

THE DICTIONARY.

Its Story May Lack Plot, but It Is Decidedly Interesting.

Whoever says "dull as a dictionary" cannot be very familiar with one. We may sympathize with the old lady who remarked of the dictionary that she "didn't think much of the story," but nevertheless no one can use a good unabridged edition with any frequency and not attest to the fact that it is full of the most fascinating reading. Indeed, notwithstanding the old lady's opinion, the dictionary often exerts a charm not unlike that of an exceedingly interesting novel. To be sure, the narrative lacks consecutiveness, but the work is full of most interesting stories.

When we go to look up a word we are in doubt about we are attracted to other words in its neighborhood; they enlist our curiosity; we are impelled to find out their meanings, too, and to make ourselves acquainted with their life histories. Very strange things, most unsuspected things, they often tell us. Occasionally a very familiar word that we thought we knew all about reveals most remarkable qualities—much as some commonplace neighbor who for years we have nodded to in passing to and fro, regarding him as an excellent but rather dull individual, may chance to join us in a walk down the street or sit beside us on the train and casually betray traits, interests, qualities of mind or heart that entirely change our opinion of him. So we may read on and on, perhaps forgetting all about the word that we set out to look up, and finally have to turn to it again to reassure ourselves as to the precise points we were in doubt about.

HER RECOMMENDATION.

Why General Spinner Gave One Woman a Treasury Position.

Here is the story as it was told by herself of the appointment under General Spinner of a woman clerk in the treasury department.

"It was in 1864," she said, "two years after the appointment of women had become a permanent thing. I was in Washington visiting a sister. I made up my mind that I wanted a position, and so, without saying a word to any one, I went to the treasury and made my own application. I simply walked into General Spinner's office and said: 'General Spinner, I would like a position in the treasury.' The general looked up carelessly and then went on with his work.

"How long have you been in Washington?" he asked.

"Three years."

"What influence have you?" he asked.

"What influence?" I stammered. "I don't know what you mean." I was beginning to get embarrassed.

"Yes, influence," he said. "What congressman do you know?"

"I don't know any," I faltered. This time the general threw down his pen.

leaned back in his chair and looked at me.

"You've been in Washington three years and don't know any congressman?" he queried. "Good! That's recommendation enough. The position is yours."

The Black Gnat Superstition.

There is a species of black gnat about the size of a young house fly that visits you at the dinner table frequently in the course of a lifetime. He is believed to be the soul of a departed friend come back to give warning of the death of some one you know. Simple folk believe in him absolutely. Whenever he appears at a certain home in New York, buzzing about the plate of the lord and master, the good wife declares, "John, who can it be next?" She runs over on her fingers the names of such friends as she can then recall. John frowns, growls about "female nonsense," strikes at the gnat, and next morning finds in the death notices announcement of the demise of one he knew.

Anthony's Nose.

There is a remarkable natural curiosity on a small tributary of the Mohawk river in Montgomery county, N. Y., known all over New England as "Anthony's Nose." It is situated on the extremity of a mountain called "the Klips," and when viewed from the river at the entrance to the highlands has the perfect shape and general appearance of a human nose at least 300 feet long. Opposite Fort Montgomery, in Putnam county, on the east side of the Hudson river, there is another nose shaped projection known to the frequenters of that locality as "The Old Man's Nasal Appendage."

Decollete.

She was magnificent in ball attire. "By what right, sir, do you tell me, I shall not wear this gown?" she demanded, with flashing eyes.

"Before we were married your old father asked me if I could keep you in clothes, and I assured him I could," replied he and met her look of high defiance with a look of steady determination.

Lord Cadogan, whom the King and Queen visited in November, lives at Culford Hall, near Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, which is situated in a heavily-wooded country, between Bury and Thetford, is close to Amp-ton and Livermore, which are two of the most beautiful domains in Suffolk. The estate passed from the Becons to the Cornwallises, by whom it was sold to the Benjons, and Lord Cadogan purchased it about twenty years ago. The house, which was built during the reign of Elizabeth by Sir Nicholas Becon, has been much altered and greatly enlarged. There are pleasant gardens, and a small but well-timbered park. The shooting on the Culford estate is now very good indeed, having been greatly improved and extended since Lord Cadogan purchased the estate.



Starving in Luxury

Many people with plenty, suffer from ruined stomachs and must sit idly by and watch others enjoy their meals. Late suppers, too much rich food, and irregular meals, have placed them in this terrible condition. The stomach is the seat of many ills and should receive your best care if you wish to keep all the faculties clear.

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HE WAS A CANUCK

Nobleman who Wanted to Test American Humor Got a Surprise.

While H. I. H. Prince Sadanaru Fushimi was in the city recently, says the New York Times, one of his suite, a nobleman, who speaks English perfectly, desired to test for himself the theory that the humor of the American workman is quick and very often witty.

"I stood on a car platform," said he, "and the weather was really very cold. The conductor had his collar turned up. I spoke to him to test the theory.

"Fine warm weather we're having," is said. "I shall have to get out my thin clothes in the morning."

"He looked at me for a moment square in the eye. Then with a faint smile he said soberly: 'Sure, I wanted to go down to the island for a swim this evening, but the company said I might catch cold if I did, so they made me work. Step up in front, please!'

"You can imagine my delight. I was so pleased with the fellow that when I got a chance to speak to him again I asked his birthplace.

"Me?" he said. "I'm a Canuck—French father, Canadian mother; been in New York about three months. Came down from Winnipeg. Why? Think I was an American?"

The nobleman has made no experiments since.

THE COCOANUT PALM.

It Plays an Important Part in Life and in Law in Ceylon.

When a traveler gets his first sight of a palm grove he does not easily forget it. He sees the trees springing up, as it were, from the water in which their shadows are reflected. Besides being beautiful ornaments to a landscape these palms are among the most useful gifts which nature has given to the inhabitants of tropical islands. In supplying actual necessities and in the number of useful purposes to which it can be applied bamboo takes first rank, but the palm comes next. To many of the people of Ceylon the coconut trees are everything, and their very lives depend upon them. The tree supplies most of their wants, besides giving them valuable commercial products. In this island there are estimated to be nearly 20,000,000 palm trees, and among the poorer classes a man's wealth is estimated by the number of trees he owns. They form the most important asset of his estate and by will are generally divided among his family. As one of the important traits of the Cingalese is his love of litigation, one can readily see what an important part the palm tree plays in the law cases there. There is a case on record in which the two thousand five hundred and twentieth part of a grove, containing only ten trees, was the subject of dispute. One of the greatest difficulties which the engineers had to encounter in building a railroad across the island was to determine the ownership of the palm trees. The ramifications of relationships and the fractional claims set up were most difficult to understand and disentangle.

A Strenuous Infant.

John—Hello, old man! I hear that you're up at your house—Popley—You don't say! Great pair of lungs, John—John—I say I hear that baby of yours—Popley—Yes, yes, and you live two blocks away. Wonderful, wonderful!

Advice.

Show your strength to the world, but beware how you betray your weakness even to your dearest friend.—Papyrus.

What the arts are to the world of matter literature is to the world of mind.

For Amateur Theatricals.
Knox—I hear you're getting up an amateur theatrical club. Woodby—Yes, and now we're looking for a good motto for the club. What would you suggest? Knox—What's the matter with "Think twice before you act?"

Absentminded.

The Groom—I can't see that check your father placed among the wedding presents. The Bride—Papa is so absentminded! He lit his cigar with it.

Fatal Blunder.

"He is gone!" she wailed. "He is gone forever!"

"Don't be downcast," her friend urged. "He may come back."

"No, no; I shall never see him again. I gave up the letters he had written to me."

Had Her Appetite.

Harry—Molly, you look good enough to eat. Molly—All you have to do is ask me to dine. I'll do the eating all right.—Boston Transcript.



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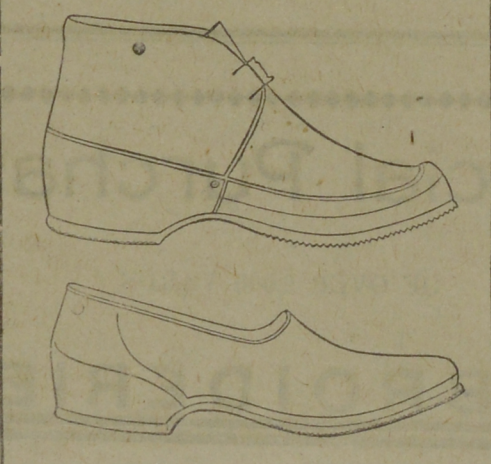
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