

* CANADIAN *

TIT-BITS

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An Illinois paper says there is a man out there so dirty that the assessors set him down as "real estate."

"You want a flogging, that's what you do," said a father to his unruly son. "I know it very well, dad, but I'll try to get along without it."

An Irish attorney says, "No printer should publish a death, unless apprised of the fact by the party deceased."

At a coloured ball, the following notice was posted on the door-post: "Tickets, fifty cents. No gentlemen admitted unless he comes himself."

"Would you not love to gaze on Niagara forever?" said a romantic young girl to her less romantic companion.

"Oh no," said he, "I shouldn't like to have a cataract always in my eye."

A rather thick-headed witness in the police-court was asked the question whether the party accused "stood on the defensive." He innocently replied, "He stood on a bench, and cursed like a fiend."

"Look here, ma," said a young lady, just commencing to take lessons in painting; "see my painting, can you tell me what it is?"

Ma, after looking at it some time, answered: "Well it is either a cow or a rosebud—I'm sure I can't tell which."

Irate Individual: "See here, that land you sold me is under water half the time!" Estate Agent: "Yes; I supposed you wanted it for a fish pond. Don't see what you bought it for if you didn't." "Great Jupiter! why didn't you say it wasn't fit to build on? How was I to know the river had a mortgage on it?" "I stated the fact that it was very low land in my advertisement." "Never said a word about it." "Oh, you're mistaken! It was in great big type—'Land for sale. Very low.'"

A lady visiting a hospital, gave a soldier who had lost both his legs a tract on the sin of dancing.

"So you think you can play 'Hamlet,' do you, young man," asked the manager.

"I do," replied the applicant, firmly.

"And have you had any actual stage experience?"

"Certainly, sir, or, I wouldn't undertake so difficult a rôle."

"And what parts have you played?"

"I don't know that you would call it a part exactly; but for three weeks I shook one end of the canvas waves in the great sea scene in 'Wrecked on the North Atlantic.'"

The newspaper correspondent, who signs himself "One who knows" is generally the one who knows the least about the matter—which fact he makes apparent in his communication.

Mamma: "Flossie, you have been a very naughty little girl, and I must punish you."

Flossie, (who had been to the dentist's recently): "Oh, mamma! Won't you please give me gas first?"

Chemist, after a heated discussion to doctor. "I want you to understand that my profession as a chemist, is as good as yours as a doctor. Our examinations are as severe, and, after all, what are you doctors but travelling salesmen to sell our goods."

Merchant: "The postal service is in a wretched condition."

Friend: "Never noticed it."

"Well, I have. During the last month I sent out one hundred and fifty statements of account, with requests for immediate payment, and, so far as I can learn, not more than two of my customers received their letters."

Young Sprigg: "Mr. Bidquick, I am worth \$20,000, and I love your daughter."

Mr. Bidquick (retired auctioneer): "Sold."

McCorkle: "Isn't Briggs naturally a lazy man?"

McCrackle: "Not exactly lazy; but he seems to think it is unhealthy to work between meals."

A sufferer by a late railway accident, rushing wildly about, was asked if he was hurt.

"No," he said, "but I can't find my umbrella."

Customer (getting his hair cut): "Didn't you nip off a piece of the ear then!"

Barber (reassuringly): "Yes, sir, a small piece, but not 'nough to affect the hearin', sir."

Young Bride (pouting): "Here we have been married only two days, Clarence—and you're scolding me already!"

Husband: "I know, my dear—but just think how long I've been waiting for the chance!"

A mayor of a small village in France, having occasion to give a passport to a distinguished personage in his neighbourhood, who was blind of an eye, was in great embarrassment on coming to the description of his person. Fearful of offending the good man, he adopted the following ingenious expedient of avoiding mention of his deformity:—

"Black eyes, one of which is absent."

A cunning fellow made a rush into a druggist's shop, took from his pocket a soda-water bottle filled to the brim with some pure liquor, and handing it across the counter exclaimed, "There, doctor, snuff that, will you." The doctor did as he was directed and pronounced the liquor to be genuine whiskey. "Thank you, doctor," said the Irishman. "Hand it to me again, if you please." The doctor did as directed, and asked what he meant. "Och, thin" says Pat, "if you will have it, the priest told me not to drink any of this, unless I got it from the doctor. So here's your health, and the priest's health."

"I feel now quite satisfied that there is no life so happy as a married one."

"And how long have you been married?"

"Since last Wednesday."

She had a Strong Will.

A theatrical man relates the following very amusing anecdote:—

Miss A—, besides being perhaps the most prominent character in the play, was also the manageress, and it was she who regulated the salaries of the actors.

Mr. Y—, one of the actors, had long contended that his salary was not one-half what it ought to be, and Miss A— declared as firmly that this was neither here nor there, for the salary would remain unchanged.

This condition of affairs did not make the two love each other as good Christians expected to do. Such scenes as these—behind the scenes of course—became frequent:

"When are you going to raise my salary?"

"Never."

"All right then. I leave tomorrow."

"Very well; why don't you?"

Or the war might be varied to this form:

"Well, are you going to raise my salary this week?"

"No."

"Next week?"

"No."

"When!"

"Never."

That determined "never" was a disagreeable check to the argument."

Finally Y— worked out a sub-plot in the play. In one act he, the noble hero, carried Miss A— from a top story to the ground down a ladder. One night, when this scene came on, he stepped upon the top round of the ladder as usual, holding in his arms his fair burden. But instead of coming down quickly, as usual, as a vigorous, invincible hero should, he stopped.

"Now, raise my salary," he whispered in her ear.

"Never."

"Raise my salary, or I drop you."

Here was a crisis. Two things were in danger—the success of the scene, and the actress's bones.

"Raise my salary, or I drop you."

The house was waiting. Miss A— closed her eyes.

"Never!" she said—and he carried her safely down the ladder.

Help Yourself.

"Can you help me a little," said a tramp, poking his head into a country shop.

"Why don't you help yourself," said the proprietor angrily.

"Thank you, I will," said the tramp, as he picked up a bottle of whiskey and two loaves of bread, and disappeared like a flash of lightning.

He was followed by several lumps of coal and the village constable.

Thought he was "Operating."

"COME, doctor, you are very skillful; I will give you the honour of carving."

"With pleasure, madam." And immediately the doctor begins his task.

He is very absent-minded, and when he has finally made a deep cut in the leg of mutton he stops, takes a roll of linen and some lint out of his pocket, and carefully bandages the wound.

Then, after regarding it critically, he remarks with professional gravity, while the guests are stupefied with astonishment:—"There, with rest and good care there is nothing to fear."

How Mr. Symms Got Rid of the Cats.

Mr. Symms' back yard has been for years infested with cats. Affliction sore, from this particular cause long time he bore, and bootjacks were in vain. The voices of the cats were to the last degree exasperating to his nerves, and a month ago Mr. Symms was apparently on the way to fall a victim to persistent insomnia.

One night a peculiarly melodious sound floted up to Mr. Symms' back windows. It was a gentle soothing sound of delicious *timbre*, and while totally different from the yell of an ordinary cat, it did suggest what the voice of a celestial and glorified cat in another and better world might be.

Mr. Symms listened with admiration and delight, and in a short time was lulled to slumber by the melodious voice.

In the morning an investigation in the back yard resulted in the discovery of what was apparently a new species of animal, half cat, and half tin can—a sort of connecting link between live cat and canned sausage. It appears that a can containing a little preserved salmon had been carelessly thrown into the back yard. A predatory cat had squeezed her head into the can, in order to get at the salmon, and had found, when it was too late, that the fragments of tin around the mouth of the can, prevented her from withdrawing her head.

In these circumstances she wandered about the yard, blind, and unable to escape. The voice was so modified by the can, that it lost its harsh and distinctive feline character, and became the delicious music which had charmed Mr. Symms' midnight ear.

Mr. Symms at once saw that the means of rendering all the cats of the neighborhood harmless, was at his command.

The next night he placed twenty-four salmon cans in his back yard, and in the morning he found that twenty-four cats had bonneted themselves.

For nearly a week these animals wandered about the back yard, unable to steal, fight, or destroy Mr. Symms' geraniums, while the neighbours called on that gentleman to thank him for the public spirit which had induced him to place in

his back window the most delightful Æolian harp they had ever heard.

It was not necessary to use more than the original twenty-four salmon cans, for the remaining cats of the neighbourhood, the moment they caught sight of the modified cats, were so shocked and alarmed, that they completely deserted the place.

At the end of a week or ten days, the modified cats gave up the effort to live with their heads permanently canned, and Mr. Symms buried them in his celery bed.

Homœopathic Payment.

HAHNEMANN, the homœopathic doctor, once cured one of his patients by merely putting a flask under his nose and telling him to smell it.

A month afterwards he sent in his account, and the next day the patient—a Parisian—called on him.

As Hahnemann was rather hard-up, being very badly paid by his *clientele*, he received his visitor with the greatest pleasure, expecting to receive his fee.

"My dear doctor," said the patient, "I'll pay you with the same readiness as you have cured me. Here is a hundred franc note; smell it. We are quits."

Encouraging to Youth.

Young men should never give way.

In the darkest hour something is sure to turn up.

We knew a young man, a poor young man who lived in a hovel.

And yet with only his two hands and a crowbar, he opened a jewellery shop.

Now he is living at a large stone residence at Sing-Sing.

Such is the truly great reward of virtuous labour.

The young man is not a bit proud.

The Cat was Drowned in it.

"Madam," said a polite traveller to a testy landlady, "if I see proper to help myself to the milk, is there any impropriety in it?"

"I don't know what you mean: but if you mean to insinuate that there is anything nasty in that milk, I'll give you to understand that you have struck the wrong house!"

"There ain't a first hair in the milk; for as soon as Dorothy Ann told me the cat was drowned in it, I went and strained it!"

The horrified young man declined partaking of the cat-flavoured milk.

Teacher: "We call transparent those bodies which we can see through. Emma, name a transparent object."

Emma: "The key-hole!"

Locked In The Vault.

I.

DRAGGED FROM HIS PEACEFUL BED.

They had met by chance in a large hotel in Birmingham, Ala., and were telling stories, more or less true, to pass away the time before going to bed.

"One night in midsummer," began the pale, round-shouldered gentleman, who was understood to be a bank cashier, "being entirely alone in the house, my family having gone to the country I was awakened by someone at my bed-side, calling me by name.

"I was not at all startled at first; indeed, for the moment I could not fully determine where I was.

"The light of a dark lantern filling the room brought me suddenly to full senses.

"As soon as I could see clearly, I was considerably astonished, to say the least, to behold a large, red-bearded man standing close beside me, with his finger on his lips, while a little way off, on opposite sides of the dressing-table were seated two powerful-looking fellows—one holding the lantern, and both perfectly silent and motionless.

"The man nearest me now spoke again in a low, determined voice.

"Mr. Benyon, keep perfectly quiet if your life is worth anything to you. You must get up and dress yourself as quickly and noiselessly as possible, and come with us to the bank."

"To say that I was undisturbed by this novel condition of things would be to say what was untrue. I am constitutionally, an exceedingly timid man, and I actually trembled violently as I obeyed these orders. The only question for me to decide was whether the money at the bank was worth more than my life—for the hard, fierce bearing of my captors left no room for doubt, as to the sincerity of their threats.

"So, without the least sign of hesitation, I dressed myself quickly as directed, offered no resistance when they informed me gruffly that they must gag me and tie my hands behind my back, and, at their command, produced the bank keys, and walked out and took my seat in a cart.

"We drove quickly to the bank; the horse was fastened close by, and, after waiting carefully a few moments to make sure of meeting no wandering policeman, we walked to the bank, and with the aid of the keys I had brought, of course entered without difficulty.

"Your work is before you," uttered the tallest of the three, pointing significantly to the door of the large safe.

"They had freed my hands, and placed my work before me. I had been brought there to do what no other man in the whole world except myself could do—work the combination lock that secured the door of the vault. Not a difficult piece of work for me, certainly.

"I knew, as they also probably knew, that there was an unusually large amount of money in the bank that night—specie as well as notes. And yet the money was utterly beyond their reach should I refuse to open the vault. No wonder I stood an instant in indecision as I thought of it.

"It was only an instant, however. Then a long, keen, glittering knife was passed slowly before my eyes, and I decided. I yielded I confess entirely from fear. Had the stake been much larger, I should have yielded as quickly.

"I turned to the vault, and in sixty seconds more, the door stood wide open.

"The leader alone went in, the other two remaining with me.

"Swiftly as though quite familiar with such places and all their arrangements, he collected all that was worth taking away. Notes were brought out to the amount of several thousand pounds, and carefully bestowed upon his own person or those of his associates. Then came the specie, enough to make it necessary for one man to steal cautiously several times to the cart in order to get it all safely loaded.

"All this being at last accomplished, it seemed to me that the job was about finished. Little did I know that the black-hearted villains had me in their power.

"I suppose you will leave me here?" I said.

"Yes that is our intention, and to make sure that you will not get away and give the alarm we have concluded to lock you up in the vault."

II.

A PRISON OF IRON.

"For a moment I stood stupefied, scarcely comprehending his meaning.

"Lock me in the vault—I, the only man on earth that knew the combination! That would be an unpleasant joke, indeed.

"Even before the villains should be out of hearing with their ill-gotten booty I should begin to grow sick and faint from breathing the musty air of my living tomb. How long would it be before I should suffocate to death? A half-hour, or an hour?

"I looked up at my captor. His lips were firm and set—thin, cruel lips that meant what they said. Ah, yes; if I doubted that, I had only to look into the cold, pitiless eyes above them.

"I swore to him that if he would leave me there, bound securely as he liked, I would not stir till morning even if I could. I pledged him my honor, that if he pleased I would never breathe a word of the whole transaction. I assured him that to be shut up there was certain death—death in a long, lingering agony.

"Alas! I spoke to a heart of stone.

"I turned to his companions. They only looked on as stolid and indifferent as though they had been deaf mutes.

"Come, sir," said the leader once more; "we must be going, and can listen to no more of this. Will you walk into the vault, or must we force you?"

"Again I flung myself down before him and fairly grovelled at his feet.

"In the very midst of my entreaty, at a sign from the leader, I was roughly seized, and, in spite of my struggles and cries, quickly thrust into the vault, and the door closed with a bang.

"I rose from the place where I had fallen almost immediately, and threw myself against the iron door. It was as firm as a rock. I was locked in the vault, and I knew that it was absolutely impossible that I could ever come forth alive.

"You will readily guess that there is not much more of the story to tell. I have only to describe to you the awful suffering that was mine during the brief half-hour that elapsed ere I began to gasp for breath, and then through fearful agony passed to a state of unconsciousness.

"There was, then, nothing now for me but to die. Philosophically I came to that conclusion at last. Already the air I breathed was becoming foul. I knew that I could not inhale it and keep my senses more than fifteen minutes longer.

"So I sat down, and leaning my head on my hands fell into a kind of stupor. For at least ten minutes I seemed to myself like one dozing or as a man who has fallen in the snow and whose senses refuse to keep active.

"At last I suddenly aroused myself and stood up. I was breathing in short, quick gasps, and felt a terrible pain in my chest. Then my brain seemed all at once to burst into flame, my fancy grew excited, I reeled as I walked and fell headlong to the floor.

"Then I experienced still greater difficulty in breathing, a still heavier weight crushing my breast, there was a still brighter light before my closed eyes—in my insane agony for an instant I fancied it the light of lanterns, and that help had come. Then I raised myself with sudden energy to my elbow for one instant, then sunk back unconscious."

The cashier paused, and looked round as if he had reached the end of his story. His auditors looked at him, still breathless with interest, puzzled and unrelieved.

"Why," cried out the young fellow fresh from college, "that is not the end?"

"Yes," answered the cashier, "that is the end."

"But how did you get out?" inquired the tea merchant.

"I never got out," answered the cashier, with a queer smile.

"Then it was a dream after all?" put in the detective.

"No, it was not a dream."

"Then what on earth was it?" impatiently demanded the old sea captain.

"Why, it was only a story. When I got to the point where I fell down unconscious in the vault, I found that my im-

magination failed me. How to get out of that prison would puzzle Mr. Grant Allen himself.

"However, my story has the merit of being as veracious as most of the stories I have heard this evening. That you will all allow, I am sure.

"Good-night, gentlemen!"

Legal Anecdotes.

"Prisoner at the bar," said the judge, "is there anything you wish to say before sentence is passed on you?"

The prisoner looked wistfully towards the door, and remarked that he would like to say "Good evening, if it would be agreeable to the company."

Said an advocate before a court of justice in Pennsylvania:—

"Your honour sits upon the adorable seat of justice like the American eagle perched upon the rock of Gibraltar, while the eternal streams of equity, like the cadaverous clods of the valley, flow meandering at your feet."

"I am willing to split hairs with my opponent all day if he insists upon it," said a very distinguished lawyer in a speech at the bar.

"Split that then," said his opponent, pulling a coarse specimen from his own head, and extending it.

"May it please the court, I didn't say *bristles!*"

A practical joke was once attempted to be played on Lord Erskine, as he went one day to Westminster Hall, with his ample bag crammed full of briefs.

Some waggish barristers hired a Jew's boy to go and ask him if he had any "old clo' to sell."

"No, you little imp!" exclaimed the indignant counsellor; "they are all *new suits.*"

"It was only a lark, sir," pleaded a youthful delinquent, in extenuation of a foolish trick he had played on a confiding friend.

"Only a lark, eh?" said the stipendiary magistrate, "Well, we have a cage for larks, into which I shall put you for seven days."

IN COURT—"How came it that when you broke into the shop you carried off a lot of useless trash and left the till untouched?"

"Oh, me lud, don't you begin to scold me for that, I beg. I have heard enough about that already from my wife."

AN ARITHMETICAL QUESTION.—Judge (to horrid scamp who has just been sentenced to a couple of years' hard labor): "Have you anything to add?"

"No, your honour; I would rather subtract."

An amusing incident happened some time ago in one of the Paris courts of justice. A vain, haughty woman was called as a witness, when the magistrate enquired her age.

"Twenty-five last August," promptly replied the lady.

The next witness was a young man who at once acknowledged that he was twenty-seven years of age.

"Are you related to the last witness?" queried the magistrate.

"Yes, I am her son," he replied.

"Ah!" mused the magistrate, "your mother must have married very young."

How IT IS DONE.—Prisoner: "So you think you can get me off?"

Lawyer: "Easily enough. I will prove to the court that you are a lunatic, and you will be sent to an asylum."

"But how am I to get out of the asylum?"

"I will get two respectable doctors to swear that you are not a lunatic."

Lord Chancellor Campbell, a few days before his death, met a barrister, and remarked:

"Why, Mr. —, you are getting as fat as a porpoise."

"Fit company, my lord, for the Great Seal," was the ready repartee.

A Lady Traveller and a Yankee.

"You're from down east, I guess?" said a fellow passenger to a lady while travelling in the State of Ohio.

"I am," she replied.

"Going west?"

"Yes."

"Travelling alone?"

"No."

"Was you raised down east?"

"No, in the Old Country."

"In the little old island? Well, you are kinder glad to leave it, I guess? Are you a widow?"

"No."

"Are you travelling on business?"

"No."

"What business do you follow?"

"None."

"Well, now, what are you travelling for?"

"Health and pleasure."

"Well, now, I guess you're pretty considerable rich. Coming to settle out west, I suppose?"

"No, I am going back at the end of the fall."

"Well, now, if that's not a pretty tough hickory-nut. I guess you Britishers are the queerest critters as ever was raised."

Grace: "I am going to visit Clara to-day. Have you any message?"

Dora: "I wonder how you can visit that dreadful girl! Give her my love."

Some Queer Revenges.

A woman who had been jilted by a tailor adopted the following method of wreaking vengeance on the base deceiver. Armed with a pair of big scissors and a bottle of vitriol, she proceeded to his lodgings in his absence, and set to work on his Sunday clothes. These she pulled out of the wardrobe wherein they lay, and cut them into ribands with her scissors. She next sprinkled vitriol over the lot, and treated the tailor's socks, shirts and pocket-handkerchiefs to vicious douches of the same corrosive liquid. Then she went away satisfied.

The wife of a wealthy but careful American gentleman objected to ask for the house-keeping money as it was required, in small sums, on the ground that it was a waste of time and derogatory to her. She demanded a bank account, and finally, by her persistence, obtained one. But her husband had his revenge. At his death he left her all he possessed on this condition:—

The amount, over a million dollars, was to be handed to her, personally, at his lawyer's office, at the rate of \$100 an hour during twelve hours of each day. Thus was she, in the event of failure to set the condition aside, condemned to spend over 10,000 hours, at or near the abode of the man of law, or nearly two years and a quarter, reckoning twelve hours to the day.

There is another specimen of posthumous revenge. A Warsaw gentleman, for some reason or other, suspected that his relations were eager for his death. He made his will and eventually died. But when his nieces and nephews gathered at the lawyer's, and that gentleman had broke the seal, inside the envelope was found another, rather smaller, having this inscription: "This seal is to be broken this day twelvemonth; not before."

Sadly they departed, to meet again that "day twelvemonth." Again the seal was broken. Another envelope was within, sealed, and similarly inscribed. Year after year, for seven years, the relations gathered at the lawyer's. At last they reached the will, when it was found that the deceased—for the repose of whose soul no prayers had been offered—had divided his property into four equal parts, one to be distributed among his nieces and nephews, another among the children of a former wet nurse, a third given to the lawyer who had assisted in the revenge, the fourth to be invested until the year 1910, when it is to be handed over to that nephew blessed with the most numerous progeny.

Very different, and much more pleasant, was the revenge of a Hamburg gentleman, who left 12,000 marks to a lady for the reason contained in the following: "Some 30 years ago I was a suitor for your hand in marriage. You refused my offer. As a consequence, my days have passed in peace and quietness. And now I requite your goodness."

In Mid-Air With a Madman ;

OR, THE ACROBAT'S FATE.

A FEW months back, when I was attending in my professional capacity, as surgeon, on Senor Tornados, the acrobat, who, despite his name, was as true an Englishman as ever lived, he favoured me with the following narrative :

"I need not trouble you with the early part of my life," he began, "but will commence my tale at a later period.

"About seven years ago—I was just twenty-three—I first met with James Ranford, who was also in my line, and he proposed that we should work together. I consented, but we did very badly. Ranford had a wife and child, so it fell harder upon him. I was forced to lend him what little I could spare, for I could not see a young woman and a little baby go without while I had it, could I ?

"Well, sir, things got from bad to worse, and my partner, being a man of violent temper, took to drink, and, I am sorry to say, used to beat his wife.

"The thought struck one of us one day that we might do better if we performed under a foreign name, so we decided to call ourselves henceforth 'The Two Foscari, the Spineless Siamese of Syria.'

"Well, sir, from that moment Ranford and I began to do well ; but I am sorry to say that our good luck only caused my partner to drink the harder, and, in consequence, to behave more badly to his wife.

"At last we got an engagement at a garden near London, where there was a grand gala night every week, on which occasion a balloon ascended. I scraped acquaintance with the aeronaut, and one evening went up with him.

"As we were sailing over London he said to me :

"You couldn't do the slack rope up here, Foscari, could you ?"

"Why not," I said ; and as I spoke, the idea flashed upon me what a splendid feature in the programme it would be : 'Perilous performance of the two Foscari Brothers, who will go through their inimitable evolutions on a slack wire suspended from a balloon floating thousands of yards above the surface of the earth !'

"As soon as I reached ground I went to Ranford, who agreed to it. The proprietor of the gardens asked us to name our terms. We did so. He tried to beat us down, but at last consented, and we went up and did it.

"Our performance gave great satisfaction, and was favourably noticed in the daily and weekly papers.

"The act that thrilled the spectators most was the last one we performed before descending. Ranford, who was a heavier man than I, hung from the rope with his head downwards ; then, taking hold of his hands with both mine, I

swung by their support ; and then, by way of climax, I let go with my left hand, and hung only with my right. I never felt the least fear. We knew each other's grip, and it was all right.

"We were earning a great deal of money, but I noticed that Mrs. Ranford looked paler and more careworn every day, and I knew how her husband was conducting himself by that. She told me that she wished they were poor again, as he had been much kinder in those times.

"One night I was returning from the gardens. As I passed the door of Ranford's lodgings, little Evelina's nurse ran out to me and said : 'Sir, go in ; master and missus have had a dreadful quarrel, and missus is going to kill herself.'

"I ran into the house. I found the parlour-door open. Mrs. Ranford was in the room alone ; her back was towards me, but I could see her face in the large mirror which stood over the chimney-piece. She had a razor in her hand, and was about to use it on herself, when she caught the reflection of my face in the glass.

"She stopped, turned round, and fell upon the floor in a fit. I picked up the razor, put it in my pocket, and placed the woman on the sofa. Ranford came into the room half drunk, half mad, and scowled at me like a demon. I expostulated, and tried to reason with him, but he only made jeering replies, and I left the house with a heavy heart. Next day the nurse-girl told me Ranford was jealous, and that he and his wife had again quarrelled. We ascended that night. He never spoke to me, nor I to him.

"Our next ascent took place on the grand gala night of the United Order of Ancient Toxophilites. As I took my seat beside Ranford I noticed that he had been drinking more than usual. We went through the performance, however, all but the last trick. As I was swinging from his two hands the thought came into my head, 'If he should not hold on !'

"As I let go with my left hand, and swung only by my right, I heard his voice say above me. 'Kerr,' he said, 'are you guilty or not ?' I asked him what he meant. 'You know,' he answered. 'Confess—speak the truth ! They are your last words ! I have but to loose my grip and down you go !'

"I tried to seize his disengaged arm, but he held it above my reach, and put his other in such a position that I could not catch at it, but swung entirely at his mercy. I leaped to reach the ropes with my feet, and so hang by my heels, but I failed. I shut my eyes, and prayed to heaven. Every act of my past life rushed through my brain ; at the same time I was perfectly conscious of everything about me. I thought what a time I should be falling. What a long, long time I should be dying ere I reached the earth, I found strength to speak.

"Ranford,' I said, 'you are mistaken.' "I'm not,' he answered.

"If you let go my hand you are a murderer. There will be an inquest.'

"I don't care.'

"It is known that there was ill-blood between us,' I continued. 'You may be hanged. Your wife will say how jealous

"A wife cannot give evidence against her husband.'

"I knew that the next moment I should be falling through the air. A spasm shot to my heart. I fancied I saw the bottom of the car rising from me. I felt the grasp of his fingers loosen !

"With the energy and strength of desperation I leaped up and caught his wrist with my disengaged hand. I climbed up his body, know not how, till I reached the perch, and thence into the car, where I lay panting for breath.

"He soon followed me.

"I frightened you, didn't I ?' he said. 'You don't suppose I meant it, do you ?'

"I made no answer, but prepared for the descent.

"Next morning I called on the proprietor of the gardens, threw up my engagement, and took another at Glasgow. I left without seeing Ranford or his wife.

"Two years passed away, during which I heard little of my late partner. While I was performing at Manchester, I heard of Coobie, an old friend of mine, being at a circus in a neighbouring town. I took train and went over to see him. We dined, and at seven o'clock went together to the circus. Lounging near the entrance I saw Ranford. He was considerably altered—thinner, and, if possible, more evil-eyed than ever.

"I know that man,' I said to Coobie.

"I know you do,' my friend replied. 'He calls himself "The Excelsior, or Champion Somersault Thrower of the World." He is in the bills for a trebel somersault to-night. In fact his engagement depends upon it, for we are full in every other line. Ah, he sees you !'

"I turned round, and saw Ranford walking quickly from us. I entered the circus, and was accommodated with a seat in the orchestra. I had a strange nervousness upon me, as if something was about to happen ; but the feeling wore off when Ranford came into the ring, although I saw that he was not sober.

"While the grooms were altering the position of the spring-board, he walked up to the orchestra, and, with the old smile upon his face, said to me :

"You can't keep away then, can't you ? You will come !"

"Ranford,' I whispered, 'you're not yourself to-night ; take my advice, don't throw the treble.'

"He burst into a loud laugh.

"You want me to fail, do you ?' he said. 'Fail when you're here ! Hi ! hoop-la !'

"He ran up on the spring-board, bow-

ed and kissed his hands. The music began. He threw several somersaults, then a double one; then he stopped and crossed his arms and looked at me. The audience were very enthusiastic, and he began again; repeated the performance and stopped again. There was more applause. Then he turned towards me, smiling, as if he said, 'Now!' and went to work a third time. He made some little preparation—turned over once or twice. The house was so silent you might have heard a pin drop. He got the spring and over he went—once, twice. My heart rose in my mouth, for I saw that he had not room to turn a third time. His head came down with a horrible *thud* among the tan and sawdust, and he lay in the ring doubled up and dead!

"A surgeon came out of the boxes, who said that his neck was broken, and that death must have been instantaneous.

"I fainted away. When I came to I saw him being carried out of the ring."

War Eagle and His Rider.

"Comanches," said Ad Anderson—"Comanches, as I'm a living sinner," and he pulled his horse up sharp. "There's a peltin' big crowd of 'em too," he added after a moment. "We're in for it this time, sure."

There were six of us together on the prairies, about twenty miles from the Nueces, in Western Texas. There were my chum Tom Jones and myself; and Ad Anderson and his nephew Billy, a youngster of fourteen; and the two Arend brothers. These last two we hardly knew, for they were strangers to the rest of us, being Pennsylvania Dutch, I fancy, or something of that sort, who had come out to Texas to look for a place to settle. Ad Anderson and the rest of us were working as cowboys on the Santa Cruz ranch, and had come out across the Nueces to gather cattle. The Arends had happened along at the ranch the night before, and had joined us in the morning, saying they were going our way. They had each of them a good new Warner carbine and a belt full of cartridges; but the way they handled them, and the way they sat on their horses, hadn't given us Texans much confidence. Now, when a swarm of mounted men appeared suddenly over a rise six hundred yards away, and they heard Ad Anderson say "Comanches," they didn't stand, or ask what to do, or say a thing, but they just turned their horse's heads, and put for the Nueces for all that was out. And that wasn't the worst of it, for the moment they started, Billy the boy, who was riding War Eagle, the racehorse of the ranch, turned him for home too, gave him his head, and commenced to throw the whip to him, as if he was finishing a race on the track.

But Ad Anderson knew what he was

about every time. The minute Billy wheeled and ran, Ad Anderson struck the spurs into his pony—and it was no slouch of a pony he was riding either—and he was up and alongside of Billy before War Eagle was fairly into his stride. "Chuck that whip, Billy," he shouted, raising his right hand with the quirt in it as if to hit him—"Chuck it, or I'll knock you off that horse."

Billy turned his white face to Ad: he was sitting back in the saddle, and slashing War Eagle down the shoulders with a stinging raw-hide; but he obeyed Ad, and at the word, he loosed the loop off his wrist and flung the raw hide clean away.

"Now pull that horse down to a lope," said Ad. "You mind me, d'ye hear? Steady him! Steady there, steady."

Ad was a man that almost everybody minded when he spoke in earnest. He had been a captain in a regiment in Hood's brigade during the war, and I reckon he hadn't been the worst captain they had. It was no easy task for Billy to get War Eagle steadied, for he was running on twenty-one feet and picking it up; but both he and the horse minded Ad's voice, and he got him down to a strong lope presently.

Meanwhile, Tom Jones and I were loping behind them at a very tidy clatter. We reached down as soon as we started, and pulled our carbines out of the leather cases in which we carried them, slung between the off stirrup leather and the horse's side. Tom had a Spencer cavalry carbine, a seven-shooter, and a right good one too I had only an old Wesson rifle. We had beautiful ground to run on, just here, for we were on a wagon trail from the Nueces to the Rio Grande, which crossed a high wide upland, bare of timber. As we looked back over our shoulders, we could see the Indians spread out like a pack of hounds on both sides of the trail, and coming after us on the keen jump. There must have been above thirty of them, and we could hear the hi-hi-hiyas of their yells ringing shrill down the breeze. The Arends were away ahead of us already. Ad hallooed to them to hold up and keep cool, as soon as he had got Billy to drop his whip and check his horse; but they never took any notice of what he said.

"You'll kill your horses," we could hear him shout to them, "running like that! There's twenty miles to go, and you've got to save 'em. Take it easy, I tell you. Pull 'em in."

I said most men naturally did what Ad told them. There was a ring in his voice and a cool confident manner about him that made it seem a matter of course to do what he said. But those two poor fools didn't feel it so. I suppose they were just crazy with fear, and the harder they ran, the more crazy they made themselves. At any rate they took no heed of him, but went

on whipping their horses, and galloping as fast as they could lay leg to the ground. In five minutes they were clear out of sight over a rise. Tom and I now laid close up behind Ad and Billy, our horses all going strong; the leading Indians were some three hundred yards behind.

"Shall I try a belt at them without stopping?" said Tom to Ad. "I could maybe give one of 'em a scare."

"No, not yet," answered Ad; "it'll only make War Eagle fight for his head worse to hear you shoot, and we can't afford to waste no cartridges neither. There's a steep bank to go down about two miles ahead. If they don't crowd us too hard till then, we'll stop a minute there to blow our horses and give 'em a rattle."

But the leading Indians flogged their war-ponies to a racing speed, and closed on us fast. Two or three of them began to shoot, and we heard the ping of their bullets flying past us. Luckily, Indians are for the most part poor shots with a rifle on horseback, and we were none of us touched.

"Give 'em a turn Tom," said Ad. "Aim low. And at the word, Tom Jones dropped his rein on his horse's neck, and twisting his body round in the saddle, fired straight behind him. Bang!

"Kick off the ground," he announced triumphantly; "one of them ponies is mighty sick. I aimed low as you told me, Cap."

His bullet had struck the ground well in front of the Indians, and rising from the graze, had hit one of their ponies, which instantly fell to the rear. As he fired, each one of the leading Indians had dropped over the right hand side of his horse, and wheeled slightly to the right, thus covering his body completely from the shot. The effect was like the scattering of a covey of partridges, when a hawk makes a swoop on them, and we gained a little distance by this manoeuvre. But now a lot of them began to edge off more to the right, trying to draw up parallel to us on that side, which would enable them to use their rifles with more effect and be equally inconvenient for us. Before they could succeed in doing so, however, the wished for bank was near. It was a place where the whole width of the high prairie broke away steeply for about two hundred yards down to a lower level. Ad turned in his saddle and took a look at the Indians. "Billy," said he, "the moment we're over the edge, you slip off and hold War Eagle and my horse, and I'll hold the other two. Mind you don't let 'em slip, now. Hang on to 'em, like grim death." Then he added to Tom and me: "Jump off, you boys, as soon as you're over the edge, and chuck me your reins. I'll hold your horses, and you give 'em what for."

Almost as he ended we were at the edge of the slope and over it, and we all

leaped off together. Throwing our reins to Ad, Tom and I knelt just under cover of the brow of the hill and opened fire. The Indians were within a hundred yards; but at the first shots they ducked behind their horses and turned away to right and left, streaming off in both directions, instead of charging right down upon us. Indians hardly ever do charge straight in on men standing at bay. I loaded and fired my single-shooter as fast as I could finger the cartridges; but I heard Tom's repeater go bang, bang, bang, bang! and I heard Ad's warning voice, saying: "Steady, Tom, steady; you're shooting behind 'em. Take that white horse now and aim a good length in front. That's one of their chiefs, I reckon."

Ad was standing behind us a foot or two lower down the hill, with the horses behind him again, so that they were quite covered by the hill from a chance bullet; but he himself standing upright, was able to see over our heads where we were firing. I looked round for an instant to Tom's side of the fight, while my fingers were stuffing a fresh cartridge into the gun and closing the breach. Bang went the Spencer again and down came the white horse like a shot rabbit and rolled over his rider. Instantly two other Indians dashed up to the fallen man, and leaning down from their saddles without dismounting, they swung him up between them, and so across the withers of the horse of one of them, and bore him out of the fray.

"Mind your side Dick," shouted Ad to me—"mind that chap, stop him if you can;" and looking to my own side, I saw that the leading Indian was urging his horse to go down over the brow some two hundred yards away, with the view of getting behind us in the broken ground on that part of the slope. I brought my rifle instantly to the shoulder and was taking aim, when Ad called out: "Raise your sight' Dick, or draw a very full bead; you've got the hundred yards sight up."

I drew a full bead and missed.

"Too low, much," said Ad; "you want to allow more than that—Now come on, boys," he added; "let's scoot before they can bushwack us among this broken ground."

We sprang on to our horses again, and hurried to the foot of the hill. We had an advantage over the Indians in having the wagon trail to follow. It led down the easiest grade, and was comparatively smooth. Some of their bullets whistled past us as we ran; however, none of our horses seem to flinch, and no rider was hit. We got away from that hill quite four hundred yards ahead of our foes.

"Choked 'em off that time," said Ad. "That touching up did 'em good: they won't crowd on us in the open, I reckon, quite so quick. It's that belt of timber along Jack Creek, though, that I'm

thinking of now. If they was to get into that before us, it's all U P."

Our horses were much refreshed by the short breathing spell we had given them, and we dashed ahead at three-quarter speed.

(To be continued.)

Not Good Enough.

"Dennis," said Mike, "d'ye see that? I'll fall overboard, and you'll jump in and rescue me, and we will divide the reward, which will be a pound apiece."

"Agreed," said Dennis: "go ahead:" and a minute later Mike was floundering in the river.

But no sooner had he fallen in, than Dennis, to his inexpressible horror, remembered that he did not how to swim; and so, instead of springing in and rescuing the drowning man, he stood leaning over the rail, staring at the bubbles where Mike had sunk.

Once Mike came up, but Dennis gave no sign. Twice he came up, but Dennis could neither move nor utter a word.

For the fatal third time he came to the surface, and faintly exclaimed:

"Denny, av ye ain't moighty quick, it's only fifteen shillings aich we'll get for recoverin' the body!"

A Sure Card.

The alleged origin of the invention of cards produced one of the shrewdest replies ever given in evidence.

It was made by the late Dr. Gregory, at Edinburgh, to a counsel of great eminence at the Scottish bar.

The doctor's testimony went to prove the insanity of the party whose mental capacity was the point at issue.

In cross-examination he admitted that the person in question played admirably at whist.

"And do you seriously say, doctor," said the counsel, "that a person having a superior capacity for a game so difficult, and which requires in a pre-eminent degree, memory and judgment can be at the same time deranged in his understanding?"

"I am no card-player," replied the doctor, "but I have read in history that cards were invented for the amusement of an insane king."

The reply was decisive.

Husband: "I won money enough last night at baccarat to get you a new dress."

Wife (sobbing): "I think you might stop playing those horrid games. John. You know what it may lead to in the end; and to think that I should ever be the wife of a gambler! This is t-too much! What kind of a dress shall I get?"

Rothschild's Advice.

There are many stories told concerning the house of Rothschild and the part its members have played in averting financial crises. Of course, that assistance which the present head of the London firm gave to the Egyptian Exchequer at a critical moment, and under circumstances which elicited a cordial recognition from Lord Granville in the Lords is being recalled. However, the most interesting incident refers to the panic of 1825. The Duke of Wellington sent for Nathan Rothschild one morning to ask his advice.

"Now, Mr. Rothschild, what can be done for the City?" asked the Duke.

"Send down Cole," replied the laconic financier.

"Coal!" exclaimed the Duke, "why whatever do you mean?"

"Cole, the bank broker," came the reply. "Send him down to buy half a million's worth of Exchequer bills in the market, and it will put things straight."

The advice was acted on, and the panic was stopped. Nathan Rothschild was the hero of another interesting incident. There was a run on the once well-known bank of Mastermans. Rothschild was urged by his friends to withdraw his account. He at once marched down to the bank, which he found besieged by an angry crowd. Tossing a bulky packet to a clerk he curtly remarked: "£200,000, place it to the credit of my account." "This saved the bank."

"I always tell my sons," once remarked Nathan, "that it takes a good deal of boldness to make a large fortune, but it wants infinitely more wit to keep it."

Curious that when one is seized with a consuming passion one's appetite fails miserably.

Horrified parent: "And you dare to tell me you kissed that young Hankinson last evening?"

Weeping daughter: "Yes; but the—mean thing k-kissed me first!"

A remarkable case of absence of mind, once came under our notice.

A girl, who was one of our first loves, was one night lighting us out, after having passed a delightful evening.

In bashful trepidation she blew us out, and drew the candle behind the door, and kissed it.

We pledge our veracity for the truth of this story. M'yes!

For Reading in the Train.

Twenty-two million foreign eggs are imported into England weekly.

More murders are committed in Italy, than in France, England, and Germany put together.

Six million five hundred thousand is the number of persons engaged in mining all over the world.

An experiment has shown that 1,000 tons of soot settle yearly on the 110 square miles of London's area.

The hobby of a lately deceased merchant, was to collect all the stray buttons that came in his way. During his life, he accumulated a barrel full, and no two buttons are alike.

Recent explorations in Greenland have developed the fact that north of the 75th degree of the land in the valleys is covered with ice of 5,000 to 6,000 feet in thickness.

A feature of the Naval Exhibition will be a model of the Eddystone Lighthouse. The building will be in every way an exact representation of the new Eddystone Lighthouse itself. It is 167ft. 6in. in height; it is promised that the electric light on the top will be 5,000,000 candle power.

The late Mr. T. C. Baring, M.P., has left an immense fortune. It is proof of his goodness of heart to quote the following telegram, which he sent Lord Revelstoke, on hearing the impending downfall of the house of Baring: "Dear Ned, —Every penny I have in the world is at your disposal.—T. C. Baring."

The Swedes have become very skilful in the manufacture of cutlery. The town of Eskilstuna, lying not far from the western end of Mælär Lake, is now widely known as the "Sheffield of Sweden." Here are situated a dozen or more factories, which turn out the finest cutlery and tools. Eskilstuna razors, pen-knives, and scissors are well-known and highly prized in almost every country.

What is the secret of longevity? A New York journal professes to have elicited from "Six Grand Old Men," their several specifics for longevity:

Mr. Gladstone says:

"I have seven hours of peaceful sleep every night. When at Hawarden I attend morning church daily. Aside from the spiritual benefit derived from religious exercises, I believe that going to church exercises a soothing influence upon the whole nervous system."

The Poet Laureate says:

"My having celebrated my eighty-first birthday, is probably in consequence of my not having worried or fretted over the small affairs of life."

Great Britain spends six times as much money on war, as it does on education.

Over 5,500 are reported to desert from the British regiments yearly.

England possesses nearly nine-tenths of the wealth in the British Isles.

The average weekly loss of vessels on the seas throughout the world is twelve.

In some agricultural districts, it is said, the decrease in population since the last census has been 40 per cent.

An Italian statistician has calculated that during the last 100 years, 6,030 persons perished in 17 principal maritime disasters, without reckoning the lives lost in similar shipwrecks and accidents.

Robespierre's small portfolio, in which he took to the Convention of the Committee of Public Safety, is now in the Carnavalet Museum. It is in black morocco, his name in gilt letters being on the outside.

A census has been made of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, from which it appears that the aggregate membership of the Connexion in Great Britain is 422,927, exclusive of 62,416 young persons in junior classes. The London districts show a total of 42,644.

Quill toothpicks come from France. The largest factory in the world is near Paris, where there is an annual product of 20,000,000 quills, the factory was started to make quill pens, but when these went out of general use it was converted into a toothpick mill.

Here is another anecdote of Lord Beaconsfield. It is that of a labourer at Hughenden, who, addressing his lordship's coachman, and not knowing his lordship was in the carriage, enquired: "How's the old man to-day?" "I'm quite well, thank you," replied the Earl, looking suddenly out of the carriage window, and thoroughly enjoying the joke.

One of the oldest of the military pensioners, named Ciattoni, committed suicide in a very eccentric fashion recently in the hospital at Paris. He said to one of his comrades: "I cannot die like a civilian in a bed." Shortly afterwards, he went upstairs and blew his brains out. Ciattoni had served in Algeria, the Crimea, and Italy, and had been in no less than eighteen battles.

The business of what is called "wolfing" a State out of money has been reduced to a science in Minnesota. It having cost the State last year twenty-five thousand dollars for wolf bounties, an investigation disclosed the fact, that, in the northern part of the State, wolf-farms existed, where wolves were bred for the bounty of five dollars a head on each. It paid better than growing wheat.

The visit of the Prince of Wales to India, cost £142,000.

The Salvation Army is rapidly spreading all over Finland.

Scent farms, for the manufacture of perfumes are the latest form of industry in South Africa.

According to the *Lancet*, the average duration of human life has increased ten years in the last century.

A Paris journal states, that a little girl died recently in an infirmary of that city from the effects of wearing red stockings.

From 1839 to the end of 1890 Parliament gave in grants of elementary education in England and Wales, the sum of £60,046,515 1s. 7d.

The number of scholars for whom accommodation is provided in England and Wales reaches 5,556,507, and the average in daily attendance is 3,732,327.

The Empress of Germany shares her husband's military tastes. At one of the grand reviews she was in the saddle for two hours, riding superbly and leading her own regiment of cuirassiers past the Emperor. Her uniform as colonel was a habit of white cloth embroidered with the silver colours of the regiment on shoulders and collar. She wore a three cornered felt hat with drooping plumes and looked remarkably well.

Cats we are told, have little natural liking for music but the taste can be acquired. A certain pet cat, though as a kitten indifferent to music, grew to like it, and regularly led the way to the piano when tea was over. Here she took post on a chair, and listened gravely during the whole performance. When it ceased she would go to sleep, though not if the instrument were left open, in which case, puss instantly leaped on the keys and poured a performance of her own, in which she showed an extreme partiality to the treble notes, and something like alarm at the lower base ones, when she happened to give them an extra vigorous kick.

There was a remarkable omission in the service at the marriage of Lady Cecilia Howard some weeks ago. The Rev. H. J. Bulkeley, Rector of Morpeth, the officiating clergyman, coming to that part of the service where the clergyman, addressing the bride, should say: "Wilt thou obey him and serve him, love, honour, and keep him, in sickness and in health?" read it as follows: "Wilt thou serve him, love, honor and keep him in sickness and in health?" the words "obey him" being omitted. There were several persons present at the ceremony, whose curiosity had been stimulated by the rumour that the bride would not promise to obey her husband; but the elision to most people present escaped unnoticed.