WASTED PRECAUTIONS.

A Spell of Worry and Anxiety That Went For Naught.

Ferguson was wending his uncertain way homeward, sorely troubled in his mind over the curtain lecture he knew was in store for him and casting about for some means of evading it. Suddenly a bright idea was evolved from his befuddled brain. He would slip into the house and get quietly into bed without awakening his wife.

Accordingly he stole gently upstairs, carefully undressed outside the door and crept into bed, with his face toward the outside.

He mentally congratulated himself upon his success thus far and went to sleep.

When he awoke in the morning he dared not look at his wife, and after lying still for a few minutes and not hearing any noise from her he concluded she was still asleep.

He then determined to arise very quietly, carry his clothes outside the door, dress there and go downtown to business without waiting for breakfast. He was successful in this, and, meeting the servant girl downstairs, he said:

"Eliza, you can tell your mistress I expect to be very busy today and therefore I didn't stay to have breakfast with her this morning."

"Laws, sir!" said Eliza. "Missis went away yesterday morning to her mother's and said she wouldn't be back till this evening."—London Telegraph.

ENGLISH JUSTICE.

Hard on Petty Thieves and Light on Wife Beaters.

It is only about a century since the death penalty was inflicted in England for theft not exceeding the value of a sheep. Now some of the London journals are making a merciless exposure of magistrates throughout the kingdom who keep up the tradition by sentencing petty thieves to jail while inflicting only trifling fines upon wife beaters and even more brutal offenders.

In one police court one defendant was fined 10s. 6d. for knocking his wife down in the street because she refused to give him money for drink, and another was sentenced to sixty days' imprisonment for damaging growing potatoes and stealing two footballs.

For cruelty to a horse, beating his wife, who was ill, with fist and hammer and leaving her with nothing to eat one man was fined 10 shillings, while another, charged with stealing a pair of socks valued at sixpence, got fourteen days' hard labor. It would not be difficult to make up a list of similar cases from American police courts, yet the tendency in America is rather toward a higher estimate of the value of human life.—Van Norden Magazine.

Australian Curiosities.

There are some curious things in central Australia. Lake Amadeus in the dry season is merely a sheet of salt. Ayers rock, about five miles round, rises abruptly from the desert. Formerly vast rivers flowed here, and the diprotodon, a wombat-like creature worthy of its name and four times as large as a kangaroo, flourished on the plains. Now there are hardly any animals to be seen. The fish live in water holes of the hills until the floods wash them down to the valleys. At the end of the wet season the water frogs fill themselves with water, roll themselves in the mud and lie low till the next rains, which may not come for two years. Meanwhile the provident frog, like the "mousie" of Robert Burns, may have the misfortune to furnish a drink to a thirsty black. The natives also get water from the roots of trees. They are in the "totem" stage and revere certain plants or animals which protect them. Men of one group can only marry women from another single group.

The Need of Common Sense.

I had a really scientific man to see me the other day, and in the course of our investigation of a point we had in common it was necessary to wash out a bottle. The bottle was empty. It was a round, wabbly vessel, and he had to hold it under the water a long time so that it might get full enough of water to hold it down. I asked him why he did not fill it with water first, and he laughed and said he did not think of it. And that bears out my contention that it is not because a man is as "clever as paint" that he therefore grasps "the common sense of common things."—G. H. R. Dabbs in Fry's Magazine.

Why Currants Are Nutritious.

The reason why currants are so remarkably nutritious is that they consist to a very large degree of saccharin in its most easily digestible form—that of grape sugar. The piquant flavor of the currant, which adds so much to its pleasantness as a food, is derived from the valuable percentage of tartaric acid which the berry contains. Potash is also present in the form of cream of tartar and is undoubtedly of dietetic value.—Ladies' Pictorial.

No Excitement.

"Here," said the dramatist, "we have a husband who loves his wife and a wife who loves her husband."

"Well?"

"How am I to construct a drama from such material?"—Louisville Courier-Journal.

His Inference.

"Evidently a Turkish bath is a scheme to keep one perpetually dirty."

"I judge from what you say that you've never taken one."

"No, but I've seen a Turk."—Exchange.

A SPANISH TRICK.

The Incident Which Moved England to Turn Drake Loose.

The relations between which Drake's raid into the south sea had for a time threatened with open rupture had greatly improved—at least in outward appearance—and in 1585, under special promises of immunity from molestation on religious or other grounds, Philip had invited to his ports a fleet of English corn ships in order to supply the deficiency of his own harvests. No sooner, however, had the English ships arrived than an embargo was laid upon them and their crews arrested.

One ship, the famous Primrose of London, managed to escape. While lying off Bilbao quietly discharging her cargo she had been visited by the corregidor of Biscay and his guard disguised as merchants. Suddenly called upon to surrender, the crew flung themselves upon the Spaniards, drove them all overboard and made sail. Some of the discomfited Spaniards as the shore boats fled were seen clinging to the English vessel. These were humanely rescued and carried in triumph back to England, and among them was the corregidor himself. Upon him were found his official instructions, setting forth expressly that the embargo was ordered for the purposes of the expedition which Philip was preparing against the English. This was enough for the queen and the powerful public opinion of commercial circles in London, which had obstinately clung to pacific relations with Spain. A retaliatory embargo was proclaimed, letters of general reprisal were issued, and Drake was let loose.—From Publication of Navy Records Society.

A PORTO RICAN CUSTOM.

Prayers For the Dying Recited In the Public Streets.

"A few evenings ago while we were at dinner in our hotel," writes an American author visiting in Porto Rico, "we heard the tinkling of a small bell just outside the hotel doors. Instantly Salvador, the waiter, stopped in the little bustling run with which he waits on the guests, hurriedly procured a candle, lighted it and carried it out on the balcony. Almost as soon as that candle was on the balcony railing we three Americans were beside it, questioning Salvador, for we were sure something unusual was going on.

"We saw a procession of many people, led by two priests, coming down the street, each person bearing in his hand a lighted candle. They stopped in front of a house facing the hotel, and Salvador told us that somebody was dying there and they were praying for his soul. Up and down the street as far as we could see on every balcony railing was burning either a candle or a kerosene lamp.

"From the absorbed interest of the people gathered in front of open doors and windows of the afflicted house the sufferer was apparently trying to die in full view of the spectators.

"Presently the bell began to ring again, the procession formed once more, and they all moved up the street, Salvador telling us in explanation that there was a second person dying and they were now going to pray for him."—Exchange.

A Slight Deduction.

In Mrs. Lapham's family circle her powers of reasoning were accounted most remarkable and convincing. Outside the family her ability to convince was not so marked.

"See here," she said without releasing the ten cent piece for which the conductor of the trolley car had gone to her side, "I've only brought Willy with me. He's eight, so I've got to pay his fare. I've left Myra, that's four, and Neddy, that's two, at home. Now, you wouldn't have charged me for them, would you?"

"No, madam," said the conductor. "Your fare, please."

"Well, they'd have taken one seat," persisted Mrs. Lapham, still retaining her hold on the ten cent piece. "I couldn't have held 'em both. I thought of bringing them, only 'twas too far. Now, why can't you take off something from Willy under the circumstances?"—Youth's Companion.

In Buying Perfumes.

"If you give her perfumery for her birthday," said the druggist, "give with discretion. Find out first the effect of perfumes on the system.

"Heliotrope is a bad scent for any but the boisterous and gay. It is depressing. It often causes the neurasthenic to weep. Would it suit her?

"Musk is a powerful stimulant, a good thing for those with weak hearts. How is she that way?

"Stephanotis creates languor. If she is lazy, then avoid it.

"Violet is the best perfume. It elevates the mind. It spurs to deeds of bravery, of sacrifice. It creates beautiful thoughts. Get her violet, my boy."—Exchange.

The Commutable Cook.

"My wife and I are keeping house in the suburbs this year."

"What does the transportation cost you?"

"Well, let's see. We bought three commutation tickets at"—

"Three! Who uses the third?"

"That's for the cook. I take one out every night, and she leaves the next morning."—Brooklyn Life.

The Cure.

"In love with that penniless young scamp, are you?" said old Roxley. "Well, I propose to cure you of that."

"You can't," retorted the willful young girl. "I'm determined to marry him."

"That's it exactly. I propose to let you do it."—Exchange.

CUNNING BIRDS.

Stratagem of the Lapwing and the Ruse of the Thrush.

"The goose is a frightful liar," said a nature fakir. "He quite puts me to shame."

"Really?"

"Really. You know how the goose, when you draw near it, hisses? Well, with that hissing sound it says: 'Scott, beware. I am a serpent.' Yes, from primeval times the goose has acted this lie. The primeval goose mother, sitting on her eggs in a place of reeds and sedge, would not fly when an intruder appeared; but, keeping her body concealed amid the leaves, she would stretch out her long, flexible neck and hiss wickedly. 'A snake in the grass,' the intruder would say to himself as he retreated, and on her eggs the goose would chuckle in a sly, contemptuous way.

"The lapwing is another liar. Approach her nest and she sets up a distressful crying and runs back and forth in front of you, trailing one wing as though it were broken. You follow. You think to snatch her up in your hands. With this lie she lures you away from her young.

"The thrush in time of drought beats with his feet on the grass like a clog dancer. Thus he lies to the earthworms. He makes them think that it is raining. Up they come in silent haste, and the deceitful thrush makes a rich meal."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

WELL BURIED.

Two Funerals For One Man Provided For by His Will.

Curious directions for the disposal of his remains were left by John Robert Pringle of Catford, who died leaving an estate of gross value of £8,049 3s. 3d. The testator directed:

"After my decease I desire that a competent and trustworthy doctor of medicine shall, by any experiment he may deem suitable, thoroughly satisfy himself that life is absolutely extinct. My carcass is to be cremated and the residuum thereof deposited in two metal urns, numbered respectively 1 and 2. On the ashes in No. 1 are to be placed a packet, which will be found on my desk, and my miniature portrait scarf-pin, and on the ashes in urn No. 2 a similar packet, which also will be found on my desk, and my miniature portrait finger ring."

He directed that the urns were then to be soldered down and No. 1 buried in his mother's grave at Newport Pagnell and the other in "my dear Lizzie's grave" in the Streatham cemetery at Tooting. He also enjoined his son to see that the graves of his mother and of the testator's mother were properly looked after.—London Mail.

At Liberty to Scream.

It was on a ferryboat plying between Sydney and Manly, one of that city's beautiful suburbs. Every seat was occupied. Each occupant felt the influence and prepared for an enjoyable trip when a lank girl of fifteen appeared, dragging by the hand a screaming child. There she stood, glowering. A mild lady suggested the child might be in pain. An old bachelor muttered that people who had charge of children should keep them at home. Low voiced but distinct imprecations were now rife. She took not the slightest heed of the muttering or the bawling, which was now at the highest pitch, till the suggestion was offered that medicine would do it good. Then she arose in her wrath, as it were, and, giving the child a vigorous shake, said:

"Ethel, cry as loud as you like. I've paid your fare."—London Tit-Bits.

Handsome Dogs Are Good Dogs.

In the most characteristic of English dogs, with the English bulldog as an unfortunate exception of a glaring sort, common sense principles in the canon of judging are distinctly marked. In the case of hounds any good eye can pick out the best animals. This was curiously illustrated not long since in private when an artist taken over one of the bigger kennels of foxhounds picked out the prize and pedigree dogs one after the other. He went purely by his own sense of what was strong and comely, of "strength and beauty met together," as Shelley says in a very different connection. — London Outlook.

He Knew of but One.

Many years ago De Scott Evans, the artist, took a trip to Jamaica, and upon his return to New York he exhibited a number of pictures that he had painted during his outing.

One day a man who had been looking through the studio stopped before a certain picture and asked:

"What does this represent?"

"That," said Mr. Evans, "is a scene in Jamaica."

"Jamaica?" echoed the visitor. "That's strange. I don't remember ever seeing anything like that in Jamaica."

"You have been there, then, have you?" the artist inquired.

"Oh, yes! I live there."

"Well, you surely must be acquainted with this place then. It is a street scene in the principal town of the island."

The man from Jamaica looked at Mr. Evans for a moment as if he thought the latter must be daft. Then he emphatically declared:

"I live in Jamaica, and there isn't a street in the town that bears the remotest resemblance to that picture."

The mention of Jamaica as a town cleared away the mist.

"I see," said Mr. Evans, "you live in Jamaica, N. Y., don't you?"

"Yes," replied the suburbanite. "Is there another Jamaica anywhere?"

They Lacked Team Work.

There was small respect in Captain Maybury's mind for the brains of the artists whom he and his wife harbored and fed during the summer. "They are a well meaning lot of folks as ever lived," he said confidentially to a neighbor, "but when it comes to common sense every last living one of 'em needs a guardeen."

"Act kind o' crazy, I reckon," said the neighbor.

"Well, 'tain't so much that," admitted Captain Maybury, "as 'tis that they lack gumption and sprawl. Two of 'em were talking to me about the 'sunset light' last night. 'We work fast as we can, but we can't ketch it,' they told me. 'It fades so fast, and before you know it the glow is dead.'

"I've got some used to their queer talk, but that did seem plumb foolish. 'If two of you can't ketch it,' I says, 'why in tunket don't the whole eight of you set to work together, same as if you had a fence to paint?' But if you'll believe me, I could tell by their looks they'd never thought of such a thing before. They're simple, that's what they are."—Youth's Companion.

The Old Time Almanac.

"It is astonishing what faith the old school farmer used to put in his almanac," said a farmer of the new school, a graduate of an agricultural college.

"My father was an old school farmer, and in June he would consult his almanac to see if we were going to have a clear Christmas. What though the almanac usually went back on him? Sometimes its predictions were true, and one accurate prophecy counterbalanced in my father's mind fifty miscures.

"Once I crossed the ocean with the old man. We sat at the captain's table, and the first night out my father, laying down his spoon, said anxiously:

"'Captain, hev ye got an almanac on board?'

"'No,' the captain answered.

"The old man frowned and shook his head.

"'Then, by gosh,' he said, 'we'll jest hev to take the weather as she comes.'"—Los Angeles Times.

Dickens and His Beard.

Frith painted Charles Dickens' portrait when the novelist began to grow a beard and told this anecdote of the occasion:

"Well, one day when Dickens was sitting the servant came up to tell me Sir Edwin Landseer was below. Dickens said, 'Let's have him up; he hasn't seen my beard and mustache yet.' Charles Landseer and Edwin had been abroad for some time together in Italy, and they hadn't all met for months. Edwin came up and took no notice of the beard, and at last Dickens said: 'Well, Lanny, what about all this? D'you like it? Think it's an improvement?' 'Oh, a great improvement,' Landseer said quite gravely. 'It hides so much of your face.' Dickens wasn't the least offended. He'd let 'Lanny' say anything."