

The Sailor's Hands.

A visitor who prides himself on his knowledge of nautical affairs was chatting with a friend outside the Flat-iron building. "See that man coming?" he asked. "Can you tell what he is by the way he walks?" "Why, no," replied the New Yorker who was with him. "He's a sailorman of some sort. Look at his hands. No landsman ever walked that way. A sailorman always walks with the palms of his hands turned behind him and the backs turned forward, the way he is walking. Look at that landsman over there. He swings his arms with the palms of the hands turned toward his body and the backs out. You can always detect a man who is accustomed to the sea that way." "What's the explanation?" inquired the other. "Why, there isn't any that I know. It may be because the sailor gets the habit of balancing himself in rough weather by the use of his arms, but I don't believe that's the reason. It's just one of those things you can't account for.—New York Press.

The Spinning Machine of a Spider. The spinning machine is situated under the hinder part of the spider's body. It takes the form of a slight depression, which a close inspection shows to consist of six small holes resembling tubes. Four of these contain an immense number of minute openings, as many as a thousand can be counted in each, and from every one of these openings a viscous fluid issues, which hardens on exposure to the atmosphere. The whole 4,000 threads are united into one line, which is sometimes so fine that 4,000,000 twisted together would not have a combined diameter greater than that of an ordinary hair from the human head. It is impossible to conceive the excessive slenderness of one of the 4,000 threads which compose such a line. The bare statement that each one has a thickness only one sixteen thousand millionth of that of a human hair does not in any way convey the impression of its wonderful fineness. The mind can no more grasp the meaning of such figures than it can understand the immense distance of which astronomers talk so glibly.

Kevin as Damocles.

A characteristic always of Lord Kelvin was his absolute faith in figures, and this ruling passion once led to his experiment as a Damocles. When he once solved a problem in mathematics, he was willing to stake upon its correctness not only his reputation, but, if necessary, his life. Taking an immense heavy cannon ball, he calculated with the utmost accuracy the size of the smallest wire which would bear the weight of the load of iron. He then procured a length of wire of just the requisite strength and to prove the truth of his figuring had the cannon ball suspended over his lecturing platform at the very spot where it would be most likely to strike and crush him should the wire give way, and it remained there for weeks.

The Last Ditch.

A dignified origin can be given to the expression "To die in the last ditch." On the death of De Witt the Prince of Orange was made head of the Dutch republic. Despite his youth he displayed the courage and tenacity of his race. "Do you not see your country is lost?" asked the Duke of Buckingham, who had been sent to negotiate at The Hague. "There is a sure way never to see it lost," replied William, "and that is to die in the last ditch."

He Got Married.

Our cook, said the family man, had a beau who called on her often, but finally his visits ceased. I asked her one day what had become of her former attentive beau, and she said he had got married. "Since he got married," said she, "he don't come around any more." "Married?" said I, surprised. "Why, I thought he would marry you?" "No he did," said the cook.—Brownings Magazine.

Outrages of the Telephone.

That the telephone has blessed many a man, saved many lives and helped pile up fortunes is true, but has it not cursed some women, ruined more lives and hastened domestic misfortune? It has. Has it not become the favorite pastime of the women with nothing to do? It has. Does it not accelerate gossip and add the flirt and the wayward constantly? It does. Self-indulgent women waste their husbands' money by ordering food over the too handy telephone rather than bother to dress for the street, thereby losing both their wholesome morning exercise and their chance thriftily to secure the best there is for the price at market or at stores from which the family larder is supplied. The time wasted by women in foolish phoning can never be offset by time gained by forehanded men in business, for what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world if his "world" is lost through folly? Telephoning, from a habit, finally becomes a vice and a menace to the courtesies. It has destroyed the fine art of social correspondence. It has crowned Haste with Courtesy's laurel.—Minna Thomas Antrim in Lippincott's.

Old Names For Guns.

As the use of artillery became more common and the advantages of portability and a greater rapidity of fire were recognized, guns, except among the orientals, became smaller, but of better workmanship and construction. Inventors began to try their hands at all sorts of improvements or attempts at improvement, and in the course of a hundred years or so the number of different pieces of cannon, large and small, muzzle or breechloading, was simply legion. There were cannon, cannon royal and demi-cannon, three or four classes of culverins, bombards, mortars, perriers, serpentes, carthons, curtails, passevolants or zebra-nas, basilisks, orgues, sakers, milions, mojanas, falcons and falconets, robinets, fowlers, bases, slings, port-pieces, murderers, drakes, aspics, double dogs and laptors, to say nothing of ribadoquins, flying dragons and partridge mortars.—Gentleman's Magazine.

A Cutting Retort.

Before dinner, at the house of a rich banker in Florence, Colonel (afterward the Earl of Dundas) had said some sharp things about the crudities of Americans. Notwithstanding this rudeness it fell to his lot to take Mme. Bonaparte (Betsy Patterson) in to table. He impudently asked Mme. Bonaparte if she had read Basil Hall's book on America, in which he pronounced all Americans vulgarians. "Yes, Colonel Dundas," she answered, "but it did not surprise me in the least. If my compatriots were descended from the Italians or Spanish, any display of low breeding might astonish me; but, being the direct descendants of Englishmen, it is natural enough that they should be vulgarians."

Cursory.

"Eddie," said the teacher, "can you give a definition of cursory? The word is generally used in connection with public speaking. For example, we often read that somebody 'made a few cursory remarks.' Please write a sentence containing the word cursory." After a brief struggle Eddie evolved this masterpiece: "Yesterday my pa helped my ma to hang pictures, and when the ladder fell after pa had climbed to the top of it he bumped his head against the corner of the dining room table and then made a few cursory remarks."—Chicago Record-Herald.

On Their Minds.

"I've got something on my mind that I've got to get rid of," said the author, bursting in and seizing a pad and pencil. "And when you have got rid of it and have received a check for it there is something down in the milliner's window that I want to get on my mind," said the author's wife, picking up his hat, coat and umbrella.—Exchange.



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