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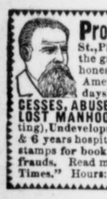

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All Hands Smoking.

Tobacco is in Tehuantepec a great industry. One evening some of our party of sixteen were kindly given a night's shelter, Mexican fashion, at a hacienda or farmhouse. Hotels, except in the large towns, are unknown. It was about 9 p. m. when we arrived. Sitting on the wide veranda to receive us we beheld the entire family. On the right of the door was the lady of the house in a white cotton gown, smoking a cigar. Below her were the daughters and handmaidens, also smoking. On the other side of the door was the ranchero or master himself, with his sons and manservants. Every one was employed in rolling the tobacco leaf into cigars, and every one was smoking, including a little boy not quite three years old, who had a full sized cigar in his baby mouth, while in his left hand he held a banana from which he took bites between the puffs, occasionally stopping to play with a small puppy dog.

"Does he often smoke?" I asked in amazement.

"Si, senora. He smokes three or four cigars a day. All our children have done so at that age." Adaptability of temperament to climate!—Fortnightly Review.

Passing a Bargain.

"Perhaps you've had a man offer you a big bargain in a diamond ring?" queried the Boston drummer as he heaved a sigh and his face went cloudy.

"Yes, several times," laughed the Pullman conductor.

"I was in Pittsburg," continued the drummer, "and while standing on a street corner a chap came along and offered me a shiner as big as a bean for $50. He was a stranger, hard up and all that. It looked to be a ring worth $350."

"And you gave him $50?"

"No. He hung on for half an hour, but I turned him down. I'm no man to be roped in that way."

"Then what—what"—

"Oh, another fellow bought the ring."

"And he was out his fifty?"

"He was in $300. That ring, sir, was O. K. and all serene, and a jeweler priced it at the figure named. The man was honest, and I was a fool, and you will please excuse me while I retire and kick myself for not knowing a piece of glass from a pure water sparkler."

A Savage Bluejay.

A sportsman camping on one of the lakes of Sullivan county, N. Y., offered to bet $10 to $1 that nobody in his party could guess how he had received an injury to a finger which he held bleeding before the spectators. No one guessed, and the man went on to explain that while standing by the lake he had seen a bluejay flying over so close above his head that he instinctively threw up his hand to stop it. The bird neither stopped nor swerved, but instead dashed straight for the hand, striking it with such force that the bill penetrated to the bone and sent the blood spurting as though the man had been struck by a knife.

This sort of action is in line with the general conduct of the jay. It is one of the most aggressive birds on the continent, robbing the nests of other birds and sometimes even killing young squirrels. The chief good thing that can be said of it is that it often robs the nest of the English sparrow.

The Maori and the Witness.

Captain Hayes in his book, "Among Horses In South Africa," tells several amusing stories. A friend of his in New Zealand had been a government interpreter among the Maoris and had many stories to tell about these people. On one occasion a native chief, who was under cross examination in court, on being asked why he had not brought a certain man with him replied:

"I have brought him."

"But," said the barrister, looking in vain round the court, "I don't see him. Where is he?"

"He is here," chuckled the Maori proudly, stroking his massive chest.

Peculiar Taxation In Holland.

Some of the most peculiar of taxations recorded are to be found in the archives of Holland. In 1791, for instance, there was in existence a tax imposed on all passengers traveling in Holland. In 1874 a duty of 2 shillings was levied on each person who entered a tavern before noon, on those who entered a place of entertainment, on marriages and deaths and on many other things. If a person was buried out of the district to which he belonged, the tax was payable twice over.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

The Horses and Saddle.

A man bought three horses and a saddle for $220. If he puts the saddle on the first horse, they cost as much as the other two horses; if he puts the saddle on the second horse, they cost two times as much as the first and third, and if he puts the saddle on the third horse they cost three times as much as the first and second. Find the cost of each.—Mathematical Puzzles.

Mr. Thomasson's Lesson.

"Yes," said Mr. Thomasson, "I went home intoxicated one night about ten years ago, and the lesson my wife taught me made a lasting impression on my brain."

"What did she say?"

"She didn't say anything. The lasting impression I refer to was made by a flatiron. See that bump?"—Indianapolis Sun.

Knows Enough to Keep Still.

Mrs. Glover—You told me that parrot I bought of you was the most intelligent bird in your collection, while the fact is he doesn't speak at all.

Dealer—That's what I meant when I spoke of his intelligence.—Boston Transcript.

The Girl Who Grew Prettier.

Mr. Charles Whymper, the well known engraver and animal painter, told the following anecdote some years ago: "I dined at Mr. So-and-so's at Highgate last night, and as a mark of honor his eldest daughter was assigned to me to take down to dinner. She's a bright girl, and I got along very nicely with her and Lady Bletherington on the other side until the ladies were on the eve of retiring to the drawing room. I was talking about the beautiful scenery near the house, the views from the windows, the fine air, when Miss —— suddenly said, 'I think I get prettier every day, don't you?'

"What could she mean? I did not dare to answer her, so I said: 'I beg your pardon. What did you say?'

"'I said I think I get prettier every day.'

There was no mistaking her words, so I answered, 'Yes, indeed, you get prettier, and no wonder in such fresh air and'— Just then she caught her mother's eye, and, with the other ladies, she left the room. As she went out she looked over her shoulder with such a withering scorn in her eyes that I knew I had put my foot in it somehow. Then it flashed upon me that I had misunderstood her. She had dropped an 'h.' What she had said was not a silly compliment to herself. The sentence really was, 'I think Highgate prettier every day.'"—Chambers' Journal.

Knew His Man.

A story about the late James G. Batterson, president of the Travelers' Insurance company of Hartford. Ex-Governor Waller of Connecticut wanted to obtain a charter for a new corporation which he represented, and the opposition called Mr. Batterson as their star witness. He was asked by his own side only two questions.

"You have lived in Hartford a great many years, Mr. Batterson?"

"Yes, sir."

"Are you in favor of granting this charter?"

"No, sir."

Here his lawyers rested, leaving the rest to chance, knowing that Mr. Batterson could keep his end up in any verbal battle with ex-Governor Waller. The latter began by asking:

"Mr. Batterson, you have lived here many years?"

"I have."

"Well, sir," added Governor Waller, "it is my wish that you may live in Hartford many more years. That is all, sir."

Thus was Mr. Batterson's opportunity to talk shelved. Governor Waller knew his man.—New York Times.

The Pulpit Versus the Bar.

An eminent American lawyer, now deceased, was sadly given to intoxication. On one occasion he entered a church while a minister was holding forth on the future punishment of the wicked.

Fixing his eye upon the lawyer, who was reeling near the door, the preacher exclaimed, "There stands a sinner against whom I shall bear witness in the day of judgment."

At this the lawyer folded his arms, planted himself as firmly as he could and, addressing the man in the pulpit, electrified the whole congregation after this fashion:

"Sir, I have been practicing in the criminal courts for twenty years, and I have always found that the greatest rascal is the first to give state's evidence."—Scotsman.

The Spanish Language.

The Spanish alphabet is perfect save for a single silent letter, h. Each letter has only one sound and pronounced as spelled. The written language therefore is, with a single exception, free from redundant letters. The chief difficulty in the language to English speaking people is the inflection of its verbs. These move from one mood and tense to another by terminal changes, while English verbs move by auxiliaries. In inflection Spanish follows Latin, of which it is a beautiful and richly endowed daughter, so much so that it adopts no word or phrase from other languages.

The Arctic Summer.

The arctic summer is brief, but for weeks together there is nothing to distinguish day and night. Once at Dvornik two naturalists had left their ship at different hours. When later they met, one said, "Good morning;" the other, "Good evening." Both agreed that the hour was 7, but while one traveler held that it was 7 tomorrow morning the other maintained that it was 7 o'clock last night. On returning to the ship they settled that it was last night, so they dined and went to bed again.

Easy.

Theodore—It's all right, darling. I have met your father, and we took to one another at once. He even went so far as to borrow $10 from me. Surely he can't refuse me your hand after that.

Edith—Dory, I'm afraid you've made a mess of it. Pa told me about the $10 and said I'd better let you slide; that you were too easy.—Boston Transcript.

Prejudiced.

"So you won't take my medicine?" said the doctor, who had been called in against the patient's wishes.

"I will not," replied the patient.

"I suppose you're one of these poor, deluded beings who believe in throwing physic to the dogs."

"Not indiscriminately. Some dogs are valuable."—Philadelphia Press.

Hit Both Ways.

First Artist—Congratulate me, old man. I've just sold my masterpiece to Banker Parvenu for five thousand dollars.

Second Artist—Glad to hear it. The miserable skinflint deserves to be swindled.

Egotism of Genius.

A writer in the London Standard declares the idea that genius is usually modest to be a popular delusion. On the contrary, he alleges egotism to be the very essence of true genius and quotes many amusing examples.

When Wordsworth, Southey and Coleridge were walking together and Coleridge remarked that the day was so fine "it might have been ordered for three poets," the gentle Wordsworth promptly exclaimed: "Three poets! Who are the other two?"

Disraeli, then a mere youth, wrote to his sister that he had heard Macaulay, Sheil and Grant speak, "but between ourselves I could floor them all." And again he said, "When I want to read a good book, I write one."

Our own Joaquin Miller wrote to Walt Whitman: "You and I are over the head of the rabble. We know we are great, and if other people don't know it it is their own fault."

It was President Grant who, being told that a certain senator, an admitted genius who was very hostile to him, did not believe the Bible, expressed his estimate of the senator's egotism by rejoining: "Why should he? He didn't write it, you know."—New York World.

Buying a Razor.

"I need a new razor," said the man who shaves himself.

"Better let me get it for you," suggested the reformed barber, who, now that he is a trolley car conductor, regards himself as a distinguished member of society. "All cutlery stores are filled with razors of the class known as 'dead ones.' When a barber buys a razor, he takes it with the understanding that he is to try it out, and if it doesn't work well he takes it back and gets another one, keeping this up until he gets one that suits him. Buying a razor, you know, is a lottery in which the prizes are few and far between. When the ordinary citizen goes to a cutlery store, he picks out what he thinks is a good razor, pays for it and takes his chances. He picks one out, too, from the bunch of 'dead ones' that barbers have tried and found wanting. That's why I advise you to let me get it for you. Then if you don't like it I can keep exchanging it until you get a good one. They needn't know I've quit the business."—Philadelphia Record.

The Woolsack.

Back during the time of Queen Elizabeth an act of parliament was passed prohibiting the exportation of wool. This product was one of the great sources of the natural wealth of England at that time, and in accordance with the economic notions of the age the authorities attempted to keep it in the country, imagining that if it went abroad, even though something more valuable or desirable were exchanged for it, the country would be the poorer.

In order to hold the importance of this commodity before the minds of the national legislators woolsacks were placed in the house of lords, where the judges sat. Hence the lord chancellor, who presides over the house of lords, "sits on the woolsack." The woolsack, according to a printed description, is a "large square bag of wool without back or arms and covered with red cloth."

"Faints."

Fusel oil, or "faints," as it is commonly called about the distilleries in England, according to the London Lancet, is a primary amyl alcohol mixed with primary and secondary propyl alcohols. In England it can be obtained gratis at some distilleries. It is used locally as an external application for rheumatism. It is obtained from fermented grain or potatoes by continuing the process of distillation after the ordinary spirit has all "come over." It is an oily liquid, with a burning, acrid taste and an odor said to resemble jargonelle pear. It has intoxicating and poisonous properties considerably more powerful than ordinary spirits.

Must Give a Horseshoe.

An old manorial rite exists at Oakham, in Rutlandshire, England, where every peer of the realm is bound the first time he enters the town to present a horseshoe to be nailed on the old portal, which is well nigh covered with these tributes. It is said that in case any contumacious peer should refuse to pay this tax the authorities have a right to stop his carriage and levy blackmail by unshoeing one of the horses. To avert so serious an annoyance the tribute shoe is generally ready, some being of enormous size and inscribed with the name of the donor.

Harsh Neighbors.

"How do you like your neighbors?"

"Not a bit," said the woman who was tying a little boy's hat on. "You see, they don't like children."

"How do you know?"

"They hurt Reginald's feelings dreadfully. When he throws stones at their dog or plays the hose on their window, they look real cross at him!"—Washington Star.

The Unpleasant Boarder.

"You do not often get better steak than that," said the landlady, hoping for a compliment.

"Yes, I seldom eat elsewhere," replied De Grouch, to whom it was always easier to keep up his reputation than his board bill.—Indianapolis News.

Genuine Faith Cure.

Towne—Do I understand you to say that Spencer's case was really a faith cure?

Browne—Yes. You see, the doctor and the druggist both trusted him.—Chicago Journal.

A man may not appear to advantage with his hands in his pockets, but it is better than having them in the pockets of others.—Chicago News.

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