SECRET WEDDINGS IN WASHINGTON.

A Government Practice Infinitely Responsible for Many of Them.

Not infrequently a lead pencil inscription across an entry in the marriage license books in the office of the clerk of the district court reads, "Please see me this." At first sight such a request has about it an air of mystery which would naturally lead the inquirer to investigate, but after he has understands the whole thing is simple enough.

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 asks 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 his miserable little moral, she might forever copy many miles of manifold, 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, 'Here 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 seat of the cup 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 bearing tightly on the barrel carries the lubricant forward.—New York Telegram.

A Retort 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 points 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 aforesaid gallery.

Somebody turned the subject of conversation to Turkey. The artist, who had been dabbling with many different colors that evening and had grown loose 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 forelog." The editor who read the copy skipped over that "right forelog" of a man as if it were the most ordinary thing in the world to most footnoted men. The compositor "set up" the "forelog" 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 Sides.

My wife goes to bed at 10 to rise at 8 and look after the children and other sentimental duties; I sit up till 3 in the morning working at rubbish for Blackwood—she is the morning lark and I of the lamp.—Durham's Dairy.

Be 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 pretzenlie bracelets 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 venders 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 propelled 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 every 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 countryman, whose ambition to own a cart and his own trade is almost sure to be realized in the course of time. The latter is then ready to marry and run an establishment of his own.

He can earn as much as the average day laborer, but he must be about the streets early and late. The police regulations compel him to keep moving. Persistent violation of those rules is likely 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 vendor, but its unique simplicity appeals most powerfully to the imaginations 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 on 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 245,127 families but 72,694 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.

Editing 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 holder 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 acrid 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 was something less than 25,000 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 Portesbume Ochiltree, so it must be true.—St. Louis Republic.

One Rock 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 bake 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 cannonading at the Battle of Waterloo was heard at the town of Creil, in the north of France, about 112 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 animalcules.

Ornithologists tell us that when feeding the stride of the ostrich is from 20 to 22 inches; when walking but not feeding, 36 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 prink and fix up—as we Yankees say. It is not good form. The thing to do is to well rush in as if you weren't in the best kit of a flutter, and just as if you were part and parcel of the establishment. I used to think girls were fools when they spoke of their best kit. He would say, "Oh, you don't look so fine in the dining room, dressing the table." That was one of my duty days. I used to take duty due, but he made the acquaintance of that, too, and came to shower that awful swell, Roxy Forsythe, in, and tell him he could wait, but that he should expect the expense to be that some extra spending when he left, and, as you believe, Roxy said that if he told his way can spoons would soon be missing, and he spoons and Roxy flew to the conceit and the summer office of the cosmos, and practical how Roxy I looked, yet it was ever so much more amusing than sitting in state in the parlor waiting some to come for.

Then another thing pops said—he has some good points, that pops of mine—he thought a girl ought to know as much as spoons and he could go to see for the stranger within the gates. That's his exact language, and there are court papers allowed at his table, nor slipped dress either. He thinks a girl ought to sew on buttons in the afternoon I can sew him without going up stairs and keeping him waiting until he is out of all patience. I know a girl who had her set been in time