

CIGAR DEALER'S READY WIT

Philadelphian Takes Advantage of Customer's Mistake to Hasten Payment of His Account.

Harry Petosky, who conducts a cigar store in Philadelphia is the possessor of an old fashioned type-writer upon which he makes out bills and occasionally writes a letter.

A few weeks ago, in writing to a delinquent customer to remit his account, he forgot to attach the series of letters.

"Had to fire the poor girl this week, because you're holding a week's salary that I wanted to give her. Please remit at once."

HE WAS ON THE WHITE LIST

Newcomer Learned Why, Having Subscribed, He Never Was Served by the Local Band.

A Frenchman bought a house in the country, and had hardly settled there when the local band called and asked for his subscription to its funds.

The Trimmer's Trick.

I took the trouble to watch a trimmer fill a basket with ordinary potatoes, writes "Tip" in the New York Press.

Venice.

Of the books about Venice there is no end. For the historian the "Queen of the Adriatic" has always possessed a peculiar charm.

Early Weapons.

The earliest weapons of mankind—the cutting, thrusting, hacking and stabbing variety—were undoubtedly suggested by the natural weapons of the animals.

True to the Death.

Not long since the driver of the engine on one of the Belgian lines of railway saw a large dog on the road-way between the rails.

LIFE IN A PERUVIAN VALLEY

Annie S. Peck Describes Home in Heart of the Mountains, Where She Was Entertained.

My home in this wonderful valley, where for weeks on three separate expeditions, I have been hospitably entertained, is for the most part a house of a single story built around two courts or patios.

IT WAS A TRAGEDY, ANYWAY

How Professor Branefog Got Tangled Up in Carrying Out His Wife's Instructions.

The people didn't merely look at Professor Branefog—they stared. He knew he was absent minded at times, and he wondered whether he had rubbed his face with boot polish instead of cold cream after he had shaved.

"Are you aware, sir, that you are carrying a joint of beef in your arms?" he asked.

"Goodness me!" said the professor. "I knew something was wrong. My wife told me to put her Sunday hat on the bed, to place this joint in the oven and to take the baby and the dog out for a walk."

"You're not put the baby in the oven, surely!" said the law's guardian. "I put something in it," said Branefog; "but I don't know whether it was the baby or the dog."

"Now, look here, Cy," remonstrated his neighbor, "you know I've got to borrow it, for mine isn't long enough to reach where I'm obliged to climb to search out that chimney leak for the Widow Sears. Can't you make it less?"

"No, I can't," and Mr. Fanning shook his small head and closed his obstinate mouth.

"Why can't you?" demanded Wilson Green.

"Because there's a weak place in it two-thirds the way up," snapped Mr. Fanning. "It'll bear my weight all right, but you're a good thumpy pound heavier. If it gave way under you 't would cost me a dollar to get it mended. Considering the risk, I call it 'dollar 'n' half cheap.'—Youth's Companion.

The Russian Play.

The new world-famous "Passion Play" at Oberammergau is said to have had its origin, about 1833, in the deep contrition of mind born of a great pestilence.

A Sharp Retort.

"My dear," said the thin little Brighton man to his wife, "this paper says that there is a woman down in Devonshire who goes out and chops wood with her husband."

"Well, what of it? I think she could easily do it if he is as thin as you are. I have often thought of using you to peel potatoes with."

The thin man laid down his paper with a sigh that sounded like the squeak of a penny whistle.—London Mail.

The Problem.

"How queer Agnes looks of late!" "Yes, I can't make out whether it's dress reform or hard luck."—Harper's Bazar.

INFLUENCE OF WEST POINT

Cadet on Home Visit Surprises Young Brother and Teaches Him Good Lesson.

When Bob, our gallant West Point cadet, came home for his long furlough, he slept with 12-year-old Dick. In the morning he thoroughly shocked Master Lazybones by stripping the clothes from the bed and putting the room in good order before he came down to breakfast.

The wholesome discipline and results of the West Point training seem to us to offer valuable lessons to American parents and teachers.

Shortly after Bob's visit the question of extra spending money worked itself out in a very satisfactory way. Dick often teased for things that were beyond the limits of his moderate allowance.

EASY, HONORABLE WAY OUT

French Ambassador's Good Story of a French Duke Illustrates His Definition of Diplomacy.

The French ambassador, at one of the superb dinners at the embassy in Washington, said of diplomacy: "Diplomacy may be defined as a way out—an easy, pleasant, honorable way out."

"A young royalist duke, from a story current about him, is well versed in diplomacy."

"This young man visited a millionaire in Cannes during the Riviera season, and his host's daughter was thrown at his head—so much so, in fact, that when he came to leave Cannes his hostess took him aside and declared gravely:

"It's reported all over that you art to marry Claire. I don't know what to say to people."

"The duke smiled easily. "Oh, just tell them," he said, "that Claire refused me."

The Useful Killdeer.

The Killdeer, if it is eaten at all in this part of the country, cannot stand in high favor. There is no talk of killdeer hunting. They are not to be perceived in the string of birds the successful hunter likes to display.

In a bulletin just put out by the agriculture department it appears that this beautiful, if somewhat unmusical bird, renders very efficient service to mankind.

The Great Can Afford to Be Simple. It takes a very great percentage indeed to carry the principle of being unostentatious into modern entertaining, says the Gentlewoman of London.

Smuggling in Italy.

Smuggling goods into Italy by aeroplane, which has led to a serious accident near Mont Cenis, will probably be extensively practiced in the future, despite the attendant risks.

Cheeses as Heirlooms.

In some parts of Switzerland it is said that cheeses form family heirlooms which are sometimes handed down from one generation to another.

Must Be Careful.

Mr. Justrich—That there sculptor chap says he's going to make a bust of me. Mrs. Justrich—Henry, it's dreadful the way you talk. Say "bust" not "bust."

NOT JUST WHAT HE WIRED

Wife Refused to Wait, but It Was No Wonder That She Was Angry.

A speaker at a dinner in New York, said of certain customs dodgers:

"They do very incriminating things, then they claim that these things are mistakes. Granting them to be mistakes, they are suspicious—as suspicious as the business man's wire."

"The wife of a young business man got a wire from her husband the other evening that said:

"Shall dine with Milly Brown, an old gal of mine. Will be late. Don't wait for me."

"When the business man reached home at midnight, his wife met him in the hall.

"Wait for you!" she sneered. "Why, I wouldn't wait for the best man that ever lived. Let alone you!"

"Why, my dear—" he stammered. "Then, bursting into tears, she handed him the telegram, and in a jiffy he explained that what he had really wired was:

"Shall dine with Billy Brown, an old pal of mine. Will be late. Don't wait for me."

WAS BEGINNING TO OXIDIZE

That Was the Diagnosis of Skin Disease Patient Made by Lithographic Pressman.

A lithographic pressman, who has had a lot of trouble with metal plates in his time, was recently taken ill and went to the Post-graduate hospital on a day that a clinic was being held. By mistake he got into a room where the student doctors were beginning to assemble and was taken for one of them.

No Figure of Speech.

Of all the things that may befall a church, nothing could be much stranger than the destruction of a little house of worship north of Hudson Bay, as once reported by Bishop Williams of Marquette.

He had attended a synod of the Canadian church at Winnipeg, and there had seen a missionary bishop, who had been six weeks on the way, having come most of the distance in a canoe.

Being asked for an explanation, he said that the Eskimos in the diocese had built a church with walrus ribs for rafters, and covered it with walrus hide.

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Several Things and an Architect.

"Seeing is believing, eh?" said an oculist. "Well, no saw was ever more absurd than that. You see a horse's head and a four barrel, and you believe the barrel is longer than the horse's head, don't you? Well, it isn't."

"Architects have to deceive—to lie—to the eye in order to make their buildings look symmetrical. They make walls lean inward that they may appear vertical. They make windows wider at the top. They make columns thicker in the middle than at the summit or the base. And the top lines of a building, in order to appear plumb to the silly eye of man, must be raised up quite a lot in the center."

Untainted.

Tempted by an offer of considerably more than the property had cost him, Mr. Kreesus, who counted his wealth in millions, had parted with his suburban villa.

Only Once.

"How often, my good man," said the stranger at the wayside station, "do the trains stop here?" "The trains stop here," said the sour station porter, "only once. After that they start."—Stray Stories.

GUILF OF DRONGO CUCKOO

Protected by Its Resemblance to Pugnacious Shrike, It Lays Its Eggs Where It Pleases.

A striking example of protective coloring in birds has just been added to the collection of the Brooklyn Institute Museum in the form of a drongo shrike and a drongo cuckoo.

The shrike is a bird of pugnacious disposition, especially at the nesting season, when it guards its nest with, for a small bird, great ferocity. Douglas Dewar, from whom this account is taken, says that he has watched a pair of these little birds attack and drive away a monkey which tried to climb into the tree in which their nest was placed.

The drongo cuckoo lays its eggs in the nests of such birds as the king crow. These are pugnacious, even ferocious, and without some guile a cuckoo could not accomplish this feat.

VELASQUEZ A CHEAP ARTIST

As Court Painter He Received \$11 a Month When He Was About Twenty-five Years Old.

Don Caspar de Guzman, Conde-Duque d'Olivarez, born in Rome in 1587, became the first minister of Philip IV. In 1621, was dismissed in 1643 after a career of mismanagement and died in exile two years later.

The canvas, measuring 51 by 85 inches, came from Capt. Robert S. Holford of London, in whose possession it had long been held after having passed through the Bailie sale in 1858, when it sold for £598 10s., and the Scarisbrick sale in 1861, when it sold for £262 10s., very moderate sums compared to the surprising figure said to have been paid for it recently.

A Manly Minister.

There'll be less sleeping done in future in the First Christian church of Los Angeles, because the rector just won't stand for it, as is evidenced by what he did some nights ago.

Circulating Libraries.

It is absolutely impossible to say just when the first circulating library was opened. If there was ever a record of the important event, it is lost.

Dead Ones.

"Why, three generations of my family have lived and died in this country," he boasted, "before your ancestors were able to raise the amount they needed to come over in the steerage."

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"YES, I'M A GREAT AUTHOR"

Reade, Balzac and Sue Puffed Their Own Works as Being Fine Literature.

Authors in "the good old days" were not above writing their own puff, a writer in the Bohemian says, Charles Reade wrote a long article on himself for Once a Week, in which he said:

"It is impossible to speak too highly of 'The Cloister and the Hearth.' It is one of the most scholarly and learned as well as one of the most artistic and beautiful works of fiction in any language. Read him. Rejoice yourself to the magic spell of his genius. The effect of 'Foul Play' is perfectly marvelous. It leaves the stories of every other sensational writer far behind."

Nor was Balzac in France above praising his own works. "If you have not been born a story teller," he wrote in a review, "you will never obtain the popularity of M. de Balzac. And what a story teller! What nerve and wit! How the world is dissected by this man! What passion and coolness!"

But the height of literary advertisement in the first half of the last century was reached in the case of Eugene Sue's famous novel, "The Wandering Jew." Every little while the daily installment in the newspaper in which it was appearing would be missing, and in its place would be an announcement that M. Sue was suffering from a slight indisposition and readers would be obliged to wait 48 hours for new developments of the narrative.

EDUCATED PORK WAS GOOD

And the Circus Property Man Searched for Reuben, the Pet Pig, in Vain.

Reuben, a much advertised educated pig belonging to the John Robinson circus, which was showing in this city recently, is no more, says a Cincinnati dispatch to the New York Tribune.

"That pig could do anything but talk, and could nearly do that, as he spelled his name with letter blocks. All was confusion the night we broke camp at Terrace Park. We had pork chops for supper, and they were particularly delicious. We were all eating our heads off, when the property man rushed in and cried that Reuben had vanished."

"He got mixed up with those pigs that were sent from the stock yards," he gasped.

"Was one of those pigs a white one, with black polka dots? I asked the cook."

"It was," he replied. "Then we have eaten Reuben," I cried.

"The property man is no longer attached to the circus."

How Oyster Islands Are Formed.

Oyster islands, similar to those formed of coral, are found in several parts of the world. The islands in Newport river and Beaufort Harbor, North Carolina, says a writer in the Century Path Magazine, have been discovered to have as base a reef to which the spawn were attached and above this layer upon layer of oysters, vegetable growth, and debris brought by the action of the waves and winds, all of which finally grows high enough to rise above the surface of the water.

The islands near the mouth of the River Tagus in Portugal are said to have been built up in this way also. Here, where there is such a quantity of oysters that 100 million a year would scarcely be missed if they were removed, the expanse of water just beyond the river's mouth is dotted with oyster islands. As in the case of the coral reefs, which on the seaward side may be covered with living, growing coral, live oysters thrive in the same waters where the accumulation of dead generations has served to form the islands.

He Snored into Safety.

Wilkesbarre, Pa., is in the field with this story: Michael Benner of Plains owes his life to the fact that he can snore loud enough to be heard some distance away. Early one morning Policeman Schneider of North Wilkesbarre heard snores coming from the direction of the Lehigh Valley railroad tracks, and fearing that some one might be asleep on the tracks, and knowing that an express train was about due, he investigated. Guided by the snoring he came upon Benner asleep, just in time to pull him from the track before the train thundered by. Benner can thank his snore for saving his life, and Wilkesbarre can congratulate herself that she has a policeman who knows a snore when he hears it.

That Was All.

"I don't know whether I ought to recognize him here in the city or not. Our acquaintance at the seashore was very slight."

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