

ENTERTAINING MISCELLANY

VARIOUS SUBJECTS CLEVERLY TREATED

How the Roman Road was Built.

A careful estimate shows that the Romans spent from thirty to one hundred thousand dollars per mile on their roads; yet Europe knew no road-building worthy of the name from the fall of Rome, about A. D. 400 to the coming of Napoleon's Tresaquet fourteen hundred years later.

For a millennium and a half the roads of these men, who built for eternity were the best roads in England, Europe and Asia Minor, and though many of them quickly disappeared if neglected, a large number remain to this day, and a much larger number have served as a foundation of modern roads. One road, which Begier examined in France, was raised twenty feet above the surrounding country. A vertical incision revealed the following sections:

- Sec. 1. A "fill" of 16½ feet.
- Sec. 2. A foot layer of flat stones and cement.
- Sec. 3. A foot layer of flat stones without cement.
- Sec. 4. A foot layer of firmly packed earth.
- Sec. 5. A half-foot layer of small metal in hard cement.
- Sec. 6. A half-foot layer of large metal and cement.

The width of Roman Roads varied from one hundred and twenty feet at home to fifteen or twenty feet in England. The lesser width made a great reduction in original cost of maintenance.

In the case of the narrow roads on the island the work was well done. "Two furrows were first made," writes W. B. Paley, "at the proper distance apart; the earth between was dug out for a foot or two, and the bottom rammed and beaten down tightly. Upon this the first stratum of material was laid and the lime poured over it; then larger stones were placed upon that, and the interstices filled with mortar, after which sometimes came another layer similar to the bottom one. The whole was often three feet thick, or more, and was rounded in the center to prevent water lodging upon it."—From "The Roman Road Builders' Message to America," by Archer Butler Hulbert.

Items of Interest.

Egyptologists say that there are still 3,000,000,000 mummies in Egypt.

Smoking-cars for women are a feature of Russian railways.

The banana and potato are almost identical in chemical composition.

In Scotland a landlord gives his tenant notice to leave by chalking the door.

The occupants of the Philippines represent such a variety of races that thirty-one languages are spoken there.

There is a large and growing importation of salt into this country, the home supply being unequal to the demand.

When first taken from the mines, opals are so tender and friable that they may be picked to pieces with the finger-nail.

Statistics of prisons show that twelve men to one woman were imprisoned in this country. In France the proportion is five to one.

The emerald improves in color on exposure to the light. Pearls kept in the dark lose their luster, but regain it on exposure to the sun.

Natives of the interior of Bolivia wear hats and shirts made of the bark of a tree which is first water-soaked and then beaten into pliability.

Cats are often victims of tuberculosis, and physicians declare that there is considerable danger of contracting the disease from these household pets.

There are no undertakers in Japan. When a person dies his nearest relatives put him into a coffin and bury him. The mourning does not begin until after burial.

An acting model of the human heart, with every detail, has been made by a French physician. The blood can be seen coursing to and from it through artificial arteries.

The men who raise many peanuts now send them to the mill, vines, roots and all. A machine cleans and shells them. One factory can shell many large wagon-loads of peanuts in a day.

The nickname of "Dinner Bell" was bestowed upon Burke because of his long and badly delivered speeches, which were so often interrupted by members of parliament leaving to go to dinner.

The Chinese never use butter in any form. In Africa a vegetable butter made from the fruit of the shea tree is used by the natives, and is said to have a much richer flavor than that made from cows' milk.

Among the middle classes of Russia when a death occurs and an impressive funeral cortege is desired, tramps are sometimes employed as mourners, suitable clothing, with the exception of shoes, being furnished by the employing agency.

There is a society in Norway which, in order to increase the output of butter for the British market, offers a six-months' course, with free board and tuition, to young country girls who wish to learn how to take care of cows and make the best butter.

Runaway horses are unknown in Russia. No one drives there without having a thin cord with a running noose around the neck of the animal. When an animal starts the cord is pulled and the horse stops as soon as it feels the pressure on the windpipe.

Siena, Italy, is famous for the large hats of its women and the long horns of its cattle. The hats, which we know in America as Leghorn hats, are a peculiar product of Siena, although they are known abroad by the name of the city from which they are exported.

Every three years all Chinese domiciled in Siam have to pay a small poll tax. When this has been paid the collector ties a string around the man's left wrist and fastens the knot with a special official seal. The bracelet is a Chinese receipt and must be worn one month.

A remarkable dinner was served recently by a farmer near Ault, Col. The table was set for twelve, and the menu consisted of one five and a half-pound potato, one fifteen-pound cabbage, one ten-pound chicken, one six-pound turnip, one two-pound onion, and three pies made from a one and a half-pound apple.

There is an animal hospital at Lodepur, near Calcutta, where there are usually about a thousand animals under treatment—horses, oxen, mules, elephants, dogs, and even sheep—all comfortably housed and looked after by a staff of eighty native "nurses," under the orders of a British veterinary surgeon.

During a recent cold period in Switzerland thousands of swallows fell exhausted and half frozen. At Lucerne and Zurich the birds were collected and taken care of by the

people. When they had sufficiently recovered they were shipped by train to Italy and there set at liberty to continue the migration southward.

The great opera singer, Mme. Grisi, who was married to Signor Mario, the tenor, was singing in St. Petersburg. The Emperor, the father of the present one, gave Mme. Grisi permission to walk in his private park. One morning the Emperor met Mme. Grisi, accompanied by two little girls. The Emperor saluted her, and said: "Are these two Grisettes?" "No, your Majesty," replied Mme. Grisi, "those are two Marionettes."

Bishop Joseph Wilmer, of Louisiana, and Bishop Richard Wilmer, of Alabama, are cousins and intimate friends. In their travels in Italy one summer, the bishop of Alabama was pointing out with enthusiasm certain architectural beauties. The Bishop of Louisiana was bored. He said: "It's all very fine, Cousin Dick, but, nevertheless, a rich field fragrant with the odor of new-mown hay would please me better." And the Bishop of Alabama replied: "Cousin Joe, there's not a donkey in all Italy that would not agree with you."

His Pass.

J. W. Brooks, a great railway manager of Michigan, whose penmanship was very poor, once wrote a letter to a man on the route, notifying him that he must remove a barn which, in some manner, incommoded the road, under penalty of prosecution.

The threatened individual was unable to read any part of the letter but the signature, but took it to be a free pass on the road, and used it for two years on the company's trains, none of the conductors being able to dispute his interpretation of the document.

A Rule for Judging Men.

The late Mr. William H. Baldwin, Jr., President of the Long Island Railroad, was one of the most considerate and best-liked of New York's large employers. Yet he had an inflexible rule in employing and discharging men. Speaking once on the subject, Mr. Baldwin said:

"There is a rule that experience has taught me to be correct. It is a rule that I have used for years in my business, and that has not once led me astray. It is this: whenever I discover one of my men looking back with pride over his accomplishments, instead of keeping his eyes forward—well, that's quite enough for me. I don't wait for any positive offense. No matter how capable he may have been, I put a cross against his name, and he goes out at the first opportunity. When a man gets to looking back on his record his usefulness is past."

She Passed Him.

A widow in a Maine town, according to the Boston "Herald," was a strict constructionist in her theology, and would admit no lodger into her boarding-house who had not a leaning toward Universalist views. One day an old sea captain happened along to ask for rooms.

"But what do you believe?" asked the widow?

"Oh, most anything," replied the captain.

"Do you believe there is a hell?"

"Sure," was the reply.

"Well," parried the widow, "how many do you think will go there?"

The captain cautiously remarked that he thought twenty thousand would be a fair estimate. The widow paused, then stated that he could come in. "Twenty thousand," she said, "is better than none."

He Learned Their Names.

The late Professor Sommerville, of the University of Pennsylvania, who was a great Oriental traveller, told of the following amusing mistake made by a French explorer:

This explorer had made a journey to Kairwan and had drawn a map of the country he had passed through.

The singular thing about this map was that the name "Maarifish" appeared so many times on it. A river would be "Maarifish River;" a mountain would be "Mount Maarifish;" a village, a lake, a valley—each would be called "Maarifish."

When Professor Sommerville saw this map he laughed.

"Don't you know," he said to the traveller, "what 'maarifish' means in Arabic?"

"No," said the other. "What does it mean?"

"It means 'Don't know.'"

A Facer.

It was somewhere within the regions of closing time, and the door-keeper of the dog show was beginning to allow his thoughts to dwell upon a prospective steak-and-onions supper, when a hulking individual presented himself at the door.

"Called for Bill Smith's dawg," he said curtly.

"Receipt?" said the door-keeper, holding out his hand therefor.

"Lorst it," said the hulking one.

"Oh, lorst it, eh? Well, what class was the dawg in?"

"Dunno. It's Bill Smith's dawg, and it's name's Jack."

The doorkeeper waxed wrath.

"There's fifty blessed tykes here called Jack," he said. "Ow am I to know which is your'n? Did it win a prize?"

"No, it didn't."

"Well"—wearily—"wot breed is it, anyway?"

"Breed," said the inquirer scornfully.

"Ow should I know what breed it is? Why, that's just what puzzled the judge!"

Allow me to introduce

PAY ROLL

(BRIGHT PLUG)

Chewing Tobacco

