

HUMOR THAT SPICES THE ROUTINE WORK OF THE OFFICIALS.

Some of the Quaint and Original Applications For Payments That Have Been Handed In to the Representatives of Uncle Sam.

If he dared to do so the commissioner of pensions at Washington could compile a delightful volume, putting therein the strange applications for pensions that come to his office. Some of these letters belong to the "too good to keep" class, and they find their way out into the world, where they add a good deal to the hilarity of nations. Some applicants for pensions manifest the most childlike ignorance regarding the method of procedure necessary when applying for a pension. They seem to think that all they have to do is to send an application to the pension office and Uncle Sam will forward a check by return mail.

Soon after the close of the civil war there came to the pension office in Washington the following unique and poetical application for a pension that went the rounds of the newspapers years ago:

to Commissioner of Pensions Washington. these many years I've tried in vain an honest pention to obtain For wound received in Sixty one at first Battle of Bull Run one of ohioes sons so brave who went to the front the union to save And whilst Engaged in above said fight a rebel Shell took half my sight Not content by taking an Eve Not content by taking an Eye this treacherous shell in Passing by took my Eye Brow Clear of the bone and Left me as unconscious as a stone burning a blister of Crystal Clear from the law bone to the Ear but thanks to god my life was spared Cheek and Eye brow but Slitely Scared and one Eye was left to me for to wright and read Poetre I hope that with that Eye to see the day when unkel Sam his Cripples will Pay.

Much more recent is the letter sent to the commissioner of pensions by an applicant who had contracted blood poisoning in the following remarkable manner:

I got blood poison by beinge hit with a hens eg wen I cam back from the frunt. The eg was not good wen you send my pension i want the Deed made sos my wife can't get none of it. She throde the eg. She war a rebbel.

Equally appealing and remarkable was another letter sent to the pension office in which the applicant set forth his claims to a pension in this wise:

The way I got my War ingery was a ketchin of a hog. The Hog war wanted by our captain for forege. We was chasin the hog and she crawled threw a hole an I thot I were about the size of the hog and tried to crawl threw, but i stuck an in termine to wight out I threde the roles in tryin to wiggle out I throde the rales off an one it hit me on my hed and nocked me senseless. I do not think the hog had nothin to do with my line of duty, for I did not ketch the hog. Wich she never was caut, so pleze send along my pension.

nsioner had evidently

THE TOY INVENTOR.

Is Hardest Task Is to Catch the Fancy of the Public,

The small inventor is an important factor in the mechanical toy business, and he earns all of the living he gets in thinking up devices. He is most concerned with the small mechanical toys, and, in addition to the prime requisite of putting forth something novel, he must get something which costs as little as possible and which catches the fancy of the multitude. This last point

is one which is most difficult to cover. No student of the subject has ever yet been able to discover or deduce the cycle in which the public taste moves, and it is still hit or miss as to whether a figure which walks on its hands, an airship with wings or an acrobat who works by gravity will be the best seller. Then, when the invention has been achieved, the inventor has still the problem of finding the maker who will buy it and pay a fair price. The inventor and maker are in much the same position as the writer and publisher; both go through the same mental turmoil as to the timeliness of the output and both take the same risks.

The inventor who has been in the business long learns at last the best places at which to offer his wares and has more or less of an idea of what they ought to bring him, and once he has acquired this knowledge his entire energy is devoted to keeping up with the demand for newness. Something absolutely different from anything else previously offered is in general better than an improvement of an old idea, and that is why in mechanical toys the same device is seldom seen two seasons in succession.-Philadelphia Record.

A MUSICAL LEGEND.

The Chinese Story of the Eight Primitive Hidden Sounds

The Chinese have some extraordinary superstitions relating to music. According to their queer notions, the Creator of the universe hid eight sounds in the earth for the express purpose of compelling man to find them out. On the same principle, it is presumed, Jupiter, according to Virgil, hides fire in flint and honey in trees in order to whet the ardor of man's industry to persevere in his efforts to rediscover the hidden treasures

According to the Celestial idea, the eight primitive sounds are hidden in stones, silks, woods of various kinds, the bamboo plant, pumpkins, in the skins of animals, in certain earths and in the air itself. Any one who has ever had the pleasure (?) of seeing and listening to a Chinese orchestra will remember that their musical instruments were made of all these materials except the last and that the combined efforts of the other seven seemed better calculated to drive the ethereal sound away than to coax it from the air, which is really the object of all Chinese musical efforts. When the bands play, the naive credulity of the people, both old and young, hears in the thuds of the pipes the tones of the eternal sounds of nature that were originally deposited in the various animate and inanimate objects by the all wise Father .--

THREE SPECIES OF MOOSE.

They Are the European, the Easter American and the Alaskan,

There are supposed to be three species of moose-the European moos elk, found in northern Europe and adjoining parts of Asia; the common moose of eastern America, distinguished chiefly from its European congener by the skull being narrowed across the maxillaries, also by its greater size and darker color, and the Alaskan moose, separated by its giant stature, its nartow occiput, broad palate and heavy mandibles.

Expressed in external features as illustrated in the adult male (always best for differentiating species):

The Scandinavian elk is a small gray animal with little palm and many spikes on its antlers.

The Canadian is a large black animal with much palmation and always a separate brow bunch of spikes. I have seen hundreds of Canadian moose antlers, but never a pair that did not show a well developed separate group of prongs in front of each brow. I have seen a score or more of Swedish elk, but never saw one that did have a separate brow group of prongs, though I confess I have seen figures of such.

The Alaskan is a richly colored black. gray and brown giant, not only the largest deer alive today, but believed to be the largest that ever did exist, since no fossil has been found to equal it in bulk. Its antlers differ chiefly in size from those of the Canadian moose, but Madison Grant claims that they are also more complex and have in the brow antlers a second palmation which is set at right angles to that of the main palmation. In these peculiarities he finds "a startling resemblance is shown to the extinct cervalces, a moose-like deer of pleistocene times, probably ancestral to the genus alces. "If this resemblance indicates any

close relationship, we have in the Alaskan moose a survivor of the archaic type from which the true moose and Scandinavian elk have somewhat degenerated."-Ernest Thompson Seton in Scribner's.

OUR LANGUAGE UNIFORM.

While Great Britain, For Instance, Has Many Different Languages.

It has been observed that the language spoken in the United States is remarkably uniform. True, there are many dialects, but Great Britain, less in area than any one of half a dozen of our states, contains such very different languages as English, Welsh and the Gaelic of the Scottish highlands, to say nothing of the provincial dialects of Cornwall and Yorkshire and the unique speech of the London cockney, while in this country, with its vast expanse of territory, its settlement by Spanish, French, Dutch and Swedish colonists and its millions of immigrants drawn from nearly every country, large and small, all over the world, there is far greater uniformity of speech than in any other land of equal area and

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made a serious blunder by taking unto himself a wife in his old age, for love of gain seems to have been the motive of the woman who married him if the following letter stated the facts Exchange. in the case:

Dear Mister Government, Pleze to fix up my penshun papers so as my wife cant draw my twelve dolers a munt when I am ded. she say she marryed me for lov to be a ole mans Darling but now I an to be a one mains barning out now i no it yeas for to sit my pension on her-aelf by being my whower so pleze let my pension end with me but pleze doant let for to her that you got this from me or I would have a hot time of it and times is hotter now than I can stand. So when I send word that I can state. So what I send word that I am no moar then send her this if you want to but not until the penshun is shut off whitch it is her just desserts for marryin for money an in a Mersheenary spirrut.

One day there came to the pension office a very old and subdued looking man who could scarcely totter along with the help of two canes. By his side was a very robust and perfectly self reliant young woman of perhaps thirty years of age. When some one went forward to ask what was wanted the young woman said:

"Well, I'll just tell you. This is my husband, and we ain't getting enough pension-that's what we ain't. We're getting only \$10 a month, and we know a man that wasn't in the war half as long as my husband was and didn't get a shot in him and he gits his \$12 a month, and we want our pension raised to that figger or more."

One applicant was willing to give the most palpable proof of the genuineness of his injuries, for he wrote as follows: If you don't think I was shott in the you or any one else can lay their finger on the builet imbedded in my back which panes me when I stoop or lay on it and which it has brought on permnent dis-ability so I can't work like I used to could I guess if you would speak to Pres-ident Maykinley and tell him about the builet he would say to send on the pen-tion and any medikel doctor would say the same. A doctor here will go his af-fydavit that he has layed his fingers on the builet wich I am proud of as scars of War where I fit and bled for my country which it is America and Union forever. If you don't think I was shott in the -New York Tribune.

Not a Fair Division.

"If a house contains six bureaus, eleven armoires, seven chiffoniers and fifty-three miscellaneous drawers, how many of 'em is the husband entitled to and how many is the wife'" asked the young clubman.

The second clubman laughed harshly. "You are young and have much to learn," he said. "You may as well understand first as last that if there were in your house a mile of bureaus, three acres of armoires and 17,000 drawers all these would still be stuffed full of veils, ruching, hatpins, ribbons, sllk stockings, petticoats, powder puffs and safety pins, and the best course for you to pursue would be to wrap your own things-your shirts, underclothes and so on-in a newspaper and keep them under the bed."--New York Press.

What "Hamir" Meant.

Though the Scottish guard of France had long lost its natural character, it jealously retained until the crash of 1789 all its curious old privileges, which, though they led to constant wrangles with other regiments, had The railroad has penetrated every cor-been duly allowed by Louis XIV. He ner of the land and made us a nation was actually obliged to intervene at of travelers. Countless human shuthis own wedding to compose a dispute thes thus are thrown daily across the as to the precedence of the Scots guards and the Cent gentilshommes. "Proud as a Scotchman" was an old proverb in France, and their successors in the bodyguard did their best to justify it. But the most curious survival. long after a word of Scotch had been heard in the corps, was the practice of answering "hamir" (a corruption for "I am here") when the roll was called, which was religiously maintained, at all events, down to the revolution .-Macmillan's Magazine.

Distances In Venezuela.

In traveling in Venezuela it is not enough to ask how far distant a place is, but also how far up or down-in other words, what its altitude is, and, no less important, what hills and valleys have to be crossed. Thus it is not only necessary to know that Caracas is six miles distant in a straight line from La Guayra, its seaport, but that it lies at an elevation of nearly half a mile above sea level and that to reach it one has to cross a mountain wall rising far above the clouds. This, to the experienced traveler, means that he must prepare for an entirely different climate .--George M. L. Brown in St. Nicholas.

A Touching Lament.

Addressing a political gathering the other day, a speaker gave his hearers a touch of the pathetic. "I miss," he said, brushing away a not unmanly tear-"I miss many of the old faces I used to shake hands with." - London Globe

Unfamiliar With the Beast. "Yes," remarked the professor, "I rather pride myself on the discovery of another hypothesis."

"Indeed," replied Mrs. Cumrox, a little doubtfully. "I had an idea they were quite extinct."-Washington Star.

Very Different Trials.

Tess-Aren't you going to choir rehearsal tonigut? Jess-No. Tess-You'd better. We're going to give that new hymn a trial. Jess-Can't. I am going to give a new him a trial my- Home Companion.

Harrah, or huzzah, is the oldest and most common exclamation in all languages.

public schools have made us a nation of readers, and the press has supplied books and papers without limit. Press associations have done their part toward giving a uniform and fairly good tone to the newspaper language of the day. The telegraph, the telephone and cheap postage have brought distant parts of the country into quick and easy communication, and so have aided in teaching a common language. land in every direction, carrying with them the threads of thought and speech and doing their part to make one pattern of the whole. No doubt our maps, which still present so many different kinds of names, will in time lose the strangeness and the "foreign air" that are so noticeable now .-- H. M. Kingery in St. Nicholas. The Turkey.

The causes can be readily seen. The

Turkeys are great wanderers. mother will often lead her brood three or four miles away from home. There they take up their habitation in the unfrequented woods. The instinct for sol itude and wild life is very strong after centuries of domestication. But a kindred instinct impels the mother to bring her grown family back in the fall to where she started out with them in the spring. This is not done, however, till the leaves are all off the trees, the beechnuts have fallen and have been eaten and the cold winds and some times the snow have made the sylvan retreats inhospitable.

Mecca.

Mecca is a large city and a principal one of the east. The temple of Mecca, to which so many pilgrims annually travel, forms a spacious square about a quarter of a mile in each direction, with a quadruple row of columns. A number of steps lead down to Mohammed's house, and within it is the black stone said to have been brought by the angel Gabriel for its foundation.

Sympathy.

It will afford sweeter happiness in the hour of death to have wiped one tear from the cheek of sorrow than to have ruled an empire, to have conquered millions or to have enslaved the world .-- Woman's Life

The Social Maze.

He-Don't you find this going out so much rather fatiguing? She-Yes, and so confusing. By the way, is the Plunketts' dance tomorrow night or is this it that we're at now?-Woman's

Those who attain any excellence commonly spend life in one common pursuit, for excellence is not gained upon easier terms .-- Johnson. 51-1

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