

**CAUGHT BY A POSTAL TRAP.**

The "Two-penny Detective" is Often Employed in England. Detectives, lawyers' clerks and others often experience great difficulty in obtaining an undoubted specimen of a certain person's signature. In one case recourse had to be had to a marriage register. In another the only signature procurable was on the fly leaf of a book which the suspect had presented to a relative, and only two or three years ago a testimonial to a sea captain was brought into court, because among the signatures to it was one for which the police had long hunted in vain.

One of the most common expedients resorted to for overcoming this difficulty is employing the "two-penny detective"—that is, sending a registered letter to the person whose signature is wanted. And this is frequently successful. Thinking the postal packet contains money or valuables, the addressee unsuspectingly signs the receipt only to discover that inside the envelope there is nothing but a "faked" letter.

This trap once caught an anonymous letter writer—a woman—who, on being interrogated shortly before, had declared that she could not write, and whose friends believed her to be illiterate. It was, in fact, mainly instrumental in getting her six months' imprisonment.

The receipt for a registered letter, it should be carefully noted, is not given up to anybody, but can be obtained only in certain cases to further the ends of justice.—London Tit-Bits.

**THE AUTOMOBILE BACK.**

Medical Advice Showing How It May Be Avoided.

The automobile is coming into such general use that any advice to its users is of general interest.

A great many people in cranking their cars strain their back or "drop a stitch," and if this is once started it usually happens more easily another time. Many people, after riding for any length of time, are tired in the back when they get out. If this is kept up the pain or weakness increases until many times the person is laid up with what is called lumbago or rheumatism. Both of these conditions are commonly due to the wrong way of using the muscles of the back.

In cranking keep the back straight, like "the oarsman's back." Bend from the hips, snapping the crank over by straightening at knee and hip, but do not bend at the middle or the waist line.

In sitting in the car keep the back straight also. Get the hips well back against the back of the seat, and, if the upholstery makes the shoulders droop put a robe, a cushion, a book or anything at the hollow of the back to prevent this. Do not slouch in the seat and do not sit on the lower part of the spine. This reverses the normal curves of the spine and must mean strain, with at times much crippling.—Journal of American Medical Association.

**His Hunt For Home.**

On one occasion De Pachmann, the famous pianist, with his nervous and irritable temperament, was summoned to appear before Queen Alexandra at Buckingham palace. He obstinately refused to go. His friends labored with him for hours and at last persuaded him not to commit an impertinence which would never be forgiven by the English people.

Finally he was dispatched in a cab. The night wore on to morning, and the frantic wife of the pianist and his friends could learn nothing of what had become of him. At last a forlorn looking cab drove up to the house, and De Pachmann dismounted. On leaving the palace he had forgotten where he lived and could only tell the cabman that it was in a square with a church in it. So all night long he had been engaged in making a round of the innumerable squares of London.

**A Businesslike Suitor.**

"No-o, he isn't the sort of husband I should have chosen for my daughter, but I think perhaps he'll get along in the world all right."  
"What way does he differ from the man you would have chosen?"  
"When he proposed to my daughter and she had told him to see me he sent me a note telling me where his office is and what his office hours are and asking me to drop around and see him when convenient."—Houston Post.

**Soda and Water.**

For sheer simplicity of phrase and conception few have surpassed that delightful old lady who, with a shrewd twinkle in her eye, inquired whether "soda water" should be written as two separate words or if there should be a siphon between them.

**Danger Not Imminent.**  
"Better go home, Jimmy; your mother is looking for you."  
"Has she got the hairbrush with her?"  
"No."  
"Then I guess I'll play awhile longer."—Pittsburgh Post.

**Wanted Some Benefit.**

Bill (on the third story, to Tom, on the fifth)—I say, Tom, whenever convenient would youse mind dropping a hammer or a brick or anything hard on me head? O! just been takin' out some accident insurance!—Buffalo Courier.

**NEWSBOYS ON HORSEBACK.**

Carriers Make Quick Time to the Suburbs in Montevideo.

Most American newsboys think themselves well off if they own a good suit of clothes, but in the Uruguayan capital of Montevideo there are over fifty newsboys who own horses and peddle their papers on horseback.

Montevideo has 300,000 inhabitants, but it spreads over more territory than an American city of the same population: there are almost no tenement houses, and there are several large parks.

Like Americans, the Uruguayans want their evening paper as soon as possible after it comes from the press. The horseback newsboys supply this demand with astonishing rapidity. La Razon, one of the leading evening journals, is issued at 5 o'clock. About twenty minutes before that hour the newsboys, mostly young men from eighteen to twenty-five years of age, gather in the street in front of the newspaper office. When the papers are brought out the clerk hands a bundle to each, and away he starts at a full gallop. All the business in the center of the town is done by ordinary "foot newsboys"; the horsemen race away to their "beats" in the suburbs, shouting with all their might, "La Razon! La Razon!"

A customer who wishes to buy a paper steps to the sidewalk and holds out his arm. The horse knows the signal and pulls up so short that it is a wonder the rider is not catapulted over his head.

So efficient is this system of equestrian newsboys that a dweller in the outskirts of Montevideo gets his evening paper almost as soon as the man who lives in the very heart of the city.—Youth's Companion.

**ORIGIN OF THE TELEPHONE.**

It Sprung From Bell's Efforts to Teach the Deaf to Speak.

Professor Alexander Graham Bell is reported to have explained in a lecture how he came to invent the telephone as follows:

"My father invented a symbol by which deaf mutes could converse, and finally I invented an apparatus by which the vibrations of speech could be seen, and it turned out to be a telephone. It occurred to me to make a machine that would enable one to hear vibrations. I went to an aurist, and he advised me to take the human ear as my model. He supplied me with a dead man's ear, and with this ear I experimented, and upon applying the apparatus I found that the dead man's ear wrote down the vibrations.

"I arrived at the conclusion that if I could make iron vibrate on a dead man's ear I could make an instrument more delicate which would cause those vibrations to be heard and understood. I thought if I placed a delicate piece of steel over an electric magnet I could get a vibration, and thus the telephone was completed.

"The telephone arose from my attempts to teach the deaf to speak. It arose from my knowledge not of electricity, but as a teacher of the deaf. Had I been an electrician I would not have attempted it."

**"Belling the Cat."**

"Who will bell the cat?" is a curious old proverb, famous in parable and in history. The mice, says the parable, held a consultation how to secure themselves from the cat, and they resolved to hang a bell about the cat's neck to give warning when she approached, but after they had resolved on doing it they were as far off as ever, for who would do it?

Both parable and proverb have immortalized themselves in history. When the Scottish nobles met at Stirling in a body they proposed to take Spence, the obnoxious favorite of James II., and hang him and so get rid of him.

"Ah," said Lord Grey, "that's very well said, but who'll bell the cat?"  
"That will I," said the black Earl Angus. He undertook the task, accomplished it and was called "Archibald Bell the Cat" until his dying day.—Glasgow Times.

**His Foot In It.**

"Well," said the hostess, bidding her guest good night, "you have a long drive home, but it's a lovely evening."  
"Yes, isn't it a fine night?" answered the guest addressed.

"So you'll have a nice drive and won't wish you hadn't come to see me."  
"On the contrary, I assure you, I always think that the drive home is the very best part of affairs like this."

Another one of the things that might have been put differently if one had had time to think it over.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

**National Flowers.**

Teacher—Now, children, can you tell me what are the national flowers of England? Class—Roses. Teacher—And France? Class—Lilies. Teacher—And Spain? (Silence for a minute—then small voice at back of the schoolroom)—Bulrushes, ma'am.—Life.

**His Bluff Called.**

"My dear, you grow prettier every day."  
"And shabbier, John. Compliments are all very well, but I'd like to see a little ready cash occasionally."

**Maternal Solicitude.**

"Is she good to the children?"  
"Very. She lets them do everything their father doesn't want them to do."—Detroit Free Press.

The greatest man is he who chooses with the most invincible resolution.—Seneca.

**PÉRILOUS HUGGING.**

The Embrace of a Kangaroo Does Not Leave Pleasant Memories.

Notwithstanding the kangaroo's popular reputation for speed, he is easily overtaken in the bush by a good horse (they say) within half a mile. A capable kangaroo dog—a lean, swift beast, a cross between a greyhound and a mastiff, bred to course and kill—soon runs him to bay. Without dogs it is the custom to kill with a cudgel. This is often accomplished by the sportsman from the back of his horse. Dismounted, however, with the kangaroo waiting alertly for attack, it is sometimes a perilous venture to come to close quarters. A slip, and the sportsman finds himself at once in a desperate situation.

One of the lumberjacks with whom we rested in the shade of the blackbutt showed us the scars of an encounter. He had ridden the kangaroo down, said he, and, being in haste to get an end of the sport, he had caught the first likely stick his eye could discover and he had stepped quickly and confidently in, and he had struck hard and accurately. And the next instant, caught off the ground, he was struggling breast to breast in the hug of the creature, frightfully aware that he must escape before the deadly hind foot had devastated him.

"My club broke," he exclaimed, "and the boomer got me!"  
There were long scars on his back and shoulders, the which we were not very sorry to see, for we could not make out why any man should wish to kill a kangaroo for sport.—Norman Duncan in Harper's.

**THE HANGMAN'S ROBE.**

Dennis Didn't Like It, So He Sold It to "Old Cain."

James Berry was not so well paid for his services as his French confrere, M. Antoine Delbler, who draws \$500 a year, while his four assistants have a similar amount to divide between them. Sanson, the first executioner to wield the guillotine, was originally paid £1,520 a year, but when executioners were appointed in each department this was reduced to £800.

Before the revolution the legal tariff in France was 25 shillings for a beheading, 16s. 8d. for a burning at the stake, and the same amount for a hanging, with allowances for the erection of a scaffold or the provision of fuel.

One of James Berry's predecessors, for a brief period, donned a uniform when at work. In 1785, according to a contemporary chronicler, the sheriffs of London were "so pleased with the excellent mode in which Edward Dennis, their hangman, performed his duties that they presented him with a very elegant official robe—a kililaut, in fact, as eastern potentates term a similar garb of honor. Dennis found this inconvenient when at work on the scaffold and sold it to a well known character of those days, 'Old Cain,' who, having set up as a fortune teller, wanted a robe to complete the costume in which he received dupes."—London Chronicle.

**A Spoiled Scene.**

E. H. Sothern once found his wit fail him in time of need. It was in the fourth act of "The Lady of Lyons." Sothern played Claude Melnotte, and Virginia Harned was cast as Pauline. Beausant, the villain, was pursuing Pauline, and she cried loudly for help. Claude is supposed to dash to her rescue and catch the fainting Pauline in his arms. Sothern dashed on to the stage, but slipped and slid, sitting down near the footlights. Losing his presence of mind, he declaimed the line: "Look up, Pauline. There is no danger." As Virginia Harned was standing, this was, of course, an impossibility. By this time the audience was in an uproar, and when Arthur Lawrence, who played Beausant, scornfully said, "You are beneath me," the amusement of the audience knew no bounds.

**Marksmen and Rifles.**

No marksman ever holds a rifle "as solidly as a rock." He may think he does, but Arms and the Man insists that the best shot gives merely the "necessary impulse to the trigger, while the rifle is moving in the right direction"—that is, when he takes deliberate aim. The snapp shooter works apparently by a sort of instinct. Firing successfully at a running deer through the woods and over broken ground implies a knack like that of thrusting one's finger toward an indicated object.—New York Times.

**Natural Inference.**

A schoolteacher was reading a story to a class of very small folks and paused at the words "lay brother," to explain their meaning. "Does any one know what 'lay brother' means?" she asked.

For a moment a row of perplexed little faces looked up at her. Then one face brightened suddenly, and a small voice piped, "Yes, ma'am, it's a rooster!"—Youth's Companion.

**He Was Sensitive.**

Blobbs—You're pretty much stuck on Miss Gobbs, aren't you, old man? Hobbs—I was once, but after what she said to me last night I'm not going to pay any more attention to her. Blobbs—Gee! What did she say? Hobbs—"No!"—Cleveland Leader.

**Nothing Lacking.**

Manager—Your play seems to lack the human touch. Playwright—You are mistaken, sir. My hero borrows money from his friends in almost every act.—Boston Transcript.

**Why It Is Fiction.**

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