

Easy Pickings

By G. M. SASSAMAN

HE STOOD at the curb of the taxi cab stand, swaying upon his feet as though at any moment he might fall upon a heap in the gutter. On his handsome young face was an expression of sobriety—alcoholic sobriety—and infinite boredom.

Scores of cabs had pulled up and received fares while he stood there on the edge of the pavement, and repeatedly he had made as if to board one, only to change his mind at the last minute.

Finally the man's discriminating taste seemed to find fulfillment. A shiny black taxi of the independent type pulled up, and the driver, a beefy-faced individual with a wart on his chin, called, "Cab, sir!"

The inebricate hiccupped, lurched slightly upon his feet, and peered at the driver. At his nod the driver jumped out to hold the cab door open. In the latter's small, closely-set black eyes a glimmer of doubtful recognition showed.

The fare wet his lips with his tongue. "Guess this is a good tickable, 'right," he muttered thickly. He climbed staggaringly into the vehicle, and the beefy-faced driver slammed the door shut, then leaped to his place behind the wheel.

Out into the lane of traffic he swung the cab, not bothering to inquire for his fare's address. And as he drove, Beefy-Face glistened quietly to himself. Here was another drunk to take over for every bit of dough in his pocket. Easy pickings!

Glancing into the mirror above the windshield, the driver scrutinized the huddled form in the rear. This guy looked good for a couple hundred bucks. Well-dressed. He looked familiar, too.

Then, suddenly, recognition came to him. Why, this bloke was the one he had rolled two, three, maybe four times before. Yeah! Only last week this good-looking guy so plastered he had had to carry him off the cab after cleaning out his wallet.

Beefy-Face made straight for a lonely park he knew, and soon he had nosed the cab into a dark lane flanked by thick-foliated trees. Here he stopped the taxi.

Climbing down from the wheel, he opened the cab's rear door and saw his passenger sprawled upon the seat, with left arm dangling almost to the floor.

The driver leaned through the door, dragged out the inert form and half carried, half dragged it to the edge of the lane. In a second he had transferred a fat roll of bank-notes from the victim's pocket to his own. A few moments later the taxicab was humming out of the park.

An hour or so later the handsome young man again was standing at the curb of the taxi stand, in almost the same spot he had occupied before. Now, however, he stood firmly upon his feet, and he seemed mildly interested in a commotion taking place at the end of the line of cabs.

Three officious-looking men, who had been scanning license plates of arriving cabs, suddenly had jumped upon the running board of a black taxi and were dragging the driver from behind the wheel. The driver, a beefy fellow with a wart on the chin, had been on the point of lighting a cigarette.

After pulling him from the cab, two of the men held him while a third took a fat roll of bills from one of his pockets. The three officious-looking men examined these intently, then nodded grimly to one another before hurrying their captive toward a sedan at the front of the line.

As the trio came past with their prisoner, Beefy-Face caught sight of the young man at the curb. He blinked in astonishment, then stopping suddenly, exclaimed:

"Say, bo, for God's sake tell these federal dicks I robbed ya! Now, didn't I?" he pleaded. "Didn't I take ya out to the park an' roll ya clean?"

The young man turned to the nearest detective, mild surprise and annoyance in his voice when he spoke. "This man," indicating Beefy-Face with an impatient jerk of the head, "must be drunk—or crazy. I feel sure he's crazy."

"No, he ain't crazy," said the detective. "He's just tryin' to pass the buck." He jerked the driver's arm angrily. "Come on, you, we got the goods on you. This was one time a 'nonyous phone tip turned out to be the real McCoy."

The property man looked up at the male lead of "Easy Pickings" came through the door backstage. There was something like paternal devotion in the former's eyes as the handsome young actor, a cigarette held listlessly in the fingers of his left hand, strode toward him.

"Say, Proppey," said the young man, a look of affected concern accentuating the sobriety of his features, "can you get another roll of money for the second act?"

The other nodded absently, then as if remembering something belatedly, exclaimed: "My gosh, Mr. Trudings! you didn't get-ah-er-drunk and pass off any of that money in mistake, did you?"

Mr. Trudings sighed, and with well-manicured hands gestured deprecatingly. "No," he said. "Certainly not. A fine time I'd have, trying to pass stage money."

"Stage money!" snorted the property man. "You know well enough we were using genuine counterfeit in the second act!"

Alleged Holy Grail

Fahim Kouckajk, owner of the so-called chalice of Antioch, which many believe to be the Holy Grail of Arthurian legend—the cup out of which Christ drank at the last supper—has placed the sacred relic on exhibition in the Louvre. Kouckajk, who has kept the chalice in a safety deposit box, bought the chalice years ago in Syria. Later antiquarians identified it as a relic which disappeared 600 A. D., when Julian the Apostate destroyed the churches of Antioch.

English Girls Pay for Ring

The Jewellers' Association of Liverpool states that the custom of the man paying for the ring has changed and that the girl now pays for her engagement ring, her wedding ring, and even for her husband-to-be's wedding ring.

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DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE, OTTAWA,
SEPTEMBER 17, 1934.

Outdoors Good Place for Lighting Effects Study

The study of lighting effects need not be carried on solely indoors, in theater, gallery, hall or home. There is plenty of room for such interest in the great outdoors, where the sources of all light exist in their abundance.

Closer inspection of natural objects shows that they are not all grayed, uniformly, by clouds and lack of sunshine, but still reflect what light there is according to their nature.

Thus one tree will have an appearance different from adjoining trees, owing to a different sort of bark, or position, which permits reflected light to filter to it.

Houses, in particular, appear in entirely different lights on days dark and mimical, as we say. It may be said, therefore, in particular, that if they appear to advantage on a rainy, gloomy day, they will shine like jewels when the sun is throwing its beams upon them.

No one should ever purchase a home without first visiting it on some gloomy day, preferably when it is "pouring cats and dogs," as the old saying has it.

If it looks well then, it will please always. Something of the same pleasant philosophy might be applied to all life and living, but we would not care to press the matter, for so much depends upon the individual, and his ability to accept, as well as to utilize.—Washington Evening Star.

Carries Eggs in Mouth Until They Are Hatched

There are several species of fishes known as "mouthbrooders," but the breeding behavior is similar in all. The fish, either male or female, or both, according to the species, clears a space in the sand at the bottom of the aquaria, into which the female deposits her eggs. The male then fertilizes them. Within a few minutes, either one or the other of the parents, again according to species, picks up the eggs in its mouth and carries them through the period of incubation and for a few days after the fry are hatched. The Ruby Jewel fish usually turns the fry loose in about three weeks, while the Tilapia will carry the eggs and fry as long as six weeks. The Ruby Jewel fish is somewhat exceptional in that it first sticks its eggs to a flat stone before picking them up. Otherwise the behavior is as described.

One Ant Steps Train

To the well-known reputation of ants for industry and perseverance, add the ability to stop trains. One lone ant recently enjoyed the distinction of stopping the southbound "Flamingo" of the Louisville & Nashville. What is more, he did it the easiest way, merely by causing an automatic signal to display a stop indication.

A colony of large red ants established residence in the sheet iron case that houses the signal mechanism. One ant, which apparently possessed an investigative type of mind, had started on a tour of exploration and had got himself caught between the contacts of the circuit breaker, thus preventing the current from reaching the motor which operates the semaphore arm. This interference, of course, made the signal inoperative, so that it automatically assumed the stop position.—Railway Age.

Painless

Consin Linnie had had an operation on her eye for cataract. Five-year-old Sylvia had been very much interested and curious about it. One day she said to her older sister: "Clara, what did they do to Linnie's eye?"

"Punched a hole in it," answered Clara carelessly.

"But didn't it hurt?" questioned the child.

"No, I guess not," Clara replied. "They gave her something to make her sleep so she would not feel it."

Infected Teeth Affect Stomach

Infections of the teeth and gums could affect the stomach. Such infections keep the individual from chewing the food properly and in addition the germs or poison can be taken up from the infected teeth and gums and be carried to other parts of the body, doing damage in these parts.

Ban on Dogs for Deer to be Lifted

Legislated in and out of the hunting picture during controversies extending over years, dogs once more will be eligible to participate in man's deer-hunting activities after the next session of the Ontario Legislature.

Provincial secretary and minister of game and fisheries, Harry Nixon, in previous sessions one of the main proponents of the restoration of dogs for deer-hunting, will reintroduce the measure, and this time, it appears, it is destined to become law. The prohibition against dogs is to disappear.

Mr. Nixon, in announcing his intention in this regard, submitted the view that the prohibition of the use of dogs in deer-hunting is injurious to the deer population. The reason for it, he said, is that the buck is more canny than the doe, and will remain securely in hiding when mere man with his gun passes by. The doe, however, invariably becomes frightened and dashes into the open, where she is shot. With the dogs stalking the deer quarry, he said, the bucks and does are chased out into the open and the hunters can pick out the males for their shot.

Owing to the fact that the Legislature does not sit until late in winter or spring, the proposed new law will not be effective this hunting season. The earliest it can become operative is 1935.

This announcement will be received with great enthusiasm by the deer hunters of this district, who favor hunting deer with dogs.

How We View THE COLD WINTER

Now that we are treated to cold nights, the verandahs are deserted and the days are shortening and growing colder, visions of the cold, cheerless, icy winters that we have passed have not faded from our memories. And barely have we rehearsed the story of that bitter winter when another one is knocking at our door. And again, let us think, is not winter our social time?

Summer with us is breaking up the home more and more and scattering the family. Winter brings us all together again; it only at the Christmas time. And the fire in the hearth

Why Handel Chose Oratorio

"Minute Sketches of Great Composers" says: "Up to his fiftieth year Handel wrote endlessly, and so shrewdly calculated commercial gain and popular favor that wealth and fame were his for the asking, although only the 'Largo' and one or two arias survive. It was his failure as opera director in London which drove him to write oratorios. In 18 years he produced 19—'Israel in Egypt,' 'Messiah,' 'The Messiah,' and 'Saul' (including the famous Dead March), being the best known." Music authorities say that England has always been oratorio-minded rather than opera-minded.

Environa of Stockholm

If Stockholm, the beautiful capital of Sweden, were not the fine and interesting city that it is, it would be amply compensated by its unusually attractive environs. Lake Malaren alone could do that, its wooded shores, meadows, villages and chateaux. Not far away is the ancient City of Strangnäs, which was the most important town in the province in early pagan days and had an eventful history. Its fine Gothic Cathedral dates from 1291 and the old Bishop's palace, now used as a school, shows the hall where Gustav Vasa was elected king in 1523. Another nearby ancient town is Sigtnäs, equally attractive.

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Cigaretts Have Been Used Over One Hundred Years

The cigaret is 100 years old, but the conditions of its birth are so obscure that the world is not celebrating its centennial.

Like many another famous invention, the cigaret's creation was due to an accident. The generally accepted story is that it was born in 1822, during the siege of Saint Jean d'Arc by the soldiers of Ibrahim Pasha, viceroy of Egypt.

Legend says that the Egyptian soldiers were faced by an emergency. A camel caravan had brought a great quantity of Turkish tobacco, but another caravan loaded with pipes had been captured by the Turks. The soldiers had plenty of tobacco and wanted to smoke, but in the absence of pipes, were obliged to find a substitute.

An officer solved the problem by rolling a pinch of tobacco in a piece of tissue paper and enjoyed the smoke. The news spread over the camp and those who could not find tissue paper used a type of India paper.

The French tobacco monopoly administration, without verifying that picture legend admits that the cigaret came to Europe from the Near East, carried back by navigators. As far as France is concerned, the oldest official document is an order signed by Louis-Philippe on October 22, 1843, which authorizes the royal factory to manufacture cigaretts.—Detroit Free Press.

Knowledge, Intelligence Have Different Meaning

A great many people confuse knowledge with intelligence, both in the use and the meaning of these terms. There is a distinction, however, that is worth considering. Knowledge is something you acquire. There are as many sorts of knowledge as there are things to learn. In other words, knowledge is the thing you require before you use your intelligence.

Intelligence is of two kinds—native and acquired. When a psychologist uses the term intelligence he usually has in mind that inherited ability which amounts to a power to use knowledge. Acquired intelligence is the kind you have in mind when you say, "Knowledge is power." For practical purposes one need not distinguish between knowledge and acquired intelligence.

One might make the distinction between knowledge and intelligence in another way. Knowledge is the raw material of mental life. Intelligence is the machinery that puts this raw material to work. The really intelligent person is the one who knows the uses of knowledge. In still other words, knowledge is the stuff out of which achievement is made, while intelligence is the ability to make achievement possible.—Washington Star.

Water Testing Outfit

It is easier to compare the color of a liquid with the color of another liquid than to match up a liquid with a flat color card. A water testing outfit provides liquid comparators in sealed vials. Nine vials each of a different shade are marked with ratings from pH 6.0 to pH 7.6. These color standards will not fade as cards are likely to do. Bromothymol blue is the indicator solution. When added to a bit of aquarium water, it will show a color which is then matched against the comparator vials. If the test shows too much alkali, sodium acid phosphate (monobasic) is added to the water. Bicarbonate of soda is used to correct too much acidity.

Dardevil Terriers

The sheer, reckless courage which characterizes the Irish terrier and for which it has frequently been called the "dare-devil," is illustrated by the following story told a number of years ago by some African hunters. As the story goes, the hunters had been trying with a pack of dogs to dislodge a lion which had been brought to bay in a dense tangle of bushes. Finally, without apparent reason, the lion bolted out from under cover. When it was entirely clear of its bushy hiding place the reason for its hasty appearance was clear, for clinging to the end of its tail with firmly locked teeth was a small Irish terrier.

Caliph of Bagdad Killed on Order of His Mother

Hadi was the second of the three sons of Mansur to become caliph of Bagdad. He succeeded his brother Mehdli in 785 and was murdered in 788. Hadi was defeated by his mother, Khelzran, who made him a prisoner of two beautiful slave girls whom she had instructed to kill him. Khelzran was then instrumental in securing the succession of her favorite younger son, Harun, the caliph of the "Arabian Nights," a mighty ruler and a famous patron of learning. . . .

Yahya the son of Khalid was a member of the great Barmecide family, which supplied the caliphs with three generations of illustrious soldiers and statesmen. Yahya had been viceroy under the caliph Mehdli and was the tutor and valued adviser of Harun al-Rashid, but he was distrusted by Hadi and would probably have been executed had not mother Khelzran and the slave girls acted opportunely. Yahya had two sons, Fadli and Jafar. Jafar was Harun's viceroy; Fadli was the caliph's foster brother and a statesman of commanding ability; Jafar (the "Ghaffar" of the "Arabian Nights") was Harun's closest friend and inseparable companion. In 803, seventeen years after his accession, Harun al-Rashid, without an hour's warning, caused Jafar to be beheaded and cast Yahya and Fadli into prison where they soon died of poison or starvation. This was the end of the Barmecides.

Sleepwalker Disproves Old Sudden Shock Myth

The popular myth that sleepwalkers will be damaged or even killed by the sudden shock of waking them while they are walking has been sufficiently disproved by a British incident in which the "walker" actually lived to tell about it. As the story goes, the steam traveler Aronside wrote on her way to the Scotch port of Aberdeen. During the night the mate in charge of the deck saw what he thought was a man climbing over the stern of the boat. He called the captain and announced that the ship had been boarded by some mysterious being out of the sea. The captain found wet footprints on the deck and traced them to the forecastle where he found a water-soaked sailor climbing into his bunk. The sailor explained that he was a sleepwalker, that he had evidently been walking in his sleep and fell overboard. The shock of the cold water immediately awakened him. Seeing a rope hanging from the moving vessel, he grabbed it and climbed back on board.

A Soldier-Statesman

Major Gen. John White Geary, who accompanied Sherman in his march to the sea during the Civil war, while a military man, had a far more varied career in civil life. Born in Pennsylvania, he studied law in his early youth, but never went into practice. During the Mexican war he enlisted and became a colonel of a Pennsylvania regiment, becoming the first commander of Mexico City after the American conquest of the Mexican capital. From Mexico he went to California, where he was appointed postmaster of San Francisco, later being elected mayor of that city. Eventually, however, his home state reclaimed him, and seven years before his death he was elected governor of the Keystone state. He held the office of governor until his death in 1873.—Washington Star.

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