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HE WAS GAME TO THE LAST

Dying Book Agent Piles His Profes-
sion With Sorrowing Friends and
Even Tackles Undertaker.

The book agent was dying. (They are tough, but they do die.) "It is hard, very hard," he muttered, "to have death come just as I had been given the exclusive right to canvass Hayseed county for Ripsnorter's Universal history—a work that was bound to sell like hot cakes."

Then glancing at his sobbing friends who stood round his bedside, he said: "Soon all that will be left of men will be a sainted memory. I shall have departed, as Shakespeare—whose works, in 15 volumes, half Russia, come at \$2 a volume, or \$24 the set—remarks, 'to that bourne from which no traveler returns.' But do not weep. I have only one last request to make. Promise me that you will grant it."

"We will," replied all present, in choking accents.
"I have your word—yours, Uncle John, and yours, Aunt Maria, and Bill's, and Cousin Jemima's, and Doctor Slaughter's?"

"You have," was the unanimous response.
"Then," said the dying man, with a look of contentment, "I shall have you all put down for a set of Strawpaper's magnificent 'History of Fakes and Superstitions,' in 12 volumes, full morocco, at \$36 the set. The entire work will be delivered to you with a week."

One by one the sorrowing friends filed out, too full for utterance.
"That little stroke of business will get me an A1 monument," said the book agent to his wife. "And now, suppose you send round for the undertaker, and I'll see if I can't land him for a set of the Blarney library at \$60, and get him to take it out in trade."

SHOWS EARMARKS OF AGE

Collector of Genuine Antique Furni-
ture Knows Little Points That
Cannot Be Faked.

How long ago was the circular saw invented? If you aspire to become a collector of genuine antique furniture you should know the answer to the question. The circular saw was invented as far back as the year 1777. Therefore, no piece of Seventeenth century furniture should bear the tell-tale curved lines that a bent tooth in a circular saw makes. The maker of false antique furniture may copy the form of the original piece with comparative ease, but he has difficulty in giving it the appearance of genuine age. Boring wormholes is now regarded as dangerous; other methods of aging are preferred. For example, a gentleman who was visiting the show of a prosperous country dealer in antique furniture noticed several rabbits inside an interesting carved coffer. "You know more about such things than I do," he remarked to his host, but unless I am strangely mistaken that is an original Sixteenth century coffer. How in the world can you put it to such a use?" "It will be a Fifteenth century coffer when the rabbits have finished with it," was the cool reply.

Snapshots of an Eclipse.

Immense telescopic cameras forty and sixty feet long, gigantic reflectors and a number of smaller instruments will be moved into Mexico for the purpose of photographing the sun during its total eclipse next September, according to plans announced here by Dr. A. B. Douglas of the University of Arizona, says a Tucson correspondent of the New York World.

Doctor Douglas will head an expedition, while a second will be conducted by Prof. W. A. Cogshall of the University of Indiana.

The Douglas expedition will take with it a forty-foot-focus camera which will reproduce the sun with a five-inch diameter. An even larger camera, with a sixty-foot focus, will be taken by the Cogshall expedition.

These cameras will be held in position by means of specially constructed towers.

San Felipe, 134 miles south of the international boundary, has been selected as the site of the Cogshall expedition's observation. Doctor Douglas has not definitely selected his location.

Strange Mirage Seen in Italy.

Images of hills, groves, buildings, ships and other objects in the vicinity, some erect and some inverted, are under certain atmospheric conditions seen in the Straits of Messina, between Calabria and Sicily. This strange species of mirage is sometimes seen in the water and sometimes in the air, and forms a kind of moving spectacle. The Italian name of Fata Morgana is given the mirage, because it is supposed to be the work of the fairy Morgana, the pupil of Merlin and the sister of King Arthur.

Required Too Much Effort.

Mrs. Envie—And have you been in South America?
Mrs. Newrich—Many times. In fact I know it from end to end.
Mrs. Envie—Then of course you went up the Amazon?
Mrs. Newrich—No, as a matter of fact, I didn't. My husband went to the top, but I never cared much for climbing.

The Difficulty.

"They say music makes the cow give more milk."
"Still I imagine it is going to be difficult to persuade some of our temperamental artists to accompany a cow."

\$100,000 STATUE BRINGS \$50

Italian Farmer Who Found Marble
Torso of a Venus First Sold
It for \$5.

The history of some pieces of marble which were found buried in a field at Sinnessa, near Naples, in ancient days the site of a Greek colony, has formed the subject of a long-drawn-out law case in which the government has at length secured an important verdict.

The fragments were apparently of no particular value and the farmer sold them for \$5. They were on their way to the new purchaser when the government director of antiquities, Professor Spinazzola, ordered him to return them to Naples for examination. The professor, having looked at them, exercised his powers of compulsory purchase and bought the fragments for \$50.

Under his direction they were cleaned and put together, when they appeared as the torso of a beautiful Venus, undoubtedly by the hand of Praxiteles (the greatest of the Attic sculptors of the Fourth century B. C.) and worth about \$100,000.

The farmer sued the government for half the value of the find, and after gaining a verdict in two courts lost his case when the government took it to the court of appeals. The statue is now one of the most precious possessions of the Naples National museum.

BIRD ENTOMBED BY MARTINS

Sparrow That Had Grabbed Martin's
Nest Is Made the Victim of
Dire Revenge.

An English ornithologist, G. Garrett, makes a specialty of observing the manners and methods followed by birds. He recently recalled the story of a sparrow which, finding a newly built martin's nest, took "possession" in the absence of the owner. The martin, seeing the usurper, called for help, and soon a thousand martins came, at "full speed," to attack the sparrow; but the latter was invulnerable. After a quarter of an hour's conflict all the martins disappeared. The sparrow thought he had got the better, and the spectators judged that the martins had abandoned their undertaking.

Not in the least! They immediately returned to the charge, and, each of them having procured a little of the tempered earth with which they make their nests, they all at once fell upon the sparrow and inclosed him in the nest to perish there, although they could not drive him out.

The Split Infinitive.

One thinks of that solemn warning against the enormity of the split infinitive which has done so much to aggravate the Pharisaism of the bad writers who scrupulously avoid it. This superstition seems to have had its origin in a false analogy with Latin, in which the infinitive is never split, for the good reason that it is impossible to split. In the greater freedom of English it is possible and has been done for at least the last five hundred years by the greatest masters of English; only the good writer never uses this form helplessly and involuntarily but with a definite object, and that is the only rule to observe. An absolute prohibition in this matter is the mark of those who are too ignorant, or else too unintelligent, to recognize a usage which is of the essence of English speech.—Havelock Ellis, in the London Mercury.

Odd Way of Drawing Water.

I took notes while we were at Epia, New Guinea, of a rather curious method of drawing water from the communal spring, half a mile from the village, writes Reginald Pound in the Wide World Magazine. Twice a day the women went down in chattering groups to the spring, carrying bamboo pipes 12 feet long. These pipes were made by forcing out the pith at the joints, and held about five gallons of water apiece. When full, the drinking end was plugged with leaves, the pipe being stood in a shady spot near its owner's house and used when needed. Incidentally, drinking from these weird receptacles was a rather hazardous business, care being necessary lest a too copious supply should gush out when the pipe was held to the mouth.

Blueberries an Inch Thick.

A blueberry an inch in diameter is not a dream but a possibility. At the government testing plantation at Whitesbog, N. J., about 25,000 hybrids have been fruited. Berries three-fourths of an inch in diameter have been produced on many of them, and one of them this year reached almost seven-eighths of an inch. The Department of Agriculture will continue the experiments until berries an inch in diameter are obtained.

Needed Awakening.

A Yankee tourist was being shown over an old church wherein hundreds of people were buried.
"A great many people sleep between these walls," said the guide, indicating the inscription-covered floor with a sweep of his hand.
"So?" said the American. "Same way over in our country. Why don't you get a more interesting preacher?"

She Would Hold the Ladder.

A very loving couple had just returned from their honeymoon. "Hilda, dearest," said George, "I see there is some asparagus ready for cooking. Shall we go and pluck it together, love?"

To which Hilda replied, coolly: "George, dearest, it will be heavenly! You shall pluck it, and I will hold the ladder."

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