

Humorous Department.

Diamonds to the Dogs.—John Barrett, director of the International Bureau of American Republics, was telling of an entranced dinner party of the vast stores of jewels owned by some of the princes of India. He is a great word painter, is John, and he dazzled those present with his tale of diamonds and pearls and rubies and such, dazzled everybody but one quiet chap who sat at the end of the table, listening intently.

When Barrett had finished the quiet man said: "I remember once when I was traveling in Mexico and I came across the cabin of a miner and prospector. He had been there for many years, had married an Indian woman and had had a dozen children. I stayed over night with him and he told me of the richness of the country."

"I politely doubted one of his statements, and he called in his wife and spoke to her in the parlors of the land. Turning to me he said: 'I'm sorry I can't prove it just now, but if you will wait a couple of days I will get some more.'"

"Some more what?" I asked. "Some more diamonds. You see, the last two barrels of diamonds I fetched in are all lost. The children got at them and threw them at the dogs."

Did As He Was Told.—Some years ago the Yankee scout, Sully Ann, under command of Capt. Spooner, was heading up the Connecticut river. Mr. Comstock, the mate, was at his station forward. According to his notion of things the schooner was getting a "leety" too near certain mud flats which lay along the larboard shore, so he went to the captain, and with his hat cocked on one side, said: "Cap'n Spooner, you're getting a leety too close to them flats. Hadn't ye better go about?"

The captain glared at him. "Mr. Comstock, jest you go forward and tend to your part of the skuner. I'll tend to mine."

Mr. Comstock went forward in high dudgeon. "Boys," he belloved out, "see that we have hook's all clear for lettin' go!" "Ay, ay, sir!"

"Let go, then!" he roared. Down went the anchor, out rattled the chains, and like a flash the Sully Ann came luffing into the wind, and then brought up all standing. Mr. Comstock walked aft and touched his hat.

"Well, cap'n, my part of the skuner is to anchor."—Bluejacket.

Once in a While. Mr. Justice Brewer of the United States supreme court, told this story on himself in an after-dinner speech a time ago:

"In my early days, when I was on the bench, I had a very good friend who was counsel in several actions before me. It so happened that most of my decisions, in these cases, were against my friend."

"After court adjourned one day he came to my chambers to have a chat with me, and while we were talking a very young country boy came in with a card of introduction, asking for my advice on the choice of a profession."

"What do you want to do?" I asked him. "I think I would like to be a lawyer."

"Why do you want to be a lawyer?" "Oh, because I think it must be fine to be a judge. I make it judges out of lawyers, don't they?"

"Before I had a chance to reply my friend broke in and said: 'Once in a while they do, my boy, but not often.'"

Jackson's Cocktails.—The latest drink in Kansas is the Jackson cocktail. It is a drink intended to avoid trouble with the Kansas prohibitory law and Fred Jackson, attorney-general, for whom it was named. It can be purchased anywhere in Kansas and at any time, and the chap that sells it is never in danger of a prosecution, and the fellow that buys it never will be brought into court as a witness.

Miscellaneous Reading.

PROFITS BY ACCIDENT.

Sometimes Happens by Accident, But Not Often. In any line of business a mistake usually means a loss. Make an error in a specification or a bid or an order and you will suffer for it ninety-nine times out of a hundred. It may be contrary to the laws of chance, but it is a fact, nevertheless, and any business man will attest it, possibly in impolitely emphatic language. If you seek an explanation it is to be found in the theory of the Total Degradity of the Inanimate Thing which any philosopher will demonstrate from the customary performance of a dropped shirt-stud. Yet there are times when, instead of disappearing, the button will remain in plain view. So are there occasions when an accident will result in a profit. Keep that in mind and then turn your attention to Wall Street, where they harvest a bumper crop of blunders every working day in the year.

Strange as it may seem, Wall Street makes errors with great ease and frequency in the transaction of its ordinary routine business. That conflicts with the popular notion, but it is true, nevertheless. There is much boasting of the precision of the delicately-adjusted machinery whereby the stock market is conducted. The facilities and safeguards provided by an intricate stock exchange system also get much publicity. But you will find one of the ways to get above all such much shipping and grinding and clashing there is, and of the dollars clashing when the gears do not mesh. The accidents are numerous and their results frequently are illogical. They testify with some eloquence to the character of the game of stock speculation.

Most of these errors are penalties paid for speed. On the American plan, speculation calls for that, above all things. Nine tenths of all speculative operations are conceived in impulse and executed in great haste. Stock exchange transactions must be handled with the utmost dispatch. Your Wall Street man resembles somewhat the lily of the field. He does not spin and his raiment often exceeds Solomon's glory. But he does hustle. He works always at top speed with his muffer out. His motto is, "Be both quick and accurate, but anyhow, be quick." His pencil is too slow, so he uses it as little as possible and does things vocally. Every day he makes thousands of transactions, each involving thousands of dollars, with a shout or a nod or a mere gesture. Every one of these he concludes and settles for within twenty-four hours. Always he is precipitate, headlong. Necessarily, therefore, he makes mistakes and, as a result, he considers them unavoidable. He treats them as part of the day's work. Every stockbroker carries upon his books an Error Account that is always open for entries. Hundreds of disputes arise from misunderstandings; misconstructions have to be adjusted daily; and the various exchanges maintain arbitration committees to settle those that are troublesome. Every one having to do with the business of the stock market, the broker and the office boy, plunger and piker, can tell his own story of some order misunderstood, some figure mistaken, some instruction overlooked, some accident encountered.

Now, it is the nature of the Wall Street game that errors involve much money. On the stock exchange values change not every minute, but every second. Really, therefore, a considerable loss is not infrequently incurred by a variation in prices; and the smallest possible change means a difference of \$12.50 in the value of every hundred shares concerned. So it is obvious that a blunder involving five hundred or one thousand shares may also involve a great deal of money within a very short time, and the amount is likely to vary rapidly if the error is not righted. But it does not follow that the money boy, plunger and piker, can tell his own story of some order misunderstood, some figure mistaken, some instruction overlooked, some accident encountered.

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of the stock of old Northern Pacific railroad which it acquired through an error and which now is without value. The shares were assessed when the Northern Pacific property was reorganized and the firm, refusing to throw good money after bad, did not pay up. Consequently, its stock was wiped out.

Back in the days when Governor Roswell P. Flower was the foremost citizen of Wall Street he was conducting a daring and spectacular bull campaign in half a dozen stocks, one of the most conspicuous of them being Federal Steel. Later, that company was taken in the United States Steel corporation, but at the time, it was a popular stock exchange football. One day, when Federal Steel had been made particularly active and buoyant by Flower manipulation, a firm of young brokers received by telephone from a client an order to sell three hundred shares of the stock. In some way an additional cipher found its way into the order, so that when it reached the stock exchange it was for three thousand shares instead of three hundred, and that amount was sold just before the closing of business. The error was discovered too late to be rectified, and consequently the firm was obliged to remain short over night of the twenty-seven hundred shares that it had over-sold. There was every prospect that the stock would climb still higher next day, and the partners in the firm spent their evening calculating how much the mistake would cost them. But that afternoon Governor Flower traveled down to a summer resort, exercised too violently, sat down to cool off, and helped himself liberally to a dish of radishes. Acute indigestion followed, and he died that night. Next morning the market opened with the Flower stocks demoralized, and the twenty-seven hundred shares of Federal Steel, over which three young brokers had been worrying greatly, were bought in at a profit of something like \$5,000. If there had been time the day before they would have been bought in at a loss, and those three young men would have missed a personal experience tending to show that speculation can hardly be regarded as an exact science.—Robert S. Winsmore in Saturday Evening Post.

THE MOUND BUILDERS. The mysterious people who built the mounds were not a race of rovers. An infinitely long time must have been required for erecting each huge earth shape. Nor were they ignorant savages, for the mounds show deep knowledge of geometry as well as of astronomy and of the principles of building. Carefully laid out military fortifications abound in the mound builders' country, indicating that the aborigines had martial lore and engineering skill and that they understood many modern principles of attack and defense.

There are also sepulchral mounds, some of them sixty feet high, etc., as well as copper utensils and bits of pottery. The bones when exposed to air crumble at once to dust. As the bones of Europeans who died twenty centuries ago are often found intact and strong, many authorities believe the mound builders date back at least several centuries before the time of Julius Caesar.

Cleverly made pottery and copper bronze implements of war and peace are found all through the mounds. Ancient abandoned copper mines on the banks of Lake Superior show that the mound builders well understood the art of mining. The workmanship of the copper bracelets, bronze knives, etc., prove their skill at the forge.

In one of the prehistoric Lake Superior mines has been found a mass of copper weighing eight tons, resting on a high platform, ready for removal to the upper earth. This implies the use of well constructed mine machinery. Pictures that have been found etched upon copper and ivory portray much artistic skill.

From all this it seems that in some remote age the central part of North America was inhabited by a race of warlike, industrious, decidedly civilized beings who had splendid skill at building, at the arts of mining, engineering and higher mathematics and who flourished apparently during numerous centuries. Yet so long ago did the mound builders cease to exist that in all Indian folklore there is no mention, no memory, of them.

None know where the Indians themselves came from. Yet they apparently settled in America long after the mound builders had vanished. The skulls discovered in the mounds are not of the least like skulls of Indians nor even of Europeans. Some archaeologists claim to find strong resemblance between the mound builders' skulls and those of the ancient Egyptians. If there were any connection between the two, who can explain how an Egyptian race chanced to flourish in the middle west?

The fate of the mound builders is as mysterious as the strange people themselves. After reaching so high a civilization and thriving for so long a time it seems strange that they should have been completely destroyed. No satisfactory explanation has ever been offered. Perhaps the mound builders moved south and became merged with the Mexican Aztecs or Peruvians, or some savage race from the north may have swept down and utterly destroyed them, or a wholesale pestilence may have wiped out their nation.

The weird looking earthen monuments (the purpose of most of them is a puzzle to the best archaeologists) are the sole remaining proof that this great lost American race ever existed.—New York World.

RURAL CARRIERS' ASSOCIATION.

President Wicker Active in Work of the Organization. Newberry News and Herald. Mr. Thos. E. Wicker, president of the Rural Letter Carriers' association of this state, has been very active and exerting his best efforts to increase interest in the association, and to enlist the co-operation of all the letter carriers in the state. Mr. Wicker in order to secure, as far as possible, the attitude of the government officials and congressmen towards the association, addressed a communication to Congressman Alkon, requesting his opinion of the subject. In reply, Mr. Wicker has received from Congressman Alkon, the following letter: Abbeville, S. C., Aug. 21, 1909. Mr. Thomas E. Wicker, Newberry, S. C.

Dear Sir: Your letter asking what I believed to be the attitude of the government toward the rural carriers, and especially with reference to the carriers' organization, was duly received. I am sure that the government, and especially congress, is disposed to do the best for the carriers that the circumstances each year will permit. I am also sure that the government does not look with disfavor upon the carriers' organization. It recognizes the right of the carrier to present his cause in the most forcible and intelligent manner, and this he can do only through organization, bringing him in touch with his fellow carriers.

The carriers, in their organized capacity, can render valuable aid to state and Federal officials in enforcing demands, but to present its requests intelligently and forcefully. I speak as a friend of the rural carrier. My first speech in congress was in support of a bill, proposing to pay rural carriers something like adequate compensation. I was the first to introduce such bills introduced; and from time to time since, I have aided in the passage of similar measures still further improving the carrier's condition. I have felt that the rural carrier was not fairly treated when compared with the mail carrier, and I have felt no little pleasure in the increasing recognition that he has found in congress. I do not hesitate to say that the association has given me valuable data, and except for organization, I do not believe that the data would have been easily obtainable. All carriers should be in the beneficial work of the organization; it seems but fair that all should unite in making it as effective as possible. Very truly yours, Wyatt Alkon.

Women of the Circus. The woman of the circus leads a much more careful life than her sister of the stage. Of her diet she must be critically careful, for in performance a mistake of an inch means death, and to be in the best physical condition she must pay the price in a life almost ascetic. The girl who spends the working hours of her life flying through the air, 30 feet above the hard tankard, can not take any chances.

They are genuine women, too. For instance, it is told of one remarkable trapeze artist that she is always afraid when she is on railroad tracks, in that this is the one feature of the life of the circus that she fears. Another, who is a notable tight rope artist and capers and dances on the slender surface of a thin wire, 25 feet above the ground, is afraid to cross the streets in a crowded city.

They know the danger of their calling. Accidents happen right along, but they are not published to the world, for the circus must ever carry a message of cheerfulness. But insurance companies, though they will grant insurance to a locomotive engineer, will never do so to a circus acrobat.

Even on the road there is plenty of domestic life to be found among these women. Many of them are great readers. The foreign performers spend a large part of their time learning the language of this country. Some have sons or brothers at college.

An interesting point about the life of the circus that would commend it to most any woman is the fact that it seems to be a sort of panacea to old age. The open-air life, the constant exercise and the careful regime have their reward.

Most performers of any merit are well paid, and the life on the road is sufficiently economical to enable them to save a considerable proportion of this salary. This money is largely put into handsome homes, where during the off season the woman of the circus can be for the time actually the woman of the home, her dearest ambition.—Exchange.

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