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SOME ODD STORIES.

INTERESTING INCIDENTS RELATED BY ALFRED R. CALHOUN.

A New Version of the Old Story of the Ghost of the Pecos—A Legend That Has Long Been Prevalent in New Mexico.

Some years before the railroad came to New Mexico I was at a dinner in Santa Fe given by the territorial officers to a number of engineers who had been making a preliminary survey down the Rio Grande. It was a stag party, and after cigars were lighted Mr. Chavez, the gentleman who presided, announced to the guests that he expected each one to make a speech, sing a song or tell a story.

At the breaking out of the late war a large number of Germans who were living in Texas, but who were strongly opposed to secession, decided to put all their portable effects into wagons and come north to New Mexico, here to remain till the war was over.

After a march of more than 800 miles, during which the oxen suffered many privations, they reached their destination, and they were delighted with the upper Pecos, which every good New Mexican regards as Eden. Soon after their arrival the Comanches, at least he never came back to deny it, and at the same time the startling news reached them that General Sibley, with a brigade of Texans, had come into the territory and proposed to hold it for the Confederacy.



A MONSTROUS SPECTRAL FIGURE. "They had no guide, nor was this thought necessary, for the maps showed that the Pecos ran nearly due south till it entered the Rio Grande, about 600 miles away, and across from its mouth was their promised land."

"The Pecos, where they had found a temporary resting place, was a beautiful trout-filled river. The banks were lined with stately cottonwoods, the sky was clear, the soil fertile and the pasturage the best. They reasoned from their experience with all other streams that these conditions would continue, and that as the river neared its mouth the volume of its water would increase. They did not notice that for 300 miles it received no tributaries, and so they could not foresee the effect of percolation and evaporation on the current."

"At length there came a day when the current ceased and they found the water only in tepid, brackish pools. Still on and down they pressed, hoping and praying for a sight of the Rio Grande and the Sierras of Old Mexico."

"Then the pools vanished, swallowed up in the parched earth, and they had to dig for water in the arid and dusty bed of the river, at first a foot, then two feet, then one-half their time was spent in digging for water and they were forced to travel at night, for the cows had died or wandered off and the horses and mules looked like parched skeletons."

A PHILOSOPHICAL COCKROACH. A cockroach sat on an editor's desk. With a cynical smile on his face, he watched the editor make grotesque black marks on a clean, white page. "Dear me!" said the cockroach, "I can't see why he should labor so constantly. For he doesn't accomplish a single thing with all his writing and scissoring. Paste and scissors, scissors and paste—Think of the energy going to waste!"

Worse Than Death. Until a recent date it was the law in Austria that a woman convicted of a capital offense and condemned to death could be saved, even if on the scaffold, if a single man would come forward and then and there make her his wife.

Marie Hartman was employed as governess in the family of a colonel of Hussars. She was wonderfully bright, and in addition she had the rare beauty that comes from a crossing of the Magyar and Teutonic races. Colonel Von Graff was about thirty years of age, rich, handsome and gallant—his adventures in the latter line being excused by his associates, owing to the fact that his wife had been an invalid since the birth of her only child, now a little girl of six.

From the time she began administering poison to her mistress till the day that unfortunate lady died was exactly seven weeks, and during that time the change in Madam Von Graff's case puzzled the foremost doctors in Vienna, including the physician of his majesty the Emperor Francis Joseph.

With the colonel's free consent an autopsy was held, and then the truth came out. The unfortunate lady had been killed by arsenic, administered with surprising skill. It was some time before suspicion pointed to Marie Hartman, and then it pointed unmistakably. The girl was arrested, but displayed a moral obliquity that amazed men whose lives had been devoted to the investigation and punishment of crime.

At length the day set for the execution of Marie Hartman arrived. In the interim between her sentence and execution she refused to see any clergyman, declaring with a laugh, when talked to on the subject, that she had no hope of heaven or fear of hell.

"Do you think I—ah—shall have a good beard?" asked an unpromising candidate for such honors. "I'm afraid not, sir," answered the barber, after a close inspection. "Aw, weally. My fawther has aw werry fine beard, you know."

There is today an English actor in the United States, who is winning both fortune and fame, who owes his start in life to his early ignorance and innate honesty. When a lad he was what is known as a "pot boy" in a public house near Covent Garden theater, in London.

"It was two quarts and a pint, sir!" This was unintelligible to the gentleman till the landlord explained that the boy meant 77.

The poor youth could neither read nor write and knew nothing about numerals, but he knew the signs by which his employer scored the quarts and pints of porter that were drunk at his house, so he called out on the instant:

Then the editor smashed the cockroach flat with his scissors and buried him deep in the pot of paste and remarked, "Now that I consider is getting off cheap. The critical faculty, as we know, is a dangerous thing to have, and so I've forwarded you to a better land, for the sake of society, understand." Then the editor took up his pen and said, "As he looked at the cockroach lying dead, 'Paste and scissors, scissors and paste—Think of the energy going to waste!' —Chicago Journal.



She—I am very sorry, but our engagement must cease. I can never marry. He—My gracious! What has happened? She—My brother has disgraced us. He—Oh, is that all? That doesn't matter. I feared maybe your father had failed. —New York Weekly.

Too Hasty. Dr. Brunton, in an address lately reported in the London Lancet, was cautioning his hearers—the members of a medical society—against hastily expressed opinions as to the nature of patients' diseases, and emphasized his warning by two professional anecdotes. He was once present at a clinic, the subject of which was a man evidently suffering from some disease of the heart.

An unnatural murmuring sound could be heard from that organ, and the pupil of one of his eyes was very much dilated. The peculiar appearance of the eye seemed to have some connection with the cardiac affection, but various opinions were expressed by the different students as to what the precise nature of this relation could be.

Why He Didn't Like England. Rigby—What are you going to do this summer—going across the pond? Digby—Y-a-s, I think I'll knock around the Continent a bit, you know. Rigby—And you won't stop in England? Digby—Naw, I think not. Rigby—Why not? Digby—Weelly, dear boy, I was ovah there lawst year, don't yer know, and me American accent was so noticeable that there was weally no pleasure in life. —Detroit Tribune.

On His Mother's Side. "Do you think I—ah—shall have a good beard?" asked an unpromising candidate for such honors. "I'm afraid not, sir," answered the barber, after a close inspection. "Aw, weally. My fawther has aw werry fine beard, you know."

What are You Going to do this Spring? Travel? You give oats to a strong vigorous horse with self assurance of returning profit. You feed a worthless cur out of sympathy for his hunger, or to be rid of his offensive whine. Railroads of both the horse and the dog class are pretty well represented in the West, the worthless ones make the most noise. You pronomize the former with confidence in profitable returns, the other—as you fling bread to the whining dog—out of charity or "to get of em." It's a matter of business and profit vs. sentiment and peace. The cost is about the same, and you ought to have your choice. Do you ask where to put your "oats," or the "crust of bread"? You can easily tell by looking about a bit.

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