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IT DEPENDS ON THE BAIT. "Eels is bitin' very good this winter" observed a Newtown man to the Eagle's cashier as he fished around in his pocket for a marriage notice and paid the expense of insertion.

"Catch many?" asked the cashier, checking the notice. "Doin' pretty well, pretty well," replied the old man. "I ketcht one the other day that was considerable eel. Ye see I went to the creek in the mornin' and cut a hole in the ice and dropped the hook. In about a minute I knowed I had a bite and I went for him. When I'd got ten yards of him out I began—"

"Got what?" demanded the cashier. "Ten yards of him, ye see, I couldn't tell how big he was goin' to be, so I just pulled his head over my shoulder and streaked for home, only a mile. Then I followed along back to the hole, and he wasn't all out yet!"

"How big was he?" asked the cashier, round eyes and standing hair. "Hold on till I tell ye. Then I takes another grip on him and reaches for home again, but that didn't seem to fetch the whole of him. Well, sir, I traveled betwixt the house and the hole all day long, and when I got him out he made a coil on my farm a quarter of a mile in diameter and 400 yards high! Fast, sir! I fell ye he was considerable eel!"

"What kind of bait do you usually use for that size of eel?" asked the cashier, sarcastically. "Whisky," replied the Newtown man. "I used three pints of whisky on that eel. Drank it this night before, you know!"

TOXOODOY SQUELCHED. Mrs. T. Toxodoxy was much agitated over the reports of small-pox, and the other evening when Mr. Toxodoxy came in she said: "Mr. Toxodoxy, are there any new cases of small-pox?"

"Yes, dear," he replied, serenely. "Oh, where are they?" "In Pittsburgh, dear?" "Indeed? Have you been vaccinated?"

LONGFELLOW'S FIRST POEM.

When our great poet was 9 years old, his master wanted him to write a composition. Little Henry, like all children, shrank from the undertaking. His master said: "You can write words, can you not?"

"Yes," was the reply. "Then you can put words together?" "Yes, sir," said his master, "you may take your slate and go out behind the school house, and there you find something to write about, and then you can tell what it is, what it is for, and what is to be done with it, and that will be a composition."

Henry took his slate and went out. He went behind Mr. Finney's barn, which chanced to be near, and, seeing a fine turnip growing up, he thought he knew what that was, what it was for, and what was to be done with it.

A half hour had been allowed to Henry for his first undertaking in writing compositions. In a half hour he carried in his work all accomplished, and the master is said to have been affected almost to tears when he saw what little Henry had done in that short time:

MR. FINNEY'S TURNIP. Mr. Finney had a turnip, And it grew, and it grew; And it grew behind the barn, And the turnip did no harm. And it grew, and it grew, 'Till it could grow no taller; Then Mr. Finney took it up And put it in the cellar.

There it lay, there it lay, 'Till it began to rot; When his daughter Rosie washed it, And she put it in the pot. Then she boiled it and boiled it, As long as she was able; And she put it on the table, And she put it on the table.

MR. FINNEY AND HIS WIFE. Both sat down to sup, And they ate, and they ate 'Till they ate the turnip up.

BOLLY. Rag, wool and india-rubber, china, composition and wax—we can imagine the immense doll population gathering about us, impatient for attention, and all leaning up against each other, for it is a peculiarity of doll physics that, as regards standing up independently in the world, a doll is unmatched for helplessness by anything under the sun—except a soda-water bottle.

Among the Athenians the perforation of the ears was a mark of nobility; with the Hebrews and Romans it indicated servitude.

STREET SCENES IN MADRID.

The Madrilenos offer not a flat, but rather an extremely round, contradiction to the general and accepted idea of the national appearance. Slenderness is the exception with them. Their city is a forced flower in the midst of mountain lands, and the men themselves rejoice in a rotund and puffy look of success, which also partakes of the hot-house character. They are people of leisure, and, after their manner, of pleasure. How they swarm in their cafes, in the Gate of the Sun—where they keep up the Moorish custom of calling waiters by two claps of the hands—or on the one great thoroughfare, Calle de Alcalá, as in the bull-ring of a Sunday!

They never sleep, or, if they do, others take their places in the public resorts. The clamor of the streets, and even the snarling cry of the news-vendors—"La Correspondencia," or "El Democratista"—is kept up until the small hours; and at 5 or 6 the restless stir begins again with the silver tinkling of fleet mule bells. There are no night-hawking watchmen in Madrid; but the custom of street-hawking is rampant in Spain; and here, in addition to the newsman, we have the wail of the water-crier ministering to an unquenchable popular thirst, the lottery-ticket sellers, the wax-match peddlers, and a dozen others. The favorite bird of the country is a kind of a lark called *alondra*, much sung in cages outside of the windows, whence they utter—with that monotonous recurrence which seems a fixed principle of all things Spanish—a hard, piercing triple note impossible to ignore. This loud, persistent "twit, twit-twit," resembling at a distance the click of castanets, begins about daybreak, and gives a most discouraging notion of the Spanish musical ear.

Of course there is home life and there is family affection in Madrid, but the stranger naturally does not see a great deal of these; and then it may be doubted whether they really exist to the same extent as in most other civilized capitals. It becomes wearisome to make sallies upon the town, and day after day find so much of the population trying to divert itself or killing time in the cafes and clubs. The feeling deepens that they resort to these for want of a sufficiently close interest in their homes. More than that, they do not seem really to be amused. Even their language fails to express the amusement idea; the most that anything can be for them, in the vernacular, is "entertaining." Still the choice of light diversion is varied enough. Opera flourishes in winter, in spring and summer the bull-fight; these two are always in blast; cocking-mains are kept up. Hitherto gambling has been another favorite pastime until checked by the authorities. Not content with all this, the Madrilenos seek in lottery shops that excitement which Americans derive from drinking-saloons. The brightly-lighted lottery agency occurs as frequently as that other indication of disease, the apothecary's window, in American cities. People of all classes hover about them both by day and by night. Posters confront you with announcements of the Child Jesus Lottery, the lottery to aid the Asylum of Our Lady of the Assumption, or the National, which is drawn thrice a month, with a chief prize of \$32,000, and some 400 other premiums. There are many small drawings beside constantly going on; not a day passes, in fact, without your being solicited by wandering dealers in these alluring chances at least half a dozen times.—George P. Lathrop, in Harper's Magazine.

THE national Tonic beverage, beer, according to the Paris *Figaro*, is largely used at the royal table in Berlin. The Emperor William's favorite dish is beer soup, made very sweet, with toasted bread in it; the Crown Prince likes beef steamed in beer, which imparts a peculiar flavor to the meat, and the Emperor is particularly fond of eels with beer sauce.

MINDS of moderate caliber ordinarily condemn everything which is beyond their range.

THE BLACK BEAR'S CUNNING. I really think that Bruin possesses the sense of humor; at all events his actions point that way, and there is no doubt that he is extremely cunning and observing. I once had an English friend visiting me, who played the flute. He was in the habit of marching up and down, while playing, near a tame bear I had at the time. The bear had a piece of stick about two feet long, which he tossed about for amusement. After a time, he came to handle the stick very much as my friend did his flute. This annoyed my sensitive friend, and in revenge he teased the bear with unceasing noises. Bruin sniffed and whined, and waited his opportunity for delivering a tremendous blow with his paw at his enemy, whose tall hat was knocked completely over his eyes. He escaped being scalped by dropping flat and rolling out of the reach of the bear. This bear spent much of his time in the tree to which he was chained, and when climbing usually got his chain twisted over and under the branches in a most intricate manner, but never failed to take out every turn as he descended. A friend who owned a tame bear told me that, for a long time, he could not account for the mysterious way in which the poultry disappeared. Observing, at different times, a good many feathers around Bruin's pole, he began to suspect that the bear was the culprit. Close watching confirmed his suspicions. When Bruin thought he was unobserved, he would seize any unfortunate hen or chicken within his reach and devour it; but if any one approached before he could complete the meal, he would sit upon his prey until the danger of discovery had passed. He was betrayed, at last, by the cackling of an old hen that he failed to silence.—Charles C. Ward, in Century Magazine.

1884. SIXTH 1884. ANNUAL DISTRIBUTION

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