

STEAL GUIDE POSTS.

College Students Keep Maine Town in an Uproar.

The Fad Has Been Followed for Years and the City Fathers Are Kept Busy Trying to Keep Track of Things.

The Bucksport (Me.) town fathers are, to use their own words, "pestered to death by the college fellers luggin' off the guide boards." The annual account of stock has just been taken and it has been found that about 20 sign-boards are missing from the crossroads in the rural districts, although the constables have been exercising due vigilance.

There is no mystery about their disappearance, says the New York Times. They have been stolen by college students to decorate their rooms, and at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Dartmouth and even at Chicago there are known to be a number of signs which in weather-worn characters tell the distance to and from Bucksport.

For years, ever since the fad has obtained, the town of Bucksport has been a sufferer from this souvenir collecting of from \$5 to \$25 a year. And the same is true to a considerable extent in many other Maine towns.

The supply of signs would have become exhausted years ago were it not for a law on the statute books of the commonwealth compelling all towns and cities to mark all crossroads with correct and legible guideboards, and, besides, the local representatives of the League of American Wheelmen make note and report to their headquarters cases of failure to comply with the law, which might lead to the slaying of otherwise unenlightened motorists. So it is that between the rigors of the collegians and the vigilance of wheelmen the lot of the "stealermen" is not an altogether rosy one.

The original Bucksport guideboards have nearly all disappeared. The more weatherbeaten and aged the more desirable they are considered and the more highly prized, although how such bulky affairs could be smuggled out of town without discovery baffles the natives.

The one sign more than all others which has been the most coveted is the multiple affair which marks the spot known as "18 miles from everywhere." It is located a short distance out of Bucksport village, and its various charms read, respectively:

"Bangor, 18 miles; Ellsworth, 18 miles; Blue Hill, 18 miles; Castine, 18 miles; Searsport, 18 miles."

It is said that the original sign occupies the place of honor in one of the swiftest suites of Yale and cannot be bought for any price. The sign has had a successor every year since it was stolen, and every year until recently the famous markers have disappeared.

But a few years ago the wits of a village genius were enlisted in the conjuring of a non-stealable sign and the result was a complete success. A sign was constructed and placed in position. It still stands.

It is made of boiler plate, all the arms being forged together in one piece and shrunk over the top of a hard pine post which was once the part of the topmast of a big ship. The post is set eight feet into the ground, and the natives "allow" that it will not blow down, and although many covetous eyes have been set upon it it still there.

It has been the custom to replace the stolen signs with cheap stenciled affairs, just enough to cover the law, and considered "good enough to steal." This policy seems to be one of preservation, as without the weather-beaten appearance the charm as a trophy seems to be gone.

And the good men who preside over the affairs of the town of Bucksport are hoping that "the boys will get over the foolishness" and the vigilant constables annually renew their oath to "make them fellers suffer if they catch 'em."

A MALICIOUS MEDDLER.

The Young Woman in the Case Had Very Good Reasons for De-testing Him.

Two well-dressed and attractive young women—business girls, apparently—rushed into a car the other morning and took seats, relates an exchange. After they were comfortably adjusted, with parcels and umbrellas, the one in the blue cloth suit scanned the two men who sat opposite, and remarked to her companion:

"It's too near the stove here; let's move down."

Then the girls arose and took seats farther down, out of range of the two men.

"What was the matter, Clara?" the other girl asked; "it wasn't really too warm back there?"

"No," the first girl answered, with spirit, "but that horrid man with the brown hat and overcoat sat near us. He is always on the car near me, Laura, and I detest the sight of him."

"I don't know him," commented Laura; "who is he?"

"Why, I don't know him, either," Clara explained; "but I won't sit where I have to look at him."

"Has he ever been rude to you?" asked Laura.

"Rude? I think so. About three months ago I dreamed I was standing before the altar in a lovely church all decorated with palms and flowers, and was just about to be married, oh, to such a handsome man, Laura, and that hideous old thing in the brown hat and coat—the very same man came rushing down the aisle and arrested my promised husband for bigamy."

SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY.

In 1889 there were employed in the fisheries of our Pacific coast states 19,528 persons.

A single page of Charles Lamb's handwriting, containing his sister's poem to Emma Laola, was sold in London recently for \$135.

The construction of the Carthaginian roads differed so materially from that of the Roman highways that it is an easy matter for antiquarians to distinguish between the two.

A California newspaper estimates that there are in this country about 100,000,000 acres of arid land that can be made fruitful by means of irrigation—land enough to support a population of 75,000,000.

The new method of cultivating tobacco in Connecticut by inclosing the fields entirely within cheesecloth covering costs \$250 an acre; but the tobacco thus raised sells for more than twice as much per pound as that grown outside.

This is one of the rules adopted by the bosa barbers of New York city: "Barbers must keep their mouths closed when leaning over a person getting shaved. They must keep their mouths and teeth in good, cleanly condition."

The metric system is already permissive and legal in Great Britain and in the United States. Any manufacturer or merchant who wishes to increase his foreign trade is entirely at liberty to make his goods with metric dimensions and to invoice them in metric measures.

Monaco was startled while Santos-Dumont was inflating his balloon by the waters of the bay turning a brilliant orange carmine. This was due to the draining of the chemicals used in making his hydrogen gas into the sea water. Inflation was stopped by the authorities till they found that the mixture was harmless to health and to the fishes.

GOLD COINS AT DISCOUNT.

Why Elevated Railway Agents and Others Refuse to Receive Them When Tendered.

"What's the matter with it?" asked a passenger at an elevated loop station in surprise one night when the ticket seller refused to accept a five-dollar gold piece tendered in payment of the fare, reports the Chicago Inter Ocean.

"Nothing that I know of," replied the ticket seller, "except that the company won't take it from me unless it's full weight, and I've no means of knowing whether it is or not."

"But it's legal tender, and there's a federal law making it an offense to refuse to receive legal-tender currency of any kind," replied the passenger, who by this time was getting rather "warm," despite the cold weather.

"Can't help that," was the answer. "If it happens to be a few cents under weight the company will dock me for the difference, and I can't afford to take any chances. My salary is not that of a bank president, and I can't stand any reductions."

By this time the crowd had become interested, and backed the passenger up in his determination to ride free if the agent refused to change the gold piece. The depot policeman didn't know just what course to pursue. He wanted to eject the obstinate passenger, but the crowd wasn't in a mood to be trifled with, and the matter was finally compromised by the agent accepting the coin under protest.

"There's something to be said on both sides," was the comment of the agent after the man had taken his train. "The company deposits its receipts in a bank, and the bank weighs all the gold taken in. If there's a shortage, which there generally is, as gold wears off rapidly in handling, it is charged up against the depositor. Consequently the company holds the agents responsible for short-weight coins just as it does for counterfeit bills. If we take any it's at our own risk. It seems pretty tough, but it's fair enough when you consider the conditions. The man who offers gold here is as much of a nuisance as the one who tenders pennies."

WHAT THE MARKSMAN HIT.

Something That Looked Like a Target, But It Was a Good Shot Just the Same.

In a passage of his recently published volume, "The Book of the Rifle," says the London M. A. P., the Hon. T. F. Freemantle tells of the following amusing story apropos of accidents to marksmen:

"Sir Henry Halford on one occasion—it was not a very clear day—was about to begin shooting at 1,000 yards, and, thinking that the marker must now be ready for him to begin, asked him through the telephone: 'Are you all right?' The marker replied: 'All right, sir, in a minute.' But, unluckily, Sir Henry took 'All right, sir,' instead of the whole sentence, and removed the telephone from his ear. He lay down and fired his shot, and, on looking through the telescope to see where it had hit, was horrified to see the marker with a perfectly white face staggering away toward his shelter. He was intensely alarmed, and in a moment there came a ring at the telephone. 'What has happened? Are you badly hurt?' 'No, sir, I am not hurt; but I had a bucket of whitewash between my legs, painting the target, and you put a bullet into it and splashed it all up in my face!'"

Sad to Relate.

Quittens—Truth crushed to earth will rise again, you know.

Critics—Yes, and it always finds the crusher doing business at the old stand.—Chicago Daily News.

LONDONERS ALARMED

German Scientist Says They May All Become Black.

Air They Breathe Is Heavy with Soot and the Average Complexion Is Sallow Now—Interesting Statements of Physicians.

For a long time social London has been considering the effect of its atmosphere upon creme marquisse complexion. Now German science has taken hold of the question and has stirred even the bewhiskered denizen of the world's metropolis by predicting the time when the typical Londoner shall be a black man, states the Chicago Chronicle. He says:

"A mud-laden river flows through the fith-choked city under a smoke-clogged sky. The air that the Londoners breathe is tinted with soot. The complexion of the average Londoner is becoming more and more sallow, and in the not distant future London-bred men and women will be black through absorption of dirt and soot pigments."

With this characterization of London and this prophecy as to the ultimate effect of uncleanness upon Londoners, the question has come home to Chicago. A few months ago the Tribune proved that the lungs of the Chicago citizen are patched with black just in proportion to the time that he has lived in Chicago, and accordingly as the smoke inspector in home and office neighborhoods has not done his duty. Is the future Chicago to shade away from the fair mulatto to a genuine black?

"Never," says Dr. William Allen Pusey, professor of dermatology in the College of Physicians and Surgeons. "People don't get black in that way. It would be impossible for soot and dirt pigments to get into the circulation and be deposited through the capillaries into the tissue, and just as absurd is the idea that an incrustation of dirt and soot on the skin could work into the pores to an extent discolored it permanently."

"What has made people black or brown or yellow? It has been nature's effort at protecting them from tropic and semi-tropic suns. From a point of physics this may seem odd to the layman when he knows that a black hat in the sun will grow warmer than a white one. But the protection to the body, through tan, comes in another way."

"As a general proposition the human skin is almost transparent. In the white person the actinic rays of the sun when they shine hot upon the skin tend to pierce the skin to the delicate tissue below, making inflammation in the form of blisters. If nature could do nothing to protect the white skin these actinic rays stimulate the system, finally producing ulcers."

"But the irritation of the skin from these actinic rays stimulates the system to deposit pigment in the skin just as near the surface as is possible. This is the 'tanning' process. It may be more active in one person than in another, hence one person may tan much more than another; again there are people who do not tan appreciably under any circumstances."

"Beginning with the supposition that in the first of things all men were white, it is easy to account for the shadings of the races from white to black, simply by this tanning process."

"To prove that tanning is simply a protective measure against actinic rays of light, a man will tan as readily from exposure to the X-ray in photography as he will tan in the sun. If the X-ray exposure is kept up too long, ulcers and deep-seated inflammation will result."

"To my mind, the Eskimo as a race, will dispose of the theory of this German professor. Personally, he is one of the most filthy of men. In his squalid habitation he breathes smoke and soot; he doesn't wash himself; he pays no attention to cleanliness and his ancestors have been as careless as he for ages. Yet when you wash the Eskimo he is a white man—white simply because the heat of the sun has not blackened him; white, because no amount of smoke, soot, and dirt can make a white man black."

Dr. Pusey's statements should have a tendency to quiet London's uneasiness. London has never made much distinction in the matter of racial color lines, but as one over anxious journal says of the possible fulfillment of the German savant's prophecy:

"Such a catastrophe must be averted at any cost, if only to enable us to retain the respect of the American people."

Thoughts of One Woman.

Troubles are bigger when examined too closely. Women suffer keenly because when grief comes they insist on subjecting it to the minute dissection of perpetual meditation under the microscope of imagination.

In heaven it will not matter who your ancestors are. Absolute devotion may not prove so supreme a love as complete renunciation.

The average man's ideas of female fashions are shaped about like a woman's bundle.

Better one word of love to the living than all the eulogies pronounced above the coffin of the dead.

One song in the storm is worth more than an entire orchestra in the sunshine.

To erect an idol of love on a pedestal is, for women, comparatively easy; what is really difficult is to keep it from wobbling after it is there.

No woman has gone through life without feeling the need of the consolation of at least one of the beatitudes.—St. Louis Republic.

PUNGENT PARAGRAPHS.

Qualified. Bizzer—"Upon what does Flasher base his claims of being a society man?" Buzzer—"He's had gout and appendicitis."—Ohio State Journal.

London Density.—Wigg—"The population in London is very dense, isn't it?" Wagg—"Dense is no name for it. They couldn't understand my jokes at all."—Philadelphia Record.

Wife—"Well, dear, if I've made you angry I can only say that I am very sorry." Husband—"H'm!" Wife—"Sorry, I mean, that you have such a bad temper."—London Tit-Bits.

"Didn't you promise me not to do it again?" "Yes, sir." "Well, didn't I promise to whip you if you did?" "Yes, sir; but as I didn't keep my promise, I won't hold you to yours."—Indianapolis News.

Not a Real Exchange.—"Did you see those two women exchange looks?" "Yes; but, somehow, that dark one in red is still the better looking."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

The Doting Mamma.—"Where's my silk hat?" "Your silk hat? Oh, yes, Georgie took it to put on the snow man he made." "The thunder he did!" "Yes, isn't it nice that he can entertain himself so easily?"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"Mike," said Plodding Pete, "did you know that we had been suspected of stealin' chickens?" "Dat goes to show how unjust dis world is!" "De idea of you or me goin' to all de work of pickin' de feathers off a chicken, an' startin' a fire an' cookin' it, when we could get everything ready an' proper, jes' by makin' a quiet visit to any kitchen!"—Washington Star.

SUPERSTITIOUS FIREMEN.

Queer Notions That Prevail Among the Members of a New Jersey Department.

The efficiency of the fire department in many suburban cities near by has been often proved, and was notably exemplified at the Paterson fire, at the recent big fire, says a report from that city. Several towns near Paterson were quick to send aid, but if one prominent Jersey place sent its fire department the chances are that the ladder and hose have not reached Paterson yet.

The fire department of this particular town—it proudly calls itself a city now—distinguished itself at a recent blaze. One of the finest houses in the place, a large stone building, caught fire one morning about ten o'clock. The owner, a New York business man, was notified by telephone, and hurried home as fast as he could, considering the town's none too accommodating train facilities.

When he reached his home he saw the town's fire apparatus on his lawn, accompanied by the members of the fire company. In the third floor from the window the suburbanite saw a man's face and shoulders. It was his coachman. The man was yelling loud and long, but not from fear. He had been trying for an hour to get the firemen to bring the fire hose into the house, where they could get at the flames. They told him that it was too dangerous; that they were superstitious about going into burning stone houses. Finally, to shame them, he had gone up through the house, and stuck his head through the window. But it was of no avail. The firemen would only pour water in the windows, ruining many a beautiful piece of furniture that might have as well been saved. The firemen did one laudable thing—they sent for a hose from a town about three miles away. The hose arrived later in the day. Those who answered the call put the hose on an ice wagon that happened to be going in the right direction. The driver delivered ice as he drove along his weary way. The hose was the last thing delivered, and the hour was somewhat late; but the urgent call was answered.

HE WAS MARRIED IN HASTE.

Case of a Canadian Immigrant Who for Alacrity and Precision Is Entitled to the Wreath.

There are on record many instances of hasty marriages, but as far as heard from a Canadian immigrant holds the prize. He tells the story of his courtship himself, says the Chicago Herald. "When I arrived at the boarding house in Newcastle, N. B.," he says, "I found myself sitting next to a young woman at supper, whom I soon found was one of the newly-arrived immigrants. I looked her over and saw a round, strong, cheery lass with a laughing face, and thought she'd do. I did not know how to go about getting her interested in me, but just spoke a word or two with her and when we came out into the passage I squeezed her hand and gave her a kiss."

"Says she: 'How dare you?' Says I: 'I want to marry you, my dear.' 'Marry me?' she says, laughing, 'why I don't know you.' 'No more do I you, my dear,' says I, 'so that makes it all fair and even.' She didn't know how to put a stopper on that, so she only laughed and said she would think of it. 'Not think of it,' says I, artful like, 'not when you've come all those thousands of miles for the purpose?'"

"What do you mean?" says she, starting. 'Come, now,' says I. 'Don't tell me. I know what's what. When a man emigrates it's to get work; when a woman emigrates it's to get married. You may as well admit it at once.'"

"Well, she protested, and held off a bit, but we were married two days after, and I guess neither of us have been sorry for it since. You see, it was my knowing the ways of the sex so well that enabled me to rush things through as I did. Nothing like understanding 'em when it comes to courtship—saves time and trouble no end."

SCARED MONTE CARLO

Woman Won Heavily Through a System of Her Own.

Discovered a Peculiarity in the Run of Numbers in the Roulette Wheel Which Was Caused by a Defect in Same.

Lord Rosslyn's recent vain attempt to "break the bank at Monte Carlo" has brought out a number of old stories regarding similar attempts in the past. Perhaps the best of the lot was told by an official of Monte Carlo to a London writer. This official declares that never but once did a "system play" give the bank any uneasiness.

"You remember," said he, "what is generally known as the suicides' table—the second on the right on entering the roulette room? It was at that table a few years ago that I saw one afternoon an old lady who, like many others here, makes her living by obtaining good places at the table on the opening of play and selling them to eager players an hour or two later. This old lady, whom you must know as Mme. X—, was well known to me and I was surprised to notice that she had a young Italian with her. They were playing occasionally with five-franc pieces and winning. But so small were the stakes that I took very little notice save to congratulate madame when she rose to go home to dinner. Then the old woman turned to me with an air of surprising defiance and asked: 'How much will you give me for the secret of an infallible system at roulette?'"

"Nothing," I responded, laughing; "we are not buying secrets to-day." To this she responded: "Ah, but, monsieur will be glad to purchase it some day. Bon soir!" And she was gone.

"For several days I did not see her and the matter passed completely from my mind. One afternoon a week later, however, I saw her at the same table in company with three men. The 'chef de partie' whispered to me that they were winning heavily and I told the surveillants to watch and report. An hour later one of the men came to me and stated that madame and her party had won 70,000 francs and that, strangest of all, they only played for the maximum and scarcely ever lost."

"That evening I myself looked on at their play several times and certainly they seemed to win each time they staked. The curious point, however, was that in 20 coups or so they never won play more than twice, first one of the partners and then the others, but on each occasion they won the maximum. Indeed, the system certainly seemed to bear out the prophecy of madame, and was actually infallible."

"A week passed and their winnings amounted to a very respectable sum, all of which had been safely lodged in the Credit Lyonnais and transmitted to a bank at Milan. The matter was now growing serious, for three times they had broken the bank at the table where they played, and at length I telegraphed to M. Blanc in Paris. He asked for further reports, and these being still unsatisfactory he came to Monte Carlo to see for himself. What he saw greatly disconcerted him. The gang was winning most assuredly, but by what system we were utterly unable to discover. Well, to cut a long story short, M. Blanc had an interview with madame and, after long haggling, he purchased the secret for 70,000 francs—and it was cheap at the price."

"The money being paid after play had ended and the rooms closed, madame led us to the table and ascended us by her statement. She told us that after some years at the table she knew quite well that no system was infallible until of a sudden, when registering the numbers, she noticed that certain of them always followed each other. Thus, if the croupier spun with the number 9 opposite him 36 was certain to be the next, and if zero was in the same position 32 would surely follow. For days she watched this, then played and won. She quickly got together her little syndicate of Italians and upon her observations they profited nearly 300,000 francs."

"And why was it that these numbers turned up in sequence? Well, it was quite simple when madame told us. The roulette wheel had become warped by the heat and was not quite round. Hence if turned from a certain point it invariably struck at a certain other point, therefore the players never hesitated to risk a maximum. That is the only system which has ever been infallible," added the courtly official, "and I need hardly tell you that since we have been careful to test the wheels every day."

Chemistry of the Heavens.

Apropos of the smallpox, which is bothering London quite as much as Philadelphia, a correspondent calls attention to the necessity of proper ventilation in public vehicles. As he expresses it: "One cannot make people clean, but the 'chemistry of the heavens' may well be invoked to render them harmless."—London Standard.

Photographs in Telephone Lines.

It is suggested that by placing photographs at intervals of say 100 miles in long-distance telephone lines much smaller, and therefore much cheaper, wire can be used. The photographs receive and transmit the sound waves without loss to their force.—Scientific American.

Her Only Hope.

He—When we get better acquainted I shall call you by your first name. She—All right. And I hope our acquaintance will reach the point where my friends can call me by your last name.—Chicago Daily News.

BUY A RUBBER BALL.

If You Weigh Too Much and Are Low in Spirits Play Ball and It Will Do You Good.

"I'm not nearly so stout as I used to be, and if you guessed your head off you couldn't guess how I have reduced my weight," remarked one of those genial, heavy-set business men. "No," he went on, "I haven't been dieting, or I haven't been taking any anti-corrupt medicine; no, nor massage, nor Turkish baths. Give it up, I've been playing ball."

"Ball?" Everybody laughed. "Baseball, football or highball?" asked some smart aleck, relates the Detroit Free Press.

"Just old, everyday ball," the large man said. "Not long ago my heart began acting queer. My wife said I was getting too stout, and had better go to see our doctor. So I went to him at breakfast. As I waited, one of his little girls came flying into the office, a sweet little thing, just dressed for breakfast—as clean as a pin—and with a pretty white apron on, and neat little pigtail of brown hair tied up in blue ribbons."

"She didn't notice me any more than if I had been a wooden Indian, but ran right over to the marble hearth and began bouncing a rubber ball with all her might and main. That was all she had come in for, the stone hearth squeaked here and she wanted a load of ball before breakfast. As I watched her, I had to admire and envy her activity and suppleness; she was in motion all over, arms, legs and body—she had to stoop, reach and run, as the ball got away from her."

"Something struck me; I picked up my hat and got out of that office as if sent word that my office was on fire. I went to the nearest toy shop and paid a dime for a rubber ball. At night I went in our bath room and played ball on the tiled floor. In the morning I got up and played ball, just as I had seen the little girl do. Twice a day, now, we play ball—my wife has got at it, too; and we feel ever so much better for it."

"Yes, my heart is all right, and my weight has gone down wonderfully. I'll never tell that doctor how his pretty little daughter cheated him out of a good big bill."

TREE AS AN INQUISITOR.

Poisonous Member of Madagascar Forest Used by Nations for a Peculiar Purpose.

One of the most deadly trees in the world is to be found in Madagascar, where it is known as the tangee tree. Its scientific name is tanguinia venenifera, the latter word signifying poisonous. By the natives it is regarded with a sort of horror, and for excellent reasons, says a London exchange. For centuries it was the custom to use the fruit of the tangee for the purpose of ascertaining whether criminals charged with grave offenses were guilty or not. In each case the prisoner was brought into court, and the judge thereupon solemnly handed him a fruit from a tangee tree and told him if he ate it and it did him no harm he would be considered innocent, but if it killed him he would be considered guilty. As there is a great deal of poison in the fruit it can readily be seen that very few if any were able to pass through this ordeal unscathed.

It is said that some criminals who had great political influence or considerable wealth used to manage to escape through the connivance of the judges; but on the other hand the criminal records tell of many cases in which the prisoners died a horrible death very soon after they had eaten the noxious fruit.

Many civilized methods of jurisprudence now prevail in Madagascar, but though this barbarous custom is obsolete almost as much aversion as it ever was. A proof of this may be found in the fact that a French naturalist recently tried to obtain some branches and fruit of the tree, but though he asked several natives to aid him in the search he was unable to obtain the slightest assistance from any of them.

Big Cases, Big Fees.

A business enterprise must be highly profitable to obtain the exclusive services, for any purpose, of a lawyer who is at the top of the New York bar. Lawyers' services when they are in demand here carry terrific charges. Some of the high-priced legal talent of this market belongs to John E. Parsons, Joseph E. Choate and Elihu Root. Choate charges anything he pleases and gets it. John E. Parsons got \$100,000 for drawing up sugar trust articles of incorporation. Elihu Root's charge for going into court is \$1,000 a day. Both Choate, as ambassador to the Court of St. James, and Root, as secretary of war, are out a lot of money in the service of their country. In a court Root could make his yearly salary as secretary of war in a week.—N. Y. Press.

A Modern Fairy Tale.

And so Prince Charming and Princess Brighteyes got married, and he hit her with a chair, and she would not give him any money to pay his debts and keep up his string of horses. And so they got a divorce, and lived happily ever after.—Baltimore American.

Her Only Hope.

He—When we get better acquainted I shall call you by your first name. She—All right. And I hope our acquaintance will reach the point where my friends can call me by your last name.—Chicago Daily News.