

## PITHY ITEMS TELLING OF CURIOUS EXPERIENCES THE WORLD OVER

### CURIOUS BLUNDERS.

#### The Anachronisms That Crowded a Once Famous Poem.

The medieval romances are full of anachronisms, making contemporaries of men who were separated sometimes by hundreds, sometimes by thousands, of years, but as historical criticism had not then a being and the general information of the age was not superior in any particular to that of the present, their plans do not amount to much from a literary point of view. An instance is the case of Ariosto, who might be supposed to know something at least of the truth of history, but whose once famous poem, "Orlando Furioso," is a tissue of historical absurdities from beginning to end.

In this poem Charlemagne and his heirs are joined by Edward I. of England, Richard, earl of Warwick; Clarence and the Dukes of York and Gloucester; cannon are employed hundreds of years before the time of Montezuma, and the Moors are represented as established in Spain in spite of the historic fact that 300 years elapsed before they crossed from Africa. In one place Prester John, who lived 400 years after Charlemagne, and Constantine the Great, who died centuries before him, are introduced and hold familiar converse with the great Charles, while in another Merlin and Edward the Confessor are joined by the Black Prince.

#### Audubon and His Hair.

Audubon, the great naturalist, early in his career wore his hair very long. He wrote in his diary one day: "I wear my hair as long as usual. I believe it does as much for me as my paintings." However, in 1827 his friends succeeded in persuading him to get his hair cut according to the prevailing fashion. On March 19 of that year he wrote in his diary: "This day my hair sacrificed and the will of God stamped by the wishes of man. As the latter clipped my locks rapidly it reminded me of the horrible times of the French revolution when the same operation was performed upon all the heads murdered by the guillotine. My hair sank the margin of the page on which this entry was made he painted about three-quarters of an inch of all around.

### A Light on Mothers.

The late William James, Harvard's famous psychologist, would often illuminate a misty subject with an appropriate anecdote. Discussing motherhood in a lecture on psychology, Professor James once said: "A teacher asked a boy this question in fractions: 'Suppose that your mother baked an apple pie and there were seven of you—the parents and five children. What part of the pie would you get for your portion?' 'A sixth, ma'am,' the boy answered. 'But there are seven of you,' said the teacher. 'Don't you know anything about fractions?' 'Yes, ma'am,' said the boy. 'I know all about fractions, but I know all about mother too. Mother 'd say she didn't want no pie.'

### The Misguided Friend.

De Chappie—If there's any one nuisance I hate more than another it's a fellow who is always going around introducing people. There's Goodheart, for instance. Bouttown—What's he been doing? De Chappie—The idiot! The other day he introduced me to a man I owed money to, and I'd been owing it so long he'd forgotten all about me. Now I'll have to pay up or be sued.—London Telegraph.

### Catching On.

Young Mr. Struckett-Ritch was eating his first meal at a real restaurant. "What are those?" he asked, pointing at the finger bowls the waiter had just brought to the table. "Those are to wash your fingers in, sir," said the waiter. "Oh, I know that," rejoined young Struckett-Ritch, with remarkable possession. "I mean are they cut glass?"—Chicago Tribune.

### Betty and the Kitten.

Betty is only four and often in her excitement she makes very odd remarks. The other day she cried out, "Oh, mother, there's a dear maitre kitten all curled up in the corner!"

### A Feat For Willie.

Teacher—Willie, if you had five eggs in the basket and laid three on the table, how many would you then have? Willie—Eight.—Life.

It is better to hold back a truth than to speak it ungraciously.—De Sales.

### STAR GEM OF CEYLON.

#### The Asteria Brought Health and Fortune to its Wearers.

Familiar to some of the ancient writers and credited with supernatural powers, the asteria, or star gem, was highly valued for the benefits supposed to be conferred on the wearer. Its bright six rayed star, ever changing and shifting with every play of light and especially shooting out its flames in the direct sunlight, would seem to be something more than an ordinary crystal, and to the superstitious mind it could readily be believed to embody some tutelary spirit.

#### The particular virtue attributed to this gem was the conferring upon the wearer of "health and good fortune" when worn as an amulet, and to those fortunate to be born in the month of April, with which the stone was associated or represented, the wearer was insured from all evil.

The star stone is found principally in Ceylon, invariably in soil peculiar to rubies and sapphires. Indeed, it is composed of the same constituent "corundum," its charoyant, or star rays, being caused by the pressure of what the natives call "silik." It is found in many different colors, from pale blue, pink and white to deep dark blue, ruby and purple. The blue are termed sapphire stars, the red, ruby stars. It is always cut en cabochon, the star dividing into six rays at the apex. It is next in hardness to the diamond.

### Still Working.

The deaf man got out of the tram car on the other side of rails. "Look out! There's a car coming!" cried the conductor. "What?" said the deaf man. "There's a car coming." "What?" "What?" Just then the car caught and knocked down the deaf man, and as he picked himself up he said: "I wonder what that fool kept me there talking about?"—London Mail.

### Just the Opposite.

An Irishman at a fair got poked in the eye with a stick and took proceedings against the offender. Said the magistrate, "Come, now, you don't really believe he meant to put your eye out." "Faith, you're right this time," said Pat. "for I believe he tried to put it farther in."—London Tit-Bits.

### WILLING TO LEND.

#### Only Her Husband, the Mean Thing, Had Pinched Her Waist!

Men have something to learn from women in the art of warding off "touchers" for coin. Women respond to such requests once in about every thousand cases, but they are scientific in their refusals. A Cleveland woman with a reputation as a borrower turned up at the home of one of her friends the other morning with a much longer story about a persistent and threatening dressmaker and the usual request for the loan—"pay it back tomorrow, certain"—of \$5.

#### "Why, my dear, certainly," was the pleasant response to her carefully rehearsed little yarn, "you poor thing, you! Just wait till I run upstairs and get my purse."

She ran upstairs. The male head of the house happened to be in the room where she kept her purse. He saw her dig the purse out of a chiffonier drawer and deliberately remove a wad of bills from it, leaving about 37 cents in silver and copper in the change receptacle. The man was mean enough to lean over the stair railing when his wife went downstairs to the parlor with her fattened pocketbook in her hand.

"Oh, I'm so sorry, dearie," he heard her say, "but I really thought I had the money. I find, though, that Frank, as usual, has been at my purse—I heard him say something about settling a plumber's bill last night when I was half asleep—and the mean thing has left me only enough for car fare. Too bad! Of course, you know, if I had it"—and so on.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

### The Moral Stimulus of Good Clothes.

Men grow in self respect as they wear good clothes. Their clothes earn them the approval of their fellows. In turn they are forced to grow to fill the measure of good opinion, so that, forced forward by the clothes he wears, men attain to their highest capability.—Sartorial Art Journal.

### The Exception.

"Doesn't your husband like cats, Mrs. Binks?" "No, indeed. He hates all cats except a little kitty they have at his club."—Baltimore American.

A man without patience is a lamp without oil.—De Musset.

### ATE A WHOLE SHEEP.

#### One of the Feats of Nicholas Wood, a Famous Glutton.

The following account of a man named Nicholas Wood, famed for his gluttony, was written by John Taylor, the "water poet" of the seventeenth century: Nicholas Wood was a Kentish yeoman. "Be it known to all men to whom these presents shall come," writes John Taylor, "that I, John Taylor, waterman of St. Saviour's in Southwark, will, with plain truth, bare and unadorned, treat of the remarkable actions of Nicholas Wood.

#### "He hath eaten a whole sheep at one meal; pardon me! I think he left the skin, the wool and bones; and presently after he hath swallowed three pecks of damsons. Two loaves of mutton and one loin of veal are but three sprats to him. Once at Sir William St. Ledger's house, so valiant and staunch of teeth he showed himself, that he ate as much as would suffice thirty men, and afterwards he slept eight hours.

#### "One morning I sent for him to the inn to eat breakfast. He had already eaten one pottle of milk, one pottle of potage, and bread, butter, and cheese. He gave me thanks and said that if he had known any gentleman would have invited him to breakfast he would have spared his meal at home. Nevertheless he would do me the courtesy to show me some small east of his office. Whereupon I summoned the hostess and commanded that all the victuals in the house be laid before my guest.

#### "The inn was slenderly provided, but six-penny loaves were mounted two stories high like a rampart, three six-penny veal pies, one pound of sweet butter, and a number of other dishes were set out, all of which were quickly brought to nothing."

### Not Idle Curiosity.

Mrs. Wanterknowe—I should like to know, Mr. W., why you are so cross when I ask questions. Surely you don't think I have idle curiosity? "Great Scott, no! Yours is the most perilously active, wide awake, sleepless, energetic curiosity it was ever my fate to encounter."

### Another Version.

The latest rendering of the Burns lines "Oh, wad some power," etc., is given in a London evening paper thus: "Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us to see some folk before they see us."

### A Tribute to Woman.

#### When everything around a man staggers and wavers, when all seems dark and dim in the far distance of the unknown future, when the world seems but a picture of a fairy tale and the universe a chimeric vision, the whole structure of ideas vanishes in smoke and all certainties become enigmatical, what is the only pleasant thing which may still be his?

The faithful heart of a woman. There he may rest his head; there he will renew his strength for the battles of life. Increase his faith in Providence and, if need be, find strength to die in peace with a benediction on his lips.—Henri Frederic Amiel.

### Easy Marks.

"Talk about easy marks," said Uncle Silas Cushman, who had been passing a week in the city, "us rubes ain't in it with them air town chaps." "Did yew sell 'em any gold bricks, Silas?" queried old Daddy Squashneck. "Naw, I didn't," answered Uncle Silas, "but I seed a feller peddle artificial ice—seed th' sign right on his wagon—seed th' chumps did not buy it fer th' real thing, by grass!"—Chicago News.

### Lots of Nerve.

Farmer's Son—My father sent me over to borrow your horse and cart. Sho—Goodness! Why, he already has af. our tools, our axes, our hay-rakes, and— He—I know. He just wants the horse and cart to bring them back.—London Telegraph.

### A Baser Motive.

"Yes, he played the last two acts with a broken wrist." "Herolom, eh?" "Not at all. He was afraid to give his understudy a chance."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

### Sooner or Later the World Comes Around to See the Truth and do the Right.—Hillard.

### Had Yachts of Their Own.

McCarthy was boasting of the prominence of his family in bygone ages. "But there were no McCarthys in Noah's ark," said O'Brien. "Our family was very exclusive in those days and had yachts of their own."

## FALLING IN LOVE

As sung in the Opera Bouffe

# "THE CHOCOLATE SOLDIER"

Based on GEORGE BERNARD SHAW'S "ARMS AND THE MAN"

English words by STANISLAUS STANGE

Music by OSCAR STRAUS

*Andante.*

Oh, when you smile and feel like cry-ing, And when you can-not tell the rea-son why,..... You're in when at night you should be sleep-ing You rest-less lie and toss a-bout the bed,..... You're in

love when you smile while you are cry-ing, Or when you laugh when you would rather sigh,..... I am no love when you watch the shadows creep-ing, Or when at dawn you rise with ach-ing head,..... I am no

schem-er, nor a fool-ish dream-er, I am a girl, a girl of com-mon sense,.... But could I

find a true and hon-est lov-er, Oh, I would love him with a love in-tense,.....

I am he, yes, I am he the lov-er you seek, I..... Oh, when you smile and feel like dy-ing, Or when you laugh while you are sigh-ing, and you can give no rea-son why, But still you long to sing or cry, Oh, when the woods to you are call-ing, It is a sign that you are fall-ing, fall-ing in love, yes, deep in love, fall-ing

fall-ing, deep in love, Then

*p dolce.* *pp* *pp*

### DRAGONS IN AFRICA.

#### Possibility That Fabled Monsters Yet Live in Dark Continent.

Once again the report comes from Africa that terrible monsters hitherto unknown to naturalists inhabit the hot swamps and jungles of the unexplored interior. This time it is in the form of a letter from Charles Brooks, explorer, scientist and hunter, of Johannesburg, to Capt. John Cutting, of the New York Maritime Exchange. Mr. Brooks writes that natives of the swamps of northern Rhodesia along the southern borders of the Sahara Desert have told him of creatures so big that beside them "elephants look like small cats."

#### It is less than a year since Carl Hagenbeck, the famous animal trainer and merchant, astonished the scientific world by asserting in his book, "Beasts and Men," that the natives had described to him a "huge monster, half beast, half dragon, which inhabited these very swamps."

#### Would it not seem strange if some such brute should be discovered alive to-day and thus lend corroboration to the centuries old stories of dragons? For centuries the world has believed that those tales of monsters were fables and that dragons existed only in the imagination of poets. Yet there is no doubt that the people of the Middle Ages really believed in dragons. And the belief was not confined to any one land. From time immemorial the dragon has been the heraldic symbol of China. The ancient Greek heroes slew dragons—did not Perseus rescue Andromeda from the jaws of Medusa the Gorgon before it and turning it into stone? The hoary sagas of the Norsemen tell of dragons—did not Siegfried challenge Fafner to mortal combat and slay him? The legends of the Christian saints are full of stories of dragons; that of St. George has been painted by many an artist and is perpetuated to this very day on the gold coinage of Great Britain.

#### There was a day when the earth was populated with dragons. Their bones have been dug up all over the world and may be seen by anyone in any museum. But these bones are the last of them perished at least 4,000,000 years ago. In their day the earth was hot and moist; the land was covered with a vast tropical jungle and, so far as science has been able to discover, had not yet made his appearance.

#### And yet—the Chinese, the Greeks, the Jews, the Norsemen, the Gauls and Britons and Romans and Persians of the dark ages knew nothing of the bones of extinct monsters lying buried under the earth. Whence then their conceptions of dragons? May it not be that these beasts and reptiles of millions of years gone by survived to a later day than the geologists are willing to confess and that men actually fought and slew them? If such be the case the memory or the tradition of such fearsome combats would linger in the mouths of men and be transmitted from father to son in story and song, generation after generation. How else account for the almost universal belief in dragons that prevailed down to comparatively modern days?

#### And would it be so very strange if in the hot swamps of Central Africa some descendants of these primeval monsters had survived throughout the ages? For these are regions which still resemble the world-wide forests of millions of years ago. They are almost impenetrable, even to the natives, by reason of the heat, the moisture and the mephitic vapors that rise from those immemorial marshes. White men have never yet ventured to explore them. They are too remote and the dangers are too great. These dangers are from reptiles, insects and disease. Surely such regions might very well serve to harbor alive through the ages the dragons that roamed the world millions of years ago.

### He Knew His Business.

A good story of the "borrowing habit" comes from abroad. A lady who had gone to live in Shanghai was compelled soon after her arrival to entertain some important business friends of her husband. Her finest china, glass and so forth had not yet arrived from England. Nevertheless she determined to give a dinner, and called in her "No. 1 boy." "Now, boy," she said impressively, "I entertain three gentlemen. You make it all best possible. Must be nice everything." Bowing and scraping, he went off to inform the other seven servants. The next evening as she ushered her guests into the dining room she gasped in amazement. Before her was a table spread with the most exquisite linen, cut glass, silver and delicate china. Over it all hung a gorgeous cut-glass chandelier. Course after course was served as if by magic. The instant she could leave her guests she sought her "No. 1 boy." "Boy, boy!" she exclaimed, "where you get such beautiful things?" The boy beamed with satisfaction. "Everything very nice, best possible! Me very good friend Russian ambassador's 'No. 1 boy'; Russian ambassador go out to dinner. Me borrow. Very nice, very nice!"

### Didn't Like Canadian Wine.

"I have never met a kinder old gentleman, or one I like more, than that Notaire," writes a representative of London Bystander of his trip through Canada, "though he did give me Canadian wine to drink. It was a sort of port or sherry, or both mixed, and it had the genuine oily taste. But it also seemed to have some vinegar in it, and some fruit salts. I like trying things however."

### At Vesuvius.

Samantha—Oh, Zeke, ain't that marvelous? Zeke—Oh, I dun'no. Reckon we've got somethin' what kin put it out. Aain't never been to Niagara, have ye?