

## CROSSING THE RUBICON.

Legend of the Vision That Guided Imperial Caesar.

Caesar was yet lingering on the hither bank of the Rubicon when suddenly, at a point not far distant from himself, an apparition was descried in a sitting posture and holding in its hand what seemed a flute. This phantom was of unusual size, and of beauty more than human, so far as its lineaments could be traced in the early dawn.

What is singular, however, in the story is that the others saw it as well as Caesar, both pastoral laborers (who were present probably in the character of guides) and some of the sentinels stationed at the pass of the river. These men fancied, even, that a strain of music issued from the aerial flute, and some, both of the shepherds and the Roman soldiers who were bolder than the rest, advanced toward the figure.

Among this party it happened that there were a few Roman trumpeters. From one of these the phantom, rising as they advanced nearer, suddenly caught a trumpet, and, blowing through it a blast of superhuman strength, plunged into the Rubicon, passed to the other bank and disappeared in the dusky light of the dawn. Upon which Caesar exclaimed: "It is finished, the die is cast! Let us follow whither the guiding portends from heaven and the malice of our enemy alike summon us to go."

So saying, he crossed the river with impetuosity, and, in a sudden rapture of passionate and vindictive ambition, placed himself and his retinue upon the Italian soil, and, as if by inspiration from heaven, the one moment involved himself and his followers in treason, raised the standard of revolt, put his foot upon the neck of the invincible republic which had humbled all the kings of the earth, and founded an empire which was to last a thousand and half a thousand years.

In what manner this spectral appearance was managed—whether Caesar was its author or its dupe—will remain unknown forever, but undoubtedly this was the first time that the advance guard of a victorious army was headed by an apparition, and we may conjecture that it will be the last.—De Quincy.

## Sandals and Moccasins.

With all our wonderful machinery we produce shoes which are not so good for our feet as the most primitive and simplest of foot coverings, the sandal, which is considered ideal by those who appreciate the beauty of the human foot and wish to preserve it. The sandal was worn by the ancient Egyptians and Greeks, and the "shoes" of the Bible were sandals. The same type is still worn by the peoples of Central Asia, India, Japan and China. The Indian moccasin, which extends over the top of the foot, but has the sole and main part in one piece, is one of the best of foot coverings, soft, flexible and durable. Out of a combination of these two the sole without an upper, and the upper without a sole, the modern shoe has been evolved.—New York Sun.

## Anything but Music.

"I often met the late Jules Massenet in Monte Carlo," said a Newport woman. "The great composer had a keen sense of humor."

"At a hotel in Monte Carlo an Englishwoman once gave M. Massenet a tea in her sitting room overlooking the blue Mediterranean. She brought out her daughter in the middle of the tea and set her down at the piano, and the girl sang in a voice as slender as a cotton thread the mirror music from 'Thais.' At the end of the song the hostess said:

"Tell me frankly, cher maitre, what do you think of my Emily's voice?"

"Madame," said Massenet, "I think the young lady has a brilliant future in sculpture or painting."

## His Daughter.

A gentleman who was once stopped by an old man begging replied, "Don't you know, my man, that fortune knocks once at every man's door?"

"Yes," said the old man; "he knocked at my door once, but I was out, and ever since then he has sent his daughter."

"His daughter?" replied the gentleman. "What do you mean?"

"Why, Miss Fortune."

## He Was Polite.

It was once told to a certain king of England that Lord Blank was his politer subject. "I will test him," said the king and showed Lord Blank to the royal carriage, holding the door for him to enter first, which he did. "You are right," said the king. "A lesser man would have troubled me with ceremony."

## CURIOUS STREET NAMES.

They Have Some Quiser Ones Abroad, Especially in London.

Europe is the land of queer street names. In London especially there is a bewildering variety. Bermondsey boasts a Pickle Her-ring street. Near Gray's Inn there is to be found a Cold Bath square. Most of the Nightingale lanes and Love lanes are hidden, ironically enough, in the slums of the east end of the British metropolis.

Houndsditch, according to Stow, derives its unsavory title from the city ditch "full of dead dogs." Formerly London possessed plenty of equally cacophonous thoroughfares. Crackbrain court was in Whitechapel and Dead Man's lane adjoined Dirty lane in Southwark. King Edward street, the site of the general postoffice, was called for centuries Stinking lane. Appropriately enough, Cutthroat lane led out of the notorious Ratcliff highway, now civilized into St. George's street. Hangman's lane stood near the Tower, and there was a Bandy-leg alley in Fleet street; Break-neck court, opposite the Old Bailey, where Goldsmith lived when he first settled in London. This has disappeared. But there is a Gutter lane in Cheapside and Bleeding-heart yard, familiar to readers of "Little Dorrit," will still be found at Hatton Garden.

In Brussels some of the street names are downright bizarre. The Short Street of the Long Chariot, the Street of the Red Haired Women and the Street of Sorrows are remarkable enough to catch the least observant eye. The Street of the One Person is, as one might guess, an extremely narrow one. But the most curious of all Brussels names of streets surely belongs to the Street of the Uncracked Silver Coconut. This, in the original, appears as one ponderous word of thirty-six letters.

Among the old street names of Paris may be mentioned the Street of the Little Windows, the Street of the Mule's Foot, the Street of the Holy Fathers, the Street of the Daughters of Calvary, the Street of the Dry Tree, the Street of the Empty Pocket and the Boulevard of the Good News.—New York Press.

## An Odious Comparison.

Will Irwin has a friend who went abroad while Victoria was still on the throne, and in London saw Bernhardt play Cleopatra.

The scene came where Cleopatra receives news of Mark Antony's defeat at Actium. Bernhardt was at her best as Egypt's fiery queen that night. She stabbed the unfortunate slave who had borne the tidings to her, stormed, raved, frothed at the mouth, wrecked the palace and finally, as the curtain fell, dropped in a shuddering, convulsive heap in the wreckage.

Amid the thunderous applause Irwin's friend heard a middle aged British matron in the next seat remarking to herself in tones of satisfaction:

"How different—how very different from the home life of our own dear queen!"—Saturday Evening Post.

## A Few First Aid Hints.

These hints are meant for public instruction for those of the laity who may have occasion to extend first aid in case of accidents:

Don't put your finger on an open wound; don't put a quid of tobacco on a wound, no matter how small it may be; don't use cobwebs or hornets' nest to stop bleeding; don't dose the patient with whisky, brandy, rum or gin; don't bind or cover a wound with a handkerchief or rag (if you cannot get a first aid packet use clean old muslin that has been dipped in boiling water for a few minutes); don't sit a patient up when he is very pale or weak; don't wash a wound, and don't remove blood clots.

## A Careful Horse.

A traveler in Indiana noticed that a farmer was having trouble with his horse. It would start, go slowly for a short distance, and then stop again. Thereupon the farmer would have great difficulty in getting it started. Finally the traveler approached and asked solicitously:

"Is your horse sick?"

"Not as I know of."

"Is he balky?"

"No. But he is so danged 'fraid I'll say whoa and he won't hear me that he stops every once in awhile to listen."—Everybody's.

## What Happens.

In a written examination on physical geography one of the questions was:

"What happens when there is an eclipse of the moon?"

A boy with rather an admirable knack of getting out of a difficulty wrote the following answer:

"A great many people come out to look at it."—London Answers.

## WEIRD STORY OF THE SEA.

A Winged Messenger, Its Fateful Mission and Its Reward.

The following story was published by a sea captain in Aftonblad of Stockholm recently. There are many people still living in Arendal who remember the occurrence which is here described.

One dark night several years ago a sailing vessel from Arendal, Norway, was crossing the north Atlantic on its way from America to England. There was a strong east wind, against which the ship was tacking. As it drew toward eight bells in the evening the captain was walking back and forth on the bridge, trying to make up his mind whether to put about or to continue on the same course for another watch or two.

As he walked he suddenly received a blow on his chest, which, he discovered, had been dealt by a sea bird. Then his winged assistant quickly disappeared to leeward.

A few moments later the captain was just giving the command to turn the vessel when he again received a blow in the chest from the same messenger. Then the bird disappeared as before in a southwesterly direction. After this had been repeated several more times, the bird, after each blow flying off toward the southwest, the captain, who thought there must be something supernatural in the matter, decided to follow the bird. Instead of turning back he caused the boat's course to be set toward the southwest. This was no sooner done than the bird settled down on the ship's railing beside the captain.

The boat now sailed at a great pace before the strong wind. But although a sharp watch was kept aft as well as forward, half the night passed and nothing unusual was discovered.

The crew began to joke about the "old man's" maneuver, and the captain himself doubted the wisdom of continuing to sail out of his course, losing distance which a great deal of tacking would be required to regain.

At 2 o'clock in the morning he was on the point of giving the order to turn again, when the lookout on the foreyard sung out that he saw a glow as of a fire ahead.

All the waning interest woke again.

Soon the vessel found itself approaching a burning ship, and it lay to as close as was practicable.

A boat was lowered and found many men floating about on hen-coops, pieces of wreckage and other floating articles from the burning ship. They were weak and exhausted, having chosen a slow death in the ocean to being burned alive or suffocated by the fire.

When the sufferers had been cared for to the best of the rescuing vessel's ability, and the vessel's bow had been turned again toward England, the sailors found that the bird was still on board. Nor did it leave the boat again. But one day, after the vessel had reached the English channel, one of those who had been saved from the burning ship kicked the bird to death in revenge for a bite from its bill.

## Styles in Wedding Rings.

Somebody wondered how long a certain woman who had just left the room had been married.

"About fifteen years," said the jeweler.

"How do you know?" asked the jeweler's wife. "You never saw her until tonight."

"I can tell by the size of her wedding ring," he replied. "The width of wedding rings changes about every five years. The kind she wears was in style fifteen years ago."—New York Times.

## Surplusage.

A man stood before a mirror in his room, his face lathered and an open razor in his hand. His wife came in. She looked at him and said:

"Are you shaving?"

The man, a foe to surplusage, replied fiercely:

"No; I am blacking the kitchen range! Where are you—out driving or at a matinee?"

## Sisterly.

Hattie—George proposed to me last night. Mattie—Did he? That must have been right after I refused him. He wasn't certain which he would do.

"Which he would do? What do you mean?"

"Why, he wasn't certain whether he would propose to you or jump in the lake."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

## Blackmail.

"Mamma," said five-year-old Margie, "I'll make a bargain with you."

"What kind of a bargain, dear?" asked her mother.

"If you'll give me a penny every day to buy candy with," replied the small diplomat, "I'll not tell any one you have false teeth."

## COINCIDENCES.

Some of the More Curious Ones That Have Been Recorded.

The late well known archaeologist, Albert Way, crossing Pall Mall, collided with an old gentleman, an utter stranger. After mutual apologies cards were exchanged. On each card was printed, "Mr. Albert Way."

The older gentleman, dying, left his fortune to the other Albert Way.

The planet Neptune, which had for countless ages revolved in the heavens unseen by any one on earth, was discovered simultaneously and independently in 1846 by Professor Adams and M. Leverrier, the two most brilliant astronomers of the day.

Some years ago a shepherd boy placed a sleeper on the railway line between Brighton and Falmer, England, with the result that a train was thrown off the rails. One year later to a day, almost to a minute, that same youth was struck by lightning and instantaneously killed within a couple of miles of the spot at which the accident occurred.

The four King Georges of England all died on the same day of the week.

In 1890, a few weeks before the census taker began the enumeration of the people of Elm Grove, Va., the town authorities counted their own population preparatory to filing articles of incorporation. The following was the remarkable result: Number of males over twenty-one years of age, 148; number of males under twenty-one years of age, 148; number of females over sixteen years of age, 148; number of females under sixteen years of age, 148.

Some years ago in Teheran an English sailor was caught in the act of carrying off some precious stones from the shah's palace. The thief was brought before the "king of kings," who swore that the next time the sailor crossed his path he would at once be put to death. It is a curious fact that this very sailor was crossing the street when the shah was driving in Berlin some time after and was knocked down and instantaneously killed.—Pearson's Weekly.

## The Wife's Reproach.

In an address to a temperance society a lecturer told how drink had once caused the downfall of a brave soldier. In the course of the sad story he said:

"Sometimes after a debauch, the man would be repentant, humble. He would promise his wife to do better. But, alas, the years taught her the barrenness of all such promises. And one night, when he was getting to be an old man, thin limbed, stoop shouldered, with red rimmed eyes, he said to his wife sadly: 'You're a clever woman, Jenny, a courageous, active, good woman. You should have married a better man than I am, dear.'"

"She looked at him, and, thinking of what he had once been, she answered in a quiet voice: 'I did, James.'"

## Consoling.

A New England congressman once went to Franklin Pierce demanding an office for a constituent. Pierce sent him to James Guthrie, secretary of the treasury. By and by the congressman returned to the president in great dudgeon.

"What did Guthrie say to you about appointing your friend?" inquired the president. "He said he would be hanged if he would."

"Did Guthrie talk that way to you?"

"He did."

"Well, that's the way he talks to me, too," was Pierce's consoling reply.

## Works Both Ways.

T. A. Daly, the poet and humorist, advocated temperance and regular hours in a witty after dinner speech in Philadelphia.

Mr. Daly concluded with an adjuration to the business man to proceed directly home from the office, without any stops at this cafe or that.

"For," said the humorist, "the man who goes straight home will always go home straight."—New York Tribune.

## On the Warpath.

Little Johnny, who had been told about Indians painting their faces before going on the warpath, came rushing downstairs one morning with a frightened look on his face and cried to his mother, who was preparing breakfast:

"Mother! Oh, mother! run for your life; sister's going to fight."—London Opinion.

## A Slow Coach.

A gentleman was one day, in the old coaching times, traveling by a coach which moved at a very slow pace. "Pray," said he to the guard, "what is the name of this coach?"

"The Regulator," was the reply. "And a very appropriate name too," said the traveler, "for I see all the other coaches go by it."

## SHAW'S VELVET JACKET.

The Belligerent Critic's Revolt in a London Theater.

George Bernard Shaw, writer, cynical critic, Socialist and mischief making Irishman, was always unconventional in his dress, first from necessity and afterward from choice. He says that at one time "my clothes turned green, and I trimmed my cuffs to the quick with a scissors and wore my tall hat with the back part in front, so that the brim should not bend double when I took it off to an acquaintance."

Archibald Henderson in his "George Bernard Shaw" writes: "Despite the loyal protest of the secretary of the Fabian society, who once wrote me vehemently asserting that Shaw always wore perfectly normal and conventional clothes, it must be admitted that Shaw has been associated throughout his life with queer sartorial tastes. The notorious velvet jacket which he wore during the days of his activity as a critic of the drama furnished the casus belli in Shaw's war with the theater managers. Shaw refused point blank to obey the ironclad regulation that occupants of stalls must wear evening clothes. The irrepressible conflict was precipitated one night when Shaw was stopped at the door of the theater by the attendant."

"What do you object to?" asked Shaw; 'the velvet jacket?' The attendant nodded assent.

"Very well," exclaimed Shaw, no whit abashed, "I will remove it." And the next instant he was striding up the aisle in his shirt sleeves.

"Here, that won't do!" shouted the attendant in great alarm, hurrying after Shaw and stopping him with great difficulty.

"Won't do?" cried Shaw, with fine assumption of indignation. "Do you think I am going to take off any more?"

"And with that he promptly re-donned his velvet jacket and, turning on his heel, left the house. Shaw finally won the battle and enjoyed his triumph in face of the objection of managers and the indignation of the fashionable and wealthy theater goers."

## Artist Ziem's Queer House.

Ziem, the artist, was a queer character. He lived in a house at the top of the Rue Lepic, on Montmartre. His house was his castle in the literal sense of the word. It was difficult to obtain admission, for the painter had an upper window out of which he always looked when the bell rang and interrogated his would be visitors. He had a basket which he let down by a cord to receive packages or messages, and he slept in a wonderful swinging bed. His house was a veritable museum, illuminated Persian manuscripts being part of his collection. Some of these were worth thousands of francs, but it was impossible to persuade him to sell any of them. In place of a newel post on his stairway stood the prow of a gilded gondola, and, closely immured in his studio, he painted pictures of Venice and bade defiance to all who came to disturb his peace.

## Intimations.

No member of the British parliament is permitted to say bluntly and directly that another is drunk, but he may hint at the fact in periphrase, as when Mr. Gladstone, replying to an unconventional speech of Disraeli's, remarked, "The right honorable gentleman has evidently had access to sources of inspiration that are not open to me." A violent scene was caused in the parliament of Victoria, Australia, by a labor member saying of a legal colleague, "The honorable and learned gentleman was once called to the bar, and he has since gone frequently without being called." The angry barrister retorted, "You tea drinking skunk!" Eventually both withdrew and apologized.

## Superstition of the Turks.

The superstition of the Turks is nowhere so apparent as in their fear of the "evil eye." Jugs placed around the edge of the roof or an old shoe filled with garlic and blue beads (blue glass balls or rings) is a sure guard against the illusion. Whenever a pretty child is playing upon the street the passersby will say, "Oh, what an ugly child!" for fear of inciting the evil spirit against its beauty. The peasant classes in Turkey are of course the most superstitious because they are the most ignorant. They have no education whatever and can neither read nor write.

## His Last Name.

A gentleman once asked a lad what was his last name.

"Johnny," replied the boy.

"Well, what is your full name?"

"Johnny Brown, sir."

"Well, how can Johnny be your last name?"

"Because, sir, when I was born by name was Brown, and Johnny wasn't given to me until I was a month old."

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