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HALF TONE PICTURES.

The Photo-engraving Process of Reproducing Illustrations.
For nearly six centuries the art of the wood engraver flourished as the only practical means of reproduction. Thousands of men had devoted their lives and their skill to the exacting work, and then—so recently that many of the old artisans are now commanding figures in the new art—photo-engraving came into being.

The beginning of the half tone process was in 1881, but it was in the early nineties that the new method came into general use. It is significant that during this same period the art of electric lighting, upon which half tone reproduction depends to such a large extent, was also in its early stages. Thus in a large measure they have developed together.

While there may be feelings of regret at the passing of the ancient art of the wood engraver, even the most ardent antiquarian cannot but concede that the modern method of reproducing illustrations is far superior. As compared with the procedure of scarcely thirty years ago, wherein a highly skilled artisan spent several days in cutting on wood the lines which would reproduce a picture, half tone engraving, representing as it does development in photography, chemical research and the application of electricity, has been known to deliver the finished plates to the printing press twenty minutes after the original picture was taken.

This commercial art occupies so large a place in our everyday business life that it receives hardly more than passing thought. Difficult as it is to imagine our magazines and newspapers without their numerous illustrations, the fact remains that but for the art of the photo-engraver these same pages would lose much of their interest. Ordinarily it is now only a matter of hours to have the finished half tone ready for the press. Less than thirty years ago it was a matter of days for a wood engraver to get his blocks in shape.—Edison Monthly.

The Pentup Joy of Living.

It would not be seemly for me to dance along the street; but, indeed, I think the children might do it just to let off some of the pentup rapture of life in older people's hearts. Lambs in the spring are a great comfort with their delightful, whimsical, exuberant skipping. My mother derives endless enjoyment from watching them. She is an old lady, but she is happy, and I imagine that the skipping of the lambs is an outlet for her eternal youth. But it is easy to see that something has gone wrong when older people have to trust to lambs and puppies and kittens to give expression to the joy of life instead of to children.—Atlantic.

The Fifteenth Century Gambler.

In the time of King Henry IV. of England the "smart set" managed to play bridge or its equivalent without shocking the susceptibilities of those who think it wrong to play for money. The fifteenth century gambler, according to one historian, "played at cards for counters, nails and points in every house more for pastime than for gain." "Everis scholar or petyte (little one) that plaies for money is to be expelled," ordains a grammar school charter of the period. One of the duties of hospital sisters was "to make diligent searche amonge the poore for cards or dice."

The Man in the Iron Mask.

In Dumas' novel, "Le Vicomte de Bragelonne," he introduces the story of the man with the iron mask as being the brother of Louis XIV. This, however, has been proved the mere invention of Voltaire, who created the story in one of his romances. While many still believe the mysterious stranger was Charles I. of England, historians claim he was but an obscure Italian political adventurer known as Count Matthioli. Yet to this prisoner was accorded great deference.

A True Artist.

"Fur ten years, mum, I was a glass eater wid a circus sideshow," said the frowy applicant for breakfast.

"How did you happen to lose your position?"

"It was dis way, mum. De bearded lady got sick an' de manager wanted me ter take her place fur a week. Bein' an artist, me soul revolted at practicin' a low deception like dat, an' I quit."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

Marking Book.

"You were telling Miss Gaussep this morning that you were going to be married again, weren't you?" said the shrewd man.

"Why, yes," the widower gasped in surprise. "How did you know?"

"After you left her she began to count on her fingers."—Philadelphia Press.

AN OSTRICH LOVES TO FIGHT.

He is Treacherous, Too, and is Never Thoroughly Tamed.

Those who manage ostrich farms declare that much diplomacy is required in the handling of the ostrich, which in more respects than one is a decidedly queer bird.

The ostrich requires, aside from other necessary qualifications, a master's hand, a strict hand, tempered by justice and mercy. Not that the ostrich is at all appreciative of kindness. Indeed, he never becomes thoroughly domesticated, say those who know him in captivity.

On the contrary, the ostrich is haughtily and stolidly irresponsible to kindness, and so treacherous is he when full grown that even his daily attendants never approach him unless equipped with the necessary appliances to bring him to terms when in an ugly or dangerous mood.

The ostrich's chief object in life seems to be to fight on every possible occasion. Indeed, a fight to him is the very spice of things.

The male ostrich is not without commendable qualities, however. For instance, he mates but once and forever.

Should he, as often happens in the course of a domestic complication, kick his mate to death he remains true and constant to her memory, never seeking a successor. In the ordinary phases of domesticity he is attentive and helpful. He digs the hole in the ground that is to serve as a nest, and during the process of incubation, which continues for forty days, he relieves the mother bird of her duties from early evening till late the next morning.

A curious habit of the male ostrich is his "constitutional." At sunrise and just before twilight the male birds line up in single file and race around the inclosure at whirlwind speed until thoroughly limbered up. Then, suddenly arranging themselves in sets, they execute a grotesque minuet with ludicrous gravity.

What the Jury Deserved.

Sir Matthew Begbie, chief justice of British Columbia, once had before him a man charged with having killed another man with a sandbag. The evidence was conclusive, and the judge charged the jury accordingly, but a verdict of "Not guilty" was promptly brought in. The judge was astonished. "Gentlemen of the jury," he said, "this is your verdict, not mine. On your conscience the disgrace will rest. Many repetitions of such conduct as yours will make trial by jury a horrible farce and the city of Victoria a nest of crime. Go! I have nothing more to say to you." And then, turning to the prisoner: "You are discharged. Go and sandbag some of those jurymen. They deserve it."

Dances in Sardinia.

Sardinian dancing is unlike any other. It is a kind of shuffling with the feet as the dancers, holding hands, move to and fro, the women on one side of the dancing ground and the men on the other, till they have worked round to the opposite sides, while the "las laudeddas" is played by a man who walks up and down between the dancers. As a rule, the men and women do not mix, whether dancing or not, but keep each to their own side. The dances take place on Sundays or feast days in some plaza of the village, but hardly ever in the big town.

Curious Water Spider.

A spider has been discovered in the fresh water ponds and ditches of the British isles that possesses all the habits of a fish and yet breathes in air the same as land spiders do. This queer arachnid weaves a sort of web or sack, carries it below the surface and fastens it to some reed or root to serve as his home. In a series of trips to the surface he carries down each time a bit of air which he deposits in the sack. When the sack is full he enters it and enjoys a quiet life as long as the supply of air lasts.

Green's Move.

Three rival tailors lived in the same street. One had a notice board over his shop with "Brown, the best tailor in the world," upon it. White, not to be outdone, followed suit with a notice, "White, the best tailor in London."

Green, seeing his rivals getting in front of him, also had a board printed, "Green, the best tailor in this street."—London Ideas.

The Cornetist's Teeth.

"Do you know the great dread of the cornetist?" said a cornet virtuoso. "I'll tell you, son—the loss of his teeth. Worst thing that could happen to him. It means the end of his playing. No man can play the cornet with false teeth. When his own cusps and canines are gone he loses his embouchure."

AVOID HOT ROOMS.

Your Health Will Be Better and Your Work More Effective.

The right temperature for the office, living room or workroom, that degree of heat that will keep one comfortable, healthful and at the same time will enable him to do the greatest amount of work with the greatest ease is discussed in a bulletin from the North Carolina state board of health. It says:

"Seventy degrees of heat, which most people think they are keeping when in reality the thermometer reads anywhere from 72 to 78, is for all practical purposes too hot. It is enervating and unhealthy. It predisposes to fatigue, colds, gripe and especially to pneumonia, for the reason that too much heat lowers bodily resistance.

"Careful study and all experimental demonstrations demonstrate that a moderately cool, dry air in motion is the best air condition for the body. At no time is a temperature higher than 68 degrees recommended, while a much lower temperature is needed to work in. In that country in Europe is the indoor temperature allowed to go over 68 degrees, while the usual house temperature over there is 60. Huntington states that men do their best mental work when the air temperature is 60 and their best physical work when it is about 60. The best all round temperature for work is 50, he says.

"Observations have further shown that the minimum amount of work during the year is done during the hot summer months and the middle winter months—January and February—when indoor heat is highest. Students at West Point and Annapolis do their best mental work, mathematics in particular, in the spring and fall and their worst work in midwinter and midsummer. Excessive heat and lack of cool, fresh air are thought to make the difference."

WILL HOLD FEAST OF DEATH.

For Mother of Gypsy Queen Mary, Who Died in Michigan.

There'll be a big sauerkraut feast this spring at that place in the United States where a certain band of Rumanian gypsies happens to be. Stella Stankovitch, 101 years old, mother of Queen Mary, died the other day in a tent pitched on the plains of Michigan. Queen Mary has decreed the feast of death.

Winter winds shake the canvas tents of the little colony of the gypsies set up outside of Ford City. Barelegged children huddle about open fires and gaze in fear at the empty cloth shelter in which the queen mother died. His flap slaps back and forth with the blow of the wind.

"I'm sick," Queen Mary said, when a visitor called on her. "I've got the grip."

She threw a few chunks of wood into a smoking, battered stove. Behind her stood a young woman smoking a pipe, and a barefooted girl of seven. On a bed, beneath ragged coverings, lay another child, feverishly ill.

"We will have a feast in memory of Queen Stella between Easter and May," the queen went on. "We'll have roast lamb and roast pig. We'll have cabbage and sauerkraut and fruits. We'll put a big table outdoors, and the feast will be free. Everybody will be welcome to come and eat of the feast of death."

And her black, beady eyes glowed in anticipation.—Kansas City Star.

Fatal Street Music.

To street musicians was due the untimely death of one of England's foremost humorists, John Leech. The strain of ceaseless application to his work rendered Leech abnormally sensitive to street noises of all descriptions, and street music in particular drove him frantic. The organ grinders, it is said, knew of his enmity toward them and played within earshot of his studio simply to plague him. In a letter to Mr. Bass, M. P., who was framing a bill for the suppression of street noises, Mark Lemon, the editor of Punch, declared that beyond a doubt Leech's ultimately fatal malady, angina pectoris, or breast pang, was due to the disturbance of his nervous system, caused by the continual visits of street bands and organ grinders.—London Opinion.

What Comes Next?

"What's a dreadnaught, father?"
"A dreadnaught, my son, is a battleship so large and heavily armed that it does not fear anything."

"Then what is a superdreadnaught?"
"A superdreadnaught is still bigger and more heavily armed. They were designed especially to give the dreadnaughts something to be afraid of."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Safe.

Flab-dub—Why have you never married, Singleton? Singleton—Well, the women have always regarded me as an unfortunate fellow who wasn't bad enough to need reforming or good enough to make a desirable husband.—Life.

Started Early.

He—When did she begin to fear that she had married her for her money? She—Well, I believe her suspicions were first aroused when she had to pay the minister.—London Telegraph.

Crabs and Toads.

While crabs are known to have lived for half a century, the average life of the toad is but four years. Frogs die sooner than toads, as the latter may live for thirty-six years.

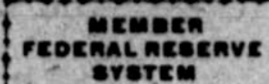
White men should exhibit the same insensibility to moral tortures that red men do to physical tortments.—Theophile Gautier.

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