

CONCERNING CATS.

THE WORLD WOULDN'T BE WHAT IT IS WITHOUT PUSSY.

Incidents That Prove That Cats Have a Serious Side Besides Furnishing Lots of News.

The cats of the country have been doing good service the past month in furnishing their share of news and humor. Moreover, the cat has a serious side and a business aspect worth considering.

The Richmond State avers that some mischievous urchins of that Virginia city gave a mail carrier the surprise of his life by putting a "cabinet size boy cut" in one of the parcel mail boxes.

In Bridgeport, Conn., Bess, the railroad bridge cat, was struck and killed by the same train that a few nights before had killed the bridge dog Jack.

Recently it was observed by the servant that after one of these late jaunts his coat was not so sleek as before, and the suspicion of something wrong was further confirmed when night after night Thomas, instead of wiping his feet on the door mat, came in with a rakish and insolent swagger.

The logical result of a profligate career like Thomas' came a night or two ago. Thomas went out as usual that evening for smooth, jaunty as usual.

The lady of the house is not prepared to say which was the most frightened, she or the servant girl, when the opening of the door was followed by the entrance, instead of James, of a fourteen-pound and apparently inebriated cat.

Native Fodder. Hon. David T. Little, of Illinois, says the Washington Post, is a constant habitue of Chamberlain's when in Washington.

The explanation of Thomas' strange conduct was found next afternoon when it was explained that it had been making free with milk punches made for a sick man in the next block, but not used.

A mysterious disappearance reported was that of Jack, a faithful attendant at the sessions of the St. Louis Merchants' Exchange for several years.

Speaking of cats, the best story is produced by the Marion, Ind., Chronicle, which says: "Cats form strange attachments sometimes."

Frank Low, of Bath, Me., also has a cat that proved himself of some use in the world, for he howled so vigorously when smoke poured out into the room where he had been sleeping that the household woke up and the fire was put out after but a few hundred dollars' worth of damage had been done.

and the happy family sleeps without a word of disagreement.

In Brighton is an institution where friendless cats and other domestic animals are given refuge. Several hundred cats are maintained by the United States Government, and the cost of their support is a regular item on the accounts of the Post Office Department.

TRAINING SEALS. They Show a Remarkable Degree of Intelligence.

"There is no limit to the capabilities of seals," said Professor Woodward. "They not only learn to imitate, but they also reason. Unlike other animals, the seal is trained without punishment. In fact, to use a whip would be to frighten the animal, which is the most timid and nervous of all brute creation.

In the training of seals another exception to usual training methods is made. It is never well to begin too early. The baby seals are weak and cannot stand the strain. The human expression in the eyes of seals has often been commented upon, and it is not strange that there should be a good deal of the human in the disposition of these animals.

"They have been trained to do some very remarkable things, the usual repertoire, however, being to play banjos, tambourines, drums, guitars, cymbals, etc., of course, without any particular tune, but they will operate the instrument, commencing and stopping at words of command. They sail yachts by pushing them along; smoke cigars, blowing the smoke away from them, giving the appearance of its coming through their nostrils; sing songs by emitting their peculiar sounds by word of command, one of them playing an accompaniment on a musical instrument; carry a line in the water to a person adrift, turn grindstones, push a needle, and make a very interesting imitation of sewing, waltz, climb chairs, stand on their tails, jump, with other diverting feats that show an adaptability to training possessed by no other animal, unless it is the dog. A clown seal is also a feature of most performances with trained seals.

Cold of unprecedented severity prevailed in central and southern Russia during the first week of this year. In some places the temperature fell to thirty-six degrees below zero, the cold being intensified by strong northerly gales.

It has long been the custom of ships lying at the Brooklyn Navy Yard to discharge their powder as precaution against accident, and the regulations as to entering a man-of-war's powder magazine are of the most stringent character.

To Harness the Tides.

Mr. Davies, of Wood Green, has embarked on a scheme which promises colossal returns. He intends utilizing tidal energy for electric lighting, tramways and railways. The notion is not entirely new. In 1881 Professor Thompson pointed out that no fewer than twenty billion foot-pounds of energy were wasted each year at Bristol alone.

The most noteworthy features of the Midwinter Fair are by all odds the county exhibits. They may not seem as novel to Californians as handsome vases and other manufactured articles, but if they are inspected carefully, says the San Francisco Chronicle, they will produce an impression of profound surprise on the minds of the best informed.

Troy, N. Y., makes over \$4,000,000 worth of stoves every year.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The Hartford Journal sagely remarks: "Make the dullest man in the world suspicious and he soon becomes remarkably sharp."

Powerful and large as are the greatest of modern United States warships, they are all of low stature compared with the towering structures of sixty or seventy years ago.

Mining engineers in the far West complain that, even where the mines have not all closed, there is little or nothing for men of their profession to do. It is the constant opening of new work that provides employment for the mining engineer, and there are parts of the West where much ore is still coming from the mines, but where the mining engineers are either preparing to depart or waiting idle and almost in despair for a return of prosperity.

American workmen are more lightly shod on the average than those of Europe, and nothing excites more scorn and astonishment in this country than the heavy boots and shoes brought over by immigrants. Shoes thickly studded with hob-nails last perhaps three times as long as the lighter footgear, but the American workman would feel himself clogged and hampered by such foot weights.

About a year ago the largest sandstone monolith of which there is any record in the world was quarried near Ashland, Wis. The stone is 115 feet long, and was intended for exhibition at the World's Fair, but the cost of putting it there was found to be so great that the project was abandoned. It was proposed to set it up in a park at Chicago, but the necessary funds could not be raised.

ALEXANDER III seems determined to live up to his sobriquet of "the Moujik Czar." He has just affixed his signature to a project of law now being elaborated by the Council of the Empire, which is destined to render inalienable the landed allotments of the peasants. The object of this measure is, of course, to prevent the seizure of the land for debt by the money-lenders, whom he regards as the principal cause of the present distress and agricultural depression in his dominions.

Cold of unprecedented severity prevailed in central and southern Russia during the first week of this year. In some places the temperature fell to thirty-six degrees below zero, the cold being intensified by strong northerly gales. Many peasants died of cold, between fifty and sixty per cent in the southern province. Five frozen corpses were discovered in one morning in the outskirts of Simferopol, in the Crimea.

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Dr. Louis Robinson is an adept at killing two birds with one stone. He has found out why drowning men catch at straws, and discovered what is to him, no doubt, an incontrovertible proof that man is of monkey ancestry. He had already found conclusive evidence in the formation of a baby's hands and toes, but he has now discovered strong corroboration in the fact that man has no inherent knowledge of how to swim.

The great forest of northern New York covers an area of 3,588,808 acres. The Adirondack Park, which is the proposed reservation, includes 2,807,760 acres. Of this 1,575,483 acres are in primeval forest.

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THE JOKER'S BUDGET.

JESTS AND YARNS BY FUNNY MEN OF THE PRESS.

Under the Spell of the Past--No Matter--Physical Proof--Between Girl Friends, Etc., Etc.

UNDER THE SPELL OF THE PAST. "I'll give you your breakfast if you'll see that wood," she announced in an ultimatum tone of voice.

NO MATTER. "They say that Lightleigh Gold-wait is losing his mind."

PHYSICAL PROOF. Paterfamilias--What on earth did that young man mean by paying you such an unconscionable long call last night?

BETWEEN GIRL FRIENDS. Miss Scare--Jack Marblehead gave me a great reception yesterday. He has a cannon on his yacht, and when I came on board he fired a salute of ever so many guns--forty-nine, I think it was.

THE ONLY RESULT. "Why don't you give your servant an alarm clock so that she will get up early in the morning?"

A GREAT BORE. Chollie--What do you think of this proposed income tax?

UNDERGRADUATE HONORS. "Studying for college, eh?" said the old gentleman approvingly, as the lad looked up from the diagram before him.

THE ATHLETIC GIRL. "Miss Flippety is devoting her time to gymnastics almost altogether?" "Yes, I've noticed that she has been practicing during the musicale."

THE CHARM OF RARITY. Mr. Matterfack and his wife and daughter were looking at an old painting, when the old gentleman took occasion to remark that he thought it "didn't amount to no great shakes."

A DELICATE MENTAL STATE. Tom--I notice that since Muggles said he would thrash you you don't go near his place. Are you afraid?

ADJUNCTS. Mrs. Nuwif--What would you suggest we have for dinner lovely, besides that pie I'm going to make?

A FORLORN HOPE. "I wish," said the young man who was calling, "that some time you would give me a little lecture on the different styles of bonnet trimming."

TOO MANY FOR HIM. "In the matter of family," sighed the poor man who had married a widow with nine children, "I seem to have bitten off more than I can shoe."

OVERWORKING THE PRINCIPLE. Wickwire--I have given up that homoopathic doctor I had and have gone back to the old school.

Almost five-eighths of the steamers in the world are under the British flag.

THE FOG WAS POSTED. Mrs. Gabb (hostess)--Your little son does not seem to have much appetite.

MOTHER'S DARLINGS. Mrs. Naber--Johnny commenced to do sums in long division yesterday.

NO DOUBT OF ITS SINCERITY. "Do you believe Ferrisy's piety is sincere?"

WHERE HE CAME IN. "How do you manage to live in this dead town?"

COMPETITION. Mrs. Jackson Parke--What in the world is keeping you up so late?

SURE ENOUGH. "He pretends to be an accomplished linguist, but you should hear him murder Latin."

IT WAS ABOUT ALL HE LEFT. "Excuse me," said the gourmand of the boarding house, addressing the landlady, "excuse me, madam, leaving the table."

ENGLISH AS SHE IS SPOKE. Gus De Smith--I hear that your wife's mother is very sick. Is she dangerous?

A GREAT SUCCESS. Strawberry--How did you like that barber I recommended to you?

INTERIORS. She (looking around the room)--What lovely interior decorations!

CLOSE FIGURING NECESSARY. Elderly Maiden--This is so unexpected, Mr. Wellalong, that--that you must give me time!

EASY. "And do you ever invite your poor relations to visit you?"

SIMPLE. Claire--How extremely simple that gown was Miss de Vere wore at the ball.

NOT SO FAR ADVANCED. Uncle George--I trust, Henry, that you are out of debt.

FORTUNE FAVORS THE BOLD. Wandering Willie--When de lady set sich a dandy meal afore me I wuz sorry I'd sneaked in de back way.

STEEL RYDES--Felt rather ashamed o' yerself, eh?

Wandering Willie--Naw, et wuzn't dat. Yer see de spilt o' de wozl pile in de back yard spoilt me appetite.--[Judge.]