THE BOOK COLLECTOR.

He Made a Swap Which Satisfied the Secondhand Dealer.

"It's astonishing how book collecting will blunt a man's conception of the rights of meum et tuum," said the proprietor of a delightful old secondhand store on the south side of the town. "I wouldn't trust a confirmed collector as far as I could throw Jackson square by the monument. They all consider themselves licensed privateers, and when one of them wants any particular volume and can't buy it the chances are it will mysteriously disappear the first time he pays you a visit. I am on to most of the tricks of the fraternity, however, and it takes a pretty smooth individual to secure any plunder in this shop.

"Only recently I circumvented an old gentleman in a manner that is apt to adhere to his memory for some time. He is a passionate admirer of Dickens and has a fine collection of early editions and books in general relating to the great novelist. One of his sets, a very handsome print with the original Cruikshank plates, is short one volume, the eighth. I have a copy of the same edition, and he has tried repeatedly to get me to break it so as to complete his own, but I have of course refused.

"Then I noticed that he began to drop in of afternoons with a book under his arm, looking up and down the shelves. The volume he carried bore a close external resemblance to the copy of Dickens he wanted, and I suspected at once that I would some day find them exchanged. Consequently I locked up the coveted volume 8 and substituted a worthless treatise on mathematics bound in the same manner. My visitor knew the exact location of the book on the shelf, and the other day I purposely gave him an opportunity to make the shift. It was done in a twinkling, and presently he strolled out. I haven't seen him since. The book he left was a very pretty copy of Keats. I am well satisfied with the swap."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

THE LEADING ARTICLE.

Advent and Development of the Editorial In Newspapers.

"I know what 'leaders' are, for I have written them," said Benjamin Disraeli in the course of a speech in the house of commons, and, though all of us may not have written "leaders" for The Morning Post and other newspapers, like Disraeli, we all at least know the meaning of the term "leaders."

For more than 100 years after the publication of the first daily newspaper The Daily Courant, which consisted of a small sheet printed on one side only and made its appearance in London in March, 1702, the "dailies" confined themselves to what is perhaps the proper business of a newspaper, the publication of the largest possible amount of news, and made no attempt whatever to mold or direct public opinion.

At the opening of the nineteenth century "the leading article" first appeared in the morning papers. It was originally called the "leaded article," because of the "leads" or spaces introduced between the lines to spread out the article and give it an imposing appearance in order that it might at once attract the eye of even the most casual reader. After a time it was called "leading article" or "leader" or "editorial," names by which it is now universally known in newspaper offices.

At the beginning "leaders" were published only tentatively. Their publication was irregular. In form they were brief—we should call them "editorial paragraphs" now—and they were principally used to direct special attention to some important event recorded in the news columns. But 75 years ago they became a settled and regular feature of the daily newspaper and a potent agency for promoting opinions, political, religious and social.—Cornhill Magazine.

His Hint For a Raise.

"There is in the employ of our house," said the hardware drummer, "a young man who is assistant bookkeeper. He's a steady chap, minds his own business and is as shrewd as they make them. The other day the senior partner of the firm, who seldom comes around, made a tour of inspection, and as he approached the assistant bookkeeper he noticed the solemn expression on his face. Desiring to be genial, he said:

"'How are you, young man? I see you are at your work. That is good. Close attention to business will always bring its own reward. Tell me, what are you earning now per week?'

"The young man, without a moment's hesitation, answered, 'Twenty dollars, sir, but I only get half of that.'"—Philadelphia Call.

Chinese Inquests.

Coroners' inquests are well known among the Chinese. One of the chief differences between their system and ours is that the Chinese doctors never dissect. In fact, Chinamen have a perfect horror of dissection.

There are few things more absurd than the code of rules laid down for the Chinese coroner. In the first place, he is bidden to make sure that he has a dead body before he begins his inquest. That, however, is less ridiculous than it sounds, for the heathen Chinee is tricky and may demand an inquest on a sham deceased with a view of extorting money from some person who may be denounced as having caused the death.

The preposterous part of the code comes in with regard to the alleged signs which show the cause of death. If the deceased is supposed to have been poisoned, rice is put into his mouth and then taken out and given to a chicken. Its effect on the fowl decides the question. Most of the other methods adopted are even more absurd and fanciful, and, as a result, inquests in China do very little to prevent crime.—Chicago News.

He Won the Bet.

A showman was making great noise at the front of the exhibition of "wonders" he had on show. A man standing in the crowd, with a little dog beside him, cried out:

"I'll bet you a quid you can't let me see a lion."

"Done!" said the showman eagerly. "Put down your money."

The man placed a sovereign in the hand of a bystander, and the showman did the same.

"Now walk this way," said the showman, "and I'll soon convince you. There!" said he triumphantly. "Look in that corner at the beautiful Numidian lion."

"I don't see any," responded the other.

"What's the matter with you?" asked the showman.

"I'm blind," was the reply, and in a few minutes the blind man pocketed the two sovereigns and went away.—London Answers.

Worse Than Death Valley.

Dreadful as Death valley is, its northwestern arm, known as Mesquite valley, is worse. All the waters upon its surface are poison, and down through the canyon a hot, suffocating wind blows with terrible velocity. During its course through the desert it frequently gathers clouds of white sand that have blinded many a horse and rider, and at frequent intervals it whirls down the canyon like a cyclone of sharp crystals. Under the glistening beds of salt and borax are concealed streams of salt water which flow sluggishly toward some unknown outlet or may be lapped up by the parched winds.

One of the strangest phenomena of this extraordinary place is what frontiersmen, for want of a better name, have called "raising earth." By the action of the sun a crust composed of minerals and clay has been formed on the surface, and by some curious pressure of nature has been lifted from the earth in irregular curves like pie crust in the oven. The cavity between this crust and the solid earth varies from one to ten feet, and the depth frequently changes after heavy windstorms by the displacement of the air beneath. The man or the animal that steps upon this crust is gone forever. It is absolutely impossible for any one to extricate himself when plunging about in the "raising earth."—Chicago Record.

Took Her Cousin's Place.

One day a young Swede, a student at the University of Berlin, received a letter from his uncle saying that his daughter, the young man's cousin, would stop in Berlin for a few days on her way to Ems and would he kindly meet her and show her the city. The mail coach arrived and with it the young lady, who found a fine looking young fellow with a vivid boutonniere awaiting her arrival. He accompanied her to the hotel. The following morning he called and took her driving in an elegant brougham. These attentions continued during the three days of her visit. The lady appeared overjoyed at the gallantry of this cousin, whom she had never met before.

On the day of her departure, while assisting her into the mail coach, the young man said, "I cannot let you depart without making a confession." The lady blushed and dropped her eyes. "I must tell you that I am not your cousin. Your cousin is a friend of mine. He had no time to accompany you, having to cram for his examinations, so he bade me take his place."

"In heaven's name, who are you, then?" cried the lady.

The young man handed her his card. The postilion blew his trumpet, the mail coach rolled away, as the young lady read this name on the card: "Otto von Bismarck."—Current Literature.

Soldiers of Fortune.

"It is embarrassing to meet former cotillon partners as elevator boys and waiters," said a European lady now visiting New York. "It has been my fate to undergo and inflict this unhappiness several times.

"I went to a fashionable hotel on my arrival. Wearing his hotel livery with the same grace as he had borne his officer's uniform when I last saw him and danced with him at a state ball in a foreign capital, was a man I had known. He colored to the eyes as he saw me, but made no sign, nor did I.

"The same thing has happened since at restaurants, at other hotels, in riding academies and in carriages. Some day M. le Baron de Trois Etoiles and Graf von Truemmer-Schloss will appear in European society with new eclat and full purses. Will I ever say that I know where they made their money? Why, of course not. It is a far cry from America to Europe, and in their own country these gentlemen have an irreproachable social position. I have really already forgotten the names of those I have seen, I assure you."—New York Mail and Express.

Goldsmith.

Not long before the close of Goldsmith's life he produced the brilliant and humorous lines of "Retaliation." Varied accounts are given of the origin of this poem. It will be remembered that in a joke Garrick wrote the following couplet as an epitaph for Goldsmith:

Here lies Nolly Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll,
Who wrote like an angel, but talked like poor poll.

It was on April 4, 1774, that Goldsmith died. The precise spot where he was buried in the Temple churchyard is unknown.

This is Johnson's summing up of the character of Goldsmith: "He had raised money and squandered it by every artifice of acquisition and folly of expense. But let not his frailties be remembered; he was a very great man."—William Black's "Life of Goldsmith."

Daniel Webster's Paper Cutter.

Joseph M. Terry of Peconic, N. Y., has presented a valuable relic of Daniel Webster to the Suffolk County Historical society. It is an ivory paper cutter which Mr. Webster used for a number of years in his library at Marshfield, Mass. Webster gave it to Charles Taylor, then a boy, whose father was at the time manager of Mr. Webster's farm. Young Taylor preserved the relic and several years ago while residing near Mr. Terry's house gave it to him.—New York Sun.

A Song About a Man.

"I will sing you a song about a man," said the minstrel. "By the way, did you ever notice that there never was a song written about a man? All songs are about roses and maidens and love and trysting places and sunsets and mothers; never one about the old man. Come to think about it, though, there was one, 'Father, Dear Father, Come Home With Me Now.' In this song the old man is drunk in the first verse."—Atchison Globe.

Words Between Them.

Judge—You say that words passed between the accused and his wife. Did you hear what they were?

Witness—No, I didn't hear them, but I saw them.

"Saw them?"

"Yes. They were in the dictionary that he threw at her."—Boston Transcript.

The man who has to be made to go to church always gets mad when he finds strangers in his pew.—Indianapolis Journal.

Every day there hangs over London a vast smoke cloud that is estimated to weigh about 300 tons.

A physician calculates that it takes eight times the strength to go up stairs that is required for the same distance on the level.

Chichester cathedral spire is the only one which can be seen from the sea along the coast of Great Britain.

STORY OF THE YAZOO FRAUD

One of the Most Gigantic Trusts Ever Known In America.

One of the most gigantic trusts ever formed on this continent was in the early days of the republic, back in 1795. Several gentlemen organized themselves into a company for the purpose of purchasing from the state of Georgia her unclaimed western territory, extending from the Mississippi on the west to the Atlantic on the east and from the thirty-first degree of latitude north of the equator on the south to the southern boundary of Tennessee on the north, including what now constitutes the territory of Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi. This vast territory was purchased for $500,000 and this was the commencement of the famous "Yazoo fraud," about which so much was said and written.

The bill authorizing the purchase and sale passed the Georgia legislature on Jan. 9, 1795, and it is said that members were paid all the way from eight negroes to 200,000 acres of land to vote for it. Corruption by bribery was open. Great indignation spread throughout the state, and upon the assembling of the legislature one year later an act was passed declaring that the said resurped act was null and void; that the records relating to the same be burned in order that no trace of so unconstitutional, vile and fraudulent a transaction should remain public.

"The infamous records were placed in one vast heap," said a senator, "and a sun glass was used to set it on fire, that it might be said that the fire that destroyed it was from heaven. This is the first and only instance in the history of the country where a legislative body personally superintended the destruction by fire of its previous records of corrupt and obnoxious laws."—St. Paul Globe.

AN EDITOR'S APOLOGY.

A Happy Inspiration That Proved to Be a Boomerang.

The editor of a small provincial paper in Austria was in great difficulty to find a fit subject for his leading article, having been too intent upon other business or upon pleasure to provide one. The last moment had come, and the editor was in despair. He tortured his brain in vain, when he suddenly was inspired by a happy thought and dashed off the lines:

"After carefully perusing the leading article written for the present number by one of the ablest of our contributors, we have arrived at the conclusion that it may be misinterpreted by the authorities and regarded as an attack upon the government. We ourselves consider it to be perfectly innocent; but, as we are unwilling, for our readers' sake as well as for our own, to have our newspaper confiscated, we have very unwillingly, though, as we think, prudently, resolved to withdraw the article. This must serve as the apology to our readers for the blank space in our present issue."

The journal was published in the evening, and the sly editor, after performing this little piece of stratagem, left the office in high humor. As soon as he arrived in the office the next morning a clerk came up to him with a doleful expression and said, "Herr Redaktor, the paper is confiscated by the police!" "For what reason?" asked the astonished editor. "For malicious ridicule of the institutions of the Austrian empire by the omission of the leading article," replied the man.

A Curious Shoe Trust.

Doylestown has four odd characters who pool their issues in buying shoes. They all have the same sized foot, and each regards this fact in the nature of a libel perpetrated upon him by the other three. Every year each one of the quartet chips in $18, and the fund of $72 is expended for shoes. Buying them in such quantities there is naturally a reduction in price. One would think that there would be an equal division of the shoes, but that isn't their little game.

The shoes are owned collectively, share and share alike, and when not being worn they are kept in a closet in the express office, which is the general lounging place of the quartet. If one man wants to wear new shoes, he goes to the express office and puts them on. If he wears russets in the daytime and wants to wear patent leathers in the evening, he goes to the express office and makes the change. They have been doing this for several years and claim they wouldn't wear shoes in any other way.—Philadelphia Record.

Why They Keep to the Right.

"It is a rare treat for a person to go through Europe the first time," said a returned tourist. "I visited one old palace in Scotland and was walking down a long corridor when I came to a sentinel, who told me to keep to the right. I could not see any reason why I should keep to the right and asked him why, but he said he could not tell. I finally asked the custodian, and he said he had looked it up in the archives of the palace and found that nearly 100 years ago the floor was painted, and some people walked over the fresh paint. The officer of the day was ordered to station a sentinel there to keep people off from the fresh paint and have them walk to the right. The order had never been countermanded, and from that day to this a sentinel stands there and tells everybody to keep to the right."—Indianapolis Press.

Antidotes For Carbolic Acid.

Alcohol and vinegar are effective antidotes for carbolic acid poisoning, a New York doctor announces. Whatever quantity of the poison has been swallowed, four times as much whisky or five times as much vinegar should be administered immediately. No oil of any kind should be given. "Thus treated early enough," he adds, "all cases will recover."

"More Sociable."

A lady who has recently returned from abroad had a curious experience at the little town of Dinant, in Belgium. She was traveling in a party of three, including another lady and a young man. They sought accommodation at a hotel and were shown a room in which there were three beds and on a deal table three basins and jugs about as big as slop basins and milk jugs.

The ladies explained that one room was quite insufficient for their needs, but it was a long time before they could get the hostess to understand why. They were then shown another room with three beds, three slop basins and three milk jugs and were told that they could have that, too, if they liked to pay for the six beds. It was therefore arranged that the man should have one room and three beds and the ladies the other room and three beds.

"Do you always sleep in threes?" said one lady to the hostess.

"Yes," was the reply; "it is much more sociable."—Madame.

Horse Racing on the Stage.

In racing scenes the horses do run at full speed. They run, however, not on the fixed stage, but on what may be called treadmills, which keep the horses in front of the house for longer or shorter periods, according as they are moved quickly or slowly. A picket fence, placed between the audience and the course, not only makes the scene more realistic; it also hides the mechanism of the treadmills. This fence has contributed in another way to add to the effect by being moved in opposition to the direction of the horses and so lending to their apparent speed.

As to the sounds made by the footfalls of horses to be heard as though passing outside an interior scene, they are reproduced by the dried hoofs of dead horses or wooden imitations mounted on handles and hammered against surfaces of stone, gravel, sod or whatever the occasion may demand. They are also more elaborately manufactured by revolving a cylinder with pins protruding from the surface. These pins are arranged, like the spurs on a hand organ roller, to imitate trotting, galloping or walking when struck against other substances. If the sound of a carriage is to be added to the trampling of horses, wheels are run on sand.—Cassell's Magazine.

Needed In His Business.

"I've decided," said the dignified old man, "to let you have that young Briteley after all if you are positive that you can't be happy without him."

"Oh, father," the beautiful girl cried, "you don't know how happy you have made me! Now I can see the gates of paradise opening. Dear, dear, good, old papa! Let me kiss you for those sweet words! Oh, I can hardly wait to fly to him and tell him the glorious news. He will be so glad! We shall all be so happy now. It seems almost like a lovely dream! I can hardly believe that I am awake! But, tell me, what has made you change your mind? Yesterday when I tried to plead for him you said you would never permit us to see each other again. Ah, if you had known how those words bruised my heart! What has happened, father, to make you relent?"

He kissed her fondly and then, with tears in his eyes, replied:

"I sat in a little game of poker where he happened to have a hand last night, and if we don't get that money back in the family some way my business is going to suffer."—Chicago Times-Herald.

Afraid to Bid.

At an auction sale of miscellaneous goods at a country store the auctioneer put up a buggy robe of fairly good quality. An old farmer inspected it closely, seemed to think there was a bargain in it, and yet he hesitated to bid.

"Think it cheap?" asked the auctioneer, crying a 10 cent bid.

"Yes, kinder," was the reply.

"Then why don't you bid and get it?"

"Waal, I've bought heaps o' things in dry goods and so on," slowly rejoined the old man, "and I never yet took home anything that the old woman thought was worth the price. If I get that 'ere robe for even 15 cents, she'd grab it up, pull at one end, chaw on a corner and call out: 'Cheated again! More'n half cotton!' That's the reason I dasn't bid."—Ohio State Journal.

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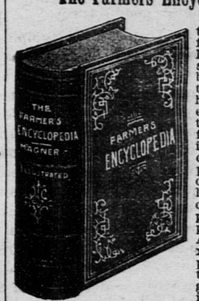

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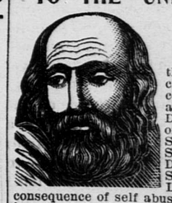

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