

wings jumped at the offer. "I'd be a godsend, Grainger, if you seemed suddenly to lose all on one condition."

you are perfectly frank with me, bearing on the matter, and especially drew your attention to School Oliver. "How did you get on the answer did not come immediately. "I'll call a taxi and we'll go to the station. He broke the silence. "No, I can't tell you that is concerned in it. But I shall be willing for her to tell you if she

is a roundabout waste of time. "But very well! Leave it to me. I'll get a taxi and we'll go to the station. Meanwhile, Mr. Grainger was scouring the quays of Westport in search of a certain Monsieur Adolphe Guyon. He ran literally to earth in a vault where he was superintending the storage of vast piles of potatoes.

"Hello, cap'n!" cried Grainger. "The man I want. Commong ça va, hein?" "Ça va très bien, mon ami," said Monsieur Guyon. "Que voulez-vous?"

"That's what I'm going to tell you out," said Mr. Grainger, catching him by the arm and pulling him out on to the platform. The conversation was long and interesting. It ended with a handshake over the platform. "So said Grainger, "midnight, eh?" "A minute, just," said Monsieur Guyon.

"THE THIRD DEGREE."

(Continued from page 2.)

"Grainger! You mean it? You are going to take this up? You've seen something?" Mr. Fewings threw agitated questions at him. "I've seen nothing but a lady in distress. I can never resist a lady in distress. The rest to me."

He remained for Mr. Fewings to fill in for him the gaps left in the story by Grainger's lightning methods, to admire the colour in her cheeks and the sparkle in her eyes as she heard of Belliver's danger and realised that she was to take part in it.

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(To be Continued.)

ROUNABOUT JOTTINGS

THE OLDEST LETTER IN THE WORLD

The oldest letter in the world is dated 600 B.C. The letter refers to a deed of purchase or hire of a field by one Annini from Simti-Ha. It is written in cuneiform characters on fire clay, and when found was enclosed in a clay envelope. The writer lived in the Dynasty of Larza, which was the first dynasty of Babylon.

WHEN EXECUTIONS WERE PUBLIC IN LONDON

Trinity-square Gardens, Tower Hill, in London, enclose brick pavement marking the spot where public executions were carried out till the year 1747. A slab of granite bears the following inscription: "See of ancient scaffold. Here the Earl of Mar, Lord Balmoral, suffered, 1746." They were beheaded, also Lord Lovat in the following year. On this occasion a scaffolding built to accommodate several hundred spectators collapsed, hurling them to the ground, and history assures us that Lovat, in spite of his awful situation, "seemed to enjoy the crowd of so many Whigs." Lord Lovat was the last person in England to be beheaded on account of his participation in the Jacobite rebellion of 1745.

GORGEOUSLY DRESSED BABIES

Up to the age of six or seven a Chinese baby is most gorgeously dressed. Its garments are of silk and richly embroidered. A portion of the embroidery is always symbolic, consisting of a well-executed figure of a silver or gold thread to represent long life.

A MINE WITH A ROMANTIC HISTORY

The great Mount Morgan mine in Queensland has had a very romantic history, though it is only 40 years old. The property, one mile square, is on the site of an ancient volcano, and its 640 acres were originally secured by the Morgan family at a nominal price. After gold had been discovered there they sold it to a syndicate of speculators. The syndicate was enabled to raise 20 million pounds worth of gold and 2 million pounds worth of copper. Its members all died millionaires. The largest educational endowment in Australia, the Walter and Eliza Hall Trust, was the name of one of them, and the wealth of another helped to found the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. The discovery of the copper was quite accidental. A quarter of a century ago it was found that the company had been allowing millions of tons of water to flow away down the bed of the neighbouring river. Now the mine is no longer open, and it has been closed.

NO CHANGE SINCE ABRAHAM

The Arab, or native Syrian population, have developed no fundamental change for more than 3,000 years. They wear the same clothes, and use the same mode of ploughing as were used by their fathers in the days of Abraham.

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FOR THE CHILDREN

By AUNT EDITH.

A CHINESE FAIRY STORY.

In China there is said to be a book which contains hundreds and hundreds of fairy stories. Three hundred and thirty-three in this wonderful book are about one magic little bird whose name is Feng. So you can imagine the Chinese think a lot about Feng.

Here is a story about the little bird. Once upon a time in China there lived a prince who, one night, had a dream in which he saw a most beautiful lady standing before him. He was just going to speak when the lady vanished—and he awoke. But the face of the lady so impressed him that he determined to find out who she was and where she came from. With her beautiful face still in his mind he sketched and painted her portrait on a piece of fine silk, which he ordered to be hung on the palace gates for all to see. Men and women, rich and poor, of those of high and low degree, came to see the wonderful portrait, but, unfortunately, no one knew her. The prince's courtiers grew more worried every day, and wrung their hands in despair, for their master would neither eat nor drink nor sleep until he found the lady of his dreams.

One day, in desperation, the prince himself set out on a world quest to try and find his dream princess, for, indeed, he was certain she was a princess, she was so beautiful. Far and wide he wandered, until one day he stood on the side of a hill gazing into the valley below, when the little bird Feng flew up to him and asked him why he stood looking so lost and desolate.

The prince told it all his troubles, and the little bird replied that if the prince showed him the portrait he could help him, for he flew everywhere and knew all the lades of the land.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, when he was shown the portrait, "if you sit on my back we will fly away, and I will show you your dream princess."

Feng made himself large enough to carry the prince, and together they flew away. When they arrived at the palace where the dream princess lived, Feng left the prince outside the castle walls while he flew in and laid the portrait at her feet.

"Listen!" cried Feng.

From the outside wall of the castle came the sound of sweet music. It was the prince playing upon a magic pipe.

"Who is this?" cried the princess. "Who can paint and play so wonderfully?"

"It is one," answered Feng, "who sought you the world over. Let me lead you to him."

So the prince found the dream princess through the wonderful little bird Feng, the Chinese fairy bird.

THE THRUSH'S SONG.

Dear mavis in the alder tree,
Your song thrills in my brain,
My heart, it aches with throbbing
With the pulse of pleasure's pain;
Like an overflowing fountain
Your melody outpours,
A gushing limpid torrent
From that tiny throat of yours:
O would I had your melody
All gay and debonair,
I would pour it forth to someone
Who would answer me as fair.

A CLEVER PARROT.

A sick parrot which apparently knew what it was suffering from was treated by the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals. Its owner, a sailor on shore leave, tried to tell the official in charge that the bird had been drooping for days and had refused its food; but the parrot kept interrupting with the words, "Cold on the chest."

When the parrot was examined it was proved that the bird was right! "Cold on the chest" exactly described its malady. After a few doses of medicine and delicacies such as chopped banana and small pieces of hard-boiled egg, the parrot was well again.

CLEVER MICE.

Mice, although they are such tiny animals, are quite intelligent. A man who wanted to get rid of some mice adopted the old-fashioned plan of placing a bucket of water in one of the rooms, with a piece of wood projecting out over the top, and bait of toasted cheese on the far end of it. This was done so that when the mouse ran along to get the cheese his weight would overbalance the stick and throw him into the water. Morning after morning, however, the cheese had disappeared, but the stick was undisturbed, and no mouse was in the water. The man watched, and when all was quiet he saw a big mouse and a little one come out and climb the perpendicular piece of wood that led to the trap. At the top they halted. Carefully the fat mouse took up his position at the back end of the stick, and whilst his weight so balanced it the little one ran to the other end, seized the bit, and hurried safely back. Then with a jump and a scamper, they were back in their hole, evidently to share the delicacy so cunningly won.

A GOOD GAME.

JUNGLE HUNT.

For this game a number of wooden animals of all sorts is required, like those of Noah's Ark, and the more the better. Hide them in the grass and in the hedge while the players are somewhere out of sight. Give each player a bag or basket in which to collect all the animals they can find. If a certain time only is allowed it adds to the fun. The hunter who returns with the biggest bag of lions, tigers, elephants, etc., is the winner, and then he or she has the privilege of hiding them for the others to find.

WHAT AM I?

I am in the clapper, but not in the bell,
In the horsepond, but not in the well,
In the butter, but not in the cream,
In the rafter, but not in the beam,
In the cowshed, but not in the stable,
In the hamper, but not on the table.
My whole is a place where people meet,
And as soon as they enter they take a seat.

Answer: A church.

A TRICK WITH AN APPLE.

Can you divide an apple without cutting the peel? It sounds impossible, but it is not really. Take a needle and thread and pass the needle beneath the peel, draw the needle out again and pass it in again at the same hole, repeating until the thread is right round the apple beneath the peel. Take the two ends of the thread and pull right through the apple, which will be cut in halves with the peel intact.

THE MERRY MONTH OF MAY.

April means the "opening" month, and May really means the "growing" or "shooting" month. May is the month of festivities. The Roman youths and maidens used to go into the fields and spend the days of May in dancing and singing in honour of Flora, the goddess of fruits and flowers. The early English consecrated May Day to Robin Hood and Maid Marian, because the favourite outlaw died on that day. The villagers used to set up May poles, and spend the day in archery, Morris dancing, and other amusements. Dancing round the Maypole on May Day, going a-Maying, electing a May queen may all be traced to those ancient times.

FORFEITS.

When next you are playing a game that has forfeits to redeem try these for the punishment:

Repeat six times without a pause, "The school coal scuttle," or "The crow flew over the river with a lump of raw liver," or "An old oak hall hatstand."

A little boy was sent by his mother with a note to the clinic doctor. The doctor opened the note, which read: "Please, will you do something for Willie's face? He's had it for a long time, and it's spreading!"

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FOUR LETTER PUZZLES.

I am a word of four letters, and each of my four letters are contained in four words:

My first is a comrade,
My second a company,
My third not wild,
My fourth victuals.

If you guess either of the four words you then have all the letters contained in the three others.

Another:—
You need a knife to xxxx a xxxx.
Still another:—
The same four letters will give four words of four letters each naming Stella, Rodents, Sailors, Emperor.

And yet another:—
Attached to a neck; an appellation; petty; a conclusion.

ANSWERS.
I. Mate. II. Pare. III. Star, rats, tars, Tsar. IV. Mane, name, mean, amen.

THE COMMON ENGLISH ELM.

I want you all to notice the common English elm. You know it, don't you? with its beautifully upright bole and massive foliage. It is common everywhere, and I had always thought it a real Britisher. But they say it never seeds in this country.

This set me thinking, and I mentally made a list of timber trees and their fruits. The oak, ash, and elm, of course, first; they are timber by law.

Then come the others which are accounted timber in some districts but not in others, such as beech, chestnut, and walnut, etc. I can hear you say:

Beech — beech-mast. Chestnut — horse-chestnut, sweet chestnut. Walnut — walnuts. Oak — acorn. Ash — those funny keys! And elm! Yes, elm — what?

Not the wych-elm, you know; that is a Scottish tree, and fruits in June, but the common English elm.

The largest specimens are found near monastic buildings, churches, and old manor houses, which shows how much our forefathers must have valued these trees for their beauty as well as for their timber.

Young elms are grown in this country from suckers or shoots, I am told, but no one knows who brought the first elm to England.

The elm is found in the central parts of Europe and in Western Asia, where it seeds freely.

SAFETY PINS TWO THOUSAND YEARS OLD

A few miles from Glastonbury is the site of the pre-Roman Meare Lake village. Archaeologists have been excavating in what over two thousand years ago was the bed of a big lake. In addition to various other interesting objects used by women of the early Iron Age, a safety-pin fashioned perfectly in bronze was found. It was of the coil-spring type, and so well had it been preserved by the peat which had covered it for more than twenty centuries that it could have served its original purpose again. The finding of the safety-pin proves that women were just as concerned with matters of dress in those far-off days as they are in modern times. Other interesting feminine belongings found in the bed of the lake were mirrors of finely burnished copper and combs, delicately made tweezers for plucking out superfluous hairs and a red substance which, experts think, was used for tinting the lips and cheeks!

FARMS FOR A SHILLING AN ACRE

Much water has flowed since the days when the furs of Canada were won only by hardship and the bartering of beads and muskets with savage tribes. Fur-farming is far more easy and profitable. It ranks now as one of the important industries of Canada. Silver foxes, musk rats, beavers, and other animals are bred in captivity and yield a rich profit. The first cargo of furs sent to England in 1676 cost, in the form of merchandise for barter, £650, and fetched £19,500 in London. Nowadays the value of the raw furs exported by Canada reaches the £3,600,000 mark, and it is still rising. Realising the enormous asset which a flourishing fur industry can be, Saskatchewan, through her Government, is now offering land to prospective fur farmers at an annual rental of 1s. per acre for three years and 4s. an acre for each succeeding year.

Gertie (referring to her fiance). "George's sudden mania for cocktails is making me anxious, granny." Granny: "I shouldn't worry, dear. After all, it can't last long. He'll have to give it up when the moulting season starts."

A young clerk in a large business house in London was in the habit of dropping a copper each morning into the hat of a beggar whose pitch was near the office. After about two years, the clerk said to the beggar, "This is the last time I shall be able to give you anything." "Why?" asked the beggar. "Well, the reason is, I am going to be married." "What?" said the beggar, "going to be married. Well, you have got a check to get married at my expense."

Master (to maid): "I think your young man is waiting for you outside, Annie." "How do you know he is my young man, sir?" "Because he's smoking one of my cigars!"

Horace (watching boat race crew at practice): "I've eard as 'ow they trains 'em on beefsteaks an' beer. 'Erbert." Herbert: "Go on! Wot's the beefsteak for?"