

A QUAINT BILL OF EXPENSES

A Scottish newspaper has unearthed the following quaint account far work done, which was presented to a public body in Scotland two centuries ago:—

- 'To filling up a chink in the Red Sea, and repairing the damage of Pharaoh's host.
- 'To a new pair of hands for Daniel in the lions' den, and a new set of teeth for the lioness.
- 'To repairing Nebuchadnezzar's beard.
- 'To cleaning the whale, varnishing Jonah's face, and mending his left arm.
- 'To a new skirt for Joseph's garment.
- 'To a new sheet anchor, a jury mast, and a long coat for Noah's Ark.
- 'To giving a blush to the cheek of Eve on presenting the apple to Adam.
- 'To painting a new city in the land of Nod.
- 'To making a bridle for the Samaritan's horse and mending one of his legs.
- 'To putting a new handle to Moses' basket, and fitting bulrushes.
- 'To adding more fuel to the fire of Nebuchadnezzar's furnace.'

ODDS AND ENDS

'Estelle, this is an abominably cooked steak. You can cook better than that.'

'Oh, but mother,' 'expostulated the young wife, 'if I cook my best Harold will eat it all and there will be nothing left over for croquettes and things.'

Jimmy had come to school with dirty hands. His teacher was shocked.

'Jimmy,' she said, reprovingly, 'your hands are very dirty. What would you say if I came to school that way?'

'I wouldn't speak about it,' said Jimmy. 'I'd be too polite.'

FAMILY FUN

Strange but True—

That a taut rope is none the wiser.

That, though night falls, day breaks.

That a pen has to be driven, but a pencil is lead.

That sailors never box the compass on the spar deck.

That the fellow with a literary bent is usually broke.

That a tree is cut down before it is easily cut up.

That improper fractions should figure in pure mathematics.

Here is a method of telling a person's age and the month in which he was born. It is a peculiar arithmetical puzzle. Ask the person whose age you are investigating to write down the number of the month in which he or she was born—thus January would be one, and June six, and so on. Then to double it, add five, and multiply by fifty; then to add their age and subtract 365. When this is done, ask for the result, and add 115. The total will give the required age, the first figure or figures being the number of the month, and the remainder the age. Suppose one is born in March and is twenty-five. The number of March is three, doubled is six; add five and you get 11; multiplied by 50, 550; add 25 and you have 575. Subtract 365, and the result is 210. When 115 is added the total is 325. The third month and twenty-five years.

For the trick of the enchanted ball a small lightweight rubber ball is needed. The performer picks it up with one hand, and holding his hands in front of his breast and about a foot apart, causes the ball to travel visibly from one hand to the other by simply blowing on it. After it has made the journey two or three times, it suddenly stops and remains in mid-air. Then it moves again from hand to hand, and finally stops once more when half-way across and falls to the ground. Anyone is at liberty to pick it up to see that it is not prepared in any way. The secret of the trick is that the performer has a loop of very fine black sewing-silk about fifteen inches long, stretched from an upper button of his waistcoat to a lower one. All that he has to do is to slip this loop over his forefingers, and move his hands apart until the loop is taut. The double line of silk forms a sort of trough in which the ball will move. By slacking the hands the ball will fall to the floor. Care must be taken that the loop comes far enough down so as not to show against the white shirt-front. To get a fine sewing-silk, the best plan is to buy the finest to be had, and unravel it. You will then have three strands of very, very fine silk.

All Sorts

The Leicester boot manufacturers complain that the bicycle and motor car have injured their trade.

The lighthouse at Corunna, Spain, is believed to be the oldest one now in use. It was erected during the reign of Trajan and rebuilt in 1634.

As St. Helena requires some £2000 in civil salaries to pay for ruling its 3500 souls, and as only forty vessels called at the rock last year, the discovery of large deposits of manganese is regarded as good news.

When things are in disorder they are often said to be turned topsyturvy; this expression is derived from the way in which turf used for fuel is placed to dry, the turf being turned downward; and the expression then means top-side turfway.

Rural France orders the feeding of her school children without much machinery. The village fathers make arrangements with some public eating place, set a money-box labelled 'cantine scolaire' on the mantelpiece, and the children go for their midday soup and pay a sou if they can. If they cannot, the money lacking is furnished by private subscription.

Although many French peasant farmers are compelled to live extremely thifty lives, barely making both ends meet, my experience in France (says Professor James Long in the 'Daily Mail'), extending over many years, and assisted by unusual facilities, teaches me that they are practically a prosperous people, and that, if they live simply and work hard their lives are examples of contentment and happiness, while they form the backbone of the nation.

It was in a railway carriage, and the company consisted of several commercial travellers and a staid and pompous old gentleman. Various efforts were unsuccessfully made by the knights of the road to draw their companion into conversation. At length one of them said:

'Come, sir, I know you are one of us. Tell us what you are travelling in.'

'Sir,' answered the old gentleman, facing his interlocutor calmly, 'I am travelling in very objectionable and inquisitive company, and the carriage is full of my samples.'

Before the so-called Reformation, the clergy used to walk annually in procession to St. Paul's Cathedral, London, on Corpus Christi Day. They mustered at the upper end of Cheapside, and there began to chant the 'Pater Noster,' which they continued through the whole length of the street, thence called Pater-noster Row, pronouncing the Amen at the spot now called Amen Corner; then, beginning the 'Ave Maria,' they turned down Ave Maria Lane. After crossing Ludgate they chanted the 'Credo' in Creed Lane. An old writer mentions Creed Lane, and remarks that Amen Lane 'is lately added thereto'; from which it may be inferred that the processional chanting ended at that spot. Amen Lane no longer exists.

Both the novelist and the inventor owe a good deal to dreams, which have given them many an idea. It has been affirmed that the inventor of the 'sewing-machine almost ruined himself before he discovered where to place the eye of the needle. His original idea was to follow the model of the ordinary needle, which has the eye at the heel. The plan would not do, and he puzzled and worked without success. Then one night he dreamed that he was taken prisoner in a savage country. He noticed, as he was being led to his death, that the warriors carried spears which were pierced through the head. He awoke, his mind filled with a great idea. Running to his workshop, he constructed a needle with an eye at the point, and found that a dream had solved his difficulties.

The woman who would avoid becoming a bore must remember that her personal affairs and petty domestic troubles are of no particular interest to any one except perhaps to spiteful neighbors, to whom they form food for gossip. If you meet or visit a friend there is no necessity to enter into the most minute details of your troubles or to bemoan your fate, which, after all, is but cowardly. Friends have quite enough trouble and worry with their own affairs without having to listen to a long recital of what does not concern them. Every woman, of course, is not a good conversationalist. In that case it is a good plan to talk as little as possible. A good listener is always appreciated. You cannot bore any one by listening, and are bound to win the good opinion of the talker.