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**AND THE AGENT WALKS UP.**  
A Little Incident in the Kentucky Mountains.  
One day, stopping at a house for dinner in the Kentucky mountains, I listened to an agent trying to sell the goods of the establishment a sewing machine, says a traveler.  
"Now, look here," said the agent, "you ought to do something to help your wife, oughtn't you?"  
"She ain't objectin' to my style, I reckon," said the mountaineer.  
"That's because she's a good, kind, uncompaining sort of a woman, and it is the very reason why you should do these things for her."  
"But I can't afford it," protested the mountaineer.  
"Afford it nothing," exclaimed the agent. "You could afford to buy that Winchester sitting by the door, couldn't you?"  
The mountaineer looked up quickly and reached for the gun.  
"Yes," he says, laying it across his lap, "but I needed it."  
"Not as much as your wife needs a sewing machine."  
"More, I reckon."  
"Of course that isn't so. How could you? Now I tell you what I'll do. If you will buy a machine for your wife I'll take the gun and part pay."  
"I reckon not."  
"Call your wife out here and ask her what she thinks about it. I'll bet a hat she'll jump at the chance for such an exchange."  
The mountaineer smiled and called the "old woman" out. He stated the proposition to her, and the agent began to feel sure of victory.  
"Jim Bolton wasn't living we might," she said, after a moment's thought.  
"What's he got to do with it?" asked the agent, in a provoked tone.  
"A heap sight. You see," she went on, "my old man and Jim ain't on terms; that's why he got the Winchester. Now, if Jim knowed we only had a sewin' machine, it wouldn't be no time till I wuz a widdier, an' I reckon I'll do my sewin' by hand. S'pose you come 'roun' after Jim's fixed." And the agent gave it up.

**Simian Politeness.**  
That monkeys are polite as well as grateful was demonstrated recently. A kind-hearted housekeeper up-town opened the yard gate to enter the alley, when she saw peacefully stretched across the alley, with his back to the fence, an Italian organ grinder, fast asleep, with a cunning little monkey slumbering in his arms. Some children, coming along, awoke the slumberer and began to tease the monkey. The lady interferred and, stepping in to the house, she picked up the monkey and, holding it in her hand, she saw the monkey's eyes sparkle like diamonds and, after he had eaten a couple of involuntarily lifted his little cap and bowed to the lady, repeating the performance every minute or so. After doing a number of tricks for his benefactress he mounted his master's shoulder and, as the latter turned to go, the little fellow kept waving his hat to the lady until he disappeared around the corner, and seemed plainly to say "Thanks. We'll be around again tomorrow."—Philadelphia Record.

**State Ownership of Railroads.**  
It is not generally remembered that the United States has made experiments in the state ownership of railroads. Kirkman, in his book on Government control, says: "Government ownership has been tried in a limited way in the United States. Fifty years ago the State of Illinois constructed a road at a cost of \$1,000,000, but disposed of it later for \$100,000. Indiana has since had a similar experience. It owns a railroad, but has found it expedient to lease it to private persons. Pennsylvania constructed a railroad from Philadelphia to Columbia, but subsequently sold it, for the reason that the commercial history, constructed and operated railroads, but within a decade found it advisable to dispose of them, and the people of the State, by provision of their constitution, subsequently forbade the State from participation in such work."

**Outwitting the Law.**  
Surgery's discovery of a way to obliterate facial blemishes has given the European detective forces a great deal of difficulty in locating well-known criminals. By these operations the whole character of the facial expression is sometimes changed by a few deft jabs of a lancet. The wounds heal in a very short time and in most cases can never be noticed. The criminal fraternity are not slow to take hold of this knowledge, and, in consequence, the descriptions in the possession of the detectives cannot always be depended upon.

**Tea-Growing in the Caucasus.**  
The tea plantations started in the Caucasus on the initiative of the Russian Government have so far been a great success. The first tea crop, gathered from a plantation near Batoum, has given considerable satisfaction. The tea grown in this plantation, according to Russian experts, is superior to the Chinese. About 40,000 acres of land have been set aside by the Department of State domains for the cultivation of tea and iron steel long obtained from China and India.—London Chronicle.

**A Diamond Worth a Million.**  
The most valuable diamond in the world today perhaps is the "White" or "Great Imperial" diamond found at the Kimberly (South Africa) mines five years ago. In the rough it weighed a fraction over three ounces troy, or exactly 457 carats. It was pared down into its present form, which is but 187 grains. It has fifty-eight facets, and it is held by a London syndicate at \$1,000,000.—St. Louis Republic.

**New York's Coal Bin.**  
The annual consumption of anthracite and bituminous coal in New York is 6,000,000 tons—some 2,000,000 cubic feet. This fuel would fill a bin 80 feet wide, 40 feet deep and 300 feet long. Laid upon Washington square, which is 60x60 feet, it would tower up more than 1,200 feet into the air, far exceeding the height of the famous Eiffel tower—the wonder of the Paris Exposition.

**BOOK-MAKING.**  
GUTENBERG'S Bibles were sold in loose sheets, and each purchaser selected for himself the amount of hand illumination he wanted, the kind of binding, and the number of clasps and bosses he was willing to pay for.  
BOOK sewing machines, to do the work of fastening together the sheets of which a book is composed, were introduced in 1872. Before that time all books were sewed by hand. The book sewing machine reduced the cost about one-half.  
THE perfection of the early printed books is due to the fact that the first printers were forced to compete with the best scribes and penmen, and were thus compelled to do good work in order to justify the right of the new trade to exist.

PAPER has been made in China from time immemorial. Outside of China it was first made at Samarcand, in Turkestan, A. D. 750. It was imported into Europe from the East for 200 years before the Europeans thought of making it for themselves.  
THE manuscript books of the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries seem to be all written by the same hand. This was due to the influence of Charlemagne, who selected a particular style of handwriting, adopted it and ordered every scribe to write after that as a copy.

ALL legal treatises and documents during the twelfth and two following centuries were written in a very stiff, affected, and un decipherable hand called "court hand." It was intentionally illegible, that the knowledge of the law might be kept from the common people.  
THE most ancient books extant are the earthenware tablets from Nineveh. They are usually 9 inches by 6, and an inch thick, though the sizes vary greatly. Each is covered with cuneiform characters, often very minute. The impressions were first made, after which the plates were baked in a furnace.

**PERSONAL PARAGRAPHS.**  
REV. DR. LANSING, of Boston, declares that for social vice the Hub is the worst city in the country.  
KAISER WILHELM is a man of restless activity. It is figured that during the last year he has traveled a distance of 18,750 miles.  
MISS FRANCES WILLARD devotes eight hours of the day to work, eight hours to sleep, and the remaining eight, as she expresses it, to doing as she pleases.

GRANDPA GOLDSON, of Sulphur Well, Ga., died at 110, his wife at 101. The "young Goldsons" are now respectively 84, 82, 80, 78, 76, 74 and 72. No child of the family has ever died except one grandson, killed in the war.  
DR. GOOD, a missionary in the interior of Africa, says that the poverty of the negro is a serious hindrance to missionary effort. In the Bule language, for instance, there is no word for "thanks" or "thanksgiving." "To believe," "to trust," "to have faith," are all expressed by one verb.  
THE personal appearance of Jean Richepin, who is described as the most versatile genius in all France since the death of Victor Hugo, most impress the stranger who meets him for the first time. He is pictured as a tall, curly-haired man, wearing a brutal style with a low brow, a thick neck, dilated nostrils and a general air of athletic calm.

ARCHBISHOP RYAN, of Philadelphia, who is one of the great orators of the Roman Catholic church, enjoys a joke at his own expense. His hair is red, and when the red hair was conferred on Archbishop Gibbons he remarked to a friend: "Well, well, I suppose I shall never get the red hat; but no matter, I have a beautiful red head."

**AMONG THE JEWELERS.**  
SWORDS are more lavishly enriched than ever.  
BUTTERFLIES with wings outspread in silver and silver gilt have been designed for veil pins.  
New postal card racks of perforated silver are out. A receptacle for stamps is attached.  
A NEW trunk tag is of silver gilt, with a dull green enameled wreath inclosing the space for the name.  
THE small reading glass in a graceful gold frame with a lightly tinted handle is a pretty toy, and much prized before the period of the eyeglass has definitely arrived.  
ONE of the prettiest chateleine pins seen in many moons was made from two turtles and a snake. These were all of light gold tinged with slight iridescence and lightly powdered with gems.

NONE of the new watches are more to be admired than those of dead weight gold, finished with a raised design in light polished lines, and perhaps radiating from a central stone. Such a watch is always in fashion.  
PEARLS are foremost among gems. Good pearls are worked into round brooches with geometrical ornamentation. Large colored jewels are in great vogue, and designs are all intended to throw them into great prominence.

The union of platinum and gold in sleeve buttons increases in popularity. The latest novelty is bean-shaped buttons with diagonal sections of gold and platinum. The line is marked by small sunken stones, and the buttons are inclosed within a raised edge.—Jewelers' Circular.  
The Rothschilds.  
It is said that owing to the close intermarrying of the Rothschilds there is no one of the rising generation of the family who is considered capable of succeeding to the management of the vast wealth now controlled by the house, whose total fortune is estimated by competent authorities as being over \$2,000,000,000. The Paris Rothschilds alone being set down at \$350,000,000, of which Baron Alfonso, the head of the French branch, is credited with \$200,000,000. This enormous fortune, if it goes on increasing at the same rate as hitherto, will double every fifteen years, and it is appalling to think of the sum to which it would amount a century hence. Under the circumstances, the bright youth of the younger generation of Rothschilds must be regarded in the light of a wise dispensation of providence.—New York Herald.

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