

Some General Information for Busy People



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He Knew Their Weakness. During the reign of Louis XV. of France the light chaise came into fashion, and great ladies of Paris were accustomed to drive in them about the city. But beautiful hands are not always strong ones. Accidents began to occur more and more frequently in the streets. Consequently says "Das Buch Fur Alle" the king brought the minister of police to do something, since the lives of pedestrians were constantly in danger. "I will do whatever is in my power," replied the police minister. "Your majesty desires that these accidents cease entirely?" "The king replied: "Certainly."

Napoleon's "Nine Lives." The surrender of Napoleon to the captain of the Bellefleur, when that event became known in England, was discredited by many. For at least eight times previously he had been reported dead, says the Westminster Gazette. The list of his deaths published in a contemporary journal is interesting. He lost the first of his nine lives in a battle on the Dnieper, where he received "five mortal wounds and expired as he gave his sword to Prince Kutusoff." Later he was twice drowned, once "while crossing the Mosqua" and again in Moscow, "where he lost his way and fell into a reservoir." During the retreat from Moscow he was suffocated in his tent and a few days later buried 5,000 fathoms deep in a fall of snow. Finally he reached Paris, where his exasperated subjects immediately lynched him. These were some of the many fables concerning Napoleon which found their way into the newspapers a century ago.

Assiniboia. The name of Assiniboia was formerly at different times applied to two districts in Canada, but now belongs properly to none. The first was the district formed in 1835 by the Hudson's Bay company, having in it Fort Gary, at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers, in Rupert's Land. It ceased to exist when Rupert's Land was transferred to Canada in 1870. The second region, known until recently as Assiniboia, was a district of the Northwest territories, given definite existence by an act of the Dominion parliament in 1875. It extended from the western boundary of Manitoba to the line of 111 degrees west and from the parallel of 49 degrees north to 52 degrees north. Saskatchewan lay to the north of the district, and in 1905 the two were united, with slightly different boundaries, under the name of Saskatchewan.

A Curious Wedding Present. Among the Brass river tribes of West Africa when a young couple get married it is the custom for the oldest member of the bride's family to present the bride with a plot of ground six feet long. This is for the grave of her family and herself when they die. The first member of the new family who dies is buried about twenty feet below ground and the next one almost sixteen feet, and this goes on until all the family die and are buried. The grave holds them all, and this, they think, prevents them from being separated. This gruesome wedding present is the one most valued by the bride, the favorite native saying being: "When all other things are gone this remains."

Badly Missed. Hugh had been left with his grandparents when his mother was called away by the illness of his father. A few days after she went away the little fellow said, "I wish I was where mother is." His grandmother said, "Why, just think; if you were there, you would be missing your school," to which he replied: "Yes. But don't you know it is a great deal worse to miss your mother than your school?"—Exchange.

All Extra. "There's some mistake about this bill," said the departing guest. "You told me your rates were \$5 a day." "So they are," said the genial hotel proprietor, "but that's just for having your name on the register. Rooms and board are extra."

Often the Case. Smith—Is your church supported by voluntary contributions, Brother Black? Elder Black (of the colored church).—No, sah, by involuntary contributions, sah! It's jes' like pillin' teeth to get money out of that congregation, yas, sah!

Excellence. Those who attain to any excellence commonly spend life in some one single pursuit, for excellence is not often gained upon easier terms.—Johnson.

The Word "Bridal." Bridal, as meaning a feast to celebrate a wedding, is really "bride ale," "ale" being the term formerly used to indicate the festival in England.

Easy to Take. Voice—Is this the weather bureau? How about a shower tonight? Prophet.—Don't ask me. If you need one take it.

Tale of Three Nations. Some gentlemen were dining together at a hotel when the conversation turned upon the characteristics of different nationalities. "Now," said one of them, "here are three waiters. I will put to each of them the same question, and I will wager a cigar they will give an entirely different answer."

"Agreed?" "Now, Tom," as the first entered with the soup, "what would you take to sit outside the dome of St. Paul's, all night?" "A guinea, sir," answered Tom, with business promptitude. Enter Sandy with the second course, the same question being asked. Sandy (cautiously), "An' what wael ye gie?" Enters Pat with the third course. "Now, Pat, what would you take to sit outside the dome of St. Paul's all night?" "Faith, and I'd take a bad cowid!" The gentleman upon the wager.—London Mail.

Progress. The first day he said, "She is the most beautiful girl I have ever seen." The second day, "She is one of the most beautiful girls I have ever seen." Third, "She is certainly a beautiful girl." Fourth, "She is beautiful." Fifth, "She is rather beautiful." Sixth, "At times she is beautiful." Seventh, "She has beauty." Eighth, "Beautiful? Well, yes." Ninth, "I shouldn't say she is beautiful, but there are times when she is good looking." Tenth, "For the past ten days I have been trying to find out whether she has any brains or not. I have decided that she has not. And I remember very well the first time I met her I thought her beautiful!"

The Original Wedding Cake. Our wedding cake is the remnant of a custom whereby a Roman bride held in her left hand three wheat ears, and many centuries later an English bride wore on her head a chaplet of wheat. The attendant girls threw corn, either in grains or in small bits of biscuit or cake, upon the heads of the newly married couple, and the guests picked up the pieces and ate them. Such was the beginning of the wedding cake, which did not come into general use until the eighteenth century and was then composed of solid blocks laid together and iced all over with sugar so that when the outer crust was broken over the bride's head the cakes inside fell on the floor and they were then distributed among the company.

Travels of a Sapphire. A sapphire of good quality which was cut into a gem weighing one and three-eighths carats was discovered in the gravel along the shore of Lake Okoboji, Dickinson county, Ia., in 1914. It is described as resembling a piece of blue bottle glass worn round and smooth by attrition and is stated to be the corn-flower-blue variety and to have a good, velvety luster. This gem was probably transported to the Lake Okoboji region by ice during the glacial period along with a large variety of other minerals and rocks, and its original home can only be surmised.

At His Own Estimate. "What are the qualifications required to make a successful card player?" asked Mrs. Trumpit casually. "Well, it's hard to say," replied her husband thoughtfully. "A man must be cool, calculating, crafty, cunning and have a touch of meanness in his disposition." "Oh, Frank!" exclaimed his wife in shocked tones. "I should think you would like to play cards with such horrid people!" The husband answered proudly: "That's all right. I nearly always win."—London Answers.

Fortunate. "I wish to thank you for your great forbearance," said the departing guest. "Oh—er—don't mention it," answered the proprietor, with a slightly puzzled look. "I'm glad you're pleased." "Yes," continued the d. e., "considering the rapacity of the attendants in this hotel, I deem myself fortunate in not being locked in my room and held for ransom."

A Case of Having Oneself. Proprietor of a Concert Party (engaging a soprano)—Now, I want you to understand, Miss Deery, that I like my boys and girls to be one big family—no quarrelling, no jealousy. Miss Deery—Oh, that's quite all right! I've never heard anything in the work of any other singer to give me the slightest cause for jealousy.

The Hiding Place. "My dear, I don't think the guests liked your caviar sandwiches." "Why, they are all gone from the table." "Yes, but I found most of 'em inside the grand piano."

Your Opportunity. Life is merely an opportunity, and wasting it or making the most of it is merely a matter of personal choice.

Proved It. Jinks—She's decidedly against rival section. Jenks—I found it out the minute I tried to open my heart to her. Club Fellow. When all is holiday there are no holidays.—Charles Lamb.

Fighting Moles. Two men were walking toward a camp in the Adirondacks. "Just look at that titanic fight," said one. The other, a native, turned his head slowly. "Moles," he said. "They'll kill each other. Watch 'em." "Titanic would have been the word for that struggle had the combatants been of any size except the tiny things they were. Apparently for no reason whatever these dainty bits of fur that furnish the softest known covering for woman had fallen upon each other with the greatest fury at the entrance of a rich bird's nest—the slightest attention to the men who approached within a few feet.

One had a hold at the shoulder, the other nearer the throat, and through out the long battle they never changed grips, but hung on like bulldogs, each braced and pulling in the opposite direction. So it was fiercely a question which skin would tear first. Soon both became quiet, and it was found they were dead. "It always ends that way," said the native, "one or both dead. Come on. It's five miles yet."

Generosity. It often happens that men are very generous with their money, but stingy with their heart. They will give hundreds and hundreds of dollars to the church or charity, but not spare a kind word to their neighbor next door or to the man who comes to collect a bill. A man who is generous in giving to good causes neutralizes his generosity when he is grumpy, peevish, overbearing or insulting. We often hear about untitled money. There is such a thing and in no instance more manifest than where a mean, snarly, spiteful man gives a sum of money to a good cause. It ought to be refused. It will do no good. The track of the serpent is over it all. People should understand that a generous gift cannot cover up their surly nature. This is the reason so many generous gifts turn out without a single generous influence for the good.

Angora Rabbits. The long haired Angora rabbit is a native of Asia Minor. Its name is derived from the province of Angora, where almost all the animals of whatever species have long fine silky hair. Over a hundred years ago the beauty of the Angora rabbit attracted attention, and it was introduced to Europe. The peasants of Switzerland, Savoy and Flanders have long bred the animal, and in those countries Angora rabbits are a source of considerable profit. Soft furry "Angora" caps and mittens and other articles of clothing are knit from yarn spun from the hair of the Angora rabbit. The hair is not shorn periodically, like the fleece of sheep, but is combed off every few months. In the course of a year some three-quarters of a pound of hair is obtained from a single animal.

Children's Pets. Luther Burbank voices his sentiments in favor of children's pets in his system of "Training the Human Plant." "Every child should have mud pies, grasshoppers, water bugs, tadpoles, frogs, mud turtles, elderberries, wild strawberries, acorns, chestnuts, trees to climb, brooks to wade in, water lilies, woodchucks, bats, bees, butterflies, various animals to pet, hay-fields, pine cones, rocks to roll, sand, snakes, huckleberries and hornets, and any child who has been deprived of these has been deprived of the best part of his education. By being well acquainted with all these they come into the most intimate harmony with nature, whose lessons are, of course, natural and wholesome."

Odors in the Arctic. "There is nothing like polar exploration for increasing one's susceptibility to smells." Dr. Nansen told how, when approaching Franz Josef Land, he knew when he was in the neighborhood of a friend whom he had left there in charge of a base. "I smelled his scented soap long before I saw him, and afterward as we approached his hut I believe I could have given a sort of inventory of everything it contained without entering. The odors of the petroleum, coffee, cheese, tea, etc., reached me quite separately and distinctly."

To Cook Bacon. In a dripping pan place a wire cake cooler, and on this lay your slices of bacon. Bake in a hot oven fifteen minutes, when bacon will be brown, crisp and dry and the fat in pan as clear as crystal. This prevents smoke and spluttering which come from frying bacon.

To Bring It Out. "I know I've got a vein of poetry in me, sir," confidently asserted the young man to the editor, "and all I want is a chance to bring it out. What would you suggest, sir?" "I think you had better see a doctor and have it lanced."

Qualified. "We want some one to play Samson," explained the movie manager. "Do you think you could wreck the temple?" "Can I? Well, I've been a baggage-man for eleven years."

The Hayden. The word Hayden, now applied exclusively to a noisy young woman, formerly denoted a person of like character, but of either sex.

Think well over your important steps in life and, having made up your mind, never look behind.

Dynamite. Dynamite if carefully made and kept will not explode except by shock or a blow, hence a cap or detonator is affixed to a charge just before firing to set it off. Set fire in open air dynamite burns merely with a smoky flame, but does not explode unless several sticks are closely piled together or packed in a box. The most common cause of premature explosion of dynamite is separation of its nitroglycerin, slight friction or shock causing this to explode and, in turn, explode the dynamite. Separation of nitroglycerin usually occurs when frozen dynamite is being thawed out; hence so many cases of explosion by careless or ignorant persons who use a perfectly good stove in a course of instruction in how to handle dynamite. The force of a dynamite explosion is usually greatest downward. Thus a stick of dynamite exploded on a rock without being covered will shatter the rock, but will produce little effect in other directions. Like all explosives, dynamite must be enclosed to produce its maximum effect. Dynamite is sometimes prepared in granular form for producing certain explosive effects; but its action is too rapid and intense for use in rifles or cannon.

Great Place For Hunting. The fauna of Uganda is probably unequalled in variety and importance in any other country in the world. On the lakes are found a great number of water birds, storks, cranes, herons, flamingoes, geese, ducks and divers. But the finest are perhaps the huge eagles, which prey on the fish, of which there is a great variety. Hippopotamuses and crocodiles haunt all the waters in the country. On land elephants are found in Buganda, Bunyoro, Buddu, Toro, Busoga, Elgon and the Nile districts; buffaloes are found near the swamps, wild boars, hyenas, leopards and wildcats infest the woods, where smaller creatures, such as squirrels, gray parrots, monkeys and guinea fowl, are found. In the wild and more open country to the north there are rhinoceroses, zebras, ostriches and many varieties of antelope, and throughout the country vultures and kites abound.

A Giant Sun. Canopus, the giant of the stellar system, is, according to a recent calculation of W. E. A. Ellison, 49,000 times as bright as the sun. It is 134 times as large as the sun in diameter, 18,000 times in surface and 2,420,000 times in volume. Its distance from us, according to the same estimate, is 489 light years. Suppose, says Mr. Ellison, that instead of being at this enormous distance it were placed in the center of the solar system in lieu of the sun. It would then occupy eighty-five hundredths of the space lying within the orbit of Venus and, as seen from the earth, would subtend an angle of about seventy degrees of arc. Thus, when its lower limb was on our horizon, its upper would be within twenty degrees of the zenith. Needless to say no life could exist on earth, with such a neighbor.

The Fame of Lens. Lens leaped into fame in the seventeenth century. During the Thirty Years' war between France and Spain Louis II. of Bourbon, known as the Great Condé, achieved one of his most notable victories when, on Aug. 20, 1648, he defeated the Archduke Leopold. On that occasion the celebrated Spanish infantry was completely beaten. Condé was at that time commander in chief of the French forces, and Turéne was his subordinate. The battle began with a panic in Condé's own regiment, but was revived by his own coolness and bravery. In after years he fought for the Spanish against his own country, whence, however, he ended his days in peace, enjoying the society of Moliere and other great Frenchmen of letters. —London Tatler.

Perplexing Plurals. Little Elsie had just reached the grade in school where the study of grammar is a part of the day's work. Among other things she was greatly interested in the singular and plural form of words. She knitted her little brow and looked puzzled when she asked her mother: "Is the plural of bird burden?" "Why, dear, how could you think that?" the mother answered. "Well," explained the child, "father said Willie Blank was a bird, and I heard you say that he and his brothers and sisters were such a burden to their mother."—Exchange.

Tell's Victim. Interested Friend—Is Willie doing well at college this year? Fond Mother—Oh, very! I know he must be studying dreadfully hard because on the other day the president told him he must either change his ways or go somewhere else for his health.

It Was Both. "What do you think of old Uncle Peter devising all his money for the erection of a mausoleum over his remains?" "Awful!" replied the second. "It's just a willful waste." "Huh! I call it a wasteful will."

Kindred Spirits. "You and Grump seem to get along pretty well." "Yes. You see, he never borrows anything but trouble, and that's all I ever had to lend."

Genie finds its own road and carries its own lamp.—Willmott.

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