BANDON RECORDER.

FACTS IN FEW LINES

Wildcats are said to be on the increase in Scotland.

Japan has 20,000 firms engaged in the making of sake, the national drink.

A coal mine in the frozen north was one thing found by the Ziegler expedition.

The electric tramway of Lisbon, Portugal, is said to be the finest in southern Europe.

Tokyo and Osaka are the best markets for seaweeds, of which the Japanese use large quantities.

It is said that some of the richest mines in the world depend entirely upon water transported in tank cars.

Washington left an estate valued at $800,000, which is supposed to be larger than that left by any other president of the United States.

In Sahara the temperature rises to 150 degrees in the daytime and sinks below the freezing point at night. There is no such variation in the great American desert.

President Roosevelt has given to the Washington zoo two dozen of its most interesting specimens, including a lion lioness, bear, zebra and a number of smaller animals.

The United States is now the leading producer of quicksilver in the world and Spain has been compelled to take second place. The entire product of this country comes from Texas and California.

In many parts of the Australian continent bee farming has become a profitable and popular occupation. There are at present over 250,000 hives in Australia, producing from 10,000,000 to 15,000,000 pounds annually.

The white flag which was hoisted on the Russian destroyer Biedovi when Admiral Rojestvensky surrendered to the Japanese has been sent to Tokyo. It was a tablecloth in the wardroom the size being about 9 by 5 feet.

The war of the Dutch against the Achinese has been going on for more than a century, and, though the once powerful kingdom of Achin is now confined to the northwest corner of Sumatra, the natives are still unsubdued.

The Austrian government pays from $2.30 up to $230 for every shark killed in the vicinity of its territory, the great range in rewards offered being due to the wide differences in species and size among these destructive fishes.

The largest drug store in the world is at Moscow. It was established 208 years ago and has at present over 700 employees. It makes up over half a million prescriptions a year. Russians send their orders to it even when traveling abroad.

Experiments on government railroads of Prussia show that when steam is superheated to 500 degrees there is a saving of 16 per cent in the quantity of steam used and a saving of 12 per cent in fuel as compared with engines using ordinary or saturated steam.

During a trephining operation on a New York girl recently a portion of her brain became mutilated, and almost two ounces of it had to be removed. Nevertheless she has just been discharged from the hospital and is said to have full possession of every mental faculty.

A workman engaged in digging a ditch at Manchester, Vt., hung his vest on a fence post while at work. When he went to look for it he found that a big Jersey cow was just swallowing the last remnants. The watch, matches and miscellaneous articles in the pockets went along too.

A prisoner who was arrested at Wolfboro, N. H., was allowed to go on his own recognizance for a peculiar reason. The justice was out of town. When the prisoner was to be arraigned a trial justice heard the case and decided that as he had been ordered before a court which could not be found after reasonable search the defendant was entitled to his liberty.

Portsmouth, England, has passed an ordinance for the suppression of cock crowing. The chicken fanciers say it cannot be suppressed, but the London News says that a partial remedy consists in placing the perch where the cock roosts so high that when he stands up to crow he knocks his head against the roof and desists. A swinging board hung over his head answers the same purpose, it says.

Now that Kansas has appropriated money to mark the old Santa Fe trail, an enterprising citizen of New Mexico suggests that a hotel be built at Las Vegas to be called the Santa Fe Trail hotel. He would portray on the walls of its big dining room the scenery of the trail. In other rooms would be hung paintings of old time stagecoaches, cavalry squads, buffaloes, Indians and scouts, the sleeping rooms to be named after the states in the Union.

Thomas Hendricks was valedictorian of his class at the Washington High school in 1903. Now he's private secretary to the general manager of the Canton-Hankow railroad. He went out to the Philippines as a government stenographer, passed into the employ of a Manila law firm and then got his present job in Canton. He signs checks and issues passes, and the Chinese have given him a name that means in English "man of honor." And Thomas is barely twenty-one.

Several notable members of the British bar have been giving advice to young lawyers. Sir John Bingham says, "Work hard, have noble ambitions, be bold, have confidence in yourselves, get married." Sir Edward Clark said much the same thing, but Justice Maule declared that there were only three things essential—"the first is high animal spirits, the second is high animal spirits, and the third is high animal spirits. If in addtion the young man will take the trouble to learn a little law, I do not think it will impede his progress in the profession."

A Cheerful View.

Walter's mamma was very sick with rheumatism, and he was rubbing her arms when she said, "Walter, it is too bad that mamma is such a trouble to you."

Walter replied cheerfully: "Never mind, mamma. If you are only just alive we don't care how much you suffer."

POLLY LARKIN

"I am glad I don't claim Ohio for my own native home," said the bachelor the other evening. "I would hate to think I hailed from a place where the elite of the society girls were such rattle-brained young women. Listen to this," (reading): "The Peanut Club is the latest society organization in Loraine, Ohio. The members, all popular young women, are required to roll a peanut from Dexter street to the loop, North Broadway, a distance of over two miles. This wonderful feat has been performed successfully by six of the most ardent and popular members of the club. There are numerous applications in and the Peanut Club bids fair to be a very large, as well as a very popular organization. As the peanut route is through the business part of the city, the girls are attracting no small attention.' Did you ever hear the like of that for girls who consider themselves old enough and with the amount of good, common sense required of young ladies who are standing on the border-land of society's realm ready to step over. I would be willing to wager a whole bag of peanuts that there is not a single member of this Peanut Club who could sweep the house for their mothers without complaining of being dead-tired when they were through, and suffering from nervous headache and weariness from head to foot. If I was a marrying man and living in the vicinity of Loraine, I would pass the peanut rollers by in my search for a wife. A feat of that kind is so perfectly absurd." "Is it any worse, uncle," asked his neice, "than you trundling old man Smith, who weighs a good two hundred pounds, around the square when you lost that bet on the Presidential election?" She made the remark innocently enough, but the bachelor was angry at the mere suggestion, and Ethel did not get her customary box of French mixed candy on Saturday night for a month afterwards.

The bachelor, however, was right. The young ladies of the Peanut Club might have found something more elevating and refined to test their eligibility for membership. If they craved notoriety they could not have chosen a more certain way of securing it than to roll a peanut for over two miles through the heart of the town. It is to be hoped that their little fad of peanut rolling will not become popular or travel further than the boundaries of their own home. They might have found a test for membership to this unique club of theirs that would have been commendable instead of ridiculous.

The bachelor was doubtless right when he intimated that the girls would find it a hardship to help their mothers in sweeping the house and in other household duties. It brings to mind a conversation I heard on the cars the other day between three girls. "Going out to Golden Gate Park to play tennis on Saturday morning with the rest of the girls?" asked one of the trio of her friend. "No, I can't go in the morning, for Saturday is the only day I can help mother with the housework." "Bother the housework," replied the girl. "Your mother ought not to expect it of you when you have been studying hard all week. My mother doesn't, and if she did it wouldn't make any difference, for I think when I study all week I should have Saturday and Sunday to myself. I never even ask if I can go; I simply say 'I'm going to the park this morning to play tennis with the girls,' and that is all there is to it, for mother knows I am going when I say I am. We don't ever have any words over it." "I could never treat my mother that way; she would not allow it, even if I was disposed to do such a thing. I don't think it shows proper respect to your parents when you ignore their wishes or fail to consult them in regard to all of your plans, or whatever you have in mind. You, too, may have help, so your mother does not need your assistance?" "No, we haven't, but the way I look at it is that we are never going to be young but once, and there is plenty of time to crowd humdrum work into your life when your girlhood days are gone, and the younger set of geris crowd you out of the tennis court and make wall-flowers of you at the parties, providing you don't get married. That last I am going to do, however, if I have to propose to some nice young man myself. You are foolish to give up your girlhood the way you do, and I think it is very selfish of your mother to ask it." "There is where we look at things in a different light. I am going to speak plainly as long as you have been free to express yourself. My mother is not selfish in wanting me to assist her on Saturdays, and it is not a task, but a great pleasure. I look forward to the days I can remain at home and assist her, and we are happy in attending to the household duties together. The more I can take off her shoulders the happier I am." "I say it is selfish in your mother to allow it, even if you do make believe to enjoy it." "On the contrary—you know I told you I was going to speak plainly—I think the selfishness comes on your side. You expect your mother to give up everything for you, but what do you give up for your mother? I am sure she would appreciate it if you would offer to stay home sometimes and help her. Our mothers do not have the easiest time in the world. They are tired and worn out many times, but you never hear them complain, consequently we pass by their aches and pains and their weariness with hardly even a word of sympathy. I am sure if you would say to your mother, 'I am going to stay home and help you this morning, instead of going out to play tennis with the rest of the girls,' that she would appreciate it." "That she would, and she would take me up quick enough on the proposition and then expect it next week the same way your mother does, so it would not pay me to begin it." "Do you ever stop to think," said the girl who had been listening to the conversation, "that our mothers are apt to be taken from us? When that time comes," she said, turning to the tennis player, "you are going to be the one to suffer keenly for your past thoughtlessness of your mother. I was as thoughtless as you are when my mother was alive. I had my good time, but I did not think of poor, tired mother. Then a day came and she died after a short illness and when I looked at her tired face as she lay at rest in her coffin and the dear hands hardened with work, my heart was almost broken, for I could see the thousand places where I could have helped to lighten her cares, and I didn't do it. I say to every girl, be good to your mothers while you have them with you. You will never regret it.

BRIEF REVIEW.

Cape Cairo Railway.

The bridge over the Zambezi river, which was formally opened on September 12th last, is one of the most important links on the Cape to Cairo Railway, the construction of which was the life dream of the late Cecil Rhodes. This bridge, the highest in the world, is a marvel of engineering. It spans the Zambezi river, just below the famous Victoria Falls, about 1643 miles from Cape Town. The width of the river above and at the falls is about one mile, but the falls are formed by a great rift or fissure, from 250 to 400 feet in width, and over 400 feet in depth, which extends entirely across the bed of the river. Through the down stream face of this pit opens a narrow gorge, which extends in a zigzag course for a length of fully forty miles. It is across this that the bridge was built. It has a main span of 500 feet, composed of steel arch trusses, similar to the two Niagara river bridges. There are also two parallel-chord deck truss spans of 87½ and 62½ feet, extending from the ends of the main span to the abutments. The bridge proper is 30 feet wide, just sufficient for a double track. The rail level is 420 feet above low water level, and 380 feet above high water, over three times the height of the Niagara Falls bridge.

Effect of Wide Tires on Traction.

The effect of wide tires on traction on different classes of roads is well shown, says the New York Engineering Record, in some experiments made by the civil engineering department of the Iowa State College. The tires were 1⅛ and 3⅛ inches wide. On a well-drained earth road of good grade the traction with wide tires was a little higher with slushy snow and while the frost was coming out, and at other times it ranged twenty pounds less to the same figure as with narrow tiers. On a badly drained earth road with poor grades, subjected to heavy travel, the wide tires required less traction than the others in dry weather and more when there was mud. On a well-built, well-drained gravel road, the narrow tires required less traction except when the surface was wet or covered with loose gravel. On a road of fine sand with its surface flat with the ground the wide tires required less pull in every case. On a well-drained gravel road with clay binder the traction with narrow tires was lower than that with wide tires only when the surface was smooth and dry, and about the same facts were observed in experiments on a well-drained cinder road under heavy travel.

Chinese Fitness for Soldiership.

Colonel Grandprey, once French military attache in Pekin, gives some very interesting information regarding the Chinese army in the Revue de Paris. He says that few countries have such excellent material as China for an army, where the whole population of 420,000,000 consists, so to speak, of one people, displaying the same racial qualities. The Chinese is long lived and tenacious of life. He thrives in every climate, in spite of the heat or cold, is extremely thrifty, and therefore easily supported. He has nerves of steel, he can sleep in any position and in any place, and can do with a minimum of sleep. He seldom needs a doctor and bears pain with the greatest stoicism. The Chinese is very teachable, and what he has once been taught he never forgets.

A perpetual sabbath is being celebrated on earth. This is not generally known, for most people think that the day they call Sunday is the only one so celebrated. The Greeks observe Monday, the Persians Tuesday, the Assyrians Wednesday, the Egyptians Thursday, the Turks Friday, the Hebrews Saturday, and the Christians Sunday. So really, it is Sunday every day to some one on earth.

The child with the silken hair should be handled far more gently than the one with strong, coarse locks. Look at your children—study them. See where they differ. The brilliant genius with supersensitive organism and the coarse sluggard often spring from the same parentage. The present Chief Justice of the United States has a brother tending bar in the State of Washington.

A Jersey City judge has decided that 5 cents a week is none too much for a man to reserve when he gives his wife the balance of his $16.25 wages.

THE MOOR'S PLEDGE.

A Point of Honor Religiously Observed by Arabs and Saracens.

A Spanish cavalier in a sudden quarrel slew a Moorish gentleman and fled. His pursuers soon lost sight of him, for he had unperceived thrown himself over a garden wall. The owner, a Moor, happening to be in his garden, was addressed by the Spaniard on his knees, who acquainted him with his case and implored concealment. "Eat this," said the Moor. "You know that you may confide in my protection." He then locked him up in his garden apartment, telling him that as soon as it was night he would provide for his escape to a place of safety.

The Moor then went to his house, where he had just seated himself, when a great crowd, with loud lamentations, came to his gate, bringing the corpse of his son, who had just been killed by the Spaniard. When the first shock of surprise was a little over he learned from the description given that the fatal deed was done by the very person then in his power. He mentioned this to no one, but as soon as it was dark retired to his garden, as if to grieve alone, giving orders that none should follow him. Then, accosting the Spaniard, he said: "Christian, the person you have killed is my son. His body is now in my house. You ought to suffer, but you have eaten with me, and I have given you my faith, which must not be broken." He then led the astonished Spaniard to his stables and mounted him on one of his fleetest horses and said:

"Fly far while the night can cover you. You will be safe in the morning. You are indeed guilty of my son's blood, but God is just and good, and I thank him I am innocent of yours and that my faith given is preserved!" His point of honor is, it is said, most religiously observed by the Arabs and Saracens, from whom it was adopted by the Moors of Africa and by them was brought into Spain.

THE BOAST OF HEALTH.

It Often Precedes Serious if Not Fatal Sickness.

All doctors know that just before death the patient often experiences what is called a "rally," nature making apparently her last stand against the symptoms which we call death, and it is quite likely that the feeling which induces men to boast of health is of the same kind—an effort of nature to protect us against the coming sickness which the body has recognized, though the mind has not. The phenomenon occurs every day in the cases of consumptive patients, who brighten up and grow hopeful just when the disease is about to strike its hardest blows, and it is quite possible that it is more frequent than has yet been recognized that the approach of fever, for example, is signaled by an unusual consciousness of health. "I have never felt so well in my life," says the patient, who twenty-four hours after is lying prostrate and whose friends quote his statement as illustrating once more the ancient and depressing belief.

The boast had nothing to do with the illness, but it preceded it, and men, attracted by the violent contrast, almost instinctively link the two together as in some way and to some extent cause and effect. Next time those who heard it, if they feel that rush of health in their veins, will avoid boasting of it, and the relation of the two will escape attention. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that boasting is of itself a sign of weakness, either temporary or permanent, and that consequently failure follows boasting more frequently than it follows silence. The perfect driver says he is perfect just when he is most careless, and the resulting spill is remembered when the thousand and one escapes due to the same driver's skill and hardihood are clean forgotten.—London Spectator.

Gladstone's Early Joys.

When Mr. Gladstone was quite an old man it chanced that he and Mr. Chaplin were staying at the same country house together on a visit. One night after dinner the Grand Old Man asked Mr. Chaplin whether his grandmother had not lived in a certain street in Mayfair. Mr. Chaplin replied that she had done so. "Well," said Mr. Gladstone, "I remember it distinctly. I lived next door to her for awhile when I was a child. She used to give evening parties. When the carriages were assembled to take up, my brother and I used to creep out of bed—it was in the summer time—softly open the window, get out our squirts and discreetly fire away at the coachmen on the boxes. I remember the intense delight with which we used to see them look up to the sky and call out to ask each other whether it wasn't beginning to rain."

Hard to Please.

Nobody outside the journalistic profession has any idea how difficult it is for an editor to please some of his patrons. For instance, referring to a man's reputation for carelessness in the matter of his toilet, a paper announced, "Mr. Maguire will wash himself before he assumes the office of town clerk." This made Maguire furious, and he demanded a retraction, which appeared thus: "Mr. Maguire requests us to deny that he will wash himself before he assumes the office of town clerk." Oddly enough, this only enraged Maguire the more.—San Francisco News-Letter.

Bryant's Remuneration.

It is amusing to know how small were the pecuniary rewards of Bryant's literary labors. Two dollars a poem was the price that he named, and he seemed to be abundantly satisfied with the terms. A gentleman met him in New York many years after and said to him, "I have just bought the earliest edition of your poems and gave $20 for it." "More, by a long shot," replied the poet, "than I received for writing the whole work."

A Bit of a Bull.

An Irishman, quarreling with an Englishman, told him if he didn't hold his tongue he would "break his impenetrable head and let the brains out of his empty skull."

Anything to Please.

Mudge—See here, what did you mean by saying I wasn't half witted? Yabsley—What shall I say? That you are half witted?

A HEROIC BATTLE.

The Enemy Was the Sea, and the Colored Troops Won.

No engagement of the civil war was carried on with more heroism and endurance than that fought by the Forty-ninth United States colored troops after hostilities were over. The Magazine of American History contains an account of the tussle in which the black soldiers bore themselves so bravely. The steamer Merrimac, loaded with cotton, left New Orleans for New York carrying, besides her regular passengers, thirty officers and 900 colored privates.

For several days all went well. Then the vessel sprung aleak, fires were dampened and the alarm spread. It was found that the iron supply pipe through which the water for the condenser was taken from the sea was broken, and the place of leakage could not be reached. The passengers were panic stricken. One small, fat German went about wringing his hands and crying:

"Ach, we are at the bottom of the sea! If we gets pack to New Orleans will dey gif me pack my monish?"

The water gained fast. The only hope lay in keeping afloat until a vessel could be sighted. The colored troops were pressed into service and proved themselves the heroes of the occasion. A line of men was established from the hold to the deck, and buckets were passed as rapidly as hands could move. On deck another line stepped back and forth with well trained military tread. The work below was most exhausting. The men at the bottom could not hold their position more than three minutes at a time. They were blinded and half strangled by the swashing sea water and bruised by the lumps of coal which dashed about.

But no one faltered, and high above the noise rose the clear, sweet voices of the workers, now singing an army song, now a cheery negro melody. The music brought new hope to the hearts of the passengers. Hour after hour the men worked and sang, and the sea did not gain on them.

Two days passed, and the drinking water gave out. Then they could no longer sing, and their parched throats were eased only by a scanty supply of oranges and lemons, but still they worked. On the third day the lights of a steamer were seen only half a mile away. Rockets were sent up, and with great difficulty, on account of her wet ammunition, a gun was fired. To the dismay of all, the steamer passed on. Quickly the soldiers formed a line once more, and the wearisome labor began again.

After sixty-five hours of bucket passing a steamer was sighted which responded to the call for help, and the waterlogged Merrimac was towed into harbor.

The men who had sung so cheerily in the midst of hard labor and in the face of death were thoroughly exhausted, but they had not lost their light hearted gayety.

ANCIENT SEA WALLS.

Punishment That Was Inflicted For Neglecting Their Repair.

W. H. Wheeler in his "History of the Fens of South Lincolnshire" quotes Harrison as saying, in his preface to Hollinshed's "Chronicle," that "such as, having walls or banks near unto the sea, do suffer the same to decay, after convenient admonition, whereby the water entereth and drowneth up the country, are by a certain ancient custom apprehended, condemned and staked in the breach, where they remain forever a parcel of the new wall that is to be made upon them, as I have heard reported."—P. 40.

Harrison, so far as I am at present able to make out, is the earliest authority for this, and he only speaks of it as a report.

In a paper by the Rev. F. C. J. Spurrell in "The Archaeologia Cantiana" relating to Dartford, I find the following, which, though it is by no means a proof of what Harrison had heard, tends to make the statement less improbable than it otherwise would be:

"In early times the Roman way crossed the marsh untroubled by the tide. Afterward, the tide having advanced further inland, the road was raised, becoming a causeway. In mediaeval times this bank was heightened against the tide, the road running inside, as at present. During a section made a few years ago through this road, near Stidolph's house, I saw a human skeleton extended across the bank about two feet below the present surface. This is, of course, a strange situation; but, looking to the fact that it was a tide wall, it is possible that the once owner of the skeleton had the duty of repairing the bank and, having let the tide through by his neglect, was placed in the breach, thus helping to repair it while suffering punishment. S. Smiles has mentioned that such a mode of dealing was a mediaeval custom. However, I know not how far the ancient graveyard extended hereabout, so that the body, which showed no signs of burial, might yet have been buried in sacred ground."—London Notes and Queries.

Power of Niagara.

What makes Niagara falls' power possible is the fact that Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, Lake Huron and Lake Erie, with a combined area of 90,000 square miles, representing the reservoirs of some 250,000 square miles of watershed, are situated 600 feet above the sea level. The great volume of water falling over the vast territory flows on its natural course to the Atlantic ocean with but a slight descent until it is brought into the narrow Niagara river, when, in the rapids just above the falls, it declines fifty-five feet and then, with a single plunge, drops into the abyss 165 feet below. Eminent engineers have computed that 275,000 cubic feet of water pass over the falls every second, representing in theoretical energy over 6,000,000 horsepower.

He Set the Pace.

"You seem bound and determined to live right up to my salary."

"I'm merely trying to live up to the diamond and things you gave me when we were engaged, dear."—Houston Post.

Oh, that you could turn your eyes toward the napes of your necks and make but an interior survey of your good selves!—Shakespeare.

BUSY INSECT EATERS.

What One Day's Hunting Brought to a Brood of Pied Wagtails.

A close student of bird life writes: "Observation of several species of insectivorous birds has shown that the parent birds will, when their family is growing up, make between them in the neighborhood of 500 visits to the nest in the course of a day, carrying on each occasion a whole beak load of gnats or spiders or larvae. For the birds which feed on gnats or other small life generally take to their youngest not single insects, but a whole collection at a time. On one occasion I spent an hour in taking the record of a pied wagtail which had its brood of newly fledged young ones in an old disused punt that had settled down at its moorings into the mud at the side of the pond. During the hour the male bird alone was looking after the family the female amused herself by running about on the bank catching insects for her own consumption and varying the occupation with long spells of attention to her toilet. The male bird, on the other hand, never rested for one minute from his work of breadwinning. As his hunting ground was the open surface of the pond, above which he flitted, he was never out of my sight.

"In the course of the hour he made twenty-eight trips, the shortest absence from the young lasting one and a half minutes and the longest nearly six minutes. On no occasion did he remain at the punt for more than fifteen seconds or just long enough to turn over the food collected on the last trip to the proper youngster and be off again. Myriads of gnats were dancing above the water, and at each dip the bird struck at one, but one could not see whether he always caught his quarry or not. As far as it was possible to guess he always did. On his shortest absence he made over forty shots, and from that the number ran up to considerably over 200.

"Supposing that he missed his aim half the time or afterward dropped or swallowed the insects, so that half of them were wasted and failed to reach the family at home, there must have been from 1,500 to 2,000 gnats brought back to the punt in the course of that one hour. Later in the day both parent birds were hawking simultaneously, each returning methodically to the young every two or three minutes. What the gross consumption of insects was in the course of the day it is impossible to guess, but it can hardly have been less than 10,000 or 15,000 and was probably twice as many."

NAUTICAL TERMS.

Origin of Some of the Expressions That Smell of the Sea.

The word "admiral" comes from "emir el bagh," which is Arabic for lord of the sea.

"Captain" comes straight from the Latin "caput," a head; but "mate" is almost identical with the Icelandic "matt," which means a companion or equal.

Cockswain was originally the man who pulled the after oar of the captain's boat, then known as "cock boat." "Cock boat" is a corruption of the word "coracle," and, as most people know, the coracle is a small round boat used for fishing on some of the Welsh rivers, such as the Xye and Usk. So cockswain comes to us from the Welsh.

"Commodore" is simply the Italian "commandatore," or commander, and "naval cadet" was originally the French "capdet," which, going a step further back, has the same origin as the word captain. The reason of this apparent anomaly is that originally naval cadets were younger sons of noble families who served as privates previous to obtaining their commissions.

There never was such a person as "Davy Jones," though we frequently hear of his locker. One ought to talk of "Duffy Jonah's" locker. "Duffy" is the West Indian negro term for spirit or ghost, while "Jonah" refers to the prophet of that name.

"Dog watch" is another curious case of a term gradually corrupted out of its original form. Originally it was "Dodge watch," so described because it lasts only two instead of the usual four hours, and thus makes it possible that the same men shall not be on duty every day during the same hours.

Sailors call salt meat "junk." It is not a complimentary term, for junk is nautical for a rope's end. Some 3,000 years ago ropes were made out of bulrushes, for which the Latin word is "juncus."

Wonderful Miniature Book.

The smallest bound book in the great collection of miniature books owned by the New York Library society is a campaign document issued in 1852. It bears not only the distinction of being the smallest volume in the great collection referred to, but has been pronounced by experts in booklore to be one of the tiniest books in existence. It contains but fourteen leaves, each of which is closely printed on both sides in microscopic type. Each leaf is one and one-half inches in length and seven-eighths of an inch in width. The title page bears the following inscription: "Life and Public Services of General Pierce. Respectfully Dedicated to General Lewis Cass. Concord Press, 1852."

Why Skees Were Invented.

The origin of the skee, which may roughly be described as a snowshoe so long that the sole extends far beyond the toe and heel, was purely practical. It was designed to make communication possible between village and village or town and town in northern Europe after a heavy fall of snow. The skate can only be used on ice, but the skee is available wherever there is plenty of snow to traverse. A forward movement of the lower part of the body gives you a start, and you then slip along without raising your feet from the ground, so that the track forms two parallel lines. Even uphill good progress can be made, aided by a long stick or a stick in either hand.

Used to Begging.

Graspit (angrily)—What! More money? If you keep on you'll bankrupt me. Then, after I'm dead, you will be a beggar. Mrs. Graspit (calmly)—Oh, well, I'd be a great deal better off than some poor woman who never had any experience in that line.

EARLY BOOKMAKERS

THE FINE ART OF THE MONKS OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

Written and Illuminated Works That Were Marvels of Skill and Industry—Anglo-Saxon Monks Originated the Roman Letter.

There is scarcely any error so popular, yet so unfounded, as that which invariably attributes unbounded indolence to the monastic orders of former days. To them we owe the preservation of literature, both in the pains they took to perpetuate history by their labors in transcribing and by their diligence in the education of youth.

In the large monasteries a chamber was always set apart for writing, allowing space in the same apartment for other quiet employments also. The transcribers were superintended by the abbot, prior, subprior and precentor of the convent and were distinguished by the name of "antiquarii." These industrious persons were continually occupied in making new copies of old manuscript books for the use of other monasteries, and by this means many were educated and our most valuable historical records were preserved.

The Anglo-Saxon monks were most celebrated as writers and were the originators of the small roman letter used in modern times. The greatest delicacy and nicety were deemed essential in the transcribing of books, whether for the purpose of general instruction or for the use of the convents.

Careless and illegible writing is therefore but seldom to be met with among the remains of monastic industry, and when erasures were made they appear to have been done with the utmost care and skill. For this purpose the monks used pumice stone, and they were also provided with a punctorium, or awl, to make the dots and with metal pens for writing until after the seventh century, when quills were brought into use, they being far better than the metal pens then in use.

The inks were composed of lampblack soot mixed with water and gum for use upon the vellum, paper not being introduced until the tenth century; hence the beautiful distinctness, as well as durability, of very ancient manuscript books. So important was the art of writing in those days that it is conceded as many as 100 different styles were in vogue among the learned.

With so many impediments to the multiplication of books as were attendant upon their slow production in this manner, it is not a matter of surprise that the monks enjoyed almost a monopoly of this kind of labor, as in truth they were the only body of men who could properly conduct it. The expense of preparing books was proverbially great, and large estates were frequently set apart for the purpose of purchasing them. In addition to the cost of transcribing, the materials of which books were composed were sources of great expense. The leaves in many instances were composed of purple vellum for the purpose of showing off to more advantage letters of gold and silver. The binding was often very gorgeous, although of rude construction. The prevailing covering for books was a rough white sheepskin pasted on a wooden board, with immense bosses of brass, but the exterior of those intended for church service was inlaid with gold relics or silver embossed on ivory plates. Some books had leaden covers and some had wooden leaves, but even as early as this bindings in velvet with silver clasps and studs were made as presents for exalted personages.

Illuminating manuscripts was also another occupation of the monks of the middle ages, although not confined to them, for the greatest painters of the day disdained not to contribute to these cumbrous and sometimes confused decorations. The art of correct drawing and a knowledge of perspective cannot, however, be ascribed to the generality of the fantastic pictures by which illuminated books are adorned. Coloring and gilding appear to have been the chief points to which the attention of the illuminations was directed. The neutral tint was first laid on somewhat in the same mode as in the present day, some portions being left untouched in order to be afterward imbedded in gold and silver. The pictures represented different subjects, according to the nature of the book which they were intended to embellish. The title on the pages was formed of capital letters of gold and azure mixed. Illuminated pictures are of a dazzling brightness, the white predominating, which, not being an oil color, reflects the rays of light and does not absorb them. So much custom had the monks in their labors of transcribing and illuminating that they were sometimes obliged to introduce hired limners, although contrary to the monastic rule in general, but such aids were seldom resorted to, the monks being usually the only laborers.

The invention of printing diminished the importance and annihilated the profits of writing, and in 1460 that of engraving superseded the art of illuminating.—New York Herald.

Catharine Parr.

Catharine Parr, the sixth wife of the much married Henry VIII., owed more to her intellectual than to her personal charms. She was not good looking, but had a pleasant face and a world of tact. So skillfully did she manage her troublesome husband as actually to turn him against some of the most trusted of his own officials. Once an order was made out for her arrest on a charge of heresy, but she got news of the matter and so cleverly flattered and soothed Henry as to effect a complete reconciliation, and when the officers came to serve the order he drove them out with curses and threats.

Glassmaking.

Much mystery has in times past attached to the art of glassmaking. It was formerly the custom for the workmen in setting pots in the glass furnace to protect themselves from the heat by dressing in the skins of wild animals from head to foot. To this queer garb were added glass goggle eyes, and thus the most hideous looking monsters were readily presented to the eye. Show was made of themselves in the neighborhood, to the infinite alarm of children, old women and others.