

AN AUTHOR'S START.

When Marion Crawford Began His Career as an Author.

Marion Crawford I had known since he was a lad of fourteen years. I, too, was a youngster in those days. We were living in a New Jersey town and he came there to visit his aunt, Mrs. Adolphe Maillard, a sister of Mrs. Julia Ward Howe. Although he came from Italy he dressed as an English lad, with high hat, Eton-jacket, wide collar and long trousers. You can imagine the sensation that he made in that quiet New Jersey town. We had had kings and princes as our neighbors, but a young boy in a high hat was unknown to us and therefore much more of a novelty. From those days, which were filled with youthful escapades, I did not see Frank Crawford, as he was then called, until he was a full grown man and had knocked about the world a bit. His uncle, the well known Sam Ward, brought him to the office of the *Circle*, then consisting of a single small room over Danell's dry goods store in Broadway, New York. "This lad wants to be a writer," said his Uncle Sam. "I wish that you would give him a chance to learn the business." We gave him the chance, not only for old times' sake, but because we liked his looks. "That fellow can do anything he cares to," I remarked after he left the office. So we let him write. He wrote book reviews, editorials and even poetry, and after that he wrote "Mr. Isaacs." You know the rest. From that on it was easy enough. He went out and we knew that, though we had given him the chance he wanted at the time that he wanted it, he would have found it quick enough anywhere else. But he never forgot what he chose to regard as a favor.—Jeanette L. Gilder in Putnam's.

POLENTA.

A Woman Tells of Her Introduction to the Italian Dish.

Did you ever eat polenta? Hear what one woman has to tell you before you say no. "Just let me tell you about my introduction to this Italian dish. Last summer, after I had closed our camp in the mountains, I was invited to spend the night with an acquaintance who had the next camp. "She is a charming woman, one who has lived abroad more than in this country. She is devoted to Italy and things Italian, and her cook from southern Italy has been with her several years. "As I was about to retire my hostess said to me, 'Pardon me, but I didn't think to ask you what you preferred to have for breakfast.' Really, before I had opportunity to frame a reply, she continued, 'We always have polenta; Antonina makes delicious polenta, so I always have it.' I did not know polenta, I was quite sure, but it certainly sounded most attractive, and so I replied, 'I am sure I should like polenta, especially if Antonina makes it,' and I went to my room with my appetite already whetted for polenta made by Antonina. "The next morning I awaited that meal with the greatest expectancy. The polenta was served, and I tasted it. Was it good? "It certainly was, but I had eaten it hundreds of times before, only we prosaic Americans call it cornmeal mush. "Truly, that is polenta. A name makes lots of difference, doesn't it?" she concluded.—Houston Post.

Professional Orators.

When Lord Rosmead, then Sir Hercules Robinson, was governor of New South Wales, in the early seventies, it fell to his lot to admit the erstwhile cannibal kingdom of Fiji as an integral part of the British empire. During the incidental ceremonies he noticed that none of the great fighting chiefs spoke in person and that each of them had a professional orator on his staff. As an Irishman, with a strong sense of humor, Sir Hercules was naturally tickled by such a novel situation, and when he got back to Sydney he repeatedly enlarged the arrangement, pointing out that the man of action was very rarely a man of words and that civilization might very well learn a lesson from Pacific chiefs.—London Chronicle.

Well Trained.

A farmer, finding a motor horn in the road, took it home, determined to turn it to some use. So he taught his poultry to gather for meals at its toot, and all nature may be said to have smiled till one morning a motor car passing the farmyard blew a loud blast. The full strength of the poultry yard instantly ran out into the road and began to pursue the car with all the ardor of railway travelers charging into the refreshment room. At the end of the fifth mile fourteen pullets and three roosters succumbed through exhaustion. The rest are still running.—English Paper.

What's in a Name.

Epicure—Waiter this steak is positively bad. It must be three weeks old. Waiter—Ah, pardon, monsieur! I have made ze meestake and have brought you ze venison. Epicure—Venison? Oh, yes! Then you may leave it. (Tastes it.) Ah, to be sure, it is venison, and very nice, too—very nice, indeed.—Town Topics.

The Poor Poet.

"My husband never gets what he should for his poetry," said the poet's wife, with a tinge of sadness. "Oh, don't be too hard on him," replied the girl absentmindedly.—Yonkers Statesman.

Who teaches often learns himself.—Italian proverb.

PLANT BAROMETERS.

The Dandelion, Clover Leaves and the Scarlet Pimpernel.

The dandelion is a dandy lettuce, one of the commonest and most reliable. It is when the blossoms have faded and are in the fluffy, feathery condition that the weather prophet faculties come to the fore. In fine weather the ball extends to its full, but when rain approaches it shuts like an umbrella. If the weather is inclined to be showery it keeps shut all the time, only opening when the danger from the wet is past, says the *Chicago Tribune*.

The ordinary clover and all its varieties, including the trefoil and the shamrock, are also barometers. When rain is coming the leaves shut together like the shells of an oyster and do not open again until fine weather is assured. For a day or two before rain comes their stems swell to an appreciable extent and stiffen so that the leaves are borne more upright than usual. This stem swelling when rain is expected is a feature of many flowering grasses.

The fingers of which the leaves of the horse chestnut are made up keep flat and fanlike so long as fine weather is likely to continue. With the coming of rain, however, they droop as if to offer less resistance to the weather. The scarlet pimpernel is nicknamed the "poor man's weather glass" or wind vane and opens its flowers only to fine weather. As soon as rain is in the air it shuts up and remains closed until the shower or storm is over.

INSECT STINGS.

Dangerous Always and Especially When One Is Run Down.

Stings and bites of insects are extremely dangerous at all times and especially when the system is not in a condition to resist the poison injected. In many insects the nature of the poison has not been ascertained, while in most of them it is of an acid, irritant nature, in others it may contain a powerful cardiac sedative and depressant, and in still others organisms in pure or mixed cultures may be introduced with the sting or bite. Apart from the natural poison used by insects it should not be forgotten that flies and other insects that live on carrion may easily carry contagion and inoculate the persons whom they bite or sting. In the case of ordinary bites and stings the chemical antidote is an alkaline solution, such as a strong solution of bicarbonate of soda or potash, which counteracts the acid of the sting. Suction at the wound in all these varieties of stings and bites will draw out some of the poison and until some antitoxin treatment can be found which will prove an antidote to the bacterial poison introduced little can be done beyond a stimulating and supporting treatment with attention to symptoms.—Health.

Old Mail Box.

Among the treasures held by the Antiquarian society in Portsmouth, N. H., there is an old box the history of which is given on a label which it bears. The box is of tin, painted green, and shows signs of much usage, which is not surprising when one considers that it carried the United States mail between Portsmouth and Boston during the Revolution. It is about nine inches long, four and a half inches wide and a little more than that in height. It was carried on horseback by Captain John Noble otherwise known as Deacon Noble who was post rider until 1783. This box contained all the mail and made every week one round trip, occupying three days in the journey—from Portsmouth to Boston the first of the week and three days at the end of the week from Boston to Portsmouth. The distance between the two places is a little more than fifty miles.

He Know No Fear.

Prince Metternich was driving in Vienna one day during the congress of 1815 when the horses bolted, the carriage was overturned and Metternich was thrown into the roadway. Finding he had no bones broken, he picked himself up and walked quietly away. The same evening he met the king of Naples, who had seen the accident. "How horribly frightened you must have been," said the king. "Not at all," answered Metternich. "It is no merit of mine, but I am constitutionally inaccessible to fear."

"It is as I thought," replied the king. "You are a supernatural being."

Hard to Get.

Not long ago at a village near Durham a quack doctor was selling recipes for rheumatism, so a pitman bought one. It told him to catch a common housefly and tickle its ribs with a clothes prop until it cried. Then catch the tears in a teaspoon and rub the part affected, and he would get instant relief.—London Express.

Praise.

"Your glasses," she said, "have made a great difference in your appearance." "Do you think so?" he asked. "Yes. You look so intelligent with them on."—Chicago Record-Herald.

The Retort Unkind.

Gerald—A gentleman is defined as one who never gives pain. Geraldine—Then you're no gentleman; you give me a pain every time you call.—New York Press.

Finding His Level.

"A man allus finds his level, son," said Uncle Eben, "an' you's lucky to be let down easy by experience in stead of arrivin' wif a jolt."—Washington Star.

Curious Old London Clubs.

The days of quiet and queer clubs are days of the past. We do not hear at present of a "No Nose club," or "Club of Beards," or a "Man-Killing club," whose titles are suggestive of the "Sturdy club," whose object was the practice of contradiction and of foul language, so that the members might not be wanting in impudence to abuse passengers on the Thames; or of the "Man Hunting club," established once by young limbs of the law; or of the "Lying club," every member of which was required to wear a blue cap with a red feather in it; or of the "Scatter Wit society," consisting of wits; or of the "Hum Dum club," whose members were to say nothing till midnight; or of the "Twopenny club," a member of which, if he swore, was to be kicked on the shins by the other members; or of the "Everlasting club," which has not lasted long; or of the "Kit Cat club," known after its toast of "Old Cats and Young Kits"; or of the "Beet-then club," of which the following amusing description was written by one of its illustrious members:

Like Britain's island lies our steak. A sea of gravy surrounds it. Shallots consecrated scattered make. The rockwork that surrounds it. —London Scraps.

Status of the Deadbeat.

No man is wholly free from sin, but so many lesser evils are tolerated that a man should hesitate long before becoming a deadbeat. Criminals are despised and abhorred, but to the deadbeat all that is coming, as well as the contempt of his fellow men. There is something at once so mean and so little in taking advantage of the confidence which comes with friendship that the hand of every man is turned against a deadbeat as soon as his reputation is well established. The deadbeat may fondly imagine he is living easy and making money without work, and of course he takes no account of the confidence he violates and the hardships he inflicts on others. But that aside, he really has a harder time than the man who is honest and fair. He is compelled to move a good deal and peace of mind he knows not. Like other types of crooks, he doesn't prosper, and his finish is more unpleasant than the beginning.—Atchison Globe.

Rounded Knife Blades.

Until the seventeenth century knife blades had pointed ends, as can be readily understood when the knife of those days was used for hunting and table purposes indiscriminately. The rounded end was introduced from France in a curious way. It happened that Cardinal Richelieu was compelled to entertain at his table a certain Chancellor Sequier—a vulgar and unmannerly man, who at the close of the meal proceeded to use his knife as a toothpick. This vulgar act so upset the cardinal that he ordered the end of every knife in his possession to be rounded, and so great was Richelieu's influence that the fashion was soon adopted all over the country. This is the vulgar, but nevertheless interesting, origin of the rounded knife of today.—Pearson's Weekly.

A Dinner For Titles.

In his autobiography, "A Fragment," Professor Max Muller tells the following anecdote of the Duke of Wellington: "His servant had been sent before to order dinner for him at an out of the way hotel, and in order to impress the landlord with the dignity of his coming guest he recited a number of the duke's titles, which were very numerous. The landlord, thinking that the Duke of Vittoria, the Prince of Waterloo, the Marquis of Torres Vedras and all the rest were friends invited to dine with the Duke of Wellington, ordered accordingly a very sumptuous banquet, to the great dismay of the real duke."

Alaskan Moonshine.

Up here in Alaska the moon rises in the south and sets in the north. Its beams are liquid and they enamel the landscape with a porcelain loveliness. It casts a spell more potent than e'er did the magicians of the east. Under its wizardry the rocks turn to silver and the brown old mountains are conjured into giant pearls. True wealth exists in the mind, and whoever beholds an Alaskan moonlight is three hundred times a millionaire.

MAKING WIRE.

The Method of Rolling and Drawing the Iron Bars.

Bars of metal four inches square are heated and passed while hot and plastic through rapidly revolving rolls, reducing them to wire rods which vary from one-quarter of an inch to an inch or more in diameter, depending upon the finished size of wire wanted.

These rods, which are formed into coils as they pass through the rolls, are dipped in acid baths to remove loose scale and provide a surface for drawing. Drawing consists in pulling rods while cold through gradually increasing diameters in steel plates. During this process the particles of metal become elongated and strained, making them harder and more brittle. To get it to a proper temper it is heated to heat or anneal it.

When a fine diameter is required there must be repeated drawings and drawings. This may be done until the bar, which originally is four inches square and four feet long, becomes reduced to a diameter of one thousandth of an inch and a length of 13,000 miles in length. Before a fine size is reached the wire is put into the steel of the die plate, so the usual die plates must be discarded and the drawing continued through holes drilled in diamonds, the diameter of these diamond dies decreasing by fractional parts of a thousandth of an inch. This wire affords a striking illustration of a material made more valuable by the application of labor.

From the time the bar of metal enters the furnace nothing is added to it. All the work is done with one article, which is passed through rolls and drawn through die plates until it is finished.—Chicago Tribune.

MODERN MARTYRS.

Those Who Entertain, but Who Suffer While Doing It.

"In a periodical the other day," says the amateur philosopher of the Providence Tribune, "I ran across a picture of what had evidently been a musical entertainment or musicale—I took it to have been a musicale for choice. "The fiddlers had gone, and so had the soloist or soloists and guests. There remained in the foreground the deserted room and a waste of empty chairs, along with the open grand piano.

"The host's head was resting on his arms on a table. The hostess had removed her shoes and was on the verge of collapse. In the background a butler was looking on commiseratingly.

"Now, there's a good deal of that sort of thing first and last the country over. It was true to life, but I never could understand it—that is, nobody has ever explained to me why people who don't enjoy entertaining or being entertained persist in making martyrs of themselves, why anybody does something for pleasure that invariably gives pain?

"A person who puts himself out and wears himself out in the line of duty is comprehensible, but why you should sacrifice yourself when you're pretending to be looking for fun is beyond me.

"The woman who said that her idea of a perfect life from the social point of view would be to be asked every where and to go nowhere doubtless expressed the sentiments of thousands, but why go anywhere if you feel that way?"

Corroded by Water.

In a German village an underground lead water pipe was found greatly corroded and perforated. Investigation showed that the soil in which the pipe had lain was permeated by very impure water and consequently contained large quantities of ammonia, ammonium nitrate and other compounds, which had attacked the lead pipe, forming lead carbonate, nitrate, nitrite and chloride. All of these lead salts, except the carbonate, are more or less soluble in water. The carbonate is insoluble in pure water, but is soluble in water containing carbon dioxide. Iron pipes coated with asphalt should be employed for underground conduits. If lead pipes are used they should be imbedded in asphalt.—Scientific American.

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PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD

BULLETIN.

HUDSON-FULTON CELEBRATION

NEW YORK CITY.

Three hundred years ago, Henry Hudson, an Englishman in command of a Dutch expedition, with eighteen men, explored the Hudson River from Sandy Hook to Troy in his small craft, the "Half Moon."

One hundred and ninety-eight years later, Robert Fulton established, with his steamboat, the "Clermont," a regular water service between New York and the towns along the Hudson river to the North.

This year, New York City, with sister cities and towns along the Hudson, will celebrate these two achievements by a series of imposing observances, religious, historical, military, naval, musical and literary, extending from September 25 to October 9.

Replicas of the "Half Moon" and the "Clermont" have been built and will play a large part in the celebration. They will be the center of attraction in the great naval pageant on Saturday, September 25. The United States Government will have fifty-two war ships anchored in the Hudson, and Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Argentine, Guatemala, Mexico, and Cuba will be represented by war vessels.

Two great parades of water craft will escort the "Half Moon" and the "Clermont" in triumphal procession past the war leviathans, first in the morning and again in the evening, when all the vessels will be illuminated.

On September 28 there will be a grand historical pageant, and on September 30 a big military parade in New York City.

On October 1, the "Half Moon" and "Clermont" will proceed up the Hudson to Troy escorted by hundreds of river craft, including torpedo boats.

A magnificent carnival parade will be held in New York City on Saturday evening, October 2, which promises to eclipse all previous attempts.

The Pennsylvania Railroad, the direct line to New York, with its unsurpassed service of fast express trains, will sell excursion tickets to New York for this period at reduced rates of fare.

Full details concerning specific fares, dates of sale, return limits, and train service may be obtained of Ticket Agents.

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