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A DILEMMA.

I faint would limp a line at once into the dimming crescent moon. Half her as "I'm calm, serene," And soothe her "silvery sheen;" I might the "best stars" exist. With comments upon heron's flight; But when I come to think it o'er, It's all been done so well before.

To sylvan and sequestered haunts I might repair and tune my chaunt; To moult a fountain, root or rill, To dais and violets, to brook and hill, I might sing of the rose's blush, Or praise the lily and the thistle; Yes, that I would, but—what a bore! It's all been done so well before.

I might become a misanthrope, Forgo the charms of joy and hope, Assume a pessimistic pose, Compare life to a withered rose. With morbid cynicism sigh And all the charms of life deny; But—think of the dyspeptic's woe! It's all been done so well before.

Of Cupid I might sing anew; But rymes for "love" are, oh! so few; And every Strephon nowadays To his own Psyche tunes his lays. Besides, all birds, throats and beak, Have their ideas of love expressed. O great ones, Muse, I implore A subject never to be done.

—Harry R. Smith, in America.

NO PLACE LIKE HOME.

Convenience of City Hotels Did Not Appeal to the Stranger.

A weather-beaten old man sat in the office of a Michigan avenue hotel and watched with curious eyes the panorama of life as it unfolded before him. Turning to a chance acquaintance, he said:

"I've been on the plains for 40 years and this is the first visit I've made east in all that time. They do things mighty different here from what they do whar I came from."

"In what way?"

"Oh, in lots o' ways."

"For instance?"

"Wall, take this 'er hotel. I never saw no hotel run like this on the plains."

"What's the matter with it?"

"Oh, nothin', only that clerk makes me tired; he's so durned polite. Just listen to him."

"Front! take that card to No. 3,428, answer goes to the tall gentleman with the silk hat."

"Front! take that card to No. 2,743, answer goes to that gentleman with the gold eyeglasses."

"Yes, sir; train goes 10:30."

"No, sir; sorry, but we haven't a room left with two beds in it."

"I'm sure I can't say, sir; perhaps you'll find it in this directory."

"That's the way that feller goes it from morning to night. It's 'No, sir,' and 'Yes, sir,' and 'Thank you,' and 'I'm sorry,' and it's bows, and scrapes, and smiles, and honey till it makes me sick."

"You do things differently out on the plains?"

"Well, I should smile. The landlord generally runs the bar, and most of the respectable guests in the barroom; but if one of the boys should happen to want to see another of the boys he just simply asks for him 'thout no fool card racket. Then he goes and sets down to wait for him, and this is the kind of talk the landlord gets off."

"Here! you, Bill, evovort up to number ten, an' tell that limping son of a gun that a squashed galoot down in the barroom wants to see him. Say! knock down the door of No. 5, if the half-headed rooster don't open it, and tell him I said there was a cock-eyed gent down yer as was waiting to see him, and I'm not going to send for him a second time. Say? Now, get a move on you, or I'll bust your crust!"

"What's that, stranger?"

"Well, you know when the stage goes? Well, look here, now, do I look like a walkin' almanack? Why in thunder don't you ask the stage driver? That he is, over in the corner—that milded covey playin' poker with Pigeon-toed Ike."

"What's that you want? A room with two beds? Just let me give you a pointer—you don't get nary bed here to-night; they're all full. You can sleep on the floor, if you'll behave yourself like a gentleman, and not kick."

"What does Albin Jones live? Dayned if I know the stranger. He comes here 'bout twice a year, gets his skin full of tanglefoot like a little red and then drives off toward the southwest. May-by Humpy the Hobo can tell yer—that's him playin' pedro with the Plate Injun."

"As the weather-beaten stranger concluded his description he signed deeply. "That's no place like home, be it ever so tough and woolly—that's no place like home!"—Chicago Times-Herald.

HARD ON CATS.

A French Government Commissioner Censures the Conduct of Animal Cats.

The French government has just had occasion to appoint a commission to inquire into the grievances of the cats in its employ. Their report is an amusing exhibition of official stupidity, and will raise a righteous indignation in the bosom of all friends of the useful mouser.

It appears that cats are kept in some of the French military magazines to keep down the surplus population of rats and mice. Their food is regulated by ministerial decree according to circumstances, and at present there is a regulation in force authorizing an expenditure of 2 1/2 centimes per cat per diem. But this does not seem enough, as the unfortunate governmental cats have grown extremely thin, so that the ministry appointed specialists to inquire into the matter. These have gravely reported that "the cats of the army are very slow to accustom themselves to the diet prescribed by the government circular. Thus they seldom eat bread, and never lap up greasy water unless actually driven thereto by pangs of hunger, so that they are dying off or else abandoning the military magazines."

The Greedy Crocodile.

The moment that a young crocodile breathes its shell it is to all intents and purposes as active as it is at any time during its life. It will make straight for the water, even if it be out of sight and a good distance off, and it will pursue its prey with eagerness and agility during the first hour of its free existence.

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THE PYGMALES OF IOWA.

In "Purchas, His Pilgrimage," a rare old-time book, very few copies of which are now in existence, the following account is given of the "Pygmies" of Iowa: "Purchas also discovered a very little man, whom he hereafter represents the most perfect shape of men, but they are inferior to the utmost joints of the fingers, the mayles having beards down to the knees; but, although they have the shape of a man, yet they have little sense or understanding, nor distinct speech, but make a kind of hissing after the manner of reese."

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CIVIC PRIDE.

He Was Driving for Chicago and He Laid Claim to the Whole Road.

It happened the other day in one of the most aristocratic districts of the North side. One of the vehicles was a handsome carriage, occupied by a swell young matron, and driven by the haughtiest of English coachmen, while the other was an extremely unbecoming wagon belonging to the street cleaning department, and engineered by a nondescript individual of Hibernian lineage.

The wagon was in such a position that it blocked the advance of the carriage, and the coachman, leaning forward, bent his haughty gaze on the driver and said: "Aw, say, me man, turn out there, will you?"

There was no reply, and the individual addressed gazed far into vacancy. The neck of the coachman grew purple, and there was some asperity in his tones as he called again: "Hi say, old fellow, just turn aside and let us pass, will you?"

Again there was no reply, and the occupant of the carriage came to the rescue. Leaning out of the window, with a conquering smile, she said:

"My good man, kindly turn out and allow us to pass; you are blocking the way." But the man on the cart gave no sign of hearing any more than might the statue of Gen. Grant under similar conditions. He also remained immovable.

Finally the lady gave the order to turn out and go around the other way. As the carriage disappeared the helper approached the cart.

"What was the swell sayin' to ye, Pat?" he asked.

Then the sphinx spoke: "They was wantin' me to turn out," he said, "but Oim drivin' for the city of Chicago, O! am, and O'll not turn out for anny wan!"—Chicago Tribune.

An Economical Derby.

Gabe Hunsberger recently applied to her, Whangoodle Baxter, of the Blue Light tabernacle, for some pecuniary assistance.

"I jess kain' do hit," replied Parson Baxter. "I has ter s'port my pore ole mudder."

"But yer pore ole mudder says yer don' do nuffin for her."

"Well, den, if I don' do nuffin for my pore ole mudder, what's de use ob an outlander like you tryin' ter make me shell out?"—Texas Sifter.

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Dr. Tanner's famous fast of 40 days is thrown into the background as a starvation feat by the performances of the big anaconda at the Philadelphia zoological gardens, which was only recently tempted to eat a nice fat rabbit after going hungry for 22 months. It may have been even longer, but the keepers have no record of the creature's change previous to its captivity, and so can't tell. It is not very unusual for a snake to abstain from food for several months, at the end of which time death generally results; but the anaconda case is distinctly different from any other. Its fast lasted more than twice as long as any in the history of the "sons," and during the whole of its confinement there was no evidence of ill health. The spell now seems to be entirely broken, and the anaconda calls regularly for its meals.

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By W. O. Stephens

AN ADVENTURE BY APLAT
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