WITNESSES TO ALIBIS.

Shady Trade Which Once Flourished In New York's Courts.

The elder Weller in "Pickwick" was, as all admirers of the works of Dickens will know, a great believer in the utility of an alibi as a defense in both criminal and civil actions.

"Never mind the character," said Mr. Weller to his son. "Stick to the alleybi. Nothing like an alleybi, Sammy; nothing. Verever he's agoin' to be tried, me boy, a alleybi's the thing to get him off."

This sage advice of Mr. Weller found frequent corroboration in the views of criminal lawyers in town up to a very few years ago. There were half a century ago more criminal lawyers than there are today, and the emoluments and fees of criminal lawyers were materially larger in the ordinary run of cases than now. As a consequence, cases were more often defended than they are now and pleas of guilty much more rarer. Then the alibi witness was a necessary though usually unwelcome part of the machinery of defense in criminal cases. There is in criminal procedure no better defense than an alibi if sustained. Alibi witnesses were therefore very much in demand until juries began to mistrust them and the penalties for the crime of perjury were visited upon some of the delinquents.

For a long time the mendacious and subsidized testimony of professional alibi witnesses obtained credence from jurors, and some of these witnesses, to quote their own language, "made a good thing out of it." Juries in criminal cases are usually sympathetic where no outside pressure is brought upon them, and it is the part of the charge of every judge in a criminal case to inform the jury that the prisoner at the bar is entitled to every reasonable doubt. If, therefore, any uncertainty existed on the point whether or not the prisoner was actually present at the time and place of the alleged crime he was entitled to the benefit of it, but little by little the prosecuting officers became acquainted with the identity and records of the professional alibi witnesses. One or two were prosecuted. Others were scared off. The commercial value of the services of the others was decreased, and finally the whole nefarious business was abandoned, never since to be revived.

CURE OF INSOMNIA.

The soporific powers of warm milk are well known, but care should be taken that the milk does not quite boil.

A Swedish method of producing sleep is to wring out a handkerchief in icy cold water and lay it across the eyes, when it is said to act like magic.

To many constitutions a warm bath taken immediately before going to bed is very soothing and produces drowsiness, while an apple eaten as the last thing is equally effective.

The homely boiled onion is another sovereign remedy, or an onion may be sliced and eaten raw, the disagreeable taste being removed by taking a little sugar or a pinch of tea afterward.

A Hindoo practice to induce sleep is to take deep inhalations, expelling the air alternately through each nostril, keeping the other closed with the finger. This has a wonderfully quieting effect.

Going to Congress.

A poor man had better keep out of congress. Campaign expenses are heavy and they come every two years. No man can go to congress without neglecting his law practice or his business. If he is a poor man he will probably lose his clients or his customers; a small business or practice will not support partners or managers. After a few years in congress nine men out of ten are beaten for renomination, and then, if they have not a fortune or an established business to fall back on, they will try to get some small salaried place under the government and may not be successful.—Philadelphia Record.

Chemical Changes.

By taking some limewater and blowing one's breath into it a fine white powder will be formed in the water.

By adding some common salt to a solution of nitrate of silver a thick white powder is produced which, if placed in the sunlight, will turn brown.

Pour the juice of a red cabbage into a test tube or thin glass bottle, drop in very gradually a solution of washing soda, shaking the bottle every time you put the washing soda in, and you will see the red solution gradually turning blue. Go on adding the soda solution, and the blue color will give way to green.

Repressed Sentiments.

People who marry always hear good wishes, congratulations and other pleasant remarks, but they miss much in not hearing the repressed sentiments which burst forth to others. A woman who recently received a wedding announcement from a friend was heard to exclaim in tones of disgust, "What a willful disregard of the manifestation of Providence when she was so plainly intended for an old maid!"

The Evidence Was All In.

A juryman went to sleep during the closing speech of one of the counsel in the case in an English court. The judge had him awakened and sternly rebuked him. "My lord," said the juror, "I was under the impression that I was sworn to give a verdict according to the evidence, not according to the speeches."

Three Kinds.

There are three kinds of good—the kind that feels good, the kind that looks good and the kind that opposes evil. And the first two are good for nothing.

THE VATICAN PALACE.

Its Existence Is Mainly Due to the Builder Pope, Nicholas V.

The present existence of the Vatican palace is principally due to Nicholas V., the builder pope, whose gigantic scheme would startle a modern architect. His plan was to build the church of St. Peter's as a starting point and then to construct one vast central habitat for the papal administration, covering the whole of what is called the Borgo, from the castle of Sant' Angelo to the cathedral. In ancient times a portico, or covered way supported on columns, led from the bridge to the church, and it was probably from this real structure that Nicholas began his imaginary one, only a small part of which was ever completed. That small portion alone comprises the basilica and the Vatican palace, which together form by far the greatest continuous mass of buildings in the world. The Coliseum is 195 yards long by 156 broad, including the thickness of the walls. St. Peter's church alone is 205 yards long and 156 broad, so that the whole Coliseum would easily stand upon the ground plan of the church, while the Vatican palace is more than half as large again.

Nicholas V. died in 1455, and the oldest parts of the present Vatican palace are not older than his reign. They are generally known as the Torre Borgia, from having been inhabited by Alexander VI., who died of poison in the third of the rooms now occupied by the library, counting from the library side. The windows of these rooms look upon the large square court of the Belvedere, and that part of the palace is not visible from without.

Portions of the substructure of the earlier building were no doubt utilized by Nicholas, and the secret gallery which connects the Vatican with the mausoleum of Hadrian is generally attributed to Pope John XXIII., who died in 1417, but on the whole it may be said that the Vatican palace is originally a building of the period of the renaissance, to which all successive popes have made additions.

AN INDIAN THEORY.

The Cause of Earthquakes, Tidal Waves and Volcanoes.

"When I lived among the Dakotas," said an old army officer, "I found men who, like Buddha, gave seven years of their lives to prayer and fasting, that they might become pure in the sight of God, or the Great Spirit, as they call that being. After they have proved themselves before their people by performing so called miracles, such as holding their hands and arms in boiling water and not being burned, shot with poisoned arrows and not harmed, bitten by rattlesnakes and not poisoned and many other tests that I have witnessed, they are accepted as holy or wise men. The Indians believe that they can get the word direct from God, or the Great Spirit, the same as the wise men and seers of old used to do. I have asked these intelligences to tell me about the cause of earthquakes and tidal waves, and they explain it like this:

"They say volcanoes are the safety valves of the earth; that the rim of the earth is gradually cooling. As it cools it contracts, making the pressure on the hot lava in the interior greater. At last something must give way, this rim must crack open, or the volcanoes must burst forth and emit this compressed lava.

"Sometimes it is relieved in one way, sometimes in another. Should the earth crack in mildocean, where the crust is usually thinner, then the waters of the ocean fill in, and there is a great explosion as the water strikes this great bed of hot lava, large masses of the rim are thrown up, and islands appear. Sometimes they stay on the surface of the ocean, sometimes they fall back and are again covered with water, but that upheaval so lifts the water that a great wave is started for the shore that carries death and destruction in its way.

"Many of the old safety valves in the earth are now closing up; only a few remain. The crust is becoming so thick that the cooling process is more slow."—Seattle Times.

Deference to Royalty.

On the occasion of a visit by the king of Italy to Vesuvius an Italian newspaper announced that "the eruption had the honor of being witnessed by his majesty." It was a German paper which once stated that a certain royal prince "was graciously pleased to be born yesterday." Equally courtier-like was an army officer in attendance on the king of Spain. The king asked him what was the time. The courtier fumbled for his watch, but could not find it, then respectfully replied, "Whatever time your majesty pleases."

Octopus and Conger Eel.

Conger eels hunt for the octopus and, when found, proceed to browse on its limbs. The octopus tries to hug the slippery, slimy conger tight, but in vain, and, finding its limbs growing loss, discharges its ink in the face of the foe and, under cover of the turbid water, beats a hasty retreat. It is to escape the too pressing attention of its foes that the octopus possesses the power of changing its color to correspond with that of its surroundings.

Three of a Kind and a Pair.

Hewitt—Our actor friend claimed that he played to a full house last night, and it turned out there were only five people in the audience. Jewett—Well, it was the regulation full house. There were three men in the gallery and a man and his wife downstairs.—New York Press.

Glass can be cut with a pair of ordinary shears if glass and shears and hands are all kept under cold water.

A COAT OF ARMS.

How One May Be Acquired For a Consideration in England.

The practice of granting arms is still in vogue in England, Ireland, Scotland, Austria, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Germany, etc., and at times the pope, as sovereign pontiff, exercises the power.

Indeed, it is by patent or grant alone that a new family can legitimately acquire a coat of arms.

The modus operandi in England, for example, is as follows: The applicant for a patent of arms (from the crown) may employ any member he pleases of the heralds' college and through him present a memorial to the earl marshal of England, who acts for the crown in these matters, setting forth that he, the memorialist, is not entitled to arms or cannot prove his right to such and praying that his grace the earl marshal will issue his warrant to the kings of arms, authorizing them to grant and confirm to him due and proper armorial ensigns, to be borne according to the laws of heraldry by him and his descendants. This memorial is presented and a warrant is issued by the earl marshal, under which a patent of arms is made out, exhibiting a painting of the armorial ensigns granted, the royal arms of England, the arms of the earl marshal and those of the college and describing in official terms the proceedings that have taken place and a correct blason of the arms. This patent is registered in the books of the heralds' college and receives the signatures of the garter and one or both of the provincial kings of arms.

A grant or patent of arms is made to a man and his male descendants. This gives him a fee simple of them—that is to say, to him and to his male descendants equally and altogether and to his female descendants in a qualified manner—i. e., for life, to bear the arms in a lozenge or impaled with their husbands' arms (if the husbands have arms), as arms can only be brought in by arms, or, if they be heiresses or coheiresses, on an escutcheon of pretense upon their husbands' shields, and in the last case their descendants inherit such maternal arms, but only as a quartering.—Nineteenth Century.

SMUGGLING.

It Was Considered a Legitimate Pursuit In Days Gone By.

A book by J. C. Wright entitled "In the Good Old Times" throws some interesting light on the ways of days gone by: "Of every three pounds of tea it was said that two were contraband. In fact, smuggling was considered a perfectly legitimate pursuit. Everybody was ready to profit by it, from the squire, who filled his cellars with cheap wine, and his wife, who adorned herself in cheap silks, to the shopkeeper, who got cheap groceries, or the laborer, who got high wages for work that was secret, unlawful and perilous. Even Adam Smith confessed to a weakness for smuggling and nobody was above bargaining to have a pipe or a hogshead put in his cellar at a low figure. But smuggling on a large scale was not carried on without bribery, perjury, informing, violence and murder."

Of the old time London watchman: "He was wrapped in a wide skirted heavy coat, a useful garment for protecting him from the cold, but not adapted to enable him to cope with the bullies who assaulted the weak and unprotected. He wore low shoes and a big broad brimmed hat, which could be turned up or down, worn forward or backward. The only means of defense which the watchman seems to have possessed was a staff something like a beadle's. In his left hand he carried his lantern."

In those primitive times pins were manufactured by hand and went through several stages of manufacture: Worker No. 1 formed the wire, No. 2 cut it into lengths, No. 3 smoothed it, the fourth man made the head, the fifth stuck it on, the sixth ground the point, the seventh washed and dried it, and it had to go through three more hands after that; hence it used to be a familiar proverb, "It takes ten men to make a pin."

Queer Judicial Decisions.

Some queer judicial decisions in Victoria are mentioned in the Australian Review of Reviews. A man who embezzled some money from a bank has received a sentence of nearly three years' imprisonment, while a man who murdered his mother by stabbing her to the heart received only one year, and another man, who shot his sister and killed her, was sentenced to only two years, and immediately after that a man who wrote a letter to another man threatening to kill him received three years' imprisonment.

Schoolboy Answers.

Here are some assertions from compositions by American schoolboys: "Franklin's father was a tallow chandelier." "The climate of North America is embracing." "This song is in the key of B flap." "There are five bowels—a, e, i, o and u." "The snow is painting the town white." "He lived in Cambridgepork." "Man is in the muscular gender because it denotes a male." "They went to the foolish (Polish) church." Question: "What is geography?" Answer: "Geography is round, like a ball."

Fame.

It is an indiscreet and troublesome ambition that cares so much about fame, about what the world says of us; to be always looking in the faces of others for approval; to be always anxious about the effect of what we do or say; to be always shouting to hear the echoes of our own voices.—Longfellow.

Laws are like cobwebs—if any trifling or powerless thing falls into them they hold it fast, while if it is something weightier it breaks through them and is off.—Solon.

RECKONING TIME.

The Watch of the Man in the Street Is Set by the Stars.

Time is a perennially interesting subject. Before the chronometer in the jeweler's window a procession is constantly passing. The banker pulls out his $700 repeater, compares it with the chronometer and moves on. The office boy with just as much dignity consults the dollar timepiece that bulges his little waistcoat. Both are equally under the spell of time.

As most persons know, England supplies the world with that valuable but impalpable commodity, that purely arbitrary thing which we call time. The meridian of the Royal observatory at Greenwich is the point from which the day of the civilized world is reckoned, but in America the United States Naval observatory in Washington determines Greenwich time and distributes it by telegraph.

In the end the watch of the man in the street is set by the stars. Out of the vast number in the heavens there are some 600, visible either to the eye or the camera, which are known to be practically invariable. The astronomer selects one of them. Through the transit instrument—a telescope poluted at the meridian—he watches, telegraphic key in hand. On the lens of the telescope are eleven hair lines. The center one marks the meridian. As the star crosses each of these lines the operator presses his key, the wires of which connect with an automatic recording clock called a chronograph.

This shows at what time the star crossed the meridian. Astronomical tables determine the time at which it should have crossed. Comparison of the standard clock with these tables shows whether or not the clock is right.

The time is distributed at noon. Three minutes before 12 o'clock thousands of telegraph operators sit in silence waiting for the click of the key which shall tell them that the "master clock" in Washington has begun to speak. At one minute before 12 it begins, beating every second until the fifty-fifth. Then, after the pause, comes a single beat, which marks exact noon, and for another day the world knows that it has the correct time to the fraction of a second.—Youth's Companion.

A FEW DON'TS.

Don't be reckless, especially in your lying.

Don't give to the Lord and then go out and rob a widow.

Don't acquire the borrowing habit, or the day will come when you will run out of friends.

Don't marry an indolent man expecting him to brace up, or you may have to take in washing to pay for the brace.

Don't be so mean minded that you can see no good in a man. He may be the first to loan you money in time of need.

Don't lay up everything for a rainy day and go hungry all through life. Besides, where you are going it may never rain.

Don't spread butter on both sides of your bread just because you have $3 in your pockets. An earthquake may come along and shake the change out of them.—Denver News.

Development of a Chick.

The development of a chick within the egg is one of the most wonderful things in nature. At the end of the fifty-eighth hour of incubation the heart begins to beat, two vesicles are seen and a few hours later the auricles also appear. On the fourth day the outlines of the wings may be perceived and sometimes of the head also; on the fifth day the liver is visible; on the sixth other internal organs appear. In 190 hours the beak is fully formed; in 200 hours the ribs are clearly developed; in 240 hours the feathers are visible; in 268 hours the eyes appear; in 288 the ribs are completed and the feathers on the breast; in 330 the lungs, stomach and breast have assumed a natural appearance. On the eighteenth day the first faint piping of the chick is sometimes audible.

Noisy Old London.

Modern cities are not as noisy as those of other days. For example, in London in the time of King George II. the streets were still cobbled and the pack horse of Elizabethan memory had been replaced by heavy carts and wagons. Barrels of beer and heavy cases were dragged about on drays of iron without wheels, and to add to the tumult heavy signs in immense frames of ironwork hang out in front of shops and houses and croaked interminably. Street cries never ceased for a moment all day. All the smaller necessaries, such as pins, thread, string, ink, straps, fish, milk, cakes, bread, drugs, herbs, matches, were hawked in the streets.

The Modern Way.

"My dear, you must really take Freddy in hand about the way he uses slang. Today he asked me what entomology was, and I told him the science of bugs."

"Well?"

"Then he asked me if an entomologist was a crazy man."—Baltimore American.

A Good Answer.

A shopkeeper had for his virtues obtained the name of "the little rascal." A stranger asked him why the appellation had been given to him.

"To distinguish me from the rest of my trade," quoth he, "who are all great rascals."—London Mail.

Proved.

Stella—Professor Lee says candy is a cure for fatigue. Bella—That's true. A man who brings me chocolate never makes me as tired as a man who does not.—Harper's Bazar.

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