

...VISIT...

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The Light of the Stars.
Various endeavors have been made to estimate the light of the stars. In the northern hemisphere Argelander has registered 321,000 stars down to the nine and a half magnitude, and with the aid of the best photometric data Agnes M. Clerk's "System of the Stars" gives the sum of the light of these northern stars as equivalent to 1-140 of full moonlight, while the total light of all stars similarly enumerated in both hemispheres, to the number of about 900,000, is roughly placed at 1-150 of the lunar brightness. The scattered light of still fainter celestial bodies is difficult to compute. By a photographic method Sir William Alvey rated the total starlight of both hemispheres at 1-100 of full moonlight, and Professor Newcomb from visual observations of all stars at just 728 times that of Capella, or 1-89 of the light of the full moon.

It is not certain, however, that the sky would be totally dark if all stars were blotted out. Certain processes make the upper atmosphere strongly luminous at times, and we cannot be sure that this light would be totally absent.—Harper's Weekly.

Party's Fate on One Vote.
Instances are common enough in elections when a single vote turns the scale, but for that vote to decide not only the fate of a candidate, but of a party as well, is rare. Yet a majority of one in parliament, which may logically depend on a majority of one in the country, has worked some of the most momentous results possible. The classical example is the act of union of 1790, certainly among the largest, most important and most remarkable changes ever accomplished by a legislative body. One hundred and six voted for it and 105 against. Then a majority of one carried the great reform bill in 1832.

Majorities only a little bigger have again and again been responsible for far-reaching consequences. A majority of five threw out the Melbourne government in 1859. By the same figure Lord John Russell's government went out of office in 1873 because he lacked three votes, and the public education act, one of the most important ever passed, was placed on the statute book by a majority of two.—London Chronicle.

Couldn't Forget It.
"Saturday night some miscreant jugged off a whole cord of my wood, and somehow I can't forget about it," declared Silas.

"Have you tried to forget it?" inquired his friend.

"Yes. Sunday morning I went to church, hoping I could get it off my mind, and before I had been there five minutes the choir started in singing 'The Lost Chord,' so I got out."—Judge.

An Even Score.
"What is your objection to him, papa?"

"Why, the fellow can't make enough money to support you."

"But neither can you."

No Use For Theory.
Wigwag—it is a pet theory of mine that two can live as cheaply as one. Youngpup—Hub! It's plain to be seen you were never the father of twins.—Philadelphia Record.

SALT SEA YARNS.

Signs and Omens to Which the Sailor Grimly Clings.

A JOKE THAT PROVED FATAL.

Superstition and a Guilty Conscience Proved Too Much For the Norseman—A Bucket of Water That Stopped a Mysterious Wailing.

It is a well known fact that in the past the sailor was among the most superstitious of mortals, and even in these enlightened days there are a goodly number of old salts who cling tenaciously to their belief in certain signs and portents. Some, no doubt, of these superstitions have vanished altogether into the limbo of forgotten things, but there will always be a credulous few who will shake their heads solemnly and prophesy dimly if a knife is stuck in the mast or an albatross or a stormy petrel is captured and brought on board. The origin of some of these superstitions cannot be traced. Many of them have been handed down from father to son for a great number of years, with a touch probably added here and there, turning a comparatively ordinary story into a weird and mysterious legend.

The Finn is the most superstitious of all sailors. There are many of this race who still believe in the ominous portent of the phantom ship, the folly of starting a voyage on a Friday (a notion by no means confined to seafaring men), the low burning blue lights which are ghost spirits hovering near to give warning of approaching disaster and many other things, all of which fill the sailor's mind with murmurings and speak to him of woe.

A story is told of a brigantine which numbered several extremely superstitious men among her crew. One night when there was no moon and a slight ground swell was running the watch, who happened to be the most superstitious of them all, heard an unearthly wailing coming apparently from the very surface of the sea. The mate and the helmsman also heard it, but the former lacked imagination, and, although he was certainly interested, he nearly blew the watch's head off when he ventured to suggest mermaids. The helmsman did not feel quite happy, but he had to stick to the wheel. The watch was pale with terror, but he kept silence owing to the mate's complimentary references to his courage and abilities. Slowly the sound began to move along the ship's side, becoming more and more agonized as it approached. This annoyed the mate, and, going to the side of the vessel, he waited until he had located the sound and then emptied a bucket of water over the rail. There was a gasp, then dead silence, and nothing more was heard that night.

When the watch went off duty he of course gave a detailed and lurid account of the incident to his shipmates, who listened, as he thought, in awed silence and then called on one of the audience for his version of the matter. This man, a Tyne-sider, who dearly loved a joke and had no respect at all for any superstitions, had conspired with his fellows to play a trick on the watch. On the night in question he had crept over the bows without a sound, carrying with him the ship's cat secured in a bag. Crouching under the stays, the joker let the cat's head out of the bag, which he tied round the animal's neck so that it could not escape. He then applied his teeth to the unfortunate animal's tail. Everybody knows the fearsome sound of an angry cat in a cab of producing, and those to which a cat whose tail is being bitten gives vent are among the most hair raising. The sound was more or less regulated by squeezing the luckless beast's body. The mate's bucket of water was as unwelcome as unexpected and caused the Tyne-sider to beat a hurried retreat.

Not only is the origin of many sea superstitions "wropt in mystery," but also any logical explanation of cause and effect. It would puzzle any one to say why it should be unlucky for the ship's boy to whistle on the weather bow, except that it is generally unpleasant from a music lover's point of view for a boy to whistle on any bow at all.

On one occasion superstition and a guilty conscience caused a practical joke to have fatal consequences. The incident arose through one of the sailors, a Norwegian, boxing the ears of the ship's boy for the aforementioned crime of whistling on the weather bow. Not unnaturally the boy was annoyed and determined to pay the Norwegian out. Aided by two other sailors, a white shirt and some string, a very presentable "ghost" was arranged in the foc'sle on the night the Norseman was on watch. He was to be allowed only a glimpse of the "spirit" on entering the foc'sle, and it was then to vanish from view, being jerked by means of a string underneath the bunk of one of the jokers. Everything was ready, and the three conspirators lay in their bunks awaiting their victim. Unfortunately they all fell asleep, to be suddenly awakened by a loud cry from the Norwegian. He stood gazing at the "ghost," the dim light shed by the lamp falling on his ghastly face. The three were about to call out to him when he spoke. "No, no," he cried, "I did not mean to kill you, Morgan! Oh, mercy, mercy!" And he rushed madly from the foc'sle. Terrified, his shipmates followed him, but as they reached the deck they saw the Norwegian throw himself into the sea.—London Globe.



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GREISEN BROS.
COLUMBUS, NEB.

A Dutch Fishing Fleet.
If the traveler wants to get a real glimpse of picturesque Holland, a glimpse which shall long be a happy memory, let him journey to the old fishing village of Schevevlingen, not far from The Hague. Its fishing fleet is an imposing one and is best seen at night, when the boats are drawn up on the beach. Each has a number, and these are painted on the sides in such large figures that they can be read at a considerable distance. At night when the fishermen begin to come to land the women of the village walk down to the beach with their knitting in their hands to meet them. They wear their wooden shoes, some of which are made to look especially clean by an application of whitening, and they make a merry clatter as they go. Industry is characteristic of the women of Holland in all walks of life. They must always be at work of some kind, and it would seem as if more knitting needles must be used in Holland than in any other country in the world.—E. J. Farrington in Interior.

The Old Time English School.
Until comparatively recent times public school boys in England had many hardships to endure. As late as 1834 a writer who spoke from experience said that "the inmates of a workhouse or a jail were better fed and lodged than the scholars of Eton." Boys whose parents could not pay for a private room underwent privations that might have broken down a cabin boy and would be thought inhuman if inflicted on a galley slave.

"They rose at 5, winter and summer, and breakfasted four hours later, the interval being devoted to study, after they had swept their rooms and made their beds. The only washing accommodation was a pump. The diet consisted of an endless round of mutton, potatoes and beer, none of them too plentiful or too good.

"To be starved," says this writer, "frozen and flogged—such was the daily life of the school boys of England's noblest families."

A Losing Game.
"By having a record kept at the cashier's desk of pay checks which patrons fail to turn in I sometimes make up a check for 65 cents. Today a man got a check for 25 cents. The cashier presented one for 25 cents. The latter, glancing at his missing check card, discovered that it was one of the listed ones. Detaining the man, he notified me. After being confronted with the waiter the beat wanted to pay both checks. I ordered a policeman summoned. The man's pleading led me to show him the list of missing checks, which amounted to something like \$80, saying that I didn't know but that he was the cause of them all. He offered to pay the lot if the matter would be dropped, and this proposition I accepted."—New York Sun.

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Don't forget the Matinee, Saturday at 2:30

HE LOST THE RACE

Mark Twain's Futile Chase After a Tallyho Coach.

MISSED A BIG CELEBRATION.

The Way the Famous Humorist in Company With W. D. Howells Did Not Attend the Centennial of the Battle of the Minutemen at Concord.

In his reminiscences of Mark Twain in Harper's Magazine W. D. Howells tells amusingly of the time when he and Mr. Clemens missed the anniversary of the battle of Concord:

"Mark Twain came on to Cambridge in April, 1875, to go with me to the centennial ceremonies at Concord in celebration of the battle of the minutemen with the British troops a hundred years before. We both had special invitations, including passage from Boston, but I said why bother to go to Boston when we could just as well take the train for Concord at the Cambridge station. He equally decided that it would be absurd, so we breakfasted deliberately and then walked to the station, reasoning of many things, as usual.

"When the train stopped we found it packed inside and out. People stood dense on the platforms of the cars. To our startled eyes they seemed to project from the windows, and unless memory betrays me they lay strewn upon the roofs like brakenmen slain at the post of duty. We remounted the same worn steps of Porter's station and began exploring North Cambridge for some means of transportation overland to Concord, for we were that far on the road by which the British went and came on the day of the battle. The livermen whom we appealed to received us, some with compassion, some with derision, but in either mood convinced us that we could not have hired a cat to attempt our conveyance, much less a horse or vehicle of any description.

"It was a raw, windy day, very unlike the exceptionally hot April day when the routed redcoats, pursued by the Colonials, fled panting back to Boston, with their tongues hanging out like dogs," but we could not take due comfort in the vision of their discomfort. We could almost envy them for they had at least got to Concord. A swift procession of coaches, carriages and buggies, all going to Concord, passed us, inert and helpless, on the sidewalk in the peculiarly cold mud of North Cambridge. We began to wonder if we might not stop one of them and bribe it to take us.

"I felt keenly the shame of defeat and the guilt of responsibility for our failure, and when a gay party of students came toward us on the top of a tallyho, luxuriantly empty inside, we felt that our chance had come and our last chance. He said that if I would stop them and tell them who I was they would gladly, perhaps proudly, give us passage. I contended that if with his far vaster renown he would approach them our success would be assured.

"While we stood, lost in this contest of civilities, the coach passed us, with gay notes blown from the horns of the students, and then Clemens started in pursuit, encouraged by shouts from the merry party, who could not imagine who was trying to run them down, to a rivalry of speed. The unequal match could end only in one way, and I am glad I cannot recall what he said when he came back to me. Since then I have often wondered at the grief which would have wrung those blithe young hearts if they could have known that they might have won the company of Mark Twain to Concord that day and did not.

"We hung about unavailingly in the bitter wind awhile longer and then slowly, very slowly, made our way home. We wished to pass as much time as possible in order to give probability to the deceit we intended to practice, for we could not bear to own ourselves baffled in our boasted wisdom of taking the train at Porter's station and had agreed to say that we had been to Concord and to my house. Even after coming home to my house we felt that our statement would be wanting in verisimilitude without further delay, and we crept quietly into my library and made up a roaring fire on the hearth and thawed ourselves out in the heat of it before we regained our courage for the undertaking. With all these precautions we failed, for when our statement was imparted to the proposed victim she instantly pronounced it unreliable, and we were left with it on our hands intact. I think the humor of this situation was finally a greater pleasure to Clemens than an actual visit to Concord would have been. Only a few weeks before his death he laughed our defeat over with one of my family in Bermuda and exulted in our prompt detection."

Friendship's Tribute.
Gladys—Did you see what the society column of the Daily Bread said about Nin Gillard the other morning? "She moves with ease and grace in our most exclusive circles." Maybelle—Yes, I read it. It's dead certain that the editor who wrote that had never seen her on roller skates.—Chicago Tribune.

On the Move.
Ascum—Do you think it's true that Skinner has bought a place for himself in society? Wise—Oh, no! I'll bet he's only leased it, for he's liable to have to skip out at a moment's notice.—Catholic Standard and Times.

Insurance Salts.
The Man in the Chair—I enjoy a quiet smoke. The Other—Well, you'll never be troubled with crowds while you smoke cigars of that brand.—London Opinion.

Caustic.
The Girl—What's your opinion of women who imitate men? The Man—They're idiots. The Girl—Then the imitation is successful.—Cleveland Leader.

Peevishness covers with its dark fog even the most distant horizon.—Rich-ter.

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TRICKY ART DEALERS.

Artiste Parisian Scheme For Booming "New Master."
For the booming of a new artist an astute dealer is necessary. He catches his artist as young as possible, preferably as an exhibitor of crazy canvases at the autumn salon of the independent artists' exhibition, and commissions him to paint 100 pictures a year.

One by one, occasionally in twos and threes, at judicious intervals the dealer sends the pictures to the Hotel Drouot for sale by public auction. There he has confederates, who raise the price at each sale, and he buys them in himself.

After a few months the young artist's canvases have a certain market value, and the next step is taken to turn their painter into a modern master. The critics are attacked. One of them is asked to look at some dabs, and when he cries out with horror the dealer says:

"What? You don't like it? Take it home with you as a favor to me. I've got it six months and then—"

In due course an art amateur calls upon the critic and cannot contain his admiration for the new artist's picture.

"What a masterpiece! The most modern thing in art I have seen for a long time!" he exclaims.

Doubt begins to invade the critic's mind, and when one or two more enthusiastic amateurs have visited him he is worked up to writing a column of panegyric on the new master. The amateurs are, of course, sent by the dealer.

One or two articles and the boom is in full swing. Wealthy and simple minded collectors, remembering how other painters have been decried in their early days and how their works later have commanded fancy prices, rush in.

The new master makes about 10 per cent of the profit and the dealer the other 90 per cent. The new master is at the mercy of the dealer. If he grumbles the dealer floods the auction rooms with a hundred or so of his masterpieces and orders his agents not to bid, the result being that the canvases sell at rubbish prices, and the boom is burst.—Gil Blas.

LONDON THEATERS.

They Charge From a Penny to Sixpence For a Bill of the Play.
At the London theaters when the young woman shows you to a seat she asks if you wish a program. If you do you pay sixpence in the orchestra or dress circle for a program hand-somely printed on fine paper. The price ranges down through "trippence" and "tuppence" as the galleries ascend to a penny in the cockpit. The quality of paper and the general artistic merit of the program decline with the price, but exactly the same information is conveyed for a penny as for sixpence.

The fastidious theater goer might prefer to pay a dime for a neat and simple program rather than to have a bulky bunch of advertisements gratis, as in New York, but these London programs, although not so thick as those of New York, are not devoid of advertisements. This gives the purchaser the feeling that he is being worked at both ends. A lady reminds me, however, that a program in a New York theater costs but 10 cents, as the sneaky printing rube off on her white gloves, the cleaning of which costs a dime.

The quality of the performance at the better London theaters certainly averages no higher than that at similar theaters in New York. The music halls are the resort of the great middle class. These are great auditoriums with tier on tier of galleries, the seating capacity ranging perhaps from 3,000 to 5,000.—London Letter in New York Sun.

The Roman Tribunes.
The tribunes in ancient Rome represented the people in much the same way that the house of commons does in England and the house of representatives in this country. For a long time the patricians or aristocrats of Rome had everything their own way. But when the plebeians (or, as we would say, the "plain people") got their tribune the reckless tyranny of the patricians ceased. The tribune had great power. He could veto almost any act and nullify almost any law passed by the Romans. Liberty among the Romans dates from the time they first secured their tribunes.—New York American.

QUEER WEDDING GIFTS.

One Couple of Mature Years Received a Pair of Coffins.
An Englishman extremely fond of hunting revived as a wedding gift from an anonymous person a complete set of false limbs a set of artificial teeth and a couple of glass eyes, to procure all of which the sarcastic donor must, of course, have put himself to considerable expense. Accompanying these strange presents was a note wherein the hope was expressed that, by reason of the recipient's many falls while following the hounds, some or all of these substitutes might ultimately prove of use. As the bridegroom had incurred much enmity while holding office under his government, it was supposed that these gifts came from a disappointed office seeker.

A well known American writer received from a rival man of letters a scrap book wherein were carefully pasted and indexed many hundreds of clippings containing adverse criticisms touching the former's work, and a popular artist was presented with a set of elementary works upon self instruction in drawing and painting.

Some years ago in the west an elderly, crusty merchant on espousing a spinster of mature age was presented by an undertaker with two coffins for himself and wife, a letter which accompanied these ghastly gifts stating that they would, unlike most of the other offerings received, be sure to be of service. Naturally enough the bridegroom resented this singular if useful gift, and it took all the efforts of mutual friends to prevent a breach of the peace.

Like vexation was no doubt felt by an infirm octogenarian in Ohio who wedded a pleasure loving woman more than fifty years his junior. The present in this case was a large brass cage, "intended," so the inevitable accompanying letter stated, "to restrain the wayward flights of a giddy young wife who has married a decrepit old fool for his money."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Not a Waxwork.
The opening of the courts in an assize town in England is always a great day for the residents. The procession to the church, where the judge says a prayer and listens to a homily, the march to the court, with the attendant javelin men and the braying of "rumpets—the men in wigs and gowls—all the rustic mind with the sense of awe and the majesty of justice. It is related in Mr. Thomas Edward Crisp's book, "Reminiscences of a K. C.," that a farmer once took his son into the crown court.

On the bench was the Baron Cleary, gorgeous in scarlet and ermine, stately and motionless. The yokel gazed with open mouth at the resplendent figure on the raised dais. Suddenly the baron moved his hand from right to left and left to right.

"Why, fether," said the boy, "it's alive!"

A Friend in Need.
Algie—I say, Fred, you're—aw—a friend of mine, aren't you?
Fred—Sure.
Algie—Then be a good fellow and—aw—help me out. I'd like to have that pretty cousin of yours learn all about my—aw—good points, douché know.
Fred—I am helping you, old chap. I argued with her for two hours yesterday trying to convince her that you weren't as big a fool as you look.—Chicago News.

Very Thorough.
New York's collector of customs was talking about smuggling.
"Smuggling must cease," he said.
"Well, make it cease, if we have to be as strict and thorough as the French customs officer. This strict officer, standing on the pier, frowned on a tourist with a swollen cheek.
"What have you got there?" he said, pointing to the swelling.
"An abscess, sir," was the reply.
"Well," said the officer impatiently, "open it, please."—Washington Star.

Conclusive.
Briggs—It's too bad about Winkle and the girl he is engaged to. Neither of them is good enough for the other.
Griggs—What makes you think that?
"Well, I've been talking the matter over with both families."—Life.

It is useless to attempt to reason a man out of a thing he was never reasoned into.—Swift.

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