OLDEN POSTAL METHODS.

Friends Often Pressed Into Service as Letter Carriers.

For years the world's postoffices acted as if their mission was to prevent people from writing letters. The present generation, which sends a postal card from Maine to the Philippines for a cent, has little idea of how heavy the postage rates once were.

Rowland Hill convinced the English postoffice department that its duty was to encourage and not to prohibit letter writing. In 1840 the uniform penny post was introduced into England, but in this country the postal authorities clung to the prohibitory idea for several years after the British had given it up, narrates the Philadelphia Record.

In those days correspondents looked out for friends about to go from one city to another by whom they might transmit their letters. Even merchants used this method for sending business letters.

In English towns it was formerly the principal duty of the "outdoor" clerk to hunt for friends about to go to London, so that letters might be transmitted by them free of postage.

It was then the custom for every one intending to travel to secure a seat beforehand, just as a berth is now engaged on an ocean steamer. The clerks used to go round to the coach office and ascertain by whom places had been booked. If friends they were used as gratuitous postmen, and it did not injure a man at his banker's to be known as a good letter carrier.

Women were in the habit of allowing their correspondence to accumulate against the departure of some man of their acquaintance. So onerous was this burden of delivering letters that many men took special pains to conceal their intended journey from women friends. They could not say them nay, and they didn't care to spend half a day as a postman in a strange city.

The Satin Bower Bird.

"That is a most remarkable bird. I don't think I ever heard sweeter tones or a greater range of notes in any feathered creature," said a woman visitor in the Bronx zoo to her companion as they stood in front of a cage in which was a lone satin bower bird from east Australia. The antipodean songster is about the size of a dove and has a lustrous blue black color. Its power of mimicry is most unusual. At times it will warble like a canary, then chirp like a sparrow or a starling and again break out into the evening song of the robin. It was able to catch the distinctive notes of many of the birds in the neighboring cages and seemed happy in pouring forth its melody. The keeper had put a quantity of twigs into the cage, and the bird had arranged these into the shape of a bower for a playground as it was accustomed to do in its faroff home. —New York Sun.

A Mistake That Paid.

Mistakes made on purpose are sometimes profitable, and a New York merchant illustrates it thus: "A concern owed me $50, and repeated duns did no good. The debt was perfectly square, but I had no documentary evidence on which to base a suit, so I decided to be foxy and secure such proof. I sent a bill for $100, with a caustic letter, figuring that the concern would answer, repudiating the claim of $100 and saying that the amount was $50. Once I got this admission I would be in a position to sue. Imagine my surprise and pleasure when I received a letter from the manager of the concern apologizing for the delay and inclosing a check for $100."

Carborundum In Furnaces.

Carborundum, the artificial substitute for emery, which is said to rival the diamond in hardness, is employed because of its extraordinary resistance to heat as a coating for the interior of furnaces. Finely powdered and made into a paste, it is applied with a brush, like paint, to the brick lining. It is said that a layer of only two millimeters in thickness will protect the bricks from the effects of the highest temperature that is produced in ordinary furnace combustion.

Carborundum is itself a product of the electric furnace, being composed of silica and carbon fused in the presence of salt and sawdust. —Harper's.

Cause and Effect.

"Private" John Allen of Mississippi was in his office one day when a seedy and exceedingly unwashed tramp came in and told him a tale of woe.

"I need a little money," said the hobo, "for I am in a bad fix. Not only am I hungry, but I am all broken up physically. I have dislocated my left shoulder."

"In that event," said Allen dryly, "you must have tried to put on a clean shirt."—Popular Magazine.

WHEN CATTLE STAMPEDE.

Rush of a Frightened Herd Is Worse Than a Cavalry Charge.

Stars aid the cattlemen on the great western plains as much as the north star aids the mariner at sea, but to the cattlemen the stars are a warning rather than a guide. A keen watch is kept especially on the seven stars in the Great Bear and the five stars outlining the letter "W" in the constellation of Cassiopeia.

When the cattle are rounded up for the night the foreman of the "cow camp" tells the first guard to watch those stars and report to him if there is any change in their appearance. When the air is heavy the stars seem nearer, but when, in consequence of a change in the temperature, the air grows thinner, the stars, although more sharply defined, seem farther away.

If the night is heavy few stars are seen, but as the barometer rises first one and then another star comes into view. Then the cowboy on guard wakes the foreman and says, "Another star out, sir."

The foreman tells him to double the guard and adds, "Wake me if the cows get to milling."

The guard is doubled, but soon the cattle grow restless, apparently without reason. They have been lying closely together and chewing their cuds, but suddenly a part of the herd begins to move, and then the whole. The cattle rise clumsily to their feet and begin "milling"—that is, moving round and round in a circle. The moment that the cowboys notice this restlessness they begin to shout and sing, and in most cases the cattle lie down again, for their fears are calmed by the sound of human voices. But if the milling is not checked and the cattle are not quieted a stampede is likely to occur.

There is no greater danger on the western plains than a stampede of a herd. Cattlemen can stand the discomforts of thirst and hunger, cold and rain, dust storms and other hardships, but a stampede fills them with dread. The rush of a herd of frightened cattle has been described as more appalling than the most desperate cavalry charge. Nothing can withstand it; everything and every one goes down before it. Men are trampled to death. Many a cowboy, unable to ride it out, has been ground to pieces by thousands of sharp hoofs as the herd, in the frenzy of wild, unreasoning terror, swept onward to its own destruction.

According to the belief of old cattlemen, cattle suddenly grow restless in this way because they are extremely susceptible to sudden changes in the atmosphere. Unlike the placid barnyard cow, the free roving steer of the great western plains is a high strung and nervous animal. A close watch must be kept on the herd after it is rounded up for the night.—Youth's Companion.

Origin of "Dago."

The word "dago," whereby many Americans are wont to designate a foreigner of the Latin race, had its origin in California. In the early days of the Golden State the hewers of wood and the drawers of water were Portuguese. They cultivated thrifty little gardens and carried on a fishing trade along the shores and up the creeks near San Francisco. The most common name among them was diego, pronounced deeaygo, and the transition from diego to dago was quite natural. The epithet was transplanted from the Pacific to the Atlantic coast, where it is now just as familiar.—New York Press.

Woman's Work In Europe.

In Germany 9,400,000, in France 6,800,000, in Austria 5,600,000 and in England 5,300,000 women are employed in manufactures and trades. To every 100 workmen in Austria there are 43 women, France 34, Italy 32, Germany 30, Switzerland 29, England 24 and Sweden 21. The percentage of women who have independent businesses has risen most rapidly. To every twenty-three small businesses carried on by men there are ten carried on by women.

Doing His Part.

"And so you've been getting married, Sam."

"Oh, yes, sah."

"And did you go on a honeymoon, Sam?"

"A what, sir?"

"A honeymoon. Did you travel?"

"Oh, yes, sah. I traveled."

"Where did you go, Sam?"

"I went to de neighbors' houses for de washin', sah."—Yonkers Statesman.

Two Friends.

Little Willie—What is the difference between a close friend and a dear friend?

Pa—A close friend, my son, is one who will not lend you any money, while a dear friend is one who borrows all you will stand for.

BRITISH PRECEDENCE.

Some of Its Delicate Points and a Few Dilemmas.

A writer in the London Express gives some interesting pointers on social and official precedence in England and calls attention to a few of the many delicate dilemmas due to questions of rank and station.

"In the first place," he says, "I may mention that it is a common error to suppose that all peers take precedence of all commoners. Not only is this untrue in the case of official precedence, but it is equally untrue of personal precedence. Thus a duke's eldest son would precede all earls and a duke's younger son and a marquis' eldest son all viscounts, while the eldest sons of earls and the younger sons of marquises have precedence over all bishops and barons.

"Again, in the matter of peers themselves it is not right, as is so often said, to range peers of the same degree in the order of the date of their patents. Before this test is applied there has to be a preliminary marshaling of them by the class of their creation—peers of England preceding those of Scotland, and both preceding those of Great Britain, while peers of Ireland and the United Kingdom follow after.

"Certain high officers of state precede all peers, and this is why their offices are so much coveted by great nobles. When the late Lord Salisbury, a marquis, became lord privy seal he at once passed over the heads of all marquises and dukes (saving royal dukes) and stood in order eighth from the king's nephew. Again, judges of the high court are almost invariably knighted, but not for their own sakes, for a judge of the high court takes precedence long before a knight, but it is to give their wives special precedence that the custom has obtained. Thus the late Mr. Justice Wright was a bachelor when elevated to the bench, and it was not until he married that he accepted knighthood.

"Men, indeed, are often careless of their own claims, but their wives have a habit of being particularly observant of such points, and it is from the women that the reckless or ignorant hostess will hear of her disregard of their rank. Nor are such offenses readily forgotten or forgiven. Now, there seems to be a general idea that the wife of a peer takes precedence of the dowager peeress—usually but not, of course, always her mother-in-law. As a matter of fact, the dowager precedes the reigning peeress on the ground that she is senior in dignity, her husband being nearer the succession. On the other hand, but on the same ground, the sons of the reigning peer take precedence of those of the late peer.

"If a woman is a peeress in her own right her position is secure, and she cannot derogate from her dignity, though she may add to it by marrying into a higher rank.

"Another point is sometimes forgotten—the position of the wives of the sons of peers. The wife of the eldest son of a duke goes in before countesses and all other peeresses of lower rank. So, too, does a duke's daughter. The wife of the eldest son of a marquis, the wives of the younger sons of dukes and daughters of marquises precede viscountesses.

"As to the lower title, the wives of baronets rank according to their husband's class and date of creation, but with this exception—the baronets of England, Scotland, Great Britain and Ireland rank only according to the dates of creation. Daughters of baronets naturally precede the daughters of knights, and between them come the wives of the eldest sons of knights. The daughter of a knight, be it noted, takes precedence of the wives of the younger sons of baronets and, as a consequence, of the wives of the younger sons of knights.

"Finally there is no social precedence between the professions, as such, but a colonel in the army and a captain in the navy are esquires by right of that position, and they would rightly be preceded by a clergyman who happened to be, let me say, the son of a knight."

Poor Little Girl.

Little Helen, who is a great talker and aged just three, was annoying her father one day by her almost endless chatter. He was endeavoring to finish some important writing, so said: "Run away, dear. Daddy is very busy."

Helen toddled off and after the space of about five minutes returned and, standing beside her father's chair, laid an appealing fat hand on his arm and, looking up into his face with a most grieved air, said: "Daddy, I's very lonely. I tan't find any one to leave myself wif."—Delineator.