

ARIZONA ROAD RUNNER.

A Sociable Bird That is Said to Hate a Rattlesnake.

The road runner is one of Arizona's distinctive ornithological institutions. It is a long legged, long billed bird, slender of build and standing some ten inches high. It is not often seen in the farming districts, but is a familiar sight on the desert.

It has gained the name of road runner from its habit of taking the road in front of travelers be they on horseback or wheeled conveyance, and running swiftly or slowly, as occasion requires, showing off its neighborly spirit and running qualities. It is not uncommon for it to keep in company of the traveler for several hundred yards.

No resident of Arizona would kill a road runner. It is firmly believed that the bird is the deadly enemy of that monster of the desert, the rattlesnake. We don't know whether any of our readers ever saw a road runner kill a rattlesnake. If there is an authentic story of such a thing we would be glad to publish it. But the accepted tradition is that the road runner and the rattlesnake are deadly enemies and that the rattlesnake fears the road runner beyond anything else.

It is told that the bird drives the snake into a coil and then, darting around the serpent like lightning pecks it to death. Whatever truth there may be in the stories of the road runner's accomplishments as a disciple of St. Patrick, it deserves the friendly protection it receives. Its quiet sociability is always a diversion for the lonesome desert traveler. —Arizona Republican.

The Bulletin—\$1.50 a year.

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BRAINY BABY.

John Stuart Mill Was a Genius at
Three Years of Age.

At three years of age John Stuart Mill began the study of Greek, with "arithmetic as an evening relaxation." At eight he began Latin, Euclid and algebra and had to act as tutor to the younger children. He was a stern and efficient tutor.

At twelve he began scholastic logic and political economy—the latter his main lifework.

At fourteen, while paying a long visit to Sir Samuel Bentham in southern France, he learned French as a relaxation from studying two or three hours before breakfast, five hours between breakfast and dinner and two or three in the evening. Being for the time master of his own hours and not subject to a stern father, he took lessons also in his spare hours in music, singing, dancing, fencing and riding, but never became proficient.

At sixteen Mill could speak in debate with adults with ease and freedom. At eighteen he contributed to the Westminster Review. At twenty-one he was made assistant in the India office and received a large salary for those days.

But Mill was bald at twenty-two. He did not marry until he was forty-five. He himself said: "I never was a boy. It is better to let nature have its own way."

The Green Flash of Sunset.

One of the most rarely witnessed of natural phenomena, but one that has often been discussed at scientific meetings and that always awakens wonder when seen, is the so called "green flash" occasionally visible at the moment of the disappearance of the sun behind a clear horizon. The observer's eye must be fixed upon the rim of the sun as it disappears in order to catch the phenomenon. One authority tells us that he has seen the green flash, although rarely, at the instant of the setting of a bright star. Among the explanations offered is one based upon the optical principle of complementary colors. If one looks at the sun and then closes the eyes a green disk will be perceived. A sensitive eye might be similarly affected by a brilliant star. —New York Herald.

"LEFT-HANDED MONKEY WRENCH"
A Joke Which is an Important Factor
in Every-day Life.

Some great philosopher has said "A little nonsense now and then is relished by the best of men." He might have added, relished by fools, also.

The most comical thing in human affairs is the importance of the unimportant. When one comes to realize that more than 90 per cent of all energy in nature, including humanity of course, is wanton waste he can see the joke of Napoleon's in sending the city boys back to Paris to save their beauty and replacing them behind the guns with his grenadiers. That was simply, in other words, sending them to the can-teen after a "bucket of reveille," or to the Adjutant to get the "key to the parade ground," identical with the mechanic's joke about the "left handed monkey-wrench," or the "type lice," discovered by the "printer's devil."

All trades and professions have their nonsense and otherwise; the former, for diversion, is just as essential as the latter. But in constructing the Tower of Babel the sophistry became a concrete proposition and they had to abandon the works, because "Order is the first law of Heaven."

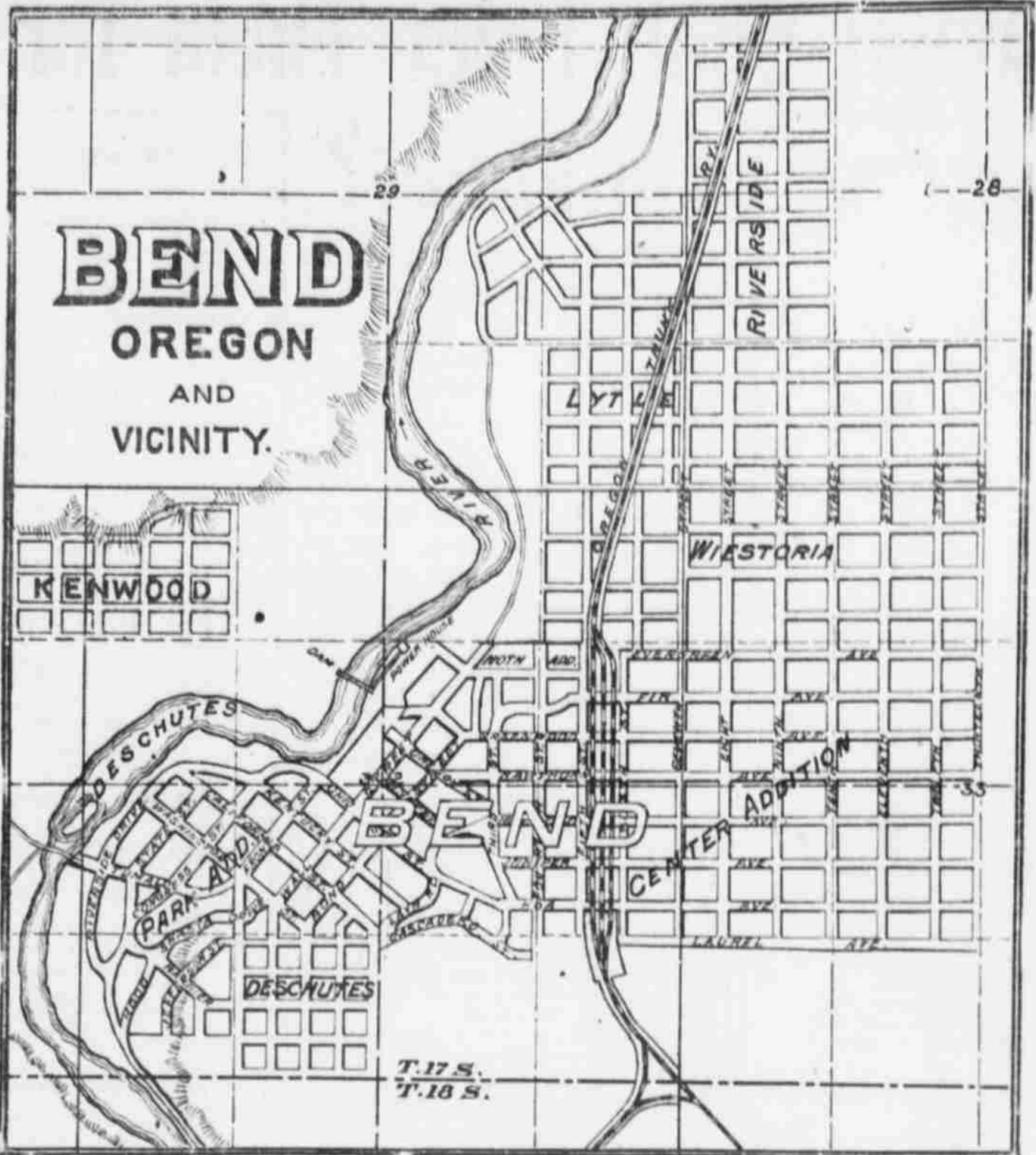
The newspaper composing-room has doubtless the most logical and refined nonsense of any vocation, which is varied, of course, according to the metropolitan status of the shop. It surpasses the stage itself for original witicism,—more artistic because original, the stage being devoid of reality is essentially

artificial. A short while ago the writer had the pleasure of being one of the players in a composing-room tragedy which was enacted in the course of several months in a certain country office in eastern Washington. The foreman, a "Squarehead," belonged to the town band (everyone knows the persistency of Dutch musicians) and did the job-work, which required less constant attention than news or "straight composition," which was

every other resource and giving full warning that if ever I caught that bird I'd fix it so it couldn't stop whistling the "Star Spangled Banner," one day I told the editor in the Quaker's presence that I had about lost patience and if I did make a break shure enough there'd be something doing, as my room was a complete arsenal of automatics. The editor called the fellow into the front office and I heard him say: "You want to keep quiet back there; we don't want any murder committed here." A grain of salt had hit the bullseye and rung the bell.

But this, of course, was a plebeian phase of composing-room nonsense. All the world's a stage and men and women merely players. Every delineation of manner and bearing writes the ideal. When one gets satisfied with the artificial in the drama he recrosses his

prestidigital (magician's) bridge, comes down off the stage, takes his seat in reality and settles down to genuine enjoyment of the universal drama. —ELMER L. KIRK.



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