

SPARKS FROM THE ANVIL

(Special for St. Peters Bote.) Thus at the flaming forge of life Our fortunes must be wrought; Thus on its sounding anvil shaped Each burning deed and thought!

—There was once upon a time a farmer who had a great orchard containing all kinds of trees; he became a Catholic, and somebody said: "Many are the ways of conversion to the Catholic Church; let us hear how you became a catholic." "Well," he answered, "I had in my orchard some very good trees; there was one tree that was particularly good; it bore the most tempting, luscious apples, and I noticed that at the foot of that tree every autumn there was an accumulation of sticks and stones, showing that the boys knew what was best. Looking around me, I noticed that the Church that got the most sticks and stones thrown at it, was the Catholic Church and I began to say to myself that must be the best Church."

—Protestants who come into the Catholic Church will not be lonesome for the company of other converts. There is hardly a parish in which there are not a number of persons who were once non-Catholics. Their greatest treasure is the faith. They rejoice when others come into the certainty of the truth.

—Every man who spares his penny to buy a Catholic paper is helping the utterance of clean words; doing his share in the work of a great missionary enterprise; helping the Voice that teaches from the Seven Hills.

—The "Ne Temere" was a Papal Decree designed to discourage mixed marriages. Among its bitterest opponents and denouncers were the leaders of the Orange Order. To listen to their raucous outcry nobody would suspect that they had a nice little "Ne Temere" decree of their own snugly tucked away in their sacred Rule Book.—Rule 4 of the Society's Revised Rules reads as follows: "Any member dishonoring the Institution by marrying a Roman Catholic shall be expelled and every member shall use his best endeavors to prevent and discountenance the marriage of Protestants with Roman Catholics, such inter-marriages generally occasioning unhappiness, and tending to the injury of Protestantism."

—The happiness of any home can be destroyed by any two people in it, each determined daily, to have his or her way. Riches or poverty, position or obscurity have nothing to do with it. Home happiness is built on unselfishness and sympathy and forbearance—or else not built at all, but scattered into ruin.

—Enthusiasm according to Lytton is the genius of sincerity, and truth accomplishes no victories without it.

—If it cost five dollars it is a fiddle; if it cost twenty-five it is a Violin.

—Some men are like silver-plated knives. They look bright, but are usually dull.

Some Points to Remember When Looking for a Job.

The following is an extract from an article in "The American Magazine," by George H. Cushing:

"The first rule of the game is that the man must have learned to manage his own money before he will be trusted to manage any business that makes money. If a man is a saver and lives within his income he is a comer, and is marked for preference. If he has money saved up and is in no fear of having to borrow any, he can afford to be politely and discreetly independent around his own office. This adds to his prestige with others."

MORAL—Get a firm grip on the Way of Successful Saving. Buy War Savings Stamps Regularly.

Bone-dry Places In The World.

The nation wide "dryness" in the United States brings to mind localities where almost perpetual drought is the rule. Among these is included a part of the United States which has been "bone-dry" since time immemorial and where depression is at its lowest.

Death Valley, 276 feet below sea level, is an alkaline desert region in California, on the Arizona border. It is seventy miles long, ten or twenty miles wide and is situated between high foothills. Only seventy-five miles away Mt. Whitney raises its 14,500 feet into the air and with other nearby elevations is a barrier to any moisture reaching this parched region.

In summer the temperature reaches 130 degrees in the shade, where there is shade enough to cover the thermometer, and even the nights are too hot to sleep. Terrific whirlwinds of heated sands sweep up and down the valley and render it a barren waste, except for a few stunted cacti and greasewood. In autumn tourists may venture into its confines but they must carry "drink" for both man and beast, as the lone stream that enters this dreary region is bitter alkaline and soon disappears in the sand, while springs are miles and miles apart. Looking for a drink here would stand about as much chance of fulfillment as ordering a Martini at a W. C. T. U. meeting. However, a few slinking coyotes, rattlesnakes, horned toads, buzzards and half-starved jackrabbits manage to exist in some mysterious manner.

An almost bottomless salt marsh occupies the centre of the valley practically from end to end. About midway it gets very shallow and narrows down to about two miles in width. At this point a road crossing has been constructed. Many of the men and beasts that have lost their lives endeavoring to cross this barren, bone-dry waste which gets its name from the fact that in the California gold rush of 1849 so many prospectors were lost in its sandy maw.

The great Sahara desert covers the major part of Northern Africa, consisting of 3,500,000 square miles—an arid region as large as the whole of Europe. From 100 feet below sea level it rises in one instance to 8,000 feet above, and some of its elevations are covered with snow for three months of the year. Most of it, however, is a dry, sandy waste, dotted here and there with an oasis where "drink" may be secured. The winds are all very hot and dry, while rain is almost unknown.

The ostrich, camel, jackel, horned viper and numerous lizards are the principle animals of the region. Several varieties of hardy birds are also found, while in such a bone-dry territory it may be expected that the human population is at a low ebb. Arabs, Moors, Jews and negroes jostle each other on the caravan routes and the fierce looking Arabs who bring their produce to the Egyptian markets are probably the robbers and cut-throats in their desert home.

It is impossible for travellers to get off the road, as the caravan routes are bordered with the bones of countless camels which have fallen by the wayside during the thousands of years these trails have been travelled. However, it is possible that the clamors of these dry people will some day cause the introduction of irrigation systems to make "wet" territory of this vast scene of desolation, as it is very productive where moisture is obtainable.

The Desert of Gobi in Central Asia, where bone-dryness has been

the fashion for thousands of years, is also a difficult place to obtain a drink. Its largest streams either vanish in the sand or empty into salty lakes. Caravan routes from China to Russia are still important trade channels, for the Russians insist that a sea voyage destroys the flavor of tea. This great arid waste is 1,800 miles wide and 400 miles deep and the almost rainless years since antiquity have parched its sands to the dryness that drifts in gyrating sand waves.

You will know Arabia is a dry country upon looking at the map and seeing that almost all its interior is labelled "Arabian Desert."

How Birds Keep Warm In Their Beds

Wild animals and birds have no stoves, furnaces and fire-places to help them keep warm in winter. When Jack Frost is on the rampage in the Canadian woods and the mercury low, our bird friends must, quite unaided, keep the heat in their little bodies. The sun...their only outside source of heat, is not available at night, when the cold bites hardest. On nights when a man, if turned loose and deprived of fire, would suffer greatly or perish, even though warmly clad, the birds must sleep comfortably. How do they do it? is the question bird students often ask.

In their struggle against the cold, birds are aided by two factors that human beings do not possess. Nature has given them rapid circulation and the warmest coats in the world. It is this circulation (they are hot-blooded) that prevents the little naked feet of the snowflake freezing as he runs in the snow in below-zero weather; it is his coat that turns the frost arrows at night when he cuddles down on the wind-swept field behind a tiny lump or grass tuft, and with his feet tucked up in his feathers sleeps warmly. Their stomachs are their furnaces; they feed them voraciously; all winter birds are huge eaters; deprived of food they perish quickly. The chickadee or nut-hatch or woodpecker loses never a minute of daylight for hunting on a winter day; the ruffed grouse swallows so many buds and berries by day that his "crop" is enormously distended, his stomach works on this supply of fuel, during his sleeping hours. Most winter birds have a passion for fat meats.

Bird coats are the most wonderful cold-resisting garments in the world. Nearly all winter species have downy feathers; the more fluffy, the warmer, seems to be the rule. The chickadee, woodpecker, Canada jay and the owls show us varying degrees of this fluffiness. Even those with harsher feathers like the goshawk, grouse or eagle, disclose an under garment of down; the harder feathers are but the storm-coat, the shingles to turn the wind. What is remarkable, too, is that these coats are adjustable. When a bird is subjected to cold he invariably rumples his plumage; he appears bigger. When perching this serves a two-fold purpose, it covers his feet (the owl, eagle, rough-legged hawk, falcons and grouse, all with their feathered leggings and shoes, stand less in need of this), and also it actually increases considerably the depth of the down coat. Feathers are among the poorest conductors of heat. Thus the down coat interposes an air space, warmed from within, between the bird's body and the cold outer air. His body is insulated from the cold. When the coat is ruffled, the feathers stand slightly more on end; the down-wall and its air space is deepened; the owner really has a warmer garment.

Of all the winter birds it would seem that the owls have the best of it. For they not only have superb coats, leggings and shoes,

but they can sleep during the warm day and hunt during the night. But as an owl's hunting consists rather much in sitting still and waiting, he loses his advantage; hence his extra garments. Most of these chaps sleep in the timber, in the sun and out of the wind and close to the hole of the tree. Not so, however, the big snowy owl. He sleeps where he hunts, out in the open. Muffled in his great coat he sits on the snow. He has but to shut his eyes to be weatherproof, and not even the blizzards of the Canadian prairies can daunt him. The little screech owl and the saw whet owl, however, retire behind the wooden walls of the woodpecker's home, and have at least a regular domicile.

The Union Government,

says the Ontario Journal in its recent issue, has gone back to its favorite sport of baiting unfortunate aliens. Last week a law was passed that no alien shall be permitted to carry a gun or weapon of any kind without a permit. So our good people of North Waterloo and elsewhere who have lived here for 30 or 40 or 50 years who are not allowed naturalization, will once more be made to feel that they are foreigners—although they have been the best of people and have helped to build up Canada.

Such is the land of freedom, equality and justice. First, plead with the alien to come to Canada; then, when you've got him here, abuse him in every way possible. Of course, the alien will not stand it. He will shake the dust of Canada off his feet, and our fool legislators will find they have cut off their noses to spite their faces. The men who did the hard labor in building up the country, railways etc., will be missed after they are gone. We need more, not fewer people. But the Government that continues to hound its young men after the war is over, cannot be expected to show any degree of horse-sense in the most simple things. Hysterical patriotism and the political crookedness that appeals to it are making a sorry mess of what was once a free and desirable land."

Household Hints

Pressing Garments.

Any housewife can do a good job of pressing woollen garments if she will take pains and heed a few simple suggestions which are made by the home economics workers at the New York State College of Agriculture. These are the main things to be borne in mind.

Use a moderately hot iron.

Use a pressing cloth which has been wrung as dry as possible.

Place the pressing cloth on the right side of the garment and press until the cloth is dry. When the cloth is removed, the material being pressed should look soft and fluffy, but should not be entirely dry.

The material should now be turned over and pressed on the wrong side. The nap will be flattened down until it is dry. If pressed on the right and the surface will appear shiny.

Make the Most of the Kitchen Range.

Avoid too much shaking. A short quick stroke of the shaker-handle will sift the ashes through the grates.

Leave grates in flat position when through shaking. Clean ash-pit daily to prevent damage to grates.

Avoid poking and slicing the fire-bed. It causes draft-holes and clinkers.

Clean the entire stove well inside, on top of the oven and below the oven, frequently and thoroughly.

Stoke frequently and in small amounts. Disturb the fire as little as possible.

Never shake a fresh fire until a little fresh coal has been added and given a chance to ignite.

Keep a pan or kettle of water always on the kitchen stove. Moist air makes for comfort, health and economy.

Uses For Salt.

Sprinkle a little salt in the skillet before placing the fish in it to fry and it will not stick in the skillet.

By adding a tiny pinch of salt to the milk when fresh, it will keep a much longer time.

Make a little salt bag and rub the griddle with it instead of grease. Pancakes will not stick and there will be no smoke or odor.

Cakes may be prevented from burning by sprinkling a little salt in the bottom of the oven.

Egg stains on silver can be removed by rubbing with a little salt and a damp cloth.

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