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TWO TIGHT CORNERS.

Exciting chapters in the life of a police captain.

A hard struggle for life with a stalwart murderer and a narrow escape from death at the hands of an armed maniac.

Some time ago the czarina, a very philanthropic and religious woman, made up her mind that the lavish use of tobacco in Russia was doing harm.

A few days passed, and her imperial majesty needed some money. It did not come, even after she had sent a confidential servant to the treasury.

There must be a mistake, your imperial majesty. Two weeks ago you prohibited the use of tobacco in the court, and so great is your influence and so deep the love for you among the people that the sales of the weed dropped down to a fraction of what formerly was the case.

The following week, so the story goes, the rule was relaxed, and the czarina's sudden poverty vanished as if by magic.

Made to Feel at Home. One of the old-time southern negroes went to Boston to make his fortune.

And the polite answer invariably was, "No, mister; very sorry, but have nothing for you."

Finally he rang the bell at a brown stone front. A gentleman appeared, and the old man began:

"Thank de Lawd, I foun' my own white folks at las'! Thank de Lawd, I foun' 'em—I done foun' 'em!"

A guileless rustic who wished to become attached to one of our railways emerged from the examination room and informed the expectant relatives that he had failed to pass the eight test.

"Why, you can't have!" exclaimed the father, who was horrified at the thought. "You're no more color blind than I am."

"Happen not, but they won't have me," answered the rustic bitterly. "It all comes o' trying to be polite an obliging, as you said I was to be, feyther."

"But I can't see how being polite could make any difference," quavered the father.

"It did, though," said the rustic. "The old chap held something up an says: 'This is green, isn't it? Come, now, isn't it green?' quite pleading like, and, though I could see it was red, I couldn't find it in my 'art to tell him he was wrong for fear he might take offense. So I simply said, 'It is, yer honor,' an they bundled me out. No more politeness for me. It don't pay!"

Marrying For Money. A decrepit old negro, with a deformed back and a few discolored fangs in the place of teeth, called one day upon a gentleman who had been her employer and announced, "Mistab, Ise gwine ter get married."

A DIPLOMATIC LIBRARIAN.

He pleased the politician without giving his friend a position.

When Mr. Putnam was the head of the Public Library in Boston, a ward leader of that city called on him to recommend a henchman for a place in the library.

There was no reason why the librarian should not have refused at once and peremptorily to appoint him, but he chose to follow another course.

After a few minutes' talk with the politician Mr. Putnam asked him whether he had ever been through all the departments of the institution.

"I never have, but I'd like to see it," replied the politician.

"It will give me much pleasure to go with you," said Mr. Putnam.

Mr. Putnam took him behind the counters and through the building from top to bottom, explaining the character and the magnitude of the work in detail.

"I'm pleased to have had a chance to show the library to you, and if your friend will fill out an application blank and send it, and if he passes the necessary examination, I think there will be no difficulty in placing his name on the waiting list."

The politician, however, had seen enough of library work to convince him that his constituent could find no place on the staff, and the blank was never filled out.

The most important part of a Wagner opera, according to the composer himself, is not the music, but the drama, which, indeed, the beginner should closely follow with the aid of the book of words, since the music is usually sung in German words.

Perhaps there is no more characteristic sight in Mexico than the so-called "evangelistas" who ply their trade in the Plaza de la Belem and the Plaza de la Santa Domingo.

They write love letters, blackmailing letters and all sorts of letters for those who do not know how to write at a rate of 3, 6, 9 or more cents, according to the length of the missive.

Once while James Whitcomb Riley was visiting a southern town where he was booked to give a reading a committee called to take him in a carriage over the city.

"So you're going to cut my throat?" I said, quietly turning part way around.

"Yes, captain. I have been commanded by God to do so. I'm sorry, but it must be done. Get ready."

A wedding ring should fit the finger. If it is too large, it is a sign of shallowness of purpose; if too tight, it suggests that the union pinches some bow.

INSPIRED BY DREAMS

Triumphs of the brain asleep over the brain awake.

Dramatic achievements that owe their being to the mysterious workings of the mind under the subtle influence of slumber.

There are numerous authentic cases in which, inspired by a dream, a person has achieved in sleep something that he had utterly failed over when awake and certainly more than one where an artistic triumph has resulted.

As it continued at intervals after he had tried locking the studio door and placing the key under his pillow, the effect can be better imagined than described, and it was only a chance accident that at length burst the bubble.

At least one enduring piece of music owes its inspiration and production to a dream in the same dramatic way.

One night, as he lay asleep, it came to him, grandly definite. He dreamed that it was an accomplished fact on paper.

Equally dramatic, again, is the story often told of a struggling musician who had written a song which he could not induce any music publisher to risk publishing.

It goes without saying, too, that the most humorous things are occasionally done by persons who retire to rest with a fixed intention for the morrow in their minds and are discovered working out the scheme in their sleep.

The writer knows a gentleman—never suspected of acting upon inspirations evolved in his slumber—who had laid in a stock of enamel paints, with which he intended to decorate his rooms after a pattern not yet decided upon.

"Keep working," said Senator Sorghum earnestly. "Don't be discouraged by failure, but try, try again. Remember that good old maxim 'Persistence is a jewel.'"

"Are you sure it's 'persistence'?" inquired the young man mildly. "Isn't it 'con' instead of 'per'?"

"Well," he answered thoughtfully, "as life goes nowadays I suppose there's a lot to be more or less 'con' in it. But it isn't considered polite to lay too much stress upon it."

Military Uniforms. Military uniforms were not originally especially splendid. It was the Prussian army and then Napoleon who set the example of adorning the soldiers' dress all over with fur, gold lace and so on.

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TWO TIPS ON RACES.

The recipient tells why he is not hankering after any more.

"No, sir," said a New Orleans dentist the other day when the conversation happened to turn on sports; "no, sir, I wouldn't play a racing tip under any circumstances. I wouldn't play it if I knew it was a copper bottomed, double riveted cinch and a 100 to 1 shot."

"But why wouldn't you?" asked a listener. "Have you been thrown down so bad?"

"I haven't been thrown down at all," replied the dentist. "On the contrary, the only two tips I ever had in my life were both perfectly straight, but—well, I'll tell you what happened to me. Personally, I don't care for racing and never go near the track, but during the winter season I did a good deal of work for horsemen and got well acquainted with several. One day a Louisville man for whom I had put in a rather difficult filling told me in an offhand fashion to put \$5 or \$10 on a certain horse that was going to run next day. I thought it over, decided I would and decided I wouldn't and finally didn't. The horse came galloping in first, 12 to 1. I was so ashamed of myself that I hadn't the face to tell the Louisville man the truth, and when he asked me how much I had gathered in I said 'a hundred' and thanked him warmly. Later on he got broke and came around to borrow \$50. 'I wouldn't ask you,' he said, 'but you know I put you next to winning that hundred.' What could I say? I handed him the money and have never seen it since. That was tip No. 1.

"The other tip was given me by a gambler here in town," continued the dentist. "I yanked out a molar that was setting him crazy, and in a burst of gratitude he swore me to secrecy and told me to be certain to back a horse—well, call him Snow King, which comes near to his name—what to run that afternoon. I couldn't go out myself that day, but I determined I wouldn't get left twice, so I sent for a friend, raked up \$20 and told him to go and make the bet for me. This friend of mine has a bad impediment in his speech, and late that afternoon he rushed in with a face like a funeral. 'K-k-kill me!' he stuttered. 'K-k-kill me!' 'Why, what's wrong?' I asked, greatly startled. With much difficulty he managed to tell me that he had got the names mixed and had bet on King John instead of Snow King. Snow King was a winner, of course, at 20 to 1, and King John was nowhere. My messenger was so heartbroken over his blunder that I didn't have the heart to reproach him, and when he pulled out \$20, mostly in small silver, and tried to make me take it I refused. 'No, my boy,' I said; 'you can't afford to make that good. It's vexatious, of course, but mistakes will happen; so keep your money and say no more about it.' That made me feel so fine and magnanimous that it sort of reconciled me to my loss, and my friend was almost tearful in his thanks.

"About a month afterward, as near as I remember, a bookmaker came in to get a set of false teeth, and while we were waiting for the cast to dry we got to talking about luck. He said it was strange how often green outsiders walk up and call the right horse. 'Why, not long ago,' he said, 'all the talent was backing the favorite in one of the events where it looked like a moral certainty that nothing else could win. Just before the race was called up comes a gawky young fellow to my box and puts down \$20 on an old skate of the name of Snow King. He got 20 to 1 and might just as well have had 100 to 1. 'Hold on,' I interrupted, beginning to feel a little sick; 'did you notice anything peculiar about that young man?' 'Nothing particular,' said the bookmaker, 'except that he stuttered so bad I thought he would never make his play before the race was over.'

"So that's why I'm sore on tips," added the dentist. "I got two straight ones, and I figure it out that I lost \$150 on the first—the \$100 I didn't win and the \$50 I loaned—and \$420 on the second—the \$400 I won, but didn't get, and the \$20 I was fool enough to tell my stuttering friend to keep; total, \$570. Wouldn't that jar you a little?"

Wanted Them Lively. "Talking about the queer ways some people have of sizing up a man's capabilities for a job," said a New Jersey man the other day, "there recently died in my town a boss carpenter who had one question which he always asked of journeymen who applied to him for employment. If the applicant was found to possess all the other necessary qualifications, he would ask: 'What are your favorite tunes?'

"Why, what do you want to know that for?"

"You whistle and sing some at your work, don't you?"

"Oh, yes."

"Well, what tunes do you generally whistle or sing?"

"Oh, there's 'Old Hundred' and 'And Lang Syne' and 'Down by the Weeping Willows' and—"

"That's enough," the boss would exclaim. "You won't do for me. These tunes are too slow for me. Good day!"

"On the contrary, if the applicant answered, 'Oh, I generally whistle 'Yankee Doodle' or 'The Fisher's Hornpipe' or something of that sort the carpenter would say at once: 'I think you'll do. Take off your coat if you want to and go to work.'"

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