

NOT ACCORDING TO WEBSTER

Here are a few well-defined words it may do you good to remember:

Appendicitis—A modern pain costing about £20 more than the old-fashioned stomach ache.

Collector—A man whom few care to see but many ask to call again.

Echo—The only thing that can cheat a woman out of the last word.

Evolution—Clever trick performed by one Darwin who made a monkey out of Adam.

Jury—Twelve men chosen to decide who is the best lawyer.

ODDS AND ENDS

'And what is this?' asked Aunt Clara, pointing to the picture of a chubby child in petticoats.

'That,' said Robby, who had been wearing knickerbockers for some time, 'is me when I was a girl.'

The origin of the terms 'sixpenny,' 'tenpenny,' etc., as applied to nails, though not commonly known, is involved in no mystery whatever. Nails have been made a certain number of pounds to the thousand for many years, and are still reckoned in that way in England, a twentypenny weighing twenty pounds to the thousand; and, in ordering, buyers call for the three-pound, six-pound, or ten-pound variety, etc., until, by the Englishmen's abbreviation of 'pun' for 'pound' has been made to stand for penny, instead of pound, as originally intended.

'Papa, what is unswerving consistency?'

'Unswerving consistency, my son, is another name for loyalty to our party.'

'But when it is the other side's unswerving consistency?'

'Then, my child, it is pig-headed and malignant obstinacy.'

FAMILY FUN

Which is the only way that a leopard can change his spots? By going from one spot to another.

Which would you rather—that a lion ate you or a tiger? Why, you would rather that the lion ate the tiger, of course.

What is the difference between a spendthrift and a feather-bed? One is hard-up and the other soft-down.

The strongest man can not stand against me. I can knock him down, yet I do not hurt him. He feels better for my having knocked him down. What am I?—Sleep.

Take two goblets, and immerse them in water contained in a vessel large enough to hold them both, and while still under water place them mouth to mouth. Then put a rubber band, about an inch in width, around them, where the rims meet. Take them out of the water, and you will find that you can swing them as a pendulum without their separating, and that to pull them apart requires more force than when they were empty. The reason is that the water does not expand like air, so that, the moment you begin to pull the goblets apart, the vacuum is formed; and the pressure of the outside air makes them adhere more closely because the vacuum is greater.

To throw a coin through a hat:—Borrowing a hat, the performer places it, crown down, on top of a sodawater glass, or any heavy glass. He then announces that he will throw ten coins into the hat, and one will go right through it, and fall into the glass, so that all may see it. He proceeds to do it, and, to the surprise of every one, one coin is seen to fall into the glass. To do this trick, the performer first conceals a coin between the first joint of his second and third fingers. When he puts the hat on top of the glass he secretly introduces this coin under the hat, and balances it on the edge of the glass. This requires considerable practice and great care, because, if not done properly the coin will fall on the outside of the glass when the hat moves from the force of the pennies that are thrown into it. The coin must be so balanced that the greater part of it is inside the glass. The performer should stand in a direct line with the coin when he throws the other coins into the hat.

All Sorts

'This meat,' protested the boarder, 'is overdone.' 'Not exactly,' replied the waitress, 'it's done over. This is the same meat you had yesterday.'

A cheese-cutting device is now made which enables one to gauge the exact size of slice that should be cut for a certain price.

Black Letter is the modern name for the Old Gothic or Old English letter, introduced into England about the middle of the fourteenth century. When, about a century later, printing was introduced the types were cast in this character, in imitation of manuscript. All the Bibles and other books printed before 1500 are in this character, and are called Black Letter books.

The late John W. Mackay was attending to business at the great Comstock mine one day, when a party of tourists approached, and asked if he knew of a guide who would take them around. Mackay offered to escort them, and did so, explaining the whole mystery of gold and silver quartz mining. When they emerged the visitors clubbed together and made up a small sum for the guide.

'Here, my man, take this,' said one: 'your explanation of the workings of the mine has been singularly clear and informing.' 'Well, it ought to be,' replied the guide, as he slipped the half-dollar in his overalls' pocket; 'I dug 'em and I own 'em.'

Probably a sandwich may be called an implement of personal use. It was devised by John Montagu, fourth Earl of Sandwich, a noted gambler and statesman of the time of George III. He invented it that he might not be disturbed while playing cards by having to eat regular meals; and his great invention is said to have helped him to gamble for twenty-four hours at a stretch.

Loadstone, or, as it was originally called, leadstone, is one of those substances which still puzzle the world of science. We know how it acts, but it is beyond the power of the most clever among us to say why it does so. The magnet, which is only a piece of iron rubbed with the loadstone, is so called because the mines whence the Greeks first obtained this curious product, are near Magnesia in Lydia, but the Chinese made use of it for the needle of the mariner's compass long before that, in what may almost be termed prehistoric days.

Vulgarisms in conversation should be strictly avoided. A well-educated person speaks simply and tersely. It is only the partially educated who indulge in fine language, and think it distinguished to use high-sounding phrases. Such expressions, however, as 'awfully pretty,' 'awfully jolly,' 'abominably stupid,' 'disgustingly mean,' denote a poverty of language, and should not be indulged in. Awkwardness of attitude, too, does one the same ill-service as awkwardness of speech. Lolling, gesticulating, fidgeting, and the like take off a certain percentage from the respect of others.

A nutmeg tree looks like a laurel and begins to bear at the age of ten years. It keeps on bearing until it is ninety. The fruit resembles an apricot, and when ripe it bursts open, showing at its heart the black nutmeg inclosed in a network of scarlet. The nutmeg after plucking must be dried over a slow fire, and the process is tedious. It often occupies two months. Before shipping the nutmegs are always steeped in sea water and lime. This is to protect them from insects. They have nothing but insects to fear. In an insect-proof condition they keep—well, they keep practically forever.

No European ruler uses the telegraph so much as the Emperor of Russia. He has a secret code both for his private and his official messages, and expends £5000 a year in this kind of correspondence. The German Emperor spends £3000 a year in the same way, and he uses a code which he has invented himself, and which he finds very useful whenever he desires to communicate with the Cabinet Ministers or other prominent officials. The telegraph is not used to any extent either by the King of Italy, the Emperor of Austria, or the King of Greece; but, on the other hand, King Edward and Queen Alexandra use it constantly. King Edward signs his private despatches 'Albert Edward' or 'Bertie,' and the Queen, who always signs hers 'Alexandra,' writes quite as many in German as in English.

About half-a-dozen butter factory companies in the North Island have sold their outputs for the coming season at 11d per lb.