

NOISE IN A BIG CITY.

PROGRESS FROM BARBARISM MAY BE MEASURED BY NOISE.

The Higher Civilization the Greater the Desire For Less Noise—The Efforts of City Authorities of Today Are Directed Toward Reducing It.

There always comes a period in the history of a progressive community when a desire to keep down noise begins to show itself. In the primitive stages of culture—the savage, the barbarian and the semibarbarian—the passion for noise is always strong. All savages and barbarians love to make all the row they can. Their joy and sorrow both express themselves in yells, wails and shouts and the beating and blowing of loud resounding instruments, more especially the drum and the horn. The noise of primitive warfare almost equals that of the gunpowder engagements of modern arms, although it was, as we might say, almost wholly manual or vocal.

The din of a barbarian funeral, too, was and is something appalling. The practice of hiring mourners to make a loud lament on such occasions has come down almost to our own time among the Celtic Irish. All African travelers describe the noise of little merry-making in an African village as something which no civilized man easily forgets. Those who have passed an evening at a Chinese theater have probably never in their wildest dreams thought it possible to produce plays with musical accompaniments of such awful shrillness and intensity.

In fact, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that the progress of a race in civilization may be marked by a steady reduction in the volume of sound which it produces in connection with its deaths, births, marriages, feasts, merry-makings, its wars and peace, trade, commerce and manufactures. The more culture of all kinds it acquires the less noise it produces. There is no surer sign, in fact, of an upward movement of the tribal soul than the appearance of a desire to get along with less uproar. When its leading men begin to ask themselves whether this or that could not safely be done with fewer yells or smaller drums, it shows that it is becoming self-conscious and is feeling the throbs of a new life. After this comes a change in the character of the musical instruments, a general lowering of the tones of the voice, the substitution at funerals of the silent tear for the half-maniacal "keen," and the exactness of silence in military drill.

In cities this mental and moral growth is of course displayed in the repression of street cries, of street music, of all noises made for mere amusement, such as beating of drums, and blowing of horns, and purposeless and persistent shouting and yelling. These are but rudimentary steps, and we have already taken them in New York. The next and most important one, the reduction of the noise made by the ordinary and legitimate street traffic, we are only beginning. Its importance has been recognized in the modern world pari passu with the increasing interest in and care for public hygiene.

There is no modern city health board, and indeed no modern city doctor, who is not well aware of the evil effects of incessant noise in the vast and increasing multitudes who in all the great cities now live, one might say, by their wits, but, more accurately, by their nerves. The amount of mental operations which require silence, or at all events an approach to silence, for their healthfulness in cities like New York, London or Paris, carried on by merchants, brokers, bankers, bookkeepers, preachers, professors, architects, designers, engravers, painters, students, judges, lawyers, editors, ministers, is something enormous and grows with all our material growth. The performance of this work in the midst of tremendous uproar of any kind of course greatly increases the expenditure of vital force which accompanies all mental exertion. Consequently the reduction of city noise is now one of the most important elements in all city reforms.

In New York we have as yet only made a beginning on it by the introduction of the asphalt pavement, but this is being rapidly extended and must produce a marked effect in sound reduction before long. What this pavement does to lessen noise in the streets in which it exists everybody who has passed along them or lived on them knows. It makes conversation in cabs or carriages and in rooms facing on the street comfortable and makes sleep in summer nights with open windows an easy possibility—facts which are really a complete answer to all the complaints of slippersness.

Better far than an occasional horse should come down than that the nerves of thousands of hardworking men and women should be continuously set on edge by clatter which is all the more wearing for being intermittent. In London the hard grinding, soul penetrating noise of the New York stone pavement has been suppressed, or rather has been largely converted into a subdued, continuous roar or boom by means of wood, asphalt and macadam, and though horses fall much on them all humanity gains.—New York Post.

A Tribute to Horses. In view of the fact that more than half the women who drive, and the men, too, for that matter, know really nothing of the art and have no sympathy or feeling for the horse other than as a pleasant means of locomotion, it is really to be wondered at that more accidents do not happen. That they do not, I am of the opinion, should be put down to a kind Providence, and that the noble animals in very many instances know more than their drivers.—Buffalo News.

Giving an Impetus. "Don't you think her presence will give 'em to our party?" "Yes. Every one will leave as soon as she comes in."—Kate Field's Washington.

FEMALE, WOMAN, LADY.

The Distinction Between Several Words and How They May Be Used.

An interesting discussion is going on in the columns of some newspapers over the use of the words "lady" and "woman." There is no real difference as to the occasions upon which each word is to be used, but there is a frank acknowledgment upon the part of some that they do not use the word "woman" where their good sense tells them that they should, for fear that it might give offense to the person to whom it was directed "as not sufficiently polite."

There are certainly no words so abused as "woman," "lady" and "female." Among certain people the use of the second of these terms is like the wearing of fine clothes or jewelry. Originally belonging to a superior class they insist on appropriating it to themselves as proof that they are the equals of any other social body. Now, while all that may be true enough and while class distinctions have no place in this country this use of the word has led to some strange and amusing confusions. The humorist who depicted the servant as addressing her mistress, "Mam, the laundry lady is a-wanting to speak to the woman of the house," did not have to depend upon his imagination for his facts.

As absurd things as that may be heard in any one of the large dry goods stores in town any day, and almost any newspaper will yield a rich specimen or two. Bishop Warren, referring to this same point, says that he glanced at the wall opposite him at the moment and saw a diploma from the "Female academy," and then turned to a bookcase and read as the title of one of the volumes there, "Female Holiness." In the report of a southern woman's Christian temperance union convention appears the fact that "Mrs. Blank was chairlady."

Now the proper word in all this is "woman." That is always and ever right. Than it there is no nobler or stronger word in the English language. "Man" is a general word as well as a particular one, and as such includes both sexes, so that the term "chairman" signifies no subservience of one sex to the domination of the other. If called upon to address a stranger, a woman, then the proper word is "madam" and not "lady," this way and "lady, that way," as so many ushers appear to think to be the only solution to the problem of address. "Female" is never to be used as a synonym of "woman." It is a term common to one-half of the animal creation, and to apply it to woman as the substantive of designation is an insult. "Lady" is applicable to every well bred and educated woman, but it is something that is reserved rather for social usage and has not the sturdy strength and nobility of "woman."—Boston Journal.

Color Protection From Intense Heat. With reference to the protective effect of certain colors against the sun's rays, years ago on my way to India the second time, having already been invalidated home once from the effects of the sun, I occurred to me to try the photographer's plan. I reasoned to myself that since no one ever got sunstroke or sun fever from exposure to a dark source of heat or even to one which, though luminous, possessed no great degree of chemical energy—the furnaces in the arsenal, for example—it could not be the heat rays, therefore, which injured one, but must be the chemical ones only.

If therefore one treats one's own body as the photographer treats his plates and envelops one's self in yellow or dark red, one ought to be practically secure, and since the photographer lined the inside of his tents and belongings with yellow it was obviously immaterial whether one wore yellow inside or out. I had my hats and coats lined with yellow, and with most satisfactory results, for during five years and even extreme exposure never once did the yellow lining fail me, but every time that either through carelessness or overconfidence I forgot the precaution a very short exposure sufficed to send me down with the usual sun fever. Many friends tried the plan and all with the same satisfactory results.—Cor. Lahore (India) Civil and Military Gazette.

Sleeping Under Feathers. Years ago we used to smile with conscious superiority at the idea of the Dutch sleeping under a feather bed instead of over it. The idea of sleeping upon a hard mattress and climbing under a soft one seemed rather an anachronism and a singular perversion of common sense, but the introduction of down or feather comfortables is simply the utilization of that knowledge of things which some of the older countries had long ago known. Feathers are exceedingly warm, and a covering made of them superinduces and retains the heat in the human body.

A curious claim is now made for a new comfortable of down. The makers assert that their product retains all the natural warmth, but allows the impure air to escape from the bed, how or wherefore we are not informed.—Up-holsterer.

Velocity of the Earth. The highest velocity attained by a cannon ball has been estimated at 1,622 feet per second, which is equal to a mile in 3.2 seconds. The velocity of the earth at the equator, due to its rotation on its axis, is 1,000 miles per second, or a mile every 3.6 seconds. Therefore it has been calculated that if a cannon ball were fired due west, and that it could maintain its initial velocity for 24 hours, it would barely beat the sun in its apparent journey around the earth.—Philadelphia Press.

What a Had Digestion Does. All life looks black to a miserable man with a stomach in which the food lies like lead. We to his companions if they expect good fellowship from him! We to his wife unless she has the womanly intuition that will make her humor him as though he were a cross baby! Man delights him not, nor woman either, nor is he best pleased with himself, though he jealously demands homage from others.—New York Ledger.

Ohio and Indiana, although fairly friendly to tramps, are noted for certain "hostile" features. The main one of these is the well known "timber lesson"—clubbing at the hands of the inhabitants of certain towns. I experienced this muscular instruction at one unfortunate time in my life, and I must say that it is one of the best remedies for vagabondage that exists. But it is very crude and often cruel.

In company with two other tramps I was made to run the gantlet extending from one end of the town of Oxford, Ind., to the other. The boys and men who were "timbering" us threw rocks and clubbed us most diligently. I came out of the scrape with a rather sore back, and should probably have suffered more had I not been able to run with rather more than the usual speed. One of my fellow sufferers, I heard, was in a hospital for some time. My other companion had his eye gouged terribly, and I fancy that he will never visit that town again.

Apart from the "timber" custom, which I understand is now practiced in other communities also, these two states are good begging districts. There are plenty of tramps within their boundaries, and when "the eagles are gathered together" the carcass to be preyed upon is not far away.—Century.

Traits Inherited From a Stepphater. Touching our note on "Telegony," we have received a communication which may interest Professor Romanes. It is to the effect that in a certain parish of Wiltshire (particulars of which we can furnish him if he desires it) there is an old woman whose first husband had "bright red, thick curly hair," and their only child had exactly the same kind of hair.

The woman became a widow, and she married secondly a man with "straight, soft, light brown hair, with not the least shade of red in it." No two men could have been more unlike in appearance. Of the second family, there were four who resembled their father and mother—the mother had pretty brown hair and eyes—then came a boy and girl exactly like the child of the first husband, with the self same curly hair, "regular 'carrots,' blue eyes, and similar features."

They are all living now, in or near the parish in question. Perhaps, nay, probably, there were ancestors of the true parents, near or remote, who had red hair, and therefore the case is not quite a satisfactory one, but Professor Romanes may think it worth while to look into it more closely.—London Globe.

The Smile That Never Came. "Stranger," said the young man with the white hair and the dyed mustache to the photographer, "I am here to get my picture taken, and I'll tell you how it is. I've just popped the question to a wider down our way with 40 acres of as good ground as ever a hog stuck his nose into, and I am now going to read her answer. When you see the pleasant smile steal over my face, I want you to fire off the ole machine and let 'er go."

"All right." The young man took his position, but he didn't get the photograph taken. Instead he rose to go without a word. "What's the matter?" asked the photographer. "There hain't nothin the matter, 'ceptin that she says she's stuck on a preacher, and that I ain't got the sense I was borned with, that's all."—Indianapolis Journal.

Accounted For. It takes the "well brought up" child to discover the hidden meanings of things. The other evening, at Mrs. E.—'s in K street, somebody was showing a picture of an artistic loving cup which had just been presented to a famous actor by his professional brethren. One of the party remarked that it had always been a marvel to him why a loving cup should have three handles.

"I can account," said he, "for one handle as belonging to the lover and the other as belonging to the beloved, but the third handle?" The shrill little voice of Mrs. E.—'s youngest, who has seen two elder sisters pass through the marriageable period, piped up:

"That's for the chaperon."—Kate Field's Washington. A citizen of North Dakota tells a reporter that he has to a large extent dropped all political problems and is absorbed on this question, "Is the hen that lays the egg or the hen that hatched it the mother of the chicken?"

At this distance it is difficult to see how the aforesaid citizen can arrive at more than one solution of this question. Suppose he bought an incubator, furnished the heat and hatched the egg. Would he be the mother of the chicken?—Minneapolis Journal.

Disgusted Economy. "Rivers, you smoke to excess. That's the third time this morning I've seen you light a fresh cigar with the stump of the old one. I call that disgraceful extravagance." "No, Banks, it's economy. Saves matches."—Chicago Tribune.



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The Great Napoleon in a Passion. I never saw Bonaparte in such a wrath as when he learned his brother Lucien had married at Senlis the widow of Joubert, a Paris broker. He ordered me to send for the notary and tell him to bring his register. When the notary arrived, I took him to St. Cloud at 9 in the morning. Here is word for word the dialogue between the first consul and the notary: "Was it you, sir, who registered my brother's marriage?" "Yes, citizen first consul."

"Were you aware, then, that he was my brother?" "No, citizen first consul." "Did you not know that my consent was necessary to the validity of the act?" "I do not think so. Your brother has long been of age. He has filled high posts. He has been a minister and ambassador. He has no father. He is free to marry."

"But he has a mother whose consent was necessary?" "No, he is of age and a widower." "But I am a sovereign, and as such my consent was necessary." "You are a sovereign only for 10 years, and your family is not bound to you."

"Show me the marriage register?" "Here it is." The first consul read it and in shutting the book was very near tearing the page. "I shall annul it." "That will be difficult, for it is carefully drawn up." "Be off with you." The notary retired without having for a moment lost his composure.—Chaptal's "Memoires of Napoleon."

A Homemade Postal Card. The postal card is often very handy. An English member of parliament has made a suggestion to the effect that the postal laws should permit the transmission through the mails of any card whatever of the regulation size bearing an adhesive 1-cent stamp. We are disposed to back up this suggestion. Its adoption would save money to the postoffice department and would be very convenient at times to people who do not happen to have postal cards at hand when needed. It would often be especially convenient to people in the rural districts. We do not know that it would be against any law to mail an ordinary white card bearing a 1-cent stamp. We recently heard of a case in which a card of this kind, thus stamped, was mailed and delivered in this city. If the sender acted unlawfully, he has never heard of it.—New York Sun.

A Word For the Cat. At this season, when the family departs from town, a word must be spoken in behalf of the house cat, too often left behind to lead a vagrant and precarious existence. Already on the Back Bay, where "early closing" is the rule, the cats have become conspicuous by the absence of their owners. A few loafers in the world are not objected to, but that suffering and slow starvation should attend their taking off is a shame to humanity. Unless the devoted house cat can be provided with a summer home, it should be mercifully put out of existence in a way the animal society understands how to do perfectly.—Boston Herald.

A Clever Sparrow. A tree sparrow on one occasion built its nest in a tall elm just beneath the more bulky erection of a crow. Not only did the large nest screen the smaller, but it afforded a means of protection from the vagaries of the weather. Some time after the crow's nest was plundered of its contents, while that of the tree sparrow escaped untouched.—London Tit-Bits.

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