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A compiler of statistics recently announced that fifty per cent. of the personages in the "Dictionary of National Biography," a British publication, were children of clergymen.

The "Soo" Canal was built and is owned and operated by the United States. It carries fifty per cent. more tonnage than the Suez Canal, and our Government does not charge the ships that use it a cent. British vessels have the benefit of it as well as Americans.

The destruction of the Palisades, which brought the reproach of vandalism upon two rich States, has been stopped by the commission appointed for that purpose until the 1st of June next, by which time it is hoped that the Legislatures of New York and New Jersey will establish an interstate park along the river and preserve the Palisades forever.

The Philadelphia Record observes: "When free from every form of nervous debility a person may expose himself to draughts, dampness and other usual causes of colds and escape entirely, while at another time, when weary or depressed from any cause, he may become the victim of a fatal attack of pneumonia from a much slighter exposure. The nervous origin of colds seems to be recognized by all physicians who have made a special study of acute diseases of the lungs and throat."

Continued satisfactory results are reported of the operation of the indeterminate sentence and the parole law in Indiana, even exceeding the hopes of those who were favorable to the law. Much of the improvement in the penal institutions due to the new laws cannot be told, but the tangible results shown in figures are very encouraging. From the reformatory 718 men have been paroled since April, 1897, and unsatisfactory results are reported in only eighteen per cent. of the cases. Better figures even are given by the State prison, which reports that of the 250 men paroled only twenty-three, or nine per cent., have violated the parole. The wages earned by the paroled men, including the board furnished them, aggregate \$170,156, practically all of which would have been lost to the men and their families under the old system.

**Baggage Rules in Greece.**  
Consul McGinley reports to the State Department from Athens: "The Greek health authorities require that all trunks, packages, etc., the personal baggage of travelers, when accompanied by their owners, must, on arrival at any port in Greece, be accompanied by a certificate of origin or a certificate from the health authorities of the port from which the baggage was shipped to Greece. As ignorance of the foregoing rule has caused many American travelers delay and trouble in regaining possession of such baggage, and as thousands of Americans annually visit Athens and other parts of Greece, this information should be published widely in order that they may come prepared with the necessary certificates to release their baggage without delay.—The Express Gazette."

**Vienna Wires Cannot Cross.**  
In Vienna effective means of preventing future accidents through the breaking of overhead trolley wires have been decided upon. All telephone and telegraph wires which cross trolley wires are to be placed underground in the form of cables at the point where the crossings occur.

Up to 1791 there were but three banks in the United States, with an aggregate capital of \$200,000. Last year there were 3,651 National banks in the country and the total capital invested in banks of all kinds in the United States amounts to almost \$8,000,000,000.

In Japan it is customary for the bride to give all her wedding presents to her parents.

**LOVE AND I.**  
We hold hands,  
Love and I;  
And sit together;  
We spread the book of life  
Upon our knees and turn its leaves,  
In fair or cloudy weather,  
To see  
But pictures there and poetry.  
There may be hard, dry prose  
Somewhere upon those  
Pages; yet we see  
But pictures there and poetry;  
And sigh for those  
Who only find the hard dry prose.  
—William J. Laupton in the New York Sun.

## A Country Cousin.

The news and the dessert were served simultaneously. "By George, if I hadn't nearly forgotten!" quoth Stafford pere. He rummaged in an inner pocket. "Can't find the letter. Must have left it at the office. Anyhow, it's from my cousin, Godfrey Chester."

"Now, Henry!" interrupted the mild voice of Mrs. Stafford in amused expostulation. "Why will you keep up that fiction about the cousinship? It is mythical, and you know it!"

"It's certainly remote," conceded the beaming paterfamilias at the opposite end of the table, "but there once was a relationship—a long time ago, I admit. But Chester and I have taken the world as we found it. He's a good fellow and I've always been urging him to manage that our young people may become acquainted. He writes that his daughter will pass through Chicago tomorrow on the way to New York, and will spend a few days with us. He says he wishes one of my family would meet her. Bless my soul, here's the letter after all!" He put on his spectacles and read aloud:

"You can't mistake her. She's a curly-headed little girl, in a gray gown and a hat with gray feathers. She's a nice child, and I'll be glad to have her meet your youngsters. There!"

"A child!" groaned Ralph, who was 22 and studious.

He swallowed his cafe noir at a gulp and rose disquietedly. "Youngsters, indeed!" cried Dick disdainfully. "Does he take us for kindergartners?"

Ross, who was the eldest, smiled in quite a superior and disinterested fashion. He boasted a flourishing mustache. He was studying law. Plainly, the subject had no interest for him.

"Eh, but one of you must meet the child!" cried the head of the house. "You'll go, Ralph?"

"Can't, sir. I'm doing an article on the architecture of the tenth century. It takes a lot of research. I'll be all morning in the Newberry library."

Henry Stafford, huge of girth, rosete of visage and twinkling of eye, turned his harvest moon face imploringly toward his youngest son.

"You, Dick?"

"Got a golf match on. Can't make it, sir."

"Dear, dear! If your sister were only at home—"

"She'll be back tomorrow afternoon," put in Mrs. Stafford.

"But the little girl gets here in the morning. She must be met. She is from a comparatively small town. She would be quite bewildered were she to find herself alone in Chicago. Besides, I'm under several obligations to Chester in a business way." He sent the good looking young fellow with the mustache an appealing glance.

"I wonder now, Ross, if you—"

Ross laughed leniently.

"You poor, perplexed old chap! Yes, I'll see that the child gets here all right."

"Good!" said Henry Stafford, with a sigh of relief. "Good!"

But when the Western train disgorged its jostling multitude in the Union depot the following morning Ross Stafford, standing close by the iron gates, found that he had undertaken a task of greater magnitude than he had at the time imagined. There was such a crush of people, stout and thin, tall and short, big and little. There were children—procreants of them. But they all seemed to belong to the folks who hurried them along. Never a glimpse could he catch of a curly-headed little girl in a gray gown, wearing a hat with gray feathers. Or—was the dress brown? By Jove! He wasn't even sure of that.

The last laggard group trickled away. Ross knew the conductor of the Denver train—spoke to him as he came hurrying along.

"All off your train, Brigham?"

"Sure."

"There was a little girl coming to Chicago—had curly hair—a blue dress—a green hat—blest if I remember! Wasn't she on?"

voice. "I am afraid there has been a mistake. No one has come to meet me. May I ask you to call a cab?"

And when he had done so, when she had thanked him, when he stood bareheaded on the curbstone as the vehicle rolled away, he recollected that he had not listened to the address she had given to the driver, and he walked off in a towering rage at his own imbecility.

Never was there so dreary a day, although the late August sunshine found its way into his office. Never had the reading of the law seemed such a dull and tiresome drudgery. Never before had the pages blurred into a mass of meaningless black marks. But, then—never before had a bewitching young face come between him and his books, a face with reddish-gold ringlets clustering around a white forehead, and shy eyes the color of woodland violets!

He leaped from his seat as a bright thought struck him. He would hunt up the cabman. That was the thing to do! But, although he hung around the Union depot for two whole hours, and questioned every Jehu within reach, he could not find the man he sought. It was evidently that particular cabman's busy day.

Tired and disgusted, Ross Stafford took a plunge at the athletic club, got himself home, shrugged himself into his evening clothes, for he was going out after dinner, and went down to the parlor to find himself face to face with the divinity of the red-gold ringlets and the violet eyes!

"Ross, my dear," cooed Mrs. Stafford, "let me introduce you to Miss Chester, whom somehow you managed to miss this morning. Why, you—"

For they were smiling at each other—merrily, spontaneously.

"Indeed, no, mother!" Perhaps he held the pretty hand she gave him a little longer than was necessary. "I met Miss Chester this morning. Did she not tell you I put her in a cab?"

Miss Chester laughed. Ross Stafford laughed. And the bewilderment of the house of Stafford, of the golden son, and the studious son, as they were in turn presented, set them laughing again.

"Lord bless me!" cried Stafford senior, ruffling his hair; "your father said you were a little girl!"

"Oh, I shall never be grown up to papa!" cried Miss Chester.

"He said," stammered the young man who was getting up an article on the architecture of the tenth century, "that—that you were a nice child!"

"Don't you think," queried Adele Chester, mischievously, "that I'm nice?"

Whereat Ralph grew guiltily red. "A gray gown!" gasped Dick. "And—a hat with gray feathers!"

"My traveling costume. Don't you," with sparkling eyes, "find this becoming?"

"This" was a trailing, foamy, be-ruffled robe, all delicately green and white as the crest of a breaker, a dress that revealed while concealing the snowiness of arms and bosom. Becoming! Ross told her then and there how becoming. Not in words—nor! But words are so stupid—sometimes.

Helen Stafford reached home before dinner was over. Her brothers' rapturous reception amazed her! Never had she known how they missed her! Nor could she dream that each of the three young hypocrites was saying to himself, "She won't go east in such a hurry if she and Helen take to each other."

They did take to each other. Ross found it was not necessary to keep his engagement that evening, and permitted his friend to cool his heels alone at their appointed rendezvous. Ralph learned his tenor vent wonderfully well with the pure soprano of their guest. And Dick was so anxious to initiate Miss Chester into the mysteries of flashlight pictures that he made himself no end of a bore. The country cousin of the Staffords did not go east that week—nor the next. When she did go all the mirth and laughter of the Stafford domicile seemed to go with her. One morning a week after her departure Ralph and Dick said some bitter things when they discovered that Ross had found out he must attend to business in New York, and had left for that city on the midnight train. And when Ross returned, silent, but smiling and exultant, they were not at all backward about telling him with true fraternal frankness their opinion of his conduct.

"You were awfully good to go to meet that little country lassie!" commented Ralph wistfully. "I believe you knew all the time she was the prettiest kind of a young girl!"

"Kindness—sheer kindness on my part, dear boy! But, as I have striven to impress on you, virtue is ever its own reward."

"Oh, come off!" entreated Dick. "You just got the inside track, and you kept it."

"I assure you in taking my late hasty trip I had only the best interests of my brothers at heart. My sole ambition was to secure you the most charming sister-in-law in the world!"

Helen jumped up. "Oh, Ross! Did you—did she—"

He laughed quizzically. "Adele gave me a message for you, my dear. She said to tell you that you are to be—"

"What—Ross?"

"Bridesmaid!"—Chicago Tribune.

**A Boer's Unkind Joke.**  
A trooper in Paget's Horse who was taken prisoner writes home that the Boer commandant, slyly pointing to the letters P. H. on his prisoner's helmet, asked: "What does 'P. H.' stand for?" "Perfectly Harmless?"—Westminster Gazette.

Every man has his field of usefulness, but lots of them are too lazy to climb the fence.

## A PSYCHIC PHENOMENON.

### In This Case No Heed Was Paid to the Warnings.

"Speaking of superstitions and strange warnings that come to people," said a veteran Washington correspondent, "I had an experience once that I hardly know how to account for. I may say in advance that I don't believe in any of the business that cannot be demonstrated scientifically. One day, not a great while after the present elevator to the house press gallery had been put in, my mother sent for me to stop at her house on my way down town, as she had something particular to see me about. I went, and she asked me if there wasn't a new elevator to the press gallery. I told her one had been put in three or four months before that. She said that was it, and that I must not ride in it, for she had dreamed the night before that I had been crushed to death in it. I laughed at her, of course, and went on my way. Down on F street I met an aunt who told me she had something odd to tell me. She said she had been the day before, with a niece of her husband, to see a fortune teller, as the niece had taken a fancy to see one of those fakirs. The fortune teller, however, instead of telling the niece anything, had directed her remarks to her (my aunt) and had told her that she had a relative, a young man, whom she should warn, as he would be crushed to death in an elevator. That was rather a jar to me, as I was her only young man relative, and as I had so shortly before been warned by my mother. However, I laughed at her also and went on my way to the Capitol.

"I went about the committee rooms awhile, and at last, quite forgetful of my late warnings, went to the elevator to go up to the gallery. The elevator man, an old fellow whom I had known for some time, was in the cage when I got there, and before opening it he talked to me through the bars.

"I don't know," said he, "whether I ought to let you come in here or not."

"Why not?" I inquired, laughing.

"Because," said he, as serious as could be, "I dreamed last night that I had run the elevator up too high and that as you started to get in you slipped some way under it, and when I got down to you at the bottom of the shaft you were smashed to death."

"This looked like the 'fatal' three warnings," and I confess I had a few doubts myself, but I had some nerve left, and I jollied him on his notion and got in. On my way up I told him what my mother and my aunt had told me, and the old fellow was so scared that he hardly knew what to do, but I got through all right, and up to date I have not been crushed in that elevator or any other, but, of course, that's no sign I won't be, and if I ever am, the cranks will be sure to hold me up as a frightful example. I suppose there are some people who wouldn't ride in that elevator for all kinds of money, and still they may fall down stairs at any moment and break their necks."—Washington Star.

## QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

The highest spot inhabited by human beings on this globe is the Buddhist cloister of Hainle, Tibet, where 21 monks live at an altitude of 16,000 feet.

Three miles from the village of Kriusvik, in the great volcanic district of Iceland, there is a whole mountain composed of eruptive clay and pure white sulphur. A beautiful grotto penetrates the western slope to an unknown depth.

In the western part of British Columbia is a novel railway, two miles in length. The rails are made of trees from which the bark has been stripped, and these are bolted together. Upon them runs a car with grooved wheels ten inches wide.

Bug eccentricities are being brought into a special collection by the British museum. It has now motes with male wings on one side and female wings on the other; butterflies with no forewings, and insects with an abnormal number of antennae or of legs.

Ed. Geoghegan of West Point, Ky., has the most remarkable horse in that state, if not in the United States. This horse has as keen a scent for a partridge as any setter or pointer in the country. He can scent them from 75 to 100 feet, and never makes a mistake. He pays no attention to rabbits or to any bird but the partridge.

One would think that 12 were more entitled to be considered an "even" number than 10, for its half is an "even," whereas the half of ten is "odd." Yet on the Stock Exchange 12 is an "odd" number. The house takes five shares as the basis of dealing, remarks Commerce, and all multiples of five are considered "even" numbers. Any intermediate numbers are "odd," and parcels of shares not divisible by five are difficult to sell, except at a reduced price.

## Order! Order!

The dignity of the House of Commons consists in inventing all sorts of childish excuses for shouting "Order!" After a few years of it the average member seems to become a sort of automatic machine wound up to shout "Order!" The House would shout "Order!" if the place were struck with lightning, just as mechanically as it shouts "Order!" if a member puts an awkward question to a cabinet minister.—London Echo.

## THE MINE BREAKER BOY

### MOST GROTESQUE AND PATHETIC OF COLLIERY TYPES.

**Part He Plays in the Mines—His Sign Language—What He Has to Look Forward To—The Summer Season Grants Relief from the Dreary Winter Trials.**

The strike at the Pennsylvania coal mines is happily a thing of the past, but it will be many years before one of the most grotesque and pathetic of the mining types who figured in it will fade from the memory of those who had the opportunity of observing him at close range, writes the Hazelton (Penn.) correspondent of the New York Post. We heard quite a little during the progress of the strike of the "breaker-boy," but it is hardly likely that the general public has any fair notion of what he really is. He is, for the most part, a mere child; small in stature, as black as coal in face, hands, and clothes; a little laborer chained to a monotonous toil, but as sharp and shrewd as a Yankee. The breaker itself, from which he gets his name, is a huge wooden box-like structure, 100 feet or more in height. Its boards have been painted only by the sun, winds, and rain, and an ugly workhouse it is. Grim and dusty, it dots the landscape in every direction and around it are gathered the numerous pyramids of culm, for which it seems to stand as sponsor.

The interior of one of these buildings can well be compared to the mechanism of the old-time church steeple. There is a maze of woodwork, beam, upon beam; winding black staircases; platforms and floors ingrained with coal dust; innumerable troughs down which great chunks of mineral slide with a never-ceasing rattle; translucent windowpanes, upon which the coal dust has hardened—in all a realm of blackness, of dust, and everlasting crackling which would soon prostrate the average man. As the coal falls in at the top great rollers receive and crush it into various sizes. Thence it falls downward, over the spirals or through the jig machines and the screens, and finally tumbles into the railroad cars from the huge bins where it is momentarily stored. In this process the breaker boys are an important and essential part. In the breakers where there are no spirals or jig machines, every bit of coal for the market must pass through their hands. One can see them sitting astride the troughs where they pick all day and toss slate or bone into receptacles at their sides. Amid a weird system of machinery, in a central portion of the workhouse where the shadows are lost in darkness, some have to spend all their time.

When these youngsters begin to work, they must learn to discern definitely the differences between coal and foreign substances. The majority of them do this very quickly; some, of course, are backward, and consequently their productive powers are not so great. The smaller boys have charge of picking the small sizes of coal, while among the larger chunks can be seen workers of various ages. Here and there an old man is found, whose hard and calloused hands tell of many years' labor in the roaring workhouses, where on the sunniest days the light is equal only to that of the average cellar of a city dwelling. When clouds obscure the sun, a miserable darkness is ever everything, and the eternal thunder of breaking and sifting coal is for ever heard. No more drear or desolate life can be pictured than that which is impressed upon one by the appearance of the breakers on cloudy or rainy days. Yet in them the little imps of blackness must work. In the winter season, when the dull, sober light is more continuous, they use miners' ever-wavering lamps. Winter time in the breakers means chilling work for all men and boys. Few are the steamships which heat the huge wooden structures, and as the icy water trickles down the chutes with the coal, it saturates the woolen gloves of these little mining slaves.

But when the summer season comes it brings a great relief from winter trials. As the days grow longer the little fellows of 10, 12, or 14 can trudge to work in the daylight, and there is no more walking over the roads perhaps for several miles, in the bitterness of the mountain cold. Between half-past six and seven in the morning they begin for 10 or 12 hours' toil, while the sun rises and falls and millions of young beings like their own selves are enjoying the free bounties of nature.

To know really the hardships of work in such surroundings it is necessary to observe and feel them. A sad sight it is to see thousands of boys laboring in the grimy breakers for 30, 40 or 50 cents a day, leading a narrow, ignorant life, working as dumb machines, plodding away, innocent of a broader existence, of the unconscious liberty of other children, and slaving because they were born among the mines—because the conditions under which their fathers work compel it. For a few years all goes well, but then a change comes; the boy becomes a man; he recognizes another world living apart from him; he tries to ameliorate his condition; he demands more wages; he strikes and then, after a few weeks' privations, goes sullenly back to work once more.

And yet, when the breaker-boys are boys, they can be said to be truly happy. In spite of a grimy face and black sooty clothes there is a sparkle in their eyes. A stranger among them is examined as wonderingly as

astronomers scrutinize a newly discovered star. A sign for his presence is passed along, as it is useless to attempt speech, for the little fellow could shout themselves hoarse and not be heard more than a few feet away. Consequently all the boys have the gesture language. To ask a fellow-worker the time one boy will hold up his hand and quickly open and close his fist a number of times. This will bring an answer from another one, who stops work just long enough to make a few motions with his fingers, designating the hour and the minutes before or after. They also employ a signal when an exchange of positions is desired. When the grinding monotony of the toil, the aching backs bent over the troughs, and the never-ending roar of coal and machinery become monotonous, a rapid beating with the hand upon the breast will draw the attention of a fellow-worker, and the two will make a mutual and hurried trade of positions. The signal for a drink of water is a twist of the wrist around in front of the mouth, and there are many others. The little fellows, comical in all their ways, make use of various signs, gestures, and furtive glances when the boss, the foreman, or the mine superintendent approaches.

## SOUTH SEA WHITEBAIT.

**Treat Which Pacific Islanders Have in Early Autumn.**

For a few days in each year, and always in the month of September, the South Sea people have a treat in the way of fish—a small stream runner, smaller than the Thames whitebait and better flavored.

The natural history of this fish is obscure. It seems to be the fry of some fish, for when taken away many have the yelk sac still attached to them. The first that is known of it is when schools appear in the mouths of rivers. The river mouths at all seasons of the tide seem fairly alive with the multitudes of fish not an inch long, but all swimming and leaping, under the impulse of the instinct to ascend the freshwater streams. Then they are simply by sinking a piece of cloth in the water and lifting it by its four corners at once. A square of cloth six feet each way will hold, at an ordinary draft, half a bushel of the fish, which the Samoans and many other islanders know under the name "inanga." During the few days they are running they are taken by millions without diminishing the schools in the least. Enormous numbers of them are known to pass up the streams, but once past the bar at the river mouth, they disappear from sight and all knowledge. Even in the height of their return they are not seen in the streams above the mouth, yet they are never seen running back to sea. The run lasts for not more than a week or ten days in any one stream, and on the island of Upolu seems to begin in the eastern streams earlier than in those down to the west. Apia harbor has two streams debouching into it. Not more than half a mile separates the two, yet the school begins to run in the Vaisigano three days before it makes its appearance in the Mulival, which lies to the westward.

In native cookery they are wrapped in banana leaves and steamed for a short time. But the catchers eat them raw with great avidity. Once a foreign resident secured a mess of the dainty fish and gave them to a Samoan cook boy to prepare after civilized methods of cookery. The domestic tyrant was not prepared to venture on Lunt refusal, but he professed to be much shocked at the order. When asked why it affected him that way, he whispered that of course he would obey orders, but he would have to do it when he could be sure that no other Samoan could discover what he was doing. Still further pressed for reasons for so much secrecy, he announced that the "inanga" was, in his own way of putting it, extremely "tufana" or low caste, and not at all a fish for one to eat so highly placed as the family he had the honor to serve. It was a clever device, but it did not bear the investigation which followed, the question of foods proper to certain ranks being interesting if true. The frying of the fish showed why the cook shirked the task. They keep their vitality for a surprisingly long time, and when they are put into a hot pan it is a task of much attention to keep them there, for they hop about like so many winged creatures. It was solely to save himself this bother that the cook had invented a low rank for a fish that is really superior to any of the most famous whitebait, whether of England, New Zealand or Puget Sound.—Forest and Stream.

## Meaning of "Instantaneous Death."

"The instant of death," says the Indian Lancet, "is a vague and indefinite expression when viewed from the point of physiology. An animal or plant cannot be considered dead until it has reached that period in disintegration where it is impossible to revive life. Some physiologists still further restrict the definition to that point in decay where every cell in the body of an animal or plant has ceased to contain or consist of living protoplasm.—In other words, each cell must have lost beyond recall its life powers. Probably one of the most striking examples of instantaneous death was that of the person who accidentally fell into a large vat of boiling caustic potash, which at once consumed the entire body, leaving only the metallic plates from the heels of his shoes and a few buttons from the clothing as remains. Death from electric shocks also border on the instantaneous process. It has been found that living cells taken from the body can be preserved in a normal state for a long time and then have life processes revived if they are properly treated.