

A Bird's Barbed Wire Fences.
There may be seen along the roadsides in Central America a brown wren about the size of a canary which builds a nest out of all proportion to its apparent needs. It selects a small tree with horizontal branches growing close together. Across two of the branches it lays sticks fastened together with tough fiber until a platform about six feet long by two feet wide has been constructed. On the end of this platform nearest the tree trunk it then builds a huge, dome shaped nest a foot or so high with thick sides of interwoven thorns. A covered passageway is then made from the rest to the end of the platform in as crooked a manner as possible. Across the outer end as well as at short intervals along the inside of this tunnel are placed cunning little fences of thorns with just space enough for the owners to pass through. On going out this opening is closed by the owner by placing thorns across the gateway, and thus the safety of the eggs or young is assured.—Harper's Weekly.

Finding Mark Twain by Faith.
One evening a few years ago Brander Matthews and Francis Wilson were dining together at the Players club of New York, when the former made the suggestion that they write a letter to Mark Twain. "But," objected Mr. Wilson, "we don't know where he is," for it was at a time when Mr. Clemens was away traveling somewhere. "Oh," said Professor Matthews, "that does not make any difference. It is sure to find him. I think he is some place in Europe, so we had better put on a five cent stamp." So the two sat down and composed a letter, which they addressed to "Mark Twain, God Knows Where."

Within three weeks they received a reply from Mr. Clemens which said briefly, "He did." The letter had been sent by the New York postoffice to Harper & Bros., thence to Chatto & Windus of London, thence to a bank in Vienna and from the bank to the small town in Austria in which Mark Twain happened to be staying.—Bookman.

He Got Badly Left.

Experiences of a correspondent of a Nuremberg paper go to show that the German adulteration laws are drastic. He says: "A French friend sent me four bottles of burgundy. After paying the duty I was informed that all wine coming from abroad has to be analyzed. As my consignment included two kinds of wine a double analysis was necessary, and for this I paid a fee of \$9.24. As the end of a week I received first a certificate attesting that my wine was pure and, second, the case in which the bottles were sent. I was also informed that two bottles had been required to form the basis of each analysis and that consequently there was no wine left. I am naturally grateful to the state for the precautions taken to guard my health, but I cannot help thinking I am entitled to the empty bottles. Surely these were not also analyzed."

Got His Receipt.

He had run up a small bill at the village store and went to pay it, first asking for a receipt. The proprietor grumbled and complained it was too small to give a receipt for. It would do just as well, he said, to cross the account off and so drew a diagonal pencil line across the book. "Does that settle it?" asked the customer.

"Sure."

"An' ye'll niver be askin' for it ag'in?"

"Certainly not."

"Faith, thin," said the other coolly, "an' I'll kape me money in me pocket."

"But I can rub that out," said the storekeeper.

"I thought so," said the customer dryly. "Maybe ye'll be givin' me a receipt now. Here's yer money."

One of the Natives.

A gentleman was once showing a countryman round a zoo, when they came to a cage containing a kangaroo.

"What is that?" inquired the countryman.

"Oh," replied the gentleman, "that is a native of Australia!"

Immediately the countryman threw up his arms in horror, exclaiming, "Goodness gracious, my sister married one of them!"—London Telegraph.

Training For a Crash.

"That man is always anxious to get into the spot light," said the observant citizen.

"Yes," replied Senator Sorghum, "but he doesn't discriminate. One of these days he's going to stand in front of a locomotive headlight and not realize his mistake till he is run over."—Washington Star.

Labouchere's Sarcasm.

Of Gladstone Henry Labouchere once remarked, "I do not object to Mr. Gladstone occasionally having an ace up his sleeve, but I do wish he would not always say that Providence put it there."

Hedging.

Clergyman—Will you take this woman until death? Prospective Bridegroom—Isn't there any minimum sentence?—New York Press.

The obvious man plies in plenty. Like Tantalus up to the chin in water and yet thirsty.—T. Adams.

The Real Need.

In negro households, especially in communities where negroes form a large portion of the population, it frequently happens that the woman is the head of the family, being not only the breadwinner, but also the disciplinarian, and in that capacity on occasions she regards her putative lord and master as subject to her will. This at least was the assumption of the colored woman who was a party to a little scene enacted in the office of a justice of the peace.

A man had been arrested on the charge of beating and cruelly mistreating his wife. After hearing the charge against the prisoner the justice turned to the first witness.

"Madam," he said, "if this man were your husband and had given you a beating would you call in the police?"

The woman addressed, a veritable amazon in size and aggressiveness, turned a smiling countenance toward the justice and answered:

"No, judge. If he was mah husband an' he treated me lak he did 'is wife Ah wouldn't call no p'liceman. No, sah; Ah'd call de undertaker."—Youth's Companion.

Flexibility of English.

English is not only, as Richard Jefferies asserted, the most expressive and flexible of tongues, but also, in Swinburne's opinion, the most musical. He proclaimed the lines—

Musie that gentler on the spirit lies Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes to be unmatched for melody in any language. And few would venture to contradict such a master of music and tongue. But surely French ranks next on the roll of languages. For clearness of diction it is unrivaled, and, thanks to its abundance of vowels close on one for every consonant it flows rhythmically from the tongue.

Against Westley's dictum, that French is to German as a bagpipe to an organ, may be cited a saying of another famous divine, Dr. Dollinger, "L'Allemand n'est pas une langue, mais ceux qui parlent ce jargon se comprennent entre eux" (German is not a language, but those who speak this jargon understand one another).—London Chronicle.

Facts About Giants.

That very few of the giants who have ever lived have been healthy or well formed recent researches prove beyond a doubt. All we know about Gollath is that he was very tall, but in the second book of Kings we read about another giant, who had more fingers than an ordinary human being, and, according to modern scientists, this is invariably a token of degeneracy. Marcel Donnal saw at Milan a giant who was so tall that his body filled two beds at night, but whose legs were so weak that he could hardly stand upright. William Evans, the gigantic porter of Charles I., had little strength, and Cromwell's porter, another giant, ended his days in a lunatic asylum. Finally, O'Brien, the Irish giant, has been described as "an enormous sick child who grew up too fast."

Another Fake.

"Did you see the lightning calculator" in the sideshow?" asked the old farmer in the wide straw hat.

"By heck, yes," drawled the other ruralite, "and he was the biggest fake in the show."

"How was that?"

"Why, thar was a thunderstorm going on while I was in the tent and when I asked him if he could calculate where the lightning was going to strike he just gave me the laugh."—Chicago News.

An Ominous Symptom.

"A good wife is heaven's greatest gift to man and the rarest gem the earth holds," remarked Mr. Jarphy the other morning. "She is his joy, his inspiration and his very soul. Through her he learns to reach the pure and true, and her loving hands lead him softly over the rough places. She is—"

"Jeremiah," said Mrs. Jarphy solemnly—"Jeremiah, what wickedness have you been up to now?"

Doubled in Value.

A Missourian who bought some Texas land and wanted to unload it told a prospective buyer that it had "doubled in value since I bought it."

"But," said the other, "you offered to sell it to me for the same price you paid. How has it doubled in value?"

"Well, you see, I gave twice as much as it was worth."—Kansas City Star.

Exchange of Compliments.

Maud—My mamma says she can remember when your mamma kept a grocer's shop.

Marie—My mamma says she can remember how much your mamma owes her for groceries.

The Danger.

"It is always dangerous to try to get something for nothing," remarked the wise guy.

"Yes, you might get what you deserve," added the simple mug.—Philadelphia Record.

Life.

Life is a burden imposed upon you by God. What you make of it, that it will be to you. Take it up bravely, bear it joyfully, lay it down triumphantly.—Gail Hamilton.

The Obliging Proprietor.

"Won't you please give me an order?" pleaded the persistent drummer.

"Certainly," replied the crusty proprietor. "Get out!"—Lippincott's.

Heaven often smites in mercy, even when the blow is severest.—Baillie.

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