

THE VOICE THAT LIES.

Court Stenographers. It is Said, Can Always Detect It.

"Any shorthand reporter who has been doing court reporting for a long time can tell almost infallibly by his sense of hearing whether a witness is telling the truth," said an old court stenographer the other day.

"When he's got his head bent over his notebook he feels the jarring false note in the voice of the liar every time, no matter how plausible and convincing the testimony in itself may sound."

"A few years ago I reported the trial of a young chap who was accused of having snatched a jewel in his store and of looting the establishment. The young fellow was good looking, intelligent, with a face as frank as an eight day clock and an easy, candid, winning manner."

"I looked the young chap over before the trial began, and I decided that the accusation against him was outrageous. When the witnesses testified that they'd seen him coming out of the store I strained my ears to catch the false intonation in their tones, but it wasn't there."

"When the defense opened the young man was permitted to go on the stand in his own behalf. I was astonished to find that his voice had the lying quaver in it right from the beginning of his statement."

"His words vastly impressed the jury and as vastly chagrined the prosecution. He undertook to prove an alibi for himself."

"In corroboration of this a married sister testified that her brother had been at her apartment from 3 o'clock in the afternoon until 10 o'clock at night, taking dinner with her and keeping her company in the absence of her husband. Well, she was lying too. She had that telltale false ring in her voice that convinced me of it despite her fine, frank face and her obvious respectability."

"The court adjourned for luncheon at the end of her testimony. I took luncheon with the attorney for the prosecution."

SKOBELLEFF'S REVENGE.

The Way the Russian General Retaliated the Czar's Insult.

During the Russo-Turkish war the day after the passage of the Danube had been made good the emperor of Russia crossed the river to congratulate and thank his gallant soldiers. In front of a long, massive line formed on the slope below Sistova, awaiting the coming of the great white czar, stood Dragomiroff, Yelchine and Skobelleff, the three generals who had been the leaders of the successful attempt."

Dragomiroff, the divisional commander, the emperor embraced and gave him the cross of St. George. He shook hands warmly with Yelchine, the brigade commander, and gave him, too, a St. George to add to the decorations which this cheery little warrior had been gathering from boyhood in the Caucasus and central Asia. Then the emperor strode to where Skobelleff stood, and men watched the little scene with interest, for it was notorious that Skobelleff was in disfavor with his sovereign, and yet of him the camps were rife with the story of his conduct of the previous morning."

Would Alexander maintain his umbrage or would he make it manifest that it had been displaced by Skobelleff's heroism. For at least a minute the czar hesitated as the two tall, proud, soldierly men confronted each other. You could trace in his countenance the struggle between disapproval and appreciation."

It was soon over, and the wrong way for Skobelleff. The emperor frowned, turned short on his heel and strode abruptly away without a word or a gesture of greeting or recognition. A man of strong prejudices, he was not yet able to exercise from his mind the calculations that had blackened to him the character of Skobelleff."

That officer, for his part, flushed scarlet, then grew deadly pale and seemed to conquer an impulse as he set his teeth hard and maintained his disciplined immobility. It was a flagrant insult in the very face of the army and a gross injustice, but Skobelleff endured it in a proud silence."

JAPANESE RESTAURANTS.

Their Farthings, the Bill of Fare and the Food.

"At the entrance to a Japanese restaurant one finds a number of the wooden 'gaitais' (clogs) which the Japanese slip off in exchange for straw braided sandals," writes a traveler. "The strange thing here about it is the fact that no misapprehension as to the outside these clogs all look much alike. The dining room is closed in with the regulation sliding doors, which can be taken away in summer, and opens on the regulation Japanese garden, with the regulation dwarfed trees and temple incense burner. As in most Japanese houses, the ceiling is low, and, while the writer never bumped his head against any of the cross-beams, six feeters might well beware. The tables are covered with immaculately clean linen, the chairs upholstered and with slats across the legs, so as not to rip open the matting. Evidently the Japanese who have been abroad and those who work in offices appreciate the comforts of a chair. Kalves, forks and spoons also seem to appeal to them. I don't know whether they fully appreciate the mission of the spoons—they seem to think that the biggest possible noise should be made when eating soup. One seems to try to outdo the other."

"Moving silently on straw sandals, the waiter brought me a bill of fare. Not an ordinary bill of fare. It is a piece of black lacquered wood, the menu written on it with white chalk in Japanese characters only. If a dish cannot be served further the finger is passed over that number, and it disappears from the menu. I began at the right hand side, remembering that the Japanese do always the opposite from the way we should do—and, lo! I got a cup of bouillon. It was not properly salted, but with a pinch or so tasted excellent. I then pointed at the next vertical column—they also read upside down here—and the waiter brought me soup. It was waved away. Number three looked like a dish of worms, minute fish I believe they call them 'hiti' on the hotel menu—with their eyes like tiny black dots. They are baked in a bunch and with a little Worcestershire sauce are quite palatable."

"Next an exquisitely cooked chicken cutlet, and number five was such a steak as one could not improve upon anywhere. I would faintly have passed on farther down the line or rather to the left, but lest I should be tempted to eat too much I asked for coffee. It is safe to do that. They know no other name for it here. My bill was 'Ich yen nidu-sen' (1 yen 20 sen), or about 60 cents, American money! This included a pint of Kirin beer brewed in Japan!"

An Experiment. In a certain very remote town a snow bank was started. It was only a branch bank, but that did not dim its luster or novelty in the eyes of the backwoods citizens."

The first depositor was Sifox. Sif was a man of means, but had trusted for the safety of his money to his own sock and his gun. Now he felt that, as the leading citizen of the town, he ought to encourage the new enterprise. He put in a thousand dollars as soon as the bank opened."

An hour later he came back and asked how money was taken out. The method of making out a check was explained, and Sif made out one for \$1,000. The cashier was surprised at the sudden withdrawal, but paid it without remark. Sif took his money and walked down to a group of men and displayed it. The group entered into a warm but low voiced discussion."

In ten or fifteen minutes Sif walked into the bank again and told the cashier that he wanted to deposit a thousand dollars."

"Why, sir, what is the matter with you?" asked the clerk. "You deposited a thousand about an hour ago and took it out before it had got cold, and now you want to put it back again?"

"Well, my friend," said Sif, "me and the boys just wanted to find out how the thing worked."

The Story of a Duel. In his "Dueling Stories of the Sixteenth Century" Brantome, a French writer, says that two French captains, though old friends, fell out and fought. One of them was disabled. "The other, being untouched, observed: 'There, that's enough for old friends like us. You'd better go and attend to your wounds.' To this the vanquished one replied: 'Well, you might as well do a bit more for me. Just pretend to be wounded and wear your arm in swelling for a day or two, so that I needn't be considered disgraced nor any question of that come up when they want to reconcile us—that is, if I survive.' And the victorious friend answered some of the other's blood on his arm and went about saying that he was wounded, but it was a mere nothing, and he only wished his friend were the same. The latter recovered with some difficulty, and they were afterward as good friends as before."

Does Education Pay? That is what a loving but sometimes cynical New York mother is asking. "We have at last completed the education of our son and heir," she says. "He has been graduated with sufficient honors from college. He has been sent abroad for finish, culture and experience, and now that he is home again we are starting him in business life. He has begun in a downtown office and may be gaining much experience and laying a sound business foundation, but as far as I can find out he spends the greater part of his time in picking postage stamps for a pittance a week. While the pride of the family in doing this we are paying our son \$100 a month and expenses, and now I ask, Does education pay?"—New York Times.

EXPENSIVE FLOWERS.

The Tulip Craze in Holland in the Nineteenth Century.

During the tulip craze in Holland in the last century in one year the sales aggregated 10,000,000 florins. Holland went tulip mad. The bulbs were quoted on the Stock Exchange. Ownership in them was divided into shares. Speculators sold them short. At one time more tulips were sold than existed. At Lille a brewer sold his trade and good will in exchange for a bulb, which was thereafter known as the brewery tulip. In Amsterdam a father gave one by way of dower with his child. Thereafter the variety was known as the marriage-of-my-daughter. At Rotterdam a hungry sailor, happening on a few, mistook them for onions and ate them. The report became as famous as Cleopatra's pearls and probably exceeded it in cost. At The Hague a poor fellow managed to raise a black tulip. The rumor of that vegetable marvel spread. Presently he was visited by a deputation from a syndicate. For that ewe lamb of his the deputation offered 1,000 florins, which he refused. He was offered 10,000 florins. Still he refused. Cascades of gold were poured before his resisting eyes. Finally, tempted and tempted, he succumbed. There and then the deputation tramped that tulip under their feet. Afterward it appeared that the syndicate had already grown a gem precisely similar and, unable to bear the idea that a rival existed, had authorized the deputation. If needful, to offer ten times the amount which it paid."

TWO CLASSES OF OAKS.

One Notable For Its Wood, the Other For Its Brilliance of Coloration.

The great oak family might be divided into two classes—those that ripen their acorns in one season, such as the white, post and mossy cup oaks, and those which require two full years, such as the red, scarlet and black oaks. To the first class belong the chestnut oak and the live oak of the south. This latter tree for generations played an important part in shipbuilding, but has now been superseded by iron and steel. The leaf, which is an evergreen, is entirely without indentations and is thick and leathery. The wood is very heavy and strong, has a beautiful grain and is susceptible of taking a high polish. At one time this wood was so valuable that our government paid \$200,000 for large tracts of land in the south, that our navy might be sure of a supply of live oak timber."

To the second class of oaks we are largely indebted for the gorgeous colors of our autumn leaves. The red, scarlet and pin oaks, with their brilliant reds, scarlets and browns, are close competitors with the maple in giving our American landscapes the most wonderful autumn colorings to be found anywhere in the world. These trees have leaves which at first glance are quite similar, but by careful examination may always be distinguished.—St. Nicholas.

Diseases of Animals.

Household pets are susceptible to a far greater variety of diseases than most people imagine. Parrots are known to be susceptible to a disease peculiar to themselves that it is called from the Greek word for parrot, "psittacosis." A number of fatal cases in human beings of what was at first supposed to be a malignant influenza pneumonia were in Paris traced to the bacillus at present thought to be causative of the parrot disease. A certain proportion of parrots are known to die from tuberculosis. Cats are known sometimes to have tuberculosis, and that they have in many cases been carriers of diphtheria and other of the ordinary infectious directly and indirectly is more than suspected.—Kansas City Journal.

How Sparrows Were Caught.

In an old game book published in England in 1820 appeared the following formula for the lessening of the sparrow pest: "Take some loss of wine and hemlock juice, temper them together and steep a quantity of wheat therein for the space of one night. Then place the same in a spot where the birds resort to feed, and when they have eaten thereof they will drop down dead drunk. Too much hemlock should not be used or there will be a danger of poisoning the birds and rendering them unwholesome food."

Thackeray's Host of Characters.

Some one who has been looking at the list of characters enumerated in the last volume of an edition of Thackeray's works has calculated that their number totals up to between 3,000 and 3,500. We have not checked the estimate, but, accepting it as accurate, share the discoverer's astonishment.—London Post.

Guarded.

A mother of four daughters, of whom one had recently married, asked a young man sitting beside her in the drawing room whom she would like for a son-in-law. "And which of my girls do you most admire?"

He (lighting shy)—The married one.

Lucky.

Smith—No, I can't get along with my wife. To everything I say she retorts "I beg to differ with you!" Penn—You are lucky, old man. My wife just differs without taking time to beg.

A Different Proposition.

Mrs. Mark Bitting—What are your chickens worth today? New Boy—I don't dare tell ye, ma'am. The boss can't only tell what we're selling 'em for.

Necessity does the work of courage.—Ed. oc.

FASHIONING A CORK

FORMIDABLE KNIVES ARE NECESSARY IN THE PROCESS

The Heavy Blade Must Be Sharpened After Each Cork Is Made—How the Bark Is Sliced, Pared and Finished in a Big London Factory.

The proprietor of the cork cutting establishment was showing some of his customers through the extensive workshops, and because his customers betrayed symptoms of the interest they felt the cork merchant offered to give a demonstration of the whole process of turning the rough material into the finished article. First of all, there was the cork cutter's knife to be inspected—a formidable affair, with a heavy blade measuring about six inches across and with a level at least one inch wide. The center of the blade was very heavy, and the reason for so much weight was at once obvious as soon as the cutter proceeded to use the knife. Holding up a short length of cork, he held it firmly against a metal knob set into the side of a table; then, having introduced the sharp edge of the knife into the material, he threw the whole weight of his body against the handle and literally drove the blade through the cork. There was no sawing back ward or forward, nothing but the steady pressure, yet so tremendously sharp was the blade that the knife pushed unceasingly forward, and in a moment or two the piece of cork lay in two fragments on the floor."

The wide beveled edge is necessary in order to prevent the cork from tearing, while the knife has to be heavily weighted to stand the strain of that amount of pressure. This knife has a small hole near the back about half-way down the blade; this is for the gauge, which is fastened on by means of a nut. The gauge is set according to the width of strips required—this width being the length of the finished cork and so insures each strip being cut the exact measurement. After the gauge has been set the workmen can cut up length after length of cork without further measuring, for the gauge, projecting over the back of the blade, runs along the freshly cut edge and thus causes the next cut to be parallel with the one last made. And the audience was informed that the gauge could be set to the seventh part of an inch. When the cork had been cut into long narrow strips the cutter took up one of those same strips and, without altering the gauge on the knife, began dividing it into a number of little cubes. The first cuts (to produce the long strips) were done across the grain; the others ran with the grain, these latter being the way of the finished cork."

"The grain must run down the article," explained the self constituted lecturer, "otherwise the cork would break in half. So first we cut across for the length of the cork, then we cut with the grain for the width of the cork. Now these little pieces are ready to be turned into the finished article." Picking up one or two of the cubes, the cutter moved across the floor to where one of the machines was standing. "Don't put your fingers near the blade," he cautioned hastily. "There's nothing sharper than the blade of this knife. It's made of the very best and hardest steel there is." Then, just as the auditors were about to murmur "Sheffield," he continued: "Made in France, that blade was. The very best steel there is." Curiously enough, this is also the case with the hairdressing trade. The best scissors are nowadays French ones. Twenty-six inches of sharp blades were quite sufficient to scare away uninitiated fingers. "Nothing requires a sharper blade than cork cutting. It must be absolutely perfect, or the stuff is torn, and if that blade goes wrong it takes me one complete day to grind it into order again. A very hard day's work it is too."

"How do you manage to keep it sharp?" asked one of the party. The man laughed. "It is ground after each cork is cut," he replied. "If not, the second cork would be perceptibly inferior to the first one."

So much sharpening seemed to imply a vast amount of labor until he pointed to a couple of small dark wheels fixed to the machine in such a manner that the blade passed along them each time it was drawn back. These small wheels were of the finest possible emery and automatically ground the blade after every cork in turn. No oil was used at all, so he explained, and he then proceeded to demonstrate the working of the machine. Pushing a wide basket close to the other side of the machine, he took up his position on the left hand side, drew a tray of pieces of cork to him, and, selecting a short length, set it against a small wheel which was placed almost against the blade and at right angles to it. Then he pressed with his foot upon a treadle, and instantly a short point moved forward, pressing on to the other end of the piece of cork and thus holding it against the wheel."

When secured between these two, he removed his fingers, grasped the upright handle of the long blade and pushed it steadily forward, and in the twinkling of an eye the piece of rough cork had assumed a familiar aspect. The pressure of the blade against the cork caused the little wheel (and with it, of course, the cork) to revolve, and in its turn this same spinning allowed the knife to cut evenly all the way around the cork. By the time the blade had been pushed to the farthest extremity of the machine the cork had been neatly pared all around. Then the treadle was released and the cork rolled away with a final spin into the basket awaiting it on the other side. It was also shown that the machine can be set to produce any taper desired."

But the most curious part of the trade was explained when one of the audience, catching sight of a basket

ful of old corks, demanded the reason of their presence. From the cork merchant's account it appeared that a large trade is done in remodeling old corks—that is to say, these used for wine bottles are bought in immense quantities, cut down by the machine into a smaller size and sold to the publicans for stopping pint bottles. Having once had the corkscrews through them they are useless for anything else, and, indeed, there would be a heavy fine for selling them to chemists, with whom a large proportion of the cork trade is carried on, but they are used for temporarily stopping the pint bottles taken out of the public houses by children under fourteen years of age."

The act requires these bottles to be securely fastened down, and so sealed the old corks are afforded a new lease of life. For this purpose not only is the old cork put on the machine and reduced all the way round, but a thin slice is taken off the top and bottom as well. This remodeling of second hand corks is piecework and paid for as follows: One and one-half pence per gross for each of the two cuts and 1½ pence per gross for the machine work. Thus, explained the merchant, he had to pay 3½ pence a gross in wages, and the corks are sold at the rate of six-pence a gross to the publicans. Out of the remaining 2½ pence he must not only purchase the old corks, but also find a profit. Of course it is possible to work up an enormous number of corks in an hour, for the work is never checked. Backward and forward runs the huge blade, the forward movement cutting the cork, the reverse one grinding it in preparation for the next stroke, and the cutter feeds the machine with the left hand, while never releasing his hold on the handle with the right."

Some one suggested the possibility of increasing the speed by machinery, but at that the cutter shook his head. Considering the extraordinary sharpness of the blade and the dangerous proximity to the fingers when the cork was put into position, he himself would not take no risk of that nature, so he averred. As it was, his instinct told him when anything was amiss, and without stopping to think or reason over the matter he would check the blade at once, but to have a twenty-six inch blade of steel moving by machinery—he would rather be excused. It was heavy work certainly, alternately pushing and pulling that blade for hours at a stretch, but unless a strictly automatic feed could be arranged to the machine it would turn the cork cutting business into a fearfully dangerous employment. The best priced corks are the tiny ones sold to the chemists for the ends of hypodermic tubes—minute little atoms that can be cut out of almost any scrap of cork, always provided it is of the best quality. There are not many cutters who can do such fine work.—London Globe.

The Nova Free and Cruise.

Both a blessing and a curse to St. Petersburg is the river Neva. Upon its banks the most magnificent palaces are erected. The numerous islands are parks and pleasure grounds of the people and are filled with resorts that are thronged during both the winter and summer months. There is only one permanent bridge, the remaining being so constructed that they can be removed when the stream freezes over, as it usually does in November, when the teams and pedestrians pass over on the ice till April. The Jockey club holds its race meetings on the ice. But when the spring thaw comes or when a strong northwesterly wind blows the water in from the sea several days in succession there is great danger of flood, for the city is not more than four feet above the mean level of the river. When a flood is coming the inhabitants are warned by the firing of guns. Ice jams are removed by dynamite, and the army is ordered out with axes. There is no way to prevent the floods that come with the winds."

"Science" in Everything. There is much confusion in the popular mind as to the application of such terms as science, scientific, scientifically. A young gentleman from the university lately assured me that cricket is played more scientifically than formerly and that there is a premium of 5 per cent in favor of scientific whist as compared with ordinary good play. A writer in a chess magazine refers to the royal game as "a science, and an exact science too." In a match at draughts the champion was said to have brought so much science to bear upon this play as to make thirty-one drawn games before one won game was scored. In the palmy days of the prize ring "The Pet of the Fancy" was said to display more science than "Ben the Bruiser."

In my younger days I visited Keshville gardens, where a man dressed in Lincoln green offered me low and arrows and invited me to shoot at a mark, observing that "archery is a pleasing science."—Notes and Queries.

Courtship in Shakespeare's England.

In Shakespeare's England courtship was not the prolonged and romantic affair it is now. The young folks did not make and unmake engagements as they pleased without consulting their parents. The etiquette of betrothal was almost as formal and as rigid as that of marriage is today. It consisted of three observances: the joining of hands, a kiss and interchange of rings, all in presence of witnesses and usually in church. The man had to promise under oath to "take this woman whose name is N. to wife within forty days." It is needless to say that under such circumstances engagements never lasting as much as six weeks, partners usually chosen by the parents, marriages at the age of fourteen and honeymoon trips unknown—there was much less opportunity than there is now for the development of romantic love.—Henry T. Finck in Harper's Magazine.