Famine.

I am the skeleton in every nation's closet. I hide myself in the dark recesses behind the silent uniforms swaying in the dark. While the guests make merry and the householders ply them with viands at the friendly board I bide my time.

But when the alarms sound and the guests go out to kill, then I start forth in the gray shadows of early morning. With my thin wand I touch the cornfields and watch them wither.

And as the sun shines on battlefields my day of triumph comes. No longer afraid to show my hollow face, I stalk through village and city, laying my rattling hands on mother and wife and babe.

My comrade, War, true to his eternal promise, has given me the entry to all societies.—Life.

Broad Humor.

"French humor is a little too broad for us, and when it isn't too broad it is apt to be disgusting."

The speaker was Miss Gladys Unger, who has adapted so many French plays. She continued:

"A Frenchman told me a joke the other day. He said two rustic sweethearts were walking out together. The girl remarked:

"'I like you very well, Gaston, all except those letters G. S. tattooed on your hand.'

"'But,' said Gaston hotly, 'don't you know, my dear, that it's the latest style to have your initials on your handkerchief?'" — Chicago Record-Herald.

By Way of Inducement.

A certain youngster in Washington was one day suffering greatly by reason of an aching tooth. His mother was endeavoring to calm him against the necessary visit to the dentist.

"You'll have it out, won't you, dearie?" the mother pleaded. "It won't hurt much, and then the ache will all be over."

But then the unhappy child began to howl with pain. His brother, a year older, was likewise distressed, and added his pleadings to those of the mother.

"Do have it out, dear," repeated the mother.

"Yes, Dick, have it out," added the brother. "It will be one less to clean, you know."—Lippincott's Magazine.

Important Precaution.

"Are you mixed up in this disturbance?" asked the policeman.

"No," replied the law-abiding citizen. "I'm neutral."

"Then why do you want to talk to me?"

"I want my neutrality definitely understood. I don't desire to take a chance on what sometimes happens to the innocent bystander."—Washington Star.

Point of View.

Mrs. Deere—How modestly she dresses and how sensibly!

Mrs. Sneere—Yes; that woman will do anything to attract attention!

BLACK BOX HOODOO

Camera May Not Have Unlocked the Trouble, But It Got All the Blame.

By H. M. LOME.

Mr. Ben Blanchard was a small, chubby man, baby-stare eyes and an infantile smile. He called himself a community promoter. This, as must be admitted, was a more taking title than that of land boomer, especially when much of the land so boomed was productive of little else than sandburs, sage-brush, cacti, jack-rabbits, and a fair sprinkling of rattlesnakes.

That is by the way, however. If you make inquiries among his eastern friends—especially in Montague street, Brooklyn—you will gather some picturesque estimates of M. Blanchard's business abilities. Financial persons of Brooklyn pride themselves on being possessed of a certain Yankee shrewdness which steers them clear of the wiles of the average schemer.

Apart from that, no man is considered reliable until he has been properly introduced by an old Brooklynite. This once done, he is established in their confidence.

Now, Ben Blanchard managed to make his entry into Montague street under the auspices of a certain Brooklynite of ancient and honorable lineage. Through the introduction thus afforded him, the community promoter made a number of acquaintances of a highly beneficial sort.

Among the communities which Blanchard had brought into being were a couple in western Kansas. At various points farther west he was in touch with other promoters to whom he introduced "good things" from the East, receiving in return a percentage of the ensuing plunder.

Once a year he was accustomed to issue invitations for a western trip to the rich and "easy" people whom he met in the East. The junket was done in fine style. A special car with attendants was provided, the food was excellent, at Topeka and the stopping places beyond, the local boards of trade did honor to the distinguished visitors, and so did the local newspapers to the extent of many columns.

During the very last trip engineered by Blanchard I acted as "historian"—to use the Blanchardian term. In reality, I was his press agent. Thus it was that he happened to have a certain experience with railroad superstition.

The party, after visiting Denver and Manitou, was on its way east. At Pueblo, one afternoon, there was a change of engines, and, as it subsequently turned out, the engineer had orders to "let her lick" across the prairie so as to show the eastern gentry that there was nothing slow about that particular section.

An old-time 'dobe house, not far from the depot had excited the interest of some of the party, and while awaiting their return the writer walked up the platform, carrying a kodak of goodly proportions. Jim Dell, the engineer—tall, lank, and sunburnt to the hue of an Indian—was just getting into the cab. His fireman followed, wiping his fingers on a clout of greasy waste. The camera was made ready for action.

Dell wheeled sharply as the bellows-catch of the camera clicked. Then he frowned at the instrument and its owner.

"You're sure thinkin' of gettin' a picture of this here machine?"

I said that was my plan.

"And of me and my pardner?"

I nodded.

"Well, I'm saying this, I am. The machine can't get away from you, I s'pose. But I'll be durned if you get my face or Bill's inside the contraption. Why? For reasons—good reasons! I've never had my picture took by one of them black boxes that was owned by a passenger but what trouble of several sorts followed. Ain't that the truth, Bill?"

Bill grunted assent.

Then the pair clambered hastily into the cab, and even as they did so the bulb was pressed, and a good negative of two greasy rear-facades was secured.

Dell followed instructions in the matter of speed, as a roaring, swirling wake of dust and dried cactus attested. But the going was too good to last.

Whether the hoodoo in the "black box" bestirred itself, or whether Bill got too busy with the fire shovel, the narrator knoweth not. The fact remains, however, that less than fifty miles from the starting point the engine and the car came to a jagged halt.

As the camera registered a record of the wreck, Jim and his helper cursed eastern dudes whose hoodoos worked mischief with western locomotives.

It was three hours before Pueblo furnished another engine that, even to the lay eye, looked grouchy and superannuated.

"It's that confounded old highbinder, No. 5," Jim was heard to mutter as the fresh engine wheezed into sight over a roll of the prairie. "Hear the durned bron-i-cal lungs of her."

Anyhow, No. 5 was coupled up, and Jim and his helper proceeded to throw it into her for all that they were worth, and a trifle more than she was. Thirty miles had not been covered, when the car seemed to turn itself into an aeroplane for a sickening second or so, came back down on the rails with a spine jarring thud, and then stopped with a suddenness that threw people and things in unstudied heaps throughout its length. Luckily the camera was unhurt.

Naturally everybody made for the doors. A few left by the windows. The cause of the unscheduled stop was plain. No. 5 had snapped her driving-rod near the middle, and it had smashed the cab to fragments. Bill and Jim had apparently vanished into thin air. The wreck was striking, and even picturesque, so the camera was made ready.

Then we were all made conscious of a gaunt, black and blood-covered apparition arising from a nearby clump of sagebrush, swearing horribly, and picking burs from out its cheeks and hands. It was Jim disguised in his gore and the grime of the accident. He lifted up his voice and yelled.

"What did I tell you about that black box? I tell ye all," went on Jim, addressing the tourists collectively in a roar, "if that there box has a berth on the car ag'in I don't drive no engine in front of it!"

"You hear him," snortingly supplemented Bill, who now appeared from the other side of the engine. He had evidently fallen face downward into a clump of cacti, and the spines in his nose and lips made him speak snuffingly.

"And," added Bill, shooting a malevolent glance at the camera owner, "if I had my way, there'd be a certain fool party left behind on the prairie in company with his fool machine."

It took much persuasion, argument, cajolery and entreaty before Jim gave consent for the camera to travel behind him, and when he left us at South Hutchinson, Kan., he wore an evident look of relief.

But that was not the whole or the end of the hoodoo. On the way to Kansas City one of the party let a valuable gold watch slide out of an open window. At St. Louis it was discovered that a flange of the car wheel had suddenly worn as thin as cardboard, and that a bad accident had been narrowly averted.

Before this, when on the home-stretch between Buffalo and New York, Blanchard arose and, addressing the party, expressed his gratification at meeting so many men of congenial disposition and sterling worth; and, in order to commemorate the occasion, he was going to do his good, his ever dear friends a small service, etc., etc. He was going to let them in on a little deal which he had intended to keep all to himself, but which, on second thought, he had determined to share with those whose friendship he had learned to, etc., etc. Every man bit.

Six months later I met a member of the party on Broadway.

"Say," said he, "have you still got that camera of yours?"

"Yes, why?"

"Oh, nothing. But I begin to believe in Jim and his superstitions. Maybe if the camera hadn't brought bad luck on board, myself and the other idiots wouldn't have lost large sums to Blanchard."

Vivisection.

The growth of vivisection is indicated in a White paper just issued. The total number of experiments on living animals in 1913 in England was 88,158 or 4,559 more than in 1912. Of these 81,809 consisted of inoculating by hypodermic injections, and some few other proceedings performed without anesthetics. Only 2,939 were of such a nature that they came under the licensing provision of the act, which stipulates that the animal must be kept under an anesthetic during the whole of the experiment, and must, if the pain is likely to continue after its effect has ceased, or if any serious injury has been inflicted on the animal, be killed before it recovers from the influence of the anesthetic. As many as 26,269 experiments were performed by 32 licenses, working at ten institutions, in the course of cancer investigations, most of them being inoculations into mice. The total number of licenses was 638. Several irregularities by individuals are recorded but in no case has the license been rescinded.

Defeat That Was Victory.

One hundred years ago the celebrated American privateer "General Armstrong," in command of Capt. Samuel C. Reid, ran the blockade of British warships off Sandy Hook and put to sea on what was destined to be her last voyage. The ship arrived at the island of Fayal, in the Azores, and soon afterward three British warships entered the bay. After a fruitless effort to escape, Captain Reid cleared his decks for action. The British made three attacks on the "General Armstrong" in small boats, and each time were beaten off with heavy loss. Finally the British vessels closed in and began a heavy fire. Finding further resistance against such overwhelming odds futile, Captain Reid set a fuse to his magazine and with his crew safely got ashore. This battle was the last naval engagement of the war of 1812. In the action the British lost 350 in killed and wounded, while the American loss was but two killed and seven wounded.

Observed of All Observers.

The Friend—They tell me your son is attracting a good deal of attention.

The Enthusiastic Father—I should say he is! Have you seen him? There's nothing lacking. He's got 'em all—linen suit, cane, wrist watch and white socks.

Is That So?

"Isn't it pretty tough to be as old as you are?" we asked the centenarian.

"Should say not," was the reply. "Why every insurance agent in town dodges me."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

BEAR QUEERLY BUILT

EXPERT TELLS ABOUT STRUCTURE OF THE ANIMAL.

Nature Evidently Had Distinct Idea in Mind When It Produced Bruin in Such a Radical Form.

"I was long curious to know," said a Pike county, Pennsylvania, bear expert, "why it was that the bear has that peculiarly clumsy and apparently painful gait, but I never found any one who could give me a satisfactory explanation of it, so I went out and killed a bear to find out for myself. The reason was a very simple one.

"I found, in the first place, that the bear has no clavicles in the shoulder to keep the shoulder bones steadily apart, as is usual in animals, and consequently when the bear moves his forelegs the shoulder blades work or slide loosely on the sides.

"Then, again, the bear has the ankle joints of his hind legs plumb on the ground, or rather as parts of the hind feet. That peculiar structure gives the first joint of the hind legs a bend in the opposite direction from that which it has in the legs of other animals.

"This loose and queer rigging of the joints of the legs and shoulders of the bear gives him that odd wabble or shuffle with which he makes his way along, although clumsy and retarding as that gait appears, it can produce a speed and agility on occasion that is surprising. The broad base which the foot of the bear forms, moreover, gives the animal a steady and secure footing, no matter what the appearance may be to the contrary.

"The unique position of the hind ankle joints as to the formation of the hind feet is what enables the bear to rise to his feet with such facility, and to maintain a secure position standing erect, while he uses his forepaws in grasping or striking with his well-known readiness and effectiveness.

"The absence of clavicles in the shoulders is what gives the bear the great hugging or compressing power in his forelegs, which is of the greatest service to him in climbing and in dealing with his foes. In fact, if he had the shoulder formation characteristic of other animals he could not climb a tree at all, for he could not accomplish it by his claws as the cat and squirrel and raccoon and other animals of arboreal habit do, nor would the bear dog need to stand in fear of that terrible embrace of his."

Infantry Decides the Battle.

While there have been many discussions as to the relative value of the different branches of an army there is little doubt, according to a writer in the Scientific American, that it is the infantry that wins battles.

While it is probable the success of a battle will depend to a large extent on the support of the field artillery, it is certain that the principal and most important arm is the infantry, which in practically every case must decide the final issue. The cavalry may be the first to be drawn into a battle, and the artillery may destroy the enemy's artillery, but a battle is never won until the infantry has driven back the enemy's lines.

The usual mode of advancing for the infantry is to deploy them in a line with a long interval between each soldier. This, naturally, is for the purpose of offering a smaller target for the enemy, but makes it more difficult, however, for the leaders to keep as good control over the men, and for that reason one of the objects of field artillery is to make the enemy's troops deploy early.

The infantry soldier is armed in all the countries with a rifle and bayonet. The rifle is the weapon upon which reliance is placed, the bayonet being used only as a last means, when in a hand-to-hand encounter with the enemy.

No Loafing Allowed.

A well-known theatrical manager, more famous, if possible for the "breaks" he made than for his many successes, attending the rehearsal of one of his plays, noticed that a man in the audience who had to play the trombone was holding the instrument in front of him and doing nothing.

Mr. Stetson at once called him to account.

"Say," said he, "what do you mean by not working along with the other fellows?"

"Why, Mr. Stetson," said the musician, "I can't play; I have 19 bars rest."

"Not on your life!" replied the angry manager. "I don't pay anyone for resting. Either you play when the other fellows do, or you clear out. See?"

No Game for Her.

Mollie—I think billiards is an awfully foolish game.

Chollie—But you forget that the balls kiss and the players sometimes hug the cushion.

"But just imagine a person wasting time on a game where only billiard balls kiss and all that the players sometimes hug is a cushion!"

Two Souls With But, Etc.

Two egotists met and made much over each other.

As they turned away, each murmured softly to himself:

"Poor deluded soul! It's all I can do to tolerate that fellow, but what can I do? It's absolutely pathetic the way he clings to me!"

WIT and HUMOR

NOT QUALIFIED AS MUSICIAN

Sambo Declined Place on Band Because He Couldn't Even Carry a Tune on a Mouth Organ.

The conversation in the lobby of a Washington hotel the other night turned to charitable work, when Congressman William P. Borland of Missouri was reminded of an incident along that line.

Some time ago Sambo Smith was watching the development of a watermelon vine in his garden on the outskirts of a southern city, when the esteemed Washington Snow rambled down the road and became a part of the immediate scenery.

"Mistah Smith," began the esteemed Snow, trailing his way across the garden, "I hab come to see yo' on some 'ponhtant bizness."

"Yes, sah," agreeably answered Sambo. "What kin I do fo' yo', Mistah Snow?"

"We am gittin' up a mission band, Mistah Smith," impressively replied the other, "an' we would like yo' ter jine."

"Say, Mistah Snow," broadly smiled Sambo, "yo' make me laugh like great happiness! Yo' know berry well dat I kain't eben carry a tune on a mauf organ."—Philadelphia Telegraph.

Dying, Egypt, Dying.

"Cleopatra, my Egyptian deity, why is the local train from Rome to Cairo like a poor baseball league?"

"Antony, my easy Mark, I confess I know not!"

"Ah, Cleo, the local train from Rome to Cairo is like a poor baseball league because, Cleo, because of its many short stops!"

Fanfare. Bus. Cleopatra reaches for favorite asp.—Harvard Lampoon.

Not Worth Mentioning.

Snooker (fiercely)—Your fowls have been over the wall and scratched my garden.

Chanks (coolly)—Well, there's nothing extraordinary in that. It's their nature to scratch. Now, if your garden were to come over the wall and scratch my fowls, it would be extraordinary, and something worth communicating.—Pearson's Weekly.

What Next?

The following overheard on the subway, is offered to our readers without prejudice:

"The women are now importuning President Wilson to establish a woman's independence day. Great Caesar! Are they never satisfied? They already have 365 such days."—New York Post.

Financial Finesse.

"Has Burroughs paid you that $5 he owes you?"

"Yes; and say, that fellow is a born financier."

"What do you mean?"

"He paid the $5 in the morning and established confidence to such a degree that he borrowed ten that afternoon."

WORKS BOTH WAYS.

Wiggs—Courtesy helps business.

Woggs—Yes, and good business makes a man feel a heap more polite, too.

How It Happened.

"How did the accident happen?" asked the sympathetic friend.

"Well, I'll tell you," replied the man on crutches. "The automobile was going pretty fast and all of a sudden we struck a wet place on the asphalt and there was a noise and the doctor said: "He'll be able to be around in about four weeks."

No Consistency.

"I don't understand George," said the bride.

"How so?"

"He told me to sweeten his coffee with a smile, which I did. And then he wept and put in two lumps of sugar, anyhow."

The Successful Brood Mare.

Sloping shoulders and sloping pasterns, associated with straight, well-set, strongly muscled legs and dense, tough feet are extremely essential to longevity or hard service. The back should be comparatively straight, strong, short, closely coupled, well muscled and support a deep chest of medium width, good deep ribs and flank. The rump should carry width to the tail, which should set fairly high. The hind legs of the horse should be set well under the body. Strong hocks, well-set and sloping pasterns are of great value. True, level action with good style is essential in all good horses.—Breeder and Sportsman.

Gone, But Not Forgotten.

William had not been in the other world long when George wooed and won the promise of his widow.

"Do you love me, sweetheart?" asked George.

"Yes, dear," cooed the widow.

"Better than anybody on earth?" persisted he, after the foolish manner of lovers.

"Yes," she answered, "better than any one on earth; but, George, don't ask me about heaven."—Judge.

Week-End in the Village.

The Tourist (spending a week-end in the village, to the oldest inhabitant)—Well, I don't know what you do here. It's certainly the most dead-and-alive show I was ever in. The Oldest Inhabitant—Ah, 'e ought to wait till next week, zur, an' see how the place 'ull be stirred up then. The Tourist—Why, what's on next week? The Oldest Inhabitant—Plowin'.—London Sketch.

Great Invention.

"I reckon," said Farmer Corntossel, "as how mebbe barbed-wire ought to be counted as one of the most useful inventions of the age."

"For what reason?"

"When there's a lot o' work to be done, barbed-wire makes it impossible fur a feller to sit on the fence an' look on."—Washington Star.

The Waning Honeymoon.

"Terrible scene at my house today," said Mr. Nuwed. "My wife says I don't love her any longer."

"And married only two months. How's that?"

"Because instead of my usual roses I took home a nice head of cabbage."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

A Good Time To Begin.

Nod—Here's a doctor who says you can get into the habit of not sleeping without physical harm.

Todd—That's an idea. When is the best time to begin?

Nod—I'm going to try it while my wife is away for the summer.—Life.

Her First Pie.

Mrs. McBride—Oh, John, don't cut your pie with a knife.

McBride—Huh! You ought to be thankful that I don't call for a can-opener.—Boston Transcript.