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A Court of Fine Manners.

At the court of Marie Antoinette all emotions and passions were veiled by a mask of politeness. Even the children were taught to speak with wit and tact and courtesy and to bear pain in silence. The little Duc d'Angouleme, eight years old, when the old Sanbrun entered his presence unexpectedly, said, touching the book in his hand: "Ah, monsieur, I am in the company of Plutarch's men. You could not come at a moment more apropos." The Count de Pallance, beheaded in his tenth year, stood erect and calm in the cart until he reached the guillotine. The headsman lifted his long curls. "Monsieur," said the boy, with a bow and a smile. The next moment his head rolled in dust. The man or woman who showed any signs of pretention or self conceit was not received at court. Profound deference was shown to women and to the aged. Well bred men heard of their own ruin with a bonmot and went out to fight each other to the death with such grace and courtesy that the duel seemed a sacrament of friendship.

Coins of Enormous Size.

When the area and square inches of surface are taken into consideration, the largest coins ever issued by any government on the globe were those put into circulation by Sweden during the sixteenth century. These mammoth pieces are neither round, square, oval nor octagon in shape, but are great irregular slabs of copper described as "resembling pieces of a boiler after an explosion." The smallest piece issued under the law which authorized this gigantic coinage was an irregular rectangular slab of about twelve square inches of surface and about half an inch thick. It was worth 30 cents. The largest of the same series was about a foot square and had a face value of $4. Each of these copper slabs is stamped in several places on the face, the various inscriptions giving the date, denomination, etc. The four dollar piece mentioned last above is nearly an inch in thickness and weighs four pounds, lacking a fraction.

Gigantic Earthworms.

The giant of the earthworms is a creature of Australia known to the scientists as Megascolides australis. Although it is a monster, from four to six feet in length and from one to one and three-quarter inches in diameter, it is as harmless as our common angleworm, which it much resembles both in color and bodily structure. Like our common angleworm, it can only be removed from its burrows with great difficulty. If a portion of the creature's body be uncovered and grasped with the intention of pulling it from its sinuous burrow the experimenter is likely to be disappointed, because the worm can hold to the sides of his den until his body is pulled in two.

Well Planted.

The beadle in a rural district in Perthshire had become too feeble to perform his duties as minister's man and gravediggger and had to get an assistant. The two did not agree well, but after a few months Sandy (the beadle) died, and Tammas had to perform the last service for his late partner. The minister strolled up to Tammas while he was giving the finishing touches to the grave and casually remarked, "Have you put Sandy weel down, Tammas?" "I hev that, sir," said Tammas very decidedly. "Sandy may get up, but he'll be among the hindmost."

Why Beverly Was Called Beantown.

The town of Beverly, Mass., was set off from the town of Salem more than 200 years ago. About that time, it is said, a schooner with a full cargo of beans entered that port. This supplied the whole town with beans; hence the name given to the inhabitants, "Beverly Beaners." In 1687 the town of Beverly voted to impose a tax of 10 shillings on all future absentees from town meetings. In 1754 twenty-eight slaves were owned in the town. The first Sunday school in America was established in Beverly in 1810.

Animals and Pain.

A correspondent furnishes to a London journal some curious instances of the apparent lack of highly developed powers of feeling pain in animals. He has, he says, seen a sparrow shot flying fall to the ground and in less than two minutes begin picking up grains that happened to be lying near it. On another occasion a tame rabbit was deprived by a spaniel of its tail, bone and all. It took not the slightest notice of its loss and began feeding again directly it returned to its hutch.

A Moralizing Burglar.

From continental Europe comes the story of a burglar who left the following note pinned to the pillow in a mansion he had ransacked: "In the Bible it says, 'Lead us not into temptation.' You and your show of weath tempted me, and I fell, though an honest workingman. Therefore you are the sinner, not I. Repent before it is too late."

Dress Cures.

Men do not seem to derive any special comfort from donning a new tie or fancy waistcoat when stocks fall or their livers are out of order, but there is no time when a woman cannot be distinctly cheered by something new to wear. —Lady's Pictorial.

Turkish Women.

The fair sex enjoy with the Turks a life of perfect idleness. It is not an exaggeration to say that the Turkish women spend half of their life in baths.—London Lancet.

He surely is most in need of another's patience who has none of his own. —Lavater.

Shakespeare In Parliament.

In July, 1855, a debate was going on in the house of commons respecting Lord John (afterward Earl) Russell's ignominious failure during his mission in Vienna to bring the Crimean war to an end, in consequence of which the opposition indulged in some strong criticism regarding the party in power. At last Lord Palmerston, then prime minister, rose and began to talk in a hectoring way about "this unnecessary and unprovoked attack upon the government" and ended by saying in a loud voice and looking straight at two literary members—Bulwer and Disraeli—who were sitting together on the front opposition bench:

"The gentlemen are making 'Much Ado About Nothing.'"

He sat down amid loud cheers from his own side, but in an instant Bulwer was up and with exquisite grace and sarcasm said:

"Mr. Speaker"—then turning to bow slightly toward the treasury bench—"I beg to remind the noble lord that in chronological order 'Much Ado About Nothing' comes after 'A Comedy of Errors.'"

Our First "Star."

"One celebrated Portia," says the author of "Shakespeare's Heroines on the Stage," "came of a noted family, being none other than Mrs. Eliza Whitlock, the sister of Mrs. Siddons and of the Kembles. In England, at the age of twenty-two, she had made her London debut as the heroine of 'Shylock' on the 22d of February, 1783, and, though somewhat masculine in face and figure, yet displayed so animated a countenance and so graceful a bearing as to win a moderate degree of favor. A few years after coming to this land she enjoyed the distinction of playing the first 'star' engagement on the American stage, being engaged for $450 and a benefit, to play at the Boston theater in October, 1796. There she repeated her Portia, contending with the remembrance of Mrs. Powell's impersonation of a previous season. She also had the honor of playing before George Washington in Philadelphia."

Deschapelles.

Deschapelles, the greatest whist player the world has ever seen, had but one hand and was an advanced republican. His manual dexterity was remarkable, and it was very interesting to watch him with his one hand—and that his left—collect the cards, sort them, play them and gather them in tricks. Late in life, when he had developed into ardent republicanism, he was supposed to have been mixed up in some of the attempts at revolution which broke out in the earlier days of the reign of Louis Philippe. His papers were seized, and it was proved that he had drawn up a list of persons to be disposed of. Among them was an elderly acquaintance, so described: "Vatry (Alphie) to be guillotined—Reason—citoyen inutile. Vatry is a bad whist player."

The Work of Oxygen.

The oxygen gas of the air is at once the great stimulant and the great destroyer of life. In fermentation, growth, putrefaction, combustion and oxidization, which are merely different names for the same process in different forms, oxygen is doing its universal work. It is no metaphor, but a chemical fact, that our world and everything in it are burning with a greater or less degree of rapidity. It is only when the process becomes very rapid that we can see the flames. So instead of saying that we are in the midst of everlasting fire—a saying which might alarm the timid—the scientific merely say that oxidization in its various forms goes on without cessation.

Wonderful Mechanical Flies.

It is not necessary to remark, especially after one reads the following, that it taxes credulity to the utmost to believe some of the old time stories:

John de Montroyal presented Emperor Charles V. with an automatic iron fly which escaped, circled around his majesty's head a few times and then alighted upon his sleeve.

Virgilius, bishop of Naples, made an iron fly which did not only fly, but kept all other flies out of the city.

Ventilating the Simplon Tunnel.

The system of ventilation adopted for the Simplon tunnel necessitates the closing of each end. This is effected by huge canvas screens, which work automatically on the passage of a train. Should the mechanism fail to lift the screen the engine will tear through it like a circus performer through a paper hoop, and no harm can result.

Now She Hates Him.

She wished to break it to him gently. "I have decided," she said, "to return your ring."

He, however, was a resourceful man who did not believe in letting a woman get the better of him. "You needn't bother," he replied. "I buy them by the dozen."

Helping Him On.

Mr. Timid—I—er—suppose your daughter has told you the—er—object of my—er—visit to you—er—this evening? Her Father—Yes; young man, and she told it better than you seem able to do.

Three of Them.

Dearborn—Do you know the seven wonders of the world? Wabash—Well, I know three of them. Dearborn—Only three? Wabash—Yes; I've only got three sons, you know.

Utterly Unreasonable.

Mamma—Don't you like Auntie Prue? Johnny—Oh, she's very kind, but she'd expect a boy to keep quiet on Christmas.

The charity that hastens to proclaim its good deeds ceases to be charity and is only pride and ostentation.—Hutton.

A Winged General of the Seas.

One of the most extraordinary specimens of the fish family is the "nam hai guan," or great general of the south sea, an animal of the whale species, which has its home in the Indian ocean. A full grown nam is upward of thirty-five feet in length, pure black in color and has eyes as large as a saucer. Besides the above characteristic features, which may be said to be whalelike, with the exception of the eyes, the nam has two immense tusks which resemble those of the elephant, both in size and color, and two queer winglike membranes extending along its sides from the side fins almost to the tail. The old nams have a curious habit of marshaling their kind to do battle with the whales and the sharks, and old mariners say that they maneuver with so much intelligence and sagacity that they are known to all the islanders by names which signify winged generals, winged warriors or winged chiefs of the seas.

The Heliotrope.

Although the heliotrope is a tender plant, extremely sensitive to cold, it is one of the best plants for cultivation indoors. It seems to have few diseases and is usually free from insect enemies, while with abundant water and sunshine and sufficient artificial heat it will bloom all winter long year after year and is so tenacious of life that when cut down to a mere stick it quickly shoots forth luxuriant new wood. In addition to this the more the plant is pruned the more luxuriantly it blossoms. The blossoms should be cut with a considerable length of the new wood upon which they grow, and if at once fully immersed in water and then placed deep in a well filled vase they remain fresh and odorous for many days. The plant is a little difficult for amateurs to propagate from cuttings, though with plenty of water and sun and some bottom heat the young cuttings quickly root and prosper.

A Pat Reply.

President McKinley once had an applicant for the post of minister to Brazil who brought with him a petition signed by 7,000 Chicagoans. It seems that he was a picture framer, and as he went about canvassing for orders he was in the habit of collecting signatures to his petition. President McKinley listened respectfully to the applicant, questioned him as to his qualifications and finally explained that before he could give the matter serious consideration he would have to confer with the senators and representatives from Illinois.

"You know that we have to select big men for these big places," said the president kindly as he bade his caller goodby.

"Won't I be just as big as any of 'em if I get the job?" was the retort.

Father of the Weather Bureau.

The father of the weather bureau service was Increase A. Lapham, a modest and retired but ripe scholar, who lived in Milwaukee. He was the first to note by telegraph the progress of the wind currents and storms and to predict their appearance in specified neighborhoods. On the strength of a weather dispatch from Omaha in 1869 or thereabouts he announced the first storm on Lake Michigan that ever was heralded twelve hours in advance of its arrival. The first work of the weather bureau was under his charge in Chicago. It was on the small beginnings of Dr. Lapham that the entire system of the signal service was based. Dr. Lapham died in 1875.

The Dear, Worn Hand.

Few things are capable of touching one with a deeper sense of pathos than the shrunken, blue veined hand of one who is near and dear. Nothing brings a sharper pang of foreboding and a harder lump in the throat than the first time it shows us that the gentle hand that soothed our childish pains and griefs and has gladly worn away its softness and beauty in our service is thin and withered, with purple veins that stand out like whipcords when it lies at rest. Such a hand ought to look more beautiful to those for whom it has toiled, whose suffering it has charmed away, than the fairest hand ever modeled by a sculptor.

Think the Earth Is Hollow.

According to a queer belief in existence among the Icelanders, all waters which flow toward the north are drawn thitherward by a suction created by the oceans tumbling downward through the hollow which, they firmly believe, penetrates our globe from pole to pole. Their authority for this curious belief is the "Utama Saga," a semisacred work, written early in the fourteenth century.

Hope and Joy.

Hope, of all passions, most befriends us here. Joy has her tears, and transport has her death. Hope, like a cordial, innocent, though strong, man's heart at once inspirits and serenes, nor makes him pay his wisdom for his joys.—Young.

She Knew Him.

An architect remarked to a lady that he had been to see the great nave in the new church. The lady replied: "Don't mention names. I know the man to whom you refer."—Sacred Heart Review.

Holding Hands.

De Garry—Why is it that when a fellow is alone with a girl he loves they seldom play cards? Merritt—Because if they did she would have to hold her own hand.

"Some men don' worry," said Uncle Eben, "'cause dey's got too much sense, and others don' worry 'cause dey ain' got sense enough."—Washington Star.

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A mother's love for her children is always being illustrated, not only in books, but in real life. A true story is told of a lady whose baby was very ill and who sat watching the child with absorbed attention, every instant fearing another convulsion and praying for deliverance from it. At her side stood an older child, who had stolen into the room unobserved and who was trying to prick the little black spots in mamma's muslin sleeve with a needle he had found. Presently the father came in, and the little child was seen and sent away.

"What is the matter with your arm?" whispered the gentleman to his wife when at last they turned to each other and smiled their thankfulness that the baby had fallen asleep.

"I don't know," said she. "Nothing that I am aware of."

She put up her hand and found that the thin muslin sleeve was soaked with blood. The little boy had become so absorbed in his sport that he had jabbed with all his might, and she in her terrible anxiety had not felt the thrusts.

Cleaning Men's Clothes.

A tailor of fifty years' experience gives the following information:

All men's clothing to be cleaned should be thoroughly beaten and brushed. Some things are so dirty it is absolutely necessary to wash them as any other woolen goods. Iron on the wrong side. To remove spots, use the following:

Two ounces of hartshorn, an ounce of castile soap, a quarter of an ounce of saltpeter. Dissolve in a quart of rain water.

He has used many cleaning mixtures, but considers this the best. Put a wad of soft cloth (like an old towel) under the spot, saturate well and rub hard. The secret of success lies in hard rubbing, which will drive the grease through into the wad of cloth. Rub dark goods with dark woolen and light goods with light. Press on right side with damp cloth between iron and garment.—Buffalo News.

Indian Summer.

Indian summer is the short spell of warm days in October or November accentuated by the first chill of autumn which has preceded it. Sometimes it lasts as long as a fortnight, and it has been observed to recur twice or thrice in a season, though this is quite rare. An atmospheric phenomenon of the same nature has received the name of "St. Luke's summer" in Germany, "St. Martin's summer" in England, the feasts of these saints being Oct. 18 and Nov. 11 respectively. The name Indian summer is of an unidentified origin. It has been established that it does not appear on any record earlier than 1794, but when first recorded it was as a term in general use. The use of the expression in 1778 by Horace Walpole clearly referred to the torrid summer of the West Indies and not to this pleasant period of the northern autumn.

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