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A MARVELOUS FENCE.

The Story of Australia's War Upon the Rabbit Pest.

The havoc that rabbits have wrought in Australia has cost the country millions of dollars. Until a few years ago, however, the western part of the continent, protected by a bulwark of seemingly impassable desert, was free from the pest. Then one day a solitary rider on the edge of the arid land saw something scuttle across his path. It was the advance scout of a vast invading army of rabbits. The government immediately determined to build a 1,200 mile fence to shut out the devastating horde.

This fence, says the Wide World Magazine, is the longest that has ever been constructed. It traverses an inhospitable country where for miles and miles there is no timber, where the rain may fall once a year, or perhaps not at all for three years. It was necessary to carry materials for the fence and supplies for the workmen hundreds of miles in carts and on camel back. The work had to be pushed with feverish haste, for countless thousands of rabbits, pressing westward steadily, were eating the country as bare as a city road.

When the workmen had nearly finished the barrier, the news came that the rabbits had rounded the end. Without hesitation they began a second fence 100 miles to the westward, and before the farming region was safely inclosed the two fences extended over 2,100 miles.

In appearance the barrier resembles the woven wire fences that are seen in all parts of the world. The netting is stretched between posts sunk deeply into the ground and treated with tar to make them less likely to be destroyed by the white ants. The lower edge of the netting is sunk into the ground to prevent the rabbits from burrowing under it, and along the top runs a heavy wire capable of withstanding the shock of charging kangaroos and emus.

Without constant attention and patrolling, however, the fences would be useless, for outside of them the rabbits keep ceaseless watch. A boundary rider patrols each section of the fence twice a week, and he carries enough material and tools to make ordinary repairs. In some parts the riders are on bicycles, in others they are horsemen, and in the arid districts the men use camels. There is a sort of "flying squad" assigned to each half dozen sections, and the boundary rider can call on them when the fence is badly broken or when the incursions of rabbits are especially threatening.

The Boomerang and Its Inventors.

The boomerang is rather a puzzle. One might think that the highest laws of mathematics had been laid under contribution in the perfecting of it. The convexity on one side, the flatness on the other and the sharp, knifelike edge on the inside of the convexity have the air of having been carefully thought out. Yet the people who invented this singular weapon cannot count higher than five and are destitute of all the arts and amenities of life. Theirs is perhaps the lowest plane of human life. Some people have assumed that the boomerang was the creation of an older and higher civilization, but for this there is no evidence. It must be the product of an age long empirical use of throwing weapons.—London Spectator.

An Interesting Memory Test.

Ask any one to draw a representation of a watch face with Roman numbers and you will have plenty of evidence of the unreliability of incidental memory. Of 200 persons examined only eight omitted the VI from their drawing of the watch face, and only twenty-one put III instead of the more familiar notation, IV. From this it would appear that impeachment of a witness because of his inability to report some incidental feature of an event or scene is not psychologically justified.—Case and Comment.

"Hooisit."

A Chicago lady had a Swedish cook, and she heard this conversation between her cook and the maid next door, also a Swede. "How are you, Hilda?" "I well. I like my job. We got creamed cellular, cemetery plumbing, elastic lights and a hooisit."

"What's a 'hooisit,' Hilda?" "Oh, a bell rings. You put a thing to your ear and say, 'Hello,' and some says 'Hello,' and you say 'Hooisit.'"—Montreal Herald.

Inside Information.

Mother—If you could have eaten that entire jar of jam without a single twinge of conscience, you must be thoroughly bad.

Willie—No, mother; I am confident there is something good in me. —Yale Record.

WHY DO WE SLEEP?

Not to Cure Fatigue, Says a Scientist, but to Prevent It.

Most of us suppose that we sleep because we are exhausted. But Claparede, the Swiss physiologist, has advanced a theory to the effect that we sleep in order to avoid being exhausted. Dr. Adolf Koelsch in Die Woche explains this theory by saying that sleep instead of being the result of fatigue is an impulsive self disinfection which the body conducts in order to get rid of the waste products before they have time to produce exhaustion.

Just as combustion of fuel for the production of heat and energy is always attended by ashes and slag, so the slow combustion which produces heat and energy in the body by means of metabolic changes is likewise attended by waste.

"Since the senses never voluntarily come to rest or shut themselves off from the outer world, a point would eventually be reached when the organism would perish as a victim of general nerve exhaustion. In order to hinder this nature arranges betimes—namely, before exhaustion can seriously injure the organism—to set in motion that opposition current which we term sleep."

Dr. Koelsch says that the sight endowed animal tends to take its sleep at night, since the stimuli which govern the animal's vital activities are then cut off. For animals endowed with other special senses, but not with sight, the night is not so great a factor. "These can only blockade stimuli to the senses either by creeping into some secluded spot or by the action of nature in causing an opportune production of a substance (a sort of hormone) which acts as an obstacle by entering the nerve path and deadening sensibility."

Walt Whitman's Easy Job.

"I used to visit Walt Whitman in his old age in his little, two story, wooden house in Mickle street, Camden," said a Philadelphia editor. "One day—it's a pleasant souvenir, this, of old time Philadelphia—one day in December I said to him:

"Well, Walt, how are things going this winter? Any Christmas subscriptions needed?" "No," said the old poet. "No, indeed. I'm working now. I'm working for George W. Childs. He pays me \$50 a month."

"Good!" said I. "And what's your job with Childs?"

"Riding in the horse cars," said Walt. "I ride about the city. I talk to the drivers and conductors. I find out which of them need winter overcoats, and, guessing their size, I notify Childs, who fits them out forthwith. It's easy, pleasant work, and it saves Childs a lot of trouble over measurements and so forth."

Brought a Blush to Her Cheek.

There was a story told of one of the world's great vocalists singing as a young girl at a private house in London. She was overwhelmed with praise. By and by she came and sat by an elderly lady, who congratulated her on the way she had sung, but ventured to offer one or two suggestions. The young singer treated the hints with scorn and afterward asked the hostess who "the old lady" was who had dared to give her suggestions. "Oh, that was Mme. Goldschmidt," replied the lady. "And who is Mme. Goldschmidt?" was the next impatient query. "Well, she's better known as Jenny Lind," said the hostess. And then the singer blushed for shame at her disdainful reception of hints from the "Swedish Nightingale."

Of Two Evils.

The little boy in this story from "Touche a Tout" was evidently a firm believer in the old adage, "Of two evils choose the less." Turning a corner at full speed he collided with the minister.

"Where are you running to, my little man?" asked the minister, when he had regained his breath.

"Home!" panted the boy. "Ma's going to spank me."

"What!" gasped the astonished minister. "Are you eager to have your mother spank you that you run home so fast?"

"No," shouted the boy over his shoulder as he resumed his homeward flight, "but if I don't get there before pa, he'll do it!"

His Opinion.

"It seems to me," ventured skimp little Mr. Hennypeck, "that Professor Peckhead's article advising men to be very careful in their choice of wives lacks—er—well, verisimilitude, or—ah!—some such word. As far as I have ever known, the man had no more to do with choosing his wife than he has with getting his photograph taken—he just keeps still, looks as pleasant as he can and accepts whatever is given him."—Judge.

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