SOUGHT AID FROM THE GODS.

Japanese Villagers United in Cursing Robber to Death.

This bit of local color is from the Japan Times: "At Shinokubo, a small village in Boshu, consisting of only 76 houses, several cases of robbery have lately occurred to the great alarm of the villagers. A diligent search instituted by them for the offender proved an utter failure. The community consequently held a mass-meeting and unanimously agreed upon cursing the robber to death. A virtuous priest of the locality was accordingly applied to for the purpose. He, however, declined to curse the robber to death, an act too cruel for a holy man like him to resort to, but promised that he would paralyze the robber by his powerful prayers, so as to disable him and lead him to repentance. Thus the priest commenced his incantations. But, behold, the robber continued his subtle operations to the indignation of the entire community. The priest has been condemned as a worthless fellow, and the villagers have taken upon themselves the task of repairing every day to the village temple by twos and threes to offer horrible prayers by which the robber is doomed to an early and fearful death."

GOOD CHANCE FOR INVENTORS.

Fortune Waiting for Man Who Can Perfect the Umbrella.

"How rich I'd be," said one umbrella salesman to another, "if I had patented the umbrella." "You might as well talk of a patent on cooking," said his friend. "Umbrellas appear to have existed always. Indeed, wherever excavations have been made—at Babylon, Nineveh, Nippur—traces of the umbrella have been found. The article is coeval with mankind. The English didn't begin to use it until 1700. Shakespeare with all his genius had no umbrella to protect him from the rain. What you might do would be to patent some new sort of umbrella—some rain shield built on better lines. We have proof that the umbrella has existed for 10,000 years and yet in all that time it has not once been improved. To-day, as it did two or three hundred years ago, it turns inside out with a strong gust of wind and it only protects the head and shoulders from the rain. Change all that. I want an umbrella that is a complete rain shield. Then you will be a millionaire in six months."

San Francisco's Rat War.

The raid on rats at this time is not the first of the kind in San Francisco. In 1852, when the sidewalks in Kearny and Montgomery streets were as uneven as the existing walks in Market street east of Front, and were made up of dry goods boxes laid in the mud end to end, some high and some low, the town was overrun with rats of all colors—gray, white, brown and black. At night they would crawl out of their holes and run along the uneven walks. They were so thick on the streets during the spring of the year named that women were afraid to go out after nightfall, and the men who ventured forth on the poorly lighted streets often stepped on a dozen rodents in walking the distance of a block. It was no uncommon thing to see men with crooked canes on the sidewalk playing shinney, the rats being used in place of knurs. In that way many were killed.

"Dick Turpin's Tree."

The last remaining portions of a famous old elm, which was known to all lovers of Blackheath, England, and the surrounding country as "Dick Turpin's Tree," were removed recently. Tradition goes that the famous highwayman used to hover about near the gigantic branches of this elm, well out of view of his prey, whom he used to so adroitly "hold up" with his horse pistols, and relieve of whatever loose valuables they might have. The elm, which had a circumference of over 15 feet, stood close to Hyde Vale, almost opposite "Ye Olde House." While it was being cut up a nail, in perfect condition, was found imbedded in the center of the wood.

Diving for Alligators.

While walking near a pond in the woods, Bullie Ham, who can tell the presence of an alligator by the smell of the critter, pulled off his coat and took a header under the water. While at the bottom of the pond Bullie's leg arose to the surface and waved to the men near the shore. The warning was heeded by the men catching Bullie's leg and giving it a yank that brought Bullie to the surface, and with Bullie came an alligator that measured some four feet in length.—Apalachicola Times.

A Voice from Cathay.

A woman was at a dinner party with an eminent Chinese philosopher, when she said: "May I ask why you attach so much importance to the dragon in your country? You know, there is no such creature, don't you? You have never seen one, have you?" "My dear madam," graciously answered the great Chinaman, "why do you attach so much importance to the Goddess of Liberty on your coins? You know there is no such lady, don't you? You have never seen her, have you?"

Classics on the Turf.

"Do you think scholarship assists a man to pecuniary success?" "I should say not," answered the patron of the races. "Half the time the bookmakers can't pronounce correctly the names of horses on which they win the most money."

WALKED THOUSANDS OF MILES

Distance Traveled by Men Long in British Mail Service.

There must be few, even among "men of letters," who, like Joseph Hunt, a Lincolnshire (Eng.) postman, can claim to have tramped a distance of, roughly, 240,000 miles, not much less than the equivalent of ten journeys around the earth. Not long ago George Thompson retired from service as postman in the Langrick district of Yorkshire, after covering on foot 125,000 miles in 26 years of letter carrying, a service 14 years shorter than that of his Lincolnshire rival. In 34 years Orme M. Brown walked 111,000 miles as a postman between Cupar and Kilmany and Logie—a distance, as was stated at the appropriate presentation to him of an easy chair, nearly equal to half that which separates the moon from the earth. John Simmonds of Henley-on-Thames retired with a record of 181,000 miles of fair "heel and toe," the result of 40 years tramping; while most amazing of all, Thomas Phipps, a postman in the Chipping Norton district, was credited with an aggregate journey of 440,000 miles between the years 1840 and 1898.

SURELY AN "ORIGINAL" NAME.

Curious Error the Result of Mistaken Pronunciation.

An English country clergyman vouches for the truth of this story. Having arrived at that point in the baptismal service where the infant's name is conferred, he said: "Name this child." "Original Story," said the sponsor nurse. "What do you say?" he asked in surprise. "Original Story," she repeated in clear, deliberate tones. "It's a very odd name, isn't it? Are you sure you want him called by the name of Original Story?" "Original Story—that's right." "Is it a family name?" the minister persisted. "Named after his uncle, sir," explained the nurse. And so as Original Story the little fellow was christened. Some weeks after this event the minister made the acquaintance of the said uncle—a farm laborer in another village—whose name was Reginald Story.

The Thrifty Chinese.

On a recent visit of one of the United States fleet to Hong Kong, one of the coolies, engaged in passing coal, was accidentally caught in the machinery, and had his leg so badly crushed that it was decided necessary to amputate it. This was explained to the fellow, and after much persuasion he was induced to submit to the sleeping medicine and have the leg taken off. He recovered in remarkably quick time and when able to leave the ship where he had been confined was given a handful of money the officers had collected for him, amounting to about $50 gold. In less than a day's time the ship was besieged by an army of Chinese, all clamoring to have a leg taken off.

A Smile Is the Prerogative of Man.

Nothing on earth can smile but man! Gems may flash reflected light, but what is a diamond flash compared to an eye-flash and a mirth-flash? Flowers cannot smile; this is a charm that even they cannot claim. It is the prerogative of man; it is the color which love wears, and cheerfulness and joy—these three. It is a light in the windows of the face, by which the heart signifies it is at home and waiting. A face that cannot smile is like a bud that cannot blossom and dries up on the stalk. Laughter is day and sobriety is night, and a smile is the twilight that hovers gently between both—more bewitching than either.—Henry Ward Beecher.

Longest Love Letter.

"The limit in love letters in all my long experience handling mail," said an attache of the local postoffice not long ago, "was one about a year ago that had ten two-cent stamps on it. The man must have weighed it, too, for the postage was just right—no more than needed and no less. How did I know it was a love letter? Well, I couldn't be absolutely cocksure about it, but if you had seen it, and noticed the stationery, the handwriting, the address, and so on, you wouldn't have asked for more than one guess. If I were to write a letter that long I would send it as an express package."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

California Sweet Peas.

Sweet peas have 86 divisions and some 300 subdivisions. In California, where almost all the flower seeds are grown, one farm of 500 acres is given up to the production of sweet peas alone. The total production yearly is about 350,000 pounds, and even when this amount is augmented by the yield from smaller farms it is almost impossible to meet the demand. Sweet pea are the most popular flowers in America for home gardens, except the nasturtiums, and even these can not always compete with the sweet peas.

The Wise Old Boy.

"I don't know why it is, dear," she said, "that you never have decided to run for president of the United States." And then he coughed, and poked the fire, and said: "Molly, I couldn't get my consent to leave home and you for such a campaign as that!"

Far from Minor.

"This is a great fuss they are making about a trolley through the park. I thought the whole matter was a minor issue." "By no means; all the fuss is because it is a major one."

MAN THAT WOMEN LIKE BEST.

Writer Asserts That There Can Be No Special Brand.

In the imagination of every woman a creature exists whom she fancies would be unto her a god if she met him; in the imagination of every man there is a woman like nobody on earth, in heaven above, or in the waters under the earth. But no woman ever shows favor to any particular type of man. If woman really liked this or that specimen of masculine humanity above all others, should we ever see the strangely assorted marriages that we do? Individually all women have their ideals, but speaking generally, there is no special brand of man that can be said to appeal to woman. It is sheer nonsense to say definitely that athletes, or courtiers, or tame cats, or dreamers are respectively most pleasing to women. But even if it could be said with authority this or that kind of man is what every woman likes, is it to be supposed for a moment that every male creature would proceed to model himself on the approved pattern? It would be a great pity if such a state of things could be brought about. Women do not want a stereotyped mold for each of the sexes, and women would lose grand opportunities for laughter if all our men were gallant, well-mannered, strong and masterful, or were amiable domestic pets. To be able to poke fun at this or that type is part of the joke of life—to a woman.—Chicago American.

NEW NAME FOR THE TWILIGHT.

Invented by Youngster with a Logical Turn of Mind.

Kenneth is five years old and attends Sunday school. He is very much interested in what he hears there, as the following story will prove. He went with his auntie to be fitted to a new pair of shoes. It was late in the afternoon, and as they waited for the salesman Kenneth noticed that the street lamps were being lighted outside. "Why, Aunt Emily," he exclaimed, "is it dark?" "Oh, not very," she replied. "Oh, I see," said Kenneth, with a comprehensive nod. "Luke." "What did you say?" asked Aunt Emily. "Why, Luke," repeated Kenneth, surprised that she had not understood. "What do you mean by that?" inquired his aunt, still mystified. "Why, you know what Luke means. It's a middling, lukewarm, you know, like lukewarm water, not real dark nor real light." Aunt Emily understood.

Where Is the Lake of Constance?

The Lake of Constance, or Boden See, over which Count Zeppelin has been maneuvering in his airship, might have to become a forbidden region for airships if the proposal to prohibit them from flying over foreign territory were internationally accepted. For the lake is bordered by Switzerland, Austria and three German States—Bavaria, Wurtemberg and Baden, and has itself been neutralized. It is one of the greatest surprises in political geography that awaits the tourist to discover that Constance, although on the southern side of the water, is not in Switzerland, but in Baden, although, after the repeated shifts into Germany from Switzerland and into Switzerland from Germany on the train journey from Bale, he is prepared for anything.—London Chronicle.

Strength of Yate.

Official tests of the many valuable hard woods native to western Australia have made known the extraordinary properties of yate, believed to be the strongest of all known woods. Its average tensile strength is 24,000 pounds to the square inch, equaling that of good cast iron. Many specimens are, however, much stronger, and one was tested up to 17½ tons to the square inch, which is equal to the tensile strength of wrought iron. The sawn timber of yate is probably the strongest in the world. The tree grows to a maximum height of 100 feet and has sometimes a diameter of two and a half or even three feet.

How to Be Happy.

The record of happiness in every life is to be doing what you feel you can do best, and to have your own inglenook. To do what you can do best includes the entire gamut, from housekeeper to social queen, though I should like to turn the gamut upside down by putting the homemaker at the top instead of the bottom of the scale. Your own inglenook you must have, married or single, if you would take into your life all the happiness it offers, and give out of your life all the happiness it owes the community.—London Pall Mall Gazette.

Took Novel to Read in Church.

The pastor of a prominent Brooklyn church got the surprise of his life on a recent Sunday. He was about to begin his sermon when a book fell out of the choir loft, narrowly missing him. He picked it up, laid it on the reading desk, but had time to observe that it was a popular novel. A young woman member of the choir had taken the book to church to read during the sermon. She might have been confused over the mishap, but her companions in the choir aver that the incident amused her.

A Clever Woman.

She—"Mary Graham is certainly a very clever woman, yet she has little to say." He—"That's where her cleverness comes in. She leads a man to believe that she thinks he is worth listening to."

MADE FIRE ON FROZEN LAKE.

Phenomenon Not So Great When Explanation Was Made.

"Cold? Then we'll set fire to some ice and warm ourselves."

The speaker made, with the heel of his skate, a hole in the ice. He applied a match to the hole. The ice blazed up instantly with a hot, bright flame.

"Oh, how good it feels," said the young girl. She removed her gloves to warm her slim hands the better. "But isn't it rather odd," she said, "to warm one's hands at a fire of ice?"

"You are a stranger to Atchison," said the young Kansan, "or you wouldn't find it odd. We are used to it here. Always, when we skate on Lake Doniphan, we set the ice on fire if we are cold."

She watched her own little fire.

"What is the explanation of this miracle?" she said.

"A very simple one," said the young man. "This lake is full of natural gas. When it freezes over, gas in the form of bubbles impregnates the ice. You have only to burst open a bubble and put a match to it, and up shoots a magical flame."

"Wonderful!" said the young girl. "What a fine thing it would be if the ice of all skating ponds could be impregnated in this way with gas. Then skaters would never need be cold."

ARTICLE THAT HAD TWO USES

Mourning Hatbands Not Always a Sign of Bereavement.

Thaddeus Stevens Houlgate, the western insurance expert, was relating in Chicago some oddities of insurance.

"And then," said Mr. Houlgate, "there was that case of the general store man in Duluth. This man's store burned down, and, because his stock was so heavy, the company disputed his claim.

"I remember one item in his stock list—17,500 mourning hatbands.

"When I came to this item, I thumped it with my pencil, and said to the storekeeper severely:

"'Look here, this is unreasonable. Why should you have had 17,500 mourning hatbands in stock? What possibility was there that death would create in a single small shop like yours a demand for 17,500 mourning hatbands?'

"The storekeeper smiled at me in a condescending way and replied:

"'I didn't keep those hatbands for men who grieved for the death of relatives or friends, but for men who went into mourning for the grease on their hats.'"

Cost of Weather Bureau.

Uncle Sam's weather bureau is bigger than anyone else's, and he spends more money on it than do all the governments of Europe combined for their weather bureaus. It has a staff of many hundred skilled experts and observers who in all parts of the country are constantly on watch to see what the heavens will bring forth. Some insurance men are said to have computed that the people of the United States are spared from losses amounting to $50,000,000 every year because of their weather service.

The sun holds the key to the weather. The weather bureau plans to search for this key and unlock the mysteries of cyclones, of droughts, of torrential floods and thus foretell years of plenty and of famine. Congress recently gave the weather bureau a sum of money to found a meteorological solar observatory. The site chosen was an unnamed peak in the Blue Ridge, 65 miles from Washington. The weather chief has christened the peak Mount Weather.

Dog Commits Suicide.

Rex, the big Newfoundland dog whose presence in the pool rooms was always hailed as a harbinger of good luck by those playing the races, deliberately committed suicide recently by drowning himself.

For several weeks the dog had been ill and was under the care of Jack Barton, to whom the dog was much attached.

Rex accompanied a number of men to the wharf, and while they stood by he jumped into the water and made no effort to keep above the surface. Barton, fearing for the dog's life, jumped in and began to haul him to safety, but Rex shook him off, and swimming out of the man's reach, stuck his head under the water and soon sank. The body floated ashore a few days later.—San Francisco Call.

Real American Aristocracy.

"It was through the Declaration of Independence that we Americans acknowledged the eternal inequality of man. For, by it we abolished a cut-and-dried aristocracy. We had seen little men artificially held up in high places, and great men artificially held down in low places, and our own justice-loving hearts abhorred this violence to human nature. 'Let the best man win.' That is America's word. That is true democracy. And tru edemocracy and true aristocracy are one and the same thing.—Owen Wister in "The Virginian."

Portrait of Archbishop Finished.

Alphonse Muchs, a New York artist, has just finished a life-size portrait of Archbishop Farley for the archbishop's house in Madison avenue. The archbishop is depicted seated in a Dagobert chair, which bears the symbols of the four evangelists, and wearing the ermine collar and purple robes with the long train of the Capa Magna of ceremonial occasions.

NOT MEANT FOR THE INSIDE.

Indian Departed from Tribal Custom in the Use of Paint.

An Oklahoma Indian is said to have made a painful mistake the other day. In his haste to quench a maddening thirst he drank a quart or two of paint, supposing it to be his favorite spiritous liquor.

The Indian of the aboriginal days frequently used paint, but never on the inside. He had a preference for decorations that could be seen. He took no delight in chromatic diaphragm. He cared nothing for a sky blue inner consciousness.

Perhaps it was owing to these facts that the Indian who drank the paint almost immediately conveyed the impression that it did not harmonize with his ordinary tone color. He conveyed this impression by seeking the tribal medicine man. He sought him with large horizontal leaps, emitting highly colored yelps of anguish at every stride, and blowing rainbow colored paint bubbles at each respiration.

No doubt the medicine man was surprised at the sufferer's appearance. He was still more surprised when he saw the patient's tongue. There was nothing like that tongue in the entire medical library. And when he went deeper and caught sight of the patient's throat he felt like burning his diploma and whooping to the woods.

Nevertheless, he rallied and grappled with the case and separated the man from the landscape and removed the fresh paint sign, and presently the Indian was in a condition to return to his wigwam, a sadder and wiser and much less decorative man.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

LAST DROP IN MISERY'S CUP.

Ungallant Remark of Youth Completed Woman's Day of Woe.

The woman who had shopped until the closing gong had sounded stood at the transfer station and awaited the suburban trolley.

"What," she wearily asked herself, "does it profit a woman if she does gain the elusive bargain and loses every trace of physical freshness?"

Presently the car came along. It had the usual fringe of humanity strung along the running-board, and the woman resignedly prepared to stand between the seats when a grimy youth rose and tendered her his place. Protesting faintly, she sank into it guiltily and registered a vow never to shop overtime again.

In due time several seats were vacated, and the woman looked hopefully toward her knight.

"Jimmy," a friend of his was saying, "there's room inside now. Why don't you sit down?"

And the last drop of discomfort was added to the woman's cup of humiliation when Jimmy responded:

"Aw, what's the use? No sooner I'll get me legs stretched when another old hen will get on and I'll have to hop up!"

Cooked in a Steam of Wine.

"French cooking—cooking regarded as a fine art—seems to me a waste of talent," said a millionaire. "Take, for instance, Joseph, the chef whom one of the Vanderbilts brought over at a salary of $15,000, and who left America in disgust, declaring that, in culinary matters, we were ignorant and uncouth barbarians.

"Joseph's best dish is poularde a la Madrayax. He takes a very tender pullet, wraps it in the belly of a young lamb and swathes the parcel in bacon. He lets the pullet absorb the flavor of the lamb and the bacon, and then he cooks it—cooks it how? In the steam arising from a pint of old Scotch whisky blended with a quart of fine port.

"There," ended the millionaire, "you have the fine art of cooking. Isn't it a waste of time?"

His Lucky Afterthought.

The poet had written the line:

"O, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?"

Then he was about to enumerate a few of the thousands of reasons why human beings should indulge a proper feeling of pride over their history, their marvelous achievements, and the sublime deeds of the great and good men who, in all ages of the world have served as beacon lights for their fellow men, when a thought struck him.

"Shucks!" he said. "That sort of thing won't go. If you want to hit the popular taste you've got to do the lugubrious. I'll bore for the reader's tears!"

So he tramped up a lot of reasons why people should be sad, mournful, and humble, and his poem lived.

The Contented Tramp.

Steinlen, the Parisian humorist, has given us a picture of an ancient tramp, with hair and beard as white as wool, who sits in a patch of unoccupied land on the outskirts of the city at the end of a long suburban thoroughfare, a street that was once a road, perhaps. Content, if not happiness, is the old tramp's present share in the world's temporalities. "Un sou de pain," he soliloquizes, "et deux sous de tabac, la terre peut continuer a tourner."—London Outlook.

Great Display to Be Held.

A great pageant of "Darkness and Light," a series of descriptive representations of famous scenes in the history of missions, is being arranged for the exhibition of the London Missionary society, to be held in London next June, an affair for which 10,000 helpers have enlisted.

LOST SOUTH SEAS CONTINENT.

Australian Professor Seeks Solution of Ancient Mystery.

The lost continent of the South seas is a pet study of Dr. Woolnough of Sydney university. The main difficulty in the way of reconciling existing conditions with an original great area was that depths of 2,000 fathoms occurred between the islands. It was necessary to look for land evidence of faulting or breaking to account for the submarine depths. The granite area in Viti Leva was found to be from 400 to 600 square miles in extent, underlying the modern volcanic rocks. A range of granite mountains with precipitous cliffs on each side gave evidence of heavy faults creating chasms of great depth. He found the rivers forming a marked rectangular network, an upraised coral reef 200 feet above the sea level, conglomerate rock showing sea shells at a height of 800 feet above the sea, and certain tills and tufts which had formerly been submarine and were now at a height of 4,500 feet. All these indicated a tremendous uplift sufficient to cause greater faulting in the original continent. The rivers of Fiji were of comparatively youthful development, and even at present passing through the canon cycle.

REPARTEE OF THE JUVENILES.

Washington Children in Smart Exchange of Compliments.

Evidently there was a severance of friendly relations between two of a group of small girls who a minute before had been romping about the sward in Dupont Circle, for just as the writer approached the daughter of a southern legislator called out to her small companion from the west: "The girl with the red dress on is a cowgirl! The girl with the red dress on is a cowgirl!" Again and again the taunting challenge was hurled at the red-frocked western maid, who finally, with one supreme effort at self-control, retorted: "Oh, very well, then, the girl who is a-hollerin' is a sheep! I'd sooner be a cowgirl than a sheep, 'cause the president is fond of cowboys and cowgirls, but not even a secretary likes a sheep!"

He Knew How.

"How," asked the young man who had just bought the village paper and desired to win prominence as an editor, "can I get the public to become interested in my journal? I know the principal thing is to make a good paper, but if nobody takes it how will anyone find out that it is good? Something must be done to attract attention—to cause the people to understand that we are on earth." "That'll be easy," said the traveling printer, who had stopped over to assist in putting the patient on its feet. "Just print an item saying that a certain preacher in this town will get into trouble if he doesn't cease paying attentions to a certain married member of his flock and cease quick. I'll bet the paper containing that item won't be off the press 40 minutes before there's a copy of it in every house in this town!"—Chicago Record-Herald.

Fat Men and Jobs.

Employment agents say it's about as hard to get work for a fat man as for a gray-haired one. According to their statements, employers of labor hold that a fat man is indolent. They assert that the hustler, the fast, nervous, energetic worker, is sinewy rather than fat, and does 30 per cent more work than the soft, fat fellow. "It is not uncommon for us to advise fat applicants to diet," said an employment agent, "and reduce their weight before beginning to canvass for a job." So far as recorded, Dr. Osler has expressed no opinion on the expediency of chloroforming men who are running to adipose tissue.

All Were Prime Ministers.

An eminent surgeon was once sent for by Cardinal Du Bois, prime minister of France, to perform a very serious operation upon him. The cardinal said to him: "You must not expect to treat me in the same rough manner as you treat your poor miserable wretches at your Hotel Dieu." "My lord," replied the surgeon, with great dignity, "every one of those miserable wretches, as your eminence is pleased to call them, is a prime minister in my eyes."—Success Magazine.

Worse and Worse.

A convict in a German prison had been extremely refractory. One means and another had been tried, but nothing could break his spirit. One morning the governor said to the warder: "I say, Huber, the scoundrel is behaving worse than ever. Put him on bread and water." "But he is already doing two fast days, sir." "Then give him a cookery book to read. We must break his spirit somehow."—Illustrated Bits.

Simple and Logical.

A teacher observed what he thought a lack of patriotic enthusiasm in one of the boys under his instruction. "Now, Tommy," said he, "tell us what you think if you saw the stars and stripes waving over the field of battle." "I should think," was the logical reply of Thomas, "that the wind was blowing."

Information.

The visitor to New York was in search of information. "Do you know anything about the copper corner?" he asked his host. "No," was the reply, "but I know the corner copper."

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