

Absent-Minded New Yorkers.

If the human head wasn't reasonably well affixed to the human shoulders, the average citizen of New York would leave his behind him whenever he got off a train. Anyway, this is the belief of the Manhattan Elevated Railroad employees in the 'Lost Department' at 9 Morris street. It might better be called the 'found' department, for hither come all the things that people leave behind them in the elevated road cars. There used to be, on upper Park row, a pawnbroker's window into which every small article was piled indiscriminately as soon as its time of redemption elapsed. That window was a very wonderful exhibit of miscellanies, but at no stage of its existence could it compare with the big lumber room at 9 Morris street.

Almost every trip of the elevated trains adds something to the mass of variegated property. The shopping hours are most productive of general merchandise, but there is likely to be a good haul of opera glasses from the before and after-theatre trips, and canes, gloves, and even hats are frequently collected between midnight and dawn, after the plunging exit from the train of gentlemen who positively won't go home till morning. Of the losing of books there is no end. They come in all hours of the day and night, and of all styles, paper-bound, morocco-backed, and coverless; and on all topics. Recently an elaborately annotated Horace stood shoulder to shoulder with an illustrated treatise on the use of the chafing dish, while the chaste and saintly E. P. Roe supported, without apparent distress, the immediate proximity of 'Sappho'; upheld, however, on the other side by a volume of temperance pamphlets.

Literary popularity, so the employees in the department say, can be gauged accurately from the condition of their library. A volume begins to be one of the 'books of the season,' when it lies, ownerless, on the seats of the elevated trains. There was a time when the 'Prisoner of Zenda' used to come in, five and six at a time. A little later Hall Caine 'Christianized' the 'lost' bookshelves. Now 'David Harum's' quaint dialect abounds, and various hero works on Dewey fill the shelves. There is always a stock-in-trade of Thackeray, Dickens, Stevenson and Kipling. Occasionally a Bible comes in. It does not appear, however, that the Metropolitan public is much given to reading the Bible while in transit. Prayer books are more common, and even hymn books. Magazines, of course, are left in practically every train, but they don't come in the 'lost' category. They are regarded as purposely left behind, and in that light constitute a perquisite of the guard.

Umbrellas always take up a large part of the floor space in the 'lost' room. A curious thing about them is that they are less frequently claimed than any other class of goods. The man who loses his umbrella takes it for granted that the finder will appropriate it. That's what he would do himself if he found an umbrella. Perhaps he'd even appropriate it without its being lost, if it happened to be a very wet day and the owner wasn't looking. Some say morality may attain to the point where the transference of ownership in the matter of umbrellas without due agreement of both parties, will be regarded as unrighteous. In that day the lion will be down with the lamb and the rest of the millennium will be at hand. Meantime the Manhattan Elevated road will continue to add to its unique collection of rain fenders, and the losers, instead of seeking to recover their property, will despair for a time and then make glad the heart of the haberdasher by purchasing another umbrella, also to be lost in time. Just as the books show the trend of literary popularity, so the umbrella market acts as a barometer. A large intake of umbrellas in the morning means that it was raining, or threatening rain, when the business public started downtown, but cleared up before they got to their destination. The sunshine drove umbrellas out of their heads, and they left these useful articles leaning against their seats. Similarly, an evening crop indicates foul weather during the day, clearing away late in the afternoon. From this it would appear that the citizen who can't afford a large annual outlay to keep his head dry had better either walk to business or hitch his umbrella to his person in some way.

'Everything a man can carry that isn't made fast to him in some way comes in here,' said the clerk of the 'lost' department a few days ago.

As he said it he was interrupted by the angry chatter of a caged blackbird, which had recently come in. Near the blackbird stood an enormous German bun (entered from a Second Avenue train; supposed to be the property of a fleshy Ger-

A RHEUMATIC CRIPPLE'S RELEASE.

A "jury" of doctors, specialists and medicine vendors decreed that James Smith, of Grimsby, Ont., should spend the rest of his days in the agonizing chains of rheumatism.

But common sense and modern medical science produced rebuttal evidence and procured his release.

The Great South American Rheumatic Cure turned the tables, relieved the pain in a few hours and healed, cured and freed.

To the man or woman suffering the agonies of pain produced by Rheumatism, of whatever form, an essay on its causes, its symptoms, and its actions are idle; the one desirable objective point with the sufferer is the shortest cut to relief from the

pain and the surest cure from the distressing, wracking, burdensome ailment.

No medicine of modern times has proved half so effective in giving almost instant relief, or has made as many cures bordering on the miraculous, as the great South American Rheumatic Cure. So often has it proved its efficacy in cases that were placed in the "no cure" list by doctors and specialists, that many of the most eminent lights in the profession have been frank enough to make confession that South American Rheumatic Cure, without

discussing its formula at all, has proved the most efficacious of remedies, and to back up their convictions, are prescribing it daily in practice; and doctors have always been the slowest to convince of the merits of any proprietary remedy.

South American Rheumatic Cure is powerful, potent, but harmless. Is a specific for all phases of Rheumatic Ailments; it goes directly to the seat of the troubles, dissolves and eradicates from the system the foreign matters which cause the excruciating pains, which stiffen and swell the joints. It acts quickly and surely, and as proof of it there is ample testimony to show that in cases of many years standing, where the patient was almost helpless, bed-ridden and so acute was the suffering that it was necessary to turn the victim in sheets because it was torture to have even

the gentlest touch of the hand on the body. In twelve hours after the first dose was taken all pain was gone, and inside of three days recovery was so marked that the patient walked without assistance. Many have had a similar experience and have testified to it.

James Smith, a dairyman of Grimsby, Ont., was a great sufferer from sciatica and rheumatism. He was almost helpless; could not walk without crutches. He had tried any number of remedies, and had been treated by almost innumerable doctors without any permanent help. He began using South American Rheumatic Cure. In a few hours the pain left him; in a few days he threw away the crutches and has never had a touch of the trouble since. You are at liberty to write him about his own case. No need for an hour's suffering. South American Rheumatic Cure can do as much for you as it has done for thousands.

South American Nerveine is a wonderful tonic for the stomach. It cures all disorders of the digestive organs, repairs exhausted nerve power, puts on flesh, and is general health builder.

South American Kidney Cure is a liquid kidney specific; it cures Diabetes, Bright's Disease, Inflammation of the Bladder and all disorders arising from imperfect working of the kidneys. It gives relief in six hours. Sold by E. C. Brown.

man lady who, after disembarking, stood upon the platform and yelled loudly but incomprehensibly after the departing cars) and the blackbird wanted the bun; hence the chattering. Nearly a crutch leaned up against the wall. It was a new crutch; so probably it was forgotten by some person who was delivering it. Once there came in a crutch that showed unmistakable signs of use. Two days later the owner came after it; a one-legged man with an air of embarrassment.

'I've been used to hopping around on one crutch,' he said. 'I only take both when I'm going somewhere special. I got reading my paper in the train and near got past my station, so I made a jump for the door and clean forgot that I had two sticks with me.'

For absent-mindedness, however, the clerks award the prize to a very attractive looking young woman who walked into the office one day, apparently under the stress of some excitement which she strove to suppress, but which trembled in her voice, as she asked:

'Is this where lost things are brought?'

'Yes, ma'am,' said the clerk. 'Have you lost something?'

'Yes, I've lost a baby. I left it in the train.'

'A baby?' said the clerk in some amazement. 'Whose baby was it?'

'Why, my baby,' replied the woman, adding, in extenuation of her having forgotten her own child: 'You see, I haven't had it for so very long.'

Somewhat in doubt as to whether it was a joke, or a bona fide case, or whether the woman was in her right mind, the clerk, after finding that the child had been lost only a few moments, took the visitor down to the Church street police station and there the youngster was, asleep in a chair with a circle of policemen surrounding it.

Sometime ago the 'lost' room used to have a pretty regular visitor in an old man who forgot his hat. He was a clerk in a downtown office, the hours of which were short, and he travelled during the slack transit hours when there were vacant seats. In hot weather it was his habit to take off his hat, always a silk hat, neatly ironed but never quite up to date, and put it in the seat next to him. About twice a week he would forget it and leave it there when he went out. After a time it got so that the 'lost' department kept a special peg for that hat from which it was handed over to the old gentleman who always received it with many apologies for the trouble he was causing. Of late he hasn't called, and the clerks don't know whether he is dead or has bought a hat string. One of the most inexplicable finds that ever came to the office is a patent leather shoe. It is a left shoe, almost new, made to order by a high priced bootmaker and was found late at night on the floor between two of the cross seats. It has never been claimed. The only solution to the problem yet advanced is that the owner had corns on that foot, slipped off his shoe for comfort and upon reaching his station, whether from sleepiness or intoxication went out without remembering to put the shoe on again. His home going must have been painful,

for a blizzard was in progress at the time.

Few pieces of jewelry, purses, or articles of great value are found in the elevated trains. The few found are usually claimed. It occasionally happens that a false claim is made, and the clerks encounter, too, a belief, principally feminine, that if the lost article hasn't turned up there, something of equal value ought to be supplied as an equivalent. The men who come to inquire after lost property are so apologetic and shame-faced, as a rule, that the clerks would believe, if they didn't know better in many cases, that the losses were the result of intoxication, instead of absent-mindedness, as is usually the case.

DUCK SHOOTING IN WINTER.

The few Fowl Which Remain are Hardly Worth the Effort to Bag Them.

When the ice forms along the weedy margins of lakes and rivers and wild rice, frogs and small shellfish are thereby locked in a duck proof refrigerator, the majority of the wild fowl that have passed the late autumn in the Middle States leave their feeding grounds to the ravages of the ice man and seek a less rigorous climate. There are a few varieties, however, that seem to prefer the rigors of the Northern winter and when the lakes and ponds become icebound find a living by scouting along the swift spring streams and unfrozen shallows of rapid rivers. At this season their food necessarily consists mostly of fish, whence the name that is often applied to them collectively of 'fish ducks.'

The best known of these winter ducks are the mergansers or sheldrakes, of which three varieties are widely known; the gooseander, or common merganser; the red or bay-breasted sheldrake and the

hooded sheldrake. These ducks are similar in haunts and habits, living largely on fish, for the more successful capture of which they are provided with narrow, rounded bills, whose edges are serrated into sharp, sawlike teeth, whence the common name often applied to the birds of 'saw bills.' If one chances to kill some of these ducks in September he may find them fairly edible, but in the winter, when an unvarying diet of fish had been the rule, they are seldom sought after by epicures. Salt codfish boiled in kerosene suggests the taste and odor of cooked winter sheldrakes. It seems a pity that these ducks are not more satisfactory adjuncts to the table, for they are certainly in their ways and wisdom as game as any duck that flies or swims.

Sheldrakes are nervous, restless birds, for the most part flying about in bunches of two to a dozen, seldom more, alighting here and there in shallows where the water is too swift for ice to form or in some air hole far out in the channel of a river. At times, however, a flock, if undisturbed, will haunt the same stretch of water for many days together. Generally, as is the habit of many ducks, they circle several times in order to look about well for enemies before they settle down to the business of foraging. Once on the water the angling process, at which they are adepts, begins. Each one, like an experienced angler, takes a different portion of the pool, knowing that each fisherman stands a better chance when he keeps by himself, a custom which many human piscators might well imitate instead of tangling their several lines in vainly striving to cast together in the same spot whence a lucky companion has just drawn a prize. This habit of keeping well apart while on the water makes it hard to obtain the raking flock shots beloved of pot-hunters, and it is seldom that the man who is sly enough to approach within range of a feeding flock gets a chance to kill more than one bird with each barrel. At times a shot may be obtained as they fly past some tree or hillock, although generally they keep well up in the air and give a wide berth to all suspicious cover.

The flock generally choose a feeding ground where the banks are low so that a careful watch may be kept of the surrounding neighborhood, and about the only way to obtain a shot is by a long 'sneak.' This means crawling on the hands and knees several hundred yards through snow near the stream, wriggling along on the stomach to be rewarded nine times out of ten by hearing the 'plash' of wings as the wary ducks take flight, while the hunter is yet far out of range, or by finding that they have paddled up or down stream many rods away from the place the 'sneaker' marked them at when he started to sneak. The disappointed expectations and the chills engendered by the snow that works up the sleeves strongly emphasize the irony of an old drake's hoarse 'quawk' as he leads his companions safely into the hazy distance. Truly a well-educated old sheldrake is one of the shrewdest masters of strategy known to duck hunters, quick-witted, keen-eyed, swift of wing, meeting craft with craft and trick with trick. A

brace in the game bag means that the sportsman has had unusual luck or else that he is a patient, skilful and a crack shot.

Resides the sheldrakes a few other varieties are to be found occasionally about central New York in winter. The long tail duck, called also old wife and old squaw, is a gayly clad bird, its predominating colors of black and white being arranged in very flashy style. The long, pointed tail feathers remind one of an English pheasant rather than a water fowl. Brilliant as is its appearance it affords a contribution to the culinary department being necessarily submitted to the process of soda fumigation and sterilization to render it at all possible as part of a dinner.

The bright feathered buffle heads or butter balls sometimes drop in and float about on the waters, little round puffs of feathers, as fat and shiny as the butter pats they are named for. In spite of their corpulent appearance they are quick of wing as a quail and the gunner must waste no time if he would get a chance at them before they are out of range. Most ducks drag a little in the water before they get well started on the wing but the buffle head seem to leave the water at once and is six feet in the air at the first spring.

Now and then a stray black duck, a prize at any season of the year, will find its way up the stream or river, and rarer still the weird, penetrating wing music of a whistler comes from high in the air, where, perhaps, a single specimen may be seen beating his way far beyond reach of the shot.

Winter duck shooting is a sport that is followed only by small boys proud in the possession of a Christmas gun, or by those hardy healthy nimrods whose hunting instinct seeks any outlet and who care no more for the zero weather than for 90 in the shade. The greater part of the game is hardly fit to eat and the pursuit of it means long walks, 'sneaks' and waits in penetrating chill of the winter dawn, crawling through the snow, lying patiently among cakes of ice 'waiting for 'em to fly over,' and last, but not least, the chance often realized, of an unmeditated bath in the river, where the water is chilled by a temperature of 10 below zero.

Don't experiment—buy Magnetic Dyes which have been successfully used in Canada for twenty-five years. Price 10 cents for any color.

Dislocation.

Witherby.—You keep a joint bank account with your wife, don't you?

Von Blumer.—Yes.

Witherby.—How does it work?

Von Blumer.—It's usually out of joint.

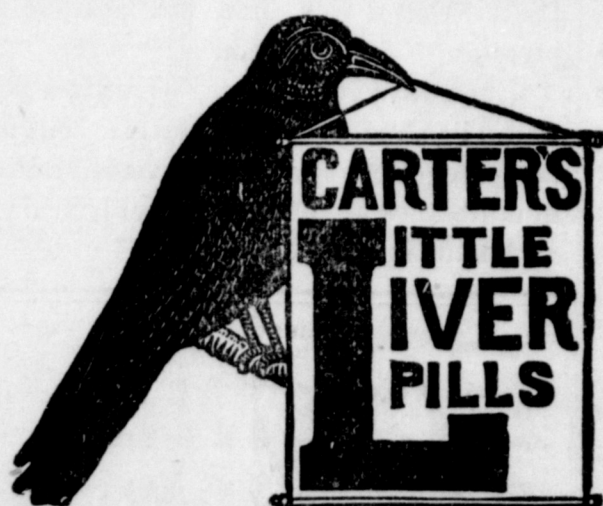
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Proving An Alibi.

'When I come home in the evening my wife is always playing the piano.'

'Is she so musical?'

'No; but if the dinner isn't good she wants me to know she didn't have anything to do with it.'



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