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FATHER'S PERQUISITE.

A woman whose husband, a soldier, was stationed abroad, went to register her new baby. After answering all the necessary questions she put down five shillings. "There is no charge," said the registrar.

"What," answered the mother, and after thinking, murmured: "Wait till he comes home. It has cost me five shillings every time he has registered our children."

SCIENCE NOTES.

MACHINES CONTROLLED BY SOUND

The control of electrical machinery by sound, and even by inaudible vibrations, is claimed by an Australian aviator. In his late demonstration, a small model motor-car was fitted with the essential batteries, without wires or ordinary wireless apparatus, and by the blowing of a whistle the car was started, directed to the right or left, and stopped. Control was practicable up to a distance of a mile. The inventor has given attention also to other machines, and is said to have had successful results in the control of air-planes and torpedoes.

A SPIRAL BELT PUMP.

A novel pump has recently made its appearance. It consists simply of a spiral spring belt, a grooved weight which turns with the bottom loop of the belt and holds the latter in place and a driving crank and pulley for turning the belt. Despite this simple construction the pump is capable of lifting a thousand gallons of water per hour from a depth of 300 feet even worked only by hand according to reports. The coil-like cable is sunk to any depth by the rotating weight. Obeying the law of capillary attraction, the water lodges between the turns of the spiral spring and only falls out when it reaches the top of the pump.

A TWELVE-MILE SHAFT.

At the meeting of the British Association in 1904, Mr (now Sir) Charles Parsons discussed at some length the feasibility of sinking a shaft to a depth of twelve miles in the earth; about ten times the depth of any shaft in existence. He concluded that the work could be accomplished in 85 years at a cost of £5,000,000. Subsequently exhaustive experiments to determine whether rock-pressure at so great a depth would crush the shaft in and destroy it proved that the construction of even deeper shafts was practicable; viz., 15 miles in limestone and 30 miles in granite. The cost of a shaft 12 miles deep, at present-day prices, would not be much more than the cost of one day of the recent war to Great Britain alone.

WASHING CARPETS ELECTRICALLY

A newly-developed electrical carpet washer makes possible the washing of carpets without taking them off the floor. No water touches the rug or carpet. Instead, a warm "sudsy" cleaning compound is scrubbed down to the bottom of the nap so as to clean every fibre thoroughly and take out all dirt or grit. Two brushes, made of soft, yielding rubber, are oscillated by an electric motor 500 times a minute, thus, the maker declares duplicating the scrubbing motion of the human hand. The soap compound which is used by the carpet washer is said to contain no harmful chemicals or animal fats.

REBUILDING FRANCE WITH TANKS

After having established itself as one of the most destructive weapons of the recent war, the tank, in various modified forms, is now building up another reputation as one of the greatest tools in the hands of the reconstructors of devastated Europe. Credit in generous measure is due the British authorities for their ingenious application of the erstwhile military tank to a large number of distinctly peacetime tasks. Thus the British have modified their small and large tanks for service as tractors for road work, agricultural purposes and canal-boat towing. More recently they have equipped some of their largest tanks with powerful derricks and clam-shell buckets for the purpose of aiding in the work of clearing the ruins of devastated France and Belgium. This machine has remarkable facilities for operating on any kind of clearing the ruins of devastated France it may be.

A HARD SUBSTANCE.

If aluminium oxide be vitrified at a temperature below its temperature of fusion, a product of great density and hardness is obtained possessing properties peculiarly favourable to the manufacture of many tools. This process is now employed for the production of "drawing-stones" for the purpose of the finest metal wire drawing. The degree of hardness of this substance resembles that of sapphire and it exhibits uncommonly little sign of wear and tear after use.

SHORT STORIES.

MRS MALAPROP.

A daily paper has opened its columns to examples of the speech of Mrs Malaprop. The mistress in one house, according to her cook, was "a perfect ptarmigan."

That is good, but as good was the char-lady who came one day to announce that she must absent herself because her husband was "bad with information in his inside," while she herself was suffering terribly with "algebra in her face."

The Irish servant was so surprised at something that she "stood there putrified," and another, English this time, had reasons for objecting to marriages between white women and coloured men. "What I always say," she said in decided accents, "is that everybody should marry into their own sex."

THE DAMSEL AND THE EMPEROR.

The Emperor Alexander of Russia during the occupation of Paris was present at the anniversary of one of the hospitals.

Plates for contributions were passed around by the ladies who patronised the institution. The plate presented to the Emperor was held by an extremely pretty girl.

The Emperor dropped in a handful of gold and whispered, "That is for beautiful bright eyes."

The charming little damsel courtesied and immediately presented the plate again.

"What?" said the Emperor; "more?"

"Yes, sir," said she; "now I want something for the poor."

KEEPING IT SECRET.

A good many years ago, the councillor of the Austrian Embassy in Berlin was very deaf, and used to shout the most confidential matters at the top of his voice. One day (relates a British diplomatist, who recently published some racy reminiscences) the inmates of the British Embassy, some little distance away, heard him yelling, "If the proposal is pressed, Germany will resist it to the utmost, if necessary by force of arms. The Chancellor, in giving me this information, impressed upon me how absolutely secret the matter must be kept."

"What is that appalling noise in the Austrian Chancellery?" I asked our white-headed old Chancellery servant.

"That is Count W—— dictating a cypher telegram to Vienna," answered the old man.

OF COURSE.

Several members at the club were discussing the human voice. "Speaking of the human voice," chimed in the club "bore," "have you ever thought what an indication of character it is? Place a woman I have never seen in another room and let me but hear the tones of her voice, and I will tell you what kind of a woman she is."

"You are perfectly right about that," said one of the other members, "and funny enough I recently had this very thing manifested to a remarkable degree. A woman called on my wife the other day, and although I had never seen her before, I knew by hearing her speak just what she was."

"What sort of a woman was she?" inquired the "bore" eagerly.

"Why," said the other member complacently, "she was Scotch."

LACONIC LETTERS.

The following letter was written by Charles Lamb. Haydon, the artist, had invited his friend to visit him, and had given minute directions to Lamb how to find his way. Lamb replied:—

"My dear Haydon, I will come, with pleasure, to 22, Lisson Grove, North, at Rossi's, half-way up, right-hand side, if I can find it."

"Yours, C. Lamb,

"20, Russell Court,
Convent Garden, East, half-way up,
next the corner, right-hand side."

The palm for brevity, however, must be awarded to two members of the Society of Friends. One of these, desiring to know whether his correspondent in a distant town had any news to communicate, sent a single sheet of paper on which there appeared one solitary symbol:—

"p"

He received by return of post a blank sheet.

THE INCOMPARABLE JIM.

Tales of Jim Driscoll, one of the Greatest Boxers that ever lived, By Chas. Barnett, the Welsh Referee.

In my opinion, Jim Driscoll was the greatest boxer who ever lived. Jimmy Wilde is certainly the greatest freak of the ring, but the master of the noble art is Driscoll.

It was Driscoll who taught Wilde the finer phases of the sport, and it is the Driscoll model that has been copied with such astounding success by our Welsh collier boys. There was brute force in Jess Willard there was craftiness in Fred Welsh, but in Driscoll we have grace and precision, the acme of cleverness. He is the King of the Ring.

I have made a very close study of his style, and he has taken pains to teach me all the tricks of the trade, in order that I should be well up in the difficult task of refereeing contests, and, armed with this knowledge, I have come through many a tight ordeal.

TIMELY ADVICE.

Driscoll, however, is ready to give any one advice. I remember travelling to Swansea with him three years ago, during the journey Sergeant Billy Wells mentioned that he was meeting Bandsman Rice for the second time in the following week. Wells confessed that Rice was a tough problem to him, as the bandsman had the knack of coming in with his face hidden behind his gloves. Driscoll instantly gave Wells an illustration for beating this style, and Wells, probably profiting by the lesson, won inside two rounds.

Driscoll was born for boxing, and he was barely in his teens before he won an open competition. I well remember his early days. He was then employed in the machine-room of the Cardiff "Evening Express," and was a sort of "president" of the boys' boxing club. At first there were no funds for purchasing gloves so the lads bound paper around their hands, and fought with the greatest possible spirit and enjoyment.

ANOTHER DRISCOLL.

Another clever boxer, Boyo Driscoll, owed a deal of his skill to the tuition and hard knocks received in that machine-room.

But even then it was generally recognised that Jim Driscoll was the star of the club. His speed was phenomenal, and when you thought you had a rich chance of getting home a punch, you generally found his head had inclined out of the way just in time.

In later years, I saw the development of this natural talent. It was the talent that sent the American sporting public into ecstasies. They were ready to pay any money to see this remarkable exponent of ringcraft, and in connection I can relate a pretty story of one of the many sacrifices Driscoll has made for charity.

AFTER DRISCOLL BEAT ATTELL.

In 1909 the little feather-weight boxer secured a newspaper decision over Abe Attell, the world's champion, in New York, and was at once besieged with offers of matches. One of these involved a £1,000 purse, but Jim suddenly remembered that he had promised the Catholic charity committee at Cardiff that he would box an exhibition at their annual show, and with scarcely a good-bye he set sail for home. He arrived in Cardiff at tea-time on the evening of the show.

One of Driscoll's finest examples of skill was given in June, 1912, at the National Sporting Club, London, where he met the recognised French champion, Jean Poesy, now, alas! a cripple from the effects of a Boche shell.

DRISCOLL AND POESY.

Poesy was by no means unaware of Driscoll's prowess, and he laid his plans very cunningly. He arrived in the ring wearing what looked like a week's growth of strong beard, and his plan was to bore in to close-quarters, stick his bristly beard somewhere near the Welsh boxer's chest, and then to fight like a demon. I shall never forget the scene. Driscoll outside the ring, is generally like an Irishman who sees a "scrap" from behind prison bars—mad to join in the fun; but inside the magic square, he is the artist, cool and resourceful.

He fenced away the tigerish lunges at his body with the ease an accomplished swordsman parries a thrust, and in the twelfth round he put Poesy down for the count with a short right-hander.

WAITING FOR THREE ROUNDS.

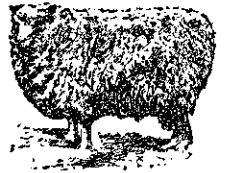
To those who declare that boxing is not scientific, I would relate the winner's remark to me immediately after the contest.

"I waited three rounds to get in that

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punch," he said, and, for my part I can honestly say that I never saw anything so neat. Poesy lunged with the right; Driscoll drew back just out of distance. Poesy came forward with the force of his effort; Driscoll side-stepped, and as Poesy was shooting past, Driscoll shot the punch to the chin. If you get a friend to take up the positions I have described, you will not fail to see how well-executed was the move which brought the knock-out.

WHERE DRISCOLL EXCELLED.

People often ask me to explain the secret of Driscoll's cleverness—just where he excels compared with other champions—and my answer is: "By his wonderful timing of punches and his uncanny judgment of distance."

Driscoll's hands, feet, and head work with automatic precision, whilst with all three he uses the chief asset—brains. Every ring device is known to him, and he has a trump for every trick.

OUTSIDE THE RING.

Outside the ring, Driscoll has also had many adventures. Once at Caerleon Racecourse, near Newport, he had been told to back a horse called Baron Grafton. On form, nothing in the race could come within lengths of the Baron, but Driscoll, who had backed it, was thunder-struck at finding it jibbing the very first fence.

The owner, who had greatly fancied the animal, was so disgusted at the failure that he straightway put the animal up to the highest bidder.

Try as he could, however the auctioneer could not raise much enthusiasm for the disgraced animal, and so it came to pass that the highest bid was £10, and the bidder Driscoll.

"Any advance on ten" said the auctioneer. "Any advance on ten? Going at ten—once. Going at ten—twice. The third and last time, going at ten—"

"Make it ten-and-six," quietly remarked Ralph Lile, one of Driscoll's pals; and amidst great laughter, the crowd melted away, and the horse remained unsold.

A GLUTTON FOR WORK.

In all my experience I have never seen a boxer train like Driscoll. His road-work is, of course, similar to that of others, excepting that he gives his companion, who is on a bicycle, more of a race than most boxers do; but in a gymnasium he is practically tireless, and he usually finishes up by "walking" on his hands.

The mistake of his career, to my mind was the historic contest with Freddy Welsh, and to this day I deeply regret having had anything to do with the making of the match. The pair had been keen ring rivals, but they were both champions at their weight, and no possible advantage was to be gained by finding which was the better of the two. At that time, unfortunately, I did not view things in this light, and so I gave prominence to the bitter words uttered in each camp. The result was a clamour for a match, and the huge purse of £2,500 was given by a small syndicate. The whole affair proved a fiasco, and whilst I have influence on Welsh boxing the experiment will not be repeated.

THE ANSWER IN THE INFIRMARY.

"During the war a soldier was tried for assaulting a sergeant. He was asked by the prosecuting officer: 'Now please tell us at once, without any provocation, did you or did you not strike the sergeant?'"

"The prisoner cogitated for a moment, then he answered brightly: 'The answer is in the infirmary.'"