

REMEDY FOR WRITER'S CRAMP.

Various Ways of Overcoming Common Inconveniences.

What an annoyance it is to spread all your writing materials out and settle down to a whole afternoon of letter writing, only to find after half an hour that you have the writer's cramp.

This writer's cramp is a serious matter to people whose work requires that they use a pen very much, while for the unaccustomed writer who takes an afternoon off now and then to catch up with her correspondence it is to say the least, very discouraging.

Children now in school are not likely to be troubled with writer's cramp, because they are being taught to hold the pen lightly and make all the movements from the arm instead of the hand.

LITERARY MECCA OF ENGLAND.

Famous Writers Who Lived in Twickenham-Tennyson's House.

The place to which the lover of English literature will sooner or later turn his steps is Twickenham. No other small town can boast of having been the residence and beloved abode of so many famous literary lights.

With it are associated the immortal names of Pope, Horace Walpole, Swift, Gay, Lady Wortley Montagu, Gibbon, Boswell, Johnson, Tennyson and Dickens. Surely this is enough to make any place doubly immortal!

Twickenham was well nicknamed by Horace Walpole the Balaie, or Tivoli, of England; for it has truly been to London what Balaie was to ancient Rome—indeed, in a far higher degree.

The big red brick house in Montpelier road where Alfred Tennyson lived for so many years of his earlier married life was the one in which many of his earlier poems were written.

That house should surely be sacred to all lovers of English literature which saw the dawn of "In Memoriam," which witnessed those delightful gatherings graced by Tennyson, Hallam and kindred spirits within its walls.

"It was a rainy day," said the book-seller, "and the wet shoes and dripping umbrellas made the floor quite wet and slippery just inside the store door. All our clerks happened to be in the back part of the place when the door opened and a large and very stout woman hurried in. Just as the door swung shut behind her she slipped and fell flat upon the floor. Before any of us could reach her she picked herself up with surprising quickness for a woman of her size, gave a stony stare all around the room, and then without uttering a word, turned around, opened the door and walked out in the most dignified manner. None of us has ever seen the woman since, and I suppose her pride will prevent her from ever coming into the store where her first appearance was so mortifying."

Economical Commodore.

It was the custom in the days of our old navy for the men to bring to the mast all worn-out articles which were to be inspected, handed in, and exchanged for new. The drummer had applied for so many drum-heads that the commodore felt sure he was being imposed upon, and one day set himself to watch while the band was playing. As one rattling martial air followed another, his anger increased perceptibly, until he burst forth in uncontrollable rage.

Umbrella an Elephant.

"There's no luck in finding an umbrella," remarked the nervous-looking man. "You can't carry it when you do find one. At least I can't. I found this one the other day, and ever since then when I'm on the car I imagine that every one on the car is looking at me and getting ready to ask me about my umbrella. If I ever find another one I'll hire some boy to lose it again for me."

Advice to a Young Man.

"What do you say to a young lady at a dance?" queried the youth who was about to attend his first ball. "Oh," replied the society man, "talk to her about her beauty."

Vienna's Crown of Green.

The city of Vienna has recently undertaken at an estimated expense of \$10,000,000, to surround itself with a belt of forests.

Fountain Pens Not New.

It is a popular fallacy that fountain pens are quite a modern invention. As a matter of fact, an old work of reference published in 1795 contains an illustration of a fountain pen, the appearance of which is very much like those sold at the present time.

DEALING WITH THE CRIMINAL.

Grave Problem That Has Ever Been Before Society.

It is a novel idea that any man over 30 years of age who commits a crime may be set down, as a rule, to be morally bad, with no hopes of improvement. Morality, according to Dr. Belfield, who advances the theory, is the arrest of the instincts by the intellect, says the Chicago Journal.

Civilization growing more and more averse to capital punishment, will never consent to the cemetery outlet thus suggested. But permanent segregation in a penal colony would be equally effective. We do not go so far as Dr. Belfield as to believe that a man over 30 who commits a crime is therefore necessarily a moral idiot.

But when a man is undeterred by punishment and goes on committing one crime after another, then we think society owes it to itself to take stern measures. Such a man should be adjudged a habitual and irremediable criminal and removed from society. But, on the other hand, honest men should not be burdened with the cost of supporting him. He should be forced to earn his own living.

BECAME THE SLAVE OF HABIT.

Former Prison Warden Could Never Forget Early Training.

A Boston psychologist was recently reminded of the story of the Russian jailer who, changing his occupation, found the chief interest of his leisure moments in catching birds, putting them in cages, and selling them to the highest bidder.

The scientist having to attend a series of lectures in a large public hall struck up acquaintance with the janitor of the building, and soon noted in him a suggestive hint of mind.

The man seemed fond of counting the people, and would occasionally report the exact number present. "We have 115 here tonight," he would say, or "Just 281 all told," or, when the hall was crowded, "I make it 370." There was a problem in all this, but it took some time for the psychologist to solve it.

A bit of friendly, familiar talk, continually renewed, did the business, for it brought out the fact that the janitor had spent many of the previous years of his life as warden in an eastern prison. With rifle on shoulder, from some inclosing wall, the man had counted his convicts until the habit became ingrained. In the recesses of his brain the lecture hall took the shape of a jail yard and the audences were his prisoners. He counted because he wished to know if all were there.

An Oration Spoiled.

"You have a mortgage on your farm, have you not?" asked the politician.

"Yes," answered Farmer Cortotson, "but—"

"And it has been there for years?"

"Ever since I kin remember, but—"

"Behold how you are downtrodden. See how the earnings of your honest toil are fished from you by the usurer's hand. A lifetime of honest, manly struggle, and your reward is the shackles of debt—"

"Hold on, stranger. I hate to interrupt you, but you've got it figured out all wrong. I've had the money to pay off the mortgage three or four times over, but the way things was sellin', it was a better investment to put it into more land."

Attraction of Chess Problems.

The mere player who has never experienced the magnetic attraction of problems cannot fully realize the feeling of joy and satisfaction from solving some masterpiece, the work of a famous composer. There can be no doubt that solving problems, especially from diagrams, is an intellectual amusement, and that the study of problems tends to accuracy of analysis, quickens the perception, and strengthens the chess faculties generally, and may occasionally impart some of those sparkling ideas which are so sadly needed in ordinary play.

Vienna's Crown of Green.

The city of Vienna has recently undertaken at an estimated expense of \$10,000,000, to surround itself with a belt of forests.

The existing forests near the city are to be preserved and others, together with broad meadows, are to be established in such a way as completely to encircle the city.

Land is being reserved for the new plantations, which are to be connected with the celebrated Prater, which already forms a green border for the Austrian capital on the east.—Youth's Companion.

Fountain Pens Not New.

It is a popular fallacy that fountain pens are quite a modern invention. As a matter of fact, an old work of reference published in 1795 contains an illustration of a fountain pen, the appearance of which is very much like those sold at the present time.

Advice to a Young Man.

"What do you say to a young lady at a dance?" queried the youth who was about to attend his first ball. "Oh," replied the society man, "talk to her about her beauty."

Vienna's Crown of Green.

The city of Vienna has recently undertaken at an estimated expense of \$10,000,000, to surround itself with a belt of forests.

Fountain Pens Not New.

It is a popular fallacy that fountain pens are quite a modern invention. As a matter of fact, an old work of reference published in 1795 contains an illustration of a fountain pen, the appearance of which is very much like those sold at the present time.

ENDED IN CHILDISH TRAGEDY.

Fate of Two Pickaninies Who Went on a Cruise.

Afloat on the bounding wave—in a wash-tub—two pickaninies went cruising Thursday, says the Houston Chronicle. They sailed until they were rescued, and with that event came a rainwater bath. White men pulled them to the shore to leave them gurgling in the arms of two black mammas.

There were no signals of distress flying as the two babies in a tub floated swiftly down White Oak bayou. The current was running like a mill race, but the tub was properly balanced for the ride.

As it emerged from the jungle into the ship channel the apparition inspired immediate action. Straightway into the brimming tide plunged man after man. They swam strongly for the tub and—tipped it over. Into the turbid stream fell a pair to draw to.

With difficulty they were fished from the water, screaming lustily for their "ship," continuing like a derelict on down the stream.

Meanwhile two buxom colored women, mothers of the black babies, had appeared. Gathering the drenched and crying pickaninies in their arms they marched away to their cabins.

The cruise started in play about the water edge and ended in a woodshed, when, with wet clothes stretched tight, every spat stung fiercely and walls sounded over the inundated bayou flats.

ECCENTRICITIES OF A SAINT.

Famous Fakir Who Spoke a Strange Language and Scorned Clothes.

The famous fakir, Bawa Mohi Sahib (the Silent Saint), during his long 50 years' sojourn at Mirpur never uttered a single word which could be understood by any one around him. What wondrous tongue he spoke no man knows.

Every day hundreds of pious people, men and women, flocked around him to pay homage and adoration. Since his boyhood, it is said, he had lived stark naked, resolutely disdaining even a loin cloth. He abode in a public lane which was always full of busy people, yet he moved as he listed in his sacred nudity, neither ashamed nor causing shame.

His age was well over a hundred years. The saint never touched gifts; indeed he meekly spurned them. A devout Sikh priest looked tenderly after him and gave him morsels of food with his own hands. For days, however, he would refuse to partake of food.

The corpse, after being taken around the city, followed by horses and palanquins flying-caparisoned for so grand a burden, was buried. The course of mourning people who followed the solemn procession mustered quite 20,000 strong.—Calcutta Statesman.

Bravery and Cowardice of a Lie.

There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious, wrote Sir Francis Bacon. And therefore Montaigne saith prettily when he inquired the reason why the word of the lie should be such a disgrace, and such an odious charge. Saith he: "If it be well weighed, to say that a man lieth is as much as to say that he is brave toward God and a coward toward men. For a lie fesses God, and shrinks from man."

Surely the wickedness of falsehood and breach of faith cannot possibly be so highly expressed as in that it shall be the last peal to call the judgments of God upon the generations of men; it being foretold that when Christ cometh "He shall not find faith upon the earth."

Keeping a Cashier in Line.

Bank Cashier to prospective depositor—Our system, sir, I flatter myself, is absolutely perfect. You literally have only to drop your money at the counter and go home without worrying.

Prospective Depositor—But how do you guard against possible defalcations?

Manager—Sir, the cashier is confined in a bollorion cage with only one door. This opens on our patent dynamic scale, which is adjusted exactly to his weight, and if he were to attempt to elope with the lightest bag he would surely bring a bomb down on his head."

Vibrations of the Sea.

"Marine seiches," or "vibrations of the sea," are pulsations usually having periods of 15 to 20 minutes, though varying in different localities, and they occur on coasts in addition to the waves of short duration due to wind and those caused by the regular ebb and flow of the tide. They have brought out various theories. A recent study has been made by Prof. Giovanni Platania at Catania, Sicily, and he concludes that the principal cause is air waves or variations of atmospheric pressure.

Nitrates from Air.

If the claim of Norwegian manufacturers can be substantiated, a process has been invented for procuring nitrate from the air, or rather for obtaining the nitrogen for conversion into nitrate—which is declared to be more sure, efficient, reliable and cheap than the employment of bacteria in the soil for the same purpose. Manufacturing establishments have already been built and are in operation in Norway, which promise to produce nitrate in such quantities and at such prices as to materially affect the market.

HEREDITY IN NATIONAL LIFE.

Past History of a People Determines Their Present Character.

In the evolution of races and nations we find at the outset two general laws, the one self-evident, the other not apparent at first sight, but equally demonstrable, according to David Starr Jordan. The blood of a nation determines its history. This is the first proposition. The second is the history of a nation determines its blood. As for the first, no one doubts that the character of men controls their deeds. In the long run and with masses of mankind this must be true, however great the emphasis we may lay on individual initiative or on individual variation.

Equally true is it that the present character of a nation is made by its past history. Those who are alive today are the resultants of the stream of heredity as modified by the vicissitudes through which the nation has passed. The blood of the nation flows in the veins of those who survive. Those who die without descendants cannot color the stream of heredity. It must take its traits from the actual parentage.

DOG AIDED HELPLESS FRIEND.

Remarkable Feat of Canine Intelligence Put on Record.

A writer in the Cornhill Magazine narrates an incident which occurred to Miss Napier during her stay in Algiers. A large dog kept for protection was taught to go to the baker's every morning for bread, and his business was to bring home 12 rolls in a basket; but for several mornings it was observed that there were only 11 rolls, and on making inquiry and watching the dog, he was found to stop on his way home and to bestow one roll on a poor half starved female dog, who lay with her puppies in a corner not far from the road. The baker was then told to put 13 rolls in the basket, and then for some days the dog brought 12. After a time the whole 13 were brought home regularly, a sign, as it was found, that his friend, the mother, was now convalescent, and able to do without help.

Taste.

Every man's taste is valid for himself; none may presume to instruct another. The taste of a navy who strolls into a picture gallery is quite as authoritative, or better, quite as authoritative, as that of its trained curator. Accordingly, the task of a museum is to grow systematically in the sunshine of science, avoiding the moonshine of esthetic uncertainties. Evidently, if this objection is based on any truth it is decisive. But it is based not on truth at all, but upon a strangely morbid timidity in the academic temperament. It is a typical idol of the scientific cave. Unquestionably such impotence of taste frequently exists in specialists. Charles Darwin has recorded the gradual withering of his esthetic life. It has remained for our times to exalt this incapacity, this malady of the soul, into a high scientific virtue.—Atlantic Monthly.

Jim Martin's Birch.

Jim Martin was a giant lumberman in the forests of West Virginia. His handslike, for rolling and toting logs, was made of green river birch, and was so heavy that no other man in the camp could use it. When the Mexican war broke out a recruiting officer visited the camp, and Jim was among the first to enlist. Instead of throwing his handslike on the ground, he stuck the end of it in the mud on the bank of the Wood Fork Branch of the little Coal river. Jim was killed and buried in Mexico. The handslike took root and grew into an immense tree, and is to-day pointed out as Jim Martin's monument. Neither man nor boy would touch it with an ax for a million dollars.

More Nature-Faking.

"I see," he said to the reporter of a daily paper, "that you have been writing up a shark story."

"Yes, I tried my hand at that."

"But you are a nature faker, sir. You have a shark sweep a man off a raft with his tail and then eat him up. It is the alligator that uses his tail in that fashion."

"Are you sure about it?"

"Of course I am. What are you going to do about it?"

"Why, I'll have to write another story to-morrow and have the shark put the man back on the raft, and then make some arrangements with some alligator to get hold of him in the proper way."

The Onion in Cooking.

The greatest of French cooks, being asked to give the secret of his success, answered: "The very foundation of all cooking is butter and ONION! I use them in all my sauces and gravies. They have the effect of making a customer come back for more. Butter without onion will drive the customer away after a few days. Boil the onion till it melts or entirely disappears; then add the butter, and call the mixture stock."

Far From It.

Former Resident—How things have changed here in 20 years! I wouldn't know the town. What has become of Floogus, who used to shave notes and lend money at two per cent a month?

Hotel Clerk—He's gone to his reward.

Former Resident—What! Is he dead?

Hotel Clerk—Dead? Not on your life! He's president of a trust company in New York.

JUST MERE PIECE OF STRING.

The Important Part It Plays in Japanese Life.

Writing from Japan, an American says: "You must come here to appreciate some of the quaint customs and usages which contact with other peoples has not yet driven out. To read about them gives you only a poor idea. For instance, did you ever know what an important thing a piece of string is here? The children, workmen, laborers, servants, all carry pieces of string for use in case of emergency."

"With us the emergency would arise only when a parcel had to be done up, but the Jap uses his piece of string as a first aid to the injured, to repair a rent in his clothing, to fix a broken-down jarikisha, to mend tools, to take measurements and, in fact, the string is his universal tool chest."

The queerest way to which it is put, according to my way of thinking, is when a police officer arrests a man, ties a bit of string about the arrested man's wrist and then leads him by the loose end of the thin hempen fetter to the lockup. You ask: "Why doesn't the Jap crook break the string and find a gateway?" He could, but he would not. That's where his respect for the law comes in, and the bit of string holds the man as securely as though he were manacled by our own humane chilled steel, nickel-plated and snap-locked method."

FINGERS OF VARIOUS VALUES.

Thumb Is Easily the Most Important of the Digits.

You have only to grasp a pen or a tool of some sort to realize that the different fingers are far from having the same value with reference to their usefulness in performing work. Much the most important is the thumb, for without it prehension would be very imperfect. The hand is no longer fingers, but merely a claw, when deprived of the thumb. It may be estimated that the thumb represents fully a third of the total value of the hand. The total loss of the thumb is estimated by competent authorities as 15 to 35 per cent. for the right and 10 to 15 per cent. for the left hand, except for workers in art, when 40 to 50 per cent. for the right and 25 to 40 per cent. for the left hand comes nearer the value.

The total loss of the index finger causes an incapacity estimated at from 15 to 25 per cent. for the right hand and 10 to 15 per cent. for the left. The middle finger is less important than the index. The ring finger is least important, and the little finger may be compared to its neighbor, except in the professions in which it serves as a point of support for the hand.

When Aliens Die in Egypt.

Under the laws of the country all bodies must be buried within 24 hours after death. In the case of foreigners, if relatives desire to remove the body, it must be embalmed or first buried for a year. The process of embalming in modern Egypt is not only very expensive, amounting often to \$1,000, but it is undesirable. Neither is it convenient often to bury the dead for a year preparatory to removal. What objections therefore may exist elsewhere to the burning of the dead so that their ashes may be transported to their own country, they are without much force in Egypt. Recently a law has been passed allowing this disposition of the dead, but as it is against the religion of the Mohammedans, the government does not see its way to providing for the burning.

Hippophagy.

Hippophagy being in low water in these later days, somebody has set himself to show what an exceedingly respectable history attaches to the practice. Among the ancients, especially in China, eating horse flesh was general, and it was only killed in Europe by a papal decree of Gregory III, though why horse flesh should have been interdicted does not appear. It was only the famine caused by Napoleon's invasion that revived the practice in Germany, where it has survived ever since.

At Last.

Mrs. Newed (excitedly)—O, Henry! I've just discovered why your poems are always returned by this magazine!

Mrs. Newed (a near-poet)—Indeed?

Mrs. Newed—Yes, indeed! Why, here's the answer in plain print: "No contributions will be returned unless stamps are furnished," and you, you old goose, always send the stamps!

Fanciful Finance.

"Time" remarked the wise person, "is money."

"Perhaps," answered Mr. Sirius Barker, "but it shouldn't be brought to the attention of some banks I have heard of. Instead of clearing-house certificates, they may find it comfortable and convenient to issue eight-day clocks."

The Hard Loser.

Goodart—Brawder was telling me today about his hard luck last spring. He certainly did lose a great opportunity.

Wise—Yes, and think of what he's lost since.

Goodart—Why, what's that?

Wise—Valuable time talking about it.

Books!

"Do you believe that everybody has one novel in him?"

"I don't know. But judging from the number of books constantly turned out, I should say that everybody believed he had."

ARRANGES HIS OWN FUNERAL.

Selects Epitaph, Names Eulogist and Retains an Undertaker.

Spokane, Wash.—Wanting to make sure that everything will be done right, James Durkin, bon'face, bon vivant, railroad projector and temperance lecturer, has ordered a monument erected in Greenwood cemetery, the tablet bearing these words: "Jimmie Durkin, Born 1859, Died—"

A minister said: "A man of his word." Durkin has retained Attorney J. F. Robertson to prepare a funeral oration. He has also arranged with an undertaker to prepare his body for burial when he dies.

Two years ago a minister censured Durkin for a window display. He invited the minister to decorate the window according to his ideas. The minister was game, and the result was the most exciting time Spokane ever saw over a window display. Durkin also delivered a temperance lecture in a church. The minister was satisfied and in a signed statement to the newspapers said: "Mr. Durkin treated me right. He is a man of his word."

"I have told Robertson not to say anything wrong about me; to tell the truth—not all, but part," Durkin said when asked about the oration to be delivered at his funeral.

Durkin says his reason for arranging with the undertaker now is so his family will not have to pay an exorbitant bill when he dies.

TWO NORSEMEN CLAIM RECORD.

Said to Have Reached Height of 24,015 Feet Above Sea Level.

London—It is declared that the highest mountain climb record, exceeding even that of William Hunter Workman and his wife, who in the summer of 1895 ascended Karakoram peaks of the Himalayas to an altitude of 21,000 feet, has just been made in India upon Mount Ka, or Godwin-Austen.

This mountain is 28,250 feet in height, and nobody so far as known ever reached its summit. But two Norwegian travelers, Rubenson and Monrad, have lately climbed two of its peaks. One of these peaks, slightly lower than the other, they set down as having an altitude of 21,900 feet; the other peak they calculated 24,015 feet high.

The Norwegians' performance is not accepted by climbers here as an absolute record, for, although the matter is subject to controversy, many believe W. W. Graham ascended Ka to within 30 or 40 feet of its summit in 1883. It is possible, too, that Dr. Longstaff's record last summer of 23,400 feet actually surpasses that of the Norwegians, for it is not certain that their estimates of altitudes reached are correct.

IS CHAMPION COMMUTER.

New York Business Veteran Traveled 95 Miles Daily for 53 Years.

New York—As the champion commuter Chicago has put forward John B. McNeil, a wholesale grocer. According to mathematicians of that city, Mr. McNeil has traveled 55 years between Elgin and Chicago, covering a total distance of 156,000 miles and expending \$4,200 in railroad fares. He has traveled 72 miles each day, occupying in the aggregate 2,625 days on trains.

But New York has Chicago beaten by many miles. J. H. Peffer, of Green Farms, Conn., has traveled between his home and New York, a distance of 48 miles each way, daily for 53 years. Mr. Peffer has traveled 1,326,100 miles, while he has been a commuter, and has paid the railroad \$5,519.

The time Mr. Peffer has taken to get to business here totals 2,650 days. This means he beats the Chicago champion's record in total mileage by more than 77,000 miles. His tickets also cost him \$2,950 more than the "Santa Claus" by all the old employees of the New Haven road, on whose lines he has traveled all his life.

FEAR STIFFENS MAN'S HAIR.

Virginia Negro Is Almost a Freak from Fright.

Pittsburg, Pa.—Fear's terrible effect can be no better illustrated than in the case of Anderson Feader, a Virginia negro, whose ten-inch hair now stands rigidly erect so that his hat seems as if hung on a peg in the top of his head. At the Hazelwood Police station, where Feader was taken; he was regarded as a phenomenon escaped from some circus. But Special Officer James Noon, who arrested Feader shortly after the negro had brushed the coke dust from his clothes after a ride on the Baltimore & Ohio, explained it thus:

"I noticed Feader's coke-dusty clothes and, suspecting him to be a vag, I trumpeted in his ear from behind. 'Murderer, you are my prisoner.' Instantly his hat rose and the long black hair, fully ten inches long, which covered his head, stood on end. I grasped a handful with one hand and thinking it a trick wig, tried to jerk it off but failed. The negro's eyes were wild with fear, and his hair continues to stand on end, almost as stiff as wire."

Violin with a History.

Sydney—An old tello, which the owner at Mount Noorah, Victoria, sent to be repaired, was found to bear the label of Nicolo Amati and the date 1624. There was also found a record of the instrument having been repaired by Louis Davich, of Versailles, in 1741, by Louis XVI.