

DIDN'T MEAN IT LITERALLY

English Soldier's Expressed Wish That Death Might Come Was Followed by Hasty Revision.

Maj. Gen. John J. O'Ryan, who has just returned from France, has brought back a number of humorous stories of the battlefield. Here is one he tells about an English sentinel: "The Twenty-seventh division was in Flanders, where it rains almost continuously," began the general. "There were English troops billeted near by. One night, after a particularly hard rain, this English chap was on duty. When he thought no one was around he began to curse everything in general, the weather, the Germans and his own luck. "Oh, I say, this is blasted weather, don'tcha know. I wish I was out of this beastly mud," the English sentry muttered. A few minutes later he was cursing the rain which beat in his face. "Gawd, but I wish I was out of this beastly water," he mused again. Just then the Germans opened a heavy fire and made things uncomfortable for everyone. "Oh, Gawd, but this is beastly," said the sentry, raising his voice. "Oh, I do hate those blasted Germans. I wish I were dead." Simultaneously with his last words a big "Minnie" dropped almost at the sentry's feet. When he recovered he was lying in a hole covered with mud but uninjured. The sentry sat up, rubbed the mud from his eyes, and then gazing heavenward, said, "Oh, I say, Gawd, can't you take a blasted joke?"—New York Sun.

FAR BEYOND ALLOTTED SPAN

Instances of Remarkable Cases of Longevity Which Seem to Be Well Authenticated.

The death at Nenagh, County Tipperary, Ireland, of Mrs. Bourke, who was reported to have reached the age of 121 years, has led the London Daily Express to make a record of some of the other famous cases of longevity. In 1904 the regimental chaplain of the 18th Bengal Infantry was still conducting services in Calcutta at the age of 130. In 1908 Andrei Nikolaevitch Schmidt, a Russian, produced papers which showed that he was 136 years old, and had enlisted in the Beval battalion in 1796. The same year Hadji Raouf was 133, and was still earning a living as a saddler in Constantinople, but he was a juvenile compared with Quo-Ka-Num, an Indian chief who roamed the shores of Puget sound at the age of 160. He was generally conceded by Europeans more likely to be 200, and he claimed to remember the time when iron was unknown to his tribe. He was 2 feet 5 inches in height and did not weigh 50 pounds. A few years ago a Chinese woman reached Montreal. She had left her native land when 70, and had lived in Demerara for 100 years. In 1912 Europe had 7,000 living centenarians, of whom 3,888 were Bulgarians.

New Canadian Coat of Arms. The Canadian government is considering adopting a new coat of arms for the Dominion—one which shall represent all the provinces in the confederation. The present coat of arms is representative of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick only, for those were the original provinces; and since it was adopted in 1858 Prince Edward Island and British Columbia have entered the federation, and finally Saskatchewan and Alberta have been carved out of what were the Northwest territories. When a design emblematic of these nine provinces has been chosen by the committee and approved by the government it will be submitted to the royal college of heralds in England to be registered. A royal warrant declaring it the official arms of Canada will then be issued.

Double Bottoms Put to Work. For many years a few steamships from the far east have brought fuel oil back to Britain in the ballast space between their inner and outer hulls. The practice never became general, however, and "tankers" continued to handle the bulk of the trade. But in June, 1917, increased submarine activity and the expansion of the allied fleets made immediate additions to tank tonnage so imperative that not a few, but hundreds, of British and American "double bottoms" were fitted for this auxiliary cargo. Apart from its war-time results this new practice has taught marine engineers many lessons that will guide them in designing the oil-burning ships of tomorrow.—Popular Mechanics Magazine.

His First Visit. Mr. Lloyd George would seem, says Liverpool Post, to have had a premonition of his future eminence when he paid a first visit to London as a lad of nineteen. "Went to the house of commons," he wrote home to his uncle. "Very disappointed. I will not say but that I eyed the assembly in a spirit similar to that in which William the Conqueror eyed England on his visit to Edward the Confessor as the region of his future domain. Oh, vanity!"

Their Plight. "The Germans will have to resort to wireless fighting." "How do you mean?" "Hasn't Poch just ordered them to stop stringing the Poles?"

Pacific Blockade. "Pacific blockade" is a term invented by Hautefeuille, the French writer on international maritime law, to describe a blockade exercised by a great power for the purpose of bringing pressure to bear on a weaker state without actual war. The Pacific blockade has apparently established itself as a legitimate means of coercing a weak power to observe its international obligations without resorting to war for that purpose. It is a modern development and has usually been the act of several powers acting in concert. It was first employed in 1827, when the combined fleets of Great Britain, France and Russia blockaded a portion of the Turkish coast. More recent instances of its exercise were the blockade of Crete by the powers in 1897, the blockade of Venezuelan ports by Great Britain, Germany and Italy in 1902 and of Turkish ports by the powers in 1905.

The Barge. "American soldiers in London," said Gen. Samuel A. Ansell, "take a great deal of interest in the barges who row enormous canal boats up and down the Thames. "A soldier stood on the Blackfriars bridge one day watching a barge row his canal boat, or barge. It was an enormous barge; half a dozen oarsmen could hardly have managed it, but the lone barge wielded his oar undismayed, and the barge approached the soldier on the bridge at the rate of about an inch a minute. "The soldier watched the barge a long time, and, when the bridge was at last reached, he took the cigarette from his mouth and shouted down to the plucky oarsman: "Well, so long, old timer! Don't forget to bring us a parrot back with you!"

What is Biggest Woodcock? What is said to be the heaviest woodcock was one shot by Arthur Duane near Whittaker's, L. I., about thirty years ago. The woodcock was mounted by Bell, the leading taxidermist of the day, but unfortunately it was later on destroyed by moths. This woodcock was weighed on a druggist's scales at Southampton and weighed exactly 14 ounces. There are several witnesses living who can testify as to the weight. The naturalists give the average weight of woodcock as ranging from five to nine ounces.

Smoking a Cause of Cancer. Cancer of the mouth in civilized countries has been greatly reduced by good dentistry. Eighty-five per cent of the cancers of the lip occur in smokers. Formerly clay pipes, which became very hot, were much used, and there has been a notable reduction in the number of cancers of the lip since the clay pipe has gone out of fashion. Smoking, however, is the cause of most cancer of the lip, the tongue and the floor of the mouth.—Maj. W. J. Mayo, War Department Lectures.

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A Sure Thing. "Ah always hab mo' faith in sympathy dan in congratulations," observed Shinbone. "You kn w's fo' sure dat dat aint anybody gwinter be jealous ob yo' bahd luck."

BRED GREAT MEN

Italian City of Florence May Claim High Honor.

Birthplace of Many of Those Who Rank in Intellectual Ability and Achievement, Far Above the Rest of Mankind.

At first thought one would be apt to claim for London, the great metropolis, the honor of having given birth to the greatest number of the world's geniuses.

Among other great Londoners the following might be cited: Francis Bacon, philosopher and essayist; Spenser, Jonson, Milton and Keats, world-known and honored poets; Hogarth, Turner, Watts, Millais and Holman Hunt, artists whose achievements are acclaimed by all the world of taste; Fox, Pitt and Beaconsfield, statesmen who have influenced the building of empire; Daniel Defoe, the novelist; Faraday and Huxley, the scientists, and many others. All these would stand in the very front ranks of greatness, some of them, like Milton and Bacon, towering above their fellow men like mountain peaks among mole-hills.

The Frenchman would undoubtedly stand up for the claims of Paris, quoting a long list of poets and painters and novelists and statesmen to justify his boast.

The Italian would probably put the question: "How far back may we go in this quest? For if ancient Rome is to be added to the record of the more modern city, where will you find her equal?"

Then Athens would lift up her classic voice in protest, and quote a long list of her sons who have formed the models of all subsequent time in art and poetry and philosophy and architecture.

But there is another competitor which can beat them all in this combat. Compared with London or Paris, or even Rome, it is a small place.

The city is Florence—Florence—the native city of Savonarola, of Fra Angelico, of Donatello, of Botticelli, of Leonardo da Vinci, of the mighty Michael Angelo, the glory of his age and of all succeeding ages; Florence, the city of Boccaccio, the father of novelists; of Machiavelli, whose very name is a proverb, and of the famous Medici; Dante, and lastly, Florence the city of Yates, the first both in time and position of this glorious galaxy of stars of the first magnitude.

How such a small place ever gave birth to so many mighty sons of genius is one of the standing puzzles of heredity and environment and education. Why does not Glasgow breed geniuses? Nobody knows. During a period of two hundred years Florence was a forcing bed for supreme achievement. During that time the little city broke all records, ancient and modern, and it is hard to see where her competitor is to spring from who shall take away her crown of laurels.

Some War Economies. There is probably nothing that seems so useless in the eyes of the average person as an Irish potato

which has begun to rot, but the department of agriculture in its war-time experiments has discovered that starch can be made from a decayed potato just as well, if not better, than from a good one, and so the surplus stock of the farmer or dealer need no longer be thrown away or wasted.

In like fashion chemists seeking methods to avoid world-wide food shortages have found that sugar cannot only be made from beets, but from sweet potatoes as well. The farmer himself can make good sirup from his sweet potatoes by boiling them until they can be mashed in the water to thick, mushy liquid. To this ground malt is added and the result, after properly cooking for about an hour, is a thick sirup, which is strained through a cloth and used for any sort of sweetening.

Modest Hero. My heroic action was this: I was lying close up to their defenses, and for four days had not been able to climb out; we lay like reptiles. There was not a dry spot; one could not get accustomed to it. And H—, the ensign, had been caught on the wire when we had started to attack. At first he asked for help, called on the men by name; but one could not show one's nose without being shot. Then he only groaned and breathed heavily. That went on for four days, and he still lived. It is a sin to grumble at God, but here one says: "Why be careful of one's soul?" I couldn't endure it and took him off the wire; but I got wounded. Then there was an attack, and our men captured the post.—London Times.

Fire-Retarding Paints. From tests made at the federal bureau of standards it appears that, while practically all paint coatings have some fire-retarding action, none of those so far tested afford very great protection. All the samples in question were materially damaged by application of flame for a few seconds. Both sodium silicate and whitewash rank comparatively high. These have the advantage of cheapness and can both be used on the same surface. However, according to a recent bulletin of the bureau, no treatment of wood after erection can be expected to serve as an effective fire protection, and the use of such materials should not be made an excuse for omitting any of the usual precautions against fire.

Injections of Cane Sugar. Doctor Rosenthal reports to the Presse Medicale (Paris) that he has administered intravenous injections of a strong solution of saccharose in numerous cases of tuberculosis. The procedure exerts a manifest tonic action. It raises the blood pressure, augments the body weight, and indirectly produces a favorable effect on the tubercular lesions. These results are ascribed by the author to an enhancement of the functions of the liver.

Safety in Debate. "Papa," said Willie Hohenzollern, "aren't you worried about what they may do with us?" "No, Willie. There is so much difference of opinion as to what would be a suitable retribution that I think the argument may easily be prolonged indefinitely."

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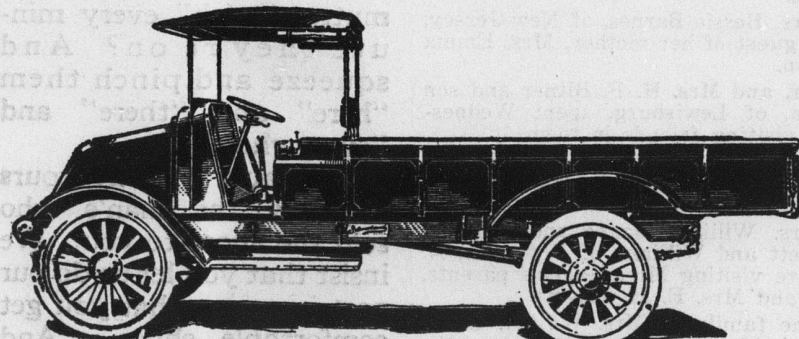
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