

# DAILY NEWS

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THE statute of this State passed in 1872 exempting from taxation \$500 worth of property of widows in all cases where the total value did not exceed \$1,000 in value, was decided to be unconstitutional and void on last Tuesday.

WHAT benefit has the country received from the present session of Congress? It has now been in session three months and nothing has been done, except to spend money. Not a bill of any importance has been passed, none even proposed.

The present British Parliament which is to adjourn on the 24th began March 5, 1874. There have been 21<sup>st</sup> Parliaments of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, from the period of the union, the first one meeting on September 27, 1790, in the reign of George III. Only two of these have exceeded the present one in duration, namely, the Seventh Parliament, which met on April 23, 1820, and existed six years one month and nine days, and the Eighteenth, which began May 31, 1859, and lasted six years, one month and six days.

THE advent of nearly 300 Chinese cigar makers in New York, and the probability that fully 3,000 more will reach that city during the month, is causing much comment. White workmen denounce the proceeding, but the manufacturers hail the advent of the Celestials as giving promise of a relief from the tyranny of strikers. Kearneyism in California is likely to have an immediate and important influence on several Eastern industries. If the Chinese cannot stay on the Pacific coast they will cross the continent.

THE Chinese are fast becoming civilized. They are preparing on a large scale for a war with Russia. Reports say a sudden war-like spirit seems to have gained possession of the whole people, and the coming struggle is to be one before which all the wars of the empire will fade into insignificance. The war department exhibits unusual vigor in putting the army on a war footing and in providing arms and equipments. The irregular troops, not used except on the gravest occasions, are being mustered into service, and everything is done precisely as it is done in Europe when the balance of power is threatened, or some one of the great powers wants a slice of territory from some other one.

UNDER recent amendments of the patent rules, applications for patents must be made to the Commissioner of Patents. A complete application comprises the petition, specification, oath and drawings, and the model, or specimen when required, and the first fee of \$15. No application for a patent will be placed upon the files for examination until all its parts, except the model or specimen are received. Models not required nor admitted, if already filed, will be returned to the applicants. When a model is required, its examination will be suspended until it is filed. From a decision of the primary examiner overruling a motion to dispense with a model, an appeal may be taken to the Commissioner. Preliminary examinations will not be made for the purpose of determining whether models are required in particular cases. Applications complete in all other respects will be sent to the examining divisions whether models are or are not furnished. A model will not be admitted as a part of the application unless on examination the primary examiner finds it to be necessary, and files a written certificate to that effect.

## Snow Storms.

Snow storms have more than once played an important part in history. At Towton, the decisive battle of the Wars of the Roses, the Lancastrian soldiers, having the snow driven in their faces by a strong wind, fell upon each other by mistake, and were easily routed. In one of the numerous wars between Denmark and Sweden the Danes escalated a Swedish fortress at night by means of the snow which had drifted against the wall. One of the Jacobite nobles, condemned after the rising of 1715, was saved by a snow storm which delayed the arrival of the death warrant for two days, during which time his friends contrived his escape. Napoleon's column of attack at Eival, in 1807, which should have fallen upon the Russian flank, was so blinded by the flying snow as to come out right in front of the great central battery and was almost exterminated. The same cause occasioned the French defeat at Pultusk a month earlier, while the destruction of the British army by the Afghans, in 1842, was materially aided by a snow-fall, which blocked the passes several fathoms deep, rendering any help from India impossible.

## LEECH CULTURE.

How the Novelist "Ouida" Was Led into an Absurd Mistake.

New York Times.

Some of the English papers have been recently exercised in regard to a highly wrought description by Ouida, the sensational novelist, of the manner in which the culture of leeches is carried on upon the vast hirudo plantations in the vicinity of Bordeaux. It is a familiar fact to travelers that the mouth of the Gironde lies in the midst of many square miles of marsh and swamp, which are appropriated to the raising of leeches for the market. The point of Ouida's story is, that the owners of these plantations consume nearly all the disabled, diseased and broken down horses in France as food for these voracious little creatures, but, to enforce this point, she draws a vivid and terrible picture of the struggles of the doomed animal, covered with thousands of annelids, tormented, writhing, shuddering, frantic until, finally, the doziness of ensanguination supervenes and the victim sinks exhausted. To one who is familiar with leech culture and with the habits of these slimy little creatures, the suspicion that the popular novelist is either quizzing the public, or has been laughably quizzed herself, naturally arises; for it is a pretty well ascertained fact that the mode of taking them for the market, after they have arrived at the standard growth, is by riding horses into the swamp or marsh, and then transferring the crop from the legs of the animal, to which they cling, to jars or receptacles prepared to receive them. In Sweden, which produces the best leeches in the market, the taking is done to a considerable extent by boys and men, who wade into the marshes and shallow water bare legged, and return clothed with the shining product. It is true that horses are sometimes used in Sweden for this purpose, and usually, perhaps in France; but this is a very different thing from feeding leeches with living animals, which would be a sheer waste of nutriment. There are leech plantations in America, but our product (the hirudo decora) is by no means as valuable for commercial purposes as the Swedish. About a quarter of an ounce of blood is reputed to be all that the hirudo decora can ordinarily carry, while a large Swedish leech may like half or two-thirds of an ounce, and it is asserted by competent observers that very large ones have been known to appropriate a full ounce before relaxing their hold. The German physicians are, it is said, in the habit of improving the capacity of the leech, or rather of prolonging its suctorial function by a very simple process. Before or immediately after the animal has secured a good hold upon the surface to be relieved, the economical practitioner clips off its tail with a pair of surgeon's scissors, and the result is that the blood taken in by the eager animal is disgorged as fast as it is appropriated, and it is made to act as a drainage tube as well as a suction pump.

## The Majesty of the Law.

A Carson City paper reports the following lively law proceedings: Yesterday afternoon a young man came into Justice Cary's court room with the rim of his hat drawn over his eyes and remarked: "Do you know me?" "I think," said the court meekly, "that you are the chap I sentenced for stealing, about a year ago." "That's just the hairpin I am," replied the other, "and here's \$20 for my fine." "But you served your term in jail," said the judge, "and own no fine." "That's all right, old boy; but I am about to commit an assault and battery, and I guess I'll settle now. You are the man I propose to lick." "Oh, that's it," rejoined the court, pocketing the coin; "then you can start and we'll call it square." The young man advanced to the court and let out his left. The judge ducked his head, and, rising up, lifted the intruder in the eye with a right hand and sent him up against the wall. In a moment the court was climbing all over the young man and in three minutes his face was hardly recognizable. The man begged the court to let up, which he finally did. As the fellow was about to go out Cary went after him with, "See here, young man; I don't think the fighting you did ought to be assessed at any more than \$2.50—he's \$17.50 in charge. I ain't charging you anything for fighting, but just for my time. Next time I won't charge you a cent." The rough took the \$17.50 and the next train for Virginia City.

## A Story of Texas and Arkansas.

An eminent divine from New England, traveling in Texas for his health, impaired by arduous clerical duties, upon arriving at one of the towns, went in search of the barber's shop for repairs and improvements. On entering an establishment of this kind, he observed a big double-barreled gun leaning against the wall. Having a constitutional awe of fire arms, he hastily asked the barber if the gun was loaded. A half-shaved native, who occupied the chair, turned round in his lather-beaten face and exclaimed:

"Stranger, if you're in an all-fired hurry, you'll find a six-shooter, what is loaded, in my coat tail pocket."

This recalls another story of an English tourist who proposed to visit Arkansas, and asked a citizen if he ought to provide himself with a revolver.

"Well," replied the citizen, "you must not want one for a month, and you must not want one for three months; but if ever you did want one, you kin bet you'd want it almighty sudden!"

## Not That Kind.

A young Englishman who, on being introduced to an American girl, who was carrying home a volume of Spencer and another of Emerson to her father, naturally supposed that they indicated her own tastes, and began making himself agreeable by talking with great profundity. At the first pause he was met with the response: "If you want talk Spencer and Emerson, Mr. —, you must come and see my father. I don't know anything about em; not a thing." "Oh, then, you are not—you are not—thoroughly at sea to find his preconceived notions all astray. 'No, I am not the Boston girl of whom you have read, who wears glasses, and knows all about Spencer and Darwin, and Emerson, and all the rest of the wise men,' and the quiver of mirth at the corners of the mouth broadened into a little burst of laughter, wherein the Englishman presently joined

## SOMETIMES.

BY MRS. MAY ELLIOT SMITH.

Sometimes, when all life's lessons have been learned And songs and stars forevermore have set, The things which our weak judgments here have spurned, And things over which we grieve with lashes wet Will dash before us, out of life's dark night, As starry skies most in deeper tints of blue. And we shall see how all God's plans were right. And how what seemed reproof was love most true. And we shall see how, while we frown and sigh, God's plan goes on as best for you and me: How, when we called, He headed not our cry Because His wisdom to the end could see. And e'en as prudent parents disallow Too much of sweet to craving babyhood, So God, perhaps, is keeping from us now Life's sweetest things, because it seemeth good.

And if, sometimes, commingled with life's wine, We find the wormwood, and rebel and shrink, Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine Pours out this potion for your lips to drink. And if some friend we love is lying low Where human kisses cannot reach his face, Oh, do not blame the heavenly father so, But wear your sorrow with obedient grace!

And you shall shortly know that lengthened breath Is not the sweetest gift God sends his friend, And that sometimes, the snare pall of death Conceals the fairest boon his love can send. If we would push afar the gates of life, And stand within, and all God's workings see, We could interpret all this doubt and strife, And for each mystery find a key.

But not to-day. Then be content, poor heart! God's plans, like little pure and white unfold, We must not tear the close shut leaves apart: Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.

And if, through patient toil, we reach the land Where tired feet with sandals loose may rest, When we shall clearly know and understand, I know that we would say, "God knew the best!"

## ACQUITTED.

## A PIRATE STORY.

On the 19th of December, 1823, a trial for piracy, which excited great attention in London and elsewhere, took place before the High Court of Admiralty. The prisoner who stood arraigned, and who was liable, if convicted, to the penalty of death, had passed through a series of mishaps and adventures stranger than fiction, and only rivaled by the career of some of Dumas' heroes. Involuntarily the associate of a crew of murderers and buccaneers, whose deeds were such as to strike terror into every merchant skipper's heart, the prisoner, Aaron Smith, now stood at a criminal bar, and had to prove to a jury that his companionship among pirates had been compulsory. On that proof his life hung on that sharp December day. To a nation like England, rich in merchant shipping, and deriving from it enormous wealth, the crime of piracy was always a heinous one. Far back as the twenty-eighth year of Henry the Eighth's reign, a statute had made robbery on the high seas punishable with death and loss of lands. When to this robbery murder, in its most cruel form, was added, it is evident that to Englishmen the crime and the criminals became so hateful as to be hunted down on every chance. The reports of the atrocities of the West India sea-thieves had come, ever and anon, across the ocean to England, and had roused hate and fear and honest wrath.

The risk which Aaron Smith ran was a very dangerous one. He was acquitted, however, for his story, which during the space of some hours, held court, jury and public enthralled by its interest, was marked by the signs of truth. He called twenty witnesses to testify to his humanity and honesty. The girl to whom he was betrothed, whose beauty attracted general admiration, proved that their marriage would have long since taken place, had not the prisoner been detained abroad. The tears of the young lady, and the emotion of the prisoner, touched those present as sincere tokens of grief, and Aaron Smith was held a deeply-injured man, and set free. He drew up a little volume called "The Atrocities of the Pirates," containing a very simple and unvarnished record of his adventures, and which was published in 1824. In June 1821, Aaron Smith left in the war-ship Harrington for the West Indies. There he staid, having left the ship, for some time, engaged in various pursuits, when he became engaged as first mate of the brig Zephyr, a Mr. Lumsden being master. On the 29th of June the voyage to England commenced. Some days brought the brig off Cape St. Antonio, whence she stood eastward.

On the next day at 2 p.m., a strange schooner stood out from the coast of Cuba toward the Zephyr. The master was informed of this by Smith and one Capt. Cowper, a passenger, but obstinately refused to change his course, supposing—I presume, on the *cetera-Romanus* principle—that as he bore the English flag, none would molest him. Mr. Lumsden was doomed to be harshly undeceived. The grim schooner came on swiftly, her decks full of men and lowered boats. Next came a hoarse order to lay-to, enforced by a volley of musketry, which increased the rising terror of the Zephyr's master. The brig was now boarded by the pirates' boats, which were filled with armed men. The chief, a ferocious fellow, staid in the schooner, and had Lumsden, Cowper, Smith, and others brought before him on his deck. His questions, in broken English, as to cargo, etc., were enforced by threats of burning the Zephyr and every soul belonging to her if the truth was not told. Smith was informed by the pirate captain that he would be kept to navigate the schooner. The mate entreated to be released, and drew a harrowing picture of an imaginary wife and children longing for his return; but all in vain. Ultimately he was forced to go on board the brig, collect his property and necessities for navigation, and return to his new master. In the interim Lumsden and Cowper were lashed to the pumps, and combustibles placed round them and fired, to extort a confession as to hidden treasure. The pirates plundered the brig, and Smith was driven at the point of the knife into the pirate schooner, and saw the brig and his companions sail off, leaving him in captivity.

In due course, the schooner touched at harbor—Rio Medias—where an evident understanding existed between the pirates and the Spanish magistrates, and where a dance took place between the crew and the fair ladies of the neighbor-

hood at the chief magistrate's house. Our hero, compelled to share in the festivities, made the acquaintance of a young Spanish beauty, Seraphina, who seems to have excited a reciprocal attachment in his heart. These Arcadian delights of music and dancing and hobnobbing of Spanish authorities with corsairs, were followed by the sale on board the schooner of the brig's cargo, the love-making on Smith's part to Seraphina, and his promises of marriage if she would aid his escape, and wound up by a furious fight between two of the pirates, one being stabbed. Smith was ordered, despite his protestations, to act as surgeon, the captain admitting no tales of ignorance, and the unhappy captive had to stand and bandage as best he could. The cause of the quarrel was investigated. One wounded man informed his captain that the other had formed a plot to assassinate him. The crew simultaneously rushed down, cut off the poor wretch's legs and arms with a blunt hatchet, and threw him overboard. Such was Smith's first experience of pirate customs, and while he still shuddered, the captain told him this would be his fate if he concealed information from him.

The schooner cruised out to sea, and at last came back to harbor. Out to meet her came the chief mate, with that portion of the crew who had been left behind. These were implicated in the assassination plot. A white handkerchief was held up to decoy them, and, when close, a volley fired among them. But one man survived, and he was doomed by the captain to die in the favorite fiend-like manner of the Cuban pirates. For three hours a boat's crew was occupied in rowing up and down a narrow bush-fringed channel, the unhappy victim being stripped naked and pinioned in the boat, while myriads of mosquitoes and sand flies hovered round and closed on his flesh. Says Smith: "We had been scarcely half an hour in this place when the miserable victim was distracted with pain; his body began to swell, and he appeared one complete blister from head to foot." His voice failed, his features became undistinguishable, and in this condition they brought him back. The captain had the boat moored, and ordered six muskets to be fired at the dying man. He only fainted. A pig of iron was fastened round his neck, and he was flung into the sea.

So ended this specimen of vengeance, and next came the turn of Aaron Smith to feel the captain's cruelty. Refusing to board a merchant brig, the rage of the corsair was so great with his captive, that he had him tied to the mast, a circle of gunpowder strewn round him, a train laid, and a match applied to it. The blaze burst up, lapped the unhappy man in its embrace, and his clothes all on fire, he fell insensible. Recovering, he found himself unable to move, both hands and legs lacerated, and, in fact, the bones lay bare, and large blisters on various parts of his body.

Compassion was excited in the heart of one of the crew, who showed kindness and attention to the unfortunate prisoner. The latter in the pain he was made to make sails, to act as surgeon, and even to mount the rigging, by the captain, whose brief fits of humanity ended in bursts of ferocious threats.

About this time a collision occurred, between some survivors of the "chief mate's" gang (who lurked in the woods near the harbor in which the schooner constantly made her head-quarters) and the crew. The friendly magistrate, before referred to, was wounded, and the maimed Smith was carried on a mattress two miles inland to the house, to dress the official's wounds. Here he saw the charming daughter, Seraphina, again, and hopes of escape were indulged in by both. To lull suspicion, he affected reluctance to go ashore, which produced compulsion. One day, on his return, one of the "gang" was captured by the boat's crew, exposed to the sandflies, maddened, blindfolded, tied to a tree and shot, ere their return to their approving captain and comrades.

Other unhappy traitors were made targets of, tied to trees, and beaten and flogged to death. All these things Smith was compelled to witness silently, on peril of his life, while his own maimed, tortured limbs forcibly reminded him of his captor's state of mind. A Dutch vessel was next captured, and her cargo taken, while Smith was made to act the surgeon. About this time he met with Seraphina, on one of his visits to her father, and was overjoyed to learn she had arranged matters for their flight. Some days elapsed, the feverish hope in the prisoner's mind making him unable to remain quiet. While thus on tender hooks, he witnessed another scene of murder. The French cook of the Dutch vessel, teased by his captors, seized a hatchet, and wounded one. The rest simultaneously plunged their knives into his body, and flung him, still breathing, overboard. Again Smith was made to become the injured pirate's surgeon. Two more prizes were taken, and then the famous Rio grew too hot to hold the pirates. Five gunboats were ordered down by the Governor of Havana, a fact of which the friendly magistrate duly informed the pirate captain. The corsair eluded the flotilla (which seems to have shown little zeal will to capture her), and remained for three weeks off the Morillo, where a French vessel was captured by her. The pirates plundered her, cut away her mizzen-mast and star-board main rigging, and in this condition magnanimously turned her adrift to pursue her voyage.

Returned to the old anchorage—the storm having blown over—the schooner lay inactive. The pirate captain (who, by the way, according to his crew's account, had murdered twenty men with his own hand) fell ill. Smith, forced to prescribe an opiate into some arrowroot; and while the captain slumbered and the crew got drunk, stole into the canoe of some fishermen who were abroad, cut her loose, and steered for Havana. Two nights and a day in this frail cokleshell, he traversed the ocean, while, as he says, "the wind blew from the southwest, and what appeared to me to be a special providence, continued to do so the whole day—a thing very unusual in that cli-

mate." He reached Havana, and after boarding a ship commanded by an old acquaintance, went ashore. Recognized by a Spanish officer who had been a prisoner on board the schooner, the unfortunate man was seized and flung into a dungeon swarming with vermin, and kept prisoner for five weeks, though a few comforts were got for him by a friendly Spaniard. He was then handed over to the British Admiral, who, he bitterly complains, had him put in double irons. He seems to have been treated at first with great severity. During the whole voyage he was, although freed from fetters, kept with a sentry over him to prevent his speaking to any one. On arrival home he was taken to London, committed for trial, indicted, tried, and acquitted, the story of which we have given the outline being so evidently true as to convince all that Aaron Smith's career of suffering and hardship was involuntary, and that his pirate adventures were as unavoidable as remarkable in the history of the seas.

## Stories of Parrots.

As you wished me to write down whatever I could recollect about my sister's wonderful parrot, I proceed to do so, only premising that I will tell you nothing but what I can vouch for as having myself heard. Her laugh is quite extraordinary, and it is impossible to help joining in it oneself, more especially when in the midst of it she cries out, "Don't make me laugh so; I shall die," and then continues laughing more violently than before. Her crying and sobbing are curious; and if you say, "Poor Poll, what is the matter?" she says, "So bad! so bad! got such a cold!" and after crying for some time will gradually cease, and making a noise like drawing a long breath, say, "Better now," and begin to laugh.

The first time I ever heard her speak was one day when I was talking to the maid at the bottom of the stairs, and heard what I then considered to be a child call out, "Payne!"—the maid's name—"I am not well; I am not well," and on my asking, "What's the matter with that child?" she replied: "It's only the parrot; and she always does so when I leave her alone, to make me come back;" and so it proved; for on her going into the room the parrot stopped, and laughed quite in a leering way.

It is singular enough that whenever she is affronted in any way she begins to cry; and when pleased, to laugh. If any one happens to cough or sneeze, she says, "What a bad cold!" One day, when the children were playing with her, the maid came into the room, and on their repeating several things which the class had said, Poll looked up and said, quite plainly, "No, I didn't." Sometimes when she is inclined to be mischievous, the maid threatens to beat her, and she says "No you won't." She calls the cat quite plainly, saying, "Puss, Puss,"