West Side.

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THE POSTMASTER'S DAUGHTER.

She Robbed the Mail, but the Inspector Kept Her Secret.

An inspector had a queer experience some time ago in a pretty little town in Maryland. As the train neared this village he walked into the mail car and asked for the mail clerk, showed his commission and put in a letter addressed to James Lancaster, a fictitious name. The letter contained a $10 bill. The inspector stood upon the platform of the mail car when the train stopped and the pouch was thrown off. A boy took the pouch over his shoulder and started up the village street. There was a crowd of visitors inside the office who swarmed toward the little desk. The inspector waited 15 minutes until they had all gone to get their mail. He entered the place. A handsome girl, 17 years old, dressed in an old fashioned bodice and light colored skirt, sat behind the wire grating in a rocking chair, sewing.

"Is there a letter here for James Lancaster?" he asked.

"No," she said after sorting some letters in the case marked "L."

"I am sure the letter must have come," said the inspector.

"It's not here."

"Are you the postmaster?"

"No. I am the assistant. My father is the postmaster."

"Who opened the pouch that came in by the last train?"

"I did."

"No one to help you?"

"No, sir."

"Maybe it's stuck in the pouch. I have heard of such things. Won't you look?"

She took the pouch, turned it up side down, shook it and looked in side. No letter.

"Won't you let me come in and help you look for it?"

"No. No one is allowed in here."

The inspector drew out his commission. "May I come in now?" he asked.

"Yes," blushing; "I beg your pardon."

"I mailed a letter myself to James Lancaster," the inspector said. It is a fictitious name—Lancaster. The letter was put in that pouch by the mail clerk on the train, who took a memorandum of it and locked the pouch in my presence. When that pouch was put off at the station, I followed it and kept it in sight until it was taken into the postoffice. Now, you say you opened it alone, and that no one else touched it. Where is my letter?"

"I never saw it, sir. If you doubt me, you can search me."

The inspector began to pace the floor in deep thought. The girl, more beautiful than ever in her excitement, sat down in the chair, crossed her legs and began to rock herself to and fro.

"Call your mother, and she can search you in my presence."

"My mother is dead."

Again the inspector paced the floor. As he walked back and forth he noticed the swinging feet of the postmaster's daughter. One of her stockings had fallen a little, and under it was the shape of an envelope.

"Your stocking has dropped," he said.

The girl turned scarlet and then white and stopped rocking. She caught her breath and almost fainted. Then she recovered, took the letter from its hiding place, handed it to the inspector and burst into a flood of passionate tears. The girl had admirers, as was natural. Her father was miserly, not giving her the money even that was needed for a bright bit of ribbon, let alone a new dress. She had been tempted to take money from the mails for bits of finery. The inspector bitterly accused the old man of being the one to blame.

"I suppose you will arrest her?" he said.

"Will you make restitution of the sum stolen?"

It was handed over.

"Will you arrest her?"

"If I did, what would be her future? No. Unless you or she tell, this will never be known."—Indianapolis Journal.

A Clever Frenchman's Scheme.

A French viscount, who is not so richly endowed as he would like to be, has invented a novel means of feathering his nest. He advertises in the French papers a lottery in which the great prize will be himself and his title. Five thousand tickets are to be issued at 20 francs each which will bring him in over $25,000. The lady who draws the lucky number will have the choice of two alternatives. She may marry the viscount with his fortune or she may share this capital sum, but must first forego all right to his hand.—Exchange.

Crumbling Walls Around Japan Cities.

Even in much changed Japan there are old cities which still retain their walls of the age of feudalism, and in the very heart of the capital the imperial palace is surrounded by the same quaint fortifications which in old troublous times made it an imperium in imperio, although the walls are crumbling, and the gates are never shut, and the moats have been abandoned to the lotus and to carp of monstrous size and fabulous age.—Chicago Herald.

An Exacting Standard.

"Is your new minister an eloquent man?"

"Well, not if you compare him with my barber."—Detroit Tribune.

Entertaining Children at a Party.

Let us imagine that we have issued our invitations, and that the eventful evening has arrived. The usual greetings over, summon a council and let them decide which they would prefer to begin with. Shall it be music, or games, or Mrs. Jarley's waxworks, or shall it be a new Arabian Nights entertainment? Suppose we decide on story telling. Gather your little audience together round the fire, let them sit on the hearth rug if they will (conventionalities go to the wall at children's parties), and then select your story and read, or, better, tell it to your youthful auditors.

There is no lack of subjects to choose from. Hans Andersen's delightful romances form excellent reading and will be listened to with rapt attention. Fairy tales will never weary them, although they have probably read them over and over. There is only one suggestion to make with reference to this form of entertainment—do not make the selection too long. A story that will occupy 20 minutes in delivery is long enough, more than this may pall on your listeners, and that would be a thousand pities.

A pleasant variation in the programme after the reading is a game in which romping will figure prominently. It is just possible that papa will object to this, but he romped himself when he was young.—New York World.

It Could Be Heard 25,000 Miles.

If it were possible to control sound waves in such a manner as to prevent their ascending and losing themselves in the great sea of ether which surrounds the globe, and to compel them to "move off at a tangent," we might get some results of startling interest.

With the atmosphere in good condition for transmitting sound, the "great guns" of modern navies can be heard for a distance of 50 miles, at least the authorities so state. These guns weigh from 100 to 125 tons, and the charge of powder used each time is 500 pounds. Now, in order that the concussion might break through the atmosphere with sufficient violence to make sound waves that would have the power to travel around the world, it would be necessary to make a gun 500 times larger than the 125-ton gun of today, and to charge it with 250,000 pounds of powder! This enormous amount of explosives would load 10 freight cars to their utmost capacity.

Brewer relates an instance when the human voice was heard for a distance of three miles, the owner of the voice being an English parson. Eight thousand three hundred and thirty three men with lung power equal to Brewer's stentor could transmit a message around the world, and not overtax themselves either.—St. Louis Republic.

Brandy and Water.

They were telling stories at police headquarters in Portland, Me., the other night, when General Neal Dow's name was brought up.

"One night, a few years ago," remarked one of the oldest officers on the force, "a man carrying an adult jag and a valise was brought in. He was landed in a cell, and he remarked rather indignantly: 'You lock up a poor devil like me, but you don't look at the big guns. You're afraid to. Why, I drank brandy and water with Neal Dow once. I'm behind the bars, but look where he is.' The story got to the ears of the doughty old general, who came to the station in dudgeon. He approached the man and denounced him.

"'Thash all right, colonel, said the prisoner. 'Member on th' train comin down? You drank the water, and—and, shay, don't I look so I had 'ntroduckshun with th' brandy?'

"The general gave him some good advice and laughingly left the station."—New York Commercial Advertiser.

Fighting Instinct in Birds.

In defense of their young even birds become fearless and sacrifice their lives with a promptness which, as a sort of suicidal instinct, might seem rather paradoxical if it were not for that bylaw of nature which always sacrifices the interest of individuals to the interest of the species. A partridge hen with a covey of half grown chicks never hesitates to fling herself into the path of the pursuing dog in order to give her youngsters a chance to escape in the thicket, and the Mexican weaver thrush flies even at the head of a snake seen to approach her nest with predatory purposes. Too often that devotion is rewarded with death, but the serpent accepts the vicarious sacrifice, and the orphaned nestlings are almost sure to be reared by other birds.—San Francisco Chronicle.

His Intentions Were Honest.

An old Scotch minister who was in the habit of preaching in the open air took his place on a bank on one occasion and unfortunately fixed himself on an ant's nest.

The active habits of these little creatures soon made the good man's position very uncomfortable, and afraid that his audience might observe something of his discomfort from his manner he apologized by remarking:

"Brethren, though I hope I have the word of God in my mouth, I think the deil himself has got into my breeks!"—Exchange.

Not Genuine.

"How did you like the play?" she asked as they came out of the theater together.

"It wasn't at all natural," was the reply.

"Why, I thought it was quite true to life. What criticism do you make?"

"The two leading characters."

"Oh! They kissed too often, eh?"

"No. They didn't kiss at all. They simply pretended to as many as seven different times, but he didn't even rub the powder off her chin."—Detroit Free Press.

On the List.

Jinks—Has your wife any brothers?

Filkins—I can't say. She has always been singularly diffident about alluding to her former conquests.—Truth.

He'll Get It Finally.

Totling—You needn't worry about that debt of Flicker's. He'll pay it when he dies.

Dimling—I don't see how.

Totling—Well, the poet says, "He who dies pays all debts."—Truth.

HE AMUSED THE BABY.

While Its Mamma Went Shopping a Stranger Performed a Curious Service.

A man stood loafing in front of a crowded store where it was bargain day, when two women stopped before him. They were already so laden with bundles that it seemed impossible that they could carry any more. One woman was wheeling a baby carriage.

"There's that checked gingham," the man heard her say; "it's the prettiest I've seen yet for baby's summer dresses."

"Well, let's go in."

"How can I take the carriage through that crowd? It's no use trying to get anything if you've got to drag a baby around with you."

The man loafing at the door took his hands out of his pocket.

"Guess I might as well tend baby as do anything else," he drawled. "Leave the baby with me, and I'll take care of it while you shop."

The women both looked at him curiously, then the mother of the baby eyed the gingham in the window and that helped her to accept his offer.

"You can leave your bundles in the cab with the kid," said the man, as he took the tongue of the perambulator and began to wheel the baby back and forth.

But neither of the women relinquished a single bundle. Indeed, the mother of the youngster at once took every package out of the little carriage and added it to the mass in her arms.

The man smiled grimly as he heard her say to her friend:

"He won't be likely to steal the baby, but I won't take my chances with the dry goods, would you?"

"No, indeed."

They were in the store a long time. When they at last came out it was with a rush, as if they feared to find their most valuable possession gone. But no, it was laughing and smiling into the face of its male nurse, who was making all kinds of comic gestures to amuse it.

"Thank you ever so much," said the mother of the baby, fumbling in her pocketbook, "it's worth a quarter"—

"Never mind that," said the man 'Did you get the gingham?'

While the two stared open mouthed at his presumption a carriage drove up, some ladies called to him, and touching his hat to the two astonished shoppers Colonel —— disappeared into his own equipage, having just done one of the odd things he is famous for doing and been of service at the same time.—Detroit Free Press.

An Extraordinary Legal Document.

One of the most remarkable legal papers on file in the archives of the world is one now in the National museum of Paris, labeled "Sentence on a hog, executed by justice in the copyhold of Clarmont-Avin and strangled upon a gibbet at that place." It is sealed with red wax, kept under a glass, bears date of June 14, 1494, and reads as follows: "We, the jury, in detestation and horror of this crime, and in order to make an example and to satisfy justice, have declared, judged, sentenced, pronounced and appointed that the said hog, now detained in the abbey as a prisoner, shall, by the executioner, be hung and strangled on a gibbet, near the gallows which now stands within the jurisdiction of the monk, being near the copyhold of Avin. In witness of which we have sealed this present with our seals." Following the above are the signatures of the jurors and the prefect of the Department de la Aisne.—Philadelphia Press.

An Absentminded Railway Guard.

Manifestations of absentmindedness on the part of the trainmen on the elevated roads are not infrequent. Sometimes they are very funny, as in the case of a Ninth avenue conductor on a recent rainy day. This particular conductor is usually jolly and level headed, but the vicious and chilling wetness of the weather had evidently worn his patience down to a very thin veneering. He shouted the names of the stations in a gruff and surly manner, and his scowls were as dark as the raincloud. For the time being he was apparently oblivious to everything except the tempestuous weather. Just as the train pulled up at the Houston street station he opened the car door and called out mechanically, "It's raining!" He repeated the cry in the next car and appeared to be unconscious that he had said anything out of the ordinary routine.—New York Mail.

Definitions of Happiness.

On an ancient Egyptian sarcophagus the good people in another world are represented as lying tranquilly asleep, while the wicked rove restlessly about, crowded together. But this latter condition was considered as enviable by the lad who, when remonstrated with for hustling other sightseers, retorted, "Well, where's the pleasure of being in a crowd if one mayn't shove?" "To sit on a stile and eat pancake edges," was the plowboy's definition of perfect happiness. There is a refined sybaritism in this aspiration—to eat only the crisp edges of the pancakes, casting away the tougher middles, is an idea worthy of the "peacock tongues" banquet of a Lucullus. Is it not a true definition of the general idea of "enough," as given by a boy regarding "enough' cake, "always a little more than I've got?"—London Standard.

Few Perfect Models.

The story of the girls of Greece combining to supply Praxiteles with composite perfection in a model is probably one of those historical figments which we abandon with regret, but in artistic circles a girl who undertook to pose for the whole figure as well as the face would be classed with the witness who, in reply to Mr. Jaggery's question—what could he testify to?—replied, "Most anythink, sir."—Washington News.

THOUSANDS AT DINNER.

Unique Picture to Be Seen Any Summer Day In Chicago's Lumber District.

Seven thousand persons at dinner is one of the sights to be witnessed daily at Chicago. One may find this mammoth picnic in progress any working day during the navigation season in the great lumber section lying along Twenty-second street from Halsted to Western avenue. This is the seat of the lumber trade of the country. No city in the United States can produce its equal. The territory covered by this industry is about three miles long by from a half to three-quarters of a mile wide. There are other sections of the city, notably on the North branch, where much lumber is stored, yet the southwestern district is the main lumber region of Chicago. This territory contains about 100 yards, there being some 50 on the North branch. Nearly 20,000 men are employed in the southwestern lumber yards during the summer. They are mostly of the Scandinavian races and Poles. A few Germans and Irishmen are among them, but no colored men are to be found.

At 11:30 a. m. every day the women and children begin to flock into the lumber district bearing the husband's and father's midday luncheon. With hardly an exception those who bear the luncheon bring also a bucket of beer with them.

When the noon whistle blows at the planing mills, Twenty-second street, which is usually a very quiet thoroughfare in this neighborhood, becomes one of the most populous avenues in the city. From every street, alleyway or side track passage emerge the lumber handlers. At the outer edge of the yards they are met by their wives and frequently two or three children. Then the family picks a pile of boards and in a jiffy is at dinner, the bucket of beer occupying the center of the group.

Lunch over, the men enjoy a social half hour with their families, improving the occasion to smoke, as the practice is not permitted in the yards. When the 1 o'clock whistle sounds, the great throng melts away as if by magic.

These lumber hands earn from $1.25 to $1.75 a day, and from such earnings some of them save enough to buy comfortable homes, though the majority of them live from hand to mouth. Nearly 1,000,000,000 feet of pine lumber alone is handled in Chicago every year, exclusive of the large trade in hard lumber.—Chicago Tribune.

Lady Holland's Dinners.

It may not be amiss to mention that the excellence of Lady Holland's dinners owed very much to the contributions which she exacted from guests who resided in places that enjoyed any reputation for venison, poultry, game and other edibles. Somebody having lauded the mouton des Ardennes at her table in the presence of M. Van de Weyer, her ladyship gave him a commission to purchase her some. He sent an order for half a sheep, which was left at the foreign office in Brussels, directed to him and inscribed with the words tres-presse. The clerks, supposing that it was a bundle of dispatches, sent it off by the hands of a special messenger. Tidings of this occurrence having been spread far and near, M. Van de Weyer was much derided in the Belgian press for his epicurean tastes.—Gentleman's Magazine.

A Suspicious Character.

They had just come from the baseball grounds, and they were engaged in an animated discussion of the game. A stranger came toward them, and although they slackened their pace he passed on without saying a word. One of them stopped the policeman on the corner and said:

"Did you see the feller that just went along here?"

"Yes."

"Well, you'd better keep your eye on him. There's something wrong about him. He's a suspicious character—maybe he escaped from an insane asylum."

"What makes you think so?"

"He saw us comin out of the ball grounds and never asked us what the score was."—Washington Star.

An inquiry directed to 29 small cities from Maine to Texas, having their electric street lamps provided and maintained by private corporations, shows that the average annual cost per lamp to the cities is $106.01. A similar inquiry directed to 28 small cities that own and run their own electric street lamps shows that the average annual cost per lamp to those cities is $63.04. In the latter case several of the cities obtain considerable income from lamps supplied to private persons.—New York Sun.

Extortion In Russian Villages.

One morning sleighbells jingled in our village. A police captain and lieutenant drove in with a dead body covered up on a sleigh. They called for the village elder.

"Ivan Ivanovitch," said the captain, eying the crowd of trembling peasants, "a terrible crime has been committed close to the land of your village."

"In God's name, what?" asked the old man.

"See for yourself." The captain drew off the cover and exposed the mutilated body. "Your village is responsible for this murder. There must be a commission sent here to investigate the matter."

"Anything but that," begged the elder, stroking and kissing the captain's coat. He knew that such a commission meant ruinous fines, to say nothing of floggings for every witness.

The peasants with one voice joined in the appeal, "Anything but a judicial inquiry!"

"Well, but the matter is serious. It will cost me a lot of money to prevent a commission coming," said the captain.

After some haggling the wretched peasants, suffering for want of sufficient food or good shelter, clubbed together and paid 75 rubles.

The captain and lieutenant climbed into the sleigh once more and drove away with the corpse to the next village. Here they repeated the same performance, and as long as the cold weather lasted that corpse represented at least 50 rubles extorted from every village it visited.—Poultney Bigelow.

Going to the Theater.

A tall, broad shouldered westerner witnessed the performances at the Star theater on Monday and Tuesday nights. Wednesday evening he was at the ticket office again.

"What's the price?" he asked.

"Same as last night," replied the treasurer, who recognized the man.

"I ain't in the Star theater again, am I?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then I've made a mistake. I want to see some of the other shows."

The stranger walked out of the house, down Broadway and turned into Thirteenth street. He noticed a crowd around the entrance to a theater and bought a ticket for 25 cents. He went up to the top gallery; then he swore.

For the third time he was in the Star theater. He rushed down to the gallery ticket office and explained that he didn't know that every door in the city led to the same show. The ticket seller said he could do nothing.

"You don't have to," snapped the man. "I'll get even with you."

"How?"

"I'll just tear up the ticket and won't use it at all."—New York Evening Sun.

A Queer Death Superstition.

A curious relic of the superstitious ideas of the middle ages still exists in many parts of England—the notion that when the death of a person is imminent the fastenings of the door of the death chamber or of the other rooms of the house hinder the departure of the soul from the body, thus making final dissolution doubly painful.

A gentleman writing some 40 years ago for a collection of antiquarian papers states that when he was curator at Exeter he had a call to the deathbed of one of his parishioners. Upon arriving there, the wife of the patient told the minister that she had expected her husband to die during the previous night and on that account had left the doors all open or unlocked. Upon asking for reasons for this odd proceeding he was told of the neighborhood superstition.—St. Louis Republic.

Romantic French Poets.

The romantic French poets of the early part of the present century never saw anything as it actually was, but on the contrary looked at all things under a glamour of unreality.

One evening Alfred de Musset, one of this romantic band, was walking in a park near Paris with another of the fraternity, who suddenly exclaimed, pointing to a bright object on the ground:

"See, Alfred, a star on the ground!"

It was a glowworm, but De Musset answered:

"So it is! It is well. I will light my cigar with it!"

It was worthy of a romantic poet to wish to light his cigar with a star, but in this case romance was one thing and reality another. The star refused to work as a "light."—Youth's Companion.