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A MOTHER'S MISTAKE.

Through Ridicule She Lost the Confidence of Her Children.

The mater was talking to my aunt the other day. I happened to overhear what they were saying. I couldn't help it. The mater was complaining because Clifford and I don't tell her things, don't confide in her what we're doing and what we're going to do and what we want to do.

It's quite true. We don't! But I don't think it's out fault. I believe it is due to another of the mater's mistakes. When we were kids, of course, we had all sorts of mighty ideas. Clifford meant to be president of the United States, and I meant to carve out a career with my sword and be a major general at least—the sort of rot, you know, that you do talk when you're a silly little thing.

Well, the mater used to laugh at us. I remember quite distinctly once I said something about what I would do when I was a general, and she said:

"What a ridiculous child you are! You'll never make a soldier!"

And she told the pater about it, and he laughed too. You don't know how that upset me. I know that I was a silly little child and that I was talking awful rot, but I don't think they need have ridiculed me like that. Anyway, after a little bit both Clifford and I couldn't help feeling that it wasn't good enough. We left off saying anything to the mater or pater about what we wanted to be. Then we began to keep our own counsel about what we were actually doing.

And now we've got into a regular habit of minding our own business and only telling the mater things that are really necessary. I know it hurts her, but I can't help it now. And don't you think it's not altogether my fault?—Philadelphia Inquirer.

Thunder and Rain.

The downpour of rain that sometimes follows a flash of lightning is usually supposed to be due to the coalescence of fine drops on losing their electrical charge, but Mr. Laine, a Finnish observer, concludes that the thunder jars the drops together. Near Vasa a heavy thunderstorm came up from the east late one afternoon, and, as the sun was unclouded, a brilliant double rainbow appeared in the east for half an hour, arching from horizon to horizon. At each roll of thunder the rainbows seemed to be much shaken, the edges being displaced and the colors blurred. This could not be due to the lightning, and it seemed that the same cause might enlarge the raindrops and disturb the rainbows.

A Story of Brignoli.

Praise went a long way with Brignoli. One evening at rehearsal in New York the orchestra laid down their instruments as one man and applauded his singing of a favorite song long and vigorously. He was much pleased and, advancing to the footlights with many a bow and smile of satisfaction, said:

"Gentlemen, immediately after the rehearsal there will be a champagne supper at the Everett House. I hope I may have the honor to meet you all there."

It is needless to remark that they were there, every man of them. The supper cost Brignoli \$500.

Her Sentiments.

It is related of a clergyman who was the father of a charming and beautiful daughter that one day while preparing his Sunday sermon he was suddenly called away from his desk on a mission of mercy. The sentence at which he left off was this: "I never see a young man of splendid physique and the promise of a glorious manhood almost realized but my heart is filled with rapture and delight."

His daughter, happening to enter the study, saw the sermon and read the words. Sitting down, she wrote underneath, "My sentiments, papa, exactly!"

Conditional.

A Scotsman was on his deathbed, and his friend persuaded him to forgive a neighbor with whom he had had a standing feud for some years.

The neighbor came to the dying man's bedside.

After they had shaken hands and made peace the dying man exclaimed:

"If I get better, Donald, remember all this goes for naught."—Pearson's Weekly.

A Race For Fun.

The younger Dumas is said to have thus passed judgment on the efforts of a would be humorist. Of this man some one said to him, "Poor fellow, he is always on a chase after a joke."

"And the joke always wins," Dumas observed mildly.

"SEEING STARS."

The Curious Illusion That May Come With a Blow on the Head.

Usually the sensation occasioned by a blow on the head or in the eye is accompanied by a hallucination. The person struck thinks that he sees something similar to the light of stars or fireworks. Such an illusion follows the compression of the globe of the eye. If there is a sudden relaxation of the eyeball, due perhaps to a passing paralysis of the external muscular system of the eye, the effect is like that of a strong breath exhaled over the face of a mirror. Instead of a shower of sparks or stars, a veil falls flimlike on the eye.

A man "sees stars" because the eye has been momentarily flattened either by sudden action or by a spontaneous spasm. Sudden sickness, a swoon, nausea or some too poignant emotion may be enough to produce the reflex movement. The most peculiar feature is that the initial seat of the phenomenon is not in the eye, but in the ear. This is a recognized physiological fact that has been demonstrated by the best eye specialists. The sense of locality, the sense of space, to which man owes his power to stand alone, to walk straight, to look straight forward or in any chosen direction, the sense which regulates his attitudes and co-ordinates his gestures, is seated in the semicircular canals of the internal ear. When a hemorrhage, a wound or a violent disturbance of any sort produces disorder in the semicircular canals the disturbance is followed by vertigo. Vertigo is a visible trouble. The victim cannot use his eyes. If he can see at all his vision is blurred or deceitful, and he imagines that he is either falling or rising from the earth.

There is a close relationship between the nerves of the eye and those of the internal ear, and some skillful physicians have declared that the physician who is summoned to a case of eye trouble should begin his diagnosis by a careful examination of the periphery of the outer ear, as well as the mechanism of the internal ear centers. —Harper's Weekly.

The Humorous Suabians.

"Next to the Americans," said Max Nordau, "I think that the Suabians are the most humorous people in the world. A Suabian, if he has nothing funny to say, keeps silent. Stupidity is unknown among this race."

"One night in Suabia in my early youth I called on a Suabian maiden. She was very pretty. Perhaps I stayed longer than I should. Suddenly, at any rate, the young girl's mother called in a loud voice from upstairs:

"Gretchen! Gretchen!"

"Yes, mother," Gretchen answered.

"Gretchen, it is very cold here. Will you ask that young man to shut the front door from the outside?"

The Indian Chief Tammany.

The aborigines, whatever may be said against them, enjoyed natural beauty, and their habitations were often made in this delightful region, their councils being attended by Chief Tammenend, or Tammany, a Delaware, whose wisdom and virtues were such as to raise him to the place of patron saint of America. The Tammany society of New York is named for him. When this chief became old and feeble his tribe abandoned him in a hut at New Britain, Pa., and there he tried to kill himself by stabbing; but, failing in that, he flung burning leaves over himself and so perished. He was buried where he died.—From "Myths and Legends of Our Own Land."

Kongo Free State.

The Kongo Free State was practically unknown to white men prior to 1876, when it was explored by the Belgian authorities. It was recognized by the European powers as a state in 1885. The country comprises a strip of territory on the right bank of the river Kongo, as well as some 802,000 square miles, an area larger than that of the republic of Mexico. It has a population of only a few thousand whites and about 16,000,000 of blacks. Its climate in many places is bad for Europeans, though it may be possible, with scientific sanitation, to make a safe abode for whites.—New York American.

An Uncharitable Division.

"Teacher said charity begins at home. Do you know what that means, mamma?"

"Yes."

"Did you know it means that Aunt Jane is a wicked lady?"

"Why, Georgie?"

"Yes, it does. Aunt Jane has got a bucketful of hair an' three switches, an' Uncle Jim is most as bald as an egg."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

THE PICAYUNE.

What the Coin Used to Buy When It Was in Circulation.

The first time I ever saw a penny was at school in Yankeeland in 1847. It was given me to pay the man for bringing me a letter from the postoffice—10 cents postage, 1 cent delivery in those days. People had to get their mail at the office. There was no free delivery. Certain neighborhoods of spinsters, however—the college town was full of such—secured the services of a lame, halt or blind man to bring their letters from the office to their door once a day for the stipend of a penny each.

There was no coin in circulation of less value than a picayune where was my home. A picayune represented so little value that a miser was called picayunish. At the same time it represented such a big value that we children felt rich when we had one tied in the corner of our handkerchief. Old Manette, who set up her table and urn for an hour or so every morning at the corner of Camp and Canal streets, served delicious hot coffee—a big cupful, too—for a picayune, but when I was out of bed early enough for that it was to go to market with John. Then we took our coffee at Palmyre's stand, for she supplemented a greasy cake the size of a cracker as lagniappe with the coffee. At the corner of Chartres and Canal streets was a tiny soda fountain where one could get a glass of soda for a picayune—or mead. We children liked mead. I never see it now, but as I recall it was a thick, honey, creamy drink. We must have preferred it because it seemed so much more for a picayune than the frothy, effervescent, palish soda water. It was a great lark to go with pa and take my glass of mead while he ordered ginger sirup (of all things!) with his soda. In the changes years bring, a penny now buys about what a picayune did in my day. One pays a penny for ever so big a newspaper today. A picayune was the price of a small sheet in my time.—Mrs. E. Ripley in New Orleans Times-Democrat.

A Pardonable Pun.

Most if not all of the deep sea sounding now done is done with steel wire. Professor Silvanus P. Thompson in his recent "Life of William Thomson," better known as Lord Kelvin, says that that scientist was one of the first to recommend the abandonment of the old hemp rope system.

In connection with this use of steel wire the story is told that Joule, visiting White's shop, found Sir William surrounded by coils of wire which he was inspecting and on inquiring their use was told that they were pianoforte wire for sounding.

"For sounding what note?" inquired Joule.

"The deep C," was Sir William's reply.

One Way to Create Peers.

Peereages have sometimes been acquired in curious ways. When the head of a well known west country family was raised to the upper house a good deal of surprise was expressed at such a distinction being conferred upon him, for he had not rendered any particular service to his party, having lost practically every election he had contested. Lord Beaconsfield furnished me with the key to this enigma. "Well," said he, "we really did not know what to do with him, for he was positively doing us harm. Wherever he stood he was beaten, so at last we thought the best way to get rid of him would be to send him to the upper house."—From "Under Five Reigns."

The Ironclad Vessel.

The famous naval battle in Hampton Roads was the first real test of the ironclad vessel. Before that memorable affair there had been one or two armored craft, but they had not been tried in battle. The Hampton Roads fight sounded the doom of the wooden warship. It was seen at once that such vessels were useless against craft like the Monitor or Merrimac, and the navies of the world were instantaneously revolutionized. Since 1862 no nation has had other than armored warships.—New York American.

Casey's Picture.

Casey decided to go into business, so he bought out a small livery stable and had a painter make a sign for him showing him astride a mule. He had this sign placed in front of the stable and was quite proud of it. His friend Finnigan happened along and stood gazing at the sign.

"That's a good picture of me, ain't it?" asked Casey.

"Sure; it looks something like you," said Finnigan, "but who the devil is the man on your back?"—National Monthly.

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