

DEFECTIVE HUMAN SENSES.

Impaired Eyesight and Dullness of Hearing Common Among School Children.

Since 1829, when Massachusetts established in Boston the first American school for the blind, similar institutions have been founded by 35 other states...

A new law of Connecticut requires that the eyes of all children attending the public schools shall be examined; and many teachers have noted that defective vision is quite common...

It has also been reported that dullness of hearing is associated with many cases of backward scholarship.

In Europe an examination showed that "out of 82 firemen and engine-drivers only three possessed perfectly normal hearing."

The increasing use of spectacles among both children and adults, has been made a cause of alarm; but who would infer an increase of the rainfall from the multiplication of umbrellas?

DEWEY IN AN EMERGENCY.

He Has Always Been Resourceful and Prompt in Action—An Instance.

One striking characteristic of the admiral is readiness with which he meets every emergency. He is resourceful as well as prompt in action.

He rushed up to the quarterdeck in half a gale of wind and promptly took command in spite of his curious appearance.

ATTIRE SHOCKS PASTOR.

Thinks a Golf Outfit Has Connection with a Bull-Fight Until Enlightened.

A Chicago minister who went out to Oak Park one Sunday to attend church was shocked to see one of his former parishioners attired in most unseemly garments.

Brother Brown looked up from a Sunday paper and appeared to be embarrassed. He invited the clergyman in to take a rest, and he made several incoherent remarks about the weather.

"No, I cannot stop," said the minister. "There is only one question I want to ask—where did you get that smoking jacket? It looks as if you were a matador or something or other connected with a bull-fight."

Italian Mountains to Be Decorated. Italy's mountains are in a fair way of being decorated, should one of the ideas now entertained of commemorating the "holy year" of 1900 be carried out.

"Burying the Tomahawk." The Sioux and Blackfeet will at parting dig their spears in the earth as a sign of confidence and mutual esteem.

MEXICAN COURTESY.

People Along the Rio Grande Are Very Polite in Their Inter-course.

The Mexicans observe many little courtesies that an American rarely thinks about, writes J. P. Cranke in Woman's Home Companion. For instance, two gentlemen meeting on the street gravely salute each other by raising their hats.

PYTHON ABOARD SHIP.

Lively Experience of a Crew on a British Steamer En Route from Hayti.

The British steamer Saltram, Capt. Owen, which arrived at this port lately from Port de Paix, Hayti, loaded with logwood, passed through a remarkable thrilling experience on the way, says the Philadelphia Inquirer.

A hasty council of war was at once held by Capt. Owen and it was resolved to employ drastic means to effect the reptile's destruction.

SNAKES ON HIS ENGINE.

A Pennsylvania Engineer's Strange Pets on His Run Through the Mountains.

C. L. Pownell, an engineer on the Tyrone division of the Pennsylvania railroad, has been a snake tamer and fancier ever since he was a boy, says a Bellefonte (Pa.) correspondent of the New York World.

Not only does Engineer Pownell carry his pet rattlers with him on his engine in a box, but frequently turns them loose in the cab or on the tender to roam at will, and it is not an infrequent sight to see Pownell's engine going spinning with rattlesnakes visible over the top of the tank, their heads hanging out of the cab, or to see them snugly ensconced on the footboard of the engine.

Arriving at his destination, Pownell calmly picks up the snakes and puts them securely in their box for the time being. Not infrequently he turns the reptiles loose on the depot platforms and plays with them for the amusement of large crowds.

Pownell handles the snakes as the average man would handle a cat, and with as little fear. The only time he appears to take any caution is in picking up the reptiles, never doing this when they are in coil, as that is the only time, he declares, when they will strike.

Saloon Business in Cuba. A New Orleans newspaper tells how a Havana saloonkeeper bewails the passing of Spanish rule on that island.

"We have not made much out of the privates under either rule," he began. "The Americans have forbidden us to sell liquor to them, and the Spanish soldiers were too poor to buy. It is the officers of the two nationalities that I compare. In Weyler's army, drinking was very heavy. The rebellion might have been ended in a short time if these officers had cared to attend to it. They were making too much money and having too good a time."

He Minds the Sheep. The London Leader tells of a dog which has lost both of its right legs, and yet manages to get about on the other two, which are in more than one sense its left legs.

BIELA'S COMET.

The Periodically Seen Body Was Observed This Year at Santiago, Chili.

The periodicity of Biela's comet was ascertained on its discovery, in February, 1826, by Biela; at Josephstadt, Bohemia, and, independently, by Gambart, at Marseilles, about ten days later.

Biela's comet was observed at its reappearance in 1832, but was missed in 1839, from proximity to the sun. At its next return, in 1845-46, it was again found, and at this appearance a remarkable separation into two distinct nebulosities took place under the eyes of the astronomers.

DIFFICULT TEST.

One Man Subjected to Civil Service Examination Literally Interpreting Instructions.

One of the hardest tests given applicants who go before the civil service commission boards of examiners is in the form of printed matter which is to be copied without a single change.

There was lately an applicant who showed his aptitude for this work. He was given a printed page and told to copy it.

"Without a change," the examiner replied.

The man labored. The printed matter was on a white sheet that was spotted, with the exception of a fly speck on one of its corners. The sheet the student had was minus a blemish in that particular spot, but when it was turned in there was a well-imitated fly speck.

FACING DEATH.

Soldiers of Every Nation Have Their Own Characteristic Way of Doing It.

"I have been under fire with the armies of nearly every nation," said an old war correspondent, "and I have learned that every nation has its way of facing death."

The dullest Frenchman as he waits for death or glory becomes an original wit, while your German's hand generally feels mechanically for his pipe. A Scotsman's jaws twitch for a second or two, and then he stands erect and motionless, waiting; while your Irishman gives vent to his feelings in a mad yell, or, if that is not possible, in a low Celtic moan.

"Thomas Atkins and the Americans are alike when the moment comes. One curses; another brings the blood through his lips, while a third mutters a name which must of necessity belong to his own sister or some one else's."

Not a Crush Hat.

The German emperor likes to study the characters of his group of small sons, and to that end has given them a room next to the one used for business purposes for himself. A certain great scientific man, having on one occasion an interview with the emperor, left his hat in the adjoining vestibule. There the little brothers discovered it, and the crown prince, explaining to the younger ones that "papa" sometimes sat on his opera hat and it came all right again, proceeded to give a practical illustration of this statement.

Snowstorm in a Tropical City. Melbourne has recently had its first taste of a snowstorm and to the great majority of the citizens it was as much of a novelty as an earthquake. The fall was not particularly heavy, but young Melbourne found quite enough snow on the ground to enable it to enter with enthusiasm into the novel sport of snowballing.

Queer "Ads" on Church Doors. On many of the church doors in London are notices tacked up telling when and where the exchequer will meet to grant licenses to sell intoxicating liquor.

STATISTICS OF THE INDIANS.

Their Numbers Estimated at 250,000—350 Schools Are Maintained for Them.

Uncle Sam's new directory of the Indian tribes shows that the parlor car companies and the apartment house builders have still a big fund of names, euphonious and otherwise, to draw from, although, in running down the list, it is seen that there are limits to the selection of Indian names.

This handbook gives the names of 71 Indian agencies and 350 tribes, with statistics of 350 schools, including agency day schools, independent day schools, reservation boarding schools, and non-reservation boarding schools.

THE NEGRO IN HOT WEATHER.

He Likes the Heat on His Head, But He Tries to Keep His Heels Cool.

It has often been said that the capacity of the negro race for enduring heat has never been fully tested. An accident related by a dairyman living on the outskirts of the city seems to bear out this assertion.

While a negro can stand any amount of heat on his head, he loves to cool his heels. It is a common sight in the winter to see a negro boy on a frosty morning with his head bundled up to keep out the cold, and at the same time walking uncomprehendingly along the frosty ground in his bare feet.

MIDDLE PART DYING OUT.

Fashion Decries that Men Must Return to the Side Division of the Hair.

Changing style has decreed that the fashion of parting the hair in the middle, which has prevailed so long among men, must go. The young man about to make an appearance "in society" hereafter need not stand before the mirror dividing his smoothly-brushed locks exactly in the middle, thereby setting off his face in symmetrical frame of glossy hair, and his elderly, bow-tied rival is soon to be denied the pleasure of making disdainful comment upon "parting one's brains in the middle."

"By far the great majority of my customers nowadays have their hair parted on the side," said a Washington street barber the other day. "The part in the middle is going out of style. It never was popular with elderly people, as so many of them are bald, but it's been the rage within the last ten years, all right. I remember when a man who had his hair plastered down each side of his face was called a 'chappie.'"

"When 'Lord Chumley' was first played in this country lots of theatergoers were greatly amused because he appeared with his hair parted in the middle. Probably the style was imported from England. It spread just after the pompadour went out. Lots of people could not wear the pompadours, which did not stand stiffly unless the hair was brushed, so they adopted the part in the middle. You never see a man with a pompadour to-day, and I venture to say that in a couple of years every one will be back to the old style of parting the hair on the side."

The Dewey Plant.

A blooming plant, with clusters of blood-red tassels depending from its glossy leaves, is to be seen not far from Broad and Chestnut streets, says the Philadelphia Press. It is labeled "The Dewey Plant" in conspicuous letters. Six months ago the duplicate was seen in another part of town, with an inscription declaring it was "Admiral Dewey's favorite flower." The plant is a native of the Philippine islands.

New Method of Blasting. A new way of blasting rock is to place a cartridge of water into a shot hole and convert it into steam instantly by electricity. This method is especially applicable in coal mines.

PACKING SARDINES.

How an Interesting and Important New England Industry Is Conducted.

The packing of small herrings, or, as they are often called, "American sardines," is an important industry in Maine. In that state there are 50 factories, which give employment to a large number of hands during four or five months of the year. The annual output is estimated to be of an average value of \$3,000,000, and about half of this amount finds its way into the pockets of the factory employes in the form of wages. The fish are caught in seines scattered all along the coast for a distance of about a hundred miles.

A FAITHFUL HORSE.

An Instance of Remarkable Devotion and Animal Courage.

Instances of the self-devotion of animals in the service of their masters are not uncommon, but they generally have to do with some sudden, instinctive deed of courage. Passive faithfulness unto death, among beasts as among men, is the rarest form of self-sacrifice.

Sergeant Parker, a member of the Canadian mounted police, waited a day or two after the departure of his men, in order to receive some government dispatches, of which he was to be the bearer. It was winter on the prairie, and every trail was hidden beneath the snow, but as soon as he secured the papers, he pushed on alone, hoping to rejoin his company by a forced march.

His faithful horse did not desert him, but stood like a sentinel at his master's feet. For a day and a night it stood there, and on the morning of the second day of its watch a mail-carrier saw the motionless figure. He approached and discovered Sergeant Parker.

It was nearly a fortnight before the rescued sergeant regained consciousness. His first question was after his horse. The emancipated beast was brought into the tent where its master lay, and at once began to lick his face. Two days later the horse was dead.

PROPERTY IN HAWAII.

Sugar Planters Are on the Flood Tide of Fortune and Are Getting Rich.

Senator Clark, of Wyoming, who has been in the Hawaiian islands this summer, speaking of the conditions there, says:

The sugar planters are on the flood tide of fortune, for the profits on cane are heavy, and everybody in the business is getting rich. Coffee planting has not been so profitable, but I think that eventually it will be made to pay. The material development of Hawaii has been greatly accelerated by annexation. Coming under our flag has been of enormous benefit. It has given confidence to the people and the guarantee of stable government brightens the whole future.

What form of government do the leading men of the country desire? They wish congress to bestow upon Hawaii a regular territorial system of government, such as that of Arizona or New Mexico. In my opinion that is the most desirable policy to pursue. At present the government is very awkward and cumbersome. There is no municipal or county government, and people residing at a distance from Honolulu are put to great inconvenience, for public records are kept at no other place. Honolulu itself is making rapid strides in the march of progress. Its harbor is crowded with shipping and its business men report unprecedented activity in trade.

Lyddite Not Widely Known. The new explosive, lyddite, which is figuring in the South African war, is a chemical known only to a few engineers. The secret was purchased by the English government from the inventor of melinite, with which it is supposed to be nearly identical. It is exploded by percussion.

NOBLE DEED OF A NEWSBOY.

Takes the Padding from His Crutch to Relieve the Distress of a Horse.

A small act of kindness sometimes thrills the heart of the beholder, especially if the act is performed without thought of observation and quite without applause. A correspondent of the Companion, a physician of Minneapolis, has sent us—"not for publication, he says," "but simply that you may know it"—the story of a very touching deed of humanity, which it surely will do nothing but good to tell of.

In front of the Masonic temple, in Minneapolis, in which building the physician has his office, a little cripple is accustomed to sell newspapers. He is a sufferer from infantile paralysis of a cerebral type, and also has a hairlip. He seems at a sad disadvantage in this eager and bustling world.

The other day a horse attached to a cart was standing on the street opposite where the crippled boy stood on his crutch selling papers.

As the doctor watched him from his window, the boy cast about for something with which to relieve the poor horse. Finding nothing else, he ripped off from the top of his crutch the cloth stuffed with felt which eased the crutch to his own armpit, and tied it with two strings to the horse's collar, so that it would cover the place where the collar bore upon the raw shoulder.

A MAINE BEAR STORY.

The Pelt of the Mother Bear Used as a Rag Attracts One of Her Cubs Into Captivity.

An old she bear had been killing sheep and scaring the women and children in a Maine township, and a farmer, who was a dead shot, took an afternoon off to hunt the animal. While passing through a blackberry patch, he found a fat cub, and after a short chase, caught it in his arms. The little fellow fought and bit until the man cuffed and choked it into submission, and then the cub cried for its mother. She came, and the hunter acted quickly. Placing the cub between his knees, he took up his rifle and waited. The mother bear had evidently seen firearms, for she halted at a respectable distance. The man squeezed the cub with his knees until it howled, and at this the mother threw away her caution and dashed on until a rifle ball finished her career.

The hunter went home with his prize, and after chaining the cub in the barn, got the old bear's skin and tanned it in a rough way. Then it was spread on the floor by the side of his sister's bed. One night about a week later, when the young woman was about to retire for the night, she heard a commotion under the bed, and saw something black and hairy moving around underneath. She screamed at the top of her voice; her brother came running and pulled out another cub. It was a mate to the captive in the barn; and it had smelled out its mother's pelt.

EARNINGS OF PLAYWRIGHTS.

More Than One Native Drama Has Colored Its Author Over \$100,000.

Dramatists of established reputation write plays only upon order. Their ordinary prepayments are \$500 upon the delivery of a scenario and \$500 more upon the completion of a play. "If the finished work does not realize expectations," writes Franklin Fyles of "The Theater and Its People" in Ladies Home Journal, "or if the manager for any other reason does not desire to put it on the stage, the money paid is forfeited after a certain lapse of time and the ownership reverts to the author. But if the manager decides to produce the piece the author receives a percentage of the gross receipts, usually five per cent., payable weekly, after the amount previously advanced has been deducted. Ordinarily it increases with the amount of money taken in. More than one native drama has earned \$100,000 for its author. A dozen have yielded \$50,000 each; three times as many \$25,000 and a goodly number \$10,000."

Commanded 100,000 Men.

There are few living generals who have been called upon to command more than 100,000 men in time of peace, but that lot has recently fallen to the German cavalry general, Count Von Haeseler. He is the commanding general of the Sixteenth army corps, stationed at Metz, and he was entrusted with the chief command during the recent army maneuvers, which took place on ground made memorable by the conflict of 1870-71. The maneuvers lasted more than a week, and four complete army corps, an entire cavalry division and more than 100,000 men took part, under the personal observation of the general. The second in command was Gen. Von Falkenhausen.

Criminality of Animals.

A writer in Forest and Stream says that the criminal tendency is manifested to a greater or less extent by all the lower animals, and he has compiled a list of 18 crimes which are commonly committed by birds, beasts or reptiles. The indictment includes murder, perjury, fratricide, suicide, theft, kidnapping, highway robbery, polygamy and drunkenness.

A Ship-Saving Cable. Hook an inventor proposes to stretch a wire cable off shore, anchored at intervals, so that endangered craft, instead of drifting upon the beach, may bring up against the rope and be held in safety.