Wit and Humor.

"A WANT of the age"—Hair.

RIFLE club—A gang of thieves.

A BRASS band—A pinchbeck ring.

IRREDEEMABLE bonds—Vaga-bonds.

WHEN is a prisoner like a gun? When he is discharged.

WANTED—A "picture of happiness" for a "frame of mind."

No one but a coward strikes in the dark, and then he only strikes a light.

IF I were in the sun and you were out of it, what would the sun become? Sin.

A MOTTO for the man with tender feet: "Cornucopia"—A copious amount of corns.

"YES," said a man, as he bent his elbow to raise the twentieth glass of beer, "it is overwork that kills."

"DYING in poverty," says a modern moralist, "is nothing; it is living in poverty that comes hard on a fellow."

IT is said that the Vice-President goes right ahead and never smiles. He must be a stern-Wheeler.—*New York Herald.*

LADY on shopping excursion—"Oh, dear, that blanket is much too good! I want it for charitable purposes."—*Punch.*

"AND what is arithmetic?" asked a teacher in one of our city private schools. "A book with sums in," shouted a ten-year-old boy.

"WHAT is wisdom?" asked a teacher of a class of small girls. A bright-eyed little creature arose and answered: "Information of the brain."

"THE biscuit," says a newspaper writer "is the national gastric clog, the huge sporegerm of self-propagating and self-perpetuating dyspepsia."

AN India-rubber baby has been constructed that looks and screams so like the natural one that it requires an experienced mother to tell the difference.

PROVIDENT MINISTER.—"I wish to state that I have procured an alarm clock that will wake up the congregation as soon as the service is over."—*Harper's Bazar.*

"Go out, young man, she's not here," said a Tuskegee preacher last Sunday, in the midst of his sermon, to a youth whom he saw standing hesitating in the doorway.

THE czar is self-sacrificing. He is even willing to give Servia some more Turkish territory, for the sake of peace. That beats Artemus Ward's patriotism.—*Graphic.*

IT is well enough to denounce tramps and say they won't accept positions. Just offer one of them the presidency of a bank once. That would be a square test.—*Puck.*

BALTIMORE consumes more tea than any other city in the Union, and they don't plant it either.—*Free Press.*

Hence the word "Bawl-tea-more."—*Phila. Bulletin.*

"I SAY, Jim," said one friend to another, on meeting, "I hear our friend A. has been in speculation heavily. Has he made anything?" "Yes," said Jim, "he made an assignment."

CANADA'S INVITATION:

Here is a rest for those who skip—
A home for flying cashiers found;
Far from the law's avenging grip,
They live in peace and slumber sound.

CIRCUSES are a little backward this season. Only five of them are the "biggest show on earth." Each of the other six is simply the "most complete aggregation on the road."—*Norristown Herald.*

GOOD-NATURED Doctor: "Stay, those eyes can be cured. I will undertake the operation and restore the sight." Beggar: "And deprive me of my livelihood? A pretty idea! Do you want to ruin me?"—*Funny Folks.*

THE time has come when the coroner will be called to hold inquests in the editor's sanctum, and for the juries to begin to sign verdicts reading, "Died from offering an editor poetry on spring. Justifiable homicide."

BRIDGET—"Wot's the most genteel thing for a lady as is a lady, to carry in the street, Nora?" Cook—"Sure, thin, some prefers a three-volume book; but I prefers a roll of music meself—quite careless and aisy like."

"A VACUUM would be the best place for a fellow to fall into, wouldn't it, Bill? for then, you know, he wouldn't fall against anything." "Yes, he would, though," stoutly answered Bill; "he would fall against his inclination."

WHAT if book agents should begin to carry phonographs about with them. The thought is dreadful and keeps us awake nights. Oh, Edison, we implore thee, call in the phonograph and issue no more.—*New York Mail.*

EDISON'S phonograph can whistle, sing, howl and jaw, but it can't throw a stone at a yowling cat on the back fence, or kick a chromo agent off the front stoop. There is still lots of room for improvement.—*Norristown Herald.*

KIMBALL, the church-debt raiser, was persuaded to attack the debt of a New York daily newspaper a few days ago, and he was thrown seven to eight. He sustained a sprained back and a fracture of the left clavicle. He says he is not a Samson.

Two wealthy wood carvers in Massachusetts have founded a home for destitute members of the craft. Why don't some of our wealthy poets found a home for destitute poets? This could be done by roofing in one or two continents.—*Danbury News.*

A GREEN sportsman, after a fruitless tramp, met a boy with tears in his eyes and said: "I say, youngster, is there anything to shoot around here?" The boy answered, "Nothin' just 'bout here, but there's the schoolmaster t'other side the hill. I wish you'd shoot him."

THE charms of country life: M. de Calinaux has had two electric bells placed at the head of his bed. "A good idea," said a friend; "one is for your servant, but the other?" "That communicates with the dog-kennel." "What for?" "To prevent him from barking when I hear burglars."

STUDENT: "Now, professor, do you not believe that relations of honor should exist between pupil and teacher?" Professor: "Certainly, sir." "Well, then, I tell you, on my honor as a man, that my examination paper, which I hold in my hand, is first grade, and will not hand it in. It is merely to save you trouble, sir."—*Williams Vidette.*

ONE of the Frankfort house of Rothschild called on the Emperor William at the beginning of his illness. "You see," said the Emperor, "I have passed my eightieth year, and at that age one must begin to think of the end." "Oh!" replied M. de Rothschild, "your Majesty was born to live a hundred years, and we bankers shall not let you go at less than par."

The American King of Beasts.

The jaguar has been called the American "king of beasts;" and his title to that rank is less doubtful than that of his Old World relation, the lion, whose claim to superior strength, swiftness, and sagacity, is not only disputed by the elephant, but by the gorilla, the orang-outang, and the rhinoceros, and above all by the Bengal tiger, who is his match in strength, and more than his match in swiftness and cunning. The grizzly bear of the Rocky Mountains surpasses him in weight, and, perhaps, in the bone-crunching power of his jaws, but these advantages are more than offset by the greater agility and general vigor of the tropical giant-cat.

Governor Pacheco, of California, lassoed an old grizzly in the Contra Costa Mountains, a few years ago, and dragged him home to his mother's ranch; and the same feat has been repeatedly performed by other sportsmen of his native State; but, to use the words of an old Mexican hunter of my acquaintance, you might as well try to lariat Old Scratch himself as an old jaguar.

In the summer of 1866 a French gunboat, *La Belle Rhone*, landed ammunition and supplies for the Maximilian government, in the harbor of Sasal, and before leaving the harbor took a fine jaguar on board, that had been purchased by an agent of the new zoological garden of Marseilles. The brute had been captured in a pitfall in the neighborhood of Merida, and, being a full-grown and beautiful specimen, was preferred to different tame ones which the citizens of the town offered for sale, though his ferocity made it necessary to confine him in a cage of *charca* sticks, a species of wood that does not easily break, but splinters like bamboo, and resists the attempt of any animal to gnaw it by lacerating its gums.

When the cage was brought on board the captive seemed to know that his remaining chances of escape were numbered by minutes, and braced himself for a last effort. In the moment when his movable prison was being lowered through the hatchway, he forced his paw through the staves, reached out and tore the shoulder of the nearest sailor, with a succession of ripping blows. The man jumped aside, yelling murder, his mates slipped their grip, and the cage, jaguar and all, tumbled down fifteen feet, straight into the hold, and upon a pile of pig-iron ballast, which fractured its bottom board.

The men stood aghast, and the shrieks, and the rush of stampeding laborers below, confirmed their worst fears; the jaguar was running at large in the hold of the ship.

Ignorant of the ladder and stairway conveniences, the brute attempted to regain the *superas auras* of the deck by the same road he had come down, and, after jumping from rafter to rafter, reached the luminous gate of the upper world by a desperate leap; and in the nick of time, for the sailors on deck had recovered their wits, and were dragging a trapdoor towards the dangerous hole. They were letting it down when its edge on one side came in contact with some obstacle; a paw was pushed through from below, a frightful head quickly after, and, heedless of the bellowed protests of the first mate, two of the men broke and ran. They returned, one with a handspike, and the other with a heavy bucket, but the delay had been fatal; the brute had got its second paw through, and, in spite of a shower of blows, enlarged the opening sufficiently to free the rest of its body.

A *sauve qui peut* followed, and the tiger jumped on deck and stood there for a second, glaring around with bloodshot eyes. But only for a second; fully conscious, it seemed, that there was not another moment to lose, he used the trapdoor as a jumping-board, and cleared the gunwales with a flying leap.

The boat had got under way some time ago, but had followed an along-shore course, so that the distance to terra firma was not very considerable—a mile, or a mile and a half at the farthest. But Don Tigron was by no means out of trouble yet; rifle-balls, carbine-balls, and pistol-balls made the water fly around his head, and the marines were just coming up with their muskets, when the French lieutenant interfered:

"Cessez-ca, me Cossaques! A chap that could beat us fair and square on our own deck ought not to be shot in the water, like a cowardly deserter; give him a chance."

The chance was poor enough anyhow, for the Bay of Sisal swarms with sharks and spear-fish; but fortune favors the brave, and, to his intense disgust, the man with the torn shoulder saw the brute land on the opposite shore, shake himself, and disappear in the willow thicket. Before night he was probably back in his old haunts in the Lagotasso, a wiser if not a better jaguar.—*Appletons' Journal.*

A FRENCH gentleman lately journeyed to Marseilles, taking with him the body of his mother-in-law, who had expressed a wish to be buried in the family vault in that city. When he reached Marseilles and went with the Commissioner of Police to receive the body from the railway officials, he noticed that the coffin was not that which he had delivered to them. The officials had sent to Toulon the coffin containing his mother-in-law's body, believing that it held the remains of a deceased Admiral, which was to be embarked for interment in Algeria, while the coffin awaiting delivery was the one which should have been sent on. The gentleman having requested the officials to communicate with Toulon by telegraph, proceeded hither himself with the coffin of the Admiral. He ascertained when he got there that the first coffin had been duly received, taken on board, amid the thunder of fort and fleet, the State vessel which was waiting for it, and dispatched to Algeria. He at once called upon the Maritime Prefect of Toulon and explained the circumstances of the case, but though a dispatch boat was sent in pursuit, the other vessel was not overtaken. He is now at Toulon awaiting her return, and declines to give up the coffin containing the deceased Admiral until he regains possession of his mother-in-law's remains.

A LITTLE boy who went to church was told to remember the text, which was: "Why stand ye here all the day idle? Go into my vineyard and work, and whatsoever is right, that I will pay thee." Johnny came home and was asked to repeat the text. He thought it over for awhile, and then cried out, "What do you stand round here doing nuffin for? Go into my barnyard and go to work, and I'll make it all right with you."

JOSEPH COOK says that the five great powers that rule the universe are the parlor, pulpit, press, politics and police. In short, he says, let us have p's.

The Increased Suicide Rate.

That there is an alarming increase in the number of suicides in this country is evident on reading the records as published in the daily papers. Every day the dispatches chronicle the suicide of from three to five persons, whose prominence or the circumstances of whose death make the announcement of general interest. During one month of the present year the weekly average of such suicides was over twenty, and possibly the average has been nearly as great for all the months. The reported cases take in all grades of society, and include young people as well as old; people prosperous and in good health as well as people disappointed and sick.

A correspondent of *The Inter Ocean* expresses his opinion that the increase in the suicide rate is owing to the publication of the particulars of every case of suicide, and the throwing about the act, in so many instances, the atmosphere of martyrdom or heroism. Believing that the publication of such cases exercises an unwholesome influence on persons of morbid imagination, leading them to adopt, for the sake of notoriety, the methods of the suicide, this correspondent asks that all suicide items be omitted, at least from the weekly edition of *The Inter Ocean.*

This approximates to a theory of suicide that has many advocates. As a wayward and disappointed boy takes a melancholy satisfaction in doing something that will make him sick, and picture the remorse and grief of his parents when they see him sick unto death, so it is argued that a person suffering from disease or worried by disappointment and trouble, turns to a resort that promises relief from all, and to an act that, while it stops all reproaches, arouses the sympathy of friends and appeals to the charity of enemies.

Has a man been wronged, he imagines that self-destruction in some way makes the fact prominent, and that his self-immolation makes the public the instrument for reproaching and punishing those who have wronged him. A man who thinks he has not been understood or appreciated, is apt to fancy that his sudden taking-off in a mysterious way will open the eyes of the world to the talent and ability that was allowed to perish with, him and, animated by this thought, he takes his revenge on the public by an act which he hopes will tear their hearts with remorse.

The letters left by many suicides show that in some such spirit they contemplated self-destruction. Others write as though they were simply tired of life, and disgusted with their own infirmities. Others, again, write not at all, but carry all clue as to motive with them into the beyond. While the public looks upon suicide as cowardly, it is easy for the person who has determined on suicide to convince himself that his act is in some sense heroic. Certain it is that such thinking on suicide makes men mad, and in seeking causes for the increased rate of self-destruction, we may find the principal one in the fact that with the change in public opinion toward the suicide has come a disposition to dwell more on the romantic and peculiar features of suicide cases.

In the old time the suicide was counted in the list of outcasts. The act itself received the severest condemnation of the church, and was looked upon with horror by the people. There was in public print and common conversation no disposition to excuse and no tendency to justify the act of an array of causes, or by enlarging upon the troubles and trials of the deceased. There was no encouragement to dwell on the subject in secret or public, but popular sentiment, custom, and tradition all were so many influences to direct men's minds away from the subject. The sentiment in the churches, the attitude of the church itself, and the feeling among the people at large, all have changed. There is now more charity for the act, and more consideration for the person who commits suicide, than formerly, and the means of directing public thought to such occurrences, having greatly increased, are used without scruple. In this change of public sentiment we may find one reason for the increase in the suicide rate.

Supplementary to this is the fact that suicides find apologists and defenders in many brilliant and erratic writers. An article is published written years ago by John M. Binckley (who is said to have committed suicide a few days since) which is in effect a strong plea for charitable judgment on the suicide. If Mr. Binckley did commit suicide, he applied to the disappointments of his career the reasoning common to diseased minds, and the article written in former years shows that his mind had been dwelling on the subject, and that he had taken the first step in the direction of danger.

Many seek causes for the numerous suicides in the hard times and incident privations. As a rule, however, the trials of people struggling against poverty tend to rouse the very qualities in human nature that contribute to wholesome and practical thought, even though it be common place and prosy.—*Chicago Inter Ocean.*

APPLYING THE SERMON.—The Rev. Mr. ———, of the Unitarian Church in a neighboring State, preached a sermon a few Sundays since on the importance of saying "No," and in the course of it dwelt impressively on the moral courage required to use that monysyllable at the right time. After the sermon a collection was taken for a very deserving charity. When the congregation was dismissed, a certain newspaper man waylaid the pastor in the vestibule, and seizing him by the hand thanked him effusively for the sermon—one of the most effective he had heard. The pastor modestly replied: "I'm glad you think so, but cannot see why you should."

"Why," replied he of the newspaper, "when I went into church I was fully determined to give five dollars to that charity, but your sermon impressed me so deeply that I found coursge to resist the temptation, and let the plate-passer go by with an emphatic "No!"—*Editor's Drawer, in Harper's Magazine.*

THE Lewiston, Maine, *Journal* tells the following story: "A gentleman from North Lexington, Mass., who formerly resided in this county, tells a singular circumstance which occurred recently in that town, in which a man was actually 'kicked to death by a dead horse.' It seems that the man's horse had died, a grave had been dug for the animal's body, and, with the assistance of another man, the owner was proceeding to lower the body to its final resting place. As it reached the edge of the cavity, it accidentally lurched over, one of the animal's hoofs caught in the frock which the man wore and threw him over the beast, headforemost, into the hole where he struck upon his head, breaking his neck."

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THOMAS J. JOHNSTON.

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