Little Lessons from the School of Experience.

SOME PESTS THAT I HAVE KNOWN

BY JIM NASIUM.

I DON'T suppose there is a man living who hasn't at some time wished that the laws of heaven and earth would go out of business just long enough to allow him to seize some murderous weapon and render the world a lasting service by losing it so effectually among the vital organs of the particular pest who happens to be on the job at that psychological moment, that the coroner couldn't find it with a search warrant. I am not of a naturally bloodthirsty disposition, but how often, oh how often have I envied the desperado his reckless contempt for the law. I am inclined to be thoughtful in regard to the consequences of any act which I am about to commit, and this trait in my character has frequently prevented me from taking a job off the fool-killers' hands. I have been brought up in a Christian-like spirit to obey the sixth commandment, yet I recognize certain extenuating circumstances which puts the sixth commandment on the blink for the time being. But I am always fearful lest the law and I do not see these extenuating circumstances in the same light.

And so it is that when I am deep in communion with the muse fishing for the pearls of thought which render it possible for me to look the landlord in the face without blushing, and some cheerful idiot blows in and reclines on my typewriter while he reels off about five miles of stale vaudeville jokes for my amusement and edification, so it is that just when I am reaching for the paper weight or the filtered water bottle the specter of the law comes up before me and his life is spared. But some of these days one of these pests is going to go a little bit too far, and the coroner will come in and hold an inquest over a grease spot on my office linoleum. Then the clutches of the law will grip me and I will go to the New Jerusalem through a trap door, with a piece of hemp rope to keep my feet from trailing in the dust. But the fear of death will not be upon me. I will go gladly. Nay, even hilariously. I will hum a merry little ditty of joy and gladness as the black cap is adjusted, and I will be launched into Eternity singing, "ain't it funny when you feel that way." For my life's ambition will be gratified, and I will know that I have not lived in vain.

The pest is of a wide variety of species, existing in both animal and insect life. Various poisons and ingenious contraptions have been invented from time to time which with the proper patience will afford some relief from the insect pest and also from certain species of the animal pest. But the species of pest which masquerades in human clothes is protected by law, and inventive genius has not yet turned out an instrument of destruction which will create much of a mortality in his ranks and at the same time evade the law. But I am preparing a bill to present to the game commission which will allow an open season during which gunning for pests will be lawful, and considerable sport and an infinite amount of satisfaction may result.

If this bill of mine passes I will take

LEANS ON MY TYPEWRITER AND REELS OFF ABOUT FIVE MILES OF STALE VAUDEVILLE JOKES.

my vacation each year during this open season, and I will purchase an arsenal of blunderbusses and a supply of giant powder and slugs and dynamite bombs and pitch my camp on the trail of the pernicious pest. And the frightful mortality which I will create in his ranks will make the extermination of the buffalo look like the puny efforts of a pea shooter.

Probably the first pest I will go after is the one whose special field of activity is the barber shop, and whose most prominent trait seems to be to get you in the barber chair and inquire into your family history, and when you open your mouth to reply he chokes you with the lather brush. Then he leans across the bridge of your nose while he mentally debates whether to cut off your head and let it fall back over the head rest or to strangle you with a Turkish towel. After deciding on a slower and more painful death in order to prolong his pleasure, he invariably cuts a wart off your chin and drops it into the cuspidore while distracting your attention with happy selections from Joe Miller's joke book.

My face is not of the rotund aldermanic proportions which makes easy riding for the razor, and the ramifications of canyons and mesas on its surface may not be picturesque in the extreme. But it is the only face I have and I am very much attached to it, so I prefer rather to keep it in its present condition than to have some low comedian running his cheese knife through the epidermis and levelling off the high places, even if he does enjoy my look of pleasant surprise at the operation.

After my complexion has been peeled down so that a spirit level wouldn't shy much on its surface, this fiend usually gives his pet flies a chance to feast on my gore while he tells me about the famous men he has shaved. Then he takes pity on me and decides to end my suffering by drowning me in bay rum. When he has combed my hair to look like a trapese performer or a slack rope artist, he appears surprised and pained that I am able to crawl out of the chair and move around in a vain search for my wearing apparel.

I have been vainly trying to dodge this tonsorial pest ever since that halcyon day when I discovered a wee lone pin feather struggling for publicity on my upper lip. The only time I have met with any success to speak of in this respect was the other day when I entered a barber shop just as a customer was leaving the chair. I abruptly turned to leave the shop when the barber said, "You're next." I said, "You bet I'm next since I saw that fellow's face." That was the narrowest escape I ever had. But I am going to quit exercising patience and forbearance in my dealings with this pest with the petrified nerve. Too much exercise results in overdevelopment, and I find that my patience and forbearance is getting topheavy. Some of these evenings when the janitor goes down into the basement dissecting parlor to sweep up the hair and amputated features, he is going to find this fellow with about six inches of an ax handle extending from his cerebellum out into the gathering gloom. Then the world will know that I have stood for his familiarity with my features and his anxiety concerning my family affairs just as long as I am going to. Sic semper tyrannis.

The man who has never been a famous humorist and had the great throbbing world waiting with bated breath for his next utterance while they are still laughing into hysterics over his last, probably hasn't had much experience with the pest who drops into your sanctum with a copy of a paper and generously reads your own jokes to you while he laughs till the tears run down and convert his collar into a dishrag. Then he explains each one to you so that you will know that he is brilliant enough to see the point and is not groping through the world in utter ignorance. Of course, I can't blame the world for throwing a few convulsions at my chaste and irrepressible humor, but it does pain me somewhat to have them carry it into my office and double up over my desk while

WHEN YOU OPEN YOUR MOUTH TO REPLY HE CHOKES YOU WITH THE LATHER BRUSH.

they tie their diaphragm into a knot with mirth over my most touching pathos which I intended for solemn thought, and then tell me how great it is and ask me for the loan of a dollar till next pay day.

I always cheerfully give them the dollar, because it is inspiring and encouraging to know that you are appreciated in the way that only the man who wants to borrow a dollar can appreciate. Then it is so all-fired lucky when the boss comes in to fire me to have him find my office full of fellows who are rolling around over the floor and gasping for breath at the excruciatingly funny jokes which I write. He always changes his mind and lets me hold down the job for another week, and he even speaks to me for a few days when we happen to meet. I have got now that when a man comes up and stands on my toes and laughs at some of my witty sayings, I never wait for him to ask me for the loan of a dollar. I dig it out of my jeans and hand it to him before he has worked up to that point and take the suspense off his mind.

I sometimes feel an impulse to grab these pests while they are helpless with mirth and drop them down the elevator shaft, but when I ponder on the result of such an act I always restrain myself. I think of what my wife and family would do if I were to kill off that section of the public that has a motive in reading the new laid gems of thought that brings to them the little manila envelope each week. And when I think that if I committed this overt act perhaps some day the boss would come in to fire me and there would be nobody in my office who wanted to borrow a dollar, and that I would have to go back to unloading steel billets for which task I am no longer physically fit, my hand is stayed. But the appreciative cuss I am going to splatter around in such a manner that they will have to collect his remains with a blotter, is the pest who thinks that I am groping along in utter ignorance of the bushels of jokes that are being poured into the world over the footlights and through the comic weeklies, and who thinks that he is conferring a great favor and helping along the fruition of my life's ambition by coming in each day and telling me the good ones he has heard and explaining to me how I can use them. Some morning the daughter of Daniel O'Connel, who swabs out my office, is going to find a wisp of hair, a section of suspender and a handful of freckles and she'll wonder if I've become dudish and been renovating my manly beauty. But it will be what there is left of that compendium of humorous information after I get through with him.

It is astonishing the amount of information and general knowledge possessed by the pest. His extreme generosity in handing it out the public does not diminish the supply in the least. In fact, he appears to expand and broaden out as he casts his bread upon the waters, and it is returned a hundred fold with compound interest and a rake off thrown in until he apparently has the whole knowledge market cornered and holds a first mortgage on the original fountain. Contrary to the practice of the financier who happens to have gobbled up everything on the market from wooden legs to railroads, he does not use his power in "restraint of trade." So that the Sherman anti-trust law does not apply to his case. No, he goes out into the highways and byways and cheerfully and ungrudgingly takes up the burden of enlightening the world. If he only stuck to the highways and byways it wouldn't be so bad either, because we could duck him by cutting cross lots. But when he comes into your office and sticks his finger into your ink well to draw plans on the wall paper so that your ignorant and unsophisticated mind will grasp the drift of what he is talking about, then it is high time that he be legislated out of business with a pick handle.

We meet him on the trolley cars, in the hotel lobbies, in the saloon, at the theater, and if he is not at the bat he is always on deck. When you plunk down two hard-earned dollars for a night's enjoyment at the theater you frequently find him occupying a seat next to you, or immediately behind you, from which point of vantage he will lean on your clean white collar and chloroform you with "baited" breath, which he baits between the acts, while he generously and boisterously explains the play to you so you will not grope blindly through the production wondering what it all means. Then he invariably inserts his thumb between your fifth and sixth ribs when a pun is produced on the stage. So that you will understand that it is meant for a joke. The worst of it is that the surrounding audience thinks he is a friend of yours and wonders why the ushers don't put you both out.

In addition to this feature of your night's entertainment, when you came to the box office to purchase your tickets you have probably found that species of the pest that is always present on such occasions. I mean the woman who squeezes in at the front end of the line and camps in front of the box office window while she inquires into the relative merits of the balcony, the parquet and the dress circle, the comparative prices, etc. Then she gives a detailed and extended biography of the different members of her party, and explains to the box office man about her aged aunt, who is slightly deaf and near-sighted and could neither see nor hear very well from the balcony, but she don't like the orchestra seats very well on account of being so close that the paint and powder on the faces of the actresses show up too plain. She gives him a list of the different theaters she has attended and how well she liked certain seats, and explains to him that she doesn't like the end seats on account of people shoving in and out past her, and she doesn't like the center seats on account of getting in and out herself. Then she has him explain the performance to her, so she will know whether it is worth going to or not, and finally compromises by taking the cheapest seats in the house, so that if it isn't worth much she won't be out so much. Then she opens up a handbag and removes a quantity of lace, writing material and wearing apparel which she stacks up on the window ledge while she hunts for her money. After she has paid for her tickets everybody in the line heaves a sigh of relief, but she has to wait to count her change because the sign above the window says to examine change before leaving window, then she has the box office man count it over for her and explain how it is that she hasn't got more coming to her.

When you finally get your tickets you have missed the first act, but the pest who is waiting for you inside generously tells you all about it while the second act is going on, so that you succeed in missing it as well, and when the show is over you crawl into your overcoat and make your escape to the nearest saloon to drown your sorrow and get what little enjoyment out of the evening that there is yet time for before the closing hour, and there you bump into another pest, who comes and stands on your patent leather shoes and blows rings from a royal cabbage leaf cigar into your face, flavored with the odor of second-hand whisky. You become so intoxicated with joy or something else at this that the barkeep refuses to recognize you any further, and you take a car for home with murder in your heart.

When you join the after-theater crowd homeward bound on the trolley car, you are not in the mood for entertaining any more pests. But he is there all right, and when he approaches you on the back platform of the crowded car and uses the lapel of your coat for a straphanger and pushes the end of a burnt-out cigar into your eye at every lurch, you promptly double his stomach over the controller box and jam his head through the window while you lynch him with the trolley rope. It is then that you begin to get the first real enjoyment that you have had during the entire evening. You giggle in childish glee as his complexion begins to take on an Alice Blue tinge from the effects of the trolley rope, and when his tongue goes out into an adjacent street and wraps around a lamp-post your joy is unconfined. You post your forfeit at the police station and go home thinking that after all your evening has not been barren of pleasure, and mentally resolving to blow all your spare cash in police forfeits and fines purchasing more pleasure of the same brand.

How to Become a Successful Palmist.

Full Instructions for Amateur Work; Also for Fleecing a Gullible Public

By LEONE CASS BAER,
With Her Own Illustrations.

I HAVE recently taken up the subject of palmistry (hands—not trees). It is quite fashionable now as a fad, and since it requires neither common sense nor actual cleverness, there are a lot of us who can enter the graduating class without examination.

For the benefit of those aspiring to this hand-holding game a few general hints may not be amiss. If you are of the feminine persuasion (I accept your correction, John Henry; persuasion is not an apt word to use in reference to a woman). Well, as I said, if you are of the feminine brand and are going in for palmistry, either for pastime or plunder, you must first invest in a clingy-clinging Olga Leathersole gown of indescribable hues all run together like some of the cute amateur water colors at the Art Institute. Wear with it one of those wide, deep girdles like you see on the leading lady when she receives the villain in her boudoir. I've never seen these girdles elsewhere than on pictures of the Sultan's wives, leading ladies, fortune-tellers and millionairesses. Maybe the shops don't carry them. If they do not, you can compromise with a red sash and a jeweled stomacher; with all sorts of appurtenances to clink and rattle whenever you move about.

Wear your hair like a poster girl, weight your unmanicured fingers with rings, and your arms with bracelets, put on a pint of powder and two bits' worth of cheap perfume, and you are nearly a palmist. All you lack is experience.

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If you are a man, you won't go in for it to make a living; no honest man could. Robbing a bank or sandbagging is honorable in comparison.

But if you go in at all to be a palmist, you must wear a white vest, a Gibson girl stickpin and drape your watch chain across your equator.

You must smell strongly of bay rum and use a quill toothpick with a gold handle. Unless you can afford such luxuries, you may as well give up all idea of becoming a palmist.

Fix up your room like a dentist's reception room or a rest room of the O. W. P. Railway Company; pile your books around on the tables, try to look intelligent, and that is all the stock you need.

If you intend to use it as a means of livelihood, judicious advertising will help. The people will flock to you.

No matter what the money market does; no matter if there's no breakfast food nor prunes in the cupboard; no matter if the proverbial wolf is doing his howling stunt at the door, there are two things that will always receive our dough—i. e., the 5-cent theater and the fortune-tellers.

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When your visitor enters, I always ask, in a high crescendo: "Did you want your palm read?"

I've noticed they always say that. Ten chances to one the caller wants to inquire about tomato plants or give you a real moss agate, but it's most likely he wants you to diagnose his hand for him. Always seat your visitor, remove his watch and chain, diamond pin and studs if you can do so without attracting his attention; collect your fee in advance and the deal will be on.

(Note—There is no fortune-tellers' union, so you may regulate your admission price to correspond to the earmarks of your victim.)

Have him write his name and three questions on a slip of paper; in your hand you must hold a similar slip, blank.

When he finally gives you his slip (the length of time will depend on his ability to write) you must deftly exchange the slips, placing your visitor's in your lap, under the table. (If you are a man you won't have a lap, so you'll have to hold it on your knee.)

Burn the blank slip; great business of incantations and weird gibberish. (Be very careful, however, he may be a Latin scholar and dissect every incant and gib.)

While he is pre-occupied in watching the flames destroy the slip, you can unfold and read what he has written. Then look off into space, grasp your hair and whisper his name hoarsely (provided, of course, you have deciphered it). Answer his questions according to the way he seems to desire them answered. Never be definite. Ambiguity is your salvation, and if you touch lightly all around the subject, and never commit yourself, you can make good—as a palmist.

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In studying palms, always begin with the front of the hand, and be careful you get the right hand. Never attempt to read a gloved hand. Cultivate a personal touch—it is more satisfactory—the results are obvious and miscellaneous. Always use refined expressions when you have fleeced your lamb, speed his departure.

* * *

There are four lines you must learn and fix in your mind, dear amateur grafter:

1. The life line—(see cut).
2. The heart line—(see cut some more).
3. The fate line—(see cut again some more).
4. The head line—take another look at cut).

There are several thousand minor details—like mounts (no, I'm not referring to steeds, dear Rosie, although the hand may belong to a member of the mule family). All the tiny lines mean something—but they are so confusing and unnecessary—these four are all you need.

Grasp the extended hand as if it were a hot potato, or its owner had leprosy, and begin your recitation, making your voice emerge from your boots, or else waver alarmingly in a shrill falsetto. The life line refers, as you have so shrewdly guessed, Blanchie, to your life. I do not know whether it begins at the wrist and runs up around the thumb, or vice versa, but I rather think it vice versa. It is never missing. It indicates how long you will tarry with us, dear brother.

Of course palmists are not supposed to be infallible, in spite of advertisements, but if a break occurs anywhere in the life line, you may, with safety, prognosticate sudden death, fatal accident or marriage.

If the sitter wears goggles and an oilskin cap and big coat and has an all-pervading odor of gasoline hanging over him, predict for him a frightful death in an automobile collision. If your visitor is a pale, thin, high-strung woman, tell her she will expire suddenly of heart trouble. Above all else, preserve a cheerful demeanor in making your disclosures.

By a little observation you can become an adept on the heart line.

Tell policemen they will be shot in the back, or drop dead from over-exertion; chambermaids, messenger boys, streetcar men, health officers and city officials will all have their life lines cut in twain by over-devotion to the interests of their employers—and too faithful performance of duty.

Never specify any exact age at which your sitter will be apt to turn his toes up to the daisies; that would be crude, and besides they might already be past the time limit you set.

This is especially true of women.

* * *

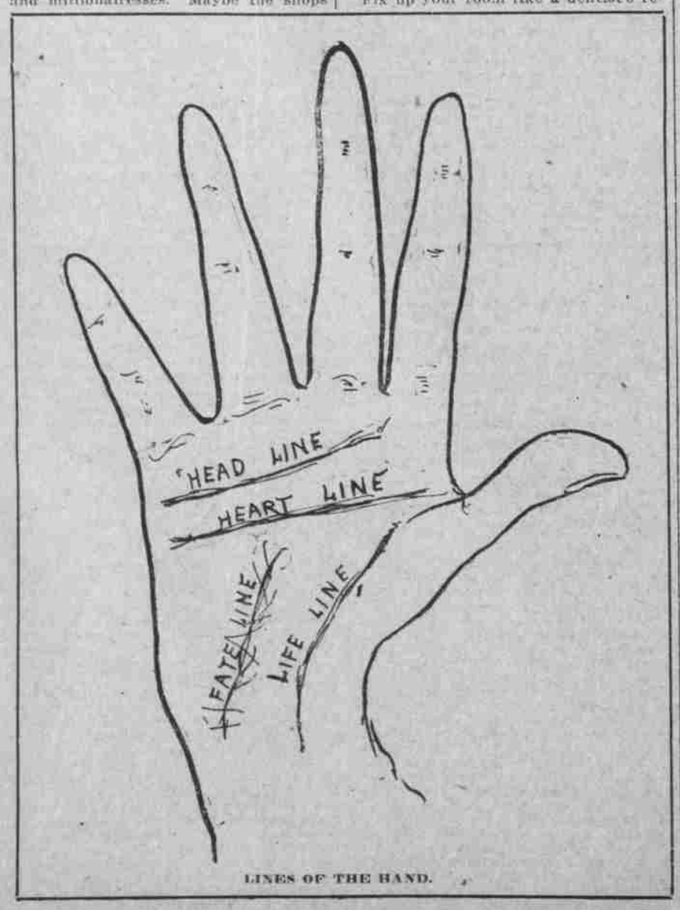
Now you pass to the fate line. Always discover a complicated fate line, and hint vaguely at love affairs, escapades and adventures. Lower your voice and talk of meetings with the fateful one out at the Oaks, the Park or Oregon City. Talk of moonlight trolley rides. (Be sure and don't say "parks by moonlight," for you aren't allowed in the parks after 9 o'clock—and the Plaza blocks are so devoid of romance.)

The headline does not refer to composition writing, Molly. It has solely to do with your mentality, if you have any. People who go to see fortune-tellers are usually deficient in mentality. But you can tell them they are born soldiers, statesmen, Carnegie heroes, and diplomats. If your sitter is bull-headed and pig-eyed, with a receding chin, impress it on him that he is a natural leader. Tell the long-haired ones they'd make poets, musicians and artists. (No doubt they would if Bohemianism, dirt and hair were all that is required.)

Always tell very young sissy men, as well as snowy-headed old sports, that they are regular devils among the fair sex, and tell ones that they are typical cynics and men of the world. The heart line indicates whether you are long or short on sentiment.

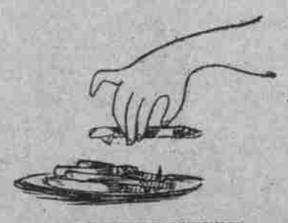
Always tell your patients they are generous to a fault. They may be so stingy that they boil tears to save the salt, but never you mind; they like to be considered generous, and you can't pile it on too thick.

Speak of unsuccessful rivals of thwarted diabolical schemes to ruin the sitter; use the word "beware" indiscriminately and promiscuously—(two words more as long as those and I'll have my space filled).

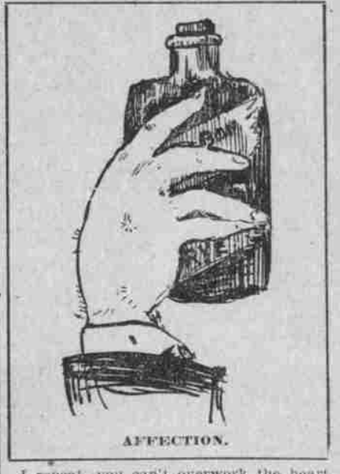


LINES OF THE HAND.

READING HIS PALM.



SELF CONSCIOUSNESS.



AFFECTION.

I repeat, you can't overwork the heart line.

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Here are a few signs and never-failing indicators. Follow them in your palmistry and you will wear paste jewelry:

Hands on hips—if a cowboy—watch out; if the cook—also watch out; if the ballet girl—nothing particular. Hand holding a bottle—signifies love of drink. (Unless it's the catsup or a nursing bottle.)

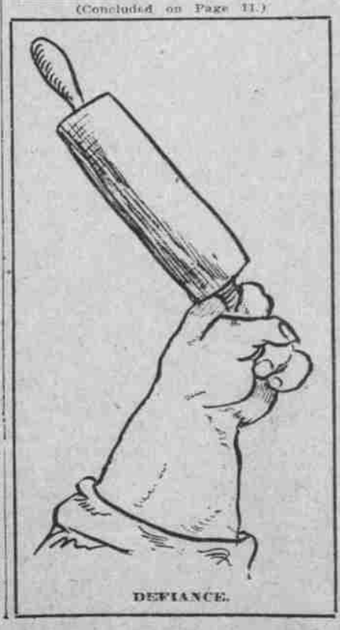
Holding a rollingpin—defense.

Upheld in air—"Teacher may I leave the room?"

Forefinger extended at arm's length—"Is that the Wells-Fargo building?"

Descending palm downward on reclin-

(Concluded on Page 11.)



DEFIANCE.