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Curious Problem of the Trembling Pillar at Rheims.

The "trembling pillar" at Rheims presents a curious problem to architects. The Church of St. Nicaise is surrounded with pillars constructed to prevent the walls from straining. At the entrance of the church is a bell tower. On one of the bells in this tower the phenomenon of the trembling pillar depends. When this bell is rung or even touched the top of this pillar sways.

It goes and returns about seven inches on each side, although the base of the pillar is immovable, and the stones are so firmly cemented that it seems like a solid piece of stone.

One authority, after a careful study of this peculiarity in explanation of which no satisfactory solution is offered, states that what is most singular about the pillar is that, although the four bells are about the same distance from the trembling pillar, only one of them has any effect upon it. The others may be rung singly or all together without moving it.

In 1775 a little window was made in the roof of the church opposite the pillar. A board was placed on top of the pillar and on it were put two glasses of water. Then the bell was rung. Immediately the pillar began to sway, and at the fifth stroke of the bell the two glasses

were thrown off.

The ringing of this bell has no effect on the pillars between the "phenomenal" one and the tower, nor on any of the others. But formerly it was the first pillar which swayed, then it became immovable, and some years ago the one next to it became the eccentric one.—Harper's Weekly.

Tom Corwin's Education.

The father of Tom Corwin, the famous Kentucky statesman, orator and wit, felt that he was too poor to make a scholar of more than one child of his large family, and so the elder brother, Matthias, was kept at school and Thomas placed at hard work on the farm. The breaking of a leg proved a happy incident in the life of the boy, as the enforced confinement gave him time for devotion to his beloved books, and he committed a Latin grammar to memory. Upon his recovery he again importuned his father to send him to school and, meeting a refusal, deliberately broke his leg a second time that he might have leisure to study. His heroic determination to learn resulted in his being placed in the same institution attended by his brother, where his natural ability and great industry gathered a thorough knowledge of the best English literature and a fair acquaintance with the Latin classics.

THE PRESIDENT'S CABINET.

It is Fashioned After the Old Privy Council of England.

In the sense in which "cabinet" is used in American politics the word has a curious origin and history. It goes back to the time of King William III. and Queen Mary, his wife, in England, from which country it was brought to America. But in Great Britain a custom as forceful as law keeps the sovereign out of the cabinet meetings. This usage began by accident.

The word itself is French in derivation and originally meant the diminutive of "cabin"—a little room. When George I. was king he could not take part in the deliberations of his own privy council because he knew no English. British statesmen did not speak German. So the ministers who served this first of the Hanoverian sovereigns of the United Kingdom used to meet in the king's private room or cabinet while he was absent. Afterward they informed him of the result of their discussions. At that time, as well as earlier in British history, much use was made of French words and phrases in court life and state affairs.

It followed naturally that the part of the privy council which was supposed to be in particular favor with the king, and especially close to him, came to be spoken of as his cabinet council, although there was never any such legal distinction made between some of the ministers of state and the others.

To this day there is no official recognition in Great Britain of a cabinet. No record is made of its meetings or discussions or of the resolutions offered there and voted down or adopted. Members of the cabinet, or inner council of ministers are careful to keep secret all of its proceedings, even after they retire from office.

When George Washington established the practice of having the heads of great government departments meet with him for consideration of public business it was natural that these gatherings should be spoken of in the English fashion as meetings of the cabinet. In that manner the name became firmly rooted in the political life of the United States, and the importance of the cabinet itself has grown with the expansion of the country's official business.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Colors to the Blind.

"Have you any conception of color?" a friend asked a blind man. "What idea have you when you hear colors mentioned?"

"A person blind from birth, as I have been, can have no possible proper conception of color," was the reply. "To me color is sound, or, rather, music. When I hear the word red, for example, I instantly think of a high piercing note of music. Blue is to me a delicately sounded note, fairly high and pleasing in tune. Green is a soft tone and rather low, quiet and restful, while yellow is lively, quick little notes rapidly sounding and causing pleasure almost to laughter. Black, alas, is the only color we can realize, for we are told that that is the absence of all light, and we know only too well what that means."

Spinal Column Words.

Some words could well do with a little abbreviation—"antidisestablishmentarianism," for instance, which contains twenty-eight letters and thus ranks as the longest word in our language. It contains only ten syllables, however, and in this respect is beaten by "honorificabilitudinitas," which contains eleven. Then "disintellectualization" and "incircumscribability" are not the sort of words to be lightly tackled at the end of a convivial evening. We have no thirteen syllabled words in English, but across the German ocean we find plenty of these, such as "snelpaardeloosonderspoorweggetroolyting," which is the Dutch for "motorcar."—London Spectator.

Scotch Division.

At a school north of the Tweed the teacher was instructing his class in the rudiments of simple division. "If," he said to one of the boys, "I had twenty marbles and I wanted to divide them, Willy, between you and Macgregor, how many would you get?"

"Ten, maybe," said the boy. "Why 'maybe'?" asked the master.

"Because, sir, Macgregor wouldna me ten unless you were standing."

A Lasting Impression.

"Well, Bertha, I hear you met Mr. Cooke yesterday. Did you like him?"

"Do you know, dear, he made an impression upon me that nothing will obliterate."

"Really? How—what did he say?" "It wasn't what he said; it was what he did. He spilled a cup of tea over my new white silk dress."

WE CAUGHT THE SMILE.

An Artist's Pathetic Experience on the Field of Battle.

M. Edouard Detaille, the famous French artist, served in the Franco-Prussian war and had the soldier's experience to re-enforce the artist's imagination. A touching anecdote of his army days has been published in the French newspapers.

In a lull, after a half day of hard fighting, the young Detaille heard a faint voice calling to him.

"Comrade! Comrade Detaille!" it called.

Detaille crawled across and inquired compassionately what he could do for the sufferer, a splendidly built, blue eyed young fellow, who was frightfully wounded.

"It was you, was it not," was the reply, "who drew those comical pictures of the Prussians—you know—the other night?"

Detaille remembered some caricatures that a few nights before had aroused the merriment of his company. "Yes, my poor friend, it was I," he admitted. "But what can I do for you?"

"Have you a pencil and a scrap of paper in your pockets?" asked the wounded man. Detaille felt and found that he had.

"Then draw me—I beg you will draw me," said the young soldier; and he gave the name and address of his sweetheart, for whom he wished the sketch to be made. "She had asked for a picture of him before he left for the front, but in the haste of getting off it had not been taken."

"Now it is all she will have, the picture, and if you do not draw me she will have nothing."

Of course Detaille complied. But it was hard, for the poor fellow was racked by convulsions of agony, and the artist was almost unmanned by sympathy. Yet, between the spasms, the boy kept his face calm. But he was troubled that he could not wholly control himself.

"It is not like this I wish her to see me," he gasped. "But you will draw my face between times, when I can smile? I cannot smile all the time, but you will draw me then? Not the other times. Only when I am smiling."

"Only when you are smiling, my brave friend," promised the artist. And presently he showed him the sketch. "See! I have the smile—there is nothing to frighten her."

Then the battle broke forth again. Detaille swept forward with the charging ranks, and only after several hours could he return to where the young hero lay. He found him quite dead, smiling in death.

When Gas Was New.

After the invention of illuminating gas early in the last century it was a long time before English people felt really at home with it. The authorities at Windsor castle are said to have been under the impression that the gas was on fire all the way along the pipes. And the Times of July 12, 1830, contained this item: "The Duke of Wellington, when at Windsor a few days ago, directed that the gas might be cut off from the interior of the castle by the desire of the queen, who, we understand, entertained apprehensions lest an accident might be caused by explosion. Her majesty's wishes will, of course, be immediately complied with, and directions have already been given to the gas company for the purpose."

A Flavor of Mustard in the Honey.

An Irishman who had offended against the strict rule of parliament that members should always address the house only through Mr. Speaker, and not directly, tendered an apology with a pungent flavor. "Gentlemen," he had begun on rising and had been stopped instantly by cries of "Order!" from political opponents. For a moment he paused, then resumed. "Mr. Speaker, I recognize that in beginning my speech with the word gentlemen I made a mistake, for which I am deeply sorry, and I promise that if the house will forgive me I will endeavor not to repeat the error!"

He Was All Right.

As an express train was going through a station one of the passengers leaned too far out of the window, overbalanced and fell out. He fortunately landed on a sand heap, so that he did himself no great injury, but with torn clothes and not a few bruises said to a porter who was standing by:

"What shall I do?" "You're all right, mister," said the porter. "Your ticket allows you to stop off."—Exchange.

Larger Ways of Business.

"What made you take down that sign, 'No Agents or Solicitors Allowed In This Building'?"

"It's no use any more," replied the janitor. "Anybody who wants to take down the public's spare change nowadays gets out a prospectus and uses postage stamps."—Chicago News.

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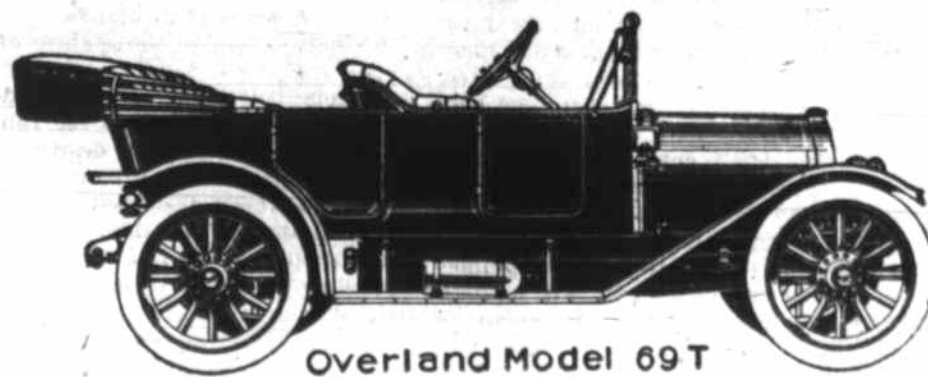
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