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THE TRAIL ON THE MESA.

Over the mesa, bare and brown,
Under the blazing southern sun,
A worn old trail leads from the town,
To the dwelling of some whose toil is done.

A little chamber of grasses, forlorn,
Fragrance, lonely, unknown and still,
While round the cactus and through the thorn
The narrow trail creeps over the hill.

Somebody's lover, somebody's friend,
Under each wooden headboard lies;
Somebody's dreams journed to the end,
To pleading mortals or weeping skies.

Sin and sorrow and love, now past,
Strength to conquer and fault to fall;
These they have answered and these, at last,
The sun, and journey over the trail.

The sun is sitting home to his rest,
The pulse of the great central ocean wides;
The trail leads on to the heart of the west,
Over the crest of the great divide.

—Florence E. Pratt.

SIGN LANGUAGE OF THE INDIANS.

A Simple Method of Expressing Many Ideas Without the Use of Words.

Make a letter A with your hands and the ends of your fingers that is a tepee or tent. Keep your hands in that position and bend them down so that your fingers point away from you; that's a horse, and a very good one, too, because it shows how the legs are interlocked at the corners of the sort of horses one sees on the frontier. If you want to say you saw something, point to your eyes. To say you heard something, point to your ears. To say you slept or are sleepy, put up one hand, with the palm side toward your head and bend your head as if you were going to lay it on that hand.

To say that you saw some one who was beautiful, put your face between the thumb and fingers of one hand and draw your hand softly down from your forehead to your chin. A faint smirk or smile made at the same time greatly helps the sign. If the beauty you tell about was a woman, make believe take hold of a mass of hair on the right side of your head and follow it down past the shoulder with your hand, as you see women do when they dress their hair. These signs for seeing, hearing, sleep, beauty, and women are exactly the same as those used by George L. Fox, the famous clown, when he played "Humpty Dumpty." I have no doubt that Grimaldi, the great English clown, also used them, for they are the natural motions for expressing those terms.

Did you ever notice how the paws of small animals are curled in when they are dead? That is the sign for "died" or "dead." Hold one hand out with the fingers bent toward the thumb to make the sign. But if you would say some one was killed, hold out a fist with the knuckles away from you, and move the wrist slowly so as to force the knuckles down as if the person was struck down. To tell about a child, hold your hand as far from the ground as its head would reach. Put a finger up to either side of the head to say "cow;" to say "deer" put up all your fingers like branching horns. But another way to tell about a deer is to imitate his leaping with one of your hands.

To tell of a snake, wiggle one finger in the air as a snake would move on the ground. That sign is the name for two tribes of Indians. The sign for a Sioux is to make believe cut your throat with one finger; for a Blackfoot, point to your foot; for a Blood, wipe your fingers across your mouth; for a white man, rub your hand across your forehead to show how white our foreheads are; for a Pagan, rub one cheek.

The sign for water is to make a scoop of your hand and put it to your mouth as you would if you were drinking at a stream. To tell of a lake make that sign and spread out your hands to cover a big space. To tell of a river make the water sign and then trace the meandering course of a river with your finger. But the sign for whisky is made by doubling up one fist and drinking out of the top of it as if it were a bottle. If you do that and make believe to stir up your brains with your fingers, or reel a little, you will describe a tipsy man. Nearly all signs in the language are made with the right hand. —Julian Ralph in Harper's Young People.

When Smoking in Church Was Common.

The Puritan Fathers were greatly addicted to smoking; indeed, the practice became so common that even the strictest observers of times and seasons actually smoked in church. This custom soon caused very considerable annoyance, as the religious exercises were greatly disturbed by the clinking of flints and steels to light their pipes and the clouds of smoke in church. Hence in the year 1669 the colony passed this law, "It is enacted that any person or persons that shall be found smoking of tobacco on the Lord's day, going to or coming from the meetings, within two miles of meeting house, shall pay twelve pence for every such default." Under this law several persons were actually fined, but the punishment failed to secure the carrying out of the arbitrary second portion of the enactment.—All the Year Round.

Pasteurized Milk.

Machines are in use in Paris and some other cities which will heat great quantities of milk to a temperature of about 155 degs. Fahr. for a few minutes, and then cool it rapidly to a low temperature. The method has been called the pasteurization of milk. It does not kill all the bacteria, but it does destroy many of them that it greatly increases the keeping properties of the milk. Moreover, it almost entirely destroys the danger from disease germs in milk, since nearly all forms likely to occur in milk are killed by this temperature. The advantage of this method is that the temperature of 155 degs. Fahr. does not give to the milk the taste of boiled milk, which most people find unpleasant, and does not render the milk difficult of digestion. —Professor H. W. Conn in Popular Science Monthly.

The Dance of St. Sophia.

The magnificent dome of St. Sophia is poised in this city, traditionally by miracle, but really by tricks of deceptive material and concealed buttresses.—London Tablet.

DID JACOB LIE?

An Embarrassing Predicament of a Manchester (England) Shipowner.

A good story is told of a shipowner of Liverpool, a Quaker named Jacob, who prided himself on his honesty. He would not have told a downright falsehood to save the value of his best craft. Jacob suffered one of his best ships to set sail from Calcutta for home without any insurance upon either vessel or cargo. At length he became uneasy. He was confident his ship had encountered bad weather, and he feared for her safety. In this strait he went to his friend Isaac.

He called him "Friend," though Isaac was one of the children of Israel. "Friend Isaac," he said, "I would like for thee to insure my ship which is at sea. I should have done it before, but have carelessly neglected it. If thee cans have the policy signed all ready for delivery at 3 o'clock on the afternoon of tomorrow, I will send and get it, and send thee the money in full."

Isaac did not seem to be anxious to insure the ship, but, being told that no underwriter infelicitous had been heard from her, he said he would have the policy made out to take effect on and after 3 o'clock of the following day, but to cover the ship and cargo from leaving India. Early on the following morning Jacob received a message by the hand of a captain just arrived to the effect that his ship was stranded and her cargo lost. This was very unfortunate.

Should friend Isaac hopefully hear the news before the policy was made out he would not make it out at all, or if it was made out and not signed he would not sign it. What was to be done? Jacob wanted to act honestly. It would not be right to let Isaac go on and make out the policy under such circumstances.

Finally he hit upon a plan. He examined his confidential clock and said, "Tell friend Isaac that I have heard from my ship, and if the policy is not signed he need not sign it." The clock was close upon the hour of 3 when the clerk arrived at Isaac's office. Friend Jacob's message was delivered, the ship had been heard from, and if the policy was not signed he need not sign it.

"I think I am in season to save it," the clerk said. "No, sir," answered Isaac promptly and emphatically. In truth the policy of insurance had not been signed, for the inventor had been in doubt. When Isaac heard the message he judged at once that the ship was safe and that Jacob sought to save the heavy bugs of premium he had agreed to pay. "No, sir," he said, "you are not in time. It is past 3 o'clock, the policy is signed; I will go and get it."

He skipped out of the hastily finished and signed the policy, and having dried the ink he brought the document to the clerk, demanding in return the sum which had been agreed upon. The money was paid and the policy was taken home to friend Jacob, who received it very gladly. The end can be readily imagined.—Manchester (England) Times.

Ways of Preparing Asparagus.

A friend, who is noted for her excellent serving of asparagus, gives the following suggestions for its preparation: "The bunch should be plunged into boiling water which is well salted, set down on the root end, with the tips well out of the water, so the steam cooks them quite sufficiently. Almost any asparagus will be well cooked after twenty-five minutes' boiling. It can then be taken into a colander and drained, the strings carefully cut and the vegetable arranged on toast to serve. There are several sauces used with it—either plain butter, pepper and salt, or yet a sauce Hollandaise being quite popular, or drawn butter may be poured over it.

"Sometimes, when the tips of asparagus are served with toast as an especially dainty dish, the stalks are well boiled and strained for a soup. Asparagus soup may be made with either stock or water. If stock is used the white is preferable, and cream is frequently added to make the soup still richer. It is a delicious soup. Asparagus can be steamed to warm it over, and can be cut in omlets and stirred into an omelette, if as happens to be left over from dinner."—Good Housekeeping.

Making an Aurora Borealis.

In 1861 two astronomers, M. De La Rive and M. Lemstrom, made experiments in the mountains of Finland which clearly pave the aurora borealis to be of electrical origin. M. De La Rive says: "We surrounded a mountain peak with a coil of copper wire, pointed at intervals with tin nibs. We next charged the wire with a strong current of electricity, and every night during our stay produced a beautiful display of the aurora, one of the main characteristics of the display being a yellowish white light on the tin points of the wire, which the spectroscope analysis proved to be the greenish yellow rays known to nothing else except the aurora borealis. The main part of the auroral display was usually about 150 yards above the copper coil."—Philadelphia Press.

A Novel Electric Light.

A novel application of the electric light may be witnessed in the vehicles of the London General Omnibus company. The inspectors have been provided with an electrical apparatus, which, from a case about the size of a hunting watch fastened to the waistcoat, throws a steady, mild and effective light on the earliest and most tattered tickets.—New York Post.

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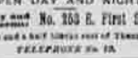

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