

A MOTHER AND THE SON.

New York Post Office Makes Delivery to a Very Vague Address—Letter from Ireland.

Among the truly remarkable feats performed by the post office employes in the way of deciphering addresses and discovering the persons to whom letters are addressed, the following incident, related in Youth's Companion, which took place in New York not long ago, is one of the most interesting. A letter was received at the general office addressed simply: "My Mother, New York, America."

The chirography was somewhat difficult, but even with this finally mastered and the deciphering of its Irish postmark, the fact that there was more than one mother in Manhattan with a son in Ireland made the post office people despair of ever discovering the rightful owner.

A day or two after the receipt of this mysterious missive a cheery-looking Irishwoman elbowed her way to the general inquiry window. "Ye haven't a litter from me b'y, have ye?" she queried, eagerly.

As most of the employes on that floor had had a laugh over the address of the letter to "my mother," the thought of it returned to the mind of the inquiry clerk at mention of "me b'y." It was quite possible that such a questioner might be the mother of such a writer.

The home of the "b'y" was found to be the same as the postmark on the letter, and after a few more precautionary inquiries, the missive was handed over to "my mother," on condition that she open it on the spot and verify her claim. This was done, and "my mother" was actually identified among the three million and a half recipients of mail matter in the great city.

HUBBY DID NOT HOLD HER

Spouse Thought He Would Silence His Wife with a Query, But Effort Is Vain.

She is a clubwoman with a sense of humor, but the other day when she decided to attend a federation session in another town she had some misgivings, says the Chicago Record-Herald. She told her husband that she was possessed of a premonition of evil and cautioned him to be especially careful of the children. He merely laughed and said that he guessed they would be all right, then remarked jocosely:

"If you get worried, you might telegraph."

In the evening of her second day away she did worry and sent this telegram to her husband:

"How are the children?"

The messenger boy came with the dispatch just as the man was about to retire. He read it, smiled and then penned this answer:

"They're all right. Why?"

"I guess that will hold her for awhile," he said to himself, and then he went to bed.

He felt so good over what he considered to be the shrewdness

of his reply that he laughed to himself, forgetting for the time being the old adage: "He laughs best who laughs last."

It was three o'clock in the morning when he was aroused by the violent ringing of his doorbell. Slipping into bathrobe and slippers, he went to the door and admitted a young Mercury, who handed out a yellow envelope. It was torn open quickly, read, and then the husband kicked himself back to bed as a recollection of his question in his message to his wife impressed itself upon his sleepy consciousness. Her reply was in one word:

"Because."

HYSTERICAL HERO WORSHIP

Famous Fighters Are Belittled by Quoting Life Incidents in Short Paragraphs.

Says the Baltimore American: Charlemagne, you were a kindergartner.

William the Conqueror, we scarcely respect you.

Agememnon, what did you do, anyway?

Alexander, did you lick anybody?

Napoleon, what was it they arrested you for?

Funston—let's see! Where did we hear that name?

Kitchener, your last name sounds familiar.

Bobs Bahadur, yours was some skirmish in India, wasn't it?

Grant, you were merely going some.

Wellington, you had some slight trouble at Waterloo, we believe.

Washington, didn't you once run short of home comforts at a place called Valley Forge?

Xerxes, what was it you were cured of?

Garibaldi, oh, yes! some new brand of macaroni, probably.

Von Moltke, some folks used to think you knew something about tactics.

Oyama, you have given us an education in what real war is.

We grovel.

DAY OF FAKE JEWELRY FAD

Dealer in Genuine Article Sees Trade Fall Off Because of Imitation Gems.

This is the day of the manufactured or imitation jewelry. It is said the sale of genuine jewelry in New York has suffered from the trade. For some time past it has been possible to obtain imitation jewelry in France and England which is difficult of detection by experts. The principal manufacturers deal in jewels of their own manufacture, which are extraordinarily fine imitations of the real stones and will have a life of 20 years. The "diamonds" are a composition of glass, lead and carbon, tipped with platinum, which is harder than gold. Every real stone, except a diamond, is transparent. Without the tip of platinum these "diamonds" would also be transparent, but with it they are given an undetectable resemblance to the genuine stone. These "gems" are mounted in 14 carat gold, and so well that, when

worn, the platinum tipping can not be seen. An infinite variety of designs, copied from the best of real models, are shown, and at a price which is about 80 per cent. less than the genuine. All the colored stones—rubies, sapphires, emeralds and turquoises—are also manufactured and are similar in appearance. The turquoise is so hard that the surface can be filed and no blemish made on the stone. As genuine pearls are the most costly of gems the imitation pearls take the lead in price. They are made of fishskin and a secret composition. The manufacture of some especially good imitation pearls, known as "Venetian pearls," is a lost art, the process having been invented by a poor Venetian, whose secret died with him. The difficulty in the manufacture of pearls is in obtaining the orient, or luster, similar to the genuine gems, and it is said that very often out of 10,000 manufactured very few will be marketable.

TREADMILL AS PUNISHMENT

Use of This Device Still Employed in British Prisons—Located in the "Wheel House."

The treadwheel is still in vogue at many English prisons. Within the walls is a little building, built of blue-gray stone, standing somewhat apart from the main structure in the corner of the exercise ground and prison garden. On the chocolate-colored door is painted in white letters the two words "Wheel House." As the door opens the dull grinding sound that we hear outside grows a little louder and clearer. The door closes behind us with the inevitable clash and click of the returning bolt. The house is an apartment some 30 feet long and 15 feet wide. On the left hand side are the wheels, four of them, in two tiers, divided by a gallery running the whole length of the house and communicating with the floor by a staircase at the opposite end. On the right hand side there is another, lower and shorter, gallery, on which stands the warden in charge. The wheels are separated by a section of brick wall.

Each wheel is divided into compartments, cutting off each prisoner from the others. The object of this is to prevent the prisoners from seeing and hearing one another, although conversation in a low voice, pitched in a different key to that of "the music of the wheel," is perfectly easy and intelligible.

ROYAL COMPOSERS MANY.

Kings and Queens Who Write Songs, Marches and Anthems in Real Life.

In no art have royalties dabbled so much as in music. Only a few days ago the khedive of Egypt had a waltz of his own composition played at the court ball, and everybody declared that it was the best waltz they had ever heard.

Among present-day royal musicians Princess Henry of Battenberg is well known. A sprightly march written by her was a good

deal played by the L. C. C. bands in the Embankment gardens a season or two back, and last year, too, a song by her was sung by Mme. Ella Russell.

The kaiser, of course, has produced several musical works. His part songs recently written for Berlin choral societies embodied his theories for a return to a simple style of music.

The czar of Russia wrote a Christmas anthem a year or two back, and Grand Duke Constantine has also produced a few works. Not long ago, when Vecsey, the prodigy violinist, visited St. Petersburg, he played one of the duke's pieces for violin and piano at the palace, the royal composer himself playing the accompaniment.

WHAT HOTELS SHOULD BE

Less Splendor and More Comfort and Good Taste Needed—Case of Old Lady.

There is a rare and forgotten anecdote bearing on all that follows. In the olden times, when folks journeyed by foot along the great post-roads oftener than by other means of locomotion, an aged and weary couple sat down beside a not very cheerful milestone, and communed after this manner: The old lady expressed her fatigue by wishing herself in Heaven. "Ah, but I wish I were at the tavern," sighed the philosopher beside her. "You rogue," she cried, "you always want to be in the best place."

It would not be fair to expect the modern tavern to compete with Heaven, by any shelter or provender it has to offer, says World's Work. But the modern tavern ought to compete with as many of the home felicities the traveler has turned his back upon as may be. I will not go so far as to say that there is not an entirely satisfactory tavern in the city of New York, as I recently heard declared by a woman of society, who, I fear, alluded more to the clientele than to the management or the architecture; but the managers of the hotels and the architects have important things to learn.

If we compare modern taverns with their predecessors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we should say that the modern ones are perfect. Washington Irving, the great connoisseur, said in 1857 of the St. Nicholas hotel, then new, which used to stand on Broadway in the neighborhood of Broome street, and had a most fascinating painting of the patron saint of New Amsterdam in the act of descending a chimney, artfully let into a great panel on the stairway, that it "beat anything in the way of a hotel" he had ever seen. Charles Dickens was also wonderfully impressed with the Tremont house of Boston in the early forties. What pleased them, however, was the beginning of that hotel magnificence which surfeits us to-day. We long for less magnificence and gilt and for more comfort, homeliness and good taste.