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SHORT STORIES OF THE DAY

Justice Crawford, Like Newton, Accidentally Makes an Important Discovery.

WHY CODY ORDERED A SUPPLY OF COAL

"Wild Bill" Hickok Has His Bluff Called by a Woman with a Kettle of Boiling Water—How a Brindle Dog Gets His Exercise.

Newton discovered the law of gravitation by watching apples fall from a tree. Bryce Crawford, justice of the peace, has discovered a way to smoke in the house without offending his wife by watching soap bubbles ascend in the hot air above a radiator.

The other day the judge went home and found his little son engaged in blowing soap bubbles by aid of an old-fashioned clay pipe. The child was enjoying himself, and, being of a generous disposition, insisted upon sharing the sport with his father, who happened to be smoking at the time. (Mrs. Crawford was not at home.) The judge removed his cigar and absent-mindedly blew into the pipe stem.

A large, top-aided bubble of a grayish color slowly expanded upon the bowl.

Giving the pipe a gentle flourish he had the satisfaction of seeing the filling sphere float idly in space. It hovered a moment over the card receiver on the center table. Then an eddy of air came, driving it across the room to the wharfed in the corner, where it bumped itself against a mineral specimen.

This was a critical time in the life of that bubble. Had it burst then a great discovery in domestic science might have been lost to the world. But it didn't burst. It bounced away, pulsating and wobbly, but still intact.

The judge breathed again. After a few more evolutions the fragile globe drifted over the register, where it was caught by a strong upward current of hot air. A sudden change came over its spirit. It is no longer the dreamy, careless creature, half myth, half substance of a moment ago, but, imbued with a great buoyancy, it shoots upward toward the ceiling. It strikes. There is a puff of smoke. That is all.

For an hour Judge Crawford sat and smoked in silence. Then an idea came to him.

When the partner of his joys returned she found the judge with a lighted cigar in one hand and a clay pipe in the other. He was smoking, but the atmosphere of the room was clear and there was no smell of tobacco. While meditating upon this strange

state of affairs she saw him draw a mouthful of smoke from the cigar, blow it through the stem of the pipe and form a bubble. Then she saw the bubble float upward in the hot air current and disappear through a window which had been let down from the top.

The judge will not apply for a patent.

Colonel William F. Cody, "Buffalo Bill" has gone east, after a visit of a few days in Omaha. The colonel is very busy these days getting ready for the launching of his Wild West show. He was walking down Farnam street on a hurried trip to the Western Union telegraph office the last day of his stay in Omaha, when some one from an up-stairs window cried out:

"Hey, there, Cody."

Colonel Cody stopped and looked about him, but could not locate the one who called him. He was not anxious about meeting old acquaintances just then, for he had a voluminous array of telegraph business to look after, so he hurried on, making some characteristic remarks about the foolishness of a man who would yell at another on the streets in such a manner. Retreating from the telegraph office to the hotel a man approached Colonel Cody familiarly and said:

"Cody, don't you remember me?"

"Are you the man who yelled at me a while ago?" the colonel asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Well, then, I have no desire to remember you," said the old scout, and he looked as if he meant it.

"Bill" McCune, well known as one of Buffalo Bill's firm friends and chief lieutenants, tells a story of how Colonel Cody regulated a country hotel. "It was at Red Lodge, Mont., last winter," said McCune, "and the weather was just about as cold as it ever gets. He arose at 5 o'clock in the morning as he is wonted to do, and to the hotel office he found a man-of-all-work engaged in scrubbing the floor. There was not a particle of fire.

"Cody wanted to know how soon there would be some heat. The scrubber told him it was an indefinite proposition as the hotel had suddenly run out of coal. Meanwhile Cody sat in a chair shivering. The man who wielded the mop stick scrubbed away as though it were summer time, and coming close to Cody, he gave a wide swath with his mop, completely enveloping the colonel's feet. A moment later that man was kicking about in a snow drift in front of the hotel. The colonel had thrown him out.

"Cody was mad. He boiled out of the hotel like a whirlwind, and finding a coal dealer, woke him up and ordered a ton of coal sent immediately to the hotel. When he returned he went into the dining room, thinking it might be warmer than the hotel office. But he was mistaken. The man he had pitched into the snow drift had picked himself up and had in the meantime scrubbed the dining room. The water froze on the floor until it was like a skating rink. A timid little woman, who was nervous for fear she would miss a train, got up early and, falling to find a fire in the office, peeped through the dining room door and asked: 'Is there no fire here, either?' 'Fire,' replied the gallant colonel, 'no, madam, there is no fire. These people seem to be running a skating rink, and before you venture in here you will do well to buckle on a pair of skates.' After a while the coal arrived and Cody did not cease until he saw a red-hot blaze in every stove in the house."

It was in the days when "Wild Bill" Hickok was in the government service as chief of scouts and before he had started out in the role of "bad man," which ended with his death in a Deadwood gambling house, that his bluff was called in a way he never forgot.

Hickok with a party of scouts had been out on the Smoky Hill river in Kansas trying to pacify a party of Indians which

had started on the warpath. Hickok and his companions had met with success, and in coming back stopped at several saloons along the route to celebrate their bloodless victory. By the time they reached the bridge west of Fort Riley, to which post they were returning, each man was "a bigger man than old Grant," and the road was not wide enough for more than the push and their horses, which were being pushed forward at the top of their speed.

The government had built a narrow bridge across the river near the fort, which was used by the settlers at that time pushing their way to the frontier of Kansas. Just before Hickok's party reached the bridge a party of emigrants was approaching. Their wagons filled the bridge, when the scouts, with Hickok at the head, rode down upon them and ordered them to get out of the road. The chief of scouts rode up to the front wagon, occupied by a man named Melnough and his family, and struck the immigrant's horses on the head with the quirt he carried. This was more than Mrs. Melnough could stand. Seizing a kettle of boiling water which had been put in the wagon at the camp ground, she jumped out of the wagon, and advancing upon the drunken scout exclaimed:

"You men turn right around and get out of this or I will scald you like rats in a trap."

Hickok started his horse toward her, but soon had all that he could do to manage the animal when it was struck with a stream of water from the kettle. Finally gaining control of the horse, he gave orders for the scouts to retreat until the wagon train had crossed the bridge.

Speaking of the incident a short time before his death, Hickok remarked: "I've seen in some close places and have seen times when I wouldn't give a dollar for my chance of getting out, but the only time I really was bluffed to a standstill was when that woman threw the hot water on the horse."

A mangy, brindle dog has fallen in love with the Harney street car line, the least pretensions of all tramways in the city and most frequently anatomized for its promiscuous antics. The dog is of unknown ancestry, and without any particular place of abode. Its peculiar infatuation for the yellow bobsars which traverse the Harney line dates from one month ago, when a conductor first noticed the beast doggedly pursuing his car. From the eastern terminus at Sixth and Pierce streets the dog followed in the wake of the car until it reached the Y at Twenty-fifth and California. Day and night since that time the dog has evinced his mania for exercise, making as many as twenty trips daily. He is a heavy dog, and on the long stretch between Twentieth and Twenty-fourth streets falls far to the rear, making up, however, when the stops are more numerous. The dog shows no preference for conductors, and frequently refuses to desert their car for the more pretentious juggernauts of the Farnam line. They frequently throw to the wanderer remnants of their lunch, which may possibly serve to cement his loyalty.

Dog with Wonderful Pedigree.
 "I paid \$4 for that dog."
 "That seems a good deal for a dog like that."
 "But the dog has a wonderful pedigree."
 "How far back do they trace it? To the dog that Noah took on the ark?"
 "This dog's ancestor didn't go on the ark."
 "Why not?"
 "He had a bark of his own."

Don't think you have drank the ne plus ultra of wines until you have tried Cook's Imperial Extra Dry Champagne.

WOULD MAKE IT ALL GARDEN

Modern Engineering Science Would Raise Flowers in Our Western Deserts.

FLOODS AND FRESHETS WOULD BE CURBED

Government Works Would Store Waste Waters to Be Released for Irrigation of Millions of New Arid Areas.

Will there ever come a day when the great west will be as densely populated as that of the east? Thoughtful persons may doubt it, but modern engineering science is proposing apparently practicable means whereby the population of the west of the very near future may be as dense as that of the east today. As a plan of development suggested for this country the National Irrigation association proposes to utilize the waste waters that under existing circumstances carry destruction to life and homes along the banks of our great rivers to flood and freeze every spring in the establishment of a system of irrigation that will clothe with verdure and forests and cereal riches the now arid wastes of the sparsely populated west.

It is to urge the adoption of this plan as a national policy that the Commercial club has undertaken a campaign of education under the inspiration and auspices of the National Irrigation association, and similar promotional work is now being carried on in St. Paul, Minneapolis, Los Angeles and other cities. Secretary Pitt of the Commercial club is to send out something like 25,000 letters setting forth the merits of the plan to commercial organizations, broadcast to members of congress and public men generally, and to the great business concerns of the east and west. Through the efforts of the National Irrigation association great interest has already been aroused in this seemingly great work, and many large business houses are sending out literature directing attention to its possibilities and promises.

Fructiferous River Improvement.
 For many years the government has annually spent large sums of money in an endeavor to improve western rivers with a view of making them navigable. To dwellers along the Missouri river it need hardly be said that the money devoted to its improvement in that respect has been practically wasted. It has not been of service even in preventing periodical floods. The new plan is to devote a share of this expenditure to the construction of works that will store the water and release it in such volume and at such times as it may be needed for the land through which it will be conducted by proper canals for irrigation.

Such an undertaking can, of course, only be essayed at great expense. It is proposed that the government take up the improvement of its own arid lands, of which there are 100,000,000 acres in the west available for irrigation. The improvement of the land now unuseable would enable the government to dispose of it at enhanced prices that would pay for its improvement. The chief benefit would be the making of the land productive and equal to the maintenance of a great population. Lands already under private ownership could be charged a reasonable rental for water for irrigation.

Where Omaha Would Come In.
 If thus improved a vast territory of this western land would be commercially tributary to Omaha, and this city would receive a great direct benefit. As the west develops its prosperity would be reflected upon the east, so that the benefits would be general. The immediate object of this vast irrigation propaganda is to secure for the present

the appropriation by congress of \$200,000 for the necessary surveys, over a wide area, many believe the movement of the objection that it is local to any section. When the surveys have been completed an appropriation of some \$10,000,000 will be asked for the construction of the necessary reservoirs and canals. Then from the sales of government lands in the sections benefited, it is claimed, the profits will be such as to encourage continuing the work in other sections and on a larger scale.

In a recent letter to the Commercial club Captain H. M. Chittenden of the corps of government engineers at Sioux City discusses the obligations of the government with convincing pertinence, and with an intelligence born of ten years of service in engineering government work along the Missouri river and its tributaries.

"For twenty-four years," writes Captain Chittenden, "the government has been expending money upon the Missouri river, and the total outlay to the end of the current year will be about \$11,000,000. It will puzzle many people to give an intelligent answer as to that of the east today. The expenditure to which this enormous outlay can be applied in the future. Two such purposes suggest themselves and both are of living practical importance, which will increase as time goes on. They are, first, protection of the Missouri valley, and second, its development.

Painful Annual Tragedies.
 Along the immediate valley of the Missouri there is annually going on a loss of property which would surprise anyone not familiar with the facts. There are few more painful tragedies enacted than those which may every year be witnessed along the course of this river. The annual high water is almost the only natural visitation of regular occurrence against which the small property owner is powerless to protect himself. He can do much to avoid loss by fire and what he cannot do he can insure against. He can protect himself against storms, lightning and to some extent against drought, but if he owns any land on the banks of the Missouri he is helpless and every year many a moderate property-holder sees a goodly share of his worldly wealth carried away by the river.

"As the country fills up with settlement and the bottom lands are more developed the magnitude of this annual loss increases. The lands are agriculturally rich, like all alluvial bottoms, and their value is becoming such that this unreasoned destruction cannot much longer be permitted to go on. Something should be done to prevent it and there is no power that can do this except the United States government.

"It is no argument to say that this cannot be done because it would mean the protection of private property at public expense. Of course it would. If the government owns and controls the agency which is destroying private property it is not the property-owner entitled to look to it for protection? The government has absolute control over the Missouri river. No bridge can be built across it except by its consent. No protective works can be put in to save private property except by the same permission. No out-of-pocket can be made, however great or evident the benefit, because it may injure the navigable condition of the stream upon which no boats run. If the government is thus to retain control of the river it should extend its control far enough to prevent the annual ravages upon property which now go on right and left over most of its course.

Obligation of the Government.
 "It is clearly the duty of the government to prevent this destruction of property by the river—clearly so as it is to build

levees to save the valley of the Mississippi from floods. The problem is a thoroughly practical one. The regulation of the river to a fixed and narrow channel, which will maintain its own navigable depth, may be physically possible, but it is practically impossible. On the other hand the protection of the banks has been shown by twenty years' experience to be entirely within the range of practical engineering.

"This is one of the purposes to which the people of the Missouri valley should see that their share of the river and harbor bill is devoted. They should go farther than this. They should not only seek to protect the land from the river, but to make the river develop the lands. So far as the upper river is concerned, except in a few places where boats still run and there are valuable bottoms to protect, the public expenditure would be far more useful if devoted to works which would get more of the river out upon the lands.

"I would not advocate that the government should go into the irrigation business. It should only execute those great and expensive works, such as the construction of reservoirs or the more extensive canals which are interstate in the extent of their influence. For various reasons private capital cannot take hold of these works to advantage. The resources of individuals are ordinarily not sufficient. If companies undertake them they build only for a specific purpose and do not generally develop the full capacity of a site as they should. They cannot, of course, be expected to build for others. The result is that, having occupied a site and having developed it for a particular purpose, they become a stumbling block in the way of further development and its full capabilities are never realized. The great reservoir and the great canal, which the development of the arid regions will yet require, should be built at the public expense. It is simply a measure of increasing the resources of nature, while the use of those resources should be left to local laws as at present."

Should Seek the Greatest Benefits.
 Captain Chittenden points out that while the main purpose of the river and harbor bill has been the promotion of navigation, it is only by ingenious feignings that the levees of the Mississippi, the reservoirs at its head waters or the reventments of the banks of the lower Missouri can be ascribed to that purpose, declaring that appropriations for river improvement should contemplate every useful purpose and especially the purposes which would yield greatest benefits. He says that the \$11,000,000 thus far appropriated for the improvement of the Missouri would have built 200 miles of bank protection, giving general security to twice that length of river and saving annually several thousands of acres of rich land. It would in addition store 750,000 acre-feet of water, enough to reclaim half a million acres. The lands so protected and reclaimed would go a long way toward offsetting the expense.

Gullibility of Human Nature.
 The gullibility of man and woman never had a stronger illustration than in the case of a fortune teller lately arrested in New York. In her account book she had memoranda like these:
 Charley Larken to pay \$10 to learn to control others in business.
 John O'Connor paid \$5 to get on the police.
 Nellie Kerrigan paid \$5 to win Jacob Worth.
 Julia Bolton paid 25 cents and agreed to pay 25 cents. Wants to marry a clergyman before Easter.
 Woman wants husband to die so she can marry "Johnnie" by Easter.
 Annie Morgan get Tom Carroll, \$5; balance, \$4.
 Married woman wants to humiliate her husband; paid \$5.

THIS CLOCK AN ALARMIST

Erratic Timepiece Cuts Up High Jinks in Judge Baker's Court.

IT GIVES EVIDENCE IN A LARCENY CASE

Defendants Charged with Stealing the Clock Are Promptly Convicted by the Jury—Story of a Modern "Hoodoo."

Spectators and jurors in Judge Baker's court were treated to a feature that was not on the docket Friday afternoon. Two young men were before the court on the charge of stealing a clock. The timepiece was brought forward as an exhibit. The alleged theft occurred last December and the clock was recovered a few days later. Since that time it has been stowed away at the post-office until the day of trial. It had not been wound from the day it was recovered by officers until Friday during the noon recess of court when somebody whose identity has not yet been disclosed entered the court room and finding no one present to turn informer wound the clock and set it to running. Worse than that, the joker—whomsoever he was—set the alarm to sound at 2:30 o'clock. Afternoon sessions of court convene at 2 o'clock, and just thirty minutes later the county attorney was in the midst of his opening statement to the jury.

"We expect to give evidence to show," said the prosecutor, "that these defendants stole the clock you see upon this table."

Simultaneous with the foregoing declaration the attorney struck a dramatic attitude and pointed to the clock, less than three feet away from him. As if menaced by the threatening index finger, the clock—a sturdy old-timer—cut loose in reckless abandon. The alarm was not like that of the diminutive nickel-plated, 69-cent bargains you see in the show windows. It was more like a riot call in a Kerry Patch police station. Judge Baker's hair stood on end. Earl Bone and John Norberg, court bailiffs, lost sight of the fact that it was the alleged stolen clock that had ferried erratically, and they floundered about trying to suppress the dignified old timepiece that does regular service in the court room, and which is not sensational enough to have an alarm. The youths accused of the theft were awestricken, as if the sounding of the clock was a providential visitation denoting some awful fate. The jurors looked at each other in mute astonishment, for they had agreed under oath not to discuss the case. As soon as Judge Baker's hair resumed its equilibrium he ordered the jury to take a five-minute recess. Judge Baker is always even-tempered, but the high jinks cut up by this homely old clock caused a frown to hover about the usually pleasant face of the honor. The bailiffs made an effort to stop the clock, but it was as erratic about stopping as it had been about alarming, and a little investigation disclosed that it was wound up for eight days, and in jostling about the stopping equipment had been thrown out of gear. Wherever that clock is it is doubtless still running.

The sounding of the alarm was not the only feature of interest, for the clock has a very loud striking apparatus, and in striking it had no regard for the hour. Sometimes it would strike five, but more frequently fifteen, and it had these spells every hour during the trial.

Elmer Woodcock and Harry Shelley were the defendants on trial. The jury returned a verdict of guilty Saturday morning. It would take a vast array of argument to convince the defendants that their fate was not conjured with by the sounding of that alarm. They have the appearance of bright young men, ordinarily immune from superstitious ideas, but they will always look upon this incident as a "hoodoo."