

HUNTING THE LOCUST.

Where it is Necessary to Carry on a War of Extermination.

Once a year there is a locust hunt in the rice-growing districts of the Philippines. It is not a pure sport, though the Filipino makes a frolic of it, for unless an organized war of extermination was regularly carried on against them, the little pests would not only eat the rice fields bare in a few days, but devour every green thing down to the water's edge. As the time draws near for the appearance of the locusts, watchmen are stationed in the fields, and as soon as the larva is discovered word is carried to the presidente of the village, who immediately issues a proclamation calling on every man, woman and child in the district to assemble in the public square next morning, prepared to wage war on the common foe.

The rolling of a drum soon after sun-up is the signal for the whole population to gather at the rendezvous. After a solemn mass and prayer by the village priest, who heads the parade dressed in his unofficial costume of red and white calico shirt and loose flapping trousers, the people fall in line and the little army starts for the fields. It is often 500 strong and is led by the local band playing spirited music, but wearing old shirts and knee trousers like the rest. A few heads here and there bob along bound round with cotton handkerchiefs, but most of them are bare, and nobody wears any shoes.

Then everybody, including the musicians, fall to work on the young locusts with bags and switches, thrashing away for dear life, sweeping the tiny pests into bags, joking, laughing and singing snatches of popular airs at the tops of their voices. The babies tumble about in the mud and the young folks pair off among the green stalks, and the burning sun beats pitilessly down upon the wet fields, until a thick, white steam rises; but still the steady swish of the wulps goes on.

When the bags are crammed full with the squirming, wriggling mass, they are tightly tied and the homeward march is begun. Everybody including the priest and the presidente, is plastered from head to foot with mud, and even the musical instruments are splashed, but everybody is happy, for the rice fields are saved. The locusts are dried, reduced to a fine flour and baked in crisp, brown cakes by the macabees, who consider them a great dainty. They taste like oaten cakes sweetened, and have a pleasant flavor, and the traveler in remote parts of the islands often partakes of John the Baptist's dinner of "locusts and wild honey" without being aware of the fact.

She Acquiesced.

The wife of one of the directors of the line was a passenger. She was an imperious woman, accustomed to having her own way, and when the ship began to roll she sent forth a cry for the captain. A steward came instead. She scorned the steward and demanded the captain's presence immediately. The purser was the next sacrifice, and after he the third officer and the first officer had all retired discomfited, with a sea in the ear, as the saying is, the captain came. By this time the rolling had increased and the lady's voice was beginning to sound far away.

"I wish you to stop this rolling at once," she said to the captain. "Madam," said the captain. "A ship as you know, is feminine and if she wants to roll I fear that I can no longer stop her than I could help coming here when you wished to see me."

It was a naive bit of flattery directed at her weakest point and despite the green tinge of her complexion that foretold an immediate attack of mal de mer, the woman smiled.

A Story from Maine.

Last Monday morning when Joe Dolley's hired man went to the barn he was surprised to hear the sound of music in the cow stable. He listened and plain and clear came the notes of "Old Zip Coon." Thinking some drunken man was there, he opened the door and went in, but saw no one. Somewhat frightened, he looked around, and found that the music was coming from the old cow's mouth. That was too much, and he booted for the house, telling Mrs. Dolley to come to the barn, as the old cow was bewitched. Investigation showed that the little boy had dropped his mouth organ in the stable the day before and the cow had tried to swallow it, but it had stuck in her throat and when she breathed she played "Old Zip Coon."—Kennebec Journal.

Passed Up.

An Erie woman made a batch of doughnuts the other day from a new-fangled recipe, supposed to produce delicious, dainty dreams of paradise. But instead of the delicious puffs promised by the cook book, a good-sized batch of sinkers, was the result of the experiment. The woman had forced herself to believe that the doughnuts were not wholly bad and was considerably disappointed, when, at meal time, the family passed them up. She had quite a lot on hand, and could well afford to be liberal with them, so she handed the doughnuts to the family. He also passed them up.—Kansas City Journal.

DANGERS OF OCEAN CABLES.

Animals Which are a Constant Menace to Submarine Lines.

The vicissitudes of a submarine cable are many, says the "Magazine of Commerce." It may be torn by an anchor, crushed by a rock, or seriously damaged by a coral reef such as abound in the tropics.

Some of the growths often found on a cable tend gradually to decay the iron sheathing wires.

Then, again, a cable sometimes suffers by a seaquake. It may be fatally attacked by the spout of a sawfish or by the spike of a swordfish. But perhaps the little animal that makes itself most objectionable from the cable engineer's standpoint is the insignificant little teredo navalis.

This little beast is intensely greedy where gutta-percha is concerned, working its way there between the iron wires and between the serving yarns. The silica in the outer cable compound tends to defeat the teredo's efforts at making a meal of the core, and this defeat is further effected by the core being enveloped in a thin taping of brass.

But where the bottom is known to be badly infested with these little monsters of the deep the insulator is often composed of india rubber which has no attraction for the teredo and possesses a toughness, moreover, which is less suited for its boring work than the comparatively cheese-like gutta-percha, which it perforates with the greatest ease.

Terrors to Silk Hens.

Any one who has ever caught a glimpse into the recesses of the average cloak room at a function where there were many men present must give a sigh for the days when it was fashionable to wear a crush hat. To see one of the attendants making his headlong way through one of the aisles with a bundle of coats over his shoulder, leaving a trail of silk hats knocked off their pegs and lying on the floor, is to wonder how any man ever gets his own tie back and also throws some light on why a silk hat looks so badly after it is returned to its owner from the tender "care" of the cloakroom berrangers. Carefulness seems to be a thing entirely unknown to one of those hobbled-hoys.

Flying Machines.

Prof. Carl Barus of Brown University offers the suggestion that the desired maximum of power, combined with minimum weight in an engine designed to drive a flying machine, might possibly be found by employing, instead of steam or gas, an explosive energy, utilized by a modification of the rocket principle. The problem, as he points out, would be to reduce and control the rapid expenditure of energy. This he thinks, might be accomplished by the cold storage of chemical substances which combine with violent expansive force at normal temperatures, but are inert under the influence of intense cold.—Youth's Companion.

Headache from Eyestrain.

Basing himself on his records of nearly 1,300 eye examinations, Dr. S. W. S. Toms claims that 90 per cent of all those suffering from redness or neuralgic headaches have ocular defects. Over 600 of the patients examined were altogether unaware of their defect. Fully half the cases were of only slight refractive errors or muscular unbalance, and it is in these cases in which ciliary spasm is the direct factor in causing headache in persons whose occupations call for near vision that accommodative asthenopia results.—Family Doctor.

Where He Stood.

The woman was showing the artist her diamond pin.

"How much is it worth?" he asked.

"A hundred and fifty dollars," she answered. "What would you do if you had a diamond pin that was worth a hundred dollars?"

"There's one thing certain," he said. "I wouldn't have the diamond pin."

Fireless Stoves.

Fireless stoves, or self-cookers, as they are variously known have been in use in Germany for a number of years. These cookers are used as follows: After a thorough heating the food to be stewed or boiled is placed inside the box, sealed and left for a sufficient time, when it is opened, and the food cooked by the retained heat, is ready to serve.

Bank of England's First Safe.

In the Bank of England's museum may be seen the old oak chest which was the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street's first strong-room. It is a little larger than a common seaman's chest and in this the bank stored its cash, notes and valuable papers.—Strand Magazine.

As to Butter.

Great Britain consumes more butter than any other nation. The average per head is 13 pounds per year, as against eight pounds in Germany, four pounds in France and two pounds in Russia.

"Stung."

The word "stung" has now come to mean such a variety of things in the vernacular that the busy little bee, the wasp, the hornet, and their ilk, have especial need to think twice before they act.

"THE LUXURY OF THE RICH."

The Curious and Wonderful Story Behind a Bill of Fare.

For any one who has imagination there is a curious and wonderful story behind a "luxurious" bill of fare. Let us begin with the wines; and let us assume that they are genuine, for one can usually have the authentic thing by paying the price for it. The wines on a richly decked table really represent the work of hundreds of French peasants, with their wives and children, who, in the midst of a lovely country, rise early and toil late, with loving and tender care, watching over the growth and ripening of the fruit of what is one of the most beautiful and decorative plants in the world. Millions of these thrifty, simple people depend for their well-being and comfort on the constant demand for wines, and for the best and purest, and therefore the most expensive wines. The rich do not compel these people to work, nature compels them to work. What the rich do is to influence the direction in which they shall work, and to bring within their reach all kinds of commodities in exchange for their work.

So other things on the same table represent the well-being, the family comfort, of shepherds in the hills, perhaps, of our own West, or of Wales or Scotland; or the wealth of fishermen on the rivers of Maine, or along our New England coasts; or, again, the earnings of the hunters along the fringes of the sea, or among the woods and hills, or on the prairie; vigorous, adventurous men, with a warm love of every changing aspect of natural beauty, who are thus able to lead half wild lives under the fair dome of heaven. It is just the putting in motion of a huge army of folk, scattered over widespread regions, carrying out exacting tasks, that makes the cost of an expensive banquet; and the rich man is simply the factor, determining in which of a score of directions a constant stream of resources shall flow, bring the power to work and recompense for work, to a varied army of good people all over the world.

The basis of the thing is that the richest man in the world cannot spend a penny except by paying some one for something.—Harper's Weekly.

The Sun From a Balloon.

At the height of two miles the sun shines with a fierce intensity unknown below where the dust and the denser air scatter the rays which, thus diffused, lose their intensity while illuminating every nook and corner of our houses.

At heights exceeding five miles, this diffused light is mostly gone and the sun shines a glowing ball, sharply outlined in a sky of which the blue is so dark as to closely approach blackness. At the outer limits of the atmosphere the sun would appear a brilliant star of massive size among other stars; and if one stepped from its rays into shadow he would enter Egyptian darkness.

At the height of a mile and a half we found it necessary to shelter our faces to prevent sunburn, although the air around us was but little warmer than that of the previous night, being about 45 degrees. As the afternoon wore on and the balloon began to cool and sink, we were obliged to throw out much sand, casting it away a scoopful at a time, and just after sunset it was necessary to empty two or three bags at once.—Atlantic.

Don't Tell It

Don't tell anybody your age. It's nobody's business. If you look younger than you are, well and good; get the benefit of it. If you look older than you are nobody will believe what you say about it, so don't tell them anything. Age is a subject that frightens most of us, and only disagreeable people discuss it anyway. Philosophers try to comfort us by pointing out that there are men and women who are born old, and others who are young to the end, and boys and girls at 70. Still, the girl of 70, if she has the courage of her years, has hitherto been obliged to declare herself "old." Light has come now, however, and septuagenarians need only declare that they are "75 years young"—that is, if they feel it necessary to explain at all. But between twenty and eighty, it is just as well to keep off the subject altogether. There are lots of things to talk about that are more interesting and profitable than age.

On a Whaler.

The cutting in and trying out of the blubber is a proxy job, and nasty is no name for it. All hands strip down to a shirt; a pair of overalls rolled up to the knees showing a pair of bare shins and sockless feet in large brogans, and in we go—grease from head to foot—day and night until the whale is all out safely and on board. If we tarried bad weather would no doubt deprive us of our spool.

It gives you a funny sensation at first to get into a deckful of blubber, with the slimy stuff ground your exposed outsoles, and oil squashing out of your shoes at every step. But I am getting used to that now, and I feel like a veteran.—Forest and Stream.

Even if it was against the law to kiss a girl it would be criminal negligence not to when you got the chance.

COUNTERFEITERS' NEW SCHEME

How the Smooth Demonstrator Gets His Victim's Coin.

"One of the latest schemes of the counterfeit money swindlers is to show gullible people a machine with which they can print for themselves large size bills, imitative of Government currency," said Capt. S. F. Rhodes, formerly of the secret service. "This money producing machine has a smooth demonstrator who will, after getting a prospective victim interested, turn the crank and grind out a \$20 note, which, it is needless to say, is genuine. The victim shows the bill to a bank cashier, and hears it pronounced good, and his mercenary nature being aroused, he sees visions of gigantic wealth, and hands over to Mr. Sharp \$500, or at least \$250, for the instrument that is going to make him a Rockefeller. It is needless to say that the subsequent specimens turned out are such miserable imitations that they would hardly fool a blind man, but the ignoramus is in a place where he can't make a roar for his lost money.

The Swaying Skyscraper.

Through the chance of perfect adjustment in the way of balance, of a row of large photographs that hang on a wall, or an office building down town the clerks in the place have a good deal of quiet amusement with persons who visit the place for the first time. Owing to this balance the pictures are easily swayed by the wind that blows through the open windows and since the office force goes in for fresh air the year round the pictures are never still. The joke lies in catching the horrified expression on the faces of the callers when they get a sight of the swaying frames. Then it is always explained with due solemnity, if the boss is not around that the swaying of the frames is due to the oscillation of the structure. It usually takes some time for the object of the joke to see the point. Meanwhile he has suffered a considerable shock.—N. Y. World.

Odd South American Animals.

Many curious animals haunt the marshy parts of South America north of the pampas. Frogs big and ferocious, given to making vicious springs when closely approached; the capybara, a cavy "contented with the bulk of a sheep"; the huge capybara and the swarthy piglike tapir are frequently seen. Along the forest margins troops of peccaries are often met with, occasionally the jaguar sometimes the puma, likewise that toothless curiosity, the great arm bear, long in claw, long nosed and remarkably long tongued. A familiar object is the great jabiru, a stork with a preference for the desolate lagoons, where it may often be observed standing on one leg and wrapped in inspection.—Scotsman.

The Ginkgo Tree.

Studies by Miss M. C. Stopes of the fossil flora of Scotland have shown that the ginkgo, or maidenhair tree, a native of Japan and China, which is cultivated in Europe and this country on account of its remarkable foliage, belongs to an extremely ancient family, of which it is now, apparently, the last surviving representative. At one time it seems to have been widely spread. A singular fact is that the fossil specimens of the ginkgo, found in the rock beds of the Inferior Oolite series, at Brox, Scotland, are so similar to the living trees that at first sight no difference is apparent. Only an examination of the structure of the cells reveals a variation.—Youth's Companion.

For Pressing Plates, Skirts.

Plaited skirts which have been washed are difficult to press. Time and expense may be saved by having the work done after the following method, which is for woollen skirts especially: Before the skirt has become badly creased or rumpled run a basting thread, using short, even stitches, down the entire length of each crease which marks the folds of the plaits. By this means, after the skirt has been washed, the proper location of each fold can readily be determined, and the pressing done successfully.

Baalzac in Church Pew.

The woman who had left a volume of Baalzac in the church pew on prayer meeting night felt a little bit ashamed when she asked for the book, but the sexton assured her she need not feel that way. "Many things are left in the church," he said, "and some of them are a whole lot less respectable than Baalzac. After each service the pews yield a strange glist of forgotten or discarded articles."

A Clever Bear.

A noted ethnologist observed in Vienna a bear deliberately making with his paw, a current in some water which was close to the bars of his cage so as to draw a piece of floating bread within his reach. These actions of the bear could hardly be attributed to instinct or inherited habit, as they would be of little use to an animal in a state of nature.

Quill Toothpicks.

The largest quill toothpick factory in the world is near Paris, where there is an annual product of 20,000,000 quills. The factory was started to make quill pens, but when these went out of general use it was converted into a toothpick mill.

MAN'S PASSION FOR POCKETS.

In Most Men Have Eighteen or More Small Wonder They Lose Things.

The great fundamental difference between the modern woman and the modern man is this: that, whereas the modern woman has nothing else, in an animal with a passion for pockets. If you were asked to say off hand how many pockets you possess at a given moment you would be stumped.

It would be necessary to make out an inventory. In the first place, there are at least five in your overcoat. There are at least five more in your lounge jacket, four in your waistcoat, and four in your trousers. You have therefore, at least eighteen pockets.

Now, it is absurd to say that any man needs eighteen pockets. Why, it is almost a set of pigeon holes they ought to be numbered or lettered. Often a man loses his railway ticket, and after paying excess fare he finds it hidden in one of his loose and half pockets. There are few of us who do not suffer from accumulations of old letters, paid and unpaid bills, bus and tram tickets, theatre vouchers and miscellaneous odds and ends.

We change our fobs and jetsam from one suit of clothes to another, for we are not happy without unnecessary fragments of paper. As a rule, a smoker carries several boxes of matches in his pockets. It is easier to put a penny in a slot at a railway station and extract a new box than to hunt through layers of pockets for an old one.

Once knew a man who carried an amazing assortment of us junk things in his pockets. He always had a lump of chalk, a piece of string, a small ivory inch rule, a penknife, a pencil and a pair of compasses. In his pocket book he carried stamps, sticking plaster, telegraph forms and pins. Another man I know always carries half a dozen silver cigar cases shaped like torpedoes, with one cigar in each.

Some men have a mania for carrying enormous bunches of keys. They do not use more than two of them every day but they are not happy unless they have a key for everything they have ever owned. When they lose their keys it is a tragedy.

I sometimes wonder why the chancellor of the exchequer does not impose a pocket-tax. It would bring in enough revenue to pay for old-age pensions. It would be much more profitable than the ancient window-tax, for men could live without windows, but they could not possibly exist without pockets.

A pocketless man would be miserable. Try to imagine yourselves in clothes without pockets. The imagination boggles at the thought. A coat without pockets would be a monstrous, before which a man would recoil in terror.

I suspect that the tailor is the first cause of pocketitis. He it is who forces us to submit to the plague of pockets. I appeal to my fellow men to revolt against this sartorial tyranny. Let us establish a pocket limit. Fourteen pockets ought to be enough for any sane man.—James Douglas in M. A. P.

Maine Man Up on Turnips.

The lobby of the Saco court room has its usual number of story tellers. A venerable member of the bar told the following story recently: A young lawyer of the village of Marshfield once came to Daniel Webster and asked him what he had better study to build himself up in his profession. "Turnip seed," was the laconic reply. The disciple of Blackstone followed his advice. He studied up everything that bore upon the subject of turnips, until he became a master of the principles of that vegetable. A year or two afterward a neighboring farmer originated a new turnip, from the sale of whose seed he expected to make a fortune. Another neighbor began to raise and sell the same seed and a lawsuit resulted. The originator of the seed came to retain Webster to prosecute the case. Webster replied: "I am not as well booked up on turnips as I ought to be, but there is a young fellow over at the village who knows all about them. Go and get him. He will win your case." The farmer posted off and engaged him. When the trial came of the lawyer, astonished the judge, jury, and audience, by his profound learning on the subject of turnips. The case was triumphantly won, and the young lawyer started on the road to fame and fortune.—Lowiston (Me.) Journal.

Thumb Bells.

The thimble was originally called a thumb bell by the English, because worn on the thumb, then a humble, and finally its present name. It was a Dutch invention, and was first glass and pearl. In China beautiful carved pearl thimbles are seen, brought to England in 1695.

Thimbles were formerly made out of iron and brass, but in comparatively late years, they have been made of gold, silver, steel, horn, ivory, and even glass and pearl thimbles are seen, bound with gold and with the end of gold.

The first thimble introduced into Spain was a bridal gift from the king to the Queen; it is shaped like a lotus bud, made of gold and thickly studded with diamonds arranged to spell the Queen's name.

TUSKLESS ELEPHANTS.

Ceylon the Only Part of the World Where They Exist.

What a sight for a Ceylon elephant hunter would be the first view of a herd of African elephants—all tuskers! It is a singular thing that Ceylon is the only part of the world where the male elephants have no tusks; they have miserable little grubbers projecting two or three inches from the upper jaw and inclining downward.

Nothing produces either ivory or horn in fine specimens throughout Ceylon. Although some of the buffaloes have tolerably fine heads, they will not bear a comparison with those of other countries. The horns of the native cattle are not above four inches in length.

The elk and the spotted deer antlers are small compared with deer of their size in India. This is more singular, as it is evident from the geological formation that at some remote period Ceylon was not an island, but formed a portion of the main land. It is thought there must be elements wanting in the Ceylon pasturage for the formation of ivory.—Ceylon Manual.

Smokeless Coal.

A London inventor claims to have discovered a process for producing "smokeless coal," apparently by distillation of coal at a low temperature. This, after distillation, is said to deposit a very brilliant substance, the heating properties of which are far greater than those of the original coal, and which is absolutely free from smoke and dirt. The inventor contends that efforts to overcome the smoke plague have hitherto been unsuccessful because they have been made in the wrong direction, and that by the extraction of the smoke-producing material in coal before being burned, he has been successful in producing a smokeless coal.

Electrocuting Animals.

The slaughter of animals for food by electrocution is being experimented by Dr. Leduc, a French scientist, who has been conducting his investigations in the French abattoirs. He has been using the intermittent low tension currents and says that he is satisfied that the system is painless, the central functions of perception being first destroyed and then those of circulation and respiration, so "that there is neither suffering nor reaction in the animals thus killed. The doctor is endeavoring to devise some piece of apparatus by which the killing of cattle may be accomplished by electricity with economy and celerity.

The Shy Man.

Women show no mercy to the shy man, for he stands outside of the compass of convention. Could he break out all might be saved; the man might be permanently cured. But he cannot. He has been brought up to respect convention. His muscles may be of steel, his heart of fire, but in his soul the spirit of diffidence holds him in a vice. In a drawing room he stands gaping, quaking, a prey to introspective torment—he who would perhaps storm a rampart with a triumphant smile on his lips.—London Observer.

Hanging Pictures Dangerous.

"Railroad casualties receive such wide publicity," said an insurance man, "that there is a common belief on the part of the public that one is more liable to accidents while traveling than when living the simple life in the confines of his home. As a matter of fact, statistics show that accident insurance companies pay more money to people who get hurt hanging pictures or taking stoves apart than they do to the victims of head-on collisions. It sounds strange, but it's the truth."—Kansas City Journal.

Three Men to Move Book.

There lies in the British Museum the largest book yet printed, a colossal atlas of engraved ancient Dutch maps. It takes three men to move it from the giant book case in which it is stored in the library of the museum. It is bound in leather, magnificently decorated, and is fastened with clasps of solid silver, richly gilt. It is nearly seven feet high and weighs 800 pounds and was presented to King Charles II. before he left Holland in the year 1660.

Valuable East African Forest.

The Colonial Office recently sent out an expert to report on the Kenia forest, in the East Africa protectorate. He finds the forest extends 287 miles long by eight miles broad, and comprises 1,000,000 acres of timber. Taking the average value of the 2 1/2 d. per cubic foot, this works out to £28 per acre, or a total value for the whole forest of £23,000,000.—London Tit-Bits.

Dead Believers.

I for my part believe in the dead historians. I glory in the possession of some hundreds of volumes by them. A great deal of cant is talked and written on this subject. There is an idea in some minds that a book on history to be good must be new. In nine cases out of ten the new book is a common-place re-statement of facts that were better presented by an older writer.—The Sphere.

A Man and a Woman.

A man's idea of being stylishly dressed is to wear something in which he looks atrociously bad; a woman's to wear something no other woman can duplicate.