

THE BEST.

Did you fall in the race?
Did you faint in the spurt?
Where the hot dust choked and burned?
Did you breast the tape midst the flying dirt?
That the leader's spikes had spurred?
Did you do your best—
Oh, I know you lost. I know that your time was bad.
But the game is not in the winning, lad,
The best of it since the beginning, lad,
Is in taking your licking and grinning, lad,
If you gave them the best you had.
Did your tackle fall short?
Did the runner flash by
With the score that won the game?
Did you choke with the hurt and shame?
If you did your best—
Oh, I know your score; I followed you all the way through.
And that is why I am saying, lad,
That the best of the fight is the staying, lad,
And the best of all games is the playing, lad,
If you give them the best in you.
—Nelson Robbins.

EMBARRASSING, PETTY AND PAINFUL ANNOYANCE.

By L. A. Miller.

Why is it that a barber will scratch and rub your head for an hour and not touch the one particular spot that itches?
Science may dispel the mystery that hangs about a universe, and philosophy make plain the whys and wherefores of things in general, but neither of them appear to be equal to the emergency in this case. Rocks have testified to the age of man, and the growth-rings of heavy oaks and giant redwoods, and gnarled and riven elms, told stories of aboriginal races, but all are silent as to a time when a barber scratched the place that itched.
Sacred history ignores the barber entirely, and profane history treats not of his peculiar characteristics; his saving graces or his singular obtuseness. Did you ever observe what a deal of discomfort a very small thing may cause? A hair wafted from somewhere lights on your nose and begins to tickle. Both of your hands are full, as a matter of course, and you would just give anything to get at that hair. The more you think about it the more it tickles. You begin to get nervous, tears come into your eyes, your knees tremble and you feel that you must scratch or die.
Things like this are likely to occur when you are standing before the hymenal altar, holding a baby for a long-winded parson to baptize, or when in a position, that to move a muscle is to expose yourself to instant death or frightful peril.
Flies light on your nose when you want to appear specially sober or while you are sitting for a photograph. Gnats crawl into your ears when you are listening to something nice, or persist in roosting on your eyelashes just the moment when you want to see clearly. Dogs bark when it is most essential for them to keep quiet; cats waul and caterwaul just when the world and its cares are fading from your sight and memory; night-hawks scream most ominously, and horned-owls hoo-hoo in doubly dismal tones when you are alone in the woods; and hornets invariably sting the day before a picnic, or near the time you are expecting to see your sweetheart. The baby at the theatre is prompted to cry during the most interesting part of the heroine's confession, or just as the comedian reaches the point of his fresh joke. The fat man coughs as the prima donna twitters and warbles her sweetest, but is silent as the grave while the bass drum is having a set-to with the bull fiddle. The creature with the resonant nose selects the precise time when the violin and flute are in the midst of the prettiest passage in the symphony to blurt out a blast that startles the bassoon player.
Haven't you noticed that things happen in his odd and disagreeable way? Haven't you wondered why they should? Since there must be a good reason for everything, it is not enough to give the seeming mystery up or let it pass with an expression of disgust or a smile.
The most probable, as well as philosophical explanation that can be given for freaks of this kind is that they are more noticeable at such times. The fall of a pin during Quaker meeting will create a stir while repeated falls of heavy gavel on a resonant slab of marble hardly produces an appreciable effect in a meeting of politicians. It depends more upon the surroundings than on the thing that happens.
A cat concert is rather delightful under some circumstances, and often not in the least disagreeable. The cry of a baby would scarcely be noticed in a nursery, and a troublesome gnat would be unceremoniously brushed off and forgotten at any other time than the particular one when they felt to be an annoyance. The times when they tickle and do not annoy are forgotten, and only those remembered when they tickle and do annoy.
This probably explains the seeming perversity of the barber in scratching every spot on your head except the one you most desire to have scratched, which did not itch, would have itched fully as much as the one he missed. Some barbers have a fashion of rubbing all in one place, and that without regard to the comfort of their victim.
Since the days of Sampson—and probably long before—most men have enjoyed having their heads gently scratched. There is something singularly soothing about it. Delilah evidently knew this when she scratched Sampson's head so divinely as to cause a sleep to fall upon him that a Philistine barber cut his hair without waking him. Considering the tools with which those Pagan barbers worked, the operation must have been little less painful than the amputation of a leg or the extirpation of an ingrowing nail, which in these days of spe-

cially keen blades and expert operators, require the administration of chloroform.

As nearly as can be determined, rubbing and scratching the head was about the only anaesthetic known previous to the christian era. The degree of annoyance caused by a small object like a hair, a grain of sand or a tiny splinter, depends entirely on the location. All men are not ticklish or hypersensitive at the same place. Some can be thrown into paroxysms by tickling the feet with a straw, others go into spasms if a feather is drawn under their nose, while others almost take fits if tickled in the ribs.
It is said that the most exquisitely horrible torture practiced during the inquisition, was that of tickling the feet of sensitive heretics. Every nerve in the entire body was set on edge and made to dance at a maddening pace. This must have been the refinement of torture, indeed.
In order to satisfy your curiosity on this score have your hands securely tied and your head held firm, while some one slowly, gently tickles your nose with a feather, or even a hair. You will soon conclude that death would be preferable to a continuance of torture. It's queer, nevertheless true.

NEW WATER SYSTEM SERVES JERUSALEM.

The pressure of an electric button put in motion the machinery bringing the waters of the pools of Solomon to the holy city. It is the consummation of years of work, involving a large outlay and much engineering skill.
During the five years of the English occupation and Zionist activity in Palestine doubtless more has been done to furnish the inhabitants water supply than was done during the centuries of Turkish occupation.
The city had but one small fountain, so that in former times the people were almost entirely dependent upon cisterns, which were often so foul that outbreaks of typhoid and malaria were very common.
The military administration under General Allenby discovered strong springs in the Judean hills south of Bethlehem, about seven miles south of Jerusalem, and by building a reservoir on a neighboring hill they were able to pump into this and then have the water flow into Jerusalem by gravity. This helped the situation and thousands of people daily visited the public hydrants for their water supply.
But the long dry summer proved too heavy a tax upon even this supply so that the engineers of the public works department turned their attention to three immense reservoirs a few miles south of Bethlehem, known as Solomon's Pools. Although they bear the name of Israel's great king they doubtless date from the Herodian period, but they were repaired in the sixteenth century by the Sultan, Suliman the Magnificent, and possibly from that fact they derived their name.—Ex.

His Saving Wit.

Not long ago a traveling salesman saved his employers from sustaining a serious loss by his presence of mind. He was traveling for a London firm of

diamond merchants and his business took him to a town in Yorkshire.

He called at an inn for a drink. When he left he forgot his bag, containing some thousands of pounds' worth of precious stones.

On discovering his loss he returned, but the barman declared he had not seen the bag.

"I would not have lost it for worlds," said the traveler, "I am a surgeon and that bag contained phials of cholera microbes."

White and trembling the barman pointed to the bag, which he had secreted behind the counter, and it was removed at once by the quick-witted traveler.

—Get your job work done here.

Sprinkling a City Front with Salt Water.

The Embarcadero, which runs the entire length of San Francisco's water

front, is sprinkled with salt water obtained by electrically operated pumps placed at various points along the shore. Each of the pumps is housed in a small shack at the shore's edge. Its pipe bends through an opening in the wall down to the water. Access to the switch which controls the electric pump is given by means of a window six inches square. The driver of the sprinkler wagons has a key by means of which he can start and stop the pump. Thus the pump cannot be molested by unauthorized persons. The water lifted by this method finally emerges in the street through a pipe, having much the appearance of an electric light standard, curved at the top over the curbstone. There is one of these posts in the neighborhood of each pumping station. By this method of utilizing water from the bay, not only is considerable money saved, but the salty contents of the water serves the purpose of ridding the thoroughfare of flies and other pestiferous insects.

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