

WHEN DOES SPEECH?

STRANGE CASE RECORDED IN A BOSTON NEWSPAPER.

Two Brothers Who Speak a New Language—A Parallel Case in the State of Nevada—The Children of the Bastille. Freaks.

A Boston newspaper recently published an account of two brothers living in that city, who, it declares, have grown to man's estate without ever being able to speak the English language, although born in the United States of American parents, and having heard English spoken continuously. Their vocal organs have been examined by the best specialists and found to be perfectly normal. These brothers, it is asserted, speak a language of their own, which they perfectly understand, but which, thus far, has been unintelligible to everybody else. Some words of the language were given by the journal referred to, and a philologist would trace a resemblance, if nothing more, to Sanscrit.

But the case referred to is not without its parallel. The writer of this article saw, on more than one occasion, two children, a brother and sister, living at a little station in the state of Nevada, who had invented a language of their own, which they constantly used in talking with each other. The girl was 9 or 10 years of age, and the boy a year or two younger. There could be no deception and no mistake about the matter. The children would play together and chatter in this strange speech of their own devising, and it was perfectly apparent that it was not such meaningless gibberish as children often use in play, but a genuine language. It resembled no language with which the writer had any acquaintance. There could be detected no resemblance to any modern language, no similarity to root forms or stems which may be said, roughly, to be common to all spoken languages; nor was there any likeness to either Latin or Greek, and, consequently, none to the cognate language which is called Sanscrit.

Somehow the children were not at all shy about talking in the presence of strangers, but they could not be made to understand what translation from English into their language meant. They understood English, and could and did speak it when spoken to; but they either could not or would not give the equivalents of English words in their own language. The mother of the children said she could not in any way account for this strange linguistic freak. She said that the first time she heard them, and indeed for many times afterward, she paid no attention, as she supposed they were "only jabbering nonsense," and she did not press it, and so she was entirely unable to say whether the language was evolutionary or whether the children spoke it just as well the first time as the last. They certainly spoke enough of it when the writer heard them to understand them without any difficulty, although it seemed to the writer from the cursory observations he could make that the vocabulary was a very limited one; but that would have been equally true of such children of that age had they been speaking English.

There has been a story in vogue for many years, although it is impossible to verify it and it is probably apocryphal, that for the purpose of determining whether there was a primal language, and if so what it was, two infants were at one time confined in the Bastille and were never allowed to hear a word of any language spoken, it being supposed that nature would supply them with the means of communicating with each other as they grew old enough to talk, and that the controversy as to a primal language would be conclusively determined. The story says, however, that up to 11 years of age the children never uttered an articulate sound. They communicated with each other in a fashion, but it was entirely by signs, and not by anything resembling a spoken language of any kind. The story goes on to say that they were then released from their confinement and placed among people where they heard French spoken all around them, and that they soon learned to speak the language which they heard, but never gave any signs of knowing any other tongue.

And yet the observation of the cases in Massachusetts and Nevada to which we have referred shows that there must be exceptions to what would seem to be a general rule. Those children in Nevada knew no more of the accepted theories of philology than they did of the differential calculus. They did not know the first thing about the development theory; they never heard of the rules of linguistic structure; and yet they constructed for themselves a language which was, for all practical purposes, just as much a language as Hebrew or Greek or German or English. It meant something to them; each could understand the other; each could say what he or she wanted to say, and that constitutes a language.

THE NAVAL ACADEMY.

THE EARLY EXPERIENCE OF A "PLEBE" AT ANNAPOLIS.

Hazing Said to Be Abolished—But "Jumping" and "Running" Are Still Practiced by the Classmen—A Cadet's Trials and Tribulations.

This is an attempt to detail the early experience of an Annapolis "plebe." Naval officers who write magazine articles all agree that hazing has been abolished. It has, in name only. One never hears of hazing now; but no one who has ever been a "plebe" can truthfully deny that "jumping" and "running" have not yet fallen into a decrepit old age.

Let us first imagine the "plebe" who arrives in September at the Naval Academy. He is a green looking chap. Men from all quarters of the country come tumbling into town, in all sorts of clothing, and with all sorts of airs. The new man is immediately sent on board the Santee. His first struggle is with his hammock. He doesn't sleep in the hammock the first night. Most of his time is spent in learning how to get into it, and after he gets in, how to stay in.

The next morning, at bugle call, the cadet tumbles out and gets down in some shape to inspection. This is a fearful ordeal. There he stands, with thumbs turned out and toes turned in, trying to look a veteran, when the inspector hurries along, glares at him, and pointing at his cap, shouts, "Hail a little on the starboard lift." The cadet opens his mouth, and says, "Eh-h," and then opens his eyes and says, "How," and finally learns that his cap has not been set squarely on his head. He has been "spotted." As he grows older he learns that there are many things for which a man may be spotted. "Cap not properly squared." "Trousers not brushed." "Shoestrings hanging." "Button off blouse." "Not properly shaved." It is marvelous what little things catch the eagle eye of the inspector.

Somehow the cadet manages to get to breakfast, and flops in the first seat. Perhaps grace has been usually said at home to slow and measured tones. Anyway he waits a moment, and soon finds that everybody has made a dive at the food and that there is none left for him. Then some more comes on, and he dives, too. The scene that follows is indescribable.

But it is not always so. When the upper class men return from their cruise no man dares reach half an inch over his side of the table for food, or he will be terribly jumped. And, by the way, the jumping soon begins for our plebe. As he wanders down for a breakfast of about fifteen men approach him, their caps cocked at an angle of forty-five degrees over their left eyes, and they demand: "What's your name?" in fierce tones. "Where do you come from?" "Albany, N. Y." "Eh, what state?" "New York." "Any more like you there?" "Yes-s." "Great guns." "Yes-s." "Say, sir." "Yes-sir." "Stand on your head!" And the poor plebe gets on and off his head till he is dizzy.

Then all fifteen men demand at once: "Who's the 'save' man here?" "Who's the handsomest?" "Who's the wooden man?" And whichever way he answers the plebe offends fourteen of the fifteen and stands the consequences. Then one man orders him to do something, and another orders him not to. "If you don't I'll jump you," says one. "If you do I'll run you," shouts the other. The plebe obeys the first and is "jumped" by the second, and then to his utter disgust the first man says: "Guess I'll jump you anyway just for the fun of it." And again he stands on his head.

CRUSOE SETTLEMENTS.

ROMANTIC LIFE ON A LITTLE SOUTH PACIFIC ISLAND.

Story of a Runaway English Sailor—Another Little Colony in the Kermadec Group—Castaways on a Coral Reef—Pitcairn Islanders.

About four months ago, as the English bark Queen's Island was passing Palmerston Island, in the Southern Pacific, the captain was surprised to see a boat containing eight persons put off from the shore. It was generally supposed that this little coral island, of the least importance of the Hervey group, and about three hundred miles from its nearest neighbor, was uninhabited. Capt. Reid, however, had accidentally approached near enough to this little speck in the ocean to discover another of those romantic island settlements which are now and then unexpectedly found in the broad expanse of the great Pacific.

The bronzed and rather scantily clad white man who clambered up the side of the bark said he was William Marston, the chief of the little island, where he had lived for twenty-five years. When he was a young man he deserted from the British bark Rifleman in Tahiti and made his way in a small sailboat nearly 1,000 miles west to the Hervey group. He took a native wife and journeyed to Palmerston Island, where he built him a cabin and started a coconut plantation. A few natives joined him, and now his little world contains thirty-three human beings, of whom fifteen are his own children. English is the only language spoken in this little community, whose island home is not so large as some Dakota farms. Here the subjects of the runaway English sailor live on the happiest terms, getting along very well with the news and gossip of the world, while enjoying, nevertheless, many of the good things of civilization brought to them by small trading vessels, to whom they sell the copra prepared from their coconuts.

Within the past few years several islands have been discovered in the Pacific which, it was found, had long been known by small traders who in their interests of monopoly carefully kept their information to themselves. After the Sydney newspapers announced the discovery of a fine new island not far from New Guinea a sea captain in port prepared a very good map of the island which he had made several years before. He had probably hoped to hand down the secret to his heirs as an exclusive trading privilege. In that way it has happened that Marston's little colony has remained unknown save to one or two traders, whose interests have kept them quiet.

Hundreds of the little islands of the Pacific are uninhabited, and are very rarely seen by vessels. Who knows but among them may be modern Robinson Crusoes, waiting patiently for a sail, and living in a fair degree of comfort upon the bounties of which nature so lavish in those regions? We have recently told the history of Mr. Bell and his little family, who are monarchs of all they survey in the Kermadec group, 600 miles from their nearest neighbors. The passengers and crew of the bark Henry James, who were rescued in May last from a coral reef in Polynesia, know what it is to be castaways in the Pacific, hundreds of miles from inhabited islands. If they had not fortunately saved their boat they might have been prisoners for many months on the little island. Five men in the boat carried the news of their disaster 1,300 miles to Samoa, and in less than two months deliverance came. They needed clothing, but were not otherwise in serious want, for fish and coconuts had amply supplemented the slender food supplies with which they had reached their place of refuge.

Among the jubilee presents received by Queen Victoria were some hats and other manufactures, most skillfully made of straw, the humble tribute of the most unique and famous of Pacific colonies. In 1880 the Pitcairn islanders may celebrate the centennial of the landing of their mutinous fathers on the little rock where Lady Belcher, their historian, says the "drunken" such a community has been the dream of philosophers. It is not often the world hears from these happy and peaceful islanders now numbering 113 souls, who have perpetuated the remarkable colony founded ninety-eight years ago by English sailors; but it is refreshing now and then to contemplate their idyllic existence, cut off from the valleys of their little home only two and a quarter square miles in extent, possessing a schoolhouse and a church, but no jail; intelligent, neat and clean, with plenty of books and fruit and flowers, a simple hearted, devout people, and the only Christian community in the world that has no strong drink, tobacco or money.

A traveler on an English bark which touched at Pitcairn in February last says he saw among the islanders' men who in stature would be a credit to the Royal Guards, and women who were fair to see, though their garments were not rich and fashionable; women who are skilled in the arts of housewifery, in the making of fancy baskets and shell work, and some, too, who can play excellently on the little church organ. Born to this life of isolation, the Pitcairn Islander bears with wonder and delight, but without envy, of the busy world, his sea girt home. When, years ago, Pitcairn became too crowded, considering its slender resources, and the people were removed by Great Britain to Norfolk, that island, small as it is, bewildered them by its vastness. Having only footpaths in Pitcairn, they thought the wagon roads of Norfolk unsightly, and the echoes aroused by their voices in the stone quarter where convicts had once lived impressed them as a most disagreeable novelty. A minority decided that they could not be happy among these strange surroundings and they returned to Pitcairn to live and die.—New York Sun.

BILLIONS IN A CART.

HOW CUSTOMS RECEIPTS ARE TAKEN TO THE SUB-TREASURY.

From \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 Carried in a Modest Old Hand Cart—A Simple System—Daily Cash—A New Plan of Paying Customs.

A heavy wheeled hand cart, with a thick set little guiding wheel in front and pushed by two men from behind, clattered down the steps of the William street entrance to the custom house at 3:45 the other afternoon. It was instantly followed by four broad shouldered laboring men, a smooth faced old man of clerical appearance and a stern looking man with a heavy brownish mustache, who quickly grouped themselves on both sides of it and in front of it and behind. The little group, with the cart rumbling in the center, pushed rapidly to Wall street to the north side and then went at a quick pace up the street to Nassau, then around to Pine street and was swallowed up in the rear entrance to the sub-treasury building. All along the journey people stopped and gazed curiously at the group as it hurried along and tried to get a glimpse of the cart. It was not a very handsome vehicle. The box was literally a box iron bound and tightly locked with a heavy brass padlock, but those who understood the matter knew that it might contain in any where from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 or more, and that this money represented Uncle Sam's daily tolls on merchandise imported from abroad, and that it was on its way to be poured into the treasury, another contribution to swell the great surplus which now lies idle there.

THE ENVY OF THIEVES. For over twenty years, at about the same hour on six days in every week, the cart has made the same journey surrounded by its escort. How many thieves have cast envious eyes at it, how many speculators on the verge of ruin, how many dishonest bank employes with the impending crisis of discovery hanging close over them, have thought that to only have for but a few weeks or a few days the contents of that ugly iron bound box would be rescued from ruin, flight or suicide, anybody can imagine. Doubtless many a gang of knaves have wasted many a long hour trying to devise some daring scheme to waylay its guardians, smash the heavy box and make off with its contents. But from all this nothing has ever come. For nearly a quarter of a century the old cart has trundled over its route with never the loss of so much as a cent.

Familiar as is the sight of the little vehicle and its guard its appearance never fails to partially stop the hurrying Wall street throng for a moment. Those who know what it means cast a reverent eye on it as it passes. Strangers who understand nothing of it catch sight of the big letters "U. S." painted on each end of the cart, and the hurried seriousness of those who surround it and know that it is no light matter that is in hand.

The system by which the money is thus transferred is perfectly simple. In the cashier's office at the custom house are kept four boxes, iron bound and made of thick oak board. They are two feet in length by one foot in breadth, and about a foot in depth. At each end is a massive iron handle that in itself weighs nearly two of the fifteen pounds at which each box is tipped by the beam. When the day's work is completed the money is counted and placed in these boxes. It is then delivered to the custody of United States Detective T. J. Murtha. Four laborers then come, and each one shoulders a box and carries it to the ground floor. Here the boxes are placed in the strong box on the cart, which Murtha locks. At the sub-treasury the money is again counted, and if it agrees with the custom house count a receipt is given.

DAILY AVERAGE OF CASH. "The daily average of cash we carry," said the good natured detective, "is about \$500,000, though of course there are many days when we carry over a million. When we carry a good deal of coin the load is a very heavy one, and this, with the weight of the cart and the boxes, makes it no easy thing to push. We always have two men pushing and four around it, besides myself and the messenger. I am the only one who is armed. We go up the north side of Wall street because there are more people there and always some of Inspector Byrne's detectives about. I have only been here about two years, but I suppose we have carried not far from \$350,000,000 in that time. What wealth the old cart has had in its bowels! It makes a man dizzy to think of it. The surplus in the treasury would be as a little chicken feed to your pocket compared to it. I never feel the least fear of an attack. How could they get away with anything? The street is filled with people. They would have to disable me first. There would be pistol shots before that. Then they would have to smash in the box on the cart, and then they would have to lug away the dead weight of one or more of those inner boxes. There would be 500 people and a dozen policemen and detectives about before they got that far. The system is absolutely safe so far as that is concerned, unless a small army of desperate men sweep down upon us."

Notwithstanding the system inaugurated of paying customs dues through the medium of bank deposits in the sub-treasury and certified bank checks drawn thereon, the old cart still goes over its regular route. But the days of its glory are numbered. Already fully half the dues are paid by the check system, and as its advantages become better understood by banks and importers it will supersede the old system. So the historical cart, like many another Wall street celebrity, will drift penniless into some obscure corner and its past glories will be forgotten.—New York World.

The Plattsmouth Herald

Is enjoying a Boom in both its DAILY AND WEEKLY EDITIONS.

The Year 1888

Will be one during which the subjects of national interest and importance will be strongly agitated and the election of a President will take place. The people of Cass County who would like to learn of

Political, Commercial and Social Transactions

of this year and would keep abreast with the times should

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Now while we have the subject before the people we will venture to speak of our

JOB DEPARTMENT.

Which is first-class in all respects and from which our job printers are turning out much satisfactory work.

PLATTSMOUTH, NEBRASKA.

Courtesy in Business Rewarded.

The other day a gentleman entered one of the largest stores of this city in pursuit of an article the price of which he knew would scarcely exceed the cost of postage on an ounce letter. The fact of its insignificance and that it was rarely called for made it hard to find. One clerk after another was enlisted in the search, till finally they were joined by the proprietor before success crowned their efforts. Somewhat mortified at the amount of trouble he had caused, the customer began to apologize, when he was silenced by the proprietor with: "My friend, it was no trouble; it was business. We have experienced fully as much pleasure in finding that for you as you have in receiving it. If you insist upon calling this trouble, please remember that we like to be troubled."

Experimenting with the Beggars.

A Paris philanthropist, who was struck by the alarming and painful increase of mendicancy in the metropolis, recently made a peculiar, although, perhaps, not a novel experiment. He went around to several generous merchants, manufacturers and tradespeople, and succeeded in inducing them to take into their employment all the "Vagron" men that he should send to them, with letters of recommendation. Then he summoned together an army of the "unemployed," made a speech to them on the advantage of labor, the advisability of economy and the dangers of absinthe and petit bleu, and finally directed them to call for the letters of recommendation, which were to procure for them immediate and remunerative employment at the minimum rate of four francs per diem. Out of 757 of his ragged audience, more than half disappeared as if by magic from the scene, and have never bothered the philanthropist since. Of the remainder, some took the letters, but never presented them; others worked half a day and clamored for their wages for that brief period, while at the end of those days only eighteen men, who were

Height of Meteorological Stations.

Of the present very limited number of high stations for making meteorological observations there are only two in Europe which exceed 3,000 meters in height, being about 10,000 and 11,000 feet respectively. Among those in this country Pike's peak, which has an altitude of 14,100 feet, exceeding thus, by more than 4,000 feet, any in Europe. These great heights are much more accessible on this continent than in Europe, there being five in America where 11,000 feet or more is reached by railroads built for facilitating mining work; the highest of these in North America is Mount Lincoln, in Colorado, the mining works on which are 14,297 feet above the sea.—Public Opinion.

Like Other Weapons.

Gen. Wolsey says that the bicycle is a military instrument of great promise. And, in