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The Quippy Ink Thief.
"Women prisoners is quippy," said the jailer. "One had a quip toward writin', and she was always swipin' ink out of the schoolroom."
"She swiped ink in her thimble. She'd fill the thimble up to the brim and then stand it carefully in her hair. Mighty good ink-wash was required on the way back to her cell. Still, what if she did spill a drop or two on her scalp? A female convict ain't on view like a society woman, is she?"
"Of course as soon as we got on to the thimble game we put a stop to it. That didn't put a stop to the ink stealin', though. I says to her one day on the way back from the schoolroom:
"Well, Russell, no more poetry writin' with ink what don't belong to ye, hey?"
"She just smiled and mumbled somethin'."
"Speak up," says I. "Do ye miss yer ink—yes or no?"
"Bob-uh-uh," says she, tryin' to brush past me. But I grabbed her arm. I noticed a thin black thread of sump'n tricklin' from her lips. Yes, sir! Would ye believe it? She was stealin' the people's ink now in her mouth!"—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Poor Billiards.
"One summer in the country," said a well known amateur billiardist, "another man and I were overtaken by a storm and had to go into a tavern for shelter. The rain fell steadily. We had three or four long hours before us. Time began to hang heavily on our hands."
"Landlord," said I, "do you happen to have a billiard table?"
"Sure," said the landlord. "Sure. Just step this way, gents."
"He proudly threw open the door of a dark, stuffy room. We saw an antiquated table with a patched cloth, and in the corner was a rack of crooked cues."
"Any balls?" said I.
"Sure," said the landlord, and he unlocked a closet and laid on the table three white balls, all alike—there was no spot, you know.
"But, see here," I remonstrated, "how do you tell these balls apart?"
"Oh, that's all right," said he. "You soon get to know 'em by their shape." —St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

To Be Sharp.
The Aryan root "ak" meant "to be sharp," and the idea of sharpness has followed it at least through 10,000 years into all of the family of languages of that tongue. It is quite likely that the property of sharpness was conceived of by these ancestors from handling shells, the first knives that man knew. That cutting edge was referred to by "ak" long before the most primitive people had learned to put an edge on flint. When these Aryans wanted to express the idea of sharpness of mind they used the same word. This root went into the Greek, where it became "akros," meaning pointed. In Sanskrit it is "acre," meaning the same thing. In the Latin we find "acrimonia," signifying sharpness, from which our "acid" comes. The Latin also has "acer," meaning sharp, and "acus," a needle. In the Anglo-Saxon it became "eg," an edge. So the idea of sharpness runs all the way through, and we have it in our "acid," "acute," "edge" and "ax" as well as in "acrid" and "acumen."—Argonaut.

The Alexandrian Library.
Omar, a fanatical caliph who overran Egypt about the middle of the seventh century, proclaimed that, since the Koran contained everything that human beings ought to read, no other books had any right to exist, so he condemned to destruction the immense library at Alexandria founded by the Ptolemies and constantly enlarged by their successors until the advent of the Saracens. How enormous it was can be imagined from the fact that for six months the manuscripts supplied the fuel of 4,000 public baths. It was the most terrible blow ever inflicted upon literature.

Genius Rewarded.
A schoolmaster not famous for his personal beauty swooped down on the inattentive boy and found him drawing caricatures. He picked up one and asked the boy in a voice of thunder, "Is this meant for me?"
"Please, sir," said the victim, in a state of terror—"please, sir, I did not mean to make it so like."
The master destroyed the picture and let the matter drop.—London Globe.

Thought It Was a Proposal.
Scene—Cab stand near London. Lady distributing tracts, hands one to caddy, who glances at it, hands it back and says politely, "Thank you, lady, but I'm a married man." Lady nervously looks at the title and, reading "Abide with me," hurriedly departs, to the great amusement of caddy.—London Spare Moments.

But He Did.
"What do you mean by kissing my daughter, sir?"
"I'm sorry, but I couldn't help myself."
"Couldn't help yourself! That's just what you did do!"



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