

comfortable beds to sleep on, to which they can go at any time, and, beyond the first natural homesickness which exhibits itself in a wild desire to run away, they have little to wail about and consequently do nothing but purr and look happy.

THE TRAGEDIAN WHO LEARNS HIS PART.

THE STAGE ÆSOP.—There was once a cat who, well knowing that he possessed no histrionic ability whatever, made up his mind, as he loved the stage as a sort of *pis aller*, that he would make money and reputation combined. 'The easiest way to do it,' said he, 'is to make the critics look small at their own trade.' So, mark you, merry sirs, that when he only had a twenty-line Shakespearian part, he went to all the old mouldy booksellers, and bought up a thousand and one ancient editions of the Swan of Avon. If he was attacked in the daily press, he immediately replied with a long-forgotten reading that no one could make head or cat's tail of. Thus did he acquire a reputation for superhuman cleverness. The critics fear him, and dine at his expense. He is shortly to be raised to the Peerage. Moral:

'If in your art no genius strong you show,
Patch it with pedantry, and your fame will grow.'

THE SOCIETY ACTOR.

THE STAGE ÆSOP.—Once upon a time there was a grimalkin of such exceeding delicacy that he would never indulge in his proper nutriment unless served on a golden skewer. This so annoyed his feline contemporaries that they grew desperately jealous of his ultra-refinement. But they were only of the masculine gender. The softer sex admired him immensely. 'To the softer sex,' said he, being a cat of business instincts, 'I will cater.' He did so. Properly enough he chose the stage, as offering the best scope for his peculiar abilities. He abhorred the Savage and the Greenroom Club, and set up a peculiar standard of art excellence. Following this, he always dressed a *la Polonius*, in the best fashion of the period. He afternoon tea'd (on five

o'clockers a *sept heures*), and made himself a universal favourite in consequence. He may not act, but he knows *la monde* universal exquisitely well. He will be made not a vulgar knight, but a C.B. Moral:—

If in the arts you wish, sir, to succeed,
Be no Bohemian, but a swell, indeed.

SUNDAY ON A LINER

AT ten o'clock, on board ocean liners, there is generally a parade of the ship's crew. Gathered on the saloon deck are all officers, engineers, sailors, stewards, bakers, butchers, cooks and firemen. All who can possibly be spared from the immediate work of the ship have to attend the parade. They stand in perfect line, if the ship is steady enough. They have on clean clothes and best uniforms; the captain, doctor and first officer walk round to inspect the men. The officer reads out the name of each man as he passes. Each salutes the captain as his name is read out. Directly parade is over there is a rush to different duties. In a few minutes the big bell again tolls to summon to church. If it is fine weather, the saloon will be crowded. Officers in uniform and sailors all prim and clean file in and take seats. The saloon stewards distribute prayer books and hymn books. The service is generally open to all on board. Many of the steerage passengers are glad to come to get a peep at the saloon. I have sometimes known the service restricted to saloon passengers because of fear of the spread of disease. The captain of one ship on the New Zealand route takes great interest in the proper conduct of public worship. At the beginning of his six weeks' voyage he suggested the formation of a choir. A number who could sing met around the small organ on Saturday evening and practised hymns and chants for the morrow. Then the captain, in lieu of a cushion with a Union Jack spread over it, had a chaste little reading-desk fitted and fastened so that it should not topple over with the motion of the ship. This was necessary at times. I have had sometimes to clutch it rapidly and hold to it while preaching, or my sermon would have come to a rapid conclusion. Prayers are generally read by the captain. He or the ship's surgeon will generally ask one or other of the ministers or clergy who may chance to be on board to preach. Sometimes there is a service in the saloon in the evening, but this happens in very few ships.—*The Quipper*.

FORTUNATE FINDS.

SOME five years ago a gentleman in Shropshire was engaged in looking through some papers and documents which had once belonged to his grandfather, and had remained untouched in a box for years, when he came across a brick-like packet neatly wrapped in brown paper. On examination he discovered inside a piece of peat, which his grandfather had evidently brought some forty years before from his native place. He flung it on the floor, when it broke into several pieces, and disclosed a very small packet, also wrapped in brown paper. He removed this outer cover and found another wrapper—a piece of sailor's oilskin—in which was enclosed eight £50 pound notes, bearing the date of 1848. The peat must have been taken when freshly cut, and the bank-notes wrapped inside it. He remembered his grandfather as a very eccentric person, and although he was known to be possessed of money, only a small amount was discovered after his decease until this fortunate find disclosed the £400.

In 1883 a young bandsman named Chappell, serving in the Durham Light Infantry (106th), stationed at the Buena Vista Barracks, Gibraltar, was accidentally killed by a fall of over 200 feet over a perpendicular and rugged cliff 380 feet high. The accident was observed by a number of people who were bathing in Camp Bay, a bathing resort below the cliff. On the alarm being given, Corporal Hammond, Medical Staff Corps, and another officer commenced to climb the almost inaccessible cliff to where the body lay, and when about 130 feet high Corporal Hammond, who was a few feet in front, placed his hand, whilst in the act of reaching another ledge, upon what turned out afterwards to be a gold watch in fairly good preservation, which it is supposed must have been there several years, as no owner for it could be found. It was conjectured at the time that the watch had been stolen from the barracks above, and the culprit, to avoid its being found on him, had thrown it over the cliff.

In 1874 a wealthy but eccentric individual residing in the Midlands had some £750 in bank notes, the numbers of which he took. A week or two later they were missing, and after a fruitless search were given up as lost. In the spring of 1892, a quarter of a mile from this gentleman's house, was a large old chapel, which had to undergo renovation. During the progress of these repairs one of the workmen, while unscrewing the tap of a gas pipe, discovered what he supposed to be a tightly-bound cigarette in the pipe. It proved to be a roll of bank notes of the collective value of £750. The gentleman who had lost the money eighteen years before claimed them, and the numbers were found to correspond with those of the notes he had lost.

Ten years ago a gentleman living in London had a stuffed rabbit sent him by a friend residing in the North of England. A short time afterwards the skin of the rabbit was damaged by a fire, and the gentleman was considerably surprised to find that, on removing the skin, a sovereign dropped out. A further search resulted in the discovery of gold and silver coins, amounting in all to £25, most artfully secreted in the stuffing. No clue was ever obtained as to how the money got in to its strange hiding-place.

Some years ago a gentleman living in Manchester was engaged to a young lady at Salford, who quite unexpectedly became entitled to a considerable sum of money through the decease of an uncle, a tradesman in London. Certain things occurred which led the gentleman to suppose that the now wealthy young lady desired to look higher in the social scale for a husband. His pride was touched, and he broke off the engagement. Shortly afterwards he secured an appointment in London. Taking a stroll in Hyde Park one evening he discovered a lady's satchel on one of the seats. On opening it he found a few tradesmen's bills, a bunch of keys, and a letter. He perused the letter, and pitched himself to make sure he was not dreaming. It was from his former fiancée to her elder sister, who had come to London on business. In the note was reference to himself, which cleared up the mystery of the apparent cause of the rupture between the two young people, and the fortunate finding of the letter led to an interview with the young lady, a complete reconciliation, and ultimately a very happy marriage.

CHANCES MISSED.

THE following incident shows how a lost opportunity in youth may very seriously affect the whole future of a life. An orphan lad residing in the North of England made promising progress at a local school until he was thirteen years of age. He then desired to take up some kind of useful occupation, and applied to the vicar of the parish for a testimonial. The worthy clergyman expressed surprise at his leaving school at that age, and offered to bear the expense of his education in a higher school or college, and went so far as to permit him to select the vocation of either schoolmaster or clergyman, and be prepared for the same at his expense. The foolish lad actually rejected the kind offer, and is now, at twenty-four years of age, working in a cloth mill for a weekly wage of fifteen shillings.

Another illustration shall be narrated by the person whom it chiefly concerned. 'In 1883, the golden chance of my life presented itself to me, and I rejected it to my never ceasing regret. A distant relative, who had been in Africa, was visiting our home, and offered to take me back with him to the South African diamond fields. About that time I was daily expecting to be appointed to a good situation in the city. Feeling so sure of this appointment, I declined with many thanks my relative's most generous offer, although my passage out and back was to be paid, and there seemed to be a good chance of my returning richer man. However, the offer was extended to my younger brother, who sensibly accepted it. I was unfortunately unsuccessful in getting the appointment I anticipated. In 1888 my brother returned home with a snug banking account of £1,600, and shortly afterwards secured a partnership in a prosperous firm in the north of London, while I am plodding on with an income only equal to about one-fifth of that received by my lucky young brother.'



AT THE CATS' HOTEL.—COMING DOWN TO DINNER.