

TRICKS OF THE MEMORY.

Speakers and Writers Sometimes Confronted With Embarrassing Difficulties.

One of the queerest things with which writers have to contend is an occasional puzzle-headedness over a perfectly well-known point of orthography or grammar. A word that one has probably spelled correctly all one's life suddenly swerves into the doubtful orthography column. Is it "ingulf" or "engulf" or "engulph"? one queries, with pen poised. Is it "appal" or "apall"? "Fantasy" or "phantasy"? and so on indefinitely. To be sure, there is the dictionary, but, asks the Boston Commonwealth, who wants to learn his A B C's over again or look up the spelling of everyday words? It is a curious fact that, left to themselves, the fingers will generally spell a word correctly. It is in the hesitation that certainty is lost. There can be no doubt that the fingers of a writer acquire a sort of automatic education. Even when a doubt as to the right spelling of a word has crossed the mind the hand will usually bring the letters into form if given its course. It is as if it consciously reasoned, "I have always driven the pen so and so, having begun so!" But once hampered by the spirit of investigation, the irresolute hand inclines toward the unbridled.

The matter is worse where parts of speech entangle themselves. Rules and regulations flatten themselves out and only a helpless floundering among pronouns, antecedents and correlatives seems for the time possible. In one of Wilkie Collins' published letters he writes: "For the last week, while I was finishing the story, I galloped along without feeling it, like the last post horses. Do you remember how the forelegs of those post horses quivered and how their heads drooped when they came to the journey's end? That's me, my dear, that's me. Good God! Is 'me' grammar? Ought it to be 'I'? My poor father paid \$80 a year for my education, and I give you my sacred word of honor I am not sure whether it is 'me' or 'I'." Probably Wilkie Collins could have made a pretty straight guess on this point, but those little aberrations come upon us sometimes when we should be slow to stake anything upon our correctness; though another person, blundering in the same way, would be instantly arraigned before the bar of our correct and scandalized judgment just as we serve merited condemnation upon the low mortals who display the identical faults of which we are ourselves guilty.

Voluble speakers and voluminous writers probably experience little of this trouble. The spouting geyser of words never fails them, and for this they are to be congratulated; yet it is a consolation to those of less oratorical ability to know that great writers and speakers learn to curb their flowing speech rather than give vent to it. Prof. Shedd states that in the last half of Webster's public life he learned to reject the vague words that come thick and thronging when the mind is aroused. He grew more select and precise, and presently, as one said, "every word weighed a pound." This style of speaking or writing cannot be driven through with the velocity enjoyed when one is more careless of results. The word fitly chosen is the word to be striven for, and such is the perversity of inanimate things, it is precisely the word that sometimes fails to come at call.

How Noted People Have Died.

King David died of old age, says the St. Louis Globe-Democrat; Louis XVI. died on the scaffold; Richard III. was killed in battle; Abraham Lincoln was assassinated; James A. Garfield was assassinated; Charles I. of England was beheaded; Louis V. was poisoned by his queen; Mustapha II. was strangled in prison; Darius Codomanus was killed in battle; Attila the Hun died in a drunken spree; Millard Fillmore died of paralysis at 74; Andrew Johnson died of paralysis at 67; Achmet III. was strangled by his guards; Chester A. Arthur died of apoplexy at 56; Louis I. died of a fever during a campaign; James II. died in exile of gluttonous habits; Nerva was supposed to have been poisoned; General Grant died of cancer of the throat at 63; Emperor William of Germany died of old age; Tiberius was smothered by one of his favorites; Louis V. was poisoned by his mother and his wife; Solyman I. was dethroned and murdered in prison; Henry VI. of England was murdered in prison; Mustapha I. was deposed and strangled in prison; Charles III., Le Fou, was deposed and died in prison; George IV. died from a complication of disorders; Feodor II. of Russia was assassinated in church; John Adams passed away at 91 from senile debility; Queen Anne died of dropsy, brought on by brandy; Gregory V. was driven from Rome and died in exile; Louis Napoleon died in exile at Chislehurst, England; Adolphus of Germany fell at the battle of Guelheim; John Tyler died at 73 from a mysterious disorder; Richard II. is supposed to have been starved to death; Jehoabaz, king of Juda, died in captivity in Egypt; Lothaire of France, was poisoned by female relatives; George I. died from apoplexy, induced by drinking; Pope Lando was supposed to have been poisoned; Feodor I. of Russia was deposed and died in prison; Gustavus Adolphus was killed in the battle of Lutzen; Sultan Aissa-Chelebi was deposed and strangled; Pope Donus II. died suddenly, presumably by poison; Pope John X. died in prison, it is believed by poison; Solomon died of weariness at the vanity of human life, and Josiah, king of Judah, was killed in battle at Megiddo by an arrow.

Political Proverbs.

Purifyin' politticks is uphill work.
Sivil servis reform gethers no moss.
Some statesmen air small pertaters few in hill.

The main qualifikashun of a candidate is, can he git thar?
It's a purty hard job to tell political onesty when you see it.

A patriott may die for his country, but ez a rule, he'd rather not.

When the offis wates fer the man in this Dominian somethin' ain't rite.

Winmen that air well treated at home mostly ain't hankerin' for votes.

The candidate that got 'em ain't goin' to worry about how sertin votes wuz got, ef nobody else don't.

Oldest Manuscript of the World.

The oldest East Indian manuscript in the world, and one of the oldest existing manuscripts of any kind, has recently been dug up just outside of a subterranean city near Kuchin. It is written on birch bark, and contains two medical sections, two collections of proverbial sayings and one invaluable charm against snake-bite given by the Lord Buddha himself to Ananda.

HOW HE FELT WHEN DROWNING.

A Resuscitated Man Gives An Interesting Account of His Experience.

More remarkable testimony as to how it feels to die is added to the little fund of positive knowledge we have on that deeply interesting subject by a correspondent of the Pall Mall Gazette. This particular experience is entirely corroborative of all other testimony we possess on the matter—namely, that it is not death the foe, the grisly terror, but death the gentle, kindly friend, and that he takes us into the unknown not with a cruel grip through ways of horror, but with a gentle clasp along a road both painless and pleasant. The New York Sun recently told the experiences of a man who was twice hanged into insensibility and practical death by lynchers in California, who described his sensations of death as being momentarily enjoyable, followed by painless passing into nothingness. It related also the sensations experienced by one who sickened into the insensibility of death by fever, and of others who fell from lofty places and were picked up as though dead. In all these cases the testimony was unanimous that the actual passing from life to death is not only painless but, in fact, physically pleasurable.

The correspondent of the Pall Mall Gazette relates that he was skating on a broad lake, when, without warning, he fell into an air hole. His impetus carried him a considerable distance under the thick ice, and the first thing he knew of the accident was when he found himself struggling for life in the cold water. He came up with his head against the solid ice. He thus describes his sensations as he leaped into unconsciousness:

I gasped and swallowed a great deal of water. I felt my lungs filling. A moment of suspense, during which I knew perfectly well I was drowning, intervened, and then—I died. I was drowned and dead. Just before I died, however, I noticed—deliberately noticed, for I am physiological and did not come up, as I had been given to understand it would, in a single flash before me.

The accident had been seen by other skaters, and in a comparatively short time the man was brought from under the ice. But, he says, he was to all seeming stone dead. Heart and lungs had ceased to act, and there was nothing more to happen to me to make me any deader. Extreme remedies were applied, and he was at last resuscitated. In describing his sensations during the few moments that intervened between his plunge into the water and his lapsing into the insensibility of death he says there was nothing horrible or terrifying. There was the first quick shock of the cold water and a realization of the disaster, a momentary struggle for breath, and then came a dreamy state, of which he only remembers that it was a sweet relief from the struggle and a pleasurable drifting into Nirvana.

The knowledge that I had thus once experienced in my own person exactly what death is and tried it fully, has had a great deal to do, I think, with my utter physical indifference to it. I know how it feels, and though it is momentarily uncomfortable, it isn't half as bad as breaking your arm or having a tooth drawn. In fact, the actual dying itself, as dying, is quite painless; as painless as falling asleep.

A Savage Dog and the Baby.

While travelling in the North of Sweden I bought a beautiful dog, says a writer in Baby. When first I became his master he was most savage, and the difficulties I had in bringing him home would fill a volume.

After being domiciled some time in my country place his temper became more civilized, but he was still very cross to strangers, and even I could not take liberties with him.

He had the range of the house and his favorite place was in my wife's boudoir. My last child was then hardly out of babyhood—in the semi-crawling, toddling stage. She was always brought down to the boudoir every evening at 5.

One evening the dog was as usual on the rug in front of the fire, the child being seated in another part of the room. A sudden cry from my wife made me look up and I saw to my horror the child had crawled close up to the dog.

One glance showed me there was no time to interfere, as by doing so the dog might bite. By the time the baby had got up to the dog he was pulling his ears and had one of its little arms right in his mouth. All the dog did was to lick the little one's face and permit it to tug away at its pleasure. Almost the first word that child learned was the name of the dog, which was Flink.

From that day the dog was a daily visitor to the nursery, and never let the children go out without his escort, and it is needless to say that that no stranger was permitted to come near them. Though Flink liked the other children, he was always devoted especially to the baby.

Taxing Vanity for Charity.

Dom Pedro, the late Emperor of Brazil, desired to erect a hospital in Rio de Janeiro, but the means for its construction were wanting. He tried to raise the necessary sum by subscription from the rich people in the city and country, but had very little success. Then the idea struck him to grant titles for money. For the title of "count" or "baron" certain high taxes were to be paid. But as hereditary nobility had been abolished in Brazil, such titles were only personal. If the sons of the ennobled wanted to retain the title they had to pay over again for the privilege. Dom Pedro knew well the weakness of men. As soon as nobility was granted to one rich family, the majority of the rest followed suit, and in this way the Emperor collected a large sum sufficient to erect and equip a splendid hospital, on the entrance of which there is the inscription in golden letters: "Vanitas humana miserie humanae" (human vanity to human misery).

Stub Ends of Thought.

To-morrow is a mystery.

Family jars are undesirable pottery.

Bachelors are the stones in a growing field.

Lovers who quarrel should never marry.

Help somebody else if you would help yourself.

The sun always shines after a good breakfast.

It spoils the doing and cheapens the gift to offer heaven as a reward for good deeds.

Some are born to matrimony, some achieve matrimony and some have matrimony thrust upon them.

The nursery is the house's heart, the library its brains, the kitchen its stomach and the parlor its good clothes.

1892

Fall and Winter.

1893

AGAIN Grim Winter is upon us; again we must bestir ourselves to withstand his attacks.

MEMORIES of past winters and by-gone experiences have taught us what is needed, and we have secured the best things in

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