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The Andromeda Nebula.

One of the most astonishing objects in the heavens is the great nebula in the constellation Andromeda, which is visible as a misty speck to the naked eye. It has long puzzled astronomers because, while its structure—a series of vast rings surrounding a central mass—suggests a gaseous constitution, its spectrum is continuous, resembling that of the sun. It has been suggested that it may be composed of stars constituting a universe external to ours. Studies of its parallax, however, indicate that it is nearer to us than some of the well-known stars, such as Capella and Gore, the English astronomer, points out that if the Andromeda nebula were assumed to be an external universe, having a diameter comparable with that of the Milky way, its mass would be forty million million million times the mass of the sun. This is regarded as incredible and so may be taken as an additional argument in favor of the view that this nebula is a member of our system.—Harper's

Woes of the Prompter.

In the production of a play there is an important person who is never seen and should not be heard by the audience, and yet he may speak more lines than the principal actor. It is the prompter. Here is a description of a prompter's labors, written by one of the genus:

"I, as prompter, had been kept very busy throughout the piece. In addition to keeping the actors on their lines it was my duty to make all the outside noises. I had screamed 'Help!' I had shouted 'Kill him!' I had dropped planks to cover up deficient pistol reports. I had thundered, halled, rained, sung like a woman, marched like an army and howled like an infuriated rabble inflated by drink. The last straw came when the hero, supposed to be pursued by hounds, sidled to the wings and hissed:

"Bark, you fool, bark! Why don't you bark, you idiot?"—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

Origin of the T Rail.

Robert Livingston Stevens, called from New York to Liverpool before the advent of the ocean steamer. In those days the passage took two months, and Stevens passed many an hour, jack-knife in one hand and a piece of wood in the other, brooding over a problem that had often worried him—how to run a railroad without stone stringers for tracks. He wanted to get an iron rail that would "hold" and would take the place of the thin strips fastened to the chair of the roadbed. Just before he reached England his whittling revealed to him the solution of his problem, and that solution took the form of a T rail with a broad base that could be applied direct to a solid wood support. That T rail is still in use on all the railways of the world.

The Echoes of Eagle's Nest.

The most wonderful echo in the known world is that heard from the Eagle's nest in the lake regions of Ireland. The rock known as Eagle's nest is the most prominent peak to be found among the heights that surround the Killarney lakes. Its apex is 1,250 feet above the surface of the water, and the extraordinary echo is heard to the best advantage from a spot 100 feet to the west from an opening called the Devil's mouth. At that point the effect of the re-echoed sounds is absolutely startling, the slightest whisper being repeated as often as 1,000 times. The rebound is always clear and distinct and appears to come from the crags, cliffs and peaks which surround the experimenter on all sides.

Animal Curiosity.

A cow will approach a new object fascinated, but with timorous suspicion, and a horse is even more timid, gazing at a distance for awhile, ready to flee in a moment. The monkey will snatch at everything that is new and deliberately examine it till finding that he cannot eat it or mock mankind with it, he will drop it and let it pass from his shallow memory. There is a pathos in the slenderness of animal curiosity. It is so easily satisfied. The thought, if thought it be, usually ends with the first flush of surprise and the impression of safety.

A Nice Girl.

"I am visiting alma mater," wrote a girl to her chum.

"I have never met Alma," the chum wrote back, "but if she's a friend of yours she's a friend of mine. I'm sure she's an awfully nice girl."

Pretty Good Urethras.

Old Lawyer—Young man, it strikes me that you are very much attached to Miss Plauwell. Young Attorney—She owns 300 acres of land in Kansas. Old Lawyer—What has that got to do with the case? Young Attorney—Why, isn't that sufficient grounds for an attachment?—Chicago News.

No, He Doesn't Drink.

"I'm sure that my husband doesn't drink," said the bride.

"That so?" asked the old timer.

"Yes, but he has one very peculiar habit. He's terribly fond of cloves."

Breakfast Food Literature.

Browne—There's lots of food for thought in this magazine story. Greene—Full of meat, eh? Browne—No. It's a serial.—Judge.

Not Even a One Cent.

Ellas—He sticks like a postage stamp but he isn't worth a cent. Stella—Then he can't be like a postage stamp.—New York Press.

A man's best friends are his ten fingers.—Robert Collyer.

Dead and King Leopold.

Mr. W. T. Stead counted among the most trying experiences of his life an interview he had with King Leopold of Belgium at the time when Gordon was shut up in Khartoum. He went to Brussels and obtained a special interview with the king in order to propose that he should move on behalf of Gordon and claim the Sudan as his reward. Leopold answered that he would not accept the Sudan if it were "offered to him on a silver salver," but Mr. Stead urged his point, and they debated the matter in strenuous fashion for over an hour.

"He was exceedingly angry," said Mr. Stead, "and raged and fumed in such a fashion that I felt more than once it would have given him great satisfaction to have drawn his sword and thrust it through the vitals of his English visitor. . . . It was a trying ordeal for me. I was glad to learn after that Leopold also felt the strain." Meeting M. de Laveleye (who had introduced Mr. Stead) some months afterward at Spa, the king referred to the interview. "Stead," he exclaimed, "it was terrible. How that man made me swear!"—London Chronicle.

The Captain Had to Decide.

Etiquette on the great liners has its difficulties, to judge from the following letter: "The question of precedence makes a morose of the first dinner on board, when a few foreign titles happen to let their cerulean blood boil over into the soup. On a recent voyage the commander was told by the chief steward that there were two Austrian ladies of title on board. One was an elderly baroness; the other was higher in rank, but quite young. Both were determined to sit off the right of the skipper. Driven to despair, he said, 'I will let the ladies settle the matter for themselves, and I won't go down till dinner is half over.' We had reached the cheese when the unhappy commander crept warily to his seat. Both ladies were still standing frigidly behind his empty chair. He had to do something, so he gave the younger warrior the seat of honor, while the vanquished baroness looked chain lightning at the enemy."—London Opinion.

Our Funny Bone.

The "funny" bone or "crazy" bone, as it is commonly called, is in reality no bone at all, but a nerve, and its peculiar name, of facetious origin, is a pun on the word "humerus," the cylindrical bone which runs from the shoulder to the elbow, the ulnar nerve passing around it. The nerve is here superficial and therefore comparatively unprotected, so that it may be easily compressed, and then a blow upon it causes a strange tingling sensation in the course of its distribution, which is felt as far away as the little finger. The humerus has been the occasion of humor in others; for Locker will

writes in "An Old Muff," published about 1740:

He cannot be complete in aught
Who is not humorously-prone.
A man without a merry thought
Can hardly have a funny bone.

What Susie Was.

The Mexican was showing his newly arrived New York guest to a room, and after the usual courtesies he paused on the threshold to say: "By the way, we always turn Susie loose for the night, and she will pass through your hall on the way to the top floor, where she catches rats. You'd better be careful and not step on her, as that is the only thing that makes her cross."

A Fair Opportunity.

Tasso, being told that he had a fair opportunity of taking advantage of a very bitter enemy, replied, "I wish not to plunder him, but there are times when I wish to take from him not his honor or his life, but his utility and ill will."

Well spoken is noble taking from an enemy, "his malice and ill will." How is that done? Love is the potent weapon. "Heat coals of fire on his head."—Exchange.

Hardly Fair.

"Which is your favorite among the plays of Shakespeare, Mr. Henpeck?" "The Taming of the Shrew."

Looking For Trouble.

A very young gentleman, after bearing some vituperous language from his father, called on his grandmother on the telephone and warned her, "You better come down to our house and see about the words your son has been using."—Exchange.

Too Liberal.

Customer—Why doesn't that spinster, Miss Brown, deal at your store now? Draper—One of my clerks insulted her. Customer—How? Draper—She overheard him telling some one that she was our oldest customer.—London Tit-Bits.

A Provider.

Wife—Can you give me a little more housekeeping money, my dear? His band—Sorry, my love, but I haven't a cent left. I've been insuring against burglary and theft.—Pilegende Blatter.

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