REPUBLICAN NEWS ITEM
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Published Every Thursday Afternoon
By The Sullivan Publishing Co
At the County Seat of Sullivan County.
LAPORTE, PA.
W. C. MASON, President.
THOS. J. INGHAM, Sec'y & Treas.

Entered at the Post Office at Laporte, as second-class mail matter.

WATCH THE LIPS.

Their Sensitive Muscles Make Them Great Telltales.

"It's a queer thing," remarked the professor, "how people can control their eyes and not their mouths."

The inventor with whom he happened to be talking made the comment that the professor probably meant tongues when speaking of mouths.

"No, I didn't mean tongues. I meant mouths," the professor rejoined. "I mean, if you want to be scientifically accurate, the action of the lip muscles. There's nearly always, in a moment of excitement, of exaltation, depression or emergency, a telltale movement on their part which can't be guarded against. Why can't it be guarded against? Because it is so largely unconscious. Most of us from our youth up have been trained to use our eyes and to use them in such a way as to conceal our emotions. It's different with the mouth. Perhaps we haven't advanced far enough to do two such important things at the same time. Anyway the fact remains that we don't do it.

"If, for example, I have reason to believe that a man is not telling me the truth I don't give my attention to his eyes. He may look at me as fearlessly as he wants. What I watch for is something significant in the region of his face below the nose. If there is no change in the expression of his lips I am disposed after all to believe him. But if there is the least trembling or twitching, the least exhibition, let us call it, of nervousness—well, then, I have my doubts."

"I suppose," observed the inventor, "that while that fact does not explain the wearing of the mustache it shows that the mustache has uses."

"It does," returned the professor, "but you must remember that the mustache, as a rule, doesn't obscure the lower lip. And the lower lip, if you'll take the trouble to notice, is if anything more revelatory than the upper one. It is usually that lip which gives the expression to the mouth. The upper lip follows suit, as it were."

"Well, well," said the inventor, fingering his mustache.—New York Press.

A KING'S UNDRESSING.

The Ceremony Was a Wonderful One in Louis XVI.'s Time.

In "Memoirs of the Comtesse de Boigne" (1781-1814), edited from the original manuscript by Charles Nicoullaud, is found the following realistic description of the "coucher" of Louis XVI.:

"The king's coat, waistcoat and shirt were taken off. He stood there naked to the waist, scratching and rubbing himself as if he had been alone, in the presence of the whole court and often many strangers of distinction. The first valet handed the nightshirt, to the most highly qualified person, to one of the princes of the blood if any were present. This was a right and not a favor. When the person was one with whom he was on familiar terms the king would often play tricks while putting it on, stepping on one side to make the holder run after him, accompanying these charming jokes with loud guffaws, which greatly vexed those who were sincerely attached to him. When his shirt was on he put on his dressing gown, while three valets unfastened his waist belt and knee breeches, which fell to his ankles, and in that garb, scarcely able to walk with these ridiculous fetters, he would shuffle round the circle of those in waiting. When the king had had enough of it, he shuffled backward to an armchair which was pushed into the middle of the room and dropped into it, lifting up his legs. Two pages on their knees immediately seized his legs, pulled off the king's shoes and let them drop with a crash, which was a point of etiquette. As soon as he heard the noise the usher opened the door, saying, 'Gentlemen will please pass out.' Those present went away, and the ceremony was finished. However, the person who was holding the candlestick was allowed to stay if he had anything special to say to the king, and hence the value that was attached to this strange favor."

Unlucky Suggestion.

An old vicar had a groom who had been detected stealing his master's oats. The vicar had not decided what course to take, and meantime the groom had gone to the curate to ask him to plead for him, and the sympathetic young fellow hastened to the rectory to appeal to the vicar. The old vicar heard his curate out, but looked obdurate, so as a last resource the curate quoted Scripture as a plea for leniency and said we were taught when a man took our coat to let him take the cloak as well.

"That's true," said the vicar dryly, "and as the fellow has taken my oats I am going to give him the sack."—London Answers.

THE TOSS OF A COIN.

Mathematics of the Turning of Heads or Tails.

CHANCE AND THEORY CLASH.

If Heads Turn Ten Times In Sequence, Theory Says the Odds Are Against Another Head, Yet Chance Says the Odds on the Next Toss Are Even.

A famous mathematician, Professor Karl Pearson, once spent the greater part of his vacation deliberately tossing a shilling and making careful notes of how it fell. He spun the shilling 25,000 times, and a pupil of his, working separately, spun a penny 8,200 times and also tested the drawing of 9,000 tickets from a bag.

It may seem strange that a learned professor should put himself to such an amount of trouble to demonstrate what every schoolboy who had ever tossed a coin already knew. Yet, as a matter of fact, few really do grasp the laws which govern such an apparently straightforward matter as the tossing of a coin. In the words of the arithmetician, the theory of "runs"—that is, heads turning up repeatedly or tails turning up repeatedly—is precisely as follows:

The chance of a head is one-half; of two heads following, is one-half multiplied by one-half—that is, one-quarter; of three heads in succession, one-half multiplied by one-half multiplied by one-half—that is, one-eighth. Now, what do you suppose is the chance of a run of eleven heads? It is safe to say that not many persons, however accustomed to tossing coins, have reasoned this out. The fact is that one "run" of eleven heads is on the average only to be expected in 2,048 sets of coin tossing.

Although the man in the street may not have reckoned this, he is always quite positive that if, say, a coin has fallen ten times head upward he is safe to start backing tails. He puts his money on tails turning up because, he says, it stands to sense that the run of heads can't continue. But does it? At the eleventh toss the head of the coin is just as big as it ever was. What mysterious influence can a past event, the tossing of ten heads, have on a future one which has no link with them—namely, the tossing of the coin the eleventh time? Surely each toss is an event by itself, as Sir Hiram Maxim said of a game at roulette at Monte Carlo:

"It is a pure, unadulterated question of chance, and it is not influenced in the least by anything which has ever taken place before or that ever will take place in the future."

A nasty piece of plain speaking this for the cranks who had published schemes for "breaking the bank" and whose plans depended entirely on the theory that if one game ended in a win for "red" the chances against it ending "red" a second time were less, a third time less still, and so on.

This of course would be a sound enough argument provided that you regard some dozens of games of roulette or tosses of a coin all as one continuous event. It is quite safe, for instance, to offer beforehand big odds against a coin turning up heads ten times running. But in practice the public house loafer does not do this. What he does is to bet on each separate toss by itself, thus defeating his own aims. The odds against a coin turning up heads eleven times are as has been shown, something like 2,000 to 1. But suppose you only start betting at the tenth toss. What are the odds against the eleventh toss again being a head?

The odds, so far from being 2,000 to 1, are actually 1 to 1! To use an Irishism, the odds are even—that is to say, if you split up the eleven tosses into eleven separate events to be bet on separately your bets should be "even money" all the time, however often heads turn up running. But if you view the eleven tosses as one combined event and you offer a preliminary bet against the whole eleven results being heads you will have to give gigantic odds.

All this goes to prove the absolute uncertainty of gambling. The greatest mathematicians of the day cannot be certain how a coin will fall, so that the man of merely average abilities who stakes anything important on the toss of a coin is allowing that part of his fortune to pass entirely outside his control.—Pearson's Weekly.

South Africa's Locusts.

Millions and millions of locusts settle, and millions and millions continue flying to settle farther on. They have been settling in myriads for a hundred miles and more, and yet enough are left flying to hide the sun. On the ground nothing can be seen but locusts. So thickly do they pack that not a square inch of earth or grass is visible. As you walk through them a narrow wake is left for a few seconds in your track where they have flown out of your way, and as they rise in thousands before your feet the noise of their wings is like an electric power station.—Grand Magazine.

Putting It Mildly.

The flooding of a Yorkshire mine had a tragic result, and a miner was deputed to break the news to a poor woman whose husband had been drowned.

"Does Widow Jones live here?"

"No," was the indignant lady's reply.

"You're a liar!" he said.—London Tatler.

Never tell your resolution beforehand.—Selden.