

Pastimes of Madmen

By Helen E. Meyer.



SOME of the inventions of the insane are of scientific value. A patient at Villejuif invented a "pamification machine" by combining a bottle, a plack, and small metallic tubes, to which he had fitted faucets. Having set up his machine, he procured loaves of bread the size of a man's head. The bread was good—so good that it was decided to make the machine known. One day when it was in action the doctor suggested taking a photograph of it. The inventor watched him as if petrified for a moment; then he fell upon the machine wrenched it apart, and trampled it underfoot. The invention—an exceedingly useful one—was lost, because no one had seen him make it, and so no one dares speak of it to him. To allude to it is to bring on a furious attack. Most lunatics, no matter how contented they may be, generally cherish a furtive longing to escape. They collect wax from the polished floors, take the impressions of locks, and make keys from empty sardine boxes, spoon handles, or anything to be found. Dr. Marie's museum includes a collection of knives of strange and unheard-of shapes. Some of them have blades made from pieces of glass or slate and set in handles of corset steels. Objects harmless in themselves become dangerous weapons through the insanity of madmen.

Insane sculptors are as common as insane painters. The insane sculptor hews out coarse statuettes, fantastic animals, ferocious little horned and grinning devils. An ex-mechanic carves all his soap bones. That his old trade is still in his memory is shown by the little screws that he makes out of the smaller pieces of bone. He works all day at his senseless and ridiculous task. Another lunatic, who believes he is the incarnation of the soul of Beethoven, passes his time carving toy men out of wood. Each pair of his creations are joined together, now at the necks, now at the shoulders.—Harper's Weekly.

A Proclivity and Compunctions

By E. J. Martin.



ENTHUSIASTIC professors expound to us that we consume food in enormous excess of our reasonable needs, and perhaps we do; but we find eating a pleasant exercise and stick to it, according to our various capacities, as long as we can get food that suits us and our digestions hold out. As for drink, the habit of using beverages that are more or less stimulating in their qualities is at least as old as history, and doubtless very much older. Coeval with it has been perception of its hazards and warnings against its continuance. Hardly any major proclivity has such a bad name, or is battered by such a fusillade of arguments and awful examples. That rum does any one any good must seem doubtful even to its best friends. When you have said that it is pleasant, and that, though it is immensely destructive to some savages and to crowds of civilized individuals, a considerable proportion of the most valuable people on the earth seem to be able to play with it without serious damage to themselves, you have said almost all that it is safe to aver. So great a cloud of compunctions swarm over that proclivity that you marvel that there is any life left in it. They do keep down some of its vigor, so that it is less destructive than it used to be, and probably they hope in time to kill it altogether. One could wish that they might, and that it might stay dead for a generation or two, till we could find out whether the world was better or worse without it. But it is not being killed. The army of compunctions it maintains is evidence of its enormous vitality. To all seeming, so long as the earth continues to spin, there are likely to be cakes on it, and also ale, but with great improvement probably by the humane race in the wise use of both.—Harper's Magazine.

The Flea, The Rat And The Plague

By William Inglis.



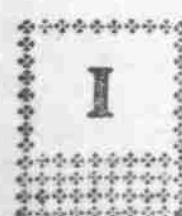
AS to the place and manner of origin of the plague germ, or bacillus pestis, nothing definite is yet known. The manner of its travel and communication to man has been clearly traced. The bacillus lives and breeds in the blood of the rat. That rat is the victim of fleas which live upon his blood, and as they feed draw into themselves the plague bacilli which swim by thousands in his vital fluid. Thus infected, and thereby as dangerous as so many little dynamite bombs, the fleas pass with the rats into the habitations of human beings which the rats infest, and there, from convenient floors or chairs or beds, leap upon human victims.

The plague-bitten flea does not poison man with his bite, as the stegomyia mosquito poisons by injecting the bacillus of yellow fever directly into the blood. The flea, it is true, bites human beings as he bites other prey. He sucks blood until he is replete, and then squirts blood from his alimentary canal upon his prey. Therein lies the peril. Plague bacilli are in this discharge, and if it be left undisturbed on the skin of the victim the bacilli will penetrate the skin and tissues, enter the circulation, and thus infect the person upon whom the flea has fed.

It is this curious manner of infection by dejecta that makes the bubonic plague peculiarly dangerous to people who do not bathe frequently. In Japan and in the United States the spread of the disease among human beings even in rat-infested cities is slow, while in India and China, and certain parts of Europe, where people bathe seldom, if ever, the plague runs like wildfire. It is almost impossible for a person who bathes twice a day to become infected with bubonic plague.—Harper's Weekly.

The Cup That Cheers

By Yik Fong.



IF tea is freshly made with fresh water that has come to a full boil and if not for immediate use poured off the tea leaves in, say, five or six minutes into another teapot—and use a "cosey" to keep the tea hot—such hot tea will cool you off better than any iced drink. Of course, we Americans favor cold drinks in hot weather, and iced tea with a dash of lemon juice is without doubt the most satisfying and refreshing of summer drinks. No typhoid germs are possible, for the infusion has been boiled.

In the Orient the Chinese and the native of Japan drink their tea hot. Hot water is poured on the leaves in very small teacups, and is sipped more or less all day long, being continually replenished with fresh tea when the brew becomes too strong. Even Europeans after tiffin, tired out with slight seeing, find marvelous recuperation in sipping their tea thus made.

There is no other way to make tea than to make it absolutely fresh. As one hundred and fifty cups can be made from one pound of tea, it is an immensely profitable drink to sell at five cents a cup or glass, and to charge fifteen to twenty cents for a small pot of tea is to restrict the use of a beverage that in hot weather should be obtainable everywhere, even in saloons without permission of any extreme temperance advocate.



BELLED THAT BEAR.

From Big Indian to East Windham the men in the Catskills are saddened over the departure of Elmer Ford, who for twenty years has held the title of the champion bear hunter of Greene County and who, in his peculiar methods of tracking and killing his quarry, could give cards and spades to the mightiest nimrods in the Adirondacks, writes the Black Dome Valley (N. Y.) correspondent of the New York World. William Butts, of East Windham, enjoyed the reputation up to the time of his death. Trophies of his prowess are still displayed in the Butts House, which he kept for many years and where he had a tame bear that in time became a hopeless victim of strong drink. Butts, mighty as he was on the trail, never did the things that made Elmer Ford's name a synonym for reckless courage.

It was Ford's contention that the keenness of the human eye was superior to brute strength and brute courage and he demonstrated this on many occasions. As many as twenty times he has entered a bear den unarmed and chased the animal out after gazing at him steadily for two minutes. That was simply to prove that he possessed hypnotic power which he could exert at will. His great feat, however, was to enter a den, crouch on all fours and compel the bear to leap over him and make for the open.

This was his invariable practice when he was accompanied by a greenhorn for whom he was acting as guide. In the fall of 1899 an Englishman who had hunted elephants in Africa and tigers in India visited the Catskills on the strength of a story he heard on shipboard that in the mountains of Greene and Columbia Counties could be found the fiercest and largest bears on the American continent. The visitor brought an arsenal with him, and after due inquiry engaged Elmer to take him through the woods. They struck a trail on the south side of Windham High Peak and followed it for eleven hours, bringing up at nightfall in the thick brush near the summit of South Mountain. In the morning, after a night's rest wrapped in blankets in the shelter of a temporary shack, they came within gunshot of a full grown black bear. The Englishman was given the first shot, and tumbled bruin over with a shot in the head. He was much disgusted to find that he had shot an animal weighing about 400 pounds, when he expected at least 800 pounds of bear meat.

"I guess those people on the boat were handing you a lemon," said Ford. "This is the wrong place to find grizzlies. That bear is about as big as we get 'em, but so long as you're disappointed I'll try to show you some fun."

There was an hour's rest and a snack of luncheon and Ford led the way up the mountain's side. It was a steep and wearisome climb, but after reaching a clearing the guide pointed to a big flat rock between two trees.

"Underneath that rock," said he, "is a bear hole. I see by the signs that ole mister bear is to home. I'm goin' in to get him. You stay here and watch me, and when he comes out just give it to him."

Ford put his rifle in the crotch of his arm and crawled into the den on all fours. The Englishman watched him, and as soon as his eyes became accustomed to the darkness he saw two gleaming eyes in the farther end of the cave. Ford advanced to within three feet of the bear's head and then gave a sudden yelp. The bear, a female, leaped clear over his back, dashed out of the entrance to the den, struck the Englishman in the chest and bowled him over. Before he could recover the bear had dashed through the brush and was out of sight.

"Why didn't you shoot?" asked Ford, as soon as he could stop laughing.

"God bless me!" replied the Englishman. "I never heard of bearding the bear in his den before. Indeed, I was not sure that there was a bear there at all, don't you know."

In the following autumn Ford laid a wager that he would go into the mountains and put a string of bells around a bear's neck. When he came back he claimed the stakes, but the stakeholder said it would be necessary to prove that he had done what he agreed.

"Wait," said Elmer.

Two nights after that he led four men from Big Indian up the side of Black Dome and pitched a camp. In the morning the camp was awakened by a commotion in the underbrush. A big she bear came plunging down the mountain frantically with fear, apparently, for with every jump there was a clank of an old cow bell fastened around her neck. Behind her came two cubs, each wearing a string of sleighbells.

"Thought I might as well do it right while I was about it," said Elmer.

TRIALS OF AN EXPLORER.

Frank N. Meyer went out to China with a sort of carte blanche commission from the United States Government. Here was the proposition for

the explorer. The United States practically includes every variety of climate and soil, barring the Arctic. Yet great sections of the United States lie fallow marked "barren." Now Korea and China and Russia have areas with the same climate and the same soil; but those areas are not marked "barren." They are cultivated so they support a population prolific as rats. Meyer was sent to see what grew in those regions, to see how it grew, to examine gardens and farms, to learn the failures and to learn the successes of those foreign peoples who have been cultivating arid soil more centuries than the United States numbers years, to do all this and send back specimens of plant growth and of seeds that gave promise of development in the United States.

Very simple, it sounds, doesn't it? It wasn't at all simple in reality. In fact, it would take a book to give the explorer's experiences. The quest led him to the far interior where Chinese soldiers dare not go. It led him to regions known as banditti haunts like the Border Marches of England in the days of the Picts and Scots. Coolies deserted him in panic terror. Horses could neither be bought nor hired. Baggage had to be carried forward on rafts and wheelbarrows.

Night after night, weeks and months at a stretch the explorer had to sleep in village inns on earthen floors where the house-scrap and filth of ten years stank in a veritable cesspool. The water was not only bad, but it was sheer poison—a vile concoction of rain and sewage. Vermin infested every inch of such abodes and flies in clouds corrupted food as fast as it was exposed. Meyer's food was canned meat, biscuits and tea. What with the smell and the vermin, restful sleep was out of the question. Of course, the man's health went utterly to pieces. It wasn't a case of an illness with a beginning and an end. It was a case of never being well; and the inviolable scientist was surrounded by banditti ruffians who had never before seen a "foreign devil," and treated him to such courtesies as one may guess—staring in at every crevice and crack, day and night, in mobs; examining him from the hair of his head to the sole of his foot; lying to him and jeering at him if he asked questions through his interpreter; accusing him of the evil eye if he examined their gardens; demanding extortionate prices when he attempted to buy seeds and specimens—in fact, treating him exactly as our own criminal population might treat a Chinese explorer if we had no police; and the Chinese police had forewarned Meyer they could not protect him in these regions.

Did Meyer turn back? Not much. He wore a good revolver and protected himself.—From "People Who Stand For Plus," in The Outing Magazine.

DANGEROUS DIVING.

Drowning is a quicker death than most people suppose. Insensibility is said to begin in about one minute, and fatal unconsciousness generally supervenes in the neighborhood of two. Few even practiced divers can remain under water more than a minute and a half, and it is generally fatal to remain beneath the surface longer than that.

At Navarino, Greece, where there are many expert divers who plunge into the sea after sponges, not one was found who could remain under water for two minutes. In the Red Sea the Arab divers generally remain down one and a quarter minutes, while at Ceylon the pearl fishers can seldom stay below for even one minute. There is a case on record at Falmouth where a diver had descended eighty feet, and on giving the signal was drawn up slowly; so it was two minutes before he reached the surface. Blood ran from his ears and nose and he was insensible. He died without speaking.

Insensibility, however, does not always involve death, for in many cases a person may be resuscitated by the use of energetic measures. The bringing to of people who have been under water for five consecutive minutes, however, is considered doubtful by physicians.

RUNNING DOWN A COYOTE.

The next morning I was mounted on a fast horse and at the place appointed. The old gentleman appeared with his two greyhounds and two wolfhounds—fighting dogs, he called them.

As we passed around the hill we could see the carcass lying in the sagebrush, and just beyond it a coyote busily engaged, apparently, in pulling off meat. The brute raised his head and made a break to escape up the valley.

Mike said him first, then Jim, and they fairly darted over the level ground, gaining all the time, until Mike made a grab for the beast's hind leg but missed it. Then the coyote apparently started to turn on the dog but changed his mind and went forward again at full speed, when Jim made a successful grab and tripped him. Up he jumped, only to be tripped by Mike. And thus he was delayed until the fighting dogs ran up and ended his earthly journeying.

Far up the valley we jumped two other coyotes from the sagebrush. One was killed by Mike and the two fighting dogs; the other one was checked by Jim until Mr. Miers urged the other dogs forward and finally caught him also.—Forest and Stream

A lovebird, no larger than a canary, has taught itself to speak as fluently and as distinctly as the best of talking parrots at the village of Ambleside, England.



Road Preservation.

It is interesting and gratifying that the need heretofore pointed out in these columns for some new surfacing for macadam roads to prevent their being sucked apart by automobile tires is recognized in the energetic adoption of remedies by the city and county. These may be yet in the experimental stage, but their early results together with the reported experience of other cities give good hope that the problem will be adequately solved.

The county has applied either the asphaltic crude oil or the preparations for oiling with solutions of bitumen or tar to several of its roads, with the result so far producing a compact surface without the loss of fine limestone in the form of dust. The bitulithic surfacing on a portion of the Grant boulevard has up to this time maintained that severely tested highway in excellent shape. A corporation producing one of the preparations for road surfacing sends The Dispatch this formula for the treatment of macadam roads that have undergone some loss of the necessary binding material: First, bring the surface to the required grade and crown with new stone. Then apply one to one and a half gallons of the surfacing solution per square yard of road surface. Surface this with one cubic yard of clean, three-quarter-inch screenings to each fifty feet of road surface, and roll to smooth and harden. This is claimed to establish a permanent, waterproof and dustless surface at a minimum of cost.

The crucial test of these remedies is in the lapse of time and the success with which they resist the frosts of winter. Next spring we shall be able to judge more accurately whether the roads so protected will prove reasonably permanent. It will be a great gain if, as experiments elsewhere indicate, they furnish the element of permanence, which, under the new uses, was seriously threatened.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

For the Cause of Good Roads.

Month by month the movement for good roads grows in Kentucky. The permanent organization this week of the Kentucky Good Roads Association crystallizes into a definite, dynamic force the sentiment that has been expanding in the State. The association, formed of representatives from the width and length of the State, constitutes a body of possibilities and promise. Primarily formed for the development of support for the proposed amendment of the Constitution as embraced in the Bosworth bill, its aim is necessarily to arouse among the entire population a realization of the importance to Kentucky agriculture, commerce, comfort, wealth and life itself of the construction and maintenance of smooth, well surfaced and complete highways. A poor county can be more surely kept poor by bad roads than by any other medium, for poverty is not so much a cause as an effect of disreputable roads. By the same token, the rich county may become poor by neglect of its highway or be preserved in their wealth by jealous care of them. These are not theories, but facts, provable by the statistics. All the world is awakening to the inestimable value of good roads, as Kentucky has lately shown a disposition to do. Kentucky is really somewhat lagging in the task European countries and some of the other American States have been developing systems of rural boulevards while we stood aside. But at last the sentiment here waxes irresistible. People know. Our roads are better and more numerous to-day than they were ten years ago. Ten years hence they will be better still. With such a body as the Kentucky Good Roads Association laboring zealously and determinedly the result should be ultimately a splendid road system. The association will have influence with voters. It will have weight with the Fiscal Courts, which have charge of the highways. And so it ought to accomplish what has not been feasible before. Persons concerned in the material uplift of Kentucky should be grateful to the men backing the association, and from all quarters of the State should hurry recruits to the movement.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Poetry and Prose.

A school book publishing company in New York recently received the following, written on a postal card, from a dealer in "General Merchandise" at Indian Trail, N. C.:

"Pleas send by return mail without fail to Miss Ida Vail at Indian Trail one copy of Blanks Jography."

The publishing house replied as follows:

"We regret that we are unable to acknowledge receipt of your order of the 17th inst. in language couched in poetical form, our office poet being out of the city. Hence you will kindly pardon the prose in which we beg to advise you that upon receipt of \$1.25 we will be pleased to accede to your request for one copy of Blank's Geography."—New York Press.

There are over fifty groups of Esperantists in the large towns and cities of Spain studying the new international language. Many business houses have adopted Esperanto for correspondence.



AT THE CHOP HOUSE.

Mary had a little lamb,
But later said with grief
That if she'd known how dear it was
She would have ordered beef.
—Chicago Tribune.

BETWEEN "FANS."

Madge—"Was it a spectacular catch?"
Mabel—"She ran to Europe for him."—Puck.

NOT SO EXACTING.

"So you're a butcher now?"
"Yes," explained the former dry goods clerk. "The ladies don't try to match spare-ribs or steak."
—Washington Herald.

A FINE PART.

"I think I'll dramatize one of Henry James' sentences."
"Only one sentence to the play?"
"Sure. That ought to satisfy any lady star."
—Louisville Courier-Journal.

AN EXCUSING SPIRIT.

"Didn't I see the grocer's boy kiss you this morning, Martha?"
"Yes'm. But he ain't to blame, ma'am. 'Twas the iceman set him the bad example."
—New York Journal.

DISCUSSING TERMS.

"Did you come to terms with that cook?"
"Haven't as yet. I'm holding out for more afternoons out per week than she wants to allow."
—Houston Chronicle.

THE POWER OF NIAGARA.

Mr. Howard—"Isn't it wonderful what force Niagara has?"
Mrs. Talkmuch—"Marvelous! Do you know when I first saw it for a full moment I couldn't speak."
—Brooklyn Life.

STRICTLY CONVENTIONAL.

"Anything out of the ordinary about this wedding out in the mining regions?"
"Not a thing. There was the usual fracas, and the groom wore the conventional black eye."
—Kansas City Journal.

SMALL CHANGE.

"It's three years since I was in this city," said the stranger, as he finished his dinner. "City looks the same."
"I don't find much change," remarked the waiter, as he took up the dime that was left from the dollar bill.—Puck.

THEIR COLLEGE BOYS.

First Mother (reading letter from son at college)—"Henry's letters always send me to the dictionary."
Second Mother (resignedly)—"That's nothing. Jack's letters always send me to the bank."
—New York Journal.

HOW ROWS BEGIN.

"Hubby, I dreamed last night that you didn't love me."
"How foolish you are."
"Foolish, am I? As if I could help what I dream about!"
And the fracas was on.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

RETROGRESSION.

"The last time I saw you were complaining about your servant being slow."
"Oh, she's progressing now."
"Is she really?"
"Yes, she's getting slower and slower."
—Democratic Telegram.

CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCE.

"Why have you quit work?" demanded the farmer.
"I just put in twenty minutes sawing wood," replied the actor who had hired out on the farm.
"Well, you ain't in vaudeville. You're playing in the legit now."
—Pittsburg Post.

A DISTINCTION.

"That's Tim Phelan lukkin' so chisty over? O'll break the face av him!"
"Shure, an' it's th' proud day for Tim. He's just got a letter from th' old sod, sayin' that his cousin's big hanged fer killin' an' robbin' an' Eng-lishman."
—Judge.

AN EXPERT HERSELF.

"Now that is what is known as a safe hit," volunteered the escort, "and entitles the runner to take his place on the second base."
"Yes," responded the damsel, "and if that duffer had the base-running ability of an ice wagon he'd have stretched that bingle into a three-bagger."
—Louisville Courier-Journal.

PRACTICE OF LAW.

"Should I go into court with the bald statement that a man was sane at ten, insane at eleven, and sane again at twelve, I'd be thrown out."
"Well!"
"But lemme embellish that plea with a few hundred-to-wits and whereas, introduce a hypothetical question and a small line of expert testimony, and I've got a case, sir, I've got a case."
—Louisville Courier-Journal.