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The population of the German Empire is increasing at the rate of 500,000 a year.

Dr. Edward Everett Hale says that only eleven per cent. of the American people are illiterate.

English courts have decided the engagements rings are not recoverable at law. A Vermont court held they were.

People who live beyond their means and are very tardy in paying their debts have been blacklisted in Vienna, Austria, by a daring publisher. A book containing their names has met with a big sale.

The old Lincoln homestead, near Hodgenville, Leno Co., Ky., where Abraham Lincoln was born, is to be purchased by an association of the citizens of Hodgenville and made into a public park. The homestead is now known as the Creal Farm, and lies about two and a half miles south of Hodgenville. An electric railway is to be built out to the farm, announces the New York Sun, and in a general way it is intended as another Mount Vernon.

Creameries scattered over many parts of the East are making considerable change in the conditions of farming, the Chicago Herald takes note. The dairy is becoming more and more important, and poor farms are enriched by the presence of many cattle. The creameries buy milk by the hundred pounds and farmers like the simplicity of this wholesale trade. Meanwhile there is a constant interest in creamery prices and local newspapers publish quotations from time to time as news items.

Certain tables of longevity just published in England by Professor Humphreys leave the whole matter pretty much in the dark. Of the 824 cases in which the subjects have reached ages varying from eighty to over a hundred years, one-third were small eaters, and only one-tenth appear to have had robust appetites. Physicians, as a class, were found to fall below the average age. The usual directions for prolonging life by diet, sleep and exercise are not strikingly confirmed by these tables, maintains the New York Tribune.

A notable example of a big result produced by small means is found in the fact that lead pencil users have whittled away several big forests of cedar trees in Europe, and the supply of wood suitable for lead pencils is practically exhausted in the Old World. An order has just been placed by a noted German firm of pencil-makers with a California lumber company for a large quantity of sequoia wood, which is found to be the best wood now available for pencils. The sequoia is the big tree of California. It seems too bad to the New York Sun that the grand old giants should be sacrificed, and especially that their end should be lead pencil shavings.

The London Times says that the Manchester ship canal is both a financial and commercial failure. It was opened eleven months ago, and it is not doing as much business now as at first. It is stated that the gross receipts of the canal for a year will be less than \$400,000—not enough to pay the interest on the first debentures. The city of Manchester in building this canal, which has cost upward of \$25,000,000, expected that ships carrying cotton and other merchandise would use the canal and unload their cargoes at Manchester docks, instead of at Liverpool; but upon the completion of the canal, the railroads immediately reduced their rates, and the

A VOICE FROM THE NIGHT.

O heron, from the lonely shore
Unceasingly thy cry,
Ill-boding, dismal, harsh,
Arises through the mist of night
That gathers deep and cold and white
Upon the silent marsh,
Dim, drifting shrouds that folded lie
Around my door.

What shadow of the future's needs
Dimly thy simple heart,
Poor dweller in the fog?
What evil spirit of unrest
Disturbs the quiet of thy nest
Beyond the tussocked bog?
Do demons even ply their art
Among the reeds?

Perhaps thy bright-eyed mate is led
Across the winding creek,
Belated, tired of wing.
Then grieve not! Soon thy loving note
As beacon's bliss to storm-tossed boat
The wanderer will bring.
O heron, on the words I speak
Recall the dead?

O heron on the lonely shore,
The east is gray above;
Thy watch is well nigh done,
And gentle dawn will bring thee sleep,
While I my endless vigil keep,
Jawelcoming the sun:
For she, my light, my life, my love,
Will come no more.

—H. Prescott Beach, in Lippincott.

ON EVEN TERMS.

YOU appear to forget that this fellow Vaughan has the reputation of being one of the most desperate criminals that ever stepped. King of the Coiners' he is rightly named; but it is chiefly because he is at the head of a dangerous gang. And because, by a lucky chance, you have found out that he is living in private lodgings under an assumed name, makes it none the less risky for us two alone to attempt his capture.

It was in a decidedly dissatisfied tone that Mr. Roche, the detective, urged upon his superior officer the hazardous nature of the business they were upon; but Arnold Bond merely smiled good humoredly as he responded:

"Whatever risk there may be, Roche, I think I shall face. And as I expect to take our man entirely by surprise, in the very bosom of his family, I don't anticipate much resistance. Still, I am prepared for it, and don't think that he will easily give us the slip. For the rest, you will simply carry out my instructions."

The two detectives knocked at the door of an unpretentious looking house in a quiet street of the east end of London.

Almost immediately, a respectable looking woman opened the door, and, stepping back, said, before Bond could speak:

"Ah, sir. I don't believe they expected you again to-night; but it's well you've come, for the poor mite is very bad, they say."

With the ever ready wit of a shrewd detective, quick to take advantage of the slightest error, Bond instantly checked the exclamation of surprise which sprang instinctively to his lips, and, stepping in, quietly observed:

"Indeed! I am sorry to hear that. Our usual friend could not come himself, but, as his partner, I thought it advisable to look in again. Let me see—Mrs. Sutton, second floor, is it not?"

Neither of the detectives scarce ventured to breathe as they anxiously waited to see the result of this rather haphazard remark.

"Oh, I took you for Dr. Dalton himself, sir! Yes, second floor. It's rather dark, but I daresay you can find your way up. Lor! I never knowed before as how the doctor had a partner."

"This gentleman is merely a friend of mine. If you don't mind, he will wait for me in the passage. I don't suppose I shall be many minutes," Bond said, inwardly chuckling with satisfaction at the lucky mistake which had, undoubtedly, saved him and his companion no little at the outset.

Leaving his subordinate—who had previously received a careful in-

The bed was occupied by a little girl of about six years of age, who, it needed no second glance to perceive was very near to death indeed. She was wide awake, staring in mute terror from the detective to her father and back again. Nor did the white face of the coiner's wife, who stood trembling by the bedside, express much less alarm than the child's.

"Let's clear out before you frighten my young 'un to death," said the coiner, in a quieter voice. "Never mind, Jess," he went on, turning to the child and speaking in such a tender and soothing tone that Bond stared with astonishment, "Perhaps, soon, I shall come back, and then you'll be better, and we will—"

Vaughan's voice faltered, and he paused.

"Ah, take him away, sir, but don't hurry him over what he very well knows must be the last goodbye he'll ever say to his child! What hope there may have been you'll take with you but to take it at this moment—"

The wretched mother, unable to articulate another word, sank into a chair, hid her face in her hands, and gave way to a sudden outburst of grief.

"Is the gentleman going to take you away, then, daddy?" the child said freely. "Oh, don't go! I do so want you to-night." Then, looking at the detective with great, earnest eyes, little Jess continued, half indignantly, half pathetically: "How would your little girl like you to be taken away if she was ill, and wanted you to stop with her dreadfully bad?"

An involuntary smile gathered for one brief instant on the stern countenance of Bond.

"It's true, worse luck," whispered the coiner, stepping near his captor. "Poor little beggar, she's mighty bad, and the doctor says the next few hours means life or death. More'n anything, she's got to be kept particular quiet, so let's clear out and leave 'em; and, please God, I'll see her again yet. Yes, my prince of traps, you can see what makes me such a miserable coward, eh?"

As if ashamed of the tremor in his speech, the coiner turned, and, taking down his hat, crushed it upon his head and approached the door with a rigid countenance and twitching lips. Apparently, he dared not trust himself to take even a farewell look at his child. But, as Arnold Bond moved toward the door also, his glance fell for an instant upon the thin, white face of little Jess, who had already fallen back exhausted.

She was gazing steadily at her father, who, however, kept his face carefully averted. The pitiful, pleading expression in the sick child's eyes struck the detectives to the heart, for it was a look which expressed more eloquently than any words the bitter disappointment she felt at seeing one she evidently dearly loved about to be taken from her this night of all nights.

The detective paused abruptly, hesitated a moment, and then the resolute expression on his features softened suddenly, and he said, in a half-jocular tone, to hide the emotion he could not entirely conceal:

"Stay, Vaughan; I can't do it after all. I can't take such a cruel advantage of even you at a time like this! That's all and good night."

"Bond, Bond," cried the king of the coiners, springing forward as he recovered from his momentary stupefaction, "Heaven prosper you for this! Bad as I am, I hope I'll be able to give you your reward for this, if it's years to come."

A moment later the detective had gone. He had sacrificed an opportunity of adding enormously to his reputation.

It was a year later before the authorities succeeded in discovering the "factory" where Vaughan and his confederates turned out the cleverly made counterfeit coins which had so long been passed with impunity in the quarters of the metropolis.

But after infinite search, they found out all he was worth. One night he surprised the counterfeiters.

Bond got word of the door, and, naturally, he was

the beams which supported the flooring above.

The detective now recognized to the full extent the really serious nature of his position; and, half dazed by the terrible calamity which had so suddenly befallen him, was giving up all hope of escape, when for the first time the leader of the gang—Michael Vaughan—himself spoke.

"Leave him to me, lads, and get you along while you may. There's not a jiffy to lose. Hark! hear the traps! They're breaking in already."

"We don't go until we've choked the life out of the rat. Who's put 'em on our trail? Run him up sharp and have him a pleasant surprise to his friends," replied one of the ruffians.

With these words the unfortunate officer was jerked off his feet, but at the same moment Vaughan snatched up a formidable knife and at a single stroke severed the rope above his head.

"I'm with you, Mr. Bond," ejaculated Vaughan, with grim determination stamped upon his white face. "Aha! see how my unctuous crew sink back from your bulldog! And by all that's lucky for us both, here come your men. Another minute's delay and I reckon it would have gone a bit hard for us both."

Almost before he had finished speaking the long cellar-like room became for a short space a scene of desperate struggling, the walls echoing a chorus of savage cries and shouts.

Of all the members of the gang their leader alone offered no resistance, but lapsed into moody silence.

Only when the opportunity offered did he whisper in the detective's ear—

"You see, I haven't forgotten what I once promised, sir, although you only had a smasher's word for it. Perhaps you didn't know it, but I reckon you had the life of my little Jess in your hands that night a year ago, and maybe you'll agree now that I've paid a fair price for it. As for me—but there, we're on even terms once more."—London Tit-Bits.

A Defense of Dirt.

Every few years somebody raises the question whether St. Paul's Cathedral in London ought not to be cleansed from the soot with which it is encrusted, and restored to something like its primitive whiteness. Some time ago an experiment of the sort was made on one of the porticos, which forthwith assumed a mottled or piebald appearance. Now the matter has come up for discussion again, and the following interesting point is made in a letter to the Times by a well known architect: "I have had the opportunity, when examining some of our London stone-faced churches, of removing the coat of dirt with a view of seeing the condition of the stone under it, and have found it to be perfect. The casing of dirt appeared to be made chiefly of road dust which had adhered to the stone (only the outer coat of all being gray black). All the deleterious chemicals must have gone out of the lower layer, so that the dirt was a perfect protection. If it were all cleaned off, the stone would be subjected to the strong chemicals in our London atmosphere. It must be remembered that this dirt only adheres to the parts which are not completely washed by the rain, and that it is just those parts, therefore, which are in most need of protection. If at some future time the atmosphere of London should be as pure as the atmosphere of the country is now, it might be wise to act on the suggestion, but until that time comes I sincerely trust that no such experiment will be made."—Washington Star.

By Balloon.

Perhaps the North Pole may be reached in a balloon. The globe has been mooted and may be out in the near future.

Sign of the Red Cross—Formidable Sword Wielded by the Executioner—Strangling a Prisoner.

THE execution of the two Japanese spies whom we Americans delivered up to the Chinese, and the decapitation of a man-of-war's captain accused of cowardice in the sea fight off Ping-Yang, were recent notable instances of the use of the headsman's sword here in China, writes Julian Ralph in Harper's Weekly. There have been other beheadings, for offences growing out of the war and for the ordinary criminal offences, and these have lent a new interest to the subject, even to foreigners resident in China, who frequently read of such punishment, but seldom witness them or hear them described. I have been so fortunate as to fall in with a distinguished European who witnessed the legal slaughter of a number of criminals in Peking. The account he has given me of what he saw is so unlike the popular idea of the methods of justice here that I have written down the substance of it.

"The official on duty on the morning of which I speak, having reached the mat shed, clothed in all the glory of a mandarin's dress—button, neck-lace, breast-cloth, and all—ordered the men brought before him one by one. The law says that in such cases the condemned men shall admit their guilt, and ask that punishment be no longer deferred. Like almost all good law and almost all good logic in China, this regulation is turned into mere ceremony and pretence. The prisoners neither say nor do anything, but a man who stands behind each one pushes him over, bumps his head on the ground and says, 'Yow.' This word, or one with that sound, means 'I want,' and the presiding mandarin understands it to have been uttered by the prisoner, and to mean, 'I want to be punished.' While the official ticks off the man's name upon the list before him, the man is pressed down upon the ground and a red cross is painted on his neck. This is done in order that the right head may be fitted upon the right body afterwards, if proof of the man's death is required for official entry.

"The prisoner thus painted is pulled away to the execution ground, where the headsman is heating his swords in a great caldron of hot water. The swords are rather more like knives than swords. Each is a yard in length, half an inch thick at the edge, and an inch and a half or two inches thick at the back. If you should weld together nine or ten of our heaviest axes, one laid beyond the other, you would make something like one of these knives. The victim is laid upon his face, and his legs are tied together. A long piece of whip-cord is looped under the man's jaw and tied into his pigtail. So much of its free end is left that two men go off with it to a distance and pull on it with all their might, while a third one sits on the condemned man's back. The executioner seizes a knife and stands over the victim, whose neck is seen to pull out—and out—and out. The knife falls, the head is severed, and frequently the men who are pulling the whip-cord fall backward and roll half over, like tumblers in a circus. The executioner picks up the head and holds it towards the man who has been beheaded. He looks at it carelessly, and makes a mark on the front of him.

DECAPITATIONS IN CHINA.

HOW CONVICTS ARE BEHEADED ACCORDING TO CHINESE LAW.

SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL.

Aluminum corrodes in salt water. A telephone line between Berlin and Vienna has been formally opened.

The blood flows almost as freely through the bones as through the flesh of very young children.

The hiccough nut is a South African plant bearing an oblong fruit, the eating of which causes violent hiccough.

A Hartford (Conn.) man has invented a new electric motor, which he claims will run over 100 miles an hour.

A steel ship has been constructed in Cardiff, Cornwall, with the standing rigging, as well as the hull, all of steel.

Dr. Maxim is said to entertain the hope that his aeroplane will be practical enough for general use before the close of this century.

Automatic machines have been devised for use on a moving train which mechanically record the condition of every foot of the track.

Railroad authorities say that an ordinary locomotive has 300 horsepower and burns a ton of coke for eighty miles of passenger train travel.

If man had been limited to the use of his natural weapons of defense he would long since have been beaten out of the contest by the animal kingdom.

Professor Bonney says that a fall of fifteen to twenty degrees F. in the average temperature would be sufficient to account for all known glaciation in the northern hemisphere.

At a recent session of the central criminal court, London, a witness who was suffering from a virulent affection kissed the Bible in the usual way. The judge promptly ordered the book destroyed.

Air can be frozen at a temperature of 293 degrees below zero, and the product, which can be handled and felt, burns, so to speak, with its excessive cold. Frozen air can be produced in any quantity, but its cost, \$500 a gallon, is likely to prevent a large business.

The observations of twenty-five years, made in the Bay of Bengal by the Indian Government meteorologists, have shown that the average temperature rises during years that sun spots are numerous and sink when they are few. When the number of sun spots exceeded the average the barometric pressure was less than its average.

To protect iron or steel used in pipes, roofs, bridges or other constructions where it is liable to suffer from corrosion two important precautions are necessary; first, see that there is no scale on the metal to begin with, and second, paint it with nothing but pure linseed oil and oxide of lead or graphite paints. Of course, frequent inspection and care are also required.

A foreign journal states that by a recent order of the Russian admiralty petroleum will be tried as a fuel under the boilers of the two new armored cruisers Rostislaff and Russia, now being built for the Russian navy. These war vessels will be the first to be supplied with petroleum furnaces, and a thorough test will be made of the value of this fuel before other vessels are fitted for its use.

Electrolytic action with sugar.

DO YOU WANT?

Do you want some real estate, Or a box of paper collars? Do you lack a chicken coop Or a pocketful of dollars? Make an ad—make an ad.

Do you want a billiard table? Would you sell a house and lot? Want to rent a lumber yard Or a tea or coffee pot? Make an ad—make an ad.

Have you got a horse to trade, Or a stovepipe, or a bell, Or a gold mine, or a store, Or a block of stock to sell? Make an ad—make an ad. —Printers' Ink.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

Never try to make game of a tame duck.

A long head is a great help in preventing a long face.

Put a beggar on horseback and he'll run into debt.—Puck.

Charity covers a multitude of sins; justice uncovers them.

No one has as much money as people imagine.—Atheism Globe.

Of all the sad words to scribble on cranks, The saddest are these, "Declined with thanks." —Truth.

A word to the wise is sufficient—especially if they have chips on their shoulders.

She—"Do you believe marriage is a mistake?" He—"No; I am a bachelor." —Puck.

Some "jokes" are so utterly bad that they are actually good.—New York Tribune.

Gashing is excusable in immature girls and oil wells.—Pittsburg Chronicle-Telegraph.

Kitty—"Oh, Mr. Flirtily is so tender, isn't he?" Judith—"Yes—pre-tender." —Detroit Free Press.

"Do you think Elsie will take her millionaire for better or worse?" "No; for more or less." —Puck.

Never judge a man by the clothes he wears; form your estimate from the clothes his wife wears.—Puck.

The man who has attained a high position must not think himself exempt from the force of gravitation.

One of the sweetest things in neckties is a true love knot made by the girl's own hands.—Philadelphia Times.

Life is real, life is earnest, — And the moments speed away, — In a manner far too rapid — When we have a note to pay. —Detroit Free Press.

The man with nobody to care for is quite as badly off as the man with nobody to care for him.—Galveston News.

When a man makes a success of anything, the conceit of other men is so great that they think they can do just as well.—Atheism Globe.

When man begins to climb too fast — With all his heart and soul, — Invariably he finds at last — He's climbed into a hole.

If you could condense the wisdom of ages into a single short sentence, couldn't you get a young man to do it for five minutes?