

"There are different ways to spell the word 'choir,'" he said, "and it makes all the difference in the world whether you are trying to spell the name of a body of singers in a church or a certain quantity of paper. If you mean a company of church singers it is 'Q-u-i-r-e,' but if a quantity of paper it —"

"Well, hardly," remarked a flashily dressed New York drummer, laying down his pen. "You will pardon me, my friend, but you're wrong. You've got the two words mixed. 'Q-u-i-r-e' spells a paper quire, and 'c-h-o-i-r' spells a church choir."

"Not by a long shot," stoutly insisted the speller. "Q-u-i-r-e" spells a church choir—or it used to do it when I went to school—and I've got money right here in my clothes which says that it spells it now."

The speaker was decidedly angry, while the rest of the crowd were rather amused at his discomfiture.

"Oh, well," remarked the New Yorker, airily, "it isn't worth while quarrelling about anyway, especially since it can be settled so easily. If you are so sure that 'q-u-i-r-e' spells choir, suppose you back up your belief by a little wager—say the cigars for the crowd—and we'll look in the dictionary over yonder, and end the controversy."

"I'm agreed," was the hot rejoinder; "or I'll bet you \$5, or \$10, or \$25, that I'm right, and prove it by Webster's Unabridged Dictionary in ten seconds." As he spoke he pulled out a roll of bills, and the New Yorker quietly laid a \$20 bill on the table, which was promptly covered.

The dictionary was brought forward. The Gotham drummer opened the big book and smiled like a man who knows that he has a "sure thing" in sight as he turned to the word "quire" and commenced reading the definition—"a body of singers in a church. See choir."

The silence that fell upon that room was unrelieved, save by the rustle of a \$20 bill as it was quietly folded and stowed away in the speller's vest pocket.

A week later, as I was enjoying a cigar in the lobby of the Riggs House at Indianapolis, I was startled by hearing a familiar voice exclaim: "How do you spell choir?" Glancing hastily around, I was surprised to see at one of the writing tables the identical gentleman whose ignorance had caused such a commotion at Cleveland concerning that very word. Looking closer I was equally surprised to find near him the benevolent gentleman who had kindly volunteered to spell the word for him at Cleveland, and who gained \$20 by doing so. Approaching the scene of battle, I took a seat where I could observe the subsequent proceedings, and within one minute the Cleveland performance had been duplicated, the speller pocketing \$25 this time as the result of his acumen.

Accosting the winner, I said, quietly: "I see that you spell 'choir' now in just the same way that you did the other day at Cleveland."

"Yes," he replied, "that's a pretty good way to spell it anywhere. It has netted my partner here and me about \$50 a day for the last two months. It works nine times out of ten, and we take no risks, you see. It is the best snap I ever struck, and I used to work with some of the slickest boys in the country, too."

"But," he added, confidentially, "if you ever try it you'd better keep both eyes open, or you'll miss connections with the dictionary. You can find 'choir' spelled and defined under the word 'quire' in Webster's Unabridged' only. Even Webster has an edition of 1891, called the 'International Unabridged,' which reads 'quire—see choir,' without giving any definition."

A GAMBLER'S CAREER.

The bankruptcy and disappearance of "Old Hutch," as the noted Chicago speculator was called, furnishes another instance in proof of the fact that gamblers in produce seldom escape disaster in the long run. At his beck prices used to go up or down, and in these movements other speculators met losses and ruin. "Old Hutch" ruled the market for years, and was deemed powerful enough to do what he liked. Now he is a wanderer, without money or influence. There would be little use in using his case to point a moral. Where the

making of money is the master passion, men will do almost anything that offers even a faint prospect of success. "Old Hutch" had his predecessors, and will have his successors. The Chicago Board of Trade could be severe on the sort of gambling carried on within the walls of its building when outsiders engaged in it, but this looked as if the object was to secure a monopoly of the operation for itself. Scarcely one of the gamblers in grain and other commodities ever retires with a full hand; usually the passion is too strong for them, and they go on indulging it to the end, with varying results, and with many of them the end of life is failure. The large operators generally have advantages over the small, whom they contrive to make victims, but they are lucky if they finally escape the pit which they dug for others.

AN EYE TO BUSINESS.

He had obtained a place in a real estate office, and was doing everything he could for the interests of his employers.

The other evening he was at a social gathering and was asked to sing. He responded with "Home, Sweet Home." His friends were a little surprised at the selection, but he was heartily applauded. Stepping forward he said: "I am glad you liked the song. There is nothing like 'Home, Sweet Home,' and let me say that the company I represent is selling them on terms to suit yourself within twelve minutes' ride of the city. If you don't want to live there it's the chance of your life for an investment.—*Washington Post.*"

COUNTRY STOREKEEPING.

"I want six buttons."

"Why can't you make it a dozen?"

"Oh, money's scarce now."

"How you talk!"

"Well, gimme a yard of caliker, an' six buttons an' a stick o' pep'mint candy for the baby. Take your pay in aigs, won't you?"

"No, I couldn't."

"Aint aigs same ez money?"

"No'p."

"Well, you storekeepers do beat all at makin' a bargain. You don't leave a body a foot to stand on."

—When Editor Thoms of the *American Art Journal* opened his mail the other day, one-half of a five-dollar bill dropped out of a letter. The writer said he had been pleased with an article he had seen in Mr. Thoms' periodical and that he thought he might like to subscribe. "I am willing to give the paper a fair trial," he wrote, "and if satisfied at the end of six months I will forward you the other half of the enclosed bill." Editor Thoms would not feel insulted if some kind-hearted person were to send him a case of wine in pints. Opening a small bottle for every friend who insists that this is a first-class joke is becoming rather expensive.

—Clerks, don't be "too fresh," even if you are just from College. I was in a dry goods store the other day, says an exchange, getting some things, when a pretty decent-looking chap came in, and said to one of the clerks:

"I want some shirts and collars, and a pair of Guyot's suspenders." "What kind of suspenders?" asked the clerk. "Guyot's" said the chap. "G-u-y, Guy, o-t, Guyot." "Oh, I see," said the clerk, reaching for a box behind him, "I didn't understand you. We do not pronounce it that way. It's a French name, you know, pronounced Ge-o; the t is silent." "Oh, it is," said the chap. "Perhaps if you were more like that t you'd sell more goods." And with that he walked out of the store.

—How to keep books," an advertisement of an American firm, attracted the attention of a Brockville young man who, desirous of securing the information, forwarded 25 cents. The answer he received was "do not lend them."

—The St. Thomas Loan Company will make application to have the name of the company changed to the Atlas Loan Company, because from its present name some people form the idea that they do only a city business, which is not the case.

THE GERMAN OF IT.—A little German furniture manufacturer, while examining some poplar—a pile of 15,000 ft.—in Price, Welch & Co.'s yard, at Baltimore, fell off the pile. The next day while explaining the cause of his lameness, he was asked how far he fell. "Fifteen thousand feet," he answered.

—Judge—"What trade do you follow?"

Vagrant—"I am a builder."

"What do you build?"

"Castles in the air."—*Texas Siftings.*

—A correspondent of an eastern journal sends this leaf from his personal experience: "In 1868 I sold 200 pounds of cherries for \$50 and bought with the money 200 lbs. of sugar. On April, 1891, I bought 200 lbs. of sugar for \$9.62."

Commercial.

MONTREAL MARKETS.

MONTREAL, May 13th, 1891.

ASHES.—First quality pots have been bought at \$4.40 to 4.50, the former figure for poor tares; seconds, \$3.60. Some few pearls have been received, but all go into one hand on consignment, and no local sales have been reported for some time.

BOOTS AND SHOES.—The trade report a very fair amount of orders for fall wear as coming in, and prospects look favorable. We have to note the failure of P. Hemond & Fils, a very respectable Montreal firm, particulars of which will be found elsewhere.

CEMENTS, &c.—Cements rule pretty steady at \$2.25 to 2.70 ex wharf, and are not likely to be very plentiful for some time, as few steamers are reported from producing points. Fire-bricks as last quoted.

DRUGS AND CHEMICALS.—There is little change in heavy chemicals, of which no great amount of new stock is yet to hand, the bulk of the supplies coming in tramp steamers, and by the regular liners. Opium is again weaker, also morphia. Glycerine is cheaper owing to competition among the manufacturers, and we reduce quotations to 18 to 22c. We quote:—Sal soda, \$1.15 to 1.25; bicarb soda, \$2.50 to 2.60; soda ash, per 100 lbs., \$2.00; bichromate of potash, per 100 lbs., \$11.00 to 13.00; borax, refined, 8 to 10c.; cream tartar crystals, 27 to 28c.; do. ground, 29 to 31c.; tartaric acid, crystal, 46 to 48c.; do. powder, 48 to 50c.; citric acid, 65 to 70c.; caustic soda, white, \$2.50 to 2.75; sugar of lead, 10 to 12c.; bleaching powder, \$2.25 to 2.40; alum, \$1.75 to 2.00; copperas, per 100 lbs., 90c. to \$1.00; flowers sulphur, per 100 lbs., \$2.75 to 3.00; roll sulphur, \$2.50 to 2.75; sulphate of copper, \$5.00 to 5.50; epsom salts, \$1.65 to 1.75; saltpetre, \$8.25 to 8.75; American quinine, 35 to 40c.; German quinine, 35 to 38c.; Howard's quinine, 42 to 45c.; opium, \$4.00 to 4.50; morphia, \$1.65 to 1.90; gum arabic, sorts, 60 to 80c.; white, 90c. to 1.10; carbolic acid, 35 to 55c.; iodide potassium, \$3.75 to 4.00 per lb.; iodine, re-sublimed, \$4.75 to 5.00; commercial do., \$4.25 to 4.75; iodoform, \$5.75 to 6.25. Prices for essential oils are:—Oil lemon, \$2.50 to 3.00; oil bergamot, \$4.70 to 4.90; orange, \$3.00 to 3.50; oil peppermint, \$4.00 to 5.00; glycerine, 18 to 22c.; senna, 12 to 25c. for ordinary. English camphor, 70 to 75c.; American do., 65 to 70c.; insect powder, 30 to 35c.

DRY GOODS.—The changeable weather seems to have been very general both east and west, judging by travellers' letters, and sorting business continues dull. It took a little spirit for a day or two last week, but only to fall flat again with the return of the cool weather. City trade, which has been somewhat interrupted by May Day fittings, is rather improved the last day or two. Money comes in very slowly. Buyers are beginning to move homewards, quite a few sailing this week; their purchases as a rule have leaned to moderation. Manufacturers of domestic goods are also pursuing a conservative course, and as far as possible manufacturing only to order.

FURS.—Quietude still marks the situation in this line, the only receipts of any note being spring rats, which are weaker. The quotation is still 20c., but sorting is being much more strictly done. There is nothing new in European markets. We quote:—Beaver \$4.50 to 5.00; bear, \$12 to 18; ditto cub, \$6 to 10; fisher, \$3.50 to 6.00; red fox, \$1.15 to 1.40; cross fox, \$2.50 to 5.00; lynx, \$1.50 to 2.50; marten, 60 to 80c.; mink, \$1 to 1.50; winter