having been stored in grooves on the exterior of each bullet, or in some similarly clumsy way that has proved but half effective. Mr. Wesson's device sinks in each bullet from the base to a point beyond the bearing of the bore, a narrow cell, which is filled with the lubricant.

The plug at the base consists of a metallic cup which is acted on by the explosion, driving it forward into the cell. Two small ducts lead upward and downward from the end of the cell nearest the point of the bullet, through which the lubricant is forced, as the metallic cup advances. The lubricant then lies between the bullet and the barrel, and as the projectile proceeds the base of the ammunition floating tightly on the barrel carries the lubricant forward.—New York Telegram.

A Bigot That Got There.

There is a man in this town who has an inveterate hatred for the Semitic race. He belongs to that clique of artists which paints very often in the Hoffman House gallery. He never allows an opportunity for an attack on the Jews to pass by. It is his hobby. One evening he found himself seated next to a prominent Wall street Hebrew banker at the afternoon gallery.

Somebody turned the subject of conversation to Turkey. The artist, who had been babbling with many different ladies that evening and had grown loosy of tongue thereby, spoke up and said that he sympathized in many ways with the people of that country, particularly with their dislike of asses and Jews, whom they are ready to kill on the slightest provocation.

"My dear fellow," said his Jewish neighbor, "how all fired lucky for you and myself that we do not live in Turkey."—New York Recorder.

Errors Are Easily Made.

An editor tells a story to show how the most glaring errors can be made, can be overlooked and almost get into print. A correspondent, probably writing hurriedly, spoke of a man who was injured in his "right foreleg." The editor who read the copy skipped over that "right foreleg" of a man as if it were the most ordinary thing in the world to meet fourfooted men. The compositor "set up" the "foreleg" and it was the ever watchful proof reader who came into the room with a broad grin on his face to ask how many legs men usually had.—New York Tribune.

Two Sisters.

My wife goes to bed at 10 to rise at 8 and look after the children and other unnecessary duties; I sit up till 3 in the morning working at rubbish for Black wand—she is the slave of the ring and I of the lamp.—Burham's Diary.

He Let Out the Dark.

Pat—Why are you taking down the shutters, Mike?

Mike—To let out the dark, to be sure.—Texas Siftings.

Ambiguous.

"How are your patent pneumatic branches selling?"

"Can't supply enough of them."—Jewelers' Circular.

New York's Street Vendors.

It is often a matter of speculation how the multitude of street vendors in New York make a living. In the vicinity of the postoffice, opposite the Astor House, are always to be seen numerous push carts, some containing nothing but bananas, invariably supplied by lazy looking sons of Italy. Watch them for an hour, or as long a time as you can spare, and the chance sales are so small, so few and far between, that it doesn't seem possible that enough business can be done to yield a profit sufficient to keep body and soul together. Yet very few of them but turn out from one dollar to two dollars a day clear of expenses.

An average of $1.50 per day, rain or shine, is not unusual. There are no expenses beyond the small capital invested in a bunch of the succulent tropical fruit. Very often this is furnished by another Italian, who may own a number of these carts and various street stands, while the venders are operating on shares or commissions. This capitalist is a sort of patrons, and having himself sprung from the ranks requires a scrupulous accounting from his poorer countrymen, who would be glad to get him into trouble, though "the finest" are very lenient in the exercise of their discretion in this respect. The fruit cart is but one of the many sources of livelihood of the street vender, but its meager simplicity appeals most powerfully to the imagination of the observer.—New York Herald.

The Census in New York and Philadelphia.

The census of New York city at the best constitutes a most difficult problem. In comparison with such a task a census of Philadelphia is child's play. There we have a city openly built, with ninety houses to every hundred families. Tenement houses are rare. Few of the people sleep in stables, in cellars or in lofts. The houses are set squarely in the streets. Four fifths of the inhabitants are native born, and all but a trifling percentage are of English speech.

Merely to state these facts is, to one who knows anything of New York, enough to show the difficulties of enumeration in that city, which in 1890 had for 242,127 families but 72,064 dwellings, of which perhaps 20,000 were tenement houses within the meaning of the sanitary acts.

New York is a city of courts and alleys in the lower parts, and with thousands of shanties, sheds and inhabited sites in the upper parts, and its population is almost equally divided between natives and foreigners, no small proportion of the latter element using languages other than English—not merely the more or less familiar German and French, but Slavic and even non-Aryan tongues.—General Francis A. Walker in Forum.

Raising Poetry.

Newspaper traditions in New York contain many quaint instances of the art of boiling down copy. It is a common saying that a newspaper receives twice as much matter as it prints. A large sacrifice to the blue pencil or rejected copy spindle is inevitable. The champion boiler of news in the New York offices in the days that veterans in the business still remember was Dr. Wood, who exercised his art in The Sun office for many years, and the most artistic feat of condensation remembered of him is worth recording. One night a half column poem was turned over to him to edit. Copy was copy to his practical eye, and he set out to get at the meat of the verses and state it in the fewest possible words. This was the result:

Do you love me? No.
Then I go.
—New York Times.

Why Wolcott Became a Senator.

"Wolcott owes his election to the senate," said a gentleman who knows him well, "to a sensational account of his winning a large stake at faro at Long Branch a few years ago. Wolcott won something like $20,000 on one play, and the story was sent from one end of the country to the other. He had no idea at that time of seeking political preferment. But the publication of this story touched Wolcott's pride. He determined to prove to the country that he was something more than a faro bank plunger, and he did it. That is the true story of how Wolcott came to enter politics."

The authority for the above is Colonel Thomas Portenbouse Ochiltree, so it must be true.—St. Louis Republic.

One Row Avoided.

Mrs. Tiptop—How in the world did you persuade yourself to marry a baker?

Mrs. Van Oven (formerly Mrs. De Fine)—I determined that for my second husband I would marry a man who could take his own biscuits.—New York Weekly.

Thunder has never been heard more than fourteen miles from the flash of lightning. The report of artillery has reached much greater distances. The surrounding at the Battle of Waterloo was heard at the town of Cecil, in the north of France, about 113 miles from the field.

If we visit Egypt and examine the pyramids, temples and tombs on either bank of the river Nile, they will be found to be composed of minute petrifactions. The pyramids of Ghizeh, opposite to Cairo, are composed of stones formed entirely of the remains of microscopic animals.

Ornithologists tell us that when feeding the stride of the ostrich is from 20 to 22 inches, when walking but not feeding, 26 inches, and when terrified 11 1-2 to 14 feet, or at the rate of about twenty-five miles an hour.

A Word to the Girls.

Girls, don't keep young men waiting when they call to see you while you primp and powder and fix up—as you fancy you do. It is not good form. The thing for you to do is to get up if you happen to be in the best of a flutter, and just as if you were part and parcel of the establishment. I want to think pups are horrid when they are coaxed from the fire and say, "Oh, yes, he's here—he's in the dining room, cleaning the silver." That was one of my duty days. I used to hate duty days, but he made me enjoyed of that, but, not once he showed that awful swell, Roger Forsythe, in, and told him he would help, but that he should count the spoons to see that none were missing when he left. Did he do it, you believe, Reg and that if he had his way two spoons would soon be missing, and he showed me my face in the mirror and the spoons on the table of the spoons, and guessed how funny I looked, but it was ever so much more amusing than sitting in state in the parlor talking about the weather. Now, about that young man said—he has some good points, that pups of mine—as changes a girl ought to show as much respect for her own family as for a new arrival in the house. Don't be a fool, girls, when he comes, and there are decent papers allowed at our table, nor allowed dress sitting. Do if things runs in to ask me to drive to the affair, and I can see you without going up stairs and keeping him waiting until he is out of all patience. I know a girl who had her beau in that way for a year, and he thought she was the sweetest girl, when he hoped that she would be ready, and then—he forgot to return.—Detroit Free Press.

How to Make Summer Cooking Easy.

Ironing at best is hard work and hot work, and yet with the exercise of a little judicious planning and purpose to make it as easy as possible—and it can be done—even with a degree of comfort unknown of by many a housewifery, who gets tired and fretted over her cooking table. There is no reason why we all should not have a day for cross irons at once. It costs $2.50 and burns half a gallon of oil in two hours. It takes up only about a square foot of space, and can be set on a bare table without danger of fire. It is also, though, to put a bit of tin or sheet iron under it. Establish your table in the closest place possible, between doors and window of a hall room if you can. Set the little stove just outside where the heat will not strike you. Put a thick rug or carpet under your feet, and wear loose, low shoes—not slippers.

It is not necessary to stand throughout the ironing, though. You may sit on a high stool and do the small pieces without the least trouble. Have the clothes basket within reach at your right hand, the clothes horse of your left, and you need not move, save to change irons. Keep three or four holders, and let one gets hot lay it down and take a cool one. And do not persuade yourself that good housewifery will be outraged if you iron plain towels, sheets, napkins and so on, in the double fold. If they are clean and sweet and dessert smooth, the utmost letter of summer law is fulfilled.

Toilsome, all, no doubt, but it is the sum of accomplished tribes that makes the sweetness of living.—New York Evening Sun.

Women and Exercise.

Dr Morell Mackenzie says of exercise for women: "I need not dwell on the necessity of exercise for women further than to say that competent authorities look upon it as the best safeguard against certain diseases peculiar to their sex, the enormous prevalence of which at the present day is no doubt in great measure due to the physical influences which many of them have been taught to consider rather as a grace than as a defect—I had almost said a vice. I may here say that I think it a mistake for women to aim directly at the development of muscle.

"The Venus of Milo, not the half masculine Amazon, must always be the type of physical perfection for them. Their exercise should, therefore, be chiefly hygienic rather than athletic. A great French anatomist, Cruveilhier, was magnanimous enough to say that whatever women might learn to do, they never would succeed in running gracefully. Charles Kingsley used to say that I think the inference true, but that, and throwing the cricket ball, are about the only things which they cannot do with twice the grace and nearly all the strength of men."

The Beauty but Useful Girls.

The "useful" girl is not noticeable in any way. Everybody makes use of her and everybody likes her. She has no enemies and no lovers. She hears very much and does very much, speak highly of her who she is brought to their attention in some way, but they never think about her voluntarily. They appreciate her highly when she helps them out of a corner and thank her cordially, and then forget her until they need her again. She is not sent to marry, for men do not seek for useful girls before choosing the one who will be the mother of their children, assist in getting up entertainments for other people to participate in, and she is an excellent nurse and reads aloud well and sings a little—enough to rock a child asleep or to help out a chorus. She is like the given "everlasting," or old Fashioned "five hundred" plant—useful and not beautiful, yet indispensable in a garden.—Ella Wheeler Wilcox in Ladies' Home Journal.

An Odd Sight in Boston.

The square in Kilby street opposite the Mason building must be somewhat like the old inn starting places of the stage coaches in the days before the railroads. The suburban and country expresses rendezvous there in great numbers, and there are some very queer conveyances and animals, not to speak of drivers, in the early afternoon, when the expresses that run out and out to Dover and Natick and Sherborn and Lincoln and such places are preparing to set out on their long drive homeward. It takes a good horse to make one of these trips into town and back in a day, and every day too; but the horse is not shown for his good looks, but for his hard muscles and his trustworthy load and legs.

He is a little apt to be angular. You might be, gentle reader, if you had to walk from Billerica to Boston and back every day. The wagons that make these long country trips are not the sprucest, well painted vehicles that one sees going about in town.—Boston Transcript.

What an Irish Famine Looks Like.

I visited the island of Achill, in Connemara. I trust I may never again have to endure the agony I endured that day—seeing men, women and children perishing all about me, without the possibility of giving relief. All of the food of every kind on the island had been consumed. In one place in one instance I saw a family feeding on boiled nettles. The next day I was driving with a farmer, a gentleman of wealth and position, on the main land. Talking over the misery I had witnessed, he said, "And yet I cannot say I have lost a single sheep on the mountains." My observation was prompt. "Lucky for you I am not one of your tenants. You would have lost many."—S. C. Hall's Book.

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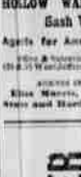

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