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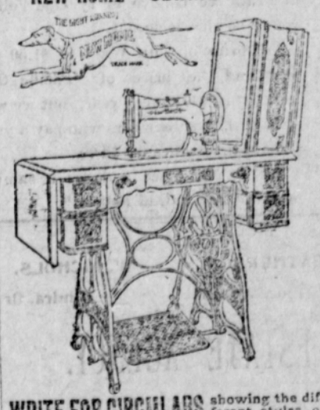

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A Sample of What a Fairly Healthy Cockatoo Can Do.

A light chain securely fastened on the cockatoo's leg promised safety, but he contrived to get within reach of my new curtains and rapidly devoured some half yard or so of a hand painted border, which was the pride of my heart. Then came an interval of calm and exemplary behavior which lulled me into a false security. Cockie seemed to have but one object in life, which was to pull out all his own feathers, and by evening the dining room often looked as though a white fowl had been plucked in it.

I consulted a bird doctor, but as Cockie's health was perfectly good and his diet all that could be recommended, it was supposed he only plucked himself for want of occupation, and firewood was recommended as a substitute. This answered very well, and he spent his leisure in gnawing sticks of deal—only when no one chanced to be in the room he used to unfasten the swivel of his chain, leave it dangling on the stand and descend in search of his plaything. When the fire had not been lighted, I often found half the coals pulled out of the grate and the firewood in splinters. At last, with warmer weather, both coals and wood were removed, so the next time Master Cockie found himself short of a job he set to work on the dining room chairs, first pulled out all their bright nails and next tore holes in the leather, through which he triumphantly dragged the stuffing.

At one time he went on a visit for some weeks and ate up everything within his reach in that friendly establishment. His "bag" for one afternoon consisted of a venerable fern and a large palm, some library books, newspapers, a pack of cards and an armchair. And yet every one adores him, and he is the spoiled child of more than one family.—Cornhill.

LIKED THE POORHOUSE.

Would Not Leave It to Go For Money That Belonged to Him.

"I won't go out! I won't leave here for anything!"

Such was the amazing declaration of a pauper attendant in an east end London workhouse on being told by an agent that he was entitled to some money. And the man—the son of a post captain in the navy—meant all that he said. Not an inch would he budge, nor would he sign any paper, and it was only by taking a commissioner down to him that the fund could be recovered.

Whether because it was only a comparatively small sum or whether because he was a worker, the guardians made no claim on it. Accordingly, at his request, it was split, and two accounts were opened on his behalf in the Postoffice Savings bank. But, for all that, he continued to remain in the workhouse.

Meanwhile he was very anxious that his wife should not know he was alive—in fact, he denied that he was married. His life partner, however, called at the agent's office to inquire about the case, though she begged that her husband might not be told of her whereabouts. She was in a fairly good position, earning as she did a living by keeping a ladies' school, and once or twice her reprobate husband had turned up in an intoxicated condition and raised a commotion that had scandalized her pupils. The ill sorted pair were, therefore, not brought into communication.

Never would the pauper legatee leave the workhouse. He remained there till his death, whereupon, having left no will, the money he had scorned to use passed to his wife.—Cassell's Saturday Journal.

How to Give a Cat Medicine.

A New York gentleman has a very fine Angora cat, and so fine a specimen of her kind that she is famous in a large circle of fashionable folk. She is not rugged in health, yet she cannot be persuaded to take physic. It has been put in her milk, it has been mixed with her meat, it has even been rudely and violently rubbed in her mouth, but never has she been deluded or forced into swallowing any of it. Last week a green Irish girl appeared among the household servants. She heard about the failure to treat the cat. "Sure," said she, "give me the medicine and some lard, and I'll warrant she'll be ating all I give her!" She mixed the powder and the grease and smeared it on the cat's sides. Pussy at once licked both sides clean and swallowed all the physic. "Faith," said the servant girl, "everybody in Ireland does know how to give medicine to a cat!"

Reading a Book.

A writer in the New York Medical Journal says that the curved pages of the ordinary book are injurious to the eye of the reader. The curvature necessitates a constant change of the focus of the eye as it reads from one side to another, and the ciliary muscles are under a constant strain. Moreover, the light falls unequally upon both sides of the page, further interfering with a continued clear field of vision. It is suggested that the difficulty might be obviated if the lines should be printed parallel to the binding instead of at right angles to it.

Golf.

The game of golf was put down by an act of parliament in Scotland in 1841 as a nuisance. Then fines were inflicted on people who were found guilty of playing the game, for it interfered with the practice of archery, as men preferred wielding the club to pulling the bow.

An Exception.

In the treatment of skin diseases it is said that the rays of the sun are quite efficacious. They can't cure freckles, however.—Bradford Era.

IRISH TURNS AND TWISTS.

The Unconscious Humor That Crops Out in the Green Isle.

The author of "Irish Life and Character" says truly that one has only to mix with an Irish crowd to hear many a laughable expression, quite innocently uttered. As the Duke and Duchess of York were leaving Dublin in 1897, amid enthusiastic cheering, an old woman remarked:

"Ah! Isn't it the fine reception they're gettin, goin away?"

In 1892 Dublin university celebrated its tercentenary, and crowds of visitors were attracted to the city. Two laborers, rejoiced at the general prosperity, expressed their feelings.

"Well, T'an," said one, "thim tarcintinaries does a dale for the thrade of Dublin, and no mistake."

"Oh, faix they do!" said the other. "And whin, with the blessin of God, we get home rule, sure we can have as manny of thim as we plase."

An old woman, seeing a man pulling a young calf roughly along the road, exclaimed:

"Oh, you bla'guard! That's no way to thrate a fellow crather."

"Sure," said a laborer to a young lady who was urging him to send his children to school, "I'd do anything for such a sweet, gintlemanly lady as yourself."

Again, the laborers on a large estate decided that it would be more convenient for them if they could be paid every week instead of every fortnight. One of their number was sent to place their proposition before the land agent, and this was his statement:

"If you please, sir, it's me desire, and it is also ivery other man's desire, that we resave out fortnight's pay ivery week."

An exasperated sergeant, drilling a squad of recruits, called to them at last:

"Halt!" Just come over here, all of ye, and look at yourselves. It's a fine line ye're Leepin, isn't it?"

JUST A BIT OF LIFE.

A Pathetic Incident of the Pawnshops in the Metropolis.

Sneaking into a small shop in an obscure and poverty ridden locality, the man who "went broke" at the races was realizing on a superfluous article of jewelry. A woman so poor and pinched in feature, so marked with care and desperation that it made him feel sick to look at her, was holding something under her shawl and waiting nervously until he should have finished his transaction.

"Wait on her. She seems to be in a hurry," he said to the man behind the counter, and at the word of permission a carpenter's plane was produced from the shelter of the shawl.

"How much do you want?" queried the unmoved pawnbroker monotonously.

"Fifty cents," replied the woman, with a gulping in her throat and an eager look in her eyes. She clutched the money tightly and ran into another creature, poor as herself, but bearing her troubles in duller fashion. She had a baby's cloak, never costly and much worn, on which she wanted to borrow money, the same sum as the other woman had asked for.

The man who had been offering a diamond felt uncomfortable. "There, give me $50. The stone's worth four times as much." And, seizing the money, he hurried after the woman who had just left the shop. He was not given to acts of charity, and he felt awkward, the more so as the woman shrank from him as he accosted her.

"I beg your pardon," he began, "but here's $5 I have no use for. Perhaps you"—

"No, no!" she cried, drawing further from him.

"For your child," he said gently.

"My child is dead!" cried the woman, with a queer sob, and fled into the labyrinth of alleys and byways that shelters so much wretchedness.—New York Times.

Curious Mexican Laws.

They have some very curious criminal laws in Mexico. For instance, it is twice as much of an offense to mutilate the face of a woman as that of a man. The law seems to be based on the idea that a woman's best possession is her beauty and that to mar it does her a great injury.

There is another curious law. If a person should be wounded in an encounter, the punishment to the offender is fixed by the number of days his victim has to stay in the hospital or under a doctor's care. A line is fixed at 40 days in the way of a general division. If the injured man occupies more than 40 days in his recovery, the penalty doubles up.

An Impudent Fraud.

An impudent fraud was perpetrated upon a Manchester bank by one of its customers, who opened an account with some few hundreds of pounds. The man, after a few weeks, drew two checks, each within a pound or so of his balance, and, selecting a busy day, presented himself at one end of the counter, while an accomplice, when he saw that his friend's check had been cashed, immediately presented his own to a cashier at the other end. Both cashiers referred the checks to the ledger clerk, who, thinking the same cashier had asked him twice, said "right" to both checks. The thieves were never caught.

Kye's Introduction.

When James Whitcomb Riley and Bill Nye traveled together giving a joint entertainment, the humorist had great fun with the poet. Once, in introducing Riley and himself to an audience, Nye remarked, "I will appear first and speak until I get tired, then Mr. Riley will succeed me and read from his own works until you get tired."

What Tips Do.

A man who lives on an up town street where the houses cost from $25,000 up was surprised not long ago by seeing a man known to all New Yorkers who patronize a well known restaurant coming from a house several doors below him with an air of proprietorship. This restaurant employee stood on the sidewalk for a few moments and gazed admiringly at his house and then at its respectable neighbors. For many years he has been connected with a certain New York restaurant as an attendant, and his fees have been generous. He knew all its patrons by name, and his politeness and eagerness to render service have made him well liked. Wondering if this restaurant attendant, whom he knew only by his first name, could by any possibility have rented a house on that street, the old resident came out to satisfy his curiosity.

"Hello," he said. "What are you doing up here?"

"Good morning, Mr. Blank," said the restaurant attendant. "How do you like my new house? I have just bought it because I think that my family will like this neighborhood. You are perhaps aware that my tips have been generous for many years, and I can now afford to live in this house very easily."

His questioner had no objection to him as a neighbor, and he congratulated the restaurant attendant on his prosperity. The house had actually been bought by tips, for its owner's salary probably averaged about $15 a week.—New York Sun.

New Old Jokes.

"Is there any new joke under the sun?" asks George Augustus Sala, an English journalist and special correspondent.

"I doubt there being one very gravely," he answers and tells two anecdotes to support this skepticism.

An intelligent Greek who acted as Mr. Sala's guide while visiting Athens related to him as a modern Greek Joe Millerism the story of a lawsuit. A deaf plaintiff sued a deafer defendant before the deafest judge in all Greece. The plaintiff claimed so many hundred drachmas for rent that was due. The defendant pleaded that he never ground his corn at night. The judge in giving judgment observed: "Well, she's your mother, after all. You must keep her between you."

"When I got home I found," writes Mr. Sala, "this apparently up to date triad of ludicrous non sequiturs in a collection of ancient Greek epigrams."

There used to be told a story of Sheridan Knowles, the dramatist, who was a first rate hand at Irish bulls, meeting one of twin brothers and asking him, "Which of ye is the other?"

Mr. Sala compares this with the story of that very ancient jester, Hierocles:

"Of twins, one died. Skolastikos, meeting the survivor, asked him, 'Was it you who died or your brother?'"—Youth's Companion.

A Practical Joke.

He was a wag and was passing a large draper's shop in Manchester. There, drawn up, were three or four vehicles, and among them was a closed brougham with the driver fast asleep on the box. Evidently the mistress was inside the shop. Without a word the wag stole quickly up and, opening the carriage door, carefully slammed it to. In an instant the coachman straightened himself up and gazed up the street as if he had never seen anything more interesting to look at in his life. Then he stole a look over his shoulder and saw the wag standing, hat in hand, apparently conversing with some one inside the carriage.

"Thank you, yes. Good morning," said the practical joker and bowed himself gracefully away from the door, turning as he did so to look at the coachman and say, "Home!"

"Yes, sir! Teh! Get up!" and away went the brougham "home."

Where that "home" was, who the mistress of the carriage was or what she did or said when she came out of the shop or what the coachman did or said when he stopped at the door of "home" and found the carriage empty—all that only the coachman and the lady know.—London Tit-Bits.

A Clever Blind Man.

The New Orleans Times-Democrat tells of a blind man in a southern city who goes to the postoffice every day carrying a small, light riding whip, which he holds slightly inclined to the front, with the tip just touching the pavement. His sense of touch has become so delicate that the whip is almost an artificial eye. When the point encounters anything, he makes a few swift passes over the surface and generally determines the exact character of the obstacle. It is done so quickly and deftly as to attract no attention, and few passers have the least suspicion of the old man's infirmity. When he reaches the postoffice, he turns unhesitatingly, mounts the middle stairs, walks over to the lock boxes and without any feeling around thrusts a key into the right aperture.

Anxious Only About One Thing.

The ghastly rider on the white horse stopped at the gate.

"I am Death," he said to the sick man who was watching from the window.

"You are welcome," replied the latter and added in a whisper: "If you value your life, don't let my wife see you tying your horse to that tree. She'd never let anybody do that."—Philadelphia Press.

Our learning is so long in getting and so very imperfect that the greatest clerk knows not the thousandth part of what he is ignorant.—Jeremy Taylor.

Australia, it is estimated, is capable of supporting at least 100,000,000 inhabitants.