

LEGAL FREAKS.

SINGULARLY STRANGELY HANDLED IN LAW COURTS.

A Woman Considered as Personal Property and Valued at \$8.50—A Horse Brought Before the Bar—The Wrong Man Told Why He Was There.

To a Hocking county court belongs the remarkable distinction of passing upon a woman as personal property. The unique precedent was had some twenty-five or thirty years ago, and before women's rights had progressed as far as they have since. A citizen of old Hocking married a young lady against the energetic protest of her father, and set up housekeeping on his own account. It was a case of "love in a cottage," as a matter of fact. During the temporary absence of the unsuspecting bridegroom the wife's father and brothers invaded love's domicile and carried her off.

The despoiled husband repaired to a neighboring justice of the peace in search of law aid to the exigencies of the case. After a thorough investigation of Swann's Treatise and Cradclough's Constable, it was unanimously decided by the justice, the constable and the desolate husband that the proper thing to do was to proceed by an action in replevin.

The papers were accordingly made out and the writ seized in the hands of the constable, who proceeded at once to execute it, and replevined the woman from the custody of her father, who, though exceedingly irate, didn't feel like resisting the edict of the court. When it came to appraising the property and fixing the sworn value of a woman, the constable was rather perplexed, but the three freeholders whom he called in to act as appraisers solved the problem in a manner fit once of hand and business like.

They went for her husband, the plaintiff, and ascertained for him that he had expended the following sums of money upon his "property": License, 75 cents; justice's marriage fee, \$2.50; one new dress, \$7; cents; one new bonnet, \$7; cents. They furthermore decided that the woman was "perishable property," and her value was only to be estimated theoretically. Whereupon they fixed the value of her labor and services for the month at \$4, which they added to the other items, making \$8.50.

In due course of time the trial came off and the plaintiff duly and satisfactorily proved his ownership by producing his marriage certificate. The defendant could not upset this evidence, and the plaintiff got judgment of restitution and 25 cents damages. His property was then restored to him in due and regular form, and the defendant was solemnly notified that a repetition of his offense would be regarded as petty larceny and punished accordingly. The man and his wife are still living happily and contentedly together.

But Hocking county cannot lay claim to exclusiveness in "precedents." Over in her next door neighbor, Perry, a horse was once restored to its rightful neighbor under a writ of habeas corpus issued by a justice of the peace.

As horse broke into B's pasture, whereupon B put it into his stable, locked the door and refused to give it up. A secured the services of the celebrated Shep Tinker as his legal adviser. Shep knew that his client could not give the necessary bail in an action by replevin, so he decided to bring a different sort of an action.

With this intent he went before a justice of the peace in old Straitsville, and took out a writ of habeas corpus and literally brought the horse into court. Lawyer Saunders, a most brilliant practitioner at the Logan bar and long the prosecuting attorney of Hocking county, was called on the other side.

He didn't know the nature of the case until the constable made his return upon the writ.

"Why," exclaimed Mr. Saunders, with a look of blank astonishment, "this court can't issue such a writ and no court could issue one for a horse." Shep was more than equal to the emergency.

"Your honor," he said, "a wise and just court can do anything that is laid down in the books. The writ of habeas corpus has been recognized as sacred for centuries. To say that this court can't issue it is to say that it is ignorant of things that it is not."

"But this court kin issue it," interposed the justice, "and it has issued it already."

Mr. Saunders saw his mistake and apologized to the court for having doubted its ability to do anything it chose. It is needless to say that the horse was restored to its owner.

WHAT HIS BUSINESS WAS. As funny a thing as ever occurred in a court happened at Napoleon, O., in 1882, before Judge Potter and a jury. A case was on trial, and an outsider seated himself on one of the benches at the foot of the panel of jurors, there being no other available seat. When the judge's counsel arose to address the jury, he scanned the face of each very closely, and naturally his gaze was directed to the furthest man from him, who hadn't happen to be a juror at all. Chairman of him, he began:

"Members of the jury, I want to know what this man (referring to the plaintiff in the case) has come into court for. What is his business? What right has he to be here? What is he seeking for? A jury of eight, gentlemen of the jury, say I do not know."

The countryman imagined that the question had direct reference to himself, and when the lawyer paused to give due weight and emphasis to the question, he jumped to his feet and howled:

"What am I here for, you cross eyed cuss of the world? What am I seeking for in this here court? I'll tell you in plain, raw, you wizen faced old son of a gun. I've been here three days waiting for my fees, and nary a red lin has I got. Pay me my witness fees, sir, and I'll get out of here immediately."

An unexpected oration brought down the house, and the lawyer never finished his argument.

John H. Morrison practiced law many years ago at Findlay and all through that section of Ohio. He had some striking peculiarities, which were in the habit of cropping out in court. He was once trying a case before Judge Patrick Henry Goode and a jury, and opened his side of the case as follows:

"May it please the court, by the perjury of witnesses, the ignorance of the jury and the connivance of the court, I expect to lose this case."

"What is that you say, Mr. Morrison?"

"That is all I have to say on that point, and the court will feel happier if I do not repeat what I have already said. From the looks of the jury I infer that they would rather not have heard it once."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

A BOOTBLACK'S CRITICISM.

Pointing Out a Defect in a Picture Which Escaped Public Attention.

Tom Nicholl, the artist, tells the following story on himself, which is a pretty good one. It illustrates the well known fact that the best of us can learn something from fools and children. The story is as follows: On one occasion he had made a large crayon picture of a little child seated in a cart which was hitched a large Newfoundland dog. It was a fine piece of work, and for some two weeks hung in a public show window, where it attracted much attention, and many were the compliments showered upon the artist for his skill.

Some time after the picture had been taken down Mr. Nicholl was seated in his studio when there came a timid rapper at the door. He called out to the caller to come in, and there entered a little street urchin, who had often given the artist a shine, and who on the strength of such acquaintance used frequently to pay him a visit.

"Well, Tod," said Nicholl, "what can I do for you today?"

The little Arab hesitated a moment, and then, in a tone that plainly indicated the intensity of his desire, he said:

"Well, I thought I'd like ter see the picture you made o' that boy an' the dog in a wagon."

"All right," replied the artist, and crossing the room to where the picture stood, faced the wall, he picked it up and placed it on an easel.

The boy stood and looked at it, with evident delight and pleasure depicted on his face. Suddenly, however, he turned, and with considerable embarrassment, as though he knew he was presuming, he said: "Mr. Nicholl, it's er dandy, but you've made a mistake in it."

"What!" ejaculated the artist. "A mistake; where?"

"Why," said the boy, a little triumphantly, "you've forgot to put in any 'bolster' on the front axle-tree."

Nicholl stepped forward, looked at the picture a moment, and sure enough the boy was right. The front end of the wagon bed was resting on nothing. He quickly seized crayon, put in the missing piece by merely making a deep shadow where he had left a high light, and the defect was remedied.

The urchin watched the process of correction, and then, after a critical and satisfied look at the picture, and remarking, "That's bully," he slung his kit over his shoulder and went out.

"The strangest thing, though," said Mr. Nicholl, in telling the story, "is how that picture should have hung on exhibition for two weeks, where it was admired and criticised by hundreds, and none of whom saw the blunder I had made, and that bootblack should discover it the minute he saw it. The point was, the boy was posted on all the points about a dog and wagon. It taught me a lesson I have never forgotten—that almost any person can give you suggestions about something that are worth having."—Arkansas Traveler.

A Rural Districter. The average New Yorker is likely to think of his friends in smaller cities as hardly equal to himself in keen business sagacity, but now and then somebody from a small town or even from the country shows himself in this quality quite worthy of the metropolis. A New Englander, who may be called Mr. Higgins, a man who stands six feet two in his stockings and is well proportioned, landed from a Sound steamer the other morning and was greeted with the familiar "Good morning, Mr. Higgins! So glad to see you here! But I'm afraid you don't remember me." The usual introduction and explanations followed, and then Mr. Higgins started with the stranger to "call on some friends."

After walking a few blocks they came into a small side street, and here Mr. Higgins interrupted the flow of reminiscences by setting down his valise on the sidewalk and laying his overcoat upon it. This surprised his companion, who asked: "What is the matter, Mr. Higgins? What are you going to do?"

"I am going," replied Mr. Higgins calmly, "to lick a bunco stealer within an inch of his life."

But the New Yorker, who had no taste for sparring matches, had suddenly remembered an engagement in another part of the city.—New York Tribune.

Electric Conveniences. One of the ingenious members of the New York Electrical club has designed a door opener which relieves the disgusted traveler or visitor from the necessity of shoving a heavy mass of wood with his hands, or of wearing out the toes of his boots in kicking it back.

A metallic plate set in the floor a foot from the threshold is marked "door opener." The caller treads upon it in the same style as the peaceful street car horse treads upon the clumsy iron switch plates which now ornament every street where this style of locomotion is in vogue.

The plate yields a quarter inch to the pressure of the foot and forms a circuit, which immediately starts a tiny electromotor, that in turn opens the door, despite door spring, air valve or counterweight. The moment the visitor passes in the plate is thrown back by a coiled spring to its former position, the circuit is broken and the door closes itself with or without a resonant bang, as may be desired.

With swing doors the plate is inset on both sides of the portal. With double church doors two pairs of plates are arranged so that the sexton can connect or disconnect each pair. When the plates are connected the worshiper's foot opens both doors, but when disconnected only one.—Philadelphia Times.

Taming a Bird. No creature is more jealous or sensitive than a bird, says Olive Thorne Miller in The Home Maker. It is easy, however, to win the heart of almost any bird, and without starving him or making him think he has mastered you. Simply talk to him a good deal. Place his cage near you on your desk or work table, and retain his choicest dainty to give to him with your own fingers. Let him know that he can never have that particular thing unless he takes it from you, and he will soon learn, if you are patient and do not disconcert him by fixing your eyes upon him. After this he will more readily take it from your lips; and then when you let him out of his cage, after the first excitement is over, he will come to you, especially if you have a call you have accustomed him to, and accept the dainty from you while free. As soon as he becomes really convinced that you will not hurt him, or try to catch him, or interfere in any way with his liberty, he will give you his boundless curiosity about you; he will pull your hair, pick at your eyes and give you as much of his company as you desire.

Smooth Newfoundlanders.

Many years ago, while living in Boston, I knew a ship master engaged in the Newfoundland trade, to him I gave an order to buy for me in that island one of the native dogs, and expected to get one of the well known big, long haired animals. The captain, however, brought me a female puppy of a smooth, short haired breed, which he said was considered by gunners in Newfoundland as the best of water dogs. When a year old Fanny was about the size of a small pointer, say eighteen or twenty inches, with short black hair on body and tail, the latter straight, ears small and rather pointed and with a wild and somewhat wolfish eye, like that of an Indian dog. She was rather savage in temper, except to myself, and would fight any dog of either sex. When she was about a year old I took her with me to Chicago, and the first time I had her out duck hunting she brought out my ducks like a trained retriever, though she had never before seen a gun fired. She could swim and dive like an otter and no crippled bird could escape her. She would dive off of the Chicago pier and bring up a white object from the bottom in eighteen or twenty feet of water. In those days plenty of ducks could be found on the river just outside the village, for Chicago was then little more in 1840. On the river banks lived Irish squatters who kept geese, and the first time I took Fanny along the river she attacked a flock of tame geese, killed the gander and brought him to me, and I had to pay the enraged old woman who owned the geese.—Forest and Stream.

The Eccentric Duchess of Montrose. The Duchess of Montrose is very fond of dress. Her favorite color is scarlet, and when this elderly lady (she is 70, I believe) is gotten up in a toilet of her favorite hue, supplemented with a scarlet ulster, her appearance is certainly peculiar. She is extremely popular with the lower orders, to whom her grace is well known by sight from her constant frolics of race courses. Curiosity took her to go to take a look at the great Socialist demonstration in Hyde park. On arriving there she was instantly approached by a number of roughs, who proceeded to give her some good natured advice: "Now, your grace, don't stay here—go home and take care of yourself—it isn't a fit place for you."

"Well, boys, I'll go," answered the lady good humoredly. And as she turned away some one in the crowd cried, "Three cheers for Caroline, Duchess of Montrose!" an appeal that met with a hearty response. "Imagine a meeting of British Socialists cheering a duchess!" continued my informant.

I have been told, but I do not know with what truth, that the Duchess of Montrose is the lady who became, some thirty-five years ago, greatly attached to James Buchanan when he was United States minister to London, and who would have married that gentleman had not her relatives strongly opposed her alliance with an American. I heard this story several years ago in London, but the name of the lady was not then stated.—London Cor. Philadelphia Telegraph.

Patti's Jealous Fits. Lucy Hooper, writing of Patti's recent performance in Paris, says: "The diva was far from feeling content with her reception, though she was enthusiastically applauded and received myriads of bouquets. But Mme. Patti is not only frenziedly jealous of any prima donna whose renown so much as approaches her own, but she cannot endure that any singer in the company, male or female, shall achieve a success while she is singing with her. On the first night Jean de Resceke, as Romeo, won such a triumph, especially in the balcony scene, that at the close of the act Mme. Patti went into hysterics and declared that she would not finish the opera—an apology must be made for her and the audience dismissed. It took all the persuasive powers of the directors to induce the jealous little woman to bring the performance to a conclusion. Mme. Patti, who is 47 years old, is beginning to feel the advance of time, and is consequently twice as cantankerous and quarrelsome as she ever was before. It is now a question as to her success in the role of Juliet. There is still talk of the unlucky debutante, Mile. Darce, whose breaking down at the dress rehearsal brought about the engagement in hot haste of Mme. Patti. But it is also whispered that Mme. Marchesi's Australian pupil, Mme. Melba, will be called upon to assume the role.—Chicago Journal.

A Maine Mother. Capt. Davis of the five masted schooner Governor Ames, built at Waldoboro, Me., had a remarkable mother. She was not content with bringing up her own eleven sons and daughters in the way they should go, but adopted two or three other children. She was the doctor of the whole neighborhood. Physicians were few and inexperienced, as is usual in small country places, and Mrs. Davis was always sent for in a hurry when any one was sick. Many were the men she saved from death. One man, given up for dead by everybody else, is now a very wealthy citizen of a western state. Often there would be two calls for her at once, and in one case a couple of men carried her a half mile through snow waist deep to the sick bed of a friend. She was present at the birth of every child born in the village for over forty years.—Lewiston Journal.

That's the Worst of It. There are some men in this world who couldn't tell you that two parallel lines may be infinitely produced and never meet, without filling you with an earnest desire to denounce the statement as a malicious lie. And they are always excellent people.—Boston Budget.

A French subterranean river has been explored for a mile or more by M. Martel, who derives from his investigations a theory of the origin of canyons.

Mistakes in Bookstores.

Says a Portland bookseller: "At one time we were carrying a large stock of religious works, and one day I called out to one of my clerks, holding up a book which he had wrapped up for some one, 'Is this 'The City of God?'" "No, I guess not," he said, without looking round, "at least I never heard it called that before. It is generally called the Forest City. Perhaps it is Brooklyn." He afterward explained that he thought I had found a reference in some book to a place called the City of God and wanted to know what city it meant.

"On another occasion a woman with a valise in her hand rushed in and asked a new boy if he had 'That Husband of Mine' in our store. He came rushing out to me in the back shop and said a woman wanted to know if her husband was in our store. I surmised what the trouble was and attended to her myself.

"Some of the most amusing mistakes, however, are those made by people who get the titles of books wrong. They read about them in some catalogue or newspaper, but don't more than half remember the name, and the result is, to say the least, peculiar. One woman came in the other day and asked for 'The Rhinestone,' and went out mad because one of the clerks told her we didn't sell jewelry. Another wanted 'The Cardinal's Letter,' by Hawthorne. It took our whole force about fifteen minutes to get at what she really wanted, 'The Scarlet Letter.' She said she knew there was something red about it somewhere and thought it must be cardinal."—Portland Advertiser.

Modern Robinson Crusoe. Professor Lee, of Bowdoin college, who accompanied the Albatross expedition as a naturalist, tells of a curious experience in the South Pacific. Years ago the Ecuador government planted a convict colony on Charles Island, one of the Galapagos group.

The convicts revolted, killed the governor and escaped, leaving behind pigs, cattle, donkeys and horses. Since that time no one was thought to live there, and at Chatham Island, another of the group, the Albatross party were told that Charles Island was entirely deserted.

They were, therefore, rather surprised when they visited Charles Island to come upon a man nearly naked, carrying a pig on his back. He was quite as surprised as they, and was at first in great fear; but finally they got him to talk. His hair and beard had grown very long, and he had lost all notion of time.

He said that some years before he had come to Charles Island with a party in search of a certain valuable moss; that he had deserted his companions, who had gone off without him, and that since that time he had been alone on the island.

He had lived on fruits and herbs; had captured wild cattle by setting traps for them, killed them with a spear made by tying his pocket knife to a stick, and from their hides made a hut. He was glad to see men again, and asked to be taken back to Chatham Island, which was granted, of course.—Youth's Companion.

The Glorified Spinster in Boston. The Boston woman is nothing if not independent. She deems herself very properly at least the equal of the masculine brute, who is taught by her to know that he is not by any means the indispensable creature commonly supposed. The female of the human species hereabout, outnumbering so greatly as she does the local male supply, must needs learn to take care of herself. And so she does. It is thus one finds thousands of unprotected girls approaching matrimony with hopelessness, pursuing a sort of bachelor-que existence in the studio buildings, with art or literature for an occupation. Some of them paint things more or less bad, which their kind hearted friends make a habit of buying. Others do hackwork for the newspapers. As a rule they are ladies and have some little income of their own which enables them to make both ends meet. Their manner of living is simple and inexpensive. A screen in one corner conceals a little gas stove and some few dishes. In a curtained alcove is a bed. Half a dozen chairs, an easel or two and some painting or writing materials complete the equipment of the virginal menage.—Albany Argus.

A Chinese Autocrat. I heard an amusing story about a prominent insurance agent who has a monopoly of the Chinese insurance business in this city. He went to a laundry and got the Mongol in charge to translate a small circular into Chinese. The names of several wealthy Chinese merchants were given as references. When the circular had been photo-engraved and reduced to a size convenient for printing on an ordinary business card, the insurance agent showed one of his Chinese friends a copy. "Melican plinter no good. He spelled my name wrong," said the Mongolian merchant. "Do you know that my Chinese friend's family pride was injured?" said the insurance agent. "It seems that Ah Sooy is the Chinese synonym for Smith, and the merchant spelled his name Smyth. The Chinese Smyths with a 'y' have a very ancient pedigree, and my friend's feelings were injured by being classed with the Smyths who spell their name with an 'i.'"—New York Star.

Miss Astor's Pearl Slippers. Mrs. August Belmont has the finest collection of sapphires in this country, though Mrs. William Astor is credited with possessing the finest single one. When one of the younger Astors was married a dainty present was given her by her uncle. It was her wedding slippers; they were of white satin elaborately seeded with pearls, put in a white satin box, on the inside of which in pale colors were "lady slippers" and on the outside china asters. The sentiment was really very pretty, and the work was most artistically done.—Philadelphia Times.

A Word to the People.

The motto, "What is Home without a Mother," exists in many happy homes in this city, but the effect of what is home without the Local Newspaper is sadly realized in many of these "happy homes" in Plattsmouth.

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