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About fifty gamblers commit suicide at Monte Carlo every year. English football players are debating changing the rules with a view to fewer killings.

Nearly every workman in Italy wears a beard, on account of the cost of shaving. Now it is proposed to aid the barbers by putting a tax on beards.

According to the New York World in eleven principal Western States the building of 26,600 miles of railroad line caused the settlement of 96,500,000 acres of farming land.

The railroad companies of Great Britain pay an average every day of \$7000 in compensation, about sixty per cent. being for damages to passengers and the remainder for lost or injured freight.

The gold product of west Australia last year was double that of the previous twelve months. The total export for the year was 110,391 ounces. The prospects for the present year are most promising.

President Eliot, of Harvard, said the other day that the Greeks, who know more about athletics than we shall learn in a hundred years, held their Olympic games once in four years, while to-day the college students want at least four contests every year.

Although the court of Austria is commonly known as the most aristocratic in Europe, no monarch is easier to reach than the Emperor Francis Joseph. He has certain audience days, when any of his subjects, high as well as low, are permitted to call to discuss with him any affair which they choose.

It is said that the leading magazine publishers are using manuscripts now which have been on hand and paid for, some of them for years. This saves paying out money now, of course. Some of these magazine offices have manuscripts on hand which they accepted and paid for five, ten and even fifteen years ago.

Two London florists, becoming desperate because of the dullness, made an effort to revive the interest in tulips and create an artificial demand for the bulbs. They spent all the money they could procure in bribing penny-liners to assist them. Their failure was complete. One of them became insane. The other was forced to accept the humble position of an under gardener at a merchant's country seat.

In France cattle and sheep are rarely, if ever, sold by actual live weights, declares the American Agriculturist, and proper appliances for weighing are practically unknown. A Government measure is under consideration for making sales by weight compulsory at public fairs. The bill provides that stock exposed for sale in any market or fair must have a ticket showing the weight, as ascertained on a scale, or, as it is called in England, a "weigh bridge."

A twelve-story office building will soon be begun in the heart of Chicago by a man who sold the lot recently for \$480,000 and then secured a lease for ninety-eight years at \$24,000 a year. Some of the provisions of the lease are peculiar, remarks the San Francisco Chronicle. He binds himself to build a twelve-story structure, costing \$200,000, and to permit no one to sell liquor on the premises under penalty of forfeiture of the lease. This is said to be the second case on record of a like restriction in Chicago. Should such clauses become general the rent of saloons in the business district of Chicago will be advanced.

Emperor William, in the estimation of the New York Tribune, deserves considerable credit for the reforms which he has inaugurated in the German army in connection with the uniform and the equipment of the men, whose comfort and welfare are now studied to a much greater extent than ever before. The weight of the equipment has been reduced by some fifteen or twenty pounds, and the tight, stiff collar around the throat has been superseded by a loose and open one, allowing the man to move his head and neck without difficulty and to breathe with greater ease on the march in hot weather. The Austrian military authorities are following suit in the matter, and are taking a leaf out of the book of their allies at Berlin, among other innovations decided upon being the substitution of a gray uniform in the place of the blue one now in use in the army of Emperor Francis Joseph.

GET ALL OUT OF LIFE YOU CAN.

This a very good rule—as rules may go—Of value to boy and to man; To set the days by the star of faith And get all out of life that he can. The coffers of hope hold infinite stores, And we may supply them at will; We may heap them with treasure that never shall fade, With wonderful beauty may fill. Yes, get out of life all we can every day; But let us reflect on the meaning; Shall we wrest from the weak because we are strong? Each thing that of value is seeming? Shall we feel that possessions are riches alone? And tattle that we lead in the van? In fulfilling this rule that we hold for our days, To get all out of life that we can? There are those who do this, but you will not, I know; For you hold that the secret of living—Of beautiful days full of infinite charm—Lies only in loving and giving. To get out of life we must put into life All generous courage, all sweetness, Be thoughtful for others, be courteous and kind, And then will life flow to completeness. And thus will the days as they glide into years Hold their riches for boy and for man Who follows this rule in its meaning sublime, To get all out of life that he can. —Lillian Whitting.

THE KEY TO SIXTY-SIX.

BY E. M. HALLIDAY.



HE weather was cold, and everybody looked pinched and blue. It was not the sort of day when business is brisk anywhere. Out of doors it was so raw, so penetrating, that the constant effort to keep up a circulation to fight against the weakening influence of the cold, absorbed every energy and left little over for thought, for plans, for business or pleasure. Inside, rooms were heated to a suffocating, baking closeness, and men were languid. They stood at windows and looked at the icy streets, or held hands to aching heads over ledgers. In the big insurance office two men were talking in a private room. A card was brought in, and an old man followed it rapidly. He was a little bent, which shortened his figure, and he held his head at a peculiar sidewise angle. He shuffled a little as he walked, but the very loose and heavy Arctic overboots upon his feet may have had something to do with that. His brown overcoat, a good deal worn at the elbows, was long and of a comfortable, old-fashioned pattern. A gray knitted woolen scarf was wound around and around his neck, and woolen gloves were upon his hands. He put one of these hands up to his ear, and snapped his fingers to catch every sound when he was spoken to, and then you saw why he carried his head so oddly. He was deaf.

He had come in, he explained, to have his life insured. He had often thought of doing so, but had never been in a position where he felt that he could regularly pay the premium before. He was a kindly faced man, who seemed to state facts because they were such, without understanding any reason why they should be concealed. His eyes were clear and apparently good, although not very wide open.

"We shall require you to fill out a blank before we can consider your application," the manager said. "We seldom take men of your age." "I am not so old as I look," the applicant replied. "I know that the premium will be large, but I have a regular income, which ceases at my death, and I have lately found a dear young friend to whom I should like to leave something. I might take a fancy to go walking on the railroad track some day," he smiled whimsically. "We will have that put in your policy," said the manager, gravely.

When he had filled out his application blank, he discovered that his name was Louis A. Cattermole, that he was forty-four years of age, and came of a perfectly healthy parentage. He said that he was born in central Missouri, that his father had been killed in the war, and his mother had been blown up on a Mississippi steamboat. He had no near relatives whom he knew. He had never been a wanderer upon the face of the earth. Three years before, he had met John Mackley, a young New Yorker, on a journey through the South, and he had come to New York very recently to live.

He seemed to be a sociable sort of fellow, although looking ten years older than he said he was. He had an ingenious way of talking, which might have come from central Missouri. McCary, the insurance manager, came from Kentucky, and he rather enjoyed verbosity when he could conscientiously listen to it, without feeling that he was establishing a precedent. "I am afraid," he said to Cattermole, "that you will never pass the lecturers." But he did. They were astonished so find so vigorous a frame. "Sound as a nut. In remarkable state of preservation. The teeth aren't good, but leaving out that and the deafness, that's fine as a specimen as I ever saw at forty-four," the doctor reported. So, after all the preliminaries were gone through, Louis A. Cattermole received a policy upon his life, made out in favor of John Mackley, the young stock broker on New Street. We made a great many inquiries, of course, Mackley, who was a big,

old Cattermole come out of the bath house in his queer rig, accentuated by his curious walk and twisted neck, and plunge into the water. Two hundred people turned to look after him with curious eyes. He went away out beyond the float, and then presently in the chopping of the waves McCary lost sight of him. Presently he saw another head bobbing about, and then he saw a man spring upon the float and wave his arms wildly. He seemed to have something in his hand; and then he plunged into the water again. A dozen swimmers started for the float, but it was a long way in that cold water. They found John Mackley dancing about, half crazy. He had been swimming out there with his friend Cattermole, and the old man had been taken with cramp, or something—perhaps it was the undertow—and he was gone. Mackley had pulled the hat from his head in his efforts to save him. He had been there but a minute before.

McCary pressed his way down into the crowd. He too had seen Cattermole but a few minutes before. Every effort was made to find the body, but they were all unsuccessful. "It will wash in," the guard said. "They always do."

"He was a great friend of mine," John Mackley said with feeling. "And he was the best story teller in New York." McCary followed Mackley into the long row of bath houses. He was an insurance manager. He had seen the whole thing, and he might as well know all the details.

Mackley went down the corridor with his heavy, majestic tread, his shoulders straight, his head well up, his bare, brassy arms shining. He stopped at his door and tried to fit in his key. It wouldn't turn. He looked at it again. McCary saw it too. On the brass tag were the figures "66." McCary put his hand upon the key. "You threw away the wrong one, didn't you?" he said coolly. "What do you mean?" Mackley asked angrily. His big fist was in the air. "Hush!" McCary said sternly. "You don't want any trouble, any explanations. It was all perfectly done, and you were very clever to carry it out so far, and right under my eyes. I advise you to go on the stage. It isn't so dangerous as this, and it's more profitable than Wall street—sometimes."

Mackley's face was rigid, but defiant. "I never should have suspected you in this world, except that I had my field glass to my eyes when you tore the hat and bandage off your head out there in the water. I saw it. It was Cattermole turn to Mackley and as you stripped your arms I saw your plan. It was clever, and it was simple; but you ought to have gotten under the float, and thrown away the key to 66, instead of the key to 68."

"Perhaps you can prove some of these things." "I can prove that your teeth were drawn—very bad teeth—in February of last year, and new ones put in. Perhaps the physicians who examined Cattermole, and the dentist, could corroborate my actual vision," McCary smiled. "But I will relieve your mind, Mr. Mackley. The case will never come to court. We will keep the handsome premiums you have paid us, and not advertise your histrionic abilities. I advise you to dress yourself—if you can get into 68—and be ready to meet the reporters." And Mr. McCary went over to the hotel to order his dinner.—Munsey's Magazine.

"The Lamb Gourd."

The Duke of Holstein in his "Travels in Muscovy and Persia" (1836) gives a full account of a wonderful vegetable growing in the neighborhood of the city of Samara, Russia, and known as the "lamb or sheep gourd." The Duke says: "It most resembles a lamb in all its members, and on that account is called 'the lamb gourd' by the people. It changes place in growing as far as the vine or stalk will reach, and wherever it turns the grass withers. When it ripens the stalk withers, and the outward rind is covered with a kind of hair which the Muscovites use instead of fur. They showed us some of these skins which were covered with soft wool, not unlike that of a lamb newly weaned."

Scaliger also speaks of the "lamb gourd" in his works. In one chapter he says that the queer vegetable continues to grow as long as grass is plentiful, but that when the grass falls, the "pore cretury dies from lack of nourishment." He also says that the wolf is the only animal that will feed upon it.—St. Louis Republic.

Nervous Singers.

The effects of nervousness are varied and amusing. One young mezzo-soprano was prevented just in time from walking on to the platform in a huge pair of fur-lined overboots, which were put on above her slippers, and which contrasted comically with her dainty gown. Another songstress, who was gifted with a good verbal memory, was singing without note. During a rather elaborate symphony, preceding the second verse of her song, she glanced idly to glance at the book of words which she was holding. Confusion followed. She could not link the melody with the poem. It was a terrible moment; but she stepped swiftly to the piano, glanced at the accompanist's copy, and finished her song as usual. It appeared, on inspection, that by a printer's error two lines of her song had been left out of the book of words. This had confused her, and was the cause of her failure to blend words and music together.—Atlanta.

SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL.

The bones and muscles of a human body are capable of over 1200 different motions. There is a boy in the Philadelphia Stock Exchange who can read the "ticker" by sound. St. Louis druggists say that the fashionable vice of cologne-drinking is on the increase there.

A steel bar magnetized while cold loses its magnetism upon being heated; one magnetized hot loses it on cooling. Dresses are made of wooden fibre which, when spun or otherwise prepared, is scarcely distinguished from fine silk.

A ton of pure gold is worth \$602,799.11, and a ton of pure silver \$37,704.84. A million dollars in gold coin weighs about a ton and three-quarters. In New Mexico canyons one may see natural stone pillars set into fantastic forms by the sand blasts formed by the wind sucking up and down the narrow pass.

The first habitable planet, according to the scientists, was the fifth satellite of Saturn, which began to cool about 5000 years after the origin of the planetary system. Watchmakers as a rule are singularly free from affections of the eye, although they wear a powerful magnifying glass in one eye only for at least five hours out of the twenty-four.

The strongest tremor known is the "Bilian" or Borneo ironwood, whose breaking strain is 1.52 times greater than that of English oak. By long exposure it becomes of ebony blackness and immensely hard. The weight of a German soldier's equipment when in marching order is now forty-seven pounds, fifteen less than that of a British soldier. The Czar's foot soldiers carry a weight of sixty-eight pounds each.

An ice locomotive was some years ago constructed for use in Russia. It is employed to haul freight between St. Petersburg and Cronstadt. The front part rests on a sledge and the driving wheels are studded with spikes.

James Warham, a farmer living near Seneca, Ky., is puzzling the physicians. Bright blue spots cover his body at periodical intervals. When the spots appear a knot the size of a walnut presents itself and remains until the spots go away. The surgical treatment of consumption is, it is stated by a medical authority, long been a dream of European surgeons. It is now announced that, as a beginning of a series of experiments, the diseased apex of the lung of a patient suffering from tuberculosis has been successfully removed.

A singular aberration of the siderrms of marines on board English ships is reported, says the Electrical Review. It appears that the buttons belonging to the marines have, in many cases, become highly magnetized through contact with, or close proximity to, dynamo, and the result is that compasses have become affected by scintillations passing near them when wearing these siderrms. An order has been issued that in future sentries are not to wear siderrms when on duty in the neighborhood of dynamo, and it is expected that this will overcome the difficulty.

The Word "Mrs."

The word "Mrs." is a curious one; if indeed it is a word. The Century Dictionary calls it "an abbreviation of Mistress or Misses," but the spelling certainly makes it an abbreviation of the first, and the second form is apparently only a contracted English pronunciation. The full word has fallen into disgrace now, and so, unless one makes it very plain that the term is quaintly used, one has to say Misses. "About 150 years ago and earlier," says an English writer, "Mrs." was applied quite impartially to unmarried as well as married ladies. Even children were sometimes styled "Mrs." The burial of an infant daughter of John Milton, who died at the age of five months, is recorded in the register of St. Margaret, Westminster, and her name is entered as "Mrs. Katherine Milton," followed by a small 'o' to indicate that a child is meant. Thus, apparently, one is historically justified in writing "Mrs." before a woman's name, whenever there is doubt. And yet the lady may be so unscientific as to take offense.—Rochester Post Express.

A Strange Musical Instrument.

A musical instrument, the like of which has never been seen before, is the outcome of many years' hard thinking by a Swedish electrician and musician. There is a frame, and on it are hung a score of tuned bells, a series of steel bars struck by metallic hammers, a row of steel strings of necessary tension, a xylophone, and a fraudulent bagpipe, made out of a bar of steel and an electric current. The operator can sit at the keys a few feet away or a hundred miles—it doesn't matter which, so long as the connecting electric wires are fixed up. For a beginner I should recommend the hundred miles radius. The keyboard, which is like that of a piano, but with few keys, is equipped with switches, so that one set of instruments or the whole lot may be operated on at once.—New York Dispatch.

A Barometer Tree.

Attention has been called to a remarkable property of the Fontainebleau service tree. The leaves of this tree (which are green above and white below) turn so as to present the white under surface to the sky just before a rain. Those who are well acquainted with the peculiarities of this vegetable barometer say the "sign" never fails.—St. Louis Republic.

ATMOSPHERIC PHENOMENA.

ELECTRICAL AND OTHER CURIOUS FEELINGS OF NATURE.

The Tornado's Funnel-Shaped Cloud—Extraordinary Performances of Lightning—Sand Storms.

TORNADOES are the most extraordinary and among the most destructive of atmospheric phenomena. It has been reckoned that on an average each of them costs one life. That which struck Louisville in 1890 wiped out \$3,250,000 worth of property and 135 lives. The funnel-shaped cloud which does the damage runs at a speed of from forty to eighty miles an hour. It looks like an immense balloon, black as night, sweeping its neck round and round with terrible fury, and tearing everything to pieces in its path. Its track is always from southwest to northeast, the width of it being rarely over 300 feet. Warning of the storm's approach is given by a still and sultry air, with a lurid or greenish sky. People feel depressed without knowing why.

This gas that covers the surface of the earth, by which we live by breathing, is a wonderful element. The electricity which pervades it, though employed for various useful purposes by man, is a mystery yet. Some of its phases are astonishing and beyond explaining. For example, there is the most intense form of known, termed globular lightning. It takes the form of spheres of dazzling brilliancy. Such spheres were seen playing about during the great Louisville tornado. People on board of ships have often observed balls of fire "as big as barrels" rolling along the surface of the ocean. These spheres are apt to burst with deafening reports.

Tubes of glass made by lightning are often found in sand. The electricity passes into the ground and melts the silicious material, forming little pipes, the inside diameter of which represents the "throat" of the thunderbolt. Such tubes measuring as much as twenty-seven feet in length have been discovered. No doubt exists as to the method of their manufacture, inasmuch as people have sought for them and dug them up still hot from places freshly struck by lightning.

Lightning does a great deal more damage and is much more fatal to human life than is generally imagined. It kills sixty-nine persons every year in France. In this country it has been reckoned to destroy twenty-two lives annually, but this is probably an underestimate. By a single flash 2000 sheep were wiped out on one occasion in Ethiopia. In New Granada a place, near the gold mine of Vega de Sapia, where no one will willingly dwell on account of the frequent strokes of lightning. A stroke at Brescia, August 18, 1769, exploded a magazine containing 207,000 pounds of gunpowder, wiping out a great part of the town and 3000 lives. A long list might be given of similar fatalities nearly as disastrous. Before the invention of lightning conductors churches and other lofty buildings were constantly struck.

One of the most interesting of electrical phenomena is the so-called St. Elmo's fire. It appears in the shape of brush-like discharges from metal points in the rigging of ships and elsewhere. These are termed by sailors "corpse candles." If three of them are seen at sea it signifies that the vessel will be lost, while a single one means a continued storm. However, the superstition varies considerably. In a passage of the "Commentaries," Caesar, says: "About the second watch there suddenly arose a thick cloud, followed by a shower of hail; and the same night the points of the spears of the fifth legion seemed to take fire." Columbus on his second voyage beheld several corpse candles playing about the mast of his ship. He sent a man aloft to fetch one down, but it could not be grasped somehow. The St. Elmo's fire is said to give out a sort of roaring sound like a port fire.

In some of the desert regions of the West—notably the Painted Desert of Arizona—those prismatic phenomena called "sand storms" are frequent. Sometimes they rise seemingly to the clouds and obtain a diameter of fifteen or twenty feet. A spot of ground becomes excessively heated, causing the air above it to ascend. This occasions an influx of the atmosphere from all sides, but unequally, the result being a gyratory motion visible in the sand or dust raised into the air. In other words, a sort of natural chimney is created, through which there is a powerful up draught. Such whirling columns have a very weird appearance as they move hither and thither, sometimes many of them at once, across the desert. One might imagine them to be animated by evil spirits, and it is no wonder that people in India call them "devils."

A peculiar phenomenon observed in various places, but most perfectly among the mountains of the Brocken in Germany, is the so-called "Brocken spectre." It is an enlarged shadow of the observer cast by the sun, near sunrise or sunset, upon the fog which envelops him. Its enormous size makes the apparition rather startling. Presumably, it is due to the fact that the shadow is thrown upon the particles of moisture suspended in the air all along to the limit of vision.—Washington Star.

Measures are being taken by the authorities of Croto to revive the silk industry of the island, which was once flourishing, but which has been dwindling for some years owing to the use of bad seed. A good supply is to be furnished free.

JUST AS OF OLD.

I miss you from my side this lonely night, And feel that nothing new on earth is true. Old sweet pictures in the mellow light Give to me the happy past—and you, Just as of old.

I wish that you would steal behind my chair And press your fingers to my tired eyes, And when, surprised, I found you laughing there, You'd lay your dear head down, where now none lies, Just as of old.

And as the fire flickered on your hair, Till each bright tress was like a skein of gold, I'd give the world if smiling, restful there, You'd whisper low, "I love you," as of old, Just as of old. —Chicago Times.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

The camel probably thinks his hump a thing of beauty.—Puck.

Nothing succeeds like the man who has the rewards of success to distribute.—Truth.

An ounce of prevention is not worth a pound of cure in the pork-packing business.—Puck.

Some people are too good to gossip with you because they don't trust you.—Achtion Globe.

We never see a bankrupt at the charity soup house. That's where his victims go.—Truth.

Mabel.—"With what verses are you the most familiar?" Poet.—"Reveries"—New York World.

If some men were half as big as they think they are the world would have to be enlarged.—Texas Sittings.

"Down brakes!" cried the railroad man's wife as the dinner plates slipped from her grasp.—Linnell Courier.

A little choppy weather was naturally expected in a month that came in like a lamb.—Philadelphia Record.

Revenge is sweet sometimes, possibly, but never when the other fellow gets in his work on you.—Somerville Journal.

A teakettle can sing when it is merely filled with water. But man, proud man, is no teakettle.—Texas Sittings.

Though his is largely a robust sort of life, the average dairyman is pretty much of a milk-and-water chap.—Buffalo Courier.

Little Girl (looking at impressionistic landscape)—"Mamma, what made him think it looked liked that?"—Harlem Life.

"Her hair is just too sweet for anything." Ah, indeed! Perhaps she dresses it with a honey comb.—New York Mercury.

"Do you think Officer McObb is square?" "Surely, he must be; he is never 'round when wanted."—Indianapolis Journal.

She.—"And what have you been studying since you left college, law or medicine?" He.—"Neither; economy."—New York Ledger.

Teacher.—"What have the various expeditions to the North Pole accomplished?" Dull Boy.—"Made geographical lessons harder."

Mrs. Captain Smith.—"And you think any soldier can be fearless?" Colonel Stotson.—"Yes; all he has to do is to keep out o' danjah, mam!"

It seems the family are sitting, Each keeping as still as a mouse. As they ponder the ancient question, "If it better to move, or clean house?"—New York Mercury.

"Man's a fool." He walks out on the lawn and orders the billy goat of his premises, follows a mule and argues with his mother-in-law.—Galveston News.

A telephone girl receives calls, but she doesn't pay them. This part of the business is attended by those hiring the instrument.—Philadelphia Times.

We have great respect for the wisdom of the ancients. They were born in time to say all their smart things before we had a chance to think of 'em.—Puck.

The Wife.—"John, these carpets must be beat." The Husband.—"Why, my dear, when I bought them the dealer told me they couldn't be beat."—New York Press.

It is only guileless boyhood that vows he "will never do it again." Even when caught in the act, the full-grown man of sound mind tries to prove that he didn't do it at all.—Puck.

Witts.—"There goes a woman whose successes have turned many another woman's head." Watto.—"That's queer. What is her line?" Witts.—"Millinery."—Buffalo Courier.

I wish that you would steal behind my chair And press your fingers to my tired eyes, And when, surprised, I found you laughing there, You'd lay your dear head down, where now none lies, Just as of old.

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