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A Patented Plant. "One plant at least has been patented," said an inventor. "It is the Abrus precatorius, alias paternoster pea, alias weather plant. John Nowack took out the patent. The weather plant is still believed by many persons to foretell the weather. John Nowack was sure it did so, and he put it on the market along with an indicating apparatus, guaranteeing it to foretell for forty-eight hours in advance and for fifty miles around fog, rain, snow, hail, earthquake and depressions likely to cause explosions of fire damp. Alas for poor Nowack! The experts of the bureau of agriculture took up his patented plant. They proved that the movements of the leaves—to the right foretelling rain, to the left foretelling drought—were not caused by the weather, but by the light. And they proved that the plant's famous downward movement, which was supposed to foretell earthquake, was caused by an insect that punctured the stem, causing the leaf, naturally, to droop. That is the only patented plant I know of, and Nowack lost money on it."

Buying Birds to Free Them. Birds are often purchased in the bird market at Lucknow, India. In order to be set free again. This is done by Hindus as a work of merit and by Mohammedans after certain rites have been performed as an atonement, in imitation of the Jewish scapegoat. It is essential that a bird used for this purpose should be strong enough to fly away; but that does not induce the cruel dealers to feed the birds, or to refrain from dislocating their wings or breaking their legs. They put down everything to good or bad luck, and leave the customer to choose a strong bird, if he can find one, and to go away if he cannot. The merit obtained by setting a bird free is not attributed to Deity, but it is supposed to come in a large measure from the bird itself or from its attendant spirit, and hence birds of good or bad omen, and especially kites and crows, are in much demand and are regularly caught to be sold for this purpose.

"Home, Sweet Home." Probably no one would have been more surprised than Sir Henry Bishop himself could be have foreseen that a single melody in one of his numerous operas would achieve such celebrity that at the present day it is still sung by leading prima donnas at fashionable concerts, jangled on street organs and loved by a vast public that knows nothing of music, properly so called, as the purest representation of the English spirit—"Home, Sweet Home." "Clara, the Maid of Milan," the opera in which this favorite song occurred, has long been consigned to the limbo of forgotten musical works, but "Home, Sweet Home," survives with undiminished popularity and is likely to survive when many more pretentious compositions have followed "The Maid of Milan" into oblivion.—Cornell Magazine.

Women and Mirrors. "We carry lots of women clear to the top floor or at least several floors up and then they take the next elevator down without going three steps away from the elevator," declared the operator of one of the "lifts" in a big office building. "No, it isn't because they like to ride in the elevators particularly. Why do they do it? To get the use of the mirrors, of course. See those mirrors on either side of the elevator? That's what attracts them. A bit of wind will strike them as they turn the corner by a big building and then they imagine that their hair is badly disarranged and make for the nearest mirror, which is in the elevator."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

A Chinese Duel. A Chinaman was killed recently in Bangkok in a duel with another of his race. The Chinese method of dueling is interesting, but does not seem deadly. These two Bangkok Chinamen fought with the two forefingers of each hand, stabbing each other with these in the region of the spleen and at the same level on the other side of the body. The men who go in for this kind of contest practice every morning, stabbing bags of rice or paddy with these fingers till they can use them like a piece of iron.

Death by Boiling. In old England, before the law was passed which prohibited "cruel and unusual forms of punishment," murderers were often condemned to death by boiling. In such cases the victims were chained in large kettles of cold water, which was gradually heated until it caused the flesh to drop from the bones. The last English victim of the "boiling death" was one Rouse, a cook, who, it was alleged, had killed seventeen persons.

Talked Shop. "I spent a pleasant half hour in a barber's chair yesterday." "How was that?" "Listening to the barber's story of how his brother went suddenly insane and slashed a customer. The barber explained between strokes that insanity ran in his family."—Columbus Press-Post.

Anonymous. Schoolmaster—"Anonymous" means without a name. Give me a sentence showing you understand how to use the word. Small Boy—Our new baby is anonymous.—Chums.

Trying to Kill Him. Mrs. Benham—I baked you another cake today. Benham—I know what you want; you want my life insurance. We ought either to be silent or speak things better than silence.—Pythagoras.

A Matter of Nose. In spite of the important place given to the nose as an index of character, there is but little to be learned from it in estimating the causes of an innate bond between the mind and the features. Most of the correspondences which have been remarked appear to be of a radical order, but why a Roman nose first became associated with a warlike and domineering disposition or how a long and thin nose became linked with business prudence is more than I can say. If we omit the changes which take place in a nose during the lifetime of its possessor, there is scarcely a nasal peculiarity of value to the physiognomist which at the same time is cosmopolitan. No Tartar or Hottentot, however warlike, could give proof of it in this way. Japan has shown that she possesses plenty of men with military aptitude, but no Wellingtonian nose can be found within her borders. Again, no Chinese nose is long and thin, yet John is not without a certain aptitude at driving bargains.—Blackwood's Magazine.

Music and the Turtle. The Egyptians, according to the sage Apollodorus, credit their Hermes or Mercury with the invention of music under the following circumstances: The Nile, having overflowed its banks and inundated nearly all of Egypt, on its return to its banks left on its shores various dead animals and among the rest a tortoise, the flesh having dried and wasted in the sun until nothing remained in the shell but cartilages. These, being tightened by the drying heat, became sonorous. Mercury, walking along the banks of the river, happened to strike his foot against this shell, was so pleased with the sound produced that the idea of the lyre suggested itself, and he constructed a lyre of the shell of a large tortoise, which he strung with the sinews of dead animals. Dryden wrote: Less than a god they thought there could not dwell Within the hollow of that shell That spoke so sweetly.

Papyrus. The papyrus used by the ancient Egyptians was made from the stems of a peculiar water reed growing in all parts of Egypt. The outside layer of the plant was removed, and beneath this there were found a number of layers of a delicate, pithy membrane. These, being separated, were placed in layers. A second layer was laid at right angles to and above the first and sometimes a third over the second. Heavy pressure was then applied, and the layers were firmly cemented into a fair article of paper. No gum other than what was contained in the plant itself was used in the process. The papyrus was very much stronger than the average paper made by the modern machines. The sheets were commonly made from six to twelve inches square.

Two Monster Beetles. The largest bug known to the old world entomologists is the gigantic Goliath beetle, which is found along the Kougo river in Africa. Goliath is upward of six inches in length from the tip of his nose to the nether end of his hard shelled body and has a pair of gauzy wings folded up under his arms, either of which is as large as a lady's face veil. But Goliath is a pygmy when compared with the elephant beetle of Venezuela, an entomological giant which weighs nearly a pound and which has a wing spread equal to that of a mallard duck. Both of these bugs are rare.

Kissing in Iceland. When you visit a family in Iceland you must kiss each member according to his age or rank, beginning with the highest and descending to the lowest, not even excepting the servants. On taking leave the order is reversed. You first kiss the servants, then the children and lastly the master and mistress. Both at meeting and parting an affectionate kiss on the mouth without distraction of rank, age or sex is the only mode of salutation known in Iceland.

Wood of the Cross. The people of the different countries have their various traditions concerning the wood of which the cross was made. In England the peasants say that it was of elderwood and that lightning never strikes that tree. Dean French in a note to his "Sacred Latin Poetry" declares that it was made of the wood of the aspen and that since the day of the crucifixion the leaves of that tree have never ceased to shudder.

One Exception. "Where there's a winner there's always a loser." "Not always." "Well, name an instance to the contrary." "When you're playing cards with your girl for kisses."

An Impression. "Now I have an impression in my head," said the teacher. "Can any of you tell me what an impression is?" "Yes'm, I can," replied a little fellow at the foot of the class. "An impression is a dent in a soft spot."

Badly Put. Fisherman (beginner)—Don't you think, Peter, I've improved a good deal since I began? Peter (anxious to pay a compliment)—You have, sorr. But, sorr, it was aisy for you to improve, sorr!—Punch.

HERE. When we are children we brag about our parents. When we get to be young men and young women we brag about ourselves. When we become older we brag about our children.

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