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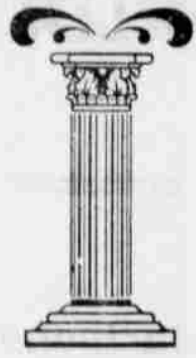
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WONDERS OF AMERICA

By T. T. MAXEY

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CZAR OF SMOKESTACK WORLD

THERE are some smokestacks that are unbelievably big—too big to be true—but the one recently completed for the reduction works of the Anaconda Copper Mining company at Anaconda, Montana, sets up a new world record.

The concrete base on which this gigantic structure stands required 118 cars of crushed rock, 50 cars of sand and 20,800 sacks of cement to complete and weighs approximately 9,250 tons.

The stack proper is constructed of specially shaped blocks or bricks about two and one-half times the size of the ordinary brick and it took 2,464,672 of these larger units to complete the job.

To make the mortar necessary to lay these brick required 77 cars of sand, 37 cars of fire clay and 41,250 sacks of cement. The estimated weight of the brick work is 23,810 tons.

The exterior diameter of this smoke-and-gas elevator is 80 feet at the base, while the interior diameter at the top tapers down to 60 feet. The wall is 22 inches thick at the top. The maximum height of the stack and its base is 585 feet 1 1/2 inches.

Smokestacks of extreme size are desirable and in fact necessary, in connection with certain classes of mining operations, to prevent the destruction of vegetation by the extensive quantities of strong and poisonous fumes and gases which result from the reducing operations.

MOST TALK NOT CONFESSIVE

Assertion Made That Anecdotes Compose by Far the Greatest Part of Conversations of Americans.

For hours a group of men will talk, and all problems fall like ducks on a rifle range before their well-aimed epigrams. It may be a brilliant session, but we cannot forbear thinking that not many serious thoughts are expressed with fervor, that few honest emotions have adequate utterance. A gathering often is devoted to anecdotes, quips and the cracking of jokes, like the biblical thorns, under the conversational pot.

Of course, much conversation is necessarily anecdotal, but two travelers who meet in the smoker of a train crossing our American plains do not tell anecdotes merely, says the New York Sun. There the anecdotes take on more meat and grow in length—they become tales. Again, however learned we are, we forget our pedantry when we talk in a smoker. Yet over a meal among those we know and will meet again we slough off our impulse to modesty and sincere self-expression and launch forth in all our drab erudition or else we sparkle in anecdote and say nothing to the point; forgetting that the best jests, aside the point, seem pointless.

In short, there is not always enough confessional conversation between Americans. In France and in Latin America the art of confession—of the confession, indeed, of one's faults, follies and fancies. As for us, we feel that no one is so sympathetic perhaps, as to merit listening to our personal histories, or, what is more to the point, the emotional accompaniment of these histories.

ORIGIN OF POPULAR SAYINGS

Many That Have in Time Become Household Words Can Be Traced to First User.

"A red-letter day" is an expression which arose out of the old ecclesiastical calendar, in which festivals and high holidays were printed in red ink. These important days consequently became known as "Red-Letter Days"—hence the term today. "Murder will out" is a phrase which Geoffrey Chaucer originated, although in the first instance it was spelt "Mordre wol out." "Truth is stranger than fiction" is a well-used saying, and perhaps it is not generally known that it was originally employed by Byron in his "Don Juan." "Escaped with the skin of his teeth," it is interesting to observe, originates in the Bible—Job, chapter 19, verse 20. "Field" originally meant land on which trees had been "felled" or "field." "Necessity is the mother of invention" is well over two and a half centuries old. These well-known words were first found in Franck's "Northern Memoirs," written in 1658. "Eaten her out of house and home," a phrase, in view of the present price of food, undoubtedly repeated by worried housewives, was originated by Shakespeare in his "Henry IV." "Anything for a quiet life" is an expression which arose from a play by Middleton, bearing that title. "Turn over a new leaf," by the way, was first used in the same play.

In the Whirl.

Hobson—The girl is very keen to get in the whirl.
Taylor—Then tell her to come down to our office and come in by the revolving door when a crowd of messenger boys are going through.—Houston Post.

VULTURES ON THE GANGES

Scavenger Birds Perform Function That is in High Degree Repulsive to Westerners.

On December 2, 1920, writes a correspondent, I was in the vicinity of the Massacre Ghat, of evil repute in the Mutiny of 1857, and saw a vulture over the Ganges. This scavenger bird was apparently on the surface of the water, and was flapping its huge wings, for all the world as if a small crocodile had gripped its talons and was trying to drag it under. Then I observed a white object come to the surface momentarily and bob under again. My interest was aroused at the strange proceedings which followed. The vulture flapped its wings as the weight of the flotsam told on its strength. Again the white broke the surface and as it did so the huge bird, with fully opened wing, appeared to be using itself in the manner of a sail, and, with the help of the breeze, which was blowing, stirred its prey out of the mid-stream, flopping every now and then, till at last it ran the white object right up on a gently sloping shelf of sand on the near bank. By this time the air was thick with birds, and no sooner had the vulture in question beached its capture than a cluster of like birds swooped down, and the whole commenced an orgy of feasting and fighting. The next day a human skeleton remained.

HABIT WAS STRONG ON HIM

Even Smith's Words of Wisdom Failed to Keep Jones' Attention From Wandering.

Smith and Jones were personal friends, so one day Smith took a personal friend's liberty and said to Jones:

"You mustn't take offense if I speak to you about something I have had on my mind for some time—just a little habit of yours."

"Nobody has ever had the nerve to tell you before," Smith continued in a hesitating sort of voice, "and you are such a splendid, noble fellow."

"Yes, yes," answered Jones.

Smith cleared his throat; then, with great determination, launched out:

"You're one of those fellows who never really know what is being said to them; you're always pursuing some train of thought. Any one can tell half the time you are not listening by the faraway look in your eyes. You've offended a lot of people. Of course, it's terribly rude, only you don't know it. You mustn't any more, old chap"—putting his hands on Jones' shoulders. "Promise me you'll not."

Jones was then obliged to face his friend.

"Just what were you saying?" he inquired in a faraway voice.

Is Your Hair Long?

The fact that a person was wrongly certified as insane led to a discussion the other day as to whether long hair was a sign of insanity, London Answers states.

It was said that, although this was no evidence of insanity, it might probably be proof of eccentricity. Many of our greatest geniuses have possessed remarkable crops of hair.

It was once said that the love of music, or the possession of musical talents, tended to increase the growth of hair, and, indeed, when one looks round there are many instances to make this seem feasible.

A great man once made a statement to the effect that there was only a thin dividing line between genius and lunacy. So if long hair is a sign of insanity and genius and there is only a thin dividing line between the two, it behooves us to be very careful how we treat long-haired, eccentric-looking individuals, for fear they prove to be some one too great to risk offending.

Taiping Rebellion 1850-1865.

What is known in history as the Taiping rebellion was an insurrection of a section of the Chinese which originated in 1850 and was not suppressed until 1865. The rebels were under the leadership of a man who declared that he was divinely commissioned by heaven to establish a universal peace, though his real object was to overthrow the Manchurian dynasty at Peking. This rebel chief, the Detroit News recalls, was named Hung Siu-suan, who began life as a village schoolmaster. Branching out, he styled himself "the heavenly king" and his dynasty "Taiping" or "Great Peace." For a time the insurrection was one of formidable dimensions, but the rebels were finally defeated, largely through the assistance of British troops, led by Gen. Charles G. Gordon (1833-1885), thereafter popularly known as "Chinese" Gordon.

Health and Wealth.

"Dr. Pillers seems to be a fashionable physician."
"I should say so! He has patients at some of the most expensive health resorts in America and a waiting-list of people whose health will give way as soon as they get money enough to consult him."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

The Family Luxury.

Guest—It's curious to me that your other daughters have married into large mercantile houses and your youngest daughter is engaged to a poet.
Host—Yes, I allowed it. The family needs him as an adornment.

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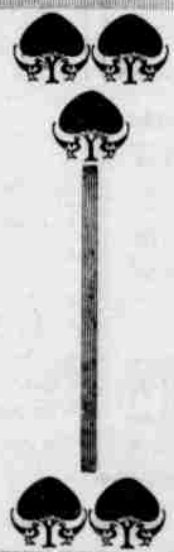
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