

THE pianoforte was invented by a German named Americus Backers, and was first used in public at Covent Garden Theatre in 1767.

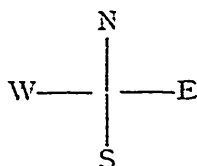
Bells were first set up in churches as a defence against thunder and lightning. The first bell hung in England was in 945. Chimes were invented in Belgium in 1487.

"I never in my life committed more than one act of folly," said an acquaintance one day in the presence of Talleyrand. "But when will it end?" inquired the latter.

Teacher: "Feminine of friar?" First bright boy: "Hasn't any!" Teacher: "Next." Second bright boy: "Nun." Teacher: "That's right." First bright boy indignantly ejaculates: "That's just what I said."

A NATIONAL school of art wood carving has been established in England, to revive the neglected art of carving in that country. It offers twelve free scholarships.

THE word "news" is generally attributed to the adjective "new." Some ingenious mind, however, finds its origin in a custom in former times of placing on the newspapers of the day the initial letters of the cardinal points of the compass, thus:—



This symbol was intended to indicate that the paper contained intelligence from the four quarters of the globe.

PERHAPS no mistake touching our fellow-men is more common than that of judging of the ordinary feelings and habitual disposition of a writer by the tone of his productions. Especially is it true of wits and humorists. Cervantes, Moliere, and nearly all the celebrated humorists, were melancholy men, and their dismal experience reminds us of the comic actor who, having split the sides of the Parisians with his fun, asked a physician to prescribe for his profound melancholy, and was told there was but one cure—to go and see Carlini. "Alas!" was the reply, "I am Carlini."

There's not a thing attuned to mirth.
Hath not its chord of melancholy.

THE felt hat is as old as Homer. The Greeks made them in skull caps, conical, truncated, narrow or broad-brimmed. The Phrygian bonnet was an elevated cap, without a brim, the apex turned over in front. It is known as the cap of Liberty. An ancient figure of Liberty in the times of Antonious Livius, A. D. 115, holds the cap in the right hand. The Persians wore soft caps; plumed hats were the head-dress of the Syrian corps of Xerxes; the broad-brim was worn by the Macedonian kings. Castor means a beaver. The Armenian captive wore a plug hat. The merchants of the fourteenth century wore a Flanders beaver. Charles VII., in 1469, wore a felt hat lined with red and plumed. The English men and women in 1510 wore close woollen or knitted caps; two centuries ago hats were worn in the house. Pepys, in his diary, wrote, "September, 1664, got a severe cold because he took off his hat at dinner," and again, in January, 1665, he got another cold by sitting too long with his head bare, to allow his wife's maid to comb his hair and wash his ears; and Lord Clarendon, in his essay, speaking of the decay of respect due to the aged, says that in his younger days he never kept his hat on before those older than himself, except at dinner. In the thirteenth century, Pope Innocent IV. allowed the cardinals the use of the scarlet cloth hat. The hats now in use are the cloth hat, leather hat, paper hat, silk hat, spring-brim hat, and straw hat.

SAYS the *London Truth*:—"I advised the clergy last week, who complain of the small coins that find their way into offertory bags, to substitute basins. One of the most witty of our judges says that when he goes on circuit he attends church on Sundays with a three-penny piece in one pocket and a sovereign in the other. 'If there is a bag,' he observes, 'I get off with the three-pence, but if there is a plate it costs me the sovereign.'"

THE *Chicago Tribune* has adopted the following "spelling reform" changes:—Drop *ue* in such words as dialogue, catalogue, etc., and the final *e* in such words as definite, infinite, etc., where the preceding vowel is short. Tung for tongue. Drop final *te* and *me* in such words as rosette and programme, and change *ph* for *f* in words like photograph.