

HUMORS OF LIBRARIES

UNSUSPECTED FUN IN ROUTINE OF LENDING BOOKS.

Muddled Names Are the Most Frequent Causes of Merriment to the Attendees—One, However, Remembered the Cover But Not the Name—Fringes and Hairpins Aroused Suspicion.

Prosaic and serious though the business of lending libraries may seem to be to the average person, it provides at times an unsuspected fund of humor. There is, for instance, the juvenile borrower, who writes to the librarian:

"Dear Sir, please renew the book that I took out about two weeks ago, or it may be three, I forgot the author and title, but it was bound in blue, with a picture of a dolphin on the back."

And then there is the troubled reader who, holding out to the assistant the latest novelty in book-marks, says, "I wish you would tell your lady readers not to leave fringes in their books. I found a hair-pin in the last book and a fringed net in this, and my wife is getting a bit suspicious."

Perhaps, however, it is the people who unconsciously twist the titles of the books and his assistants with their biggest laughs, and in "Library Jokes and Jottings," Mr. H. T. Coutts gives some amusing examples of borrowers' quaint requests. Here are a few selections:

"I come for Mr. A. . . . Will you please send him 'Indecent Orders'?" ("In Deacon's Orders").

"Please renew 'Prisoner of Zena Dare'." ("Prisoner of Zenda").

"Have you a novel entitled 'She Cometh Not Her Head'?" ("The Cometh Not, She Said").

"I want Bradron's 'Trial of the Servant'." ("Trail of the Serpent").

"Have you the 'Essays of a Liar'?" ("Essays of Elia").

"I want 'From Jesse to Ernest'." ("From Jesse to Ernest").

"Bunch of 'Screws'." ("Bunter's Crumbs").

"Is the 'Stuck-up Minister' (Sticket Minister) in?" ("Sticket Minister").

"Kiss Auntie." ("Kissante"). If you please."

"A lady reader," says Mr. Coutts, "who had a passion for country walks used to arrange visits to charming rural spots, and sought help in her choice of them at the library."

"She was an attendant to supply her with 'Notable Hamlets.' One day she pointed out to her the portraits of Henry Irving and other famous actors, included in the volume, she could not believe that it had nothing to do with rambles to famous villages."

That the printer is not devoid of humor is evident from the following entries selected from the proof sheets of a library catalogue: "Baldrewood, Roll, 'My Run Home' (Run); Hole, S. B. Deane, 'A Book About Nones' (Nones); Stables, Gordon, 'Our Friend the Fog' (Dog)."

The facetiousness of the printer is again shown in the alterations of "A Harvest of Wild Oats" to "A Harvest of Wild Cats"; "The Golden Face" to "The Golden Fars"; the "Princess Aline" to the "Princess Alive"; and "Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures" to Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Leases."

Children often confuse the titles of popular books and will ask for such things as "Allison's Pables," "Good Liver's Raveles," "Helen's Dairy," "Holly berry Fim," "From Powder, Admiral to Monkey," and "Sweet Family Robinson and his Dog."

Most of these can be translated easily, but a more difficult case occurred when a girl requisitioned "Waterress." The librarian told her that a book of that name was "to do in the library, but the girl persisted in her request. A schoolgirl, low, she said, had borrowed it only a week or two before, and had told her it was a nice book. Eventually a solution of the problem was found in Mrs. Molesworth's "Lettice."

The Glove on the Pole.

A quaint custom in an English town, Honiton, is "proclaiming the fair." The town obtained the grant of a fair from the lord of the manor so long ago as 1257, and the fair still retains some of the picturesque characteristics of bygone days. The town crier, dressed in picturesque uniform and carrying a pole decorated with gay flowers and adorned with a large gilt model of a gloved hand, publicly announces the opening of the fair, as follows: "Oyez! Oyez! The fair's begun, the glove is up. No man can be arrested till the glove is taken down." Hot coals are then thrown among the children. The pole and glove remain displayed until the end of the fair.

A Clock Case Made of Pennies.

A novelty in clockmaking consists of a time-piece whose case is made of English pennies. The coins, of which there are ninety-six, all bear the date 1797 and were beaten out to almost double their original size and then riveted together, while the figures were made of small pieces of copper cemented on to the face. The clock stands fourteen inches high and is eight inches broad at the base. That "time is money" is an adage with which we all more or less agree, but this is a case in which the saying might be reversed and still remain true. The clock is owned by a resident of Laurel Bank, Ilkley, Yorkshire, England.

Cast-Off-Police Boots.

A queer way of disposing of their old boots is followed by the Colombo police. When these "cant officers" have accumulated to a figure bordering round a thousand they are taken down to the police bulk in the harbor and thrown into the sea. Formerly, policemen were allowed to dispose of these, when they became unserviceable, but according to new regulations, they have to return to headquarters all boots when they get worn out.

Hardship comes when the fire of genius isn't hot enough to keep the pot boiling.

It makes a woman heartick every time she has to cut a piece of valuable old lace.

COMPANIES HARD HIT.

Increase in Arson is Costly For Insurance Concerns.

"A period of depression, such as the present, causes a serious drain on the fire insurance companies of Canada through the deplorable increase of arson."

The man speaking was an Ontario manager of one of the largest Canadian fire insurance companies.

"The frequency of arson in the Province of Ontario," he recognized by every insurance manager and actuary. But arson is about the most difficult of all crimes to prove conclusively, and while we are thoroughly satisfied of its presence in many cases, we are obliged, for lack of evidence, to swallow our medicine."

"What proportion of Ontario fires since 1912 would you say were deliberate crimes?"

"All a matter of guessing. Some insurance men put it as high as thirty-five and forty per cent. Others think five per cent. is enough. It is impossible to know with any exactness, because while we may have grave suspicions in case after case, we have no conclusive proof. Take, for instance, the circumstances of a great many country towns. All the retail stores are lined up in the same block, all of frame construction, all about an equal risk from the insurance viewpoint. One is a millinery shop, another a dry goods store, another a bank, and so forth. Did it ever strike you as queer that a fire during hard times seldom or never starts in a bank? It is not a matter of luck so much as the fact that a bank has nothing on its shelves to sell to the insurance companies. If fire were left to itself it would strike home with all the uncertainty of lightning. But because it is not left to itself, it manages to visit far too many stores and factories with large stocks of goods just a little past their season and therefore a dead weight on the proprietor's hands."

"A Toronto man lost a certain kind of building the other day by fire and put in a request to me for several thousand dollars insurance money. I was mentally satisfied his case was crooked. Inquiries brought the information that the banks were pressing him hard, that his business had run down badly, that he was up against it for ready cash. And on top of all that away went the building and stock in smoke. Do you blame us for laying a big percentage of our losses to arson?"

"When a proprietor of a stock of unseasonable goods determines to turn his hopeless wares into a hundred cents on the dollar, he never hands the job to anyone but himself. The dishonest policyholder in his own firebug. He tells no one his plans, and does the deed at an hour when observation is unlikely. Unless circumstantial and corroborative evidence can be secured the court cannot convict on a company's mere suspicion."

"In all instances of suspected arson the onus of proof is placed upon the companies. That were fair enough if the crown bore the expense, where the widowed warms an arrest. But not only must insurance companies work up the case by their own solicitors, but in the event of a culprit being sent to prison the companies bear all the cost of prosecution, a matter of fact the state is far more concerned in eliminating arson than an individual company, for the people actually pay the piper."

Sir Richard's Honor.

In British Columbia they are said to take their politics more seriously than do the Eastern Canadians, but frequently there is a gleam of good-natured humor and badinage in the debate of the British Columbia House.

Not long ago Sir Richard McBride, the Premier of the province, went south and was the guest of a California university, which honored him with the degree of Doctor of Laws.

He returned, took his seat in the House, and the news of his new degree soon became noised abroad in the corridors.

It was not long until a Labor member of the Legislature arose and gravely drew the attention of the M.P.'s to a report of the honor done the Premier in a foreign land.

"I congratulate Sir Richard," he said, "for it cannot be gainsaid that he well deserves the degree. He has doctored more laws than any other man in this province."

And even Sir Richard smiled.—Canadian Courier.

Sir John's Advice.

The late Rankin McKee, the widely-known actor, who died recently, was a Canadian, born at Sandwich, Ont., in 1844, the son of Lieut.-Col. Rankin, a member of Parliament. While at Upper Canada College, Toronto, he had a disagreement with his father over his association with the dramatic society there, and ran away with an actor. He made his stage debut in Rochester under an assumed name. His father found him and made him return to accept a Government clerkship.

"About two years later," Rankin has said in reminiscences, "the great Sir John A. Macdonald, who was then Premier of Canada, told me what he thought of the Government service. 'You keep on and on, and in the end you are only an old hack,' he said. 'I've heard that once you were an actor. Why don't you go back on the stage?'"

Rankin was quick to follow his advice.

He Remembered.

Thirty-nine years ago James O'Brien, now license inspector for South Wellington, O., rescued a boy, P. Armstrong, from a water grave in Birge's dam, on the River Speedy. Mr. Armstrong, who is now a professor at Harvard University, dropped into the inspector's office at Guelph the other day and presented him with a gold watch as a token of his appreciation.

One might just as well attempt to rearrange the colors of the rainbow as to undertake the reformation of man's neighbor.

Continual cheerfulness is a manifest sign of wisdom.

OFFICERS ARE MODEST.

But Passengers Tell of Storm On North Pacific.

Seafaring men never like to make much of any great deed which they perform, and, as a result, have often been branded as boastful, says the Victoria, B.C., Times. After nursing their ships through great storms, which the passengers believed would result in their death, the captains and officers are always humble and by the travelers, who tell stories of how they were kept out of death's iron grip by the great seamanship of the men who commanded their vessel.

But when a newspaperman approaches a captain to obtain his account of the great trials he is liable to get something like this: "Why, there isn't much to it. Of course, it was the worst weather I ever experienced in my 30 odd years' experience at sea. But still you know we are paid to bring our ships safely into port, and we are simply fulfilling our obligations to our company and the public."

Upon the arrival of the Empress of Japan, Capt. Hoperoff, from the Orient, it was not expected that the officers would make much of their recent outward voyage. In reply to a query the captain's white liner would only say: "Of course it was a bad one."

A passenger on the Japan on her outward voyage writes of the trip and says that the waves on the Pacific were running mountains high. "I have never seen anything like them," he writes. "Rough weather was encountered at the start and it grew worse and worse the further the ship got out into the ocean. After the first four days not more than a third of the passengers came up to the deck, and the rest of the passengers, in fact, did not show their heads again until the vessel was almost in Japanese waters."

The officers seemed to have no sleep, and those who were not on deck went from cabin to cabin comforting the many who were ill and making the most of their time. And all this was done to keep us from very grave fears. We could not believe that anything was seriously wrong while the officers were in such humor. The captain and the chief officer seemed to take it in turns to be up and below all the time. No set of officers could have inspired greater confidence."

"The pitching of the steamship was simply terrific. At times the whole of the front part of the ship was under water, and as the bows rose up the broad cataraacts. There were called for under in the same way, but not quite so badly, for the poop was never submerged. Altogether, it was a very exciting voyage, and none of the passengers wish for another such experience."

Record Wolf "Clean-Up."

So far as "clean-ups" among the wolves of the northern woods go, Arthur Stieh, of Hymers, a little place in Thunder Bay District, holds the record for the past winter. He has killed twelve since the cold weather set in, and received a bounty of \$15 for each.

Seven small carcasses arrived in Toronto not long ago through the parcel post delivery, addressed to the Department of Provincial Police. They were pups of the grey timber wolf variety, cold in death.

Good Friday Stieh was tracking in the northern woods, and the woods near his potato farm in the northern forests. Sh discovered the fact that he was on her trail and led him a merry chase, doubling and redoubling in her tracks, and leaping from log to log in order to confuse him. At last he was within the neighborhood of a large uprooted tree, beneath which he found a hole that looked much like a lair.

Tracks leading into the burrow convinced him that some wolf had its dwelling there, whether it was the one he had been trailing or not. He reached in and touched it with his fingers something furry and warm. Upon bringing it out it proved to be a puppy wolf. He puts his hand in again, and kept on until he had seven of the tiny cubs lying on the ground beside him.

Devonshire (Eng.) lace workers have been engaged for three years, and will not finish for another nine months, on a beautiful court veil with flourishes and trimmings made on the fabric of the finest Brussels net. The edging is about thirty yards of lovely Honiton lace, and the centre part contains 240 large sprays of lawn, with over 200 small sprays of the same flower. Scattered over the whole are hundreds of butterflies.

The wearer of this elaborate adornment will be a lady (now in India), and the occasion will be one of the functions of the British Court of 1915.

Wisdom From Wives.

A man who had been married three times used to say, even in the presence of his third wife, "I married the world, the flesh and my present wife." And he gave his experience, says Rev. E. J. Hardy in "Still Happy Though Married," as follows: "My first wife cured me of romance, my second taught me humility, and my third made me a philosopher."

Salt For Malaria.

Seeking a cheap and non-poisonous substitute for quinine oil in tropical climates, Dr. J. W. Scott, M.D., of the West African Medical Staff, experimented with common salt as a means of suppressing malaria and yellow fever. In solutions of sufficient strength, it has proven remarkably effective in destroying larvae of the yellow fever mosquito.

Played Part 1,800 Times.

Mr. Edward Compton, the well-known English actor, recently gave his 1,800th impersonation of David Garrick. He has made a fortune out of the part, and holds the record of having played the title-role more times than any actor, past or present.

A Man's Faith in His Judgment Gets a Rebuke Every Time He Steps up a Step That Isn't There.

A woman may have faith in her husband, but she seldom believes more than half he says.

TRAFFIC IN DIAMONDS.

How Illicit Business is Carried On In South Africa.

Some good instances of the seamy side of the diamond traffic are told by Douglas Blackiston and Cap. Caddell in their engaging work "Seduced Service in South Africa." A young Englishman of good family arrived on the fields, and having about a couple of hundred pounds but no experience, joined a Scottish man who was working a claim that seemed promising. They did little for a month or so beyond just paying expenses; but presently the average finds rose very considerably, then dropped to below the previous level. At the end of about four months the Englishman denounced that he was sick of the business and would retire leaving it to the generosity of his partner to return his partnership money if luck turned. The Englishman celebrated his departure by standing drinks with suspicious liberality to a crowd at a casual dinner.

Knowing—or, rather believing—that the young man was so short of money that the raising of the home-ward fare had been a matter of difficulty, the partner began to think and ask a few questions. He noticed that being a little buyer, who was very friendly terms with the Englishman, and drew certain conclusions, on which he resolved to act. He joined the drinking party, encouraged his departing partner to linger over final glasses, and carried him home very drunk. The young man's opportunity of making a domiciliary search, and was rewarded by finding over £4,000 worth of stones concealed in various parts of the baggage; besides conclusive evidence that the faithless partner had sent through the post to Cape Town, some of whose contents could be well guessed by the man left for Cape Town next day, bearing the signs of a broken heart and head. That he carried little away with him was inferred from the fact that for a couple of years after leaving the diamond fields he was working as a clerk in a bank.

A simple method of transferring stones to an accomplice was practiced by a famous I. D. B. (illicit diamond buyer), who amassed a fortune without having to undergo the indignity of arrest and search. His sleeping partner, and custodian of his illicitly acquired stones, was a barmaid, who afterwards became his wife. The I. D. B. called in at regular periods, and ordered such drinks as his naturally parsimonious disposition and the day's luck or ill-luck suggested. They were champagne, or cognac, or beer. When a bottle of stout was called for, the barmaid understood the signal. The I. D. B. would drink about half of it, engage in conversation with someone in the bar, and either go off hurriedly, after glancing at his watch, or accept an offer of someone to take a drink. In either case, he did not finish the stout. This the barmaid would put apparently among the dirty glasses awaiting washing, but actually in a place of safety, for she knew that diamonds had been dropped into it from the pocket of the I. D. B.

The largest number of diamonds ever captured at one time would have been got through but for an accident. Just on the Free State border, the police patrol came up and began a systematic and microscopic search of suspected wagon. They even cut the diesel-boiler or wagon-pole—into small pieces, and sounded or prodded every part of the wagon large enough to conceal a stone, but in vain. On the way, one of the detectives remembered that he had left a knife or gimlet on the wagon, and returned to it. He found the men busily repairing the damage as well as they could, and replenishing the water in the water-kid, which had been emptied out in the search. The detective asked for a drink, and, in helping himself, was struck with something odd about the large bung which closed the water-cask. He examined closer and found a packet nailed to the bung—in fact, it was the bung—one solid mass of pitch containing four pounds' weight of extra fine stones.

Wonderful Lace Veil.

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Ran Into a Hyena.

An unusual accident befell two young officers in Secunderabad recently. They were cycling one night from the club to Trimigherry. One of them was riding a motor bicycle, and towing the other who was on an ordinary bicycle. Suddenly a large hyena rushed across the road in front of them; the motor cycle just missed it but the other one caught it fairly. The hyena fled howling horribly, but the rider of the ordinary bicycle was also thrown right over the handle bars and sustained some rather nasty injuries in consequence of which he was in hospital for some days.

When the Wind Propels a Straw Hat it is Chase, but the Remarks of the Owner are Nothing that Even Sounds Like That.

When the wind propels a straw hat it is chase, but the remarks of the owner are nothing that even sounds like that.

To Oswego, New York

Beginning June 29th, STEAMER OLCHEUT leaves Swift's wharf 3 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, reaching Oswego 7 p.m., connecting with east and west-bound New York Central and D. L. & W. trains.

For information inquire from Agent, C. A. Kirkpatrick, 42 Clarence St. Telephone 233.

WORLD'S GREATEST BANK.

Lloyd's Now Leading Institution of Its Kind.

With the recent acquisition of the Wills & Dorset Banking Company, Lloyd's Bank of London becomes probably the greatest financial corporation of its kind, as its deposit and current account now aggregates more than 500 million dollars, says the Wall Street Journal.

Lloyd's Bank has a history extending over a long period of years, as the private bank out of which it was formed was established in 1765, and the present banking corporation was formed in 1865, including its latest acquisition, the bank has absorbed no less than forty-eight other banking houses since 1865, and of these thirty-five were private banks, one of these dating back to 1677. The bank is represented in forty-five out of the fifty-two counties in England and Wales, and a subsidiary company was formed in 1911 to open a branch in Paris, an old French private banking house being taken over.

It is unusual for an English joint stock bank to organize a subsidiary for doing business in a foreign country, but this plan had a foreign origin. Under the French law, to conduct a banking business in France would have rendered the entire capital of the bank, no matter where located, subject to taxation. In all Lloyd's Bank now has 880 separate offices, while an incorporated bank, the traditions of the private banking days yet remain, and practically all officials of the bank and its branch managers were educated in private banking houses, and preference was always given to men so educated in taking on new employes.

An Odd Little Island.

The Isle of Man presents many curious features, none of which is more curious than its laws. For instance, the Legislature is called the House of Keys, as it was, in other times, a judicial body charged with the duty of interpreting the laws. Any person so bold as to slander this House of Keys was liable not only to a fine in the amount of \$50, but to the loss of both his ears.

Two deacons were once appointed to execute the laws which before the year 1417 were uncodified, and these were known as breast laws, for the reason that they were imparted to the deacons in secret, to be kept by them within the secrecy of their own breasts as long as they chose, or during their absence, though they were authorized to impart and explain to the populace, as much of these special laws as should at any time seem wise and expedient.

Certain of the Manx laws, as set down after the codification, are extremely quaint. Here are a couple of extracts from the Manx legal rulings: "If a man steal a horse or an ox it is no felony, for the offender cannot hide them; but if he steal a capon or a pig he shall be hanged."

"In case of theft, if it amount to the value of six pence halfpenny it shall be felony, and death to the offender; and under that value to be whipped or set upon a wooden horse which shall be provided for such offenders."

Floating Churches.

A novel feature of the vessels building at Cammell Laird's shipyard at Birkenhead for the National Steam Navigation Co. of Greece is the little church which has been fitted on board each vessel.

These floating churches have stained-glass domes, tiny altars, and walls adorned with icons. Standing on the shelter deck and fitted up internally in oak, the church is entered by doors on either side. In addition to the dome, brass-framed rectangular side windows are fitted.

On the occasion of a general service the majority of those attending will, on account of the smallness of the church, have to be accommodated amidships in front of it, and in order that altar and priest may be in full view of those present, altars, which have been arranged in the wall of the church directly opposite the altar.

Landlady Gets Better of Joker.

Sir Robert Ball, who was a keen humorist, was never loath to recount a joke at his own expense. The great astronomer, who was a friend of some friends at Stratford, and when the bill was presented he said to the landlady: "Madam, I am going to give you a lesson in astronomy. It is 25,000,000 years all things must return to their original condition. You shall all be here again eating a dinner precisely identical. Will you give us credit until we come back?"

"Well," replied the landlady, "you were here 25,000,000 years ago, and you left without paying the bill then. Settle that account and I will treat you for what you have had to-day."

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