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Two Paris surgeons have discovered the germs that cause gangrene and they have prepared a serum to combat it.

A woman is the patentee of a new post hole digger with a hinged scoop to remove all the loose earth from a hole.

Spinch has been termed the broom of the stomach by a French physician, because it thoroughly cleansed that organ.

A perfumery atomizer small enough to be carried in a pocketbook is the idea of a French inventor.

NATURAL HISTORY.

Wherein is Related a Tale of a Farmer and a Possum.

PLAYS DEAD WHILE HANGING.

Only Way to Kill Him Is to Beat Him to a Jelly—One the Soldiers Let Go. Prose and Poetry Tell a Lot About the Animal That Bluffs.

By M. QUAD.
[Copyright, 1910, by Associated Literary Press.]

A possum he lived in a tree,
And a jolly old fellow was he,
Took life as he found it,
And walked all around it,
Which is the best way, don't you see?

WHAT is called the Virginia possum is found in almost every middle and southern state, but while the farmer often catches sight of foxes, coons and woodchucks he seldom gets a squint at a possum. The animal hardly ever moves out by day, and at night he is very sly. He makes his nest in a hollow tree, hollow log or among the roots of a tree, and he hides it well. He is a poor runner and not much of a fighter, though if he once gets his teeth into a dog he will hang on until killed. It is owing to this grip of his jaws



"BUT POSSUM HE PLAYED."

that the fox, the coon and the "chuck" give him half the path when they meet at night. Any one of them can roll him over, but so tough is his hide that they might chew on him for an hour without hurting him.

Near by lived the good Farmer Dwight, And the possum he went every night. He went looking for scraps, And he thought that perhaps With the dog he'd get up a fight.

The possum does not wander far from his lair. This is because he is like no other animal in his eating. He will eat berries, young rabbits, birds, eggs, roots, fornicia, vegetables of all sorts, scraps from the table, mice, bugs and almost everything else you can think of. He can therefore get his living around any farm. If living near a marsh he will feed on crabs and frogs. If there are snakes on a farm he will thin them out. A fight often takes place between a possum and a black snake, but the former is always the winner. It is said that the bite of a rattlesnake will not poison him. In gathering fruit from a tree the possum hangs to a limb by his tail and uses his forefeet to gather with. He can eat more persimmons than any three colored men, but when it comes to the watermelon he doesn't care for it.

He'd pick up a chick now and then Or strangle a goslin or hen. He was never the best, And he ate it with zest Before he'd returned to his den.

The two oddest things about the possum is the way he uses his tail to hang by and his "playing dead" when attacked and overcome. If the farmer clubs one to death, or thinks he does, the animal will remain quiet for hours and then get up and walk off. To actually kill him with a club he must be beaten to a jelly. He has a hide on him like a bull, and he has few nerves to feel pain. A bulldog may worry one for an hour after he is supposed to be dead, and he will come to life again and make for his tree.

There were nights in the full of the moon When he was mistook for a coon, And the dog made him hump Around bushes and stump And got out of that pretty soon.

Naturalists used to assert that when the mother possum had a litter of five the old man turned to and ate up three of them so as to keep the number down where all could make a good living. This has been found to be incorrect. As soon as the house is full of children papa takes his departure and finds another boarding house for himself. They may live or die, but it's nothing to him. It is only at such times that if he meets another daddy possum he will get up a row without the least excuse. He's used about it, you see; thinks two in the family enough.



Every 10c Packet of WILSON'S FLY PADS WILL KILL MORE FLIES THAN \$8.00 WORTH OF ANY STICKY FLY CATCHER

Clean to handle. Sold by all Drug-gists, Grocers and General Stores.

Three times he was caught in a trap And over the head got a rap, But possum he played, And living he stayed And winked as he woke from his nap. In the New York zoo several years ago a possum was struck fifteen times with a baseball bat in the hands of a strong man. He went dead, and a man was set to watch him. He was watched for ten hours, but as he stayed dead the watcher went away for half an hour. Upon his return—no possum! The next day the animal was as lively as if he had not been clubbed. During the civil war some Union soldiers captured a possum in

Virginia and let him curl his tail over a limb. He was closely guarded for three days and was still "all there" when the boys let him go.

At length 'twas the farmer who said: "That possum shall sleep with the dead. I'll catch him once more. And, b'gosh and gione, His blood I truly will shed!"

When a fox or coon finds he is discovered at his little game and is chased by the dog two or three times he pulls up stakes and hunts a new neighborhood. Not so with the possum. When he finds a good thing he hangs right on, and the result is that his wife looks for him to come home some morning and he does not show up.

He has eaten of ducklets full ten, And his goslins are gone from the pen. He has sucked scores of eggs And then used his legs To tote himself homeward again.

At the Cincinnati zoo they put a basket containing six dozen eggs into the cage of the possum. He was willing and went at it. They thought he might suck the whole seventy-two, but he was no hog, and he stopped at fifty. The hole he made in the shell was no larger than a darning needle, and not a shell was broken. Just how much eggog a possum can drink is not known, but about a gallon would probably do for him.

By thunder, I'll stand it no more, But dabble my hands in his gore! I've sworn it and said That I'd have him dead, And to life he shall come nevermore!

The stupidity of the possum is shown in the fact that he can be easily trapped. He is not looking for anything of the kind, and it is said that he cannot scent a steel trap like the fox or wolf. A trap set anywhere around the henhouse will eventually get him. And next morning the captive was there, And the ax the old man did prepare. One look he just gave him, And then he did shave him And cut him in two, I declare!

Three Telegrams.

I. Blue Haven, May 3.
William J. Binks, New York:
Please send me \$500 at once. TOM.

II. New York, May 4.
Thomas Binks, Yale College, Blue Haven:
You must economize. Send me your bills. FATHER.

III. Blue Haven, May 5.
William J. Binks, New York:
All right. Am economizing. Have forwarded bills by freight. Cheaper than express. Love to mother. TOM.
—Harper's Weekly.

Another Catch.

Gunner—What's the latest news to-day?

Guyet—George Washington's auto sold for \$500 in New York.

Gunner—What are you trying to hand me? There were no autos in George Washington's day.

Guyet—Who said anything about automobiles? This refers to his autograph.—Chicago News.

New Mother Goose.

Simple Simon met a pie-man going to the fair.

Said Simple Simon to the pie-man, "Let me taste your ware."

Said the pie-man to Simple Simon: "The ultimate consumer is permitted only to smell the pie. So take your sniff and go."—Minneapolis Journal.

The Candy Kid.

"I want to play the villain in this drama," howled the chocolate cream.

"But why should you?" gurgled the gumdrop.

"When the clerk wraps me up in silver paper I can yell 'Folled again!'" —Cleveland Leader.

Sure Enough.

"What's in a name, anyhow?"

"What's the matter?"

"Here my name is Holdfast, and I can't keep a job, while my neighbor, who is named Gunn, has never once been fired."—Baltimore American.

In and Out.

Wigg—There seems to be quite a difference between a job and a situation.

Wagg—Oh, yes. For instance, when a fellow loses his job he often finds himself in an embarrassing situation. —Philadelphia Record.

Sounded Artificial.

"He praised her beauty, yet she hates him."

"Strange! Why so?"

"He concluded by saying he considered her a work of art."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

Sightseeing.

On a visit to his grandmother Harry examined her handsome furniture with interest and then asked, "Grandma, where is the miserable table that papa says you always keep?"—Success Magazine.

Well Provided For.

Benevolent Lady (to show girl)—And, dear child, have you no home?

Show Girl—Yes, indeed. My father and mother have both married again, and I am welcome at either place.—Life.

Quickly Answered.

Mr. Lakeside (of Chicago)—Mighty, pretty woman that next door to you. Why don't you flirt with her?

Mr. Swampside—She isn't married.—New York Weekly.

Kept Apart.

"If women would only be bolder,"

Declared the suffragette,

"And just stand shoulder to shoulder, We'd win the ballot yet."

But one woman candidly told her

When she at last had hushed:

"We can't stand shoulder to shoulder, 'Tis our hats all crushed."

—Washington Herald.

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WHY not give your lad the same training?

"When I was a growing lad, and came upon many words in my reading that I did not understand, my mother, instead of giving me the definition when I applied to her, uniformly sent me to the dictionary to learn it, and in this way I gradually learned many things besides the meaning of the individual word in question—among other things, how to use a dictionary, and the great pleasure and advantage there might be in the use of the dictionary. Afterwards, when I went to the village school, my chief diversion, after lessons were learned and before they were recited, was in turning over the pages of the 'Unabridged' of those days. Now the most modern Unabridged—THE NEW INTERNATIONAL—gives me a pleasure of the same sort. So far as my knowledge extends, it is at present the best of the one-volume dictionaries, and quite sufficient for all ordinary uses. Even those who possess the splendid Dictionaries in general volumes will find it a great convenience to have this, which is so compact, so full, and so trustworthy as to leave, in almost cases, little to be desired."—Albert S. Cook, Ph.D., LL.D., Professor of the English Language and Literature, Yale Univ. April 23, 1911.

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