

JUNIOR EDITORIAL CORNER



Junior Call, Third and Market streets, San Francisco, Cal., July 31, 1910.
Bow Wow, Juniors:

I'm coming out of my kennel with another growl this week. I am beginning to feel that I have undertaken too much of a job. In fact I know I have. A couple of weeks ago I barked all through the editorial column over the lack of open letters, and since then I must wag my tail to you. You have responded nobly.

But now I have another bone to gnaw. If you will notice, page 7 is reserved for the younger juniors, and each week there appears upon it short stories written by Juniors. Now, we don't get enough of these stories. There are only two or three of you who help out on that page, and we must have more.

The Junior is published for the Juniors, and while I can accomplish a great deal of work for a small dog, I can't begin to do it all. The finest thing about the Junior is its staff. That's you. I want a number of short stories written expressly for the little Juniors, and I want them right away. Can you do it?

The hardest thing in the world to find is originality. Did you ever stop to think how easy it is to follow the path laid out by the other fellow? It takes a great deal less effort to agree with what a person says than to disagree with him and then explain to him the whys and wherefores. Mother used to tell me a story—mother is one of the wisest dogs that ever lived—and it went something like this:

Once upon a time—all the best stories start like that—there was a dog who was what might be termed a gay dog. He had among other things an exceedingly fine opinion of himself. One day with his master and a number of other dogs he had gone out on a hunting trip. Now, his master in climbing over a big rock slipped and sprained his ankle and lay helpless with only his dogs around him and night coming on fast.

Calling the smart young dog to him he said:

"Larry, you'll have to go for assistance. Don't take the road, but cut across the field to the right, and go through the forest. It will bring you to town a great deal quicker than will the road."

But Larry didn't want to cross the lumpy fields, and the long winding road with its big shade trees beckoned him that way. Besides, he argued, he didn't know the way through the forest and might get lost. So he started down the road, while one of the other dogs, loving his master, greatly, struck off across the bare, dry field with its hot blazing sunlight. Right at the edge of the forest in a little clearing he found a cottage and there besought aid for his wounded master, with the result that the master was at home with his ankle bandaged by the time Dog Larry reached the distant town. And the moral, mother used to say, was this: "Don't follow the beaten path. Buckle on your courage and never be afraid to attempt something new."

That will be about all for this week, I guess, only put your imaginations to work and send in some good short stories.

ALONZO.

SHORT BARKS FROM ALONZO

There was an old woman and what do you think?

She lived all her days upon victuals and drink.

One day she got tired and ate up a Call,

And found it so good she left nothing at all.

Humans haven't any idea of the difficulties we dogs experience with their language. I heard of a pup the other day whose mother read him a Dutch lecture and wound up by saying: "Never, never under any circumstances must you carry a tale." That pup immediately went out in the back yard and chopped off his tail. Being a collie he has ruined his social prospects. Nobody wants a bob tailed collie.

I met a friend of mine—a highly pedigreed English bulldog—on the street the other day. He has recently returned from a trip abroad. A gold mounted collar, heavily engraved, was clasped about his throat, and, the weather being a bit severe, he was wearing a handsome fur lined coat. The minute he saw me he put on a bored, supercilious air. "'Do, 'Lonzo?" he said, with a languid wave of his tail. "How's the bally old town getting on?" He then proceeded to tell me of his European tour and confided that his new valet was a Frenchman, and utterly bored him to death, doncherknow. About that time his mistress emerged from a nearby store, when he was carefully scooped up and into the waiting carriage. With a last effort he called, wearily, "'By, 'Lonzo. Tell the boys I'm leading a dog's life." Now, what d'ye think of that?

POINTED PARAGRAPHS

The season for heated arguments is now open.

Only those who have no worries can afford to look worried.

Inquisitive people acquire a lot of information that isn't so.

A businessman's leisure is simply the time he doesn't know what to do with.

FLOWER LORE

BY KATHARINE BEALS

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PEONY—(Bashfulness)

"Erect in all her crimson pomp you'll see
With bushy leaves the graceful peony."
—Rapun.

AESCULAPIUS was the son of Apollo, and while still an infant was intrusted to the care of Chiron, the wisest and most just of all the Centaurs. Chiron bestowed upon the youth much care and instructed him so thoroughly in the art of healing that when he was grown he was renowned for his skill and knowledge, and was known as the Paeon, or helper, and was the first physician of the gods. One day Hippolytus was killed by a fall from his chariot and Paeon with his knowledge and skill restored him to life. This so alarmed Pluto, the king of the infernal regions, that he persuaded Jupiter to annihilate the physician with one of his terrible thunder bolts. Apollo was so grieved by the death of his son that Jove took pity on him and instead of giving the body of Aesculapius into the keeping of Pluto he transformed it into a plant which bears the name by which he was best known among the gods and which is said to be the first plant used for medicinal purposes.

As Homer tells the tale it differs somewhat from other ancient versions. According to his story, Pluto had been severely wounded by Hercules, and Paeon cured him by means of a plant which he received from his grandmother, the mother of Apollo. In gratitude Pluto caused the plant to be called Paeonia, to perpetuate the memory of the physician of Olympus.

Another account of the origin of the plant is that Paeonia was a beautiful nymph, and one day Apollo, who was not always discreet, was indulging in a mild flirtation with her. Paeonia happened to turn her head and saw Venus regarding her with great severity, and she blushed so red that the color never left her face and when Venus in her anger changed her into a flower she still retained the same rosy hue.

FIGURES IN MANY SUPERSTITIONS

The Greeks held the peony in great reverence as a sacred flower. They believed that it was an emanation from the moon and was under the especial protection of that planet, that the flower was illuminated during the night, driving away evil spirits, and protecting those who cultivated it.

A small piece of the root worn as an amulet around the neck was held to be a sure protection from evil enchantments. The healing properties of the plant were not so numerous as those of some others, but were said to

be unailing. The root boiled in wine was used for diseases of the stomach, and 15 black seeds eaten before retiring were thought to be a preventive of nightmare. As late as the sixteenth century beads were made from the roots and worn by children as a safeguard against convulsions. One writer in the second century assures us that extract of the peony was efficacious in cases of insanity.

All early writers agree that roots must be taken up with great care after dark, as the plant is carefully guarded by Picus, the woodpecker of Mars, who would attack the eyes of any one whom he might discover attempting to disturb the plant.

THE CHINESE PEONY WONDERFUL

In China the mantanfa, or peony, is regarded with reverence and pride. It is the queen flower of China and is cultivated very carefully. The great tree peony of China grows to a height of eight feet and is a triumph of the flower world. Some of the flowers are of enormous size, measuring nine inches across, and on the bush peony they are sometimes so large and heavy as to require artificial support.

The Chinese name of the peony means Flower of Prosperity. It is also known as the plant of 20 days, because it is said that the blossoms retain their beauty and freshness for that length of time. The flower is used extensively in Chinese art decoration; in connection with the peacock it is a favorite ornament for temple and place walls.

THE PEONY IN AMERICA

In America we have been used to think of the peony as an old fashioned flower, a survival of the "good old colony times," when no New England front yard was complete without its "piny bush." As it is a hardy perennial, there are still in some New England gardens peony bushes that are almost as old as the homesteads themselves, and that have been known to have a hundred blossoms at one time.

In poetry the peony has been strangely neglected. Shakespeare in "The Tempest" makes Iris speak of the meadows "with their peonied and lilled banks." And one or two of the very early English writers mention it, spelling the name in various ways. One writer in the sixteenth century tells of a garden

"With gilly-flowers all set round
And pnyons powdered ay between."

Of the later poets Jean Ingelow writes of the leaves

"At the roots
Of the peony bushes in rose red heaps,
Or snowy, fallen blooms."

But it is in stories of colonial life that the peony shines. Dr. Holmes calls it "an aristocratic flower," and Mary E. Wilkins has honored it by giving its name to one of her stories.

(Next Sunday, the Iris.)

Guarding the Gold and Silver at the Mint

The precautions taken at the United States mints against waste of the precious metals are of a most extraordinary character. No miser could guard his treasure with more sedulous care than does your Uncle Sam.

Every evening the floor of the melting room is swept cleaner than a good housewife's kitchen. The dust is put carefully aside, and about once in three months the soot scraped from every flue is transferred to the same precious dust heap. This is then burned and from its ashes the government derives a handsome income.

The earthenware crucibles used in melting are not employed more than three times. Then they are crushed under heavy rollers and in their porous sides are found fine flakes of fine silver. Like Aladdin with his lamp, Uncle Sam would not exchange old crucibles for new ones.

In the melting room when the casters raise their ladles from the melting pots a shower of sparks flies from the molten surface of the metal. For the most part they are bits of incandescent carbon, but clinging to the carbon is often a minute particle of metal. Lest such particles should escape, the ashes and clinkers below the furnaces are gathered up at night. The debris is ground into powder by a steam crusher and then is sold to a smelter, like ordinary ore, at a price per ton warranted by the assayer.

The ladles that stir the precious metal, the big iron rods, the strainers and the dippers all are tested in a most curious fashion. After considerable use they become covered with a thin layer of oxidized silver, which looks for all the world like brown rust. The implements are then laid in baths of a solution of sulphuric acid, which eats away the iron and steel and leaves the silver untouched.

Gradually the ladle, or whatever the implement is, will disappear, and in its place remains a hollow silver counterpart of the original, delicate as spun glass. These fragile casts reproduce the ladle with perfect accuracy in all its details, although their surfaces are perforated with innumerable little holes. Scarcely have they been molded, however, before they are cast into a crucible, to become in time dollars, quarters and dimes.

There is a large tank in one corner of the melting room and into it newly cast silver bars are dropped and left to cool. Infinitesimal flakes of silver scale off and rise to the surface of the water, which acquires the metallic luster of a stagnant pool. Here is silver which must not be lost, so beneath the pipe through which the tank is emptied is banked a thick layer of mud. As the water filters through it the mud retains the precious residuum.

Four times a year this mud is removed and each experiment shows that some \$50 has been saved by this device.

Origin of the Handkerchief

"Aunt Jane, I'm much smarter than Cousin Jim."

"In what respect, dear?"

"I can use my own handkerchief already, and his nurse has to use his for him."

Talking about handkerchiefs, it is related that at the beginning of the nineteenth century Mlle. Duchesnois, a famous actress, dared to appear with a handkerchief in her hand. Having to speak of it in the course of the play, she could only summon courage to refer to it as "a light tissue." A translation of one of Shakespeare's plays by Alfred de Vigny was being acted, and the subject, mentioned for the first time upon the stage, provoked a storm of indignant hisses from all parts of the house. Handkerchiefs were finally popularized in France by the Empress Josephine, who had imperfect teeth, and used a little square of lace and muslin to conceal her mouth.

Shopping

The leader says: "I went shopping this morning and everything I bought began with C (or any letter desired). From the druggist I bought (points at a child, who must immediately respond with some article bought of a druggist beginning with the letter C—as cologne); from the baker I bought (cookies or cake may be the answer); from the grocer I bought —. And so the lists continue until some child fails to answer at once, when he must take the place of the leader and continue the game, choosing any letter desired.