
 * UP-TO-DATE *

CONNECTICUT is usually regarded as a safe and pleasant place to live in, and yet it had forty-three murders in 1906, where Maine had only two. To be sure, Connecticut has more people than Maine, but not so very many more; it has fewer than 1,000,000, while Maine has 725,000. It is fair to state that it was an unusually bad year for the old nutmeg state in this respect, as its forty-three murders are more than it ever had before in a single year, and seventeen more than the annual average for the last decade.

"You know how a soldier traitor is put to death," said the colonel. "The traitor stands blindfolded, and half a dozen privates shoot at him simultaneously. But perhaps you don't know that each of these privates, though he take the most careful aim, may afterwards say, without fear of contradiction, that the traitor's blood does not stain his hands."

"This is the reason: "Two of the rifles for the ghastly shooting are always loaded with blank cartridges. Then they are shuffled, and no one knows which the harmless ones are. The executioners draw, and each is as like as not to draw a harmless gun.

"So when they shoot, they can solace themselves for their unchristianlike work with the thought that maybe they are only shooting a blank cartridge at the poor, blindfolded wretch before them."

Mrs. William H. Taft, the war secretary's wife, has given 20,000 acres of land and \$5,000 toward the construction of the projected Nueces Valley railroad in Texas. Her Catarina ranch (200,000 acres) will benefit by the road.

China now has a railway mileage of about 9,000 miles. Of this, 1,330 miles is in operation and the rest under construction, except 930 miles "in abeyance." Last year the Chinese imperial railways, 526 miles, paid 26 per cent on the capital outlay.

Among the many curious and unusual animals which have been found by Sir Harry Johnston, the African explorer, in the Uganda protectorate, is the whale-headed stork. The bird resembles the common stork in everything but the head, which is anything but beautiful. The beak is enormous and gives the stork a peculiar, whale-like appearance. It is rather a puzzle to scientists to discover the reason for this enormous pendance. The whale's mouth is built to catch a multitude of small fish, and possibly the stork's beak may have been evolved by the same agency.

Trypsin, the remedy now on trial for the cure of cancer, is one of the secretions of the pancreas, says the London Globe. It is a powerful ferment. If the whole amount secreted for digestion were absorbed into the circulation unchanged, it would digest the body itself and so cause death. Trypsin dissolves otherwise insoluble proteins, converting them into peptones. It is also able to split up these latter bodies. The use of trypsin in cancer was first suggested by Dr. Beard of Edinburgh. It is stated that several cases of cancer have been cured or much improved, by injections of trypsin.

A statistician, whose calculations may be taken to be as trustworthy as statistics usually are, estimates that the money given yearly in tips in France amounts to nearly \$75,000,000, over \$20,000,000 being bestowed in Paris alone. His calculations are based on the assumption that each inhabitant in Paris spends seven-twelfths of a penny, and each inhabitant of the provinces one farthing a day in tips.

There are people who say that they never can enjoy a hot bath because the hot water always makes them faint. This trouble, according to Suburban Life, may be remedied by the simple expedient of placing a towel which has been wrung out in cold water on the head and retaining it there until the bath is over. It is possible that cases of drowning have occurred as a result of faintness while in the bath, so that this precaution becomes advisable.

According to the Jewish Outlook the Jews of the United States are rejoicing too much over the recent elevation to high office of some of the people of that persuasion. "There is a certain incongruity in the fact," says the writer, "that in the United States, the freest country of the globe and the oldest republic, the Jews do not occupy, at least not politically, the position they do in old European lands. The number of Jews in the United States congress is small, when compared with

the number of Jews in the parliaments of other nations. Even in Russia there were in the last duma proportionately more Jews than are in the congress of the United States. The same is the case in Germany, Austria-Hungary and France, where in the parliaments Jews are prominently in evidence. In Italy, with her small Jewish population, there is a large number of Jews in parliament, and the most important positions in the Italian cabinet of ministers are held by Jews, who, moreover, take interest in Judaism."

There is in London a cafe much frequented by diamond merchants, and known appropriately as the African cafe, where it would seem that a romancer might find good material. Stevenson, for example, might well have laid a scene in "The Rajah's Diamond," there. It was farce, however, instead of romance that blossomed forth the other day, when an American diamond merchant, whose name was suppressed, but who may be identified by the description—"tall and handsome, with a prominent nose"—sprang to his feet declaring that he had been robbed. There were fifty other diamond experts in the cafe, but he barred the door, and declared that all must be searched. Luckily, when the police appeared, he searched himself first, and the missing stones came to light, whereupon he made a handsome gift to the police orphanage, and clapped his diamonds into his safest pocket.

"Snow is a well known meteor, formed by the freezing of the vapors in the atmosphere." This is from a scientific treatise of eighty years ago, and the London Chronicle makes an odd mistake in laughing at it: "We have long since ceased to think of snow as a 'meteor.'" It is simply a question of terminology. Meteors are literally "things in the air," and the term was formerly applied to all atmospheric phenomena, as when Bishop Hall calls hail "an ordinary meteor." This use is still preserved in the word "meteorology." The specific use of "meteor" for shooting-star, which tends to increase because "shooting-star" is an entirely inaccurate term, has naturally curtailed the use of "meteor" in a more general sense, which is rather a pity, because "atmospheric phenomenon" is a clumsy and poor equivalent. It would be awkward, for example, to get on without "meteorology," and it would be convenient to keep in practical use a term to express the subject matter of that science, which is precisely the Greek "meteora."

There is a strange jostling of the medieval and the modern in the story which comes from Italy of the controversy over the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius. This miracle, which takes place several times a year in Naples for the edification of large numbers of people, was imitated some time ago by Prof. Giaccio, and he has now been challenged by two Catholic professors of chemistry in Rome to repeat his experiment under conditions prescribed by them—the material to be prepared in their presence and then shut up till next May in a safe with three locks. The phenomena to be produced in May under these conditions are variations of temperature within the limits of 66 to 86 degrees Fahrenheit; variations as to the time required for the liquefaction from one minute to several hours; variations in volume and weight. Professor Giaccio has accepted all the conditions except the last, which he holds to be not merely contrary to the law of the indestructibility of matter, but to rest, in the case of the Naples miracle, upon very slender evidence.

It is to be noted that the "Americanism" "jail" is creeping into English use, much to the indignation of purists. The London Chronicle, for example, has admitted it to its columns, though an editorial paragraph finds it necessary to protest: "This is one of the commonest of Americanisms used day after day, and the reason for its popularity is perhaps to be traced to the fact that many people are apt to mispell 'gaol' by 'goal.'" The facts in the case, of course, are that "jail" is not an Americanism at all, but one of two variant English forms, "jail," from the old French "jalole," and "gail," or "gaol," which should be pronounced like "gale." It never is, except by uninstructed Americans who come upon it in print, and the reason for this anomaly is that the archaic form "gaol" (which was, by the way, formerly spelled also "goal," as bad spellers, according to the Chronicle, spell it still) was preserved as a printed form in England by law books, the conservatism of which is proverbial, and which naturally had much to say about "gaols." But in speech the "jail" form triumphed, and England seems now to be suiting the spelling to the word as America did long ago. But for that matter, there was the best of precedents in English use for this so-called Americanism. Milton used it, and Pope, while Addison came as close to it as "jail."

SHORT STORIES.

HERE are many stories told of the queen of Italy's acts of kindness to her poor subjects. The following, however, shows that even the good intentions of queens are not always fulfilled.

Her majesty recently noticed a pleasant faced little girl and spoke to her. There was a short conversation and the queen asked the child what she could do in the way of needlework. "I can knit stockings, signora," replied the girl.

"Do you know who I am?" continued the queen.

"Yes, signora; you are the queen."

"Well, then, make me a pair of stockings and send them to the palace."

A few days afterward the articles arrived, and the queen, in return for the gift, sent the child a beautiful pair of silk stockings, one filled with sweets, the other containing money. Next day the queen received a letter from her little friend, as follows:

"Signora, your gift has caused me many tears. My father took the money, my big brother took the sweets, and as for the stockings, why mother took them for herself."

Apropos of misses and masters, the "only child" has always been pitied because he is lonesome; and because he has been pitied he has also been petted. Petting is not good for anybody and, consequently hundreds of reasons have been advanced in support of the theory that large families were preferable to small and that children should be "taught their place" and have the selfishness drummed out of them by other children a trifle older and stronger. However, the hero of this story put in a new plea for a numerous progeny when he returned the other noon from an institution of learning for beginners. He was evidently in abysmal spirits.

"What's the matter with you now?" queried his mother. "Mi in arithmetic again, or did you get your hem-stitching and clay modeling wrong?" "Nope," he replied dejectedly. "I ain't got nobody to catch anything from. It's funny I can't have no brothers nor sisters like the rest of the scholars. Richard Laffin, who sits in the next seat to me, has caught the measles from the twins in his house; he's got 'em double and he ain't got to go to school for two weeks."

She was reading a paper before the mothers' club.

"And here I will insert," she said, "a half dozen questions of the sort my little boy asks me every night before he falls asleep:

"Why does Santa Claus give children skates when there ain't any ice?" "When I drink water, why don't it run down into my leas?"

"Is it his very best medicine that the druggist has in them big green and blue bottles?"

"Why is it I breathe out smoke when I'm cold, and not when I'm warm?"

"Who cooked dinner when all the big folks was little boys?"

"Speaking of the objection in congress to adding legislation to measures when it is not germane reminds me that there are more curious combinations than are found in congress," said Senator Knox to one of his associates. "I was riding along a country road beyond Yonkers one time and came across a little frame dwelling on which was displayed this sign:

Bull Pups and Violets for Sale.

"It struck me that this was going beyond anything I ever noticed before in stretching the application of the word germane."

A traveling man says that he once had occasion, while in Maryland, to make a business call upon the proprietor of a "general store" in a town on the eastern shore. Now, this proprietor was known on all sides as illiterate. Nevertheless, he would never concede the truth of the general impression.

The traveling man says that, when he entered the store, the proprietor was engaged in a business conversation with a customer, who, as he turned to go, said:

"By the way, I believe I owe you some money, don't I?"

"Just a minute," answered the proprietor, turning to a slate on the wall. Reversing it he carefully scanned the marks thereon. "You owe me for a cheese," he finally said.

"A cheese?" repeated the customer, "why, I haven't bought a pound of cheese off you for months. There must be some mistake."

The storekeeper gave a glance at the reverse side of the slate.

"That's so," he exclaimed, with a smile. "It was a grindstone. I didn't see the dot over the 'i' in the middle."

The chiefs of the party had indulged in one of their harmony dinners, and the editor of the Daily Bread was looking over the account of the affair that had been turned in by the reporter.

"There were a lot of speeches made, wasn't there?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," answered the reporter. "Was Colonel Gorey's speech the only good one?"

"Oh, no, not at all." "Then why have you reported his talk in full and given only a brief synopsis of the others?"

"For the reason that when it came his turn to speak the banqueters were too far gone to be able to understand it, and I thought they ought to have a chance to see what it was."

The old time darkies may twist the long words which are their delight, but they always make themselves intelligible. The Atlanta Constitution says it is one of their curious characteristics. "Aunt Dilsey," a young Richmond lady recently said to her "mammy," "what has become of young Tom Phillips?"

"De lan' sakes, Miss Baby," Aunt Dilsey replied, with uplifted hands and eyes like saucers, "he done run off to de great imposition out west, but we ain't heard from him, nary line, 'cept'n 'tis one o' dese sump'n n'er picture cards; an' I jes believe, Miss Baby, dat he's done been catnipped!"

WANDERINGS OF A PARAGRAPH.

New York Sun: A reporter on a Louisville newspaper wrote a few weeks ago a harmless fake story, and his paper printed it the next day. It told of a Kentucky man who had been asleep for twelve years.

Since that time the pleasant bit of fiction has been earning bread and butter for people all over the land. Thus we read several days after the thing was published:

"A man in Kentucky has been asleep for twelve years. When he wakes up he should be assured of a permanent job as jurymen."

Chicago made that up. In fact, most of the Chicago papers commented in one way or another upon the somnolence of the Kentuckian.

The St. Joseph (Mo.) paragraph man handled it thus:

"Down in Kentucky a man's been asleep twelve years. Won't he be mighty glad to find out all his debts are outlawed."

Somebody in Denver has evidently had experience in Kentucky, because the next time the newspaper waif shows up it is in a Denver paper, thus disguised:

"A veteran Kentucky citizen has been sleeping for twelve years. Probably only snoozing off a real old Kentucky jag."

A spirit of envy may have inspired the next text on the subject. It comes from a New Orleans paper:

"A Kentucky man has been buried in a sound sleep for the last twelve years. Most likely he started in to read one of Marse Henry Watterson's editorials."

Hot on the heels of this unkind cut comes the deliberate insult of a Detroit newspaper:

"See that a Kentucky man has been asleep for twelve years. Don't blame him. That's about all there is to do nowadays if you have to live in Kentucky."

There is probably some allusion to local conditions in this from St. Louis: "A Kentuckian of some standing has been asleep for twelve years. In all likelihood the gentleman is dead, and some of those highly efficient ambulance surgeons have made one of their usual hurried diagnosis of his case."

Still hurrying on its way, the scrap of intelligence slips into Columbus, O., editorial room, where the man takes it and huris it back in this shape:

"There's a man in Kentucky who's been asleep for twelve years. As long as he keeps his eyes shut and lies still it's all right. He's a blamed sight honestier than a lot of other Kentuckians who have been walking around sound asleep for twice twelve years."

One might be inclined to wonder suspiciously about the habits of the Harrisburg man who fixed it up this way:

"We learn with interest that a Kentucky man has been asleep for twelve years. He probably came in at 3 a. m. too muddled to make excuses to his wife, and now he's simply sidestepping the morning-after explanations."

When the Cincinnati writer starts in we see how far a man dare go for a pun:

"That Kentucky chap who has been quietly sleeping for the last twelve years must have filled himself full of 'still' whisky."

Pittsburg shows it still manages to keep an eye on literary affairs:

"A Kentucky man went to sleep twelve years ago and he's asleep yet. This shows us the terrible effects of reading one of Henry James' novels."

The handling of the theme in Cleveland shows a tendency to get gay with the police. The paper says:

"A man in Kentucky has been asleep for twelve years. This naturally brings up the pertinent inquiry: 'Why isn't he on our notice force?'"