

RARE COINS ALL CORNERED.

Old Pieces held Tightly by Some Though Worthless.

The passion for making collections of articles of various kinds, and particularly stamps and coins, is like hope. It springs eternal in the human breast.

"You would be surprised," said a professional collector of coins and stamps, "to know how many utterly worthless specimens are brought to me by persons who have perhaps treasured them for long and then, needing money, have come to me, expecting to be handsomely paid for an article that really has no commercial value whatever."

"Sometimes, indeed, I have paid good prices for worthless articles of no use to me at all, to save their owners from the disappointment which I could plainly see a refusal would cause them."

"Why, I handle on the average pretty nearly 500 specimens a day, both stamps and coins, brought in here by people who expect them to be literally worth their weight in gold. Yet, in spite of the great number of specimens coming into my hands in this way every year, it is only about once in three years that I find anything of real value."

"You see, it's this way. Hardly any good rare coins or stamps are circulating at large. Almost everything has been picked up by collectors; and if you follow up any rare issue, you can place almost every one—either find the owner or account for the issue."

"And you will be surprised, perhaps, when I tell you that we are indebted to burglars for most of what we do find. One of the light-fingered gentry lifts some rare old coins, he has no sentimental fondness for them based on age and possibly associations, and he is unable to make any use of them."

"So he bids himself of the worthless and possibly dangerous or incriminating articles, and in that way they drift into our hands."

A Story of Raphael, the Artist.

Raphael, the great Italian painter, whose celebrated Biblical pictures are worth fabulous sums of money, was not a rich man when young and encountered some of the vicissitudes of life like many another genius.

Once when traveling he put up at an inn, and remained there, unable to get away through lack of funds to settle his bill. The landlord grew suspicious that such was the case, and his requests for a settlement grew more and more pressing. Finally, young Raphael, in desperation, resorted to the following device:

He carefully painted upon a table top in his room a number of gold coins, and placing the table in a certain light that gave a startling effect, he packed his few belongings and summoned his host.

"There," he exclaimed with a lordly wave of his hand toward the table, "is enough to settle my bill and more. Now kindly show the way to the door."

The innkeeper, with many smiles and bows, ushered his guest out and then hastened back to gather up his gold. His rage and consternation when he discovered the fraud knew no bounds, until a wealthy English traveler, recognizing the value of the art put in the work, gladly paid him \$50 for the table.—Stray Stories.

Physical Degeneracy.

Interesting facts regarding the question of physical degeneracy in England have been furnished by old tailor measurements. A firm in the north of England has compared the measurements for clothing made two generations ago with those of today, the results going to show that chest and hip measurements are now three inches on the average more than they were sixty years ago. The same conclusion is reached by the experience of the ready-made clothiers, who, it is said nearly always find that the present-day wearers of clothing require distinctly larger sizes than their ancestors.

Feathers of the Hen.

A unique feather-guessing contest was recently conducted by a company manufacturing feed for poultry. Five hundred dollars in prizes was offered for the best guesses as to the number of feathers on a hen. The first prize was \$100. Thousands of guesses were received, including some amusing ones. One person, who was probably looking for some "catch" scheme, estimated "none at all." Many estimates in the hundreds of thousands were received, several in the millions, the highest estimate being 600,060,017. The correct number was found to be 8,120.

A Pleading Coincidence.

In the fall of 1862 Lieutenant H. R. Merrill was saved from capture by the Confederates through a timely warning given him by a young girl who lived in the neighborhood. He was able to escape into the mountains with his detachment just ahead of his pursuers, and got back to the main lines without losing a man. A short time ago, by some accident, Merrill learned the address of his benefactress. A correspondence followed, and now a wedding is said to be in sight.

The Great Chicago Fire.

The most destructive fire ever known was that of Chicago, October 8 and 9, 1871. It covered an area of about three and a half square miles, destroyed 17,450 buildings, killed 200 persons, made homeless 93,500 people and the loss amounted to about \$200,000,000.

WOMEN GET UP PROMPTLY

Hotel Keeper Says That They are the Easiest to Awaken.

"It is immeasurably harder to awaken men in the morning than it is women," George W. Collins, hotel proprietor, informs me. "A tap or two at a woman's door in the morning is sufficient."

"No matter how late she may have retired, no matter how exhausted she may have been, no matter how faint the 'yes' in answer to the knock that comes from the bed, you can bank on it that within a half-hour or so that woman will walk into the dining room bright-eyed and cheerful; but with a man—well, it's different."

A man may leave a call for 7 o'clock in the morning with the warning that he must be up at that hour. A few minutes before 7 you detail a boy for the purpose and tell him not to stop pounding till the man awakes.

"The room may be on the top floor, but you can hear the thump, thump, thump on the door 'way down in the office. Does the man wake with a faint 'yes' and scramble out of bed? Not he. The boy knocks until his knuckles are sore, and then suddenly a stentorian voice roars from the room. 'Yes, yes, what in blazes is the matter with you? Do you think I'm dead?' The boy retreats, turns in his report at the office and goes to ease his hand in cold water."

"Three hours later a swollen-eyed individual with wrinkles in his brow walks up to the desk. 'I thought I left a call here for 7 in the morning?' 'You did, and the bellboy woke you promptly at 7.' 'That's a little too strong,' is the answer, and after you've argued with him for half an hour you haven't convinced him that he was actually awakened as he had ordered. So it goes day after day. The women get up promptly in response to a call, while the men invariably turn over to have another nap.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Recognition Grudged.

Referring to the incredulity and bitter attacks which Henry M. Stanley and other explorers had to meet, A. J. Montenegro Jephson writes in Scribner's Magazine: "I remember one evening when we were talking together over the camp fire his telling me, laughingly, about a certain prominent personage who was well known for his pomposity and self-importance. He said: 'When I returned from finding Livingstone Mr X distrusted me and only offered me one finger of his hand to shake. After my return from my second expedition when I sailed down the Congo he gave me two fingers. When I had founded the Congo Free State for the king of the Belgians and returned to England I got three fingers, but it took me years before I got his whole hand.' This seems to me typically British and I merely quote this little story to vindicate the grudging recognition which has been given to most of the great explorers by those armchair geographers who stay at home. Livingstone suffered from this same attitude of incredulity and returned to the interior of Africa, where he met his death, because he could not bear to face the unbelievers in London until he had solved the mystery of the great Luabala river."

Mayor Wanted a Bed.

Mayor Smith of St. Paul is perhaps the only chief magistrate of an American city who ever asked an officer to arrest him in order that he might get a bed. His honor was on a hunting trip up Brainerd way and one day went over to the neighborhood of a little place named Osakis. In the evening he went to the village, but found that the one little hotel was full to overflowing. Nor could he find a bed anywhere else. Then he sought out the town marshal and asked to be arrested, but the man with the star refused and the worn and weary mayor had to wait for a train next morning.

Once Pride of Navy.

The old three-decker, Duke of Wellington, once the pride of the British navy, is being broken up at Portsmouth. She was launched in 1852 and headed the fleet that went to the Baltic when war was declared against Russia in 1854. At that time she was the biggest man-of-war in the world, though her tonnage was only 6,071. But she carried 131 guns. "She can fire 300 shots a minute. What can stand up to her?" said a London paper. She was of wood, of course, and represented the produce of seventy-six acres of forest oak, reckoned at forty oaks, 100 years old, to the acre.

Danish Field Guns.

The Danes have a new field gun which can fire 200 rounds a minute, weighs less than fifteen pounds and has great range. Every Danish cavalry regiment has a gun detachment now. One man carries the gun in a leather case attached to his saddle, another carries ammunition and a horse is loaded with a reserve supply.

Non-Alcoholic Drink.

Germany, determined to call a halt on drunkenness, has invented a new beer beverage. The alcohol is extracted from finished beer by distillation, and the residue is a "beverage" which retains the taste and nourishing qualities of beer itself, and which can, by carbonating, be easily rendered both palatable and lasting. "Pomri" has become popular in certain regions. It is made from cider.

Metric System in Mexico.

The metric system has been generally adopted by the people of Mexico, as well as being the official measures of weight and capacity.

CONNECTICUT HARD CIDER.

A Man Who Incurs the Habit Is Always Below Par.

Pleasure isn't the emotion with which we dilate on reading the information that the owners of cider mills down in Old Mystic are making preliminary preparations for a big business this fall. Still cider is good enough in its place. It's pleasant to drink when young and soft. Botted cider is an excellent thing to tone up mince pies, apple sauce and that sort of thing. But hard cider, which is consumed by thousands of barrels per winter in Connecticut, is a work of evil, an agency of mischief and a device in demoralization. A man who incurs the hard-cider habit is always below par. The person who habitually swigs that brand of beverage is apt to accumulate a mean disposition. Upon him the stuff exercises an evil influence. It mars his moral fibre, begets ugliness in him and tends to raise the mischief with his insides. To use a phrase of the curb, it puts him on the bum. Adequate scientific attention has never been paid to the part which hard cider has played in producing rural degeneracy in detached sections of Connecticut. We should not venture to set up the contention that hard cider is the main cause of any bucolic deterioration that may exist, but it's unquestionably an important contributing cause. Many a manslaughter in Connecticut has been directly traceable to hard cider. Many a country crime in this State is attributable to hard-cider drunks. A hard-cider jag, as a rule, contains much more cussedness than inheres in a whiskey jag. Many and malign are the effects of excessive hard-cider drinking. Hard cider is peculiarly a rural beverage, and on him who becomes its slave the influence of the drink is bedeviling. We wish that some Atwater with a scientific ambition to get at the cold-blooded truth, and nothing but the truth, would conduct a thorough and rigid investigation into the social and physical effects of hard cider. Anybody who has eyes to see and ears to hear and a nose to smell, can't fail to be convinced that hard cider habitually taken into the human stomach in considerable quantities tends to offset the work of home missions, but the situation in all its aspects has never been scientifically studied.—Hartford Post

Rufus Choate and Justice Shaw.

There is an anecdote of Mr. Choate which occasionally goes the rounds of the papers and which is often repeated quite inaccurately. The true version is this: I heard it within a few hours after it happened, and have heard it at first hand more than once since. Mr. Choate was sitting next to Judge Hoar in the bar when the Chief Justice was presiding and the Suffolk docket was being called. The Chief Justice said something which led Mr. Choate to make a half-humorous and half-displeased remark about Shaw's roughness of look and manner, to which Judge Hoar replied: "After all I feel a reverence for the old Chief Justice."

Maine's Insular Dependency.

The first town meeting of the Squirrel Island village corporation occurred Saturday evening and presented the novel phenomena of women exercising the right of suffrage and of citizens of other state voting in and being elected to office by a Maine village meeting, and there is nothing to prevent a subject of England or Russia, provided he owns a cottage on the island, from exercising there the prerogatives of a born citizen of Maine so far as local matters are concerned. The island, indeed, bears to the State of Maine the relation not unlike that borne by Porto Rico to the United States, except that in so far as purely local matters are concerned, Squirrel is more independent. The arrangement promises to be extremely satisfactory to all parties, and it is probable that Squirrel will not long be the only village of this type in the United States.—Bath Me Times.

The Latest Fad.

Most of us have resorted, at one time or other, to those old expedients for wooing sleep, the counting of imaginary sheep and the arrangement of supposititious piles of coins of different values. Methods of inducing slumber are innumerable; this one will tell you to drink hot milk; that one will assure you that an unflinching remedy for insomnia is to imagine one's self in a grotto where water is slowly trickling over rocks and finally falling into a pool with a splash. But the very latest treatment seems to render all these brain torments wholly unnecessary. All one has to do is lie still, think about nothing or everything, according to the state of one's brain, and draw in quick breaths, which must be very slowly exhaled. This process we are assured, will always produce physical and mental repose, if it does not immediately induce sleep. It is easier to try, at any rate, than the sheep-counting plan.

Written on Nerves.

In your brain there is a little bunch of nerves that automatically takes note of the names of people, places, and things. It is the center of memory, and it works quite independently of the rest of the mental machinery. If this living notebook is injured, the result is an entire loss of memory; but that is all. If any other part of the brain is touched, death is instantaneous.

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