

Ballaine's Bank Balance

There was a crowd blocking the pavement and gazing with evident interest at one of the great plate glass windows of the Lombard National Bank. At a distance it looked like a "run," but a closer view showed the entrance of the bank unobstructed. A notice, written in a bold hand, and hung inside the window, was the object of the crowd's curiosity. It read: "At the opening of this bank to-day Mr. T. Fillmore Ballaine's balance was \$2,117 10c. 8d."

For two weeks a similar notice had appeared regularly upon the window of the bank. It began on a Monday morning, and the few that glanced at it learned that T. Fillmore Ballaine had \$680 2c. 1d. therein. Who Mr. T. Fillmore Ballaine was no one seemed to know, and why the bank should make public a matter usually regarded as a business secret, none could guess. But everyone who read it puzzled over it, and looked up at the notice the next time they passed the Lombard National Bank.

On Tuesday the notice read \$800 12c. 7d., and on Wednesday it read \$876 9c. 5d. in the morning, but was replaced in the hour of closing by a new notice, which read \$720 19c. 3d. By Thursday the affair was in the papers, and on Friday the daily balance was the topic of the town. All day long on Saturday a crowd stood at the big window and discussed Mr. Ballaine's balance of \$1,250 7c. 8d., and passed comments thereon.

At the hour of closing a new notice proclaimed that Mr. Ballaine had had \$1,499 19c. 11d. therein, and some wag in the crowd gravely passed his hat, saying: "Let's make it even money!" On Monday morning Mr. Ballaine was surprised to find that some one had left a deposit of one penny or him, and that his balance stood at \$1,500.

During the second week Mr. Ballaine's bank balance climbed more slowly; but every increase was hailed with delight by the crowd in front of the window, who knew neither Mr. Ballaine nor the secret of his peculiar advertisement, yet who thoroughly enjoyed both.

Not till Wednesday of the second week did the notice in the window credit Ballaine with \$1,900. Then a man in the crowd offered to bet a hundred that it would touch \$2,000 by Saturday. For a moment the crowd thought he must be Ballaine, and gazed at him unmercifully; but some one recognized him as a city sporting man, and his bet was not taken.

Thursday was the tenth of the month, and Mr. Ballaine evidently paid a few bills, for on Friday the balance in the window went down to \$1,486, where it hung till the close of business of Saturday. Then the clerk put up a new notice, and the eager crowd cheered when it read—\$2,200 10c. 4d.

On Monday morning a portly man, ruddy of face, grizzled and grumbling, pushed into the crowd and read the notice. With a grunt of disgust he entered the bank. The cashier recognized him as one of his heaviest depositors, and greeted him pleasantly. "Good morning, Mr. Penny."

"Good morning, I heard about your remarkable window and came to have a look. Strikes me as being ridiculous. I don't see how you can allow it," said Mr. Penny, removing his silk hat and wiping a moist brow.

"Mr. Ballaine obtained permission from the manager," replied the cashier, smiling.

"He did, eh? Who is this man Ballaine?"

"A young solicitor. Very bright fellow, quite original in his methods. This plan was his own. He brought enough influence to bear through his friends to obtain the necessary permission from the powers that be. It has proved a remarkable attraction to the public."

"Friends, eh? Who were they?"

The cashier enumerated some of the most prominent of the younger business men of the city.

"All right," interrupted the capitalist, with the air of a man who had heard displeasing news. "When the young man comes in tell him he wins." Then he left the bank.

The cashier smiled, for he knew what Ballaine's "winning" meant, and he reported the conversation to the manager.

But the crowd outside knew nothing of this, and only gaped as usual at the sign. That day it dropped to \$1,920 9c. 5d., and remained there for ten days, when it jumped to \$10,400 11c. 2d. That night the evening papers proclaimed the sale of Mr. Penny's famous riverside mansion for a fabulous sum, and conveyed the interesting information:

"The deal was consummated by Mr. T. Fillmore Ballaine, a solicitor in Essex Chambers, whose commission on this deal alone is \$8,400."

Next day many people looked up at the big window of the Lombard National, but there was no trace of Mr. Ballaine's balance. In its accustomed place hung a sign, which read:

"Anny Office. Values Paid for Gold, Drest and Haggens."

But the public had become curious and the newspapers were worried into checking their efforts at solving the mystery to no purpose, however, as Mr. Ballaine finally told the representatives of the press to "go to jail."

"I don't want your check," said the older man. "I want you to take that notice out of that window."



One man and a deadly torpedo floating about beneath the surface of the water. The torpedo charged so that it will blow a great warship to destruction; the man provided with means by which to discharge his dangerous weapon in a way to do the most harm. Such is the latest of all torpedo boats—a one-man affair, not larger than a large fish, and yet as effective in its purposes, if the theory of its inventor is correct, as one of the Holland submarine boats.

The man who has perfected this offensive and invisible destroyer is Thomas J. Moriarty, for many years the mechanical expert in the employ of the United States Government at the torpedo station at Newport.

Mr. Moriarty was long ago impressed with the idea that the only way by which to make the action of the torpedo actually certain was to put an experienced operator inside it; for, while its automatic machinery operates with almost human intelligence, there is no certainty that it will on long ranges do exactly what is required of it. From the idea of putting a man inside it to that of placing a man outside it, the transition was easy; and it then became a problem to give him a safe shelter, means of locomotion, of submerging and of discharging the projectile.

To accomplish these essentials he has devised a cigar-shaped boat of bronze plates, about ten feet long, three feet deep and five feet wide. Beneath this is suspended the Whitehead torpedo in a frame, and it is propelled by compressed air when the operator has approached near the mark.

When in the boat the operator lies on a cradle astride of its support. Padded prongs on the cradle curve over his shoulders and hold him in place, providing also a purchase for his arms when operating the lever in front of him. He wears a waistcoat made of two thicknesses of airtight material, to which is attached a small mouth tube by which it is inflated. It serves as a padding for the body while the operator is in the boat and also as a life-preserver in an emergency.

Air is admitted through the rear mast and circulates throughout the boat. This air tube is, however, automatically closed when the boat is beneath the surface of the water, and the counting tower is completely covered by means of a hydrostatic piston, open to the water at the bottom of the boat, the pressure of the water at the increased depth forcing up the piston, which actuates a lever to force a valve over the air-tube opening, thus preventing the entry of water through it.

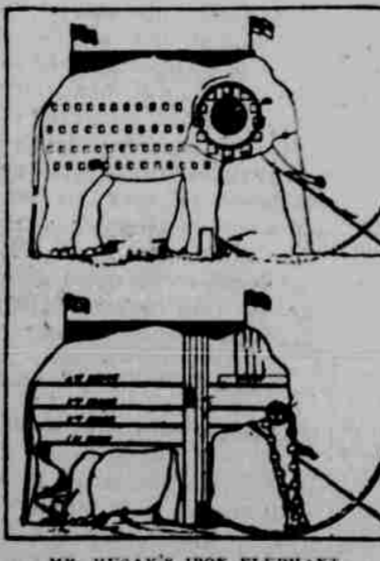
The same motion of the piston operates levers connected to a valve in the compressed air tank in the bottom of the boat, opening it and thus allowing a fine stream of air to issue therefrom into the boat, and supplying the operator with fresh air. As the boat again reaches the surface the pressure on the hydrostatic piston is released because there is less depth of water and the air tube is again opened and the air tank valve closed.

The torpedo is fired by compressed air, but on leaving its casing the propelling mechanism of the projectile is set in motion, and it starts off under its own power for the mark.

WONDERFUL IRON ELEPHANT.

Designed for Great Exposition by a Chicago Man.

Mr. Joseph Husak, of Chicago, is prepared to out-Ferris Ferris at the St. Louis exposition, or at any other exposition which may come along and make room for his "iron elephant," 300 feet long and 250 feet in height, or for his "Jonah's whale," 50 feet long and big in girth in proportion.



MR. HUSAK'S IRON ELEPHANT.

The "iron elephant" is the chief feature and creation of Mr. Husak's inventive faculty, and he purposes to adapt the metal beast to more uses than the Indian beast is capable of in the flesh. The body of the animal is to be four stories in height, the floors to be reached by elevators running in the logs of the creature. The first floor is to be used and rented for small show rooms; the second floor for a cafe and restaurant, and furnish entrance to the

elephant's trunk, which is to be constructed to pull the cars up and down and at the same time swing. The third floor will be used for all sorts of amusements, and serve as an entrance to the "chute of chutes" and to the small Ferris wheels in each ear of the elephant. The fourth floor can be used for a theater or music hall, placing the stage in the head of the beast. On top of the creature will be a roof garden or an observatory. The eyes will be two gigantic searchlights, and the tail might be used by some inventor to show a new fire escape. All signals may be trumpeted from this structure, and electric power will be used to run the different devices.

Mr. Husak's whale will be in proportion to simulate the real thing. Even the interior of the animal will be constructed according to economy of nature, only that entrance to the inside through the mouth will be through an split jaw. Windows will be provided, and the whale, swimming in a circular tank, will be operated by electricity, rising and sinking at the slightest wish of the operator.

QUEER STORIES

Gas was first used for a street illumination in Baltimore, gas lamps being introduced in that city in the year 1816.

The lantern of the Lundy Island light-house is 540 feet above high water, and can be seen thirty-one miles. The Cape Clear light is 450 feet above the sea.

The latest astronomical photograph, prepared by the joint exertions of the observatories of London, Berlin and Paris, shows sixty-eight millions of stars.

In the Japanese match factories the boxes and labels are made by little girls, who are wondrously dexterous in the work. These little experts get from one halfpenny to two pence halfpenny for twelve hours' work.

A transatlantic steamer, carrying what is called "a full mail," usually takes two hundred thousand letters and three hundred sacks of newspapers for London, to say nothing of the five hundred and odd sacks for other places.

In the public schools in Japan the English language is required to be taught by law. The Japanese youth in the open ports and commercial cities are eager to learn English as a passport to wealth, position and employment.

Malwatehlin, on the borders of Russia, is the only city in the world peopled by men only. The Chinese women are not only forbidden to live in this territory, but even to pass the great wall of Kalkan and enter into Mongolia. All the Chinese of this border city are exclusively traders.

BICYCLE FEVER IN PERSIA.

Consul Tyler Says Demand for Wheels is Remarkable.

Americans will be amused to learn that the bicycle fever and the "bicycle race" have taken possession of the people of that oldest and most decrepit empire of the effete Orient—Persia—and that the subjects of the Shah have gone quite "agony" upon the subject, John Tyler, the American consul at Teheran, says in a brief letter:

"About seventeen years ago a Mr. Stevens, an American traveler, on his bicycle tour around the world, stayed some months at Teheran. That was the first exhibition of this mode of traveling witnessed in Persia, and it caused a good deal of curiosity and amusement among the people. His late majesty Naser-eddin Shah, and his court examined the bicycle in the palace, and were much interested in Mr. Stevens' riding performance and his account of his travels. Since that time other persons have visited Teheran on similar expeditions, and private individuals, resident in the city, have imported machines for their own use, so at the present time the bicycle has become one of the recognized methods of locomotion."

In other words, the Persians have the bicycle fever, and have it bad. Imagine a devout Persian going to the mosque on Friday on his wheel, and, meeting his neighbor, Hafiz Ben Ali, comparing notes with him on the merits of their respective wheels. Also imagine the rage of Hafiz when some rascally innkeeper dog of a groom sprinkles broken glass along the roadway, thus causing a puncture to his tire. Again think of Yusuf Ben Adhem, "whose name led all the rest," swearing by the beard of the prophet that his sprockets and ball-bearings were out of order, or of the lady Scheherzade, the Satisfaction of the Soul, starting out on her bike in search of original matter with which to conclude her long-winded narrative.

Continuing, Mr. Tyler says: "The conservatism of habit is much stronger in Eastern than in Western lands, and in this country the bicycle has been looked upon as something mean and contemptible, but utility and economy are now questions of more pressing importance than formerly, and prejudice has given place to a more liberal and enlightened opinion; and those who previously opposed the introduction of the bicycle have come to appreciate its value as a substitute for the more expensive horse."

Mr. Tyler concludes his letter to the State Department by advising Americans that, of all new markets for bicycles, Persia heads the list.

BRING THE ENDS TOGETHER.

A certain colonel somewhere in the South (no matter where was in the habit of telling yarns and greatly exaggerating. He had a negro servant who corroborated everything his master told. One day the colonel had some gentlemen to dinner, and they were enjoying some fine venison very much. The colonel said:

"Yes, I went hunting the other day and saw a fine buck. I took a good sight at him and shot him through the head, and the bullet went through his hind leg."

The gentlemen looked at each other a little mystified. The negro scratched his head and at last said:

"Yes, indeed, gemmen, just as massa raised the gun to shoot de buck he raised his hind leg and scratch his ear, and the bullet went through the head and right through de hind leg." The gentlemen looked more satisfied.

After the guests had gone the negro said to his master:

"Gorry mighty, massa, next time you tell one of dem yarns do get the ends closter together. I had hard work to make both ends meet."

TABITHA SANBORN'S RIDE.

She Really Couldn't Bear to Waste Time from Her Work.

SUSPICIOUS BOBBIE.

Kind Gentleman—Can you spell your name? Bobbie—Yes, sir.

THE WORLD IS IMPROVING.

There are more sudden deaths every year, and fewer cases of long suffering.