Saved by a Sparrow

HERE is an absolutely true story of a little bird, just a common sparrow of the mountain foothills, but, possibly, no stranger case of bird instinct has ever been chronicled.

One raw, rainy October day, while the engine of an express train was standing at a water tank on a lonely side track in eastern Colorado, the engine driver was surprised to see a sparrow fly in the cab window and perch upon the throttle at the boiler head. The little fellow made himself at home there and set to making his toilet, for his feathers were very wet.

Not wishing to drive the tiny visitor away, and with a desire to see how long he would remain after the train began to move, the engine driver reached carefully for the throttle and succeeded in putting the big machine in motion without frightening the bird.

After having thoroughly dried himself the sparrow hopped down from his strange perch and sat for several moments in a corner on the engine driver's cushion, evidently enjoying his ride, after which, with a chirp, he flew out of the window and away.

The engine men forgot the incident as they dashed on over the foothills and through the village. Two days passed; the engine had returned, and was again east bound, with the same engine driver. It drew up for water at the same tank, and the driver was astonished to receive another visit from the little bird. Then they named him Mike, and at the same place Mike flew in the cab window whenever that particular engine passed on its eastbound trips. It mattered not whether the train was on time or late, funny little Mike knew in some way. He never made a mistake in engines and never boarded any other.

You must know that trainmen are a very superstitious lot; nearly as much so as the men at sea; so it came about that the engine driver friend of the bird looked upon him as a mascot. He brought little seeds and cracker crumbs on each trip, and, strange as it may seem, the little fellow soon became so tame that he would perch upon the man's hand and eat the dainties. Here was a sparrow, wild and free to go where he wished, yet tame and happy for a half hour or more every few days in the cab of a great, throbbing, roaring, screeching locomotive, for neither the shrill blast of the whistle nor the clank of the great bell nor the popping of the safety valve caused him to evince the slightest fear.

The season grew late; frost had come and autumn had put her last tints on vine and tree and shrub. No longer were heard along the streams the mournful cries of the "knee deep." The woods had grown still and one day the engine driver carried the seed and the crumbs in his vest pocket past the tank and on to the end of the run, for no Mike came to receive his dinner. He was greatly missed, but the engine men knew that their friend must have taken flight to the sunny southland for the winter, and he was not forgotten through all the dreary trips that were made across the bleak country. With the breaking up of cold weather Mike's coming was eagerly watched for.

Would he come again. Had he forgotten his grime-stained friends of the engine cab? Could a little bird not much larger than a man's thumb think long enough at a time to find his way back to the vicinity of that water tank?

The grass came again; the trees took on their summer garb; here and there could be seen an occasional bird.

And Mike?

He came one day. For some time the engine driver had carried food for his friend in his pocket, to make sure that there would be no disappointment. So when with a peep, peep, the little sparrow flew in the window of the big, panting machine, with as much confidence as if he had never missed a trip, he found his repast ready.

* * * * * * * * *

A cold, sobbing rain was soaking the brown fields of autumn. The streams were swollen and the railroad track was soft. At the tank Mike appeared as usual and perched upon the throttle of the engine; minutes passed into a half hour, an hour, an hour and a half, yet the bird showed no sign of leaving, as he had always done before, and the engine driver grew uneasy.

"Mike makes me nervous," at last he said to the fireman; "never stayed so long. This means something."

The fireman shook his head ominously.

The train approached a portion of the road where the track wound for several miles along a narrow bed on the side of a canyon, where there were numerous trestles and small bridges. The engine driver on the right and the fireman on the left side of the cab leaned far out of the windows peering ahead as the dizzy height was being passed over. Suddenly Mike flew to the engine driver's hand which rested on the throttle, chirped fast and loud for several seconds and darted from the engine. The occurrence so startled the engine driver that he nervously shut off the steam and applied the brakes. As he did so the fireman gave a cry of alarm, and in another instant a great mass of rocks and dirt and trees crashed down the mountain side and on to the track, carrying with it a bridge. With a deafening roar the mass rolled on into the chasm below, missing the engine by only a few yards. Had the train not been stopped where it was the landslide must have swept it into the awful depths.

Mike was never seen afterward. What became of him, of course, nobody knows.

You may call it instinct chance or what you wish, but the fact remains that the little sparrow saved the train with its burden of human freight from destruction.—Chicago Chronicle.

MIKE APPEARED AS USUAL, PERCHED UPON THE THROTTLE.

ESAU THE CHIMPANZEE.

Apes May Gain Brain Power by Associating with Human Beings.

Esau, I believe, is appearing at a London music hall as a member of the company, and goes through various antics by way of showing the high degree of intelligence he possesses. Those of us who know something of champanzee ways and of the high brain type the animal exhibits are not surprised that an individual ape, here and there, will go far ahead of his fellows under domestication.

Only I take leave to remark that a music hall is hardly the sphere in which the educational development of the animal can be duly carried out. To my mind there is something pathetic and calling for pity in the sight of an ape being made to "perform" for the amusement of the crowd. The scientific side of the matter would be represented by the further training of the chimpanzee in private and the careful watching of his ways. A story has been circulated that Esau is to be taken to Germany to undergo an operation on his tongue, in the hope, presumably, of loosening that member and of giving him a chance of speech.

Anything more ridiculous than this idea could hardly have been conceived. Esau has his own language ready made. People who expect him to talk forget that language is a matter of brain, not of tongue or muscles only, writes Dr. Andrew Wilson in the London Chronicle. Imitative acts might be cultivated in the chimpanzee to a surprising extent. If the dog, with a much lower brain, has benefited by his long association with man, one may well speculate on the development of brain power which would be possible in a champanzee had that race had the advantage of human companionship for many centuries.

Bob Burdette to Young Men.

Remember, son, that the world is older than you are by several years; that for thousands of years it has been so full of smarter and better young men than yourself that their feet stuck out of the dormer windows; that when they died the old globe went whirling on, and not one man in ten millions went to the funeral. Don't be too sorry for your father because he knows so much less than you do. Remember the reply of Dr. Wayland to the students of Brown University, who said it was an easy enough thing to make proverbs such as Solomon wrote. "Make a few," tersely replied the old man. The world has great need of young men, but no greater need than the young men have for it. Your clothes fit better than your father's fit him; they cost more money and they are more stylish; your mustache is neater; the cut of your hair is better. But, young man, the old gentleman gets the biggest salary, and his homely, scrambling signature on the business end of a check will drain more money out of the bank in five minutes than you could get out with a ream of paper and a copper-plate signature in six months.

Pay of Turkish Ministers.

A Turkish ministerial portfolio is a sort of gold-mine to the holder. It is not the Vizier, however, who holds the richest claim, though his salary is $60,000 a year, which is also that of the War Minister. The "plum" of Turkish officials is the admiralty, which is worth $84,000 a year, and the present holder is stated to have amassed a fortune of $12,000,000. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has $44,000, and finance comes next with a thousand lower, financial ability being apparently esteemed in inverse ratio to the need for it. The lowest salary is that of the Minister of Mines, though it is rather higher than that of the Premier of Great Britain. The sum is $27,800.

Personal Observation.

"Do you think that riches bring happiness?" said the philosopher.

"Beyond a doubt," answered Senator Sorghum. "I can point out a number of members of the legislature who have been made happy by my money."—Washington Star.

CABINET OFFICERS EARN EVERY DOLLAR OF THE SALARIES THEY RECEIVE.

"THE position of cabinet officer must be a snap in Washington," remarked a visitor to a resident official friend in the office of an uptown hotel this morning. "I would like to have the office 'tendered' to me. The alacrity with which I would 'accept the portfolio' would be astonishing."

"But there might be reasons why you would not accept," replied the official. "The position is very far from a snap, as you say, and I, being a poor man, would, for one man in the capital, decline the honor, no matter how much I might secretly desire the office.

"There is not a member of a cabinet, with possibly an exception here and there, who gets out of the game for less than $20,000 a year and no one under $10,000 or $12,000. To properly maintain the position of cabinet officer, and to live upon the salary would entail the practice of economy which would be quite unusual. A member of the house can live—and many practically do—upon his mileage, but not a member of the cabinet upon his salary. I have known of many members of different cabinets who have spent from $30,000 to $150,000 a year. In the Senate and House combined there are scores of men who have practically no incomes other than their salary of $5,000 a year. These men work for what may be properly termed their wages.

"Cabinet officers do not work for their salaries; they merely accept what the Congress decided a century or two ago, in stage coach days, to be adequate compensation. The salary of the office did not enter into their calculations in ninety-nine cases out of 100 when their portfolio was tendered them.

"When a cabinet officer is a wealthy man, as most of them usually are, they work for a variety of reasons. Some have wives who have social ambitions and tastes which cannot be gratified in their former environments. Others work for the personal pleasures, the privileges and the honors the position bestows, the last being more or less passed down to their posterity. Others give up $100,000 a year income, toil like messengers over their desks by day and eat official dinners at night for reasons past finding out. Some believe, usually erroneously, however, and occasionally correctly, that service in the cabinet may prove of future use to them in presidential conventions or in senatorial elections. Dozens of members of the cabinet have resigned before the end of the first two years.

"The pay is incommensurate with the responsibilities and the work. A cabinet officer once said to me: 'My salary pays my house rent and gas bills. My work is performed solely for love; it is uncompensated, and, upon the theory that the laborer is worthy of his hire, I am going back home and gather up the stray strings to my scattered income," and home he went shortly afterward.

"To the feminine members of a cabinet officer's family the rule is reversed. They get about $1,000,000 a year each out of it in the gratification of their personal ambitions and desires and the fun they have.

"You often hear men say: 'I would go into the cabinet for $8,000 a year.' These men can't get in. Ninety-five per cent of the cabinet officers of the United States, who are not multimillionaires, serve their country at a sacrifice, and the latter do, too, to a certain extent. Upon a single meeting of the cabinet may hang the fate of hundreds of thousands of lives and the expenditure of billions of money. yet the men who thus are to pass judgment are paid salaries on a par with the cashier in a New York bank of small size."

"I should think that Congress would properly increase the pay of cabinet officers."

"My friend, you do not understand Washington life. For over a century there has been a deadly social feud between the members of the Senate and the members of the cabinet. Up to the time of the passage of the presidential succession act, placing the cabinet in line for succession to the presidency in the event of death, the Senators had the best of it, but to-day the wives of the cabinet members carry the trophy flag. There is no immediate prospect of the passage of the bill you suggest."—Washington Star.

ENGLAND'S NAVY TO BE INCREASED BY ADDITION OF THIRTY-ONE NEW VESSELS.

THE naval program of the British government for the coming financial year is bold and comprehensive, says the London correspondent of the Washington Star. Although the details of the ships to be ordered are not yet drawn up, it has been decided to order thirty-one new fighting vessels, exclusive of a river gunboat, a new admiralty yacht, and a surveying ship. The new program includes three battleships, three armored cruisers, four scouts, fifteen destroyers, ten submarines and two coast guard cruisers. Even the "forward group," who desire the navy to be increased at the expense of the army, will be satisfied at the estimates, which propose a net increase of the naval expenditure of £3,250,000, compared with the last year.

Exclusive of £1,250,000 met by appropriations, the total expenditure will be £34,500,000. The personnel will be 127,000, a net increase of 4,600, for which £619,000 increase is taken. The biggest increase, however, is £2,250,000 for new construction, principally in contract work. The item for armaments has decreased by £150,300 to £3,250,000, but there is an increase of nearly £500,000 in works.

Those who have complained in the past that the naval authorities appear to have been asleep while other countries were making a great fuss over the doings of their submarines will be particularly pleased with the statement explaining the navy estimates. The admiralty have been active in the matter of submarines and before long England should have a nice little fleet of these queer craft. A year ago five of these vessels were under construction and they have been delivered.

Trials will shortly commence to test their practical utility, both for defense and attack, and one may expect to hear some interesting details. Meanwhile four vessels of an improved type have been laid down, and it is hoped they will be completed before the end of March, 1904. One of the four has so far advanced that preliminary trials have begun, but secrecy is maintained as to the results. Evidently they have been satisfactory, for it is proposed to build ten more.

DON'T DROP BEHIND.

No Woman Should Lose Her Hold Upon Progress and Growth.

Oftentimes one hears a woman complain that she is losing her hold on progress—that she hasn't time to read and to keep up generally.

Why has she dropped behind? Some women do not. Under any circumstances, amid any surroundings, they develop. Take them into a log cabin in the wilderness and they return to civilization and talk so delightfully about their experiences that everyone envies them the chance of the wilderness and the joys of the log cabin. In their success one finds a hint of the possibility of catching up with the procession, and keeping up with it, too. What is their secret of progress, where other women fall out of the line of advance?

One woman, relates Harper's Bazar, who lived in the most out-of-the-way place in all Texas for some ten years, and came back more charming than she went, explained it thus: "I never let either my dress or my mind get careless. There is a great deal in girding up one's loins, as the Bible advises, and keeping them girded. Once loosen everything and you dissolve in sloth, and lose ground before you know it." She was determined not to drop behind, and, having the will, she found the way. She kept up her correspondence with many friends, subscribed for a New York newspaper, and read it regularly, even if a trifle late, and studied with so much interest the life of the far-away spot where she lived, its people, its animals, its plants, its customs and incidents, that when she came back to her Eastern home and talked to her friends about it, every woman of them sighed and said: "Oh, what an opportunity you had in being there!" instead of commiserating her for having been a thousand miles from a woman's club.

GREATNESS OF INVENTIONS.

True Measure Their Service to Society in Influence on Civilization.

The greatness of inventions is measured not by their ingenuity nor by the fortunes they make for their originators or others, for that is a small matter, but by the service which they render to society and by their influence on civilization. I had intended, therefore, to interpret briefly some of the great inventions, to show how the most destructive weapons of war are life-savers and peace-preservers; how the telephone will affect morals and elevate the standard of honor; how the arc light serves as good police; how the elevator is affecting social problems by piling one city on top of another; how the ocean cables, the telegraph and wireless telegraphy are creating new world-conditions which are producing a new world-life, and how the bicycle and the automobile, by securing for us better roads, will not only increase the wealth, but also improve the intellectual and moral life of the country, but the limits of this article forbid.

If inventions are to be measured by their effects, by far the greatest in the history of the world was the invention of the steam engine. In 1769, the same year in which the Duke of Wellington and Napoleon Bonaparte were born, James Watt patented his steam engine, which was destined to exert more influence in shaping the world's future than both of these great captains put together. From the beginning, man has had to struggle with nature for his life. She scorched him; she frosted him; she starved him; she smote him with disease; she overawed and terrorized him; her winds buffeted him; her waters drowned him. Before her lightnings, her floods, her cataracts, her avalanches, her tempestuous seas, he was powerless. Against the measureless forces of nature he could oppose only his puny arm. On that arm he must rely to wrest from her his food, fuel, raiment, and shelter. Such was the unequal contest for long thousands of years. But to-day nature is man's servant; her mighty forces do his bidding, and run his errands.—Dr. Josiah Strong, in Success.

A Human Candle.

Candidate for Mayor—I have found something beside a candle that will answer that old riddle, "The longer it stands the shorter it grows."

Friend—What is it?

Candidate for Mayor—A candidate. The longer he stands for office the shorter he grows financially.—Baltimore American.

Japanese Calendars for America.

One of the prettiest calendars of the year hails from Japan. It is bound with quaint Oriental jingles in a small book which is illustrated by Japanese artists and printed on the delicate rice paper.

Boys and Girls

Little Stories and Incidents that Will Interest and Entertain Young Readers

Little Pud and the Bumblebee.

A round little lad stuck his nose one day
In a hollyhock big and red
That leaned o'er the walk in inviting way
Just over his curly brown head.
He stood on his toes and poked in his nose
To take o fits sweets a good smell,
But quickly he stopped and on the walk dropped
With a lusty and agonized yell.

Forth from the flower a big bumblebee
Came booming and buzzing like mad,
Resentful and angry mostly plainly was he
At Pud Boy, the round little lad.
To have a fat boy poke in and annoy
A bee at a feast, I suppose,
Arouses his ire, and so, all afire,
He stings the fat boy on the nose.

And little Pud Boy, when his hurt was well
And gone was the terrible pain,
Remembered, and into a flower's cell
His nose never ventured again;
In fear he would flee at th sight of a bee
As fast as he could from the spot;
And then he would say in very wise way:
"'At bug's little foots is too hot!"
—Brooklyn Eagle.

Boys Are Great Apple Eaters.

What would the boy of to-day do without apples? Wherever you see a lot of apples there are sure to be boys around ready to devour them, and no boy considers life worth living unless his pockets are bulging full of the fruit.

The fruit-eating proclivities of the boy has little reference to the state of his appetite. Whether he be full of meat or empty of meat he wants the apple just the same. Before meal or after meal it never comes amiss. The farm boy munches apples all day long. He has nests of them in the hay mow, mellowing, to which he makes frequent visits. Sometimes old Brindle, having access through the open doors, smells them out and makes short work of them.

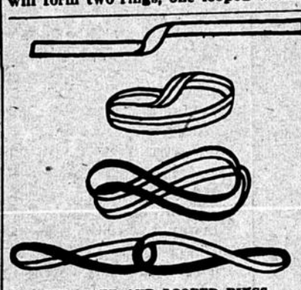
The genuine apple eater comforts himself with an apple in their season as others with a pipe or cigar. When he has nothing else to do or is bored he eats an apple, sometimes several of them. When he takes a walk he arms himself with apples. His traveling bag is full of apples. He offers an apple to his companion and takes one himself. They are his chief solace when on the road. He tosses the core from the car window and from the top of the stage coach. He would in time make the land one vast orchard. He dispenses with a knife. He prefers his teeth shall have the first taste. Then he knows the best flavor is immediately beneath the skin, and that in a pared apple this is lost. If you will stew it by all means leave the skin on. It improves the color and vastly heightens the flavor of the dish.

The apple is a masculine fruit, hence women are poor apple eaters. It belongs to the open air and requires an open-air taste and relish.

New Wrinkles in Paper.

The great variety of articles, from car-wheels to candle-shades now manufactured out of paper, has suggested the name "Paper Age" for the present time. One of the amusing and interesting forms in which paper may be cut and folded is shown in the accompanying article from the Scientific American.

If a flat strip of paper be taken, and its ends pasted together to form a ring and it be then cut along its center line, two similar but entirely separate rings will be formed, unconnected in any way. If, however, the paper be twisted as illustrated in the uppermost view, and its ends be pasted together to form a ring with a single twist in it, this ring, when cut along its center line, will form two rings, one looped within the other as shown in the third and fourth views.



SEPARATE AND LOOPED RINGS.

Perplexing as this may seem at first glance, the explanation is quite simple. We may consider the upper edge of the paper strip as one ring, and the lower edge as the other. Now following the edges of the twist as shown in the second view, it is evident that one edge has been twisted completely around the other edge; or, in other words, one edge or ring has been passed through the other ring, which when cut apart form two interlopped rings.

Immediate Results.

One day my little brother insisted on staying out in the rain. On being asked why he did not come in he said:

"I have to get watered so I'll grow."

Next day he said: "Yesterday I was only up to my nose and I've grown to the top of my head in the night, because I stayed out in the rain."

As He Was Called.

Our neighbor, little Arthur, aged three, was a notorious little runaway.

On being asked his name, he always insisted that it was Baby. "But," said I one day, "what does mamma call you?"

He replied with great earnestness, "Arfur tumhere!"

Failed to Take the Hint.

One evening my aunt had company, and when her little boy's bedtime came she said:

"Well, good-night, sweetheart."

The child looked at her a moment and then answered:

"Why, mamma, are you going to bed already?"

A Populous Line.

Teacher in History, to Harry, who was not paying attention:

"How was the 'Mason and Dixon' line settled?"

Harry, sleepily: "Very thickly settled."

FINANCIAL CONCERNS ARE GROWING IN NUMBERS AND AMOUNT OF BUSINESS.

SOME recently published statistics attest the surprising growth of national banks and savings banks in the United States. In 1864 there were fewer than 600 national banking associations and their aggregate capital was considerably less than $100,000,000. At the end of 1865 the aggregate resources of the national banks, which then numbered 1,513, amounted to less than $1,360,000,000.

Now let us look at the returns made to the Comptroller of the Currency on Oct. 1, 1902. At that date the national banks numbered 4,601; their total capital stock was over $714,000,000 and their aggregate circulation $380,000,000. Their aggregate resources amounted to $6,114,000,000. The face value of United States bonds now held by national banks is about $457,000,000 and the individual deposits exceed $3,200,000,000. The amount of money paid into the federal treasury since 1863 by the national banks as taxes on circulation, capital, deposits, surplus, etc., reaches $170,000,000. We add that the number of shareholders in the national banks is 330,124, to which total the New England States and Middle States, including under the last-named term New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and the District of Columbia, contributed more than 226,000 individuals.

Obviously the national banks are organized and supported by the relatively rich. Turning to the savings banks, which are intended for the relatively poor, we observe that the aggregate deposits in these institutions increased in the five years preceding Oct. 1, 1902, from $1,940,000,000 to $2,640,000,000. In the same period the number of depositors rose from 5,200,000 to 6,400,000. This is an astonishing exhibit when we consider that in many States the savings of the poor are invested in the stock of building associations. It should also be noted that the federal government, through the money orders issued by its postal department in 1902, did a banking business of upward of $313,550,000.—Harper's Weekly.

BURGLAR UP TO DATE.

Aristocratic Cracksmen Who Go About in Automobiles.

The latest burglary at Springfield, where nearly $1,500 was taken from a safe in a store on the main street, has puzzled the police of that city and the State police as well. A consultation has been had with Chief Wade at the statehouse, but so far there is absolutely no clew to the burglars. That they were professionals is plain enough from the way they did the job. They blew open the safe without anybody in the neighborhood hearing a sound. They got away without anybody seeing them. And they left absolutely no traces behind them.

From some things that have been noticed and are now recalled it is believed that the burglars who are operating in that section of the State get away from the scenes of their breaks in automobiles. This Springfield job is not the first of the kind lately in that part of the State, and there is a lurking suspicion that the cracksmen got away with their booty into a nearby State, perhaps into New York. In doing a job of this kind they could leave Springfield and reach New York about daybreak, traveling in a fast machine, if the roads were good.

At first it may seem queer to think of burglars traveling around the country in the same kind of vehicles that millionaires use, but the up-to-date burglar, the police say, uses every modern invention that can be of any benefit to him. Some use electricity in carbons to burn holes in safes or smokeless powder to blow the safes open. There is really nothing incredible in the idea that some of the police hold that after doing a job the burglar get into a high-priced automobile and are over one hundred miles away before their crime is discovered.

Of course, if the burglars operate too much in any particular section of the country their machine would come to attract attention, but by using this means of getting around they really get a wider field to operate in, say 150 or 200 miles in any direction from the center of operations. By traveling at night in their automobile, instead of using the steam roads or trolleys they may avoid being seen by anybody who could describe them to the police of the cities or towns in which they operate. The automobile burglar is decidedly a modern figure in criminal annals.—Boston Advertiser.

Suspicious.

"He thinks her heart is as good as gold."

"Yes, but it isn't warranted."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

When a woman nudges you with her elbow it is equivalent to saying, "I told you so."

OUTPUT OF TOOTHPICKS.

Millions Manufactured in America and More Imported.

There is one article of manufacture that is used so extensively in the United States that no one has an idea of the annual quantity consumed, namely, wooden toothpicks. According to an expert, the number is simply incalculable. Millions upon millions of the tiny wooden slivers are turned out every year from American factories alone, and on top of this tremendous output come importations from Portugal and Japan and other countries nearly as large as the domestic product.

Most of the American toothpicks, according to the New York Times, come from Franklin County, in Maine, near the forest home of the white birch, out of which 95 per cent of the domestic toothpicks are made. This wood is soft and pliable and of admirable resistance for the purpose for which it is used. Whole mills in Maine are devoted to supplying the country with toothpicks and in the industry is to be found some of the finest and most intricate of machinery. So tremendous is the output of these machines that in a brief season, during the spring, enough toothpicks can be made to supply the markets of the entire country for the year to come.

A further idea of the capacity of the machines may be had from the fact that only 100 men are necessary to operate and run all the mills in Franklin County. Other mills of this kind are scattered throughout Pennsylvania and Massachusetts and western New York, but the real home of the toothpick is Maine.

White birch is not the only wood used for the domestic toothpick; maple and poplar are employed as well, but birch has the property of retaining its forest odor and sweetness.

The felling of toothpick trees is only incidental to the regular lumber work of the Maine foresters. No especial men are sent out to hunt up suitable trees. But whenever the foreman of a gang of woodsmen comes across a tree especially adapted to toothpicks he orders it felled and laid aside. The branches of the tree are then trimmed and only the trunk itself is transported to the mills. There the bark is skinned and the naked trunk is run through a machine which severs it into veneers. "Veneers" is the technical expression for thin strips of wood no thicker than a piece of blotting paper and no wider than the length of a toothpick. Once the trunk has been cut into these sheets of wood, only one process remains to turn out the toothpicks fit for packing and shipping to market. The veneers are fed into a second machine supplied with sharp, rotary knives that whirl at tremendous high speed, snipping the veneers into toothpicks at the rate of hundreds of thousands an hour.

It is only the so-called "fancy" toothpick that is not made in this country. In Portugal, from where most of the orangewood picks are imported, the sticks are sharpened by young girls who, in return for turning out "picks" sharp as needles and smooth as ivory, are paid 3 cents a day.

The Japanese toothpicks are made of fine reeds, and are distinct from those sent to this country by the Portuguese manufacturers. A Japanese toothpick is delicate and thin as tissue paper, and nevertheless strong and pliable. The Japanese toothpick-maker earns even less than his Portuguese fellow craftsman, his remuneration being a fraction more than 2 cents a day. In short, a thousand toothpicks may be bought in Japan for as much as it costs to pack and box 5,000 of American make.

"Ikey, Get Off the Wagon."

The quick wit of one of the ushers at a recent wedding averted what might have been a tragedy following the joyous ceremony. He had been the life of the large house party attending the wedding. One of his stories particularly pleased the father of the bride. The catch line in it was, "Ikey, get off the wagon." After the bride and bridegroom had started on their honeymoon a number of the guests went to a theater, then to supper, and it was late when they drove to the home of their host.

The house was dark, and though a ring of the bell would have brought one of the servants, it was decided for a lark to try to get in, undetected, through a window opening on the porch. Being in a happy mood the party forgot that there had been some talk during the day of the possibilities of burglars making a try for the valuable wedding presents.

The window fastening was not very secure and a little pressure released it. Then the usher got his head inside the window. He saw the glint of polished steel in the dim light at the end of the hall, and he realized his danger of being shot for a burglar. Quick as a flash he shouted, "Ikey, get off the wagon."

When the bride's father opened the door and let them in, he still had the revolver in his hand. He said, a little more soberly than he had before, "My boy, that's a great story."—New York Sun.

Unique Indoor Snowstorm.

Nature tells of an indoor snowstorm on a very clear, cold evening at a party given in Stockholm, Sweden. Many people were gathered in a single room, which became so warm as to be insufferable. The window sashes were found to be frozen, and a pane of glass was smashed out. A cold air current rushed in, and at the same instant flakes of snow were seen to fall to the floor in all parts of the room. The atmosphere was so saturated with moisture that the sudden fall in temperature produced a snowfall indoors.—New York Tribune.

Statue to Lee.

General Fitzhugh Lee, referring to Virginia's proposal to place a statue of Robert E. Lee in the national Capitol, says he thinks they should honor Washington, the successful, as well as Lee, the defeated.

Deer in New Zealand.

The red deer of New Zealand are estimated to number between 4,000 and 5,000 individuals, the offspring of two stags and six hinds that were turned out in 1868.

When a man pays his wife more than the usual attention, they say it is a sign she is about to "hear something" on him.