

THE CATCHER'S MITT.

At First It Was a Bricklayer's Glove Lined With Lead.

It was in 1875 that gloves were first recognized as necessary accessories to a catcher's kit. Frank McGunnigle, famous ball player and manager, was then catching for Fall River in a game against Harvard college. Mac's hands were very sore, but it was necessary that he should catch. He sent out for a pair of bricklayer's gloves, thick, strong things of hard leather. In practice he found that, while they protected the palms, there was not liberty enough for the fingers to throw. An idea struck him. He whipped out a jackknife (ball players were armed those days) and cut off the fingers of the right hand glove. "Fine," said Frank, "fine! I have discovered something." But an inventor, a real one, was in the game. Tyng of Harvard, the real inventor of the catcher's mask, was behind the bat for his college. Tyng had his eagle eye on Mac ever watching how the bricklayer's gloves worked in a ball game, catching baseballs instead of bricks.

After the game Tyng got busy. He bought a pair, and as a first improvement had the palms lined with thin sheet lead, and this glove was used for some time in that section of the country, but when another genius appeared on the field bearing the name of Guinnesso, with an improvement, his suggestion was adopted, and this improvement was the real origin of the padded glove. Guinnesso was a player on the Lowell team and had used the McGunnigle-Tyng ironclad mitt. He admitted that the glove was good, but it was too much of a handicap in playing ball, so Guinnesso bought a soft pair of walking gloves with a good thick lining. He amputated the fingers of both gloves and wore them under a pair of bricklayer's, and the combination worked like a charm.

Shortly after this the makers of baseball paraphernalia turned their attention to gloves. It was hard to convince the manufacturers that the glove or mitt for the left hand should be thicker than the one for the right, but they finally reached the point after the most prominent catchers of the period demonstrated that the left hand had to bear the brunt of the shock consequent on the pitcher's delivery. The manufacturers thought they had reached the acme of perfection when they placed on the market a pair of catcher's gloves made out of heavy buckskin lined with a thick padding, the fingers of the left hand glove re-enforced by stiff leather tips, and the glove for the right paw devoid of fingers and somewhat lighter.—New York Cor. Pittsburgh Gazette-Times.

Very Polite.

"Now, Robby, if you don't want to go to Bessie Hunk's party you must write a note and tell her so, and be sure to let it be polite. You will find some ideas of the proper thing in this book of etiquette," said Mrs. Carhart to her little son.

Robby struggled with the problem for an hour or more and then presented for his mother's inspection the following truthful but somewhat unconventional effusion: "Mr. Robert Carhart declines with pleasure Miss Bessie Hunk's kind invitation for the 14th and thanks her extremely for having given him the opportunity of doing so."

How Wagner Worked.

Wagner was a genius, and in some ways a queer genius. When he wished to compose he desired absolute quiet and freedom from disturbance, and at these times not even his wife or his favorite servant dared interrupt him. But his queerest fancy was that he could compose better if he were dressed in the costume of the age that the opera which he happened to be working on represented, or the character whose music he was then writing.

Conscientious.

Among the questions sent out by a school examiner was the following example in arithmetic: "If one horse can run a mile in one minute fifty seconds and another a mile in two minutes, how far would the first horse be ahead in a match race of two miles?"

A scholar returned the question with this attached: "I will have nothing to do with horse racing."—London Answers.

Value of Albumen.

Albumen is by all odds the most important of the ingredients of our food. It is that part of the food upon which nutrition mainly depends. Take away the albumen and the gluten, which is probably the same substance in another form, and starvation must speedily follow, no matter how liberally we may partake of starch, sugar and fat.

CANOE HURDLE RACES.

Maori Women Are Experts in Handling the Frail Craft.

On the great North island of New Zealand, at the town of Waikato, in Auckland, I chanced to be present at the last of the many regattas the natives hold during the season, says a writer in the Indianapolis Star. More than any other people that I have ever known, the Maoris of New Zealand, who live near the coast, are endowed with amphibious powers.

In the handling of these canoes, both the male and female are expert. Perhaps the first thing a Maori child learns after it is able to walk is how to handle a canoe, and until they die of old age most of their days are spent in carrying on the business of life in these heavy canoes upon the waters that wash the island's shores. Knowing this, it was not surprising to me when the hurdle race was announced and three canoes pushed off from the shore, "manned" by women.

The hurdles were stretched close to the highland from where I was watching the races with the judge of the events. They were stout bamboo poles, supported about sixteen inches above the water by cross sticks rising from the soft bottom of the bay and guyed to keep them rigid even under pressure.

At the word the three canoes jockeyed at the starting line, a pistol rang out and they leaped forward toward the hurdles. Well chosen were those teams, for the half mile they came on neck and neck and began the negotiation of the hurdles at the same instant. Working frantically, paddling from the stern to lift the bows over the hurdle and shoot the canoe two-thirds over the pole that the canoe's weight might lift them safely over at one try, the three teams leaped the hurdle neck and neck and passed the finish line together.

If I had been the judge I could not have decided between them, but the Maori judge was canny. He gave the prize to the canoe that had shipped the least water in the race.—Detroit Free Press.

Saltmaking in Spain.

The Spanish method of producing salt, as employed near Cadix, is by allowing the sun to evaporate the water from what are known as "pans," small ponds prepared for the purpose of a uniform depth of about eighteen inches. These are flooded directly from the sea three or four times a year, and in time there is left a deposit of about three inches of salt, which is piled in the open in the form of small pyramids until sold. This method has the advantage of being inexpensive and of not requiring machinery. The only requisites are a hot sun and a soil which will not permit the water to filter through, as the salt in solution would then be lost. Something depends also upon the analysis of the water. For instance, the water of the Mediterranean has a greater specific gravity than that of the Atlantic.

The Ultimate Consumer.

"Now, here," said the man in authority at the public library, "is a rare old book that cost us \$250, and we're glad to get it even at that."

"Shade of John Gutenberg!" exclaimed the frequent visitor. "Does anybody ever want to look at it?"

"No."

"Then what satisfaction is there in having it on hand?"

"Oh, well, perhaps a hundred years from now some antiquarian will find it here and will be half tickled to death to look it over."—Chicago Tribune.

Unappreciated Efforts.

Unselfish goodness is seldom appreciated in this world of ours. There was that man in the electric car, for instance. Having rung up three fares in his efforts to stop the car for the lady that sat on the opposite side, he tossed after her the umbrella that belonged to the little gray whiskered man on his right.

Neither the gray whiskered man nor the conductor liked the thoughtful Samaritan for his altruistic efforts.—Boston Transcript.

Coventry.

Coventry is one of the oldest cities in England, but a more interesting claim to fame lies in the fact that she is literally the central town. The city of the three spires is about equally distant from London, Liverpool, Hull and Bristol. Two parliaments at least have been held within her gates—the parliament indocum and the parliament diabolium.—London Chronicle.

Commercialism in Petticoats.

"What did that candidate give you?"

"Fifty cents."

"Me too. I thought he had a barrel."

"If he has he's got the little apples on top."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

TRUE MADSTONES.

Any Value They Possess Lies in Their Absorbent Qualities.

Most persons, especially those in rural districts, have seen so called madstones. Frequently physicians are asked whether there is actually any virtue in these stones. Their answer is that they do possess some value, but that they would be of still more value were their limitations understood.

There is no particular variety of stone or substance that may be designated exclusively as the madstone. Many madstones, so called, have been examined, and it has been found that but few of them were, geologically speaking, identical.

Madstones, it appears, act on the same principle, that blotting paper does when absorbing ink, and there is nothing that makes a better one than baked pipe clay. A new clay pipe, costing a cent, cannot be excelled by any madstone, no matter how much it may be "cracked up." The action can be clearly demonstrated by placing a common dry red brick in contact with the margin of a puddle of water and observing what capillary attraction will accomplish.

In order to be efficient therefore the prime requisite is that the stone shall be porous and show strong adhesive and absorbent qualities. There is nothing mysterious about the true madstone. Some have appeared to be concretions, either vesicular, renal or biliary, that were found in the bladder, kidney, or liver of some animal. Those from the deer are supposed to be best.

When a person is bitten by a dog supposed to be mad and the porous stone is applied to the wound the blotting paper action begins, and the blood saliva from the mouth of the animal and whatever poison these fluids contain will naturally, by capillary attraction, be absorbed by and into the substance applied, whether the madstone be the madstone of the superstitions or not.

There is no truth in the statement that if a stone sticks the wound is poisonous and that if it does not take hold there is no venom present. If the stone be clean and dry it will adhere when moisture is within reach until the stone becomes saturated. For example, a new brick will absorb a pint of water. After the venom has been taken into the circulation the madstone is worthless, but as the victim is usually filled with whiskey at the time the stone is applied the spirits may counteract the effects of the poison.—Minneapolis Journal.

Moore's Greatest Poem.

"Lalla Rookh" was read universally and translated into several European languages. The poem has no lofty Miltonic flights, no hall of Ebla reaching the height of the sublime, but it is calculated to suit the taste of every order of the mind. Young and old, educated and uneducated, comprehend its luxurious imagery, sweet passages, fascinating descriptions and gorgeous voluptuousness; hence the uncommon popularity of the poem. Those who have hearts for the deeper things of humanity—what enjoyments come not from external color, orient hues and tyrian purple!—will prefer the heart which is shown in many of Moore's other productions.—Westminster Gazette.

Municipal Amenities.

A member of the Isle of Wight board of guardians thus answered a colleague from whom he had received what he took to be an insult: "I am not a bigger fool than you are, and I do not come here to be made a target for a censorious, cantankerous, scurrilous, insolent and illiterate cad from a Ventnor stable. Mr. Chairman, if you will allow him to turn upon me the rapier of insult I shall plunge into him the dagger of sarcasm, and it will not be my fault if it does not go to the hilt!"—St. James' Gazette.

Older Than His Father.

A curious tombstone has been discovered at the Ilfracombe churchyard by a correspondent. The inscription reads as follows: "In memory of William Griffiths, died October 25, 1835, aged 127 years. Also William, father of the above, who died October 2, 1845, aged 72 years." According to the dates given, the son was sixty-five years older than the father.—London Standard.

Genre.

The term "genre" is French and means "man, his customs, habits and ways of life." A painter of domestic, rural or village life, or the writer who deals with the strictly human rather than the more romantic and unreal human situations. For instance, in the drama Victor Hugo introduced the genre system in lieu of the stilted and unnatural style of the Louis XIV. era.

NO COPPER, NO WAR.

Modern Methods Render the Use of the Metal Imperative.

War can be waged on credit for a while or on a silver basis, as it was by Japan. But cut off the supply of copper, and sooner or later nowadaya a war comes automatically to an end.

This is because the red metal enters into the composition in a greater or less degree, of nearly all the munitions of war. Take for instance projectiles for big guns. Round the base of each one of these is a band of copper, which, when the gun is fired, expands and grips the interior rifling of the weapon, causing the projectile to rotate.

It also serves another and a very important purpose. By its expansion at the very moment the charge ignites, the explosive gases are held in check, as it were, and forced to expend all but a tiny fraction of their energy in driving the projectile through the bore of the piece.

There are other demands for the metal which are far more insistent and notably that in connection with small arm ammunition—that is to say, rifle cartridges.

These are made of solid drawn brass. No other substance will do, because all others are liable to jam in the barrel. Now, ordinarily, brass contains three parts of copper to two of zinc, but the fine brass from which cartridges are made consists of three parts of copper to one of zinc.

Experts state that thirteen tons of copper are required for 1,000,000 rounds of small arm ammunition. One has only to bear these facts in mind and to remember that in modern warfare, with immense armies operating in the field, many millions of cartridges are fired away daily by the infantry, without counting the big guns and naval operations, to realize the enormous quantity of the metal used and the necessity for the combatants to have a goodly supply on hand.—Pearson's Magazine.

First Hospital in New World.

It is said that the first hospital ever built in America was erected by the Spaniard Cortes in the City of Mexico in 1524. It was endowed out of the revenues obtained from the properties conferred on him by the Spanish crown for his services in the conquest of Mexico. The endowment was so arranged that it still exists and is paid at the present day. A supervisor is named by the lineal descendant of Cortes at present. In this hospital women occupied positions as nurses and physicians, and in their care were all cases of obstetrics and women's diseases. Considerable was known by the Indians of medicine. The Mexican hospital is a fine building, with arcades and courtyard. It is an interesting landmark in the history of hospital construction and administration.—Medical Record.

Napoleon and the Steamboat.

Fulton's first steamboat before its trial was looked upon by many of the wisacres of the time as the freakiest of all freaks. Napoleon Bonaparte scoffed at Fulton's apparent vagaries. Later, however, when looking from the height of the barren rock of St. Helena he saw a funnel emerge from the sea, with a trail of black smoke curling along the horizon, he turned to Count Montholon and said: "It was I, and not Fulton, who was crazy. Had I listened to him I should not now be here."—Youth's Companion.

Origin of "Red Tape."

The term "red tape" is used to denote excessive routine and formality in the management of official affairs, a servile adherence to precedent. Before the invention of the modern appliances of elastic bands, file holders and other means of securing papers all official documents were bound with red ribbons or tapes. The necessary delay caused by the undoing of tapes by slow moving government officials before business could be transacted came at length to stand as representative of all delays.

Water Like Steel.

Water can be put through a nozzle so fast that it becomes as hard as steel, and if struck with a sword the weapon is broken or dented. Similarly the track of water behind a big speeding ocean liner is like rocks and may buck ferriboats or buckle or break the rudders of tender craft that thoughtlessly push and paddle into this dangerous, rigid undertow.—New York Press.

Too Suggestive.

"Uncle," said the impecunious nephew, "you really ought to go and see the new play. You would just die of laughing."

The old man merely glared. A few minutes later there could be heard the sound of a scratching pen as he altered his will.

Popular Poverty.

Katie, aged seven, was the only child of Mr. and Mrs. Jones. One day, when the new minister called, Katie, upon her own invitation, went into the parlor to entertain him until her mother came down stairs. As she approached the parlor door, Mrs. Jones heard the minister ask Katie how many children her mother had, and was very much surprised to hear her little daughter reply "six."

Her mother wisely made no comment upon the startling reply of the child, but sent her out to play, and when the minister's visit was over she asked Katie why she had told him that her mother had six children, and was more dumfounded than ever when Katie said, "Because I did not want the strange gentleman to know that you were so poor that you didn't have but one child."—National Monthly.

An Efficiency Recipe.

Be earnest, but be calm, no matter what happens. A man may learn to treble his day's work by systematically shutting out all feeling during office hours. What fatigues and annoyances are not our work, but the mental friction, nervous strain, muscular tension, emotional wear and tear which we allow to accompany our work. A real man is always a machine while on the job, never a machine at any other time. Recipe for efficiency: Be a plodder by day and a poet by night. Do your planning, your dreaming, your resolving, when silence and solitude open the mind for great thoughts and purposes; then appear to the world just as an ordinary business man, with nothing unique about you to rouse the neighbors' suspicions.—New York Independent.

The Dramatic in Life.

The undying interest which is taken in the theater is explained by the very profound line with which Shakespeare began a very silly speech, "All the world's a stage." People, as a rule, take no interest in anything that is not dramatically or, as in the case of politics, melodramatically formulated. Any creed to be popular must be dramatically stated. Therefore the gospels are preferred to the epistles. Aesop's fables are remembered because they are the truth about things stated dramatically and morally.—George Bernard Shaw.

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A Shine in Every Drop

A Cynical Clerk.

The office boy in a law office of this town himself hopes to be a lawyer some day. He has begun his studies already by asking questions of the clerks whenever he hears a legal term as to which he desires information.

The other day he approached one of the clerks with this question: "What do they mean by a contingent fee?"

"It's like this," explained the clerk. "If you lose the case your lawyer gets nothing. If you win you get nothing."—New York Times.

Cheering Comment.

"That infant of yours kept me awake half the night," said the irritable neighbor.

"Well, I congratulate you," replied the weary father. "That comes nearer being a kind word than anything I have heard today. Nobody else owns up to getting half a night's sleep."—Washington Star.

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