

CORNERS IN COINS

Odd Schemes That Were Worked by Willy Operators.

CLEVER RUSE OF A NEW BANK

It Won the Good Will of the Town by "Challenging" Its Citizens After Cornering All Its Metal Money—A Russian "Prophet" Who Made a Rich Haul.

There have occurred from time to time in various countries all manner of "corners" in coins, traceable to all manner of queer origins. Some years ago an individual named Peterson established in a "boom" town of a new state a bank that was a branch of a larger institution elsewhere. As, for special reasons, the people of the new town would have nothing to do with the new bank the outlook for Peterson was a gloomy one. After reflection he hit upon a happy expedient. He sent out men commissioned to go to all the stores of the place to get change for greenbacks and banknotes. In a little while he had all the coined money in the town, the result being, of course, that the good people of the coming metropolis were flush of greenbacks, but had no "change."

Some one suggested that Peterson's bank might possess some of the coined pieces, and accordingly a rush was made there—where every one was obliged with silver. The ruse of the wily Peterson had the desired effect, as the next morning his bank was filled with deposits.

Superstition has frequently been the basis of a corner in coins of a particular denomination. A remarkable case of this kind occurred in southern Russia in 1900. There appeared at Bezdianek, on the sea of Azov, a person proclaiming himself a prophet, and as such he announced his intention of reforming the world. Among the queer doctrines advanced by this individual was included the decree that all his followers must retain all five kopeck pieces issued in the year 1861, the year of the emancipation of the serfs. They were by reason of that event held to be holy.

It was not long before the ignorant peasants in the vicinity became convinced that all pieces of that denomination should be taken to the prophet for preservation. The heaven sent one further announced that should the fatherland get into difficulty every one of the coins in question would "turn to gold" and thus save the empire.

And so it happened that over an area of 300 miles Russian peasants were feverishly collecting the "holy" pieces and turning them over to the prophet. When he had gathered a goodly number of the coins he de-camped.

In a way the Russian government may be said to corner its own coins of one denomination. Each year it mints a limited number of bronze pieces of the nominal value of one-fourth of a kopeck, about one-eighth of a cent. As these coins are practically not in circulation, only a few are issued.

It is really an easy matter in small towns to corner a particular coin. At a Welsh holiday resort members of the local band became so indignant at the large proportion of halfpennies in their "silver collections" that they locked up every halfpenny received. The consequence was that in a few weeks there was hardly a halfpenny in the town. Then the band reaped a harvest of coins of higher value.

Cornering gold coins demands a capital that few men possess. Some years ago, however, at Dispepe there occurred a sudden scarcity of ten franc and twenty franc pieces, due to the operations of an eccentric British-lingering trader. He and women traveled from all parts of the state to hear Jenny Lind sing in the park house some of them spending from three to six days on the journey—Argonaut.

At Sixes and Sevens. She—A pretty time of night for you to come home! He—A pretty time of night for you to be awake! She— I've stayed awake for the last four hours waiting for you to come home. He—And I have been keeping myself awake for the last four hours at the club waiting for you to go to sleep. London Tit Bits.

Something Different Yet. "I hate to meet that man. Every time he opens his mouth he puts his foot in it."

"I'd rather meet him than these agents who worry the life out of me. Every time I open the door they put their foot in it."—Houston Post.

Premised Too Much. Magistrate—If I let you off this time will you promise me to take the pledge? Delighted Prisoner (excitedly)—Oh, yes, yes, yes, I'll drink yer health!—London Tit Bits.

Dig but deep enough and under all earth runs water, under all life runs grief.—Bulwer.

An Expensive Wedding. The bride nearly fainted during the ceremony and had to be supported by her father until it was over.

"Yes, and now I hear her father is supporting both of them."

Business is the faithful but unobedient servant of misfortune.—Fallon.

LIFE IN ANCIENT ROME

Problems Were Pretty Much the Same as Those of Today.

In reviewing the book "The Common People of Ancient Rome" a critic says: "It should be something of a corrective to modern conceit to note how little we have advanced since the patricians first became dominant in Rome and since the Roman government prided itself on opening public baths and washhouses for the people. Diocletian denounced the rich and their luxuries, attributed to them the high prices of necessities in language almost identical with a radical newspaper of today. Plautus tells us of the trusts that were founded to control prices, and the 'trust problem' was as much a reality in ancient Rome as it is today.

"Capital and labor were highly organized, and labor was indefatigable in its efforts to secure special privileges for its guilds. There were benefit societies, burial societies and insurance societies. The man in the street talked then just as he talks now. He discussed the claims of rival political candidates, he read the advertisements in public places, and he protested against their defacement of the scenery. It is indeed hard to find a single feature of modern life, a single reform, a single problem, without its counterpart in ancient Rome.

"We have even borrowed the Roman slang. A slave in a play of Plautus says, 'Do you catch on? (tenses) I'll touch the old man for a loan' (tenses) senem, etc., or 'I put it over him' (tenses) subverti. The illiterate Roman used the double negative, just as it is used today. 'You ought not to do a good turn to nobody' (tenses) nihil boni facere oportet.

GIANT SWORDFISH.

Menstrus Fifteen Feet Long Armed With Three Feet Weapons.

A queer fish is the swordfish. It is found in the tropical and subtropical zones of both the eastern and western hemispheres. Some of the tropical species are of enormous size and measure from twelve to fifteen feet in length, with swords at least three feet long.

The sword is much the shape of a cone somewhat flattened, the end sharply pointed. It is smooth on the top and sides, but the under part is rough. It is really an elongation of the bones of the upper jaw and is possessed of very great strength, for with these weapons they have been known to pierce the copper sheathing of vessels and heavy plates and timbers, but although they can drive the sword far into these substances, they cannot draw them out, so break them off and swim away without them.

A large fish extends nearly the length of the back of the creature, which is folded back when the fish is swimming in order that its progress may not be impeded if speed is desired, but when quietly swimming it is often erected and acts as a sail to carry it through the water. The swordfish is very aggressive in its disposition and will often assail fish much larger than itself. Even the whale is not exempt from its attacks. The food of the swordfish consists of smaller fish which it kills by stabbing them with its sword. There is quite a large business done in swordfishing, as the fish is used for food. The larger species are caught by harpooning the smaller in nets.

Jenny Lind in the Park House. When Jenny Lind made her tour of America in the early fifties under the management of P. T. Barnum, Madison was the only Indiana city in which she would sing. The city still boasts of how the diva stopped there on her way down the Ohio river from Cincinnati to Louisville. The city had no auditorium large enough, so one of the largest pork warehouses was emptied and scoured and fitted with covers to remove any lingering odor. Men and women traveled from all parts of the state to hear Jenny Lind sing in the park house some of them spending from three to six days on the journey—Argonaut.

Relieved. A young north side father on arriving home the other evening found his wife in a state of great excitement. "Harold," she exclaimed, "baby got hold of the ink bottle this morning."

"And what has he done?" "Spilled ink all over the new dining room rug."

"That can be easily remedied thought you were going to tell me that the misguided child had written there a novel."—Pittsburgh Post.

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CRUISE OF THE YACHT HILDA

Why Her Disappearance Remains a Mystery.

"Tell us about the Hilda, Brownlow." "It isn't safe to spin that yarn. Some of you might get me into trouble."

A promise of secrecy was made, and the yarn was spun.

"The Hilda had the newest thing in engines, and as soon as she had been started her owner, Mr. Chippindale, started in her for a trip around the world, with me as engineer. "A great many people think the days of pirates are past and gone. Don't you believe it. Ships go out and are never heard from—some down in a storm, more likely their crews are murdered and the ship is plundered and scuttled. Well, we were steaming westward somewhere between Hongkong and Manila when we met a rather queer British cutter coming through the water, turning the while before her, heading right for us and signaling us to slow down. Thinking she had something important to communicate, we stopped the engines and a boatload of men came aboard. As soon as they were on our deck the ship they came from heeled down the British flag and raised the skull and crossbones.

"I'm not going over the doing away with every man of us. That's what keeps me from sleeping."

"Weren't you one of the yacht's crew?" "Sure. But I was the engineer, and not one of the pirates could run an engine. Goodbye, their captain, said to me 'Run them engines, and so long as you run them right you live. When you run them wrong'."

"I knew what he meant without his saying it, and you bet I ran the engines right. This was the time when the Spanish war was coming on, and we'd learned all about it from speaking to an American cruiser, especially that Dewey was soon to sail from Hongkong. Besides, all the nations were sending man-of-war to the Philippines to see (fill rly) (Gooleidge had been dodging vessels that were calculated to give him this information and did not know anything at all about it. He came to me and asked me what kind of craft we'd been meeting, and I concocted a story. I told him that a couple of hundred miles east of Manila we'd passed a small steamer, capable of making eight knots and no more, that carried express matter. Gooleidge suspected that a money safe belonging to the express companies might be aboard and was itching to get at it. We would have to go back toward Hongkong and Manila to reach the steamer and were likely to fall in with a cruiser.

"Sure enough, one morning we saw a black line on the horizon to the northward, then another and another. It was Dewey's fleet but we didn't know it.

"As luck would have it, I was steering across the line of a scout ship. I looked out and saw the smoke north by northeast and made up my mind that the steamer would pass astern of us. I kept an eye out for the porthole, and when she came within sight I saw a signal flying for us to heave to. Gooleidge didn't dare risk an inspection and paid no attention to it. The cruiser came on, but was only two knots better than us and gained slowly. I didn't know that she was ordered to overhaul everything she met, and I was afraid she'd get tired of the chase, so I contrived to loosen a screw and let go a rod, then called Gooleidge and told him I'd have to stop the engine a few minutes and fix it or the thing would break up. If I hadn't been necessary to him he would have killed me right there, but instead he told me he'd give me just five minutes to fix it after stopping and held his watch in one hand and a pistol in the other.

"I kept asking him the time, bawling as well as I could without his seeing me do it, until he called four minutes. Then I screwed her up and started on. I hadn't more than done so when a shot went skipping before our bows, and I made up my mind we'd be overhauled. I heard Gooleidge come below and go into Mr. Chippindale's stateroom, which he'd appropriated to his own use, and in a few minutes there was the report of a pistol. I went to the room, looked in and saw the pirate giving his last gasp.

"I hurried on deck, and there in the distance was a fleet of war vessels, and the cruiser that had been following us had turned to join them. Setting Gooleidge's glass lying on one of the quarter deck wicker chairs, I leveled it and saw the flagship of the fleet signaling the cruiser to come in.

"When it was known that the captain had blown out his brains, two of the crew came to me and said they had been taken when Gooleidge was shot headed and had joined to see me walking the plank. They said they would have had work to get clear if taken. The others were tired of the business. They proposed that if I would run the yacht ashore and destroy her I might go free. As there was nothing else to do and I was in the same boat with the others, I consented. A few days after Dewey captured Manila we landed on the island, burned the yacht and, making our way to Manila, enlisted in the American army."

"I see," said one of the listeners, "why the affair never got into the newspapers."

"Just so," remarked the narrator. "And mind you keep dark about it."

SNAPSHOTS AT CELEBRITIES

W. B. McKinley, Manager of the Taft Campaign.



Photo by American Press Association.

Representative William Brown McKinley of Illinois, manager of President Taft's campaign for re-nomination, is also chairman of the Republican congressional committee in charge of the general fight for the election of Republicans to both houses. From his headquarters at Washington Mr. McKinley will direct the pre-convention contest. After the convention he will probably relinquish his temporary duties and again take up the work of the congressional committee, although there is a possibility that he may become national chairman to handle the fight against the Democratic nominee. Four years ago Mr. McKinley was considered for the position of national chairman to conduct Mr. Taft's campaign for the presidency, but Mr. Hitchcock was finally agreed upon. The new Taft manager is a politician of wide experience. Already he has handled two congressional campaigns, in one of which, four years ago, he was successful and in the other, two years ago, he was swamped, losing the house to the Democrats. Mr. McKinley besides being an aggressive politician is a business man of uncommon ability. He is a native of Illinois, fifty six years old, and by occupation is a farmer and banker. In business he has been very successful and owns a network of trolley lines that gridiron the middle section of Illinois. He is serving his fourth term as a congressman.

New York's Health Officer.

Dr. Joseph J. O'Connell, the new health officer of the port of New York, is a personal friend of Mayor Gaynor and was recommended by the latter for the post. The port of New York is that of the city of New York, and the health officer is an ex-officio member of several city boards.

Although a general practitioner, Dr. O'Connell has made a specialty of



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DR. JOSEPH J. O'CONNELL. mental and nervous diseases. He is a native of Brooklyn, forty-five years of age, and is a graduate of St. Xavier's college, New York city. He has been connected with the health service of the city for fifteen years. He was formerly inspector for the board of health of the old city of Brooklyn at the time when the city was threatened with an epidemic of cholera and yellow fever. He was also associated with other branches of the city government and has had twenty years' experience in this line of activities.

Mr. Wickersham's Wit.

Attorney General Wickersham is not an easy man to make answer a question that he does not wish to answer. Not long ago one of the newspaper correspondents said to him:

"Since you dissolved the oil trust the price of kerosene has advanced 4 cents a gallon. What have you got to say about that?" "It may be true," remarked Wickersham. "But I haven't bought any kerosene for a week."—New York Press.

My Diplomatic Mission

It Was My First and My Last

By F. A. MITCHEL.

I am the daughter of an American admiral. When my father was retired he joined us in Washington, where we lived. At his death, his income being cut off, I found it necessary to do something to add to the small income of my mother and was given a clerkship in the navy department, but the salary was small, and I confess I looked forward to the humdrum life before me with dislike.

Notwithstanding our limited resources I maintained my position in society. Washington does not suffer so much from commercialism as other American cities. I was invited just as often after my entrance upon my clerkship as before. Indeed, I occupied a better social status than many newly rich people who, having suddenly acquired wealth, settled in Washington to spend it.

One evening during a reception at the White House the wife of a member of the Russian diplomatic corps sought me out and drew me away from the throng for a chat. She gradually led the conversation upon myself and asked me how I would like to enter the diplomatic service. Upon asking her what she meant she explained that diplomacy was synonymous with chicanery. There was a constant effort between the diplomats of the world to get possession of each other's secrets and this forestall action. I was interested, and the lady proceeded to tell me that women were usually mixed up in these affairs and were relied on principally by their husbands to extract information from their diplomatic rivals. Then, after pledging me to secrecy, she told me that the Russian embassy was at that time in want of an attractive woman to obtain a secret from a diplomat and that she would be paid liberally for the service rendered.

Of course the lady was sounding me to learn if I would undertake the matter. I neither accepted nor declined, leaving her, intending to think it over. I did think it over and came to a decision that may be considered peculiar. I determined that I would not dishonor my father's name by becoming a spy, but, being infatuated with the idea of swimming in that undercurrent of duplicity that had been mentioned, I resolved to accept the offer, but not for pay. I had an object in view that concerned my own individual self for more than Russia. When I had made up my mind I called on the lady who had been given the commission to employ me and told her I was ready to listen to a proposition.

I dare say that this may be considered a whipping sentence around the stump, but at the time I was not aware of doing anything dishonorable. I was employed by the Russian embassy as a particular person in it was specified to get a secret from the secretary of legation of Great Britain. It was suggested by the Russians that England was making a secret treaty with the sublime Porte. Russia has always been at issue with the other European powers as to Turkey, and ever since the Czar Nicholas I was outwitted by the British minister just previous to the Crimean war, Russia has been eager to get even with England by some sharp diplomatic move. I was therefore employed to draw this secret from Ed Cathorne, who would surely be cognizant of it, who had chosen diplomacy as a profession and was expected to rise soon to the rank of ambassador.

Had I set out with the intention of spying upon him his love for me would have turned to hate, even though I had weakened on the way through love for him. My action was incomprehensible to him. He became convinced that I had had from the first no intention of getting any diplomatic knowledge from him, but he could not understand the reason I gave to him for entering upon the matter at all. I told him I had yielded to a desire to see something of the undercurrent of diplomatic life. It was not re-rodution and found Mr. Cathorne very agreeable. Indeed, he was of the best type of English gentleman, not noble, but well connected at home and in every way desirable. I refrained at this first meeting from anything connected with the work I had undertaken. I simply endeavored to make myself as agreeable as possible to him. I saw at once that he was an intellectual man, and I treated him accordingly. I talked of anything but of weighty matters. Girls make a mistake in thinking that men of depth wish deep women for companions. One means, at least an opportunity, to wish him for some one. However, I per-

mitted Mr. Cathorne to do most of the talking, leaving him to do as he liked. Small talk is all that can be in it. Mr. Cathorne asked permission to call upon me, which was, of course, granted. We occupied the same house, as when my father lived, a two story brick near—circle, and it had in it all the attractiveness of simplicity. My opinion of me since they had learned that I would not give them away even to my own husband.

I have continued to be a diplomat's wife at my own courts, but the diplomat's effort by which I received a husband is the only one of my life. I am quite content to leave the chicanery of the service to others.

Russian embassy would do my bidding in the matter. Mr. Cathorne seemed very much pleased to have my company on the voyage and offered his mother's and sister's hospitality during my stay in England.

I was offered a passage across the ocean and ample funds for other expenses by my employers, but Mr. Cathorne knew that I was not able to travel expensively so I chose one of the poorest staterooms and declined to accept anything from the Russian embassy until I had finished my work. Fortunately I had enough for the purpose saved from my salary. I offered to resign my position in the navy department, but on account of my father's services was given a leave of absence. I learned afterward that those who sent me on my mission were much puzzled at my declining to be furnished with funds. But they continued to be puzzled till they heard definitely from me later, for I gave them no satisfactory explanation. I also learned that from this time they began to doubt me and took measures to get the information they desired through other parties.

Mr. Cathorne was devoted to me on the voyage. He talked about everything except diplomacy, on which he maintained a rigid silence. I did not make the slightest attempt to draw him out in that line. Any effort to do so would have aroused suspicion. But it was not in accordance with my plan to draw him out. Something deeper was in my mind. Besides, I soon learned from him what was necessary for me to know. He told me that he would remain at home only long enough to make a report at the foreign office in London, after which he would take a little trip on the continent. I well knew that this meant a visit to the sultan of Turkey.

Everybody knows what an ocean voyage is for matchmaking. We had not reached England before Mr. Cathorne and I were engaged in what in America we call a flirtation. The flirting, however, if it really was flirting, was all on one side. An Englishman is not an adept in such affairs. The game at which he is especially expert is not the game of love, but of diplomacy. I was content, for the time being at least, to let him have his own way at the game of diplomacy. I could have mine at the same of love.

I had not been in England eighteen hours before I received an invitation from a sister of Mr. Cathorne to visit the family home, near London. I spent several days there, during which, I fear, the visiting was rather between Mr. Cathorne and me than between me and his mother and sisters. Our affair reached a crisis one evening when he told me that he would run over the next morning to Paris on business. Before going he told me what I had been hoping for—not his diplomatic secret, but that he wished me to be his wife.

Before parting with him that evening I was not to see him the next morning—he admitted that he was going farther than Paris. I asked him if he was going still farther, and he finally admitted that he would stop till he reached Constantinople. I asked him why he was going there, and he declined to tell me. I remonstrated with him, saying that a proscribed wife should share all her husband's secrets.

"Not his government's secrets."

I threw my arms around his neck, laughed and said:

"You're going to Constantinople on the matter of a treaty between England and Turkey."

Disengaging himself from me, he looked at me with astonishment.

I told him that I had been employed by whom I would not say—to get a knowledge of that treaty, that I had accepted the offer for the fun of the thing and had declined to receive even the money for my expenses. He demanded to know who had employed me, and I refused to answer. That, I thought soon to be used to the rank of ambassador.

And now it is time that I give this reason. Before I made up my mind to accept the Russian offer I felt pretty sure that Edward Cathorne was the man I was to prey upon. I had seen him often, and the moment I first looked upon him the little god shot one of his steady arrows into me. But that is, I talked of anything but of weighty matters. Girls make a mistake in thinking that men of depth wish deep women for companions. One means, at least an opportunity, to wish him for some one. However, I per-

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