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LINCOLN'S DISPOSITION.

Ordinarily cheerful, it held a strain of deep melancholy. Hopeful and cheerful as he ordinarily seemed, there was in Mr. Lincoln's disposition a strain of deep melancholy. This was not peculiar to him alone, for the pioneers as a race were sadder rather than gay. Their lives had been passed for generations under the most trying physical conditions, near malaria infested streams and where they breathed the poison of decaying vegetation. Insufficient shelter, storms, the cold of winter, savage enemies and the cruel labor that killed off all but the hardiest of them had at the same time killed the happy-go-lucky gaiety of an easier form of life. They were thoughtful, watchful, wary; capable, indeed, of wild merriment, but it has been said that although a pioneer might laugh he could not easily be made to smile. Lincoln's mind was unusually sound and sane and normal. He had a cheerful, wholesome, sunny nature, yet he had inherited the strongest traits of the pioneers, and there was in him, moreover, much of the poet, with a poet's capacity for joy and pain. It is not strange that as he developed into manhood, especially when his deeper nature began to feel the stirrings of ambition and of love, that these seasons of depression and gloom came upon him with overwhelming force.—Helen Nicolay in *St. Nicholas*.

THE BARK OF TREES.

Nature's Provision For the Relief of the Growing Plant.
The practical cultivator understands that nature makes provision for getting rid of the bark of trees as the trunk increases in size. On the growth of the past season may be seen small olive spots. These are formations of cork. From year to year, in subsequent development, these little patches spread, really eating their way through the bark. This is the provision which nature makes for finally ridding the bark in each species of plant. These cork cells have their own special lines of development, and this is the reason why each kind of tree has its own particular bark. The characteristics are so prominent that clever observers can select different kinds of trees by their bark even at midnight. As it is the evident intention of nature to get rid of old bark, it is a great help to the tree to assist nature in this respect, and any wash or treatment which aids the plant in getting rid of it is a practical advantage. Soapy water wash or lye water is useful, and even scraping has been found of great advantage. In a rough sort of way lime wash is frequently used, the only objection being the white and glaring color. It is, however, the cheapest and the best of all bark treatments.

THE USEFUL YAWN.

This Lung Ventilating Process Serves a Double Purpose.
The act of yawning is distinctly beneficial in two ways. In the first place it serves the purpose of lung ventilation. The lungs are not filled or exhausted by ordinary respiration. There is a certain quantity of air which physiologists call "residual air" left in the recesses of the lungs after the ordinary respiration. This in time becomes vitiated and affects the blood and, through it, the nervous centers. The result is a yawn, which is really a stretching of the respiratory chamber to its fullest capacity and the filling of it with freshly inspired air which drives the vitiated air out. Yawning is also beneficial in so far as it opens, stretches and ventilates the vocal, nasal and auditory chambers in immediate connection with the mouth. The cracking sound often heard when yawning is due to the stretching and opening of the eustachian tubes, which form a communication between the middle ear and the back of the throat. The deafness which often accompanies a cold is due to the congestion of these tubes.—London Hospital.

Heroines, Old and New.

Most modern heroines are married women, whereas the nice ones in Shakespeare and in novels before 1850 were almost always unwedded maids. You like Beatrice and Portia and, above all things, Rosalind. You do not lose your heart to Lady Macbeth (though a fine figure of a woman), and you do not desire to compete with Othello in the affections of Desdemona. This may be a too nice morality, but to Victorian taste even widows, in novels at least, come under the ban of the elder Mr. Weller. Nobody but Colonel Esmond ever cared for Lady Castlewood, and Dobbin is alone in his passion for Amelia.—Andrew Lang in *London Post*.

Postponed.

A bashful young couple who were evidently very much in love entered a crowded street car in Boston the other day. "Do you suppose we can squeeze in here?" he asked, looking doubtfully at her blushing face. "Don't you think, dear, we had better wait until we get home?" was the ow, embarrassed reply.—Life.

The Clock.

The clock has a strange way of telling different tales with the same face. If it is telling one man to hurry up, it tells the next man who looks that there is plenty of time.—Atchison Globe.

Realism.

Why is the cow purple in the picture? Because the girl's parasol is red. The cow, in fact, is purple with rage. This is precisely what is meant by realism in art.—Puck.

The secret of success lies in the man and not in the stuff he works on.—Torrey.

PEPYS AS A PLAYGOER.

The Time When Women First Appeared on the English Stage.
In the methods of producing plays Pepys' period of playgoing was coeval with many most important innovations which seriously affected the presentation of Shakespeare on the stage. The chief was the substitution of women for boys in female roles. During the first few months of Pepys' theatrical experience boys were still taking the woman's parts. That the practice survived in the first days of Charles II.'s reign we know from the well worn anecdote that when the king sent behind the scenes to inquire why the play of "Hamlet" which he had come to see, was so late in commencing he was answered that the queen was not yet shaved. But in the opening month of 1661, within five months of his first visit to a theater, the reign of the boys ended. On Jan. 3 of that year Pepys writes that he "first saw women come upon the stage." Next night he makes entry of a boy's performance of a woman's part, and that is the final record of boys masquerading as women in the English theater. I believe the practice now survives nowhere except in Japan. This mode of representation has always been a great puzzle to students of Elizabethan drama. It is difficult to imagine what boys in Shakespeare's day, if they were anything like boys of our own day, made of such parts as Lady Macbeth or Cleopatra. Before, however, Pepys saw Shakespeare's work on the stage the usurpation of the boys was over.

It was after the Restoration, too, that scenery, rich costume and scenic machinery became, to Pepys' delight, regular features of the theater. When the diarist saw "Hamlet" "done with scenes" for the first time he was most favorably impressed. Musical accompaniment was known to pre-restoration days, but the orchestra was now for the first time placed on the floor of the house in front of the stage instead of in a side gallery. The musical accompaniment of plays developed very rapidly, and the methods of opera were applied to many of Shakespeare's pieces, notably to "The Tempest" and "Macbeth."—From "Pepys and Shakespeare," by Sidney Lee, in *Fortnightly Review*.

POINTED PARAGRAPHS.

How soon we learn that the average man's bark is about all there is to him. When people say anything good about you, ever notice what a few are present?

We all of us claim to be natural, but we all of us know that the only time when we are not putting on is when we are asleep.

Somewhat the hundred dollars some other man has always looks larger and as if it should go further than the hundred dollars you have.

There are not many sights more depressing than to meet a farmer's wagon on a country road going out from town with a coffin in it.

When a man says he got up nine times with the baby six nights in succession it means that one night he woke up and heard his wife get up.—Atchison Globe.

Hawaiian Huckleberry.

On the island of Hawaii are great thickets of the ohelo, or Hawaiian huckleberry (*Vaccinium reticulatum*), which the natives consider sacred to Pele, the goddess who is supposed to preside over the famous crater of Kilauea, and which, together with white pigs and chickens, are thrown by them into the boiling red lake during an eruption to appease the wrath of the aggressive dame and thus cause the rivers of lava to cease flowing on their destructive course. These berries grow in clusters on low bushes right on the very brink of the brimstone beds and are so numerous that a bushel may be easily gathered in half an hour. In appearance they somewhat resemble a cranberry, and the flavor is pleasantly suggestive of grapes.

The Word "Expire."

"Expire" in its literal sense is breathing out. Inspiration and expiration together constitute respiration. Izaak Walton observed that "if the inspiring or expiring organ of any animal be stopt it suddenly dies." The Romans spoke of "breathing out" the breath of life instead of "dying" by way of euphemism, just as they said "Vixit" (he has lived) instead of "he is dead." In all languages the reluctance frankly to say "dead" or "die" appears; hence such words and phrases as "pass away," "decease," "demise," "the departed," "defunct," "the late," "no more," "if anything should happen to me."

Perpetuating the Species.

There is a stringent law in Japan that when one camphor laurel is cut down another must be planted in its place. The tree is hardy and long lived, attaining to an enormous size. It is covered with a small leaf of a vivid green color. The seed, or berries, grow in clusters, resembling the black currant in size and appearance. And the wood is employed for every purpose, from cabinetmaking to shipbuilding.

He Guessed Right.

"Ah, me," exclaimed Mrs. Nagget, "my shopping was most unsatisfactory today!" "Huh," grunted Nagget; "trying to get something for nothing, I suppose?" "Yes, dear. I was after a birthday gift for you."—Philadelphia Press.

The Other Side.

"Do you think a little learning is a dangerous thing?" "Possibly. But it isn't half so dangerous as the same amount of ignorance."—Detroit Free Press.

THE TOY INVENTOR.

His Hardest Task Is to Catch the Fancy of the Public.

The small inventor is an important factor in the mechanical toy business, and he earns all of the living he gets in thinking up devices. He is most concerned with the small mechanical toys, and, in addition to the prime requisite of putting forth something novel, he must get something which costs as little as possible and which catches the fancy of the multitude. This last point is one which is most difficult to cover. No student of the subject has ever yet been able to discover or deduce the cycle in which the public taste moves, and it is still hit or miss as to whether a figure which walks on its hands, an airship with wings or an acrobat who works by gravity will be the best seller. Then, when the invention has been achieved, the inventor has still the problem of finding the maker who will buy it and pay a fair price. The inventor and maker are in much the same position as the writer and publisher; both go through the same mental turmoil as to the timeliness of the output and both take the same risks.

The inventor who has been in the business long learns at last the best places at which to offer his wares and has more or less of an idea of what they ought to bring him, and once he has acquired this knowledge his entire energy is devoted to keeping up with the demand for newness. Something absolutely different from anything else previously offered is in general better than an improvement of an old idea, and that is why in mechanical toys the same device is seldom seen two seasons in succession.—Philadelphia Record.

A MUSICAL LEGEND.

The Chinese Story of the Eight Primitive Hidden Sounds.

The Chinese have some extraordinary superstitions relating to music. According to their queer notions, the Creator of the universe hid eight sounds in the earth for the express purpose of compelling man to find them out. On the same principle, it is presumed, Jupiter, according to Virgil, hides fire in flint and honey in trees in order to whet the ardor of man's industry to persevere in his efforts to rediscover the hidden treasures.

According to the Celestial idea, the eight primitive sounds are hidden in stones, silks, woods of various kinds, the bamboo plant, pumpkins, in the skins of animals, in certain earths and in the air itself. Any one who has ever had the pleasure (?) of seeing and listening to a Chinese orchestra will remember that their musical instruments were made of all these materials except the last and that the combined efforts of the other seven seemed better calculated to drive the ethereal sound away than to coax it from the air, which is really the object of all Chinese musical efforts. When the bands play, the naive credulity of the people, both old and young, hears in the thuds of the gongs and the whistling of the pipes the tones of the eternal sounds of nature that were originally deposited in the various animate and inanimate objects by the all wise Father.—Exchange.

What "Hamir" Meant.

Though the Scottish guard of France had long lost its natural character, it jealously retained until the crash of 1793 all its curious old privileges, which, though they led to constant wrangles with other regiments, had been duly allowed by Louis XIV. He was actually obliged to intervene at his own wedding to compose a dispute as to the precedence of the Scots guards and the Cent gentilshommes. "Proud as a Scotchman" was an old proverb in France, and their successors in the bodyguard did their best to justify it. But the most curious survival, long after a word of Scotch had been heard in the corps, was the practice of answering "hamir" (a corruption for "I am here") when the roll was called, which was religiously maintained, at all events, down to the revolution.—Macmillan's Magazine.

Distances in Venezuela.

In traveling in Venezuela it is not enough to ask how far distant a place is, but also how far up or down—in other words, what its altitude is, and, no less important, what hills and valleys have to be crossed. Thus it is not only necessary to know that Caracas is six miles distant in a straight line from La Guayra, its seaport, but that it lies at an elevation of nearly half a mile above sea level and that to reach it one has to cross a mountain wall rising far above the clouds. This, to the experienced traveler, means that he must prepare for an entirely different climate.—George M. L. Brown in *St. Nicholas*.

A Touching Lament.

Addressing a political gathering the other day, a speaker gave his hearers a touch of the pathetic. "I miss," he said, brushing away a not unmanly tear—"I miss many of the old faces I used to shake hands with."—London Globe.

Unfamiliar With the Beast.

"Yes," remarked the professor, "I rather pride myself on the discovery of another hypothesis."

"Indeed," replied Mrs. Cumrox, a little doubtfully. "I had an idea they were quite extinct."—Washington Star.

Very Different Trials.

"Tess—Aren't you going to choir rehearsal tonight?" Jess—No. Tess—You'd better. We're going to give that new hymn a trial. Jess—Can't. I am going to give a new him a trial myself.

Harrah, or huzzah, is the oldest and most common exclamation in all languages.

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