

A QUEER CORK SAFE.

Dupes Were Unable to Find the Place Where They Were Bunked.

"Did you ever hear of a cork safe?" asked a drummer who represents the latest thing in chilled-steel and burglar-baiting time locks, according to the New Orleans Times-Democrat.

"When the victim entered the place it looked like an ordinary business establishment, with desks, railing, maps on the walls, safe in the corner, and several clerks at work on books.

THE JOLLY HARBOR SEALS.

One of Them Up on the Platform or Their Pool, Watching the Red Fir.

"What's he watching the clock for?" a visitor at the aquarium asked of an attendant, referring to the smallest of the three harbor seals there.

"He's waiting for the whistle to blow," was the reply, and it certainly did seem as though the little black seal was waiting for something.

"As the people set their faces toward the door the seals dash and splash and prance about in their pool, and jump up half or three-quarters of their length out of the water and look over the railing, watching and waiting for the men with the food.

"It may be that the little black fellow just happened to be up there at that hour, and that it was looking at the clock just by chance, and that it couldn't tell the time by it at all; but the seals all know sure enough the four-o'clock whistle.

A KNOTTY CASE.

It Which It Is Shown That Cows Are Valued More Than a More Human Body in Africa.

A Uganda woman had married three husbands at different times, and had had a son by each of them—the second, says a writer in Blackwood.

So much evidence was produced that I became utterly confused, especially when the mother crawled in on hands and knees to give evidence as to parentage, in which, by the way, she was fatly contradicted by her offspring.

Bursts into More Pieces. The ordinary shell which was manufactured 30 years ago only broke into from 20 to 25 pieces when it burst.

Poor Publishers. Publishers in Finland lose from \$6,000 to \$10,000 a year due to suppression of books by the government.

Pass the Asparagus. According to Liebig, the alkali in asparagus develops form in the human brain.

GETTING AN ANTIQUE CHEAP.

How a Collector Secured an Old Mahogany Table at Very Small Cost.

When a man becomes a crank on the course of antiques he will go to any extreme to gain possession of a coveted treasure, says the Philadelphia Record.

"That's a queer sort of a table to be washing dishes on," ventured the doctor.

"Sure, it is that," replied its owner; "and I wouldn't be bothered with it at all, if I could afford a new one."

AT THE PARIS EXPOSITION.

This Account Says the American Pavilion Is a Beautiful and Attractive Structure.

Our cocher has been ordered to turn into the Avenue de la Tour Marbourg, and suddenly I find that we have come out upon the Quai d'Orsay, and are at the entrance of the Pont des Invalides, says the New Lippincott.

Here, on the rive gauche, in company with others of the Pavillons des Etrangers, will stand the American pavilion, a beautiful and attractive structure, whose broad steps lead down to the water.

INTENSE COLD.

Numbs the Senses and Produces in Some Cases Results Similar to Alcoholic Intoxication.

The usual results of exposure to extreme cold are loss of energy, both physical and mental, followed by drowsiness and disinclination to move; the mental faculties become torpid and the senses numbed, while the victim is seized with an irresistible desire to lie down and sleep.

FAMOUS ZOOS.

South Africa Possesses Some of the Largest and Finest in the World.

The South African republic's zoological collection and gardens are the finest and largest in the world. The gardens, which are in the Lebombo region, are guarded by a whole tribe of Kallers, and contain every species of wild animal to be found in South Africa.

The animals of South America, for instance, are given the free range of large inclosures containing miniature mountains, rivers and forests; while the tigers and lions live in sandy stretches, jungles and so on.

Never Rains There. Rain has never been known to fall in that part of Egypt between the two lower falls of the Nile.

IS YOUR CLOCK ON TIME?

Some Interesting Observations Suggested by This Frequently Repeated Query.

"One of the things I have learned in the course of my experience," said the middle-aged man, according to the New York Sun, "is that people don't like to have you ask: 'Is your clock right?'"

"Doesn't every man think his own watch is a good timekeeper? He does. It may be a cheap watch that cost ten dollars or five dollars or one dollar, but he thinks it's a good one.

"The question implies in some vague, indefinite way the idea of an assumption of superiority on the part of the questioner, for does it not suggest inferiority, at least on the other man's clock? and no man likes it. My conclusion is that nobody should ask the question idly—not at all, in fact, unless something really depends upon it.

MYSTERY OF NUMERAL NINE.

Soothsayers of Olden Times Attached a Sacredness to It—Some Curious Coincidences.

Among the magicians and soothsayers of ancient times both the figures nine and three had a certain amount of mystery and sacredness attached to them, and volumes have been written in explanation of their meaning in connection with the history of men and the world.

In 1869 the famous Comstock lode find became known to the world; in 1879 the gold-bearing region around Leadville and Tombstone, A. T., began to attract attention, and in 1899 the diggings at Clover Creek and in lower California became the objective points of great multitudes of excited and anxious seekers after sudden wealth.

A HARD RAIN.

The Man from the East Was Not Accustomed to the Tides of the Northwest.

"It rains a great deal in the Puget sound country," said the man from that section, according to the Washington Star, "and I heard of a funny incident not long ago about it. Some chap had come from the Missouri valley to take up his residence at Whatcom, on Hellingham bay, where there are very high tides.

One of the few things of which the boers have an inadequate supply is tobacco. While spending millions for guns and ammunition, they neglected to provide themselves with an abundance of the soothing weed.

Rich Organs Grinders.

In Italy it is to be found a whole village of well-to-do organ grinders, who are now spending comfortable fortunes acquired in America.

Pigeons in British Army.

Each pigeon used in the carrier service of the British navy costs the government £4 a year.

Some Smiths in United Kingdom.

In the United Kingdom there are 300,000 persons named Smith.

PART OF WRECKED SHIP.

How a Firm of English Shipbuilders Are Utilizing Part of a Stranded Vessel.

Probably the most remarkable achievement in the line of wrecking and rebuilding is to be found in maritime history, as represented by the reconstructed steamer Milwaukee, which was turned out in the summer of 1899 at the yard of C. S. Swan & Hunter at Wallsend-on-Tyne, England, says the Engineering Magazine.

The Milwaukee, a vessel of 483 feet length and 50-foot beam, went ashore near Aberdeen in September, 1898, a huge rock penetrating the hold for a length of 30 feet and to a height of eight feet above the tank top.

The saved portion of the vessel depended for flotation until placed in dry dock upon a transverse watertight bulkhead at the forward end of the boiler space. It was towed to the Tyne and moored in the river until a new bow was built, launched and made ready for connection with it.

FROST SPOILED THE SPORT.

Sad Misfortune That Befell a Party of Georgia Chicken Fighters on a Stranded Steamboat.

Forty dejected and homesick gamblers returned to Knoxville the other day, says the Savannah News. On Christmas day, with 100 gamecocks, they left on a steamboat for an isolated resort down the river, where they expected to have a great cocking main and return to the city the next morning.

TWO TALL STORIES.

One Each from Boston and Philadelphia, So High Must Be True.

A writer in a Boston publication says that not long ago a hawk caught a fish in Long Island sound, but while flying with it to the woods to devour it at leisure, the fish floundered from the hawk's hold and dropped into a farmer's yard, where a big nastiff was sitting.

Gorgeous Swords.

Of gorgeous swords which are not so much weapons as settings for precious stones, the most valuable in England is said to be the one presented by the Egyptians to Lord Walsley and valued at £2,000; but this sum is comparatively little for a jeweled sword if the value of the sword brought over to Europe by the shah of Persia on his first visit—namely £10,000—can be taken as a standard of what a diamond-hilted weapon ought to cost.

No Doubt of a Personal Devil.

The assertion which was made recently in England by a military expert that among the Boers there is a common belief that the Bible was written originally in Dutch, has called out from a correspondent of the London Daily News the following anecdote: "A Dutch minister, lately arrived in the Transvaal from Holland, was rebuked by an old farmer for having expressed doubts of the reality of a personal devil."

Wireless Telegraphy in Warfare.

Appropos the use of the Marconi system of wireless telegraphy in the war in South Africa it is interesting to note that it has been proved the cannonading does not interfere with the transmission of messages. The apparatus has been worked successfully and messages sent while the largest guns in the British navy were being fired.

ADEPTS AT LYING.

Pertinacious Untruthfulness Is a Dominant Trait of the South African Kaffirs.

The Kaffir makes an interesting study. You cannot understand him all at once. It requires time, and a good deal of it. A new arrival thinks the kaffir is a born prevaricator of the truth, and has his reasons for so thinking, says the London Mail.

"Suppose you catch a 'boy' committing a misdemeanor. Ask him what he has been doing, and he will look up in your face, a picture of innocence, and reply: 'Ikona, baas'—plump denial. Tell him you saw him do it, threaten him with punishment, he will still persist in maintaining his innocence. He will still plead ignorance of the misdeed and mutter in astonishment or fear: 'Ikona, baas.' In fact, he knows nothing whatever about it. If the offense be one that cannot be overlooked you proceed to administer reproof—with the foot, if you are not particular and wish to be impressive. What does he do? If he is a raw 'boy,' and not used to it, he runs off with a terrified look on his face; if he is used to it he retires precipitately with a satisfied smile, not necessarily because he has got the thrashing, but because he no longer has it to look forward to.

The only explanation for the systematic lying of the native in face of the most convincing proof is that the native mind is totally unable to form a conception of what we understand by truthfulness.

DESERVED HER CRACKER.

This Parrot Awoke Her Master When Burglars Came, and Saved the Silver.

A Philadelphia writer relates the story of a parrot that protected her owner's home from burglars, who had entered through one of the front parlor windows. They crept through the hall-room past the bird, and began jimmieing open the sideboard in the dining-room, where the silver was kept.

"Is that you, Frank?" she queried. The burglars stopped as if they had been shot. Polly repeated the question in a louder and more imperative key.

The rise of the parrot awakened her master, Mr. Fisher. He grasped a revolver, which he had bought only a few days before, and kept under his pillow, and made for the head of the stairs. He pressed an electric button on the wall and the lights in the hall-room, when he saw three men struggling to open the front door. He promptly opened fire, but they succeeded in getting away, where he found the parrot in her cage under the piano. The cage was upset, but the bird escaped. The owner placed her right side upon the piano, when she lifted her frightened head from under her wing and asked: "Is that you, Frank?"

WOMEN PRINTERS IN LONDON.

A Remarkable Business Society That Has No Counterpart in This Country.

Women are found now and again in printing offices in this country, engaged in typesetting and similar kinds of work, but it would be hard to find a duplicate of the Women's Printing Society in London, where the entire establishment is owned and managed by women, and all the labor, with the exception of heavy machine work, is done by them.

This society has been carried on for a number of years as a successful business. Originally started by subscription for the purpose of training girls who were anxious to earn a livelihood in this way, it rapidly developed into a prosperous concern, but it has not lost sight of the aim of helping needy young women workers with which it was begun. It is managed on the cooperative principle. No dividend may exceed five per cent. per annum, and above that the surplus is to be given over to the hands by way of loans.

Apprentices are taken for three years, many of them being girls just out of school of about 16 years of age. Some of the workers become at the same time share-holders.

Pat's Parrot.

Pat's parrot, one of which talks all day long and imitates its mistress' trills and squeaks in an amazing fashion, and even composes the most elaborate melodies. The other parrot—Jumbo by name—is an excellent talker. Pat's parrot, which is named Pat, brought him in New York for \$200. He was reputed to be the finest talking parrot alive. Once in her possession he became dumb. In vain she tried to coax him to converse. Months went by, until one morning the prima donna awoke with a sad shriek. "Send for the doctor!" she cried. "For I have to sing to-night." The doctor duly arrived. As he entered the room the parrot uttered his first and last words. "Oh, doctor!" he exclaimed, in a strong Yankee accent, "I'm so sick!" And since that day, now several years ago, he has not uttered a word.

Ready for Emergencies.

The German war department, it is said, actually keeps in stock duplicates of all the bridges in the empire considered likely to be damaged or destroyed in case of war; and, what is more, it has duplicates of a good many French bridges, and of other countries in which it is interested.

Value of American Live Stock.

The live stock of the United States is estimated to be worth \$2,220,000,000.

STICK STAMPS ON STRAIGHT.

Attention Is Called to the Irreverence of Sticking Great Men on Their Heads.

"Did you ever happen to think," said A. V. Rawdon, of Kansas City, to the New York Tribune man, "of how much better it would be if people would affix stamps neatly and in upright position upon their letters instead of in the helter-skelter manner which is so generally prevalent? Besides, is it treating in fitting manner the memory of those great ones in the history of the republic whose features are held in living memory by means of the post? The father of his country has not come down to us historically as one likely to enter the presence of a lady on his nose, or even when carrying you a notification that your bank account is overdrawn to do so while skating along on his left eyebrow.

"Do you think that he who wrote the articles of confederation for the Albany convention would stand on his head, even were he conscious that it was his lot to carry around patent medicine advertisements and book notices? Would the conqueror of Appomattox, after his wonderful trip around the world, rest easy if he knew he was repeating that triumphant progress every day and entering the uttermost corners of the earth on his ear, his eye or flat on his back? Or, again, is it befitting that the stern and rugged conqueror of New Orleans and unrepentant opponent of the United States bank should enter your presence prone upon his right or left side? I shudder even to think of him as standing on his head, on account of the agony this position would cause him, due to his spike-like hair.

"By all means stick your stamps on straight. It looks better, and besides pays a more fitting tribute to the nation's dead."

THE NEBRASKA "DESERT."

Big Crops Now Grow Where a Noted Writer Once Lamphooned the Idea.

Thirty years ago Nebraska was part of the "great American desert" in the imagination of eastern people, and even of eastern people living as far west as Chicago, remarked a long-whiskered stockman, as he looked around the Union depot, says the Chicago Inter Ocean.

Dye ever hear of E. D. Webster, who was private secretary of Seward in Lincoln's war cabinet? Well, E. D. Webster was a great man. He belonged to the old school of politics. He came out to Omaha after the war, and we were great friends, although Webster was in years older than I. We only differed about one thing. I thought Nebraska and Kansas all that western country might be made to grow crops. Webster argued that the whole scheme was non-sensical.

"Tell you what I'll do," he said one day. "You take a peck of corn and plant it out there on that claim of yours. I'll take a box of Smith's Lozenges and plant 'em on a strip joining your corn, and I'll bet I raise the higher crop."

Well, that's all; only last fall I gathered 80 bushels to the acre off of that 200 acres.

PARIS UNSPEAKABLY LOVELY.

Artistic Uniformity of the Buildings Is One of the City's Great Charms.

In the Latin Quarter and in the Faubourg St. Germain, winding streets, dingy old houses, narrow byways and nicely carved portals, and, in contrast, a few of what one Paris tourist has been wont to write a traveler from Paris, to Laclie's Home Journal, "Old Paris may have had its attraction, but modern Paris is unspeakably lovely. The French are essentially classic in their taste, and have order and form, and straight, strong lines. No Queen Anne house, shagreened, nor unpurposive work for its sake. The houses are all of gray stone, and of one height and every one of them is almost equal in size as its neighbor. One reason for this uniformity is that the French could not endure irritating irregularities; but a more cogent reason is that when Louis Napoleon was rebuilding his capital he would everything very splendid, and so he put such an enormous tax on all buildings that did not conform to a certain standard of height and elegance that the builders found it cheaper to follow the royal regulations than to pay the tax.

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