

WRITING THE SERMON.

Friday is the Minister's Day For Performing His Task. Probably few of the good people who listen with rapt attention to the sermon which is preached to them each Sunday, says the Denver Post, know that for nearly 300 years Friday has been the time honored day for the pastor to go into his study, write the sermon which is to furnish "food for thought" to the congregation on the following Sunday. In speaking of this custom a clergyman says: "When Christianity was first promulgated, all preaching was done extemporaneously. Such a thing as preparing a sermon was unknown. Many lifted men expressed their views on arduous subjects, then added a few words of good advice to their listeners. This practice is still continued in the Roman Catholic church of the present day, and I think that a very limited number of the priests ever write a sermon. Not all ministers, however, adhere to this rule by any means. When Henry Ward Beecher was asked on that day he prepared his sermon, he replied, 'On Sunday morning, of course.' 'Well, Mr. Beecher, don't you think that is a rather dilatory habit for you to get into?' asked another. 'Oh, no, not at all,' replied Mr. Beecher in his quick way. 'You see, I look at a sermon like some do on a pan-ake. They can be served hot or cold, and I like mine hot; that's all.'"

His Friend Geoffrey. The following story, told by the Washington Post, leads us to wonder which to condemn first, the booster or the critics. It concerns a certain man who has a large collection of autographs.

Indeed, the envy and sometimes the scepticism of his friends have been excited by the number of successful authors who have set down familiar and flattering inscriptions in his books. Some carpers have even gone so far as to hint darkly at a similarity of handwriting throughout the collection.

He recently purchased a rare edition of Chaucer, and one evening when a party was gathered at the house the recited book was passed from hand to hand. The owner lost sight of it, and the next morning he found it lying on his library table. On the fly leaf was inscribed: "To Jack —, from his old friend and schoolmate, Geof. Chaucier."

Wit of Horne Tooke. It is said that Horne Tooke, who excelled in that duellike controversy exhibited by two disputants when pitted against each other with only the reath of a mahogany board between them, was exceedingly quick and sharp in retort. When he made his most leathly thrusts, it was with a smiling outenance and without seeming effort or emotion. Replying to a man who contended that only landowners should be allowed to vote at elections, he said, "Pray tell me how many acres does it take to make a wisecrack?" When asked by George III. whether he ever played cards, he replied, "I cannot, your majesty, tell a king from a mare." What can be more uniquely comic than his saying to his brother: "You and I, my dear brother, have inherited the faculty of nature. You have been in the world by your gravity, and I have fallen by my levity?"—Saturday Evening Post.

The World's Largest Crab. How would you like to have a crab like this squeezing your toe when you go bathing? The gigantic Japanese crab, measuring twelve feet, is probably the largest crustacean in the world. The specimen is a type of the spider crab, which inhabits the waters of the group of islands forming the empire of Japan. The body portion is the size of a half bushel measure, while its two great arms or "feelers" could easily encircle the figure of a man. Its eight arms or legs resemble huge bamboo poles and are extremely elastic, and if strung into one line they would reach to the top of a four story apartment building. One of the extraordinary peculiarities of this crab is the faculty of assuming a disguise by affixing pieces of seaweed and sponges to the body.

Norway Hotel System. There is a capital hotel system in vogue in certain parts of Norway. In villages where no hotel exists one of the more prominent inhabitants is subsidized by the Norwegian government and in return is bound to provide accommodation for not less than four travelers. He may take in four if he chooses, but four is the minimum. The accommodation and food supplied are excellent, and the charges are very moderate.

The Drop Curtain. A youngster had been to the theater, and upon his return his uncle asked him how he liked the play. "Oh," he replied, "the play was all right, but I didn't see nearly all of it." "Why, how did that happen?" asked his uncle. "Because," answered the youngster, "the roller must have been broke, for the window blind fell down two or three times!"—Chums.

A Fair Exchange. Editor—See here, Mr. Dolan. You delivered me a load of hay for the six years' subscription you owed for my paper.

Mr. Dolan—Of did. Editor—Well, my horse won't eat that hay, b' gosh!

Mr. Dolan—Well, my goat won't eat your paper, be gosh!—Puck.

The average man is always anxious to meet the fool killer for the purpose of sending him next door.—Chicago News.

THE WOODCOCK.

Where Does It Hide During the Molting Season? It is during the months of August and September that the mystery of the woodcock's life begins. This is the molting season, when the bird changes its plumage before beginning its journey southward. At this time it leaves the swamps. Where does it go? That is a question which has never yet received a satisfactory answer, although each sportsman and naturalist has his own opinion, and many fine spun theories have been advanced. Some say that the birds move toward the north, some that they seek the mountain tops, coming into the swamps to feed only after nightfall; some that they seek the cornfields, and there have been many other such theories.

Probably the truth lies in a mean of all these statements. I think it probable that the birds know the loss of their feathers renders them to a certain extent helpless and more exposed to the attacks of their natural enemies, and they therefore leave the more open swamps and hide in the densest and most tangled thickets. It is certain that they scatter, for at this season single birds are found in the most unusual and unexpected places.

Years ago when shooting in Dutchess county, N. Y., I knew one or two swamps, which we called molting swamps, where in August we were sure to find a limited number of birds. These swamps were overgrown with rank marsh grass and were full of patches of wild rose and sweetbrier. If we killed the birds which we found there, we were sure in a week or ten days to find their places filled by about the same number.—Outing.

MILITARY DISPLAY.

An Amusing Bit of Routine in a New York Hotel.

There is no better place to mark the increasing love of military display and maneuvers than the lobby of a large hotel. The colored bell in particular are great soldiers. In one of the Broadway hotels uptown the colored hallmen are changed at noon. Things were quiet in the lobby at that hotel today, for the clerks and bookkeepers were deep in their books, and the loungers were all sitting peacefully on the sofas when the steady tramp, tramp of what sounded like a regiment of infantry broke the stillness.

The regiment consisted of six colored hallmen in blue and brass, with an especially resplendent mulatto in a more gorgeous uniform walking at the head of the procession, says the New York correspondent of the Pittsburg Gazette. He lined his six men in front of a bench before the desk, looked them over sharply to see that they were "eyes front" and hissed "Attention!" Then as he clapped his hands one of the six men hinged their legs simultaneously and drooped into their seats like a row of wooden soldiers.

The mulatto wiped his brow with a highly perfumed handkerchief, glanced at the head clerk for approval and as the first man responded with a jerk to the cry of "Front!" went to the main doorway to look at the sunlight of Broadway with the air of a successful major general. The whole performance was excruciatingly funny, but I am sure that mulatto would have committed assault and battery on any one who dared to laugh.

The Wax Insect. Trees afford the birthplace and cradle of the wax insect, scientifically called Cossus pela. In the early spring the bark of the boughs and twigs becomes covered with brown pea shaped scales, which can be easily detached and which, when opened, reveal the flowery looking mass of minute animals, whose movements can just be detected by the naked eye. In May and June, however, the scales are found to contain a swarm of brown creatures with six legs and two antennae each. Some of the scales also contain the white bag or cocoon of a small black beetle, which, if left undisturbed, burrows into and consumes the scales. The Chinese say that this beetle eats the little wax insects, and it appears certainly the case that where the parasite is most abundant the scales fetch a lower price in the market.—Chambers' Journal.

All in the Family. They were discussing the factors which make for success in the world, when the knowing young man said: "There's nothing like force of character, old man. Now, there's Jones. Sure to make his way in the world. Has a will of his own, you know."

"But Brown has something better in his favor."

"What's that?"

"A will of his uncle."—Stray Stories.

Legal Points. "So he got out an injunction against your company," we say pityingly. "Why didn't you forestall him by getting an injunction to prevent the issuance of his injunction?"

"I couldn't. You see, he was slick enough to get out an injunction against my getting out an injunction against his injunction!"—Baltimore Herald.

Small in a Double Sense. "After all," remarked Smithers, yawning, "it is a small world."

"It has to be," snapped Smuthers, "to match some of the people in it!"—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

Accounted For. Dime Museum Manager—What is that peculiar smell? The Living Skeleton—The rubber skin burned his finger lighting a cigarette.—Judge.

We ought to avoid the friendship of the bad and the enmity of the good.—Epictetus.

WOMEN OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.

Nowhere Are the Conditions of the Sex So Barbaric as in That Staid Old State.

According to Mrs. Stanton Blotch, president of the Equal Suffrage League of New York, the late campaign for political rights for women in New Hampshire revealed almost barbaric conditions surrounding the women of that region, says a New York exchange.

"Nowhere are the conditions of women so barbaric as in this staid old New England state," she said. "This is due to the introduction of the factory system. The New Hampshire woman has no more incentive to individual development than the women of barbarous tribes, whose interests never go beyond the cooking of food and tilling of the soil.

"Farm work is largely in the hands of the women of this state. Although they are physically weak as a rule, statistics of our recent war showed that our largest soldiers came from New Hampshire, but the native women are abnormally small as a result of their hard lives.

"The New Hampshire woman lives, in most cases, on a rocky, unproductive farm and her employments in her primitive home are as ephemeral as those of any savage. She bakes pies and doughnuts, washes her clothes and cleans house. The old industries of spinning and weaving and preserving and soapmaking have passed out of her hands. So long as she had these things to do she had an outlet for her energies. She had an incentive to organize and systematize her household work."

A PLUNGE IN ICY WATER.

One Who Has Had the Experience Says It Is Not as Unpleasant as Many Suppose.

It is the common impression that one suffers keenly from cold if suddenly immersed in a lake or stream covered with thin ice. Such, says a Philadelphia exchange, does not appear to be the case of the experience of a Philadelphia boy who got such a wetting the other day when skating. He said: "I was skating on ice that kept cracking, and then—smash!—all of a sudden I was overboard. I was in the water, holding on to the jagged edges of the ice. My first thought was feeling of surprise at the water's warmth. I had gone clean under, head and all, and now I was immersed save for my head, arms and shoulders; yet I wasn't cold; the water actually felt a little warmer than the air. I guess that I was in for six or seven minutes. A plank had to be brought before I could get out. During those minutes the only part of me that suffered was my poor wet hands that clutched the ice. After a minute or two they began to ache with the cold. My body in the water gave me no discomfort and perhaps if I had kept my wet hands in the water they wouldn't have troubled me either. But I couldn't do that or I'd have been carried under the ice."

SAVED BY STRATEGY.

Pioneer Drummer Had a Way of Disposing of a Western "Bad Man."

"I traveled through the west in pioneer days," said a Philadelphia drummer, according to an exchange, "and though things were pretty rough I never had but one close call. I had an argument with a Dakota cowboy and he set out to wipe me off the earth. 'But you shot first?' queried a listener. 'No, I was not armed. I simply resorted to strategy. He looked like a man who'd oblige, and just as his finger was pressing the trigger I told him that I much preferred to be killed with a knife. When he got his knife out I changed to a club and from a club to a stone in a stocking, and I finally got him all mixed up and bought his whole outfit for eight dollars and sent him off to get drunk. There is really no need of being killed if you keep your wits about you."

AMERICAN ABSINTHE.

"The Green Terror of France" Produced in Considerable Quantities in Wisconsin.

"Absinthe, 'the green terror of France,'" said a botanist of the agricultural department, reports the Washington Evening Star, "is now being produced in considerable quantities in this country and is being used to an alarming extent. In some sections of Wisconsin wormwood is being cultivated, and it is from this plant that oil is distilled for making absinthe. There are several wormwood farms in that state.

"The Wisconsin growers of wormwood and distillers of the oil at first shipped nearly all their output to Europe, but now they find a good market for it in this country, and at almost fabulous prices. Of course the drug houses of America furnish a ready home market. The oil is employed in many ways, but its chief uses are in the making of absinthe and liniments."

Our International Commerce.

In view of the establishment of the department of commerce and labor, it may be interesting to note that the internal commerce of the United States last year has been estimated by the government statistician at \$0,000,000,000. Fifty years ago it was only \$2,000,000,000. The manufactures of the United States are nearly double those of Great Britain and Ireland, and about equal to those of France, Germany and Russia combined.

CITIES IN NAME ONLY.

Aspiring Municipalities That Are So Small as to Be Simply Ridiculous.

The recently completed census of the United States reveals some singular facts relative to the towns and cities that compose the nation at large. There are quite a number of so-called "cities" which are so ridiculously small in population as to make it a matter of wonder and amazement that they are really cities, says the Washington Star. The population of a few such cities may be given as illustrations. The city of Johnson, Kan., has a population of only 15, and the population of the city of Coronado, in the same state, is even less, being only ten.

There are several cities in Kansas which have very diminutive populations, as follows: Bird, 88; Brauer, 70; Ford, 82; Freeport, 83; Horace, 90; Hugoton, 54; Richfield, 61; Tribune, 62; Clydesse, 40. The city of Siloam Springs, Mo., has a population of 98. The city of Brigantine, N. J., has a population of 99, but small as is the population of that city, it is nearly five times as large as that of the city of Lavallette, in the same state, which has a population of only 21. The city which exceeds all the others in the diminutiveness of its population is the city of Rainy Lake, Minn., which has a population of only 7.

WHY HUMANS ARE NOT ALIKE.

The Possibilities of Diversity in Every Respect Are Beyond All Limits.

Everybody is different from everybody else, and in all the world two persons could not be found who are exactly alike in every particular. Often one man is seen who resembles some other man, but he is distinguishable nevertheless. Oftentimes twins are so nearly duplicates that people get them mixed, but yet all their features are not identical, says the Chicago Inter Ocean.

A Chicago man, L. A. Vaught, has been figuring to determine how many different people there could be in the world, and yet have no two of them alike. The result he has arrived at is startlingly large, and if the world were to be the abiding place of so great a population there would scarcely be standing room.

The possibilities of human diversity is something extraordinary. There are said to be 42 individual faculties of genetic instincts composing the human mind. These 42 faculties may combine in 2,810,012,235,505,759,797,086,285,212,489,023,129,540,768,000,000,000 different ways. This will account, says Mr. Vaught, for the diversity of the human family in the past, at present, and for millions of years in the future.

NEW STORY OF MARK TWAIN.

How the Famous Humorist Had the Merry Cackling Turned Upon Himself.

The following story about the author of "A Double-Barreled Detective Story" is told by the London Publishers' Circular. One day, while Mark Twain was connected with a publishing house, he went into a book store in New York, and, picking up a volume, asked the price. He then suggested that as a publisher he was entitled to 50 per cent. discount. To this the clerk assented. "As an author," proceeded Mark, "it would appear that I am again entitled to 50 per cent. discount." Again the clerk bowed. "And as a personal friend of the proprietor," the humorist modestly continued, "I presume you will allow me the usual 25 per cent. discount." Once more the salesman managed to produce an impressive bow. "Well," drawled the unblinking speaker, "under these conditions I think I may as well take the book. What's the price?" The clerk calmly took up his pencil and began to figure industriously. "Then he announced the result with the greatest obsequiousness. 'As near as I can calculate,' said he, 'we owe you the book and about 35 1/2 cents. Call again.'"

Sawdust in Cereal Food.

Referring to breakfast foods, Literary Digest quotes from Cosmos, Paris: "Very fine sawdust is sometimes mixed with cereal foods, and has at least one advantage—it is not poison. It even constitutes a sufficient food for the larvae of certain insects, but it is quite insufficient for the nourishment of man. It was shown in 1898 that certain suspected cereals contained no less than 40 per cent. of wood sawdust."

Dragged the Elephants.

A correspondent of the Cornhill Magazine (London), at the durbar in India, devotes considerable space to describing the wonderful docility of the elephants, some of which were "so gorgeous that they would have astonished Solomon. Most orderly and above reproach were the elephants." Then he bluntly makes this revelation: "But then they were drugged."

Makes People Taller.

A physician of Paris has a method to make one grow tall. This is to apply static and faradic electricity to the knee joints daily, in connection with massage night and morning. He binds the joints in compresses saturated with salt water each evening and puts his patient upon a diet of cereals to promote the growth of cartilage.

Jubilee of Free Libraries.

Manchester, England, is about to celebrate the jubilee of its free libraries. It is calculated that during the 50 years 52,000,000 reference books have been read or consulted.

MOTORMAN'S EXPERTNESS.

If Given Fair Notice He Will Not Carry a Passenger Beyond the Crossing.

"People who complain that the car isn't stopped just right for them at the crossing," said a motorman, according to the New York Sun, "may really have themselves to blame for it. They don't give the conductor notice and so the conductor can't tell the motorman time enough ahead. When he can the conductor gives the motorman ample notice of the street at which he is wanted to stop; he may pull the strap for the next block almost before the car has got fairly well started from the last, but the motorman likes ample notice.

"The rails may be slippery and it may on some days require more space to bring a car up in that it would on other. But the motorman can stop the car anywhere under any conditions with the rear step square across the crossing if you give him a chance.

"And of course he would rather make a good stop like that than to make a poor one; this on his own account as well as on the passenger's. 'The days when he runs by seem always to be the worst days for the passengers, days that are damp and sloppy; but these days may be also the worst for the motorman, the hardest days, with slippery rails, on which to run a car with exactness.

"So as a general proposition I should say it would be wise for the passenger who wants to get off at the next block and who doesn't want to wait too long, but to tell the conductor early, and he will tell the motorman and the motorman will do the rest, or come mighty close to it."

STONES THAT ARE ALIVE.

One Species That Shows Positive Evidence of Being Possessed of Animation.

It is generally known that stones possess a species of life in at least that they grow from small beginnings frequently to enormous size. There is one stone in particular, however, that seems endowed with a greater degree of life than others. It is called "the living stone" and is found in the Falkland islands. Those islands are among the most cheerless spots in the world, being constantly subjected to a strong polar wind, says Nature.

In such a climate it is impossible for trees to grow erect, as they do in other countries, but nature has made amends by furnishing a supply of wood in the most curious shape imaginable. The visitor to the Falklands sees scattered here and there singular shaped blocks of what appears to be weatherbeaten and moss covered boulders in various sizes.

Attempt to turn one of these "boulders" over and you will meet with a surprise, because the stone is actually anchored by roots of great strength; in fact, you will find that you are fooling with one of the native trees. No other country in the world has such a peculiar "forest" growth, and it is said to be next to impossible to work the odd-shaped blocks into fuel, because the wood is perfectly devoid of "grain" and appears to be a twisted mass of woody fibers.

ODD MESSENGER OF LOVE.

Manitoba Widow Writes on an Egg and Gets a Husband from Liverpool.

Among the weekly consignments of eggs lately received by a Liverpool, England, warehouseman was an egg bearing this message: "Packed by Mrs. Meade, a lonely widow, age 30, on Meade's farm, Bellevue, Manitoba." The warehouseman was a widower, his age was 42 and he was decidedly lonely, being without kith or kin. He decided to try his luck with the lonely widow. He wrote to her, told her the story of the message having reached him, sent her his photograph, described his own loneliness in a big city and hinted that they might neitherg of them continue pining for companionship, reports a London paper, if they once met, and giving references to several responsible persons who knew his character. In less than three weeks he received a cable. It merely said: "Come out." He went out. The lonely ones met—and they are lonely no longer.

Missionary Work in China.

Rev. Dr. Ryan, for 17 years a Baptist missionary in China, who has just arrived in San Francisco, reports that no serious trouble from insurrection is to be feared in that part of the empire. The missionaries, however, have most to fear from disturbances in northern China, where the hatred for foreigners is intense, says the Chicago Chronicle. In southern China there is almost a friendly feeling for foreigners, and a disposition to accept some modern ideas from them.

Town Like London.

The chief desire of the municipality of Baro, in Chili, is to have their town known as a second London, and within the last decade much money has been spent to make it an exact replica of the British capital. The streets have been laid down and named after those in London.

All in America.

This country invented the parlor, sleeping and dining cars, the pressed-steel freight car, many of the best features of the modern locomotive, the air brake, the automatic coupler and a host of related devices, and it runs the fastest long-distance train.

No Use to Wink.

Government to Interfere With Certain Drinks at Soda Fountains.

The sale of claret sodas and other semi alcoholic drinks at soda water fountains promises to be seriously curtailed this summer, says the Brooklyn Eagle. Uncle Sam has been advised that there has been a tremendous increase in the sale of soda water drinks, so called, which contain a dash or two of distilled spirits or wines of different kinds. The government has decided that if this business is to go on the drug store proprietors must take out regular liquor licenses, like the saloons on the corner.

An order has been prepared for distribution among the collectors of internal revenue, warning them that drug stores, candy stores and other establishments that sell soda water in which alcoholic liquids have been introduced, must pay the regular government retail liquor dealer's license. Several years ago the department made a ruling that "where an alcoholic flavoring syrup is used for sprinkling into a glass of soda water a quantity so small as to merely give a flavor to the water, the special tax of a liquor dealer is not required to be paid for the sale of such beverages." So great has been the trade established under this exemption, however, that it is now found necessary to revoke this ruling.

The treasury department, under strict orders from Secretary Shaw, who is determined to break up the business of druggists who sell soda water drinks mixed with whiskey, wines and other spirits. The tax is \$25 a year, and if this is collected by the government it is likely that the local authorities will also require a regular liquor selling license to be taken out. Certain syrups require a small percentage of alcohol in them to prevent fermentation. The tax is not intended to apply to cases of this sort, but only where the alcoholic mixture is added after the beverage or syrup has been received from the manufacturer of the same.

Interchangeable 1000-Mile Refund Tickets.

Commencing June 1, 1903, interchangeable 1000-Mile Refund Tickets will be placed on sale, limited to one year from date of issue, good only for transportation of the owner, with usual free allowance of 150 pounds baggage over any of the following lines:—

Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. (Between all points east of Ohio River and between Pittsburg and Kane. Also to and from points on Philadelphia and Reading Railway and Central Railroad of New Jersey between Philadelphia and New York.)

Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad. (East of and including Huntington.)

Delaware, Leckawanna and Western Railroad.

Erie Railroad. (East of and including Jamestown and Suspension Bridge.)

Lehigh Valley Railroad. Pennsylvania Railroad.

These tickets will be sold at rate of \$30.00 each, subject to refund of \$10 on surrender of cover to Trunk Lines Mileage Ticket Bureau, No. 143 Liberty Street, New York, at any time within eighteen months from date of purchase.

This form of ticket will be issued in deference to requests of numerous patrons of the lines in interest desiring one ticket good over several lines instead of having to provide themselves as at present with a separate ticket for each line they desire to use.

Agents at principal stations of the railroads named above will have these tickets on sale and give all further information regarding them that may be required.

Eel Basket Law.

The bill making it lawful to catch eels with baskets having wing walls, was signed by the governor last week. The provisions of the bill are that it will hereafter be lawful to catch eels in such baskets provided that every basket has slats not less than one inch apart with a movable bottom, which shall be taken out at sunrise and be kept out until sunset. The bill limits the time to use the baskets from the 25th day of August to December 1st. The right to catch eels in this manner is to be secured by taking out of a license from the county treasurer at a fee of \$5 and another fee of \$1, the latter to go to the treasurer for his trouble. The \$5 license goes to the state fish commission for the enforcement of the fish laws.

The following letters are held at the Bloomsburg, Pa., postoffice, and will be sent to the dead letter office May 19, 1903. Persons calling for these letters will please say "that they were advertised May 7, 1903":

Mrs. Charlie Bernard, Mr. David M. Geiger, Mrs. A. M. Bogart, Miss Edith Jenkins, J. E. Reeves.

One cent will be charged on each letter advertised. J. C. BROWN, P. M.