

OPAL DIGGERS OF AUSTRALIA

They Live in Burrows, Work Hard and Now Can't Sell Their Gems.

Opal is the Australian natural gem, but latest reports from that country show that the diggers are experiencing very hard times, owing to the slump in the precious stone in the European markets.

Cooper Pedy, the home of the famous South Australian black opal, is 100 miles from anywhere, and probably the most primitive village in the British empire. The Australian blacks christened it Cooper Pedy, or "white man's living in a hole," and it well deserves its name.

Of all the rough outback jobs in Australia, digging for opal is about the worst. Cooper Pedy lies in the heart of the Stewart range, 170 miles from the nearest station on the East-West railway, and its whole population of between 70 and 80 diggers lives underground in burrows scratched out of the hillsides. A tin shanty, in which diggers keep their tools, is the only sign of life showing above ground.

Every morning the diggers come out of their burrows and set out for the opal fields, to cut patiently through the rock in the hope of finding the beautiful black diamonds lying beneath. Between them they have dug many thousands of pounds of opal in the last four years, though they have worked only a small area of a field said to be 40 miles long. In normal times opal is worth \$150 an ounce, but now that there is practically no demand for the gems the diggers have opal, but no money.

Cannibalistic Sea Gulls.

It is not generally realized how great an enemy the sea gull is to smaller birds. An observer ventures the opinion that the reason why small migrants invariably cross the sea by night is that otherwise they would be simply exterminated by gulls. Sometimes it happens that a change in the wind delays the arrival of flights of spring migrants, so that they fail to make a landing before daylight. Light-house keepers have then witnessed scenes of savage slaughter; hundreds of poor, tired, little songsters being hunted down by gulls, seized and devoured.

Year by year in England gulls work further and further inland, and in bad weather may be seen almost anywhere, even in the Midlands. Indeed, on one occasion a number were noticed in a flooded meadow near Leamington, a town which claims to be almost the geographical center of England.

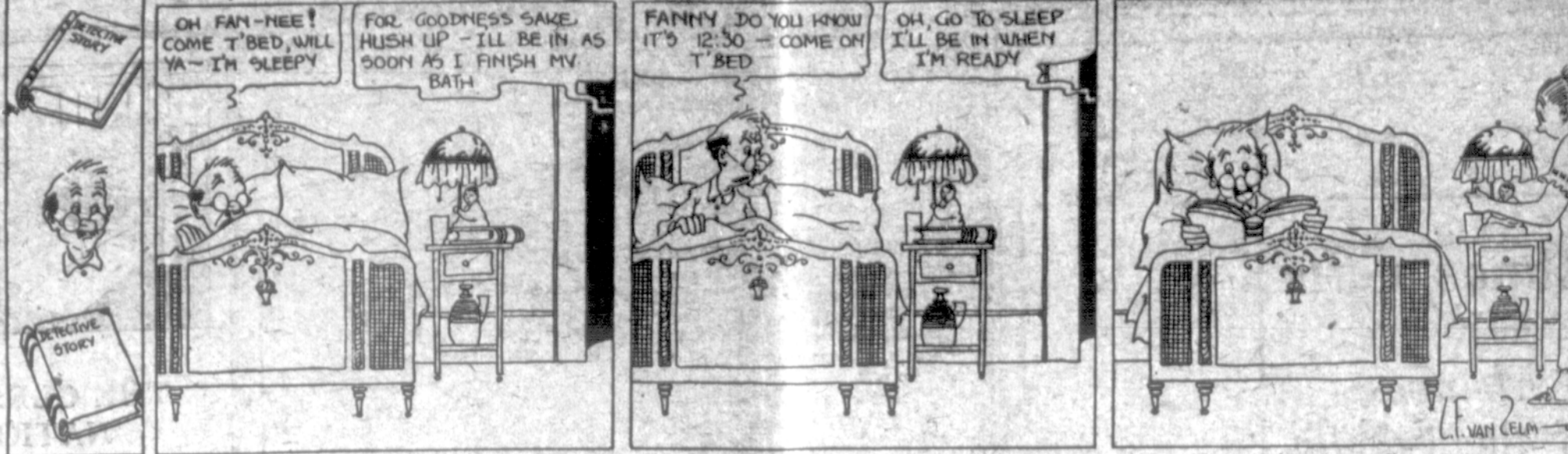
Original "Bill of Health."

A bill of health is a certificate issued to the master of a vessel when clearing from a port. When no disease of an infectious nature exists in the port, the bill is known as a clean bill of health; if infectious disease is suspected or there is possibility of such, it is called a suspected bill, while in case of such disease existing, it is known as a foul bill. The expression "clean bill of health" is often applied to individuals who, after a physical examination, are found in perfect health.

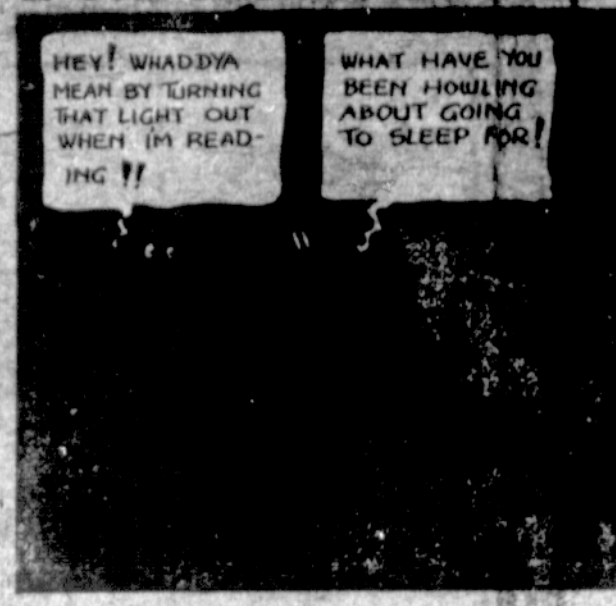
Eight-Year-Old Child Has Mentality of 18

Los Angeles.—Elizabeth Benson, aged eight, is the name of a new infant wonder just discovered here. According to mental tests applied to her by the department of psychology of the public schools, the child has the mentality of a girl of eighteen. The tests gave her an intelligence standing of 202 per cent. The Leland Stanford university revision of the Binet Simon tests was used. The child has been enrolled in the highest grade of the grammar schools here and is studying French outside of school.

AW, WHAT'S THE USE



Is Your Husband Like That?



PICTURED IN OLD CALENDAR

Interesting Ancient Book Showed Special Duties Which Were the Portion of the Husbandman.

Some of the most interesting and rarest of the calendars in use in Europe before the time of Caesar are the old Runic books of the Scandinavians north, which were carved or written on leaves or on bone and strung together on a leathern thong. Not only were they in use by the wise men and wise women of each village, but they were carried by soldiers on campaign.

From the customs of the North rather more than from any other source do we appear to derive most of the seasonal celebrations common in English-speaking countries, such as May day games and dances, harvest festivals and winter feasts.

The extent to which farming and cattle raising made up the round of interest in everyday living may be seen in a striking and an interesting way from the symbols with which they commonly marked the months. January had the sign of the drinking horn, February showed a man sitting before a fire, in March the husbandman was digging, while in April he was pruning a tree. May showed sheep tending and sometimes a tree with a nesting bird. June was for weeding, July for mowing, August for reaping. Threshing was the mark for September. October, for gathering grapes and working in vineyards. November was pig-sticking month, and the month when the fishermen came in for the winter, while December was given over entirely to feasting with one's friends.

No Holdups in Colombia.

As for risks to life and limb, I know of no safer country than Colombia. The "holdups" and other forms of highway robbery, of daily occurrence in many large cities in the United States, are practically unknown in Colombia.

During the six years when parties from the American museum explored the republic from end to end, we lost not one single article from an equipment, a large part of which—camp utensils, guns, knives, etc.—must have seemed highly desirable in native eyes. Indeed, I recall that on passing through a small town where we had previously established our headquarters a woman ran out to give us a needle and thread one of our men had left sticking in the wall of his room!—National Geographic Magazine

Export of Brazilian Nuts.

During the first semester of 1921 the three distributing ports of Para, Manaus and Itacoatiara shipped 34,908,792 pounds of Brazil nuts to the United States and 13,415,360 pounds to Europe. The total exports for the three previous years amounted to 21,246,748 pounds in 1920, 54,828,992 pounds in 1919, and 11,238,736 pounds in 1918.

Robins Most Plentiful.

It is safe to say that there are more robins in this country than birds of any other species. All bird censuses show this conclusively. The robin has become a welcome and well-remembered guest to all who were born amid rural scenes. He has secured a place in our literature. He makes himself perfectly at home with us, and knows all the folks.

WINS AFTER 60 YEARS

Veteran of Civil War at Last Gets His Pension.

New York Man, Now Past Seventy-Five, Served One Week Less Than the Required Ninety Days—Special Act Is Required.

Liberty, N. Y.—After a wait of nearly sixty years in which he passed the age of seventy-five, George W. Garrison, Green county veteran of the Civil war, will be permitted to live the remaining days of his life on a government pension, denied to him all these years because his war service fell short of the required 90 days by less than a week. Fifty dollars a month has been granted to him in a bill introduced in the house of representatives recently signed by President Harding.

Garrison's case is probably without parallel. March 22, 1863, just as soon as his age would permit, he enlisted in Kingston, N. Y., as a private in Company C, One Hundred and Twenty-third regiment of infantry, New York volunteers, for three years. He left Kingston at once and soon was at the battle front, fighting with the Union forces on the Virginia battlefield.

Exposure left him with severe illness. He was removed to the Columbian hospital in Washington, where he lay for weeks, and his case was finally considered hopeless. He rallied, but meanwhile Lee had surrendered, and his physician, without solicitation from Garrison, secured for him an honorable discharge.

Still weak from his service and illness, Garrison was compelled to make the journey to his home in Freehold, N. Y., by easy stages. There he was placed under the care of his family physician. Complete health never returned.

INVENTS TUNING DEVICE



Alfred Crossley, radio engineer of the United States Navy department, and his new "loose" or "radio" coupler whereby sharp tuning is possible in radio receiving sets. This tuning device is so built that perfect zero coupling may be obtained, a condition not possible in present radio coupling instruments.

ARCTIC TOO HOT FOR SEALS

Ocean Is Reported Becoming Warm, Driving Away Fur Bearers—Icebergs Scarce.

Washington.—The Arctic ocean is warming up, icebergs are becoming scarcer and in some places the seals are finding the waters too hot, according to a report to the Commerce department from Consul Hitt at Bergen, Norway.

Reports from fishermen, seal hunters and explorers, he declared, all point to a radical change in climatic conditions and scarcely any ice has been met as far north as 81 degrees 29 minutes. Soundings to a depth of 3,100 meters showed the Gulf stream still very warm.

Very few seals and no whitefish are being found in the eastern Arctic, while vast shoals of herring and smelts, which have never before ventured as far north, are being encountered in the old seal fishing grounds.

That Strong Cigar.

A woman went into a cigar store to buy some cigars for her husband, who was laid up.

"Do you want them mild or strong, madam?" the clerk asked. "Give me the strongest you have," she said. "The last ones he had broke in his pocket."—Everybody's Magazine.

We Have Met Them.

"Education," said Uncle Eben, "don't do much for some men, 'cept' to give 'em mo' vocabulary to talk foolishness."

The Art of Giving.

The art of giving is an integral part of the art of living.

PARENTS TO PLAN STUDIES

Will Have Voice in Arrangement of High School Course, Mothers' Congress Proposes.

Philadelphia.—A new plan for high school associations throughout the United States is in the making, according to Mrs. C. C. Bright, chairman of the parent-teacher committee, National Congress of Mothers and Parent-Teacher associations.

It is the aim of the national congress of that body to organize a high school association which will function differently from the grade or ward associations already in existence.

It has been felt that the parents of freshmen should be brought together early in the school year, to give due consideration to the selection of studies to be pursued by their sons and daughters. This also should afford parents an opportunity to counsel with the teachers as to how to prevent certain detrimental problems from arising.

With these ends in view, the national congress has drawn up a constitution and by-laws for the proposed High School Parent-Teacher associations.

Simply Crushed.

Young Jones, who is something of a pianist, was calling for the first time upon a young lady whom he much admired.

Now not only the young lady but her mother and a number of guests were present. The hostess very soon approached Mr. Jones and asked: "Are you a musician, Mr. Jones?"

Then Jones, who was most anxious to exhibit his skill, said with due modesty:

"Why, yes; I think I might claim to be one."

"I am delighted," continued the hostess. "My daughter is going to play, and I shall take it to be very kind of you if you will turn the music for her."—Minneapolis Tribune.

The Permanent "I."

"You are having a great deal to say in affairs of government just now."

"Of course I have," answered Farmer Cornsmeal. "I represent the farmers that raise the food. It doesn't make no difference how many fancy problems come up for discussion, the populace always gets around to the one basic question: 'When do we eat?'"

Women in Politics.

"Do you think women ought to take a hand in the game of politics?" "Certainly," replied Miss Cayenne. "The only trouble is that some of us undertake to play the game as recklessly as we do bridge."

A Monopoly.

We never know what the future has in store for us—and the worst of it is we can't go to any other store.—Boston Transcript.

Life As I See It.

The telephone girl can say "thr-ree" better than any villain in the melodrama.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Haven't the Time.

Leaders of men are seldom followers of fashion.—Boston Transcript.

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Good Eyes Are Rare.
The Eyesight Conservation Council of America has issued an announcement showing an alarming state of affairs as far as our sight is concerned. The object of the council is to arouse general interest so that people will be impelled to give the care of their eyes some proper attention. Nine out of ten persons over twenty-one years of age have imperfect sight. Above forty it is almost impossible to find a man or woman with perfect sight. A survey of 10,000 employees of factories and commercial houses in a large city showed that 53 per cent had uncorrected faulty vision and 13 had the defects corrected, making a total of 63 per cent defective eyes.

Nowadays.
Ask the average man if he prefers blondes or brunettes and he will say, "Yes, I do."

Hardly.
Love laughs at locksmiths, but not when a man is jailed for the nonpayment of alimony.

The Discovery of Microbes.
Microbes in connection with disease were first written about by a German scientist in the Seventeenth century.

Bears Most Powerful.
Neither the lion nor the tiger is equal in muscular power to the bear tribe, of which the polar and the grizzly are the strongest.

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