

THEY WERE NOT INTERESTED

The young woman in the hat that resembled an inverted chopping bowl, with a yard of ostrich plume on one side, hailed with excitement the girl whose headgear reminded one of a peach on a rampage.

"Have you heard?" began the first girl, breathlessly. "How in the world did she ever attract him? Why, her complexion is atrocious—"

"What in the world are you talking about?" demanded the other girl.

"I'm talking about Bertha's engagement to Richard Startmount!"

"My gracious!" cried the young woman in the flower hat, putting down her packages hurriedly and looking for a chair. "You don't mean it! Well, there's nothing like perseverance, is there? Goodness three years!"

"But to that lovely Startmount man!" mourned the girl in the drooping hat. "When there were so many other girls so much better suited to him—and so much prettier—"

"But she's not even pretty at all!" objected the second girl aggressively. "And as for style—Bertha may mean well, but has about as much style as a dress reformer! What could he see in her?"

"Isn't it absolutely funny!" agreed the girl in the large hat. "I should think he could see the contrast between her and—others. Of course, when Richard used to call on me so much I never really went to any extra trouble to entertain him though I did manage to show him how pleasant a girl with some originality could make it for a man. Not that I claim to be brilliant, but—"

"Oh, it must be hard for you," broke in the girl with the flower hat sympathetically. "I had forgotten how infatuated you were—that is, of course, you didn't realize it, dear, but you really made a dreadful goose of yourself over Richard Startmount. I always defended you when people said you ran after him—"

"That was sweet of you," said the girl in the big hat, with daggers in her voice. "Of course, you judged by yourself and could not realize it was quite the other way round. Naturally you could sympathize with such a situation had it been true, after the way you got laughed at about young Smith. He married a Boston girl, didn't he? As soon as he could escape from you—"

"Really, dear," interrupted her friend, languidly, "you have mixed me with some one else. I can't imagine what you are talking about. Young Smith always bore me. But I can't get over my surprise at Bertha's capturing Richard Startmount. Why, she'll look positively insignificant in that huge touring car of his! I should think he'd like a wife who was at least attractive! You ought to see my new automobile hat and veil!"

"It's too bad you won't get a chance to use them now," said the girl in the big hat, idly, "I don't suppose Bertha will let Richard take any one out—"

"I have other acquaintances," said the girl in the flowered headgear tartly, "besides that Startmount man who owns automobiles. It really doesn't matter in the least to me if he has got engaged to a dozen girls. I don't see why you should be so worked up over it, though of course, I suppose I can't appreciate the surprise and unpleasantness of having a perfectly insignificant girl walk off with a man from under one's very nose when one had planned and angled and worked for months—"

"I really don't know," said the girl in the large hat, idly, "who could appreciate a situation like that better than yourself! You know perfectly well that you couldn't talk of anything else the time Richard took you to the theatre twice in one week!"

"Do you still remember that?" drawled the girl in the flower hat, with an aggravating smile. "I know you were furious at the time." The girl in the big hat laughed dramatically. "As though I cared what third Startmount did!" she said. "I just told you of his engagement because I thought you'd be particularly interested! I don't care a particle!"

ARKANSAS RATTLESNAKE

Sounded a Warning While Fighting for Life.

"Whenever I hear anybody speak of snakes it makes me think of an exciting experience I had a number of years ago with a big rattlesnake in Arkansas," said an old timer, "and I want to say that since that time I have had more respect for the rattlesnake than I ever had before."

"Of course, it is a mere commonplace to speak of the rattlesnake's gameness. They are game, else they would not be so fair. Gameness and fairness go together. I am in a position to say that the rattlesnake is both fair and game. I met the reptile on the side of a hill. He made an effort to get away. I ran upon him before I was aware of his presence in the neighborhood. I was riding. He had just crossed the road, which was on the crown of the hill. The hill sloped down into a ravine which was some three hundred yards from the road which the snake had crossed. I crawled out of my saddle and began the fight. I was on the lower side. The snake was making for the ravine. He was about nine feet long, and as fine a specimen of his kind as I ever saw. I attacked him with sticks, poles and every other thing I could get my hands on. He would coil up and throw himself more than his length down the hill toward me. In the meantime he was sounding the danger signal in a way I had never heard it sounded before. You could have heard the hum of his rattles half a mile from where the fight was taking place. Inch by inch he forced me down toward the ravine. I crippled him, but he kept right on just the same, and though I would get right in his path he would crowd in on me until I was forced to get out of the way in order to escape the danger of his fangs. Not once during all this time did he cease to warn me with his rattles that he was bent on mischief, if he could but get close enough to me to use his fangs. Before the battle had ended I was in the ravine. The point toward which the snake was headed from the beginning of the fight. Once in the ravine, victory was an easy matter. I killed him in a short while. But I have always felt ashamed of myself for doing it. A thing so game deserved to live. Besides, the snake had not harmed me. Really, it was a piece of brutality that I am heartily ashamed of, and if I had the thing to pass through again I would not pass through it, that's all. At any rate, since that time I have had more respect and more sympathy for snakes, and maybe after all the game old rattler died a martyr to the reptilian cause."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

In Provincetown.

We arose from the steps to let the old fellow in, and he stopped long enough to say "This gettin' past you folks reminds me of the summer Squire Hopkins's three daughters were bein' courted all at the same time. Russell Jaspie was a-courtin' Samantha, the oldest girl; Frank Atwood was a-courtin' Mabel, and Susie, the youngest, was bein' courted by Jim Handy. One night, pretty late, the Squire come back home from town meetin' and started to go in by the front door, but found Russell and Samantha a-spoonin' on the steps; so he went to the side door, and there was Jim Handy settin' close to little Susie. He backed off again and went around the house to get in through the kitchen without disturbin' no one, and I'm jiggered if he didn't stumble onto Frank a-huggin' his other girl. Then the Squire he up and says, says he, 'Frank, you let me in to-night and in the mornin' I'll have another door cut through!'—Life.

The Obelisk on Mont Pelée.

A notable result of the eruption of Mont Pelée, Martinique, is a huge obelisk, or tower of rocks extruded from the top, and adding 800 or 900 feet to its height, which is now some 5,000 feet. The pillar issues from the new cone of the volcano and virtually plugs it. At its base the column is some 300 to 350 feet thick, and from certain points of view tapers to a needle or "aiguille." It also appears to bend, or arch, over toward the southwest, or in the direction of St. Pierre. On the southwestern face it is cavernous and slaggy, showing where explosions had carried away parts of the substance. On the opposite, or northeastern, face, the surface appears solid and smooth, but having parallel grooves like glacial markings. It shows the marks of attrition by the surrounding rock.—London Globe.

When the Fish Leaped.

Prof. Charles W. Oldrieve's dynamite bombs, thrown into the sea while he was giving an exhibition of walking in wooden shoes on the water at Revere Beach carnival yesterday, caused thousands of fish to leap into the air in plain sight of the great crowds of people who lined the shore. It was a feature not down on the programme but was curiously interesting. Oldrieve and his wife rowed with some difficulty out through the breakers, then he put on his wooden shoes, climbed out of the boat and began walking on the surface of the water. When he threw the first bomb, its explosion sent a column of water high in the air. There was a momentary calm, then fish came leaping out of the water all around the spot for some distance. The same thing happened when later bombs were exploded. Apparently no fish were killed.—Boston Transcript.

Sometimes a man is willing to remain at the foot of the ladder for the purpose of pulling others down.—Anecdotes.

Anxieties of a Mother

Yes, Jack, dear, the party is all over and you may come in and hear about it. It was a great success. I shall let our son have another birthday party when he is 3 months old; he enjoys them so much.

"He was such a darling and listened so patiently to the many ideas advanced about the care of children. Really, he had the dearest little smile—that is, until Mrs. James wanted to force his attention upon her stupid baby. You know, our darling doesn't care much about little boys anyway. He was perfectly radiant when Daisy Miller toddled up to him. I just know he is going to be very popular with girls."

"Yes, Mrs. James insisted upon his looking at her Jimmy. Then John Vincent, Jr., set up such a howl that I had to call the nurse to quiet him. Mrs. James said it must be an awful trial for a young mother to have a cross baby—as if he didn't have provocation when he was made to look at the stupidest—"

"No, Jack, I'm not 'knocking,' as you say. I am just telling you the truth. You know the truth ought to be spoken at all times."

"Don't you know what we do at baby parties? I forgot that this was the first one—that you were never a young mother before. Well, father, then. We tell each other how to care for our babies. I told them my experience. Oh, you can learn a lot in two months. Yes, you can."

"They didn't seem to be much interested in my plans until I told them of my idea of beginning to train baby's mind at a very early age. I told them about taking little Jack shopping last week. They were astonished to learn that he already appreciates pretty things. Yes, he just loves to shop."

"Now, Jack, as if a mother didn't understand what her baby liked! Well, if you insist upon having the symptoms—"

"He enjoyed shopping so much that he slept all the time the clerks were making a fuss over him. They wanted to see the color of his eyes and he pretended he was sleepy, but I know he was listening to their chatter—just like a man."

"Really, Jack, I didn't know there was so much worry in finding the right kind of food for a baby. I am almost discouraged. I have been giving him Mulgrim's baby food, and to-day Mrs. James said that she had always used it for her Jimmy—so I went right out and told the nurse not to give our precious darling any more of it. She looked discouraged, because we have tried so many foods, but I made up my mind to once not to use it, for we don't want our baby to turn out a stupid as Mrs. James' Jimmy."

"When I got back Mrs. Davis was telling that she used Joter's baby food. I have some of that, but I shall throw it out. Why? Can you ask such a question? Don't you love your baby? Well, then, do you want him to grow to look like her children? Yes, food has a lot to do with it. 'Helps to Young Mothers' says that potatoes make the skin coarse, and—"

"If you don't want to listen to what will make your son fine looking—"

"Mrs. Miller asked me if I ever saw a healthier child than her Daisy, and she always used the Lactogen food. I had to admit that Daisy looked all right and that the Lactogen food agreed perfectly with my baby. Now that has to be thrown out, too. No, I wouldn't risk another bit of it. Her child is the worst-behaved little girl in this neighborhood."

"There, baby's crying now. What's the matter, nurse? Well, if he won't drink the Osema milk you will have to give him just a little of the Mulgrim's, although it is risky and I shall probably have a dreadful time correcting him when he is a little older."

"Don't worry about his crying. John, for it strengthens his lungs. Mrs. Miller said that our baby certainly had the strongest lungs of any child in the building. She never admitted anything nice about him before."

"Now, what shall I do about his food? Of course, he has to have nourishment, but everything seems to have some awful objection. Ask grandma! Now, John Vincent Harris, as if I didn't think of that as soon as this—this difficulty arose! I know you will laugh at her suggestion. I did. Besides, we can't afford it."

"She said to give him the milk from one cow. As if a little bit of a baby could drink a whole cowful of milk. Really, I sometimes wonder how grandpa kept out of the poor-house!"—Chicago News.

Against Japanese Customs.

The Empress of Japan has been reading some European plays and she does not like them. She believes that they deal with forbidden subjects and must lead to dangerous meditations. The freedom with which women in them are represented as expressing their opinions in public, giving vent to their insatiable sentiments and putting their hands over their eyes and weeping before people is said to have a very bad influence.

AGES AND TALK.

Theory That May Work Out, and Then, Again, It May Not.

"Did you know that it was possible to tell a person's age by talk, by the tone of the voice, and more particularly by some of the expressions they use?" asked an observant man. "I have heard persons who were totally blind remark that they could tell a person's age by the way he or she talked, and they would give a good reason for it. You see, there are certain expressions that are common to the different periods of life, certain little sayings that unerringly indicate the range of the speaker's experience, and it is really an easy matter for the person who has to rely upon sound altogether to trace the differences between the sayings of persons of one age and the sayings of persons of another."

"But persons who are not blind and who do not have to depend upon sound for their impressions can tell the age of a person, if they pay proper attention to what is said. I know that I can, and I am an average man. It is simply a question of knowing a thing or two about human nature. There is a great difference between the talk of the man or woman of twenty and the man or woman of thirty. The difference is as marked as the difference between the talk of men and women who are married and men and women who are single. If we know the kind of chatter young men and young women indulge in, say between the ages of fifteen and twenty-one; if we know the expressions they are in the habit of using, why can we not close our eyes when in the presence of a whole group of persons not known to us personally and pick out those who range between the ages indicated? If we know the sayings of persons of a more advanced age; if we know the subjects they most frequently discuss, is there any reason why we cannot approximate their ages when we hear them talking? I think not. As a matter of fact, I have made a number of interesting experiments along this very line with friends who became interested in the subject, and it will probably surprise you to know that in no case did we miss by more than two or three years. These inaccuracies can be accounted for by the difference in the temperaments of men and women of the same age. Some men and some women tend to become old prematurely, while others do not age as rapidly as the average. You can generally tell the age of a man or a woman by the talk they indulge in."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Industrial Notes.

The Baltic coastline affords but scanty shelter to vessels from the sudden and heavy storms during the equinox. The Russian Board of Merchant Shipping and Harbors has therefore decided to establish various harbors of refuge for coasting vessels. Harbors are to be built at once between Libau and the new port of Windau in the Baltic province of Courland and also on some of the islands in the Baltic.—London Globe.

A new fog signal designed to enable ships to enter harbors in a fog, has been introduced by M. de Meulemeester, a Belgian. It consists of a ring of ear trumpets round the mast, each communicating by a rubber tube with a receiving apparatus, from which another tube goes to the ears of the observer. The sound enters the trumpet, and is loudest in that pointing to its source. By this the operator tells the direction of the steam or fog horn, and enables the vessel to steer its way into port.—London Globe.

Christian Grossman's Fight.

According to a letter received at Ottawa from Manila, the affair in which Lieut. Christian Grossman lost his life is to be compared with some of the almost unbelievable deeds of border men in the Indian wars. Grossman was up in the hills with a detachment, looking after ladrones. He dropped behind his command one day and was fiercely set upon by a band of natives. At the first fire he was shot through both hips and fell from his horse. Getting himself into a kneeling position, he gave battle with such effect that he killed ten of the natives and wounded others, and he was still fighting, though almost unconscious, when his soldiers, attracted by the fire, returned to his assistance. He was wounded several times, and lived but a day or two after being taken to the hospital.—Kansas City Journal.

Used to It.

A spark from a cigar set fire to some straw at the bottom of a country cart, but the two Londoners in the vehicle noticed nothing until their attention was called to the blaze by a countryman driving behind. "I've been noticing the smoke this long while," said Hodge. "Then, why on earth didn't you tell us before?" demanded one of the travelers. "Well," replied the countryman, "there's so many of these new-fangled vehicles going about that I didn't know but what you was going by steam."—London Globe.

Matchless Johnny Cake.

Our Consul at La Rochelle, Mr. George H. Jackson, reporting to the State Department the startling fact that corn meal is almost unknown to the French people, suggests that the introduction of Johnny cake. The people of France should be warned against accepting any substitute alleged to be "just as good" as that immaculate and matchless compound.—Providence Journal.

"Some people come out of a book like a spout of water, scattering a shower of ideas over you."

WITH THE "HELLO GIRLS"

They Are Called Operators by Their Employers.

THERE IS LITTLE LEVITY

The Great Switchboard is Like a Vast Network of Nerves Over the Human Body—Sensitive and Alive. Queer Questions They Are Asked.

Since girls have been the connecting link between lines in the telephone business, they have been the subject of much levity, and in many instances of uncanny jokes, anecdotes, and witticisms, until the world at large has conceived the idea that "The Hello Girl" is entitled to little, if any, consideration, and that she uses over the telephone language which would be coarse even on the Bowery.

To set aside this impression one has but to visit one of the exchanges in this or any other city.

The telephone operators are, perhaps, the most distinctive class of breadwinners in the whole category of wage-earning girls. But to get at the very uniqueness of the profession of the telephone operator it is essential to journey as it were, through one or more of the telephone company's huge offices, where, instead of being at once brought into touch with the "Hello Girl" of the world—but who is accorded the more dignified title of "operator" by her employers—one is usually first shown a number of great lead-covered cables, made up of insulated wires which enter the building from the companies' underground system. These cables, each containing hundreds of pairs of wires, spread out, and each pair passes through the wonderfully intricate apparatus where the testing is done, and finally pass to two operating rooms, where they terminate in a huge horseshoe-shaped switchboard.

And there, like the men behind the guns, are found the telephone girls, working like beavers. No time for any levity. No time for the fun which is accorded to them by the unthoughtful. The great switchboard is like a vast network of nerves over the human body—sensitive and alive.

This switchboard has all the lines multiplied throughout, each line number appearing on the face of the board every six feet in order to enable an operator to reach every subscriber without leaving her position.

The apparatus brought into play is a jack, from which connection is made with the subscriber; a small electric lamp, which lights when the subscriber—a subscriber is the person who has a telephone in his or her office or house—lifts the receiver from the hook; a pair of cords, with accompanying lamps, to place the subscribers together, and ringing keys to introduce the current on the subscriber's line to ring the telephone bell.

A "position" in telephone parlance is the place occupied by an operator. Each operator is in charge of a position, and has her own individual transmitter and receiver. The positions are divided into groups—and are under the immediate charge of a "supervisor," who is held responsible for the service in her section, or division, by the chief operator.

To take care of requests for all kinds of information a separate switchboard is provided, and is presided over by from five to ten attendants in each exchange. This is known as "information." There all things pertaining to direct communications of subscribers are referred. And among these questions are found many which are pertinent, and foreign as well, to the telephone company's business.

A long list of some of these questions was given the writer. Here are some of them.

"What is the nearest way to get to Eckington without paying two car fares? I am in Georgetown; also at what corners will I transfer? How many minutes apart are the Eckington cars at G Street?"

"What is the 12th of February?"

"How can an operator tell when a line is busy?"

"Is there skating at the parks?"

"Tell me a few places and give me the phone numbers of them also, that sell foreign souvenirs."

"When is the new city hall to be occupied?"

"What car can I take to go to Takoma Park, and how long will it take to get there?"

"What are the hours of worship at the cathedral?"

"What is the postmaster's name at Baltimore?"

"Why is the city hall's flag at half-mast?"

"Why do I receive 'information' every time I call a number?"

"When is Lincoln's birthday?"

AIRSHIPS IN WARFARE

Wright Brothers Tell How They Constructed Their Aeroplane.

For the first time since they first attracted attention the Wrights—Orville and Wilbur—have just told some of the secrets of their machine and how they perfected it.

They began their experiments after Lillenthal's death in 1896. Their opinion as to what was needed was an airship that would not capsize when the wind was blowing.

The chief trouble in the turmoil of the air. The common impression is that the atmosphere runs in comparatively regular currents which we call winds. The air along the surface of the earth, as a matter of fact, is continually churning. It is thrown upward from every irregularity, like sea breakers on a coast-line; every hill and tree and building sends up a wave of slanting current.

"And it moves not directly back and forth upon its coast line, like the sea, but in whirling rotary masses. Some of these rise up hundreds of yards. In a fairly strong wind the air near the earth is more disturbed than the whirlpool of Niagara."

They tell how they adopted the two-plane machine, how they gave up the tail, used a rudder in front, their idea being to get a machine that could be balanced and steered by reflex action, as a bicycle is. In remarkable experiments they found that certain birds, like the buzzard, were merely animated aeroplanes.

"The buzzards and hawks find the currents blowing upward off the land, the gulls that follow the steamers from New York to Florida are merely sliding down hill a thousand miles on rising currents in the wake of the steamer in the atmosphere and on the hot air arising from her smoke-jacks."

Acting on this knowledge, they gradually developed a sliding machine until December, 1903, when they sailed with a machine equipped with an engine. Then they found the great problem to be equilibrium in turning corners.

By the most careful experiments they found the way to control the machine around corners.

"The machine was now under practical control. Six flights averaged over 15 miles each; we obtained a flight of twenty-four miles in thirty-eight minutes—that is, at the rate of thirty-eight miles an hour."

"We know that we have at last secured a practical working aeroplane."

The Double Eagle.

Bankers say the new \$20 gold piece will both pay and receive tellers. The principal causes of this are the absence of milling and the high relief of the designs on both sides. As the coins are to-day the relief is considerably reduced from what it was in the original design. If the Government decides to continue the coinage of the new piece the relief will be further reduced.

"The new \$20 gold piece lacks artistic finish," said Mr. Henry Chapman, the coin expert. On the obverse side the attempt at shortening of the left leg of the figure is largely responsible for this defect. For shortening is one of the most difficult things to do in this kind of work, and when it is done incorrectly, it makes a "titled" showing.

"On the whole, the coin is highly impracticable. Furthermore, it has the appearance of gold plate. This and the high relief of the designs, will make it easy to counterfeit."

"The attempting to reproduce a tiny picture of the Capitol building on a space as big as a pin head, down to the left of the figure on the obverse side of the coin, in, I think, belittling the structure. It gives no adequate idea of the size and grandeur of the building."

"It does not look like a coin, and it is not good metal work. It lacks dignity, and, on the whole, is highly impracticable."

"That creature on the reverse side of the coin is a bird, but I'm at sea to decide what kind," said Whitman Stone, curator of birds at the Academy of Natural Science. "If I were to be real lenient I might concede that it's a bird of prey, which might show it at least to be a distant relative of the eagle. But an eagle, never!"—Philadelphia Press.

Unique Institution.

There is perhaps no institution in the United States which enjoys such a unique reputation for debating work as the University of Notre Dame, Indiana. Seventeen times Notre Dame has debated with State Universities and the other great schools of the country, and never once has victory failed to perch on her banners. This curious record has caused considerable speculation among professors of debating in other institutions, but the probable explanation is that advanced by President James of the University of Ill.

This is what he calls the "Wild Irish oratory of Notre Dame, coupled with a stubborn course in Logic" that gives these astonishing results. Fully eighty per cent of the students of Notre Dame belong to the Celtic race, and quickness and imagination are theirs by right of inheritance. Notre Dame has discussed both sides of the subject in the same year with important colleges and won on both sides.

A letter addressed to "The man who wears the tallest hat in Bristol" has been correctly delivered in that English city.

Stage money is also tainted money.

A well-bred man doesn't brag about his dough.