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Our Puzzles Once More

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Our Puzzles once More.

A press of business, last week, prevented us from attending to the favors of our enigmatical friends ; and we then dismissed the whole subject in brief. The unexpected interest, however, which is still manifested in all directions about the matter, induces us to speak of it again, with a view of convincing the sceptical that there is really no "humbug" in the case. And first we reply to "Adolescentulus," who writes from Burkeville, Prince Edward County, Va. The translation of his cypher runs thus :

I am a word of nine letters. My first, fifth, and fourth, is the chief support of the human frame. My first, seventh, and fifth, has often been the cause of bloodshed. My first, seventh, sixth, and fifth, is what we all wish to do in prosperity. My first, ninth, seventh, third, and fourth, denote what we all have been doing whilst on the bed of sickness. My first, second, sixth, and fifth, is that which is often bestowed on those who are unworthy of it. My eighth, second, third, and fifth, is a term applied to the sound of a musical instrument. My first, fifth, third, seventh, eighth, and ninth, is what the distressed often apply for in vain. My whole is what the wealthiest wish to obtain.

The answer is *Longevity*.

As "Adolescentulus" is no doubt really what his signature implies, we will take the liberty of saying to him that his cypher is very inartificially constructed, and therefore very easily unriddled. He has put the word "Enigma" at the head, and we at once knew it to be such, when we noticed the frequent recurrence of the word which stands for "My." "Adolescentulus," whom by certain indications we know to be a youth of some talent, would have been himself able to solve any such cypher, had we sent it to him. If he will consider well what we shall say, in a subsequent part of this article, he will soon find himself in condition to solve *any* puzzle of the kind now in question.

J. H., of Philadelphia, who sent us "a poser" two weeks since, with the assurance that if we managed to read that (which we did) he would send us one hereafter which he would *defy* us to make out, has now forwarded us the following :

8.418.891†

7 990†21 70 6.2 8768 3: 6.2 †29†

27†56 5612265 3: 831525 2346†2170† 63

†2898†

9 912 75 6.2 317†2 3: 178.25!—7675 :62†

9.212 3323 90†871832569082!—966 39552†

9998!

This is by far the most difficult cypher which we have received. Some of the words are

crowded together, and the writer has taken other liberties which do not come within the conditions originally laid down. For example, in some cases the figure 3 stands for I, in others for O; in some cases the figure 6 stands for L, in others for T; while 2 stands for E and M indifferently, and 9 for both W and A. Some words, moreover, are mis-spelt. How much the difficulty of solution is increased in this way, may easily be conceived. The translation, however, is as follows:

CHURCH-YARD.

I wander in the city of the dead

Midst streets of houses mouldering to decay.
Where is the pride of riches? it is fled.

Where pomp and circumstance? all passed away.

"A subscriber," who, beyond doubt, takes us for a bottle conjurer, addresses us this letter:

Mr. Editor,—

Your success in decyphering has almost disheartened me from attempting anything of my own invention; for I am perfectly satisfied, from what I have seen of your ingenuity, that you can decypher any piece of writing where hieroglyphics are used instead of letters; and allow me to say you would be a valuable requisition to an army, in reading the enemy's despatches. But there is a system occurs to my mind which was used with great success by Napoleon during the war in Spain, when every other system of secret writing was decyphered by the English. This one plan alone baffled all their ingenuity. It will be found on the other page. If you can make it out, and give the sense as the writer intended it to be understood, I will give up at once.

A SUBSCRIBER.

Then our friend might as well give up and be done with it. But we wish it distinctly understood that such puzzles as this are not what we *promised* to decypher. For what we *did* promise to do, we refer our friends to a late Messenger. Here follows A Subscriber's cypher:

That capital punishment I have got, the tooth-ache; such a punishment ought not to be continued. That I will do my utmost to have it abolished is evident from my conduct from the first. Judge democracy from the fact that it is formidable to tyrants only. War is conducted in a manner revolting to humanity. Neither age nor sex is spared; and one thousand thousand murdered does not lessen the thirst for blood. Oh Heavens! oh my God!—the amount of crime in our land! And moreover, as water will ultimately find a level, even so does familiarity with public business make us neglectful of private interest. Executions begets a strain of thought in the good which is painful. Contempt in the rich towards the poor is a mockery of God. Base and vile, it also exposes the littleness of your souls. A spear wounds the feelings of any whom it comes in contact with, regardless of the pure and virtuous, however frail.

But the advocates of this horrid, this wretched, this barbarous custom, have the audacity to tell us it is the only genuine production, the only real means by which we can effect a cure, and have a tendency to deter the wicked from trespassing on my corn crib, and to stop the perpetration of crime in the custom house. Now I would ask such clerks what is the amount of salary, the men why so many days ago were caught in the very act of committing suicides in our prisons, and when interrogated as to the cause, and why so much precaution to guard our good ship Constitution, and to prevent self-murder on the quarter deck, or be bound in chains in our cells of solitary confinement, without the most distant hope of relief—hurrah—hurrah—hurrah for Liberty! to commence with five, six, seven, or even eight as the case may be all the year round? It can be an-

answered on no other principle than electricity. No other ground than red clay with sandy bottom is fit for apothegms—*this, that the brain of the mammoth is kept in a continual state of turmoil—the sufferer is distracted by his own foibles, his own whims and nonsense, his intolerable loquacity—thus needlessly disturbing himself until out of existence, and seeks relief in the arms of Morpheus, or slumbers in death, to wake no more until time and death shall be no more—thus proving conclusively that this is a probationary state—that death is preferred by the brave and free to a life in slavery, to a life of solitary wandering in a trackless desert, is 10,000 confinement by those who are used to the chambers of luxury, and are best able to judge of their own imaginary wants.*

The words in italics were italicised by ourselves, and did not so appear in the original. By reading these words alone, the true meaning of this queer piece of composition is discovered. How we were enabled to pick out the precise words which are to be read, is a question we will not answer just now. It is sufficient that our correspondent will acknowledge that his cypher is read.

T. R. H. or J. R. H. (we cannot make out the first letter precisely) of Philadelphia, will pardon us for not undertaking the solution of his puzzle as it stands; for he has evidently misunderstood our whole design. He says that he has made a bet upon our infallibility; and *that* he may safely do, provided always that he sticks to the matter in hand. We said, distinctly, that we would read any English writing, where arbitrary marks are used in place of the common alphabetical characters—for example, an alphabet is first made in which a * represents a, a † b, a ‡ c, &c &c—this alphabet is then employed as *the ordinary one would be*. The same character must always stand for the same letter. Now if J. R. H. will take the trouble to count the various distinct characters employed by him, he will find there are no less than fifty-one. But there are only twenty-six letters in the English alphabet. He can get his MS. again by applying at our office. In the meantime let him concoct another puzzle, in accordance with our conditions, and bet as much as he pleases upon our solving it. The present bet is a drawn one of course, as there was a misunderstanding.

The following letter is from Lewistown, Mifflin County, Pa.

Dear sir,—

It appears from several back numbers of the Messenger that the Philadelphia puzzle-makers are not able to puzzle you. I therefore send you one which if you translate, I will agree to send you ten subscribers and the cash. It is a genuine article and no deception about it. If you cannot come it, please insert it for the amusement of the Philadelphians, and try them on a country poser.

Yours, &c.

G. W. KULP.

The Philadelphians are not such fools as Mr. Kulp supposes them. His puzzle, however, is this:

Ge Jeasgdxy,

Zij gl mo, laam, xzy zmlwhfzek ejlvdxw
kwke ix lbr atgh lbmx aanu bai Vsmukkas pwn
vlwk agh gnumk wdlmzweg jobrvv oaeg enwb
zwagy mo mlu wnbx mw al pufdcfph wzker
sssf xkiyahul. Mk num yexdm wbxxy abc hv
vyx Phwkgnamcuk?

We had scarcely glanced at this affair when we pronounced it an imposition, notwithstanding Mr. K's assertion to the contrary. In the first place, had it been "a genuine article," it would not have been written in as free and running a hand as it is—a hesitation would have been apparent about the characters. In the second place, there is no word in the English language which ends as Mr. K's word "*Vanukks*" does—that is to say with double-duplicate letters. But the same method which serves us in the deciphering a true cypher, will enable us to demonstrate the falsity of any fictitious one. It may afford our friends some amusement to follow us in the process of a demonstration in the present case.

The reader will observe that we have italicized three words in the cypher, and upon these three depends all we have to say. We begin with "*mw*," a word of two letters. Now all English words of but two letters consist of a vowel and a consonant. Let us suppose the "*m*" to be the vowel "*a*," and let us prefix this to every consonant, and see how many words can thus be made. For example—*ab*, *ac*, *ad*, *af*, *ag*, &c—we find no English word until we come to "*ah*"—and all that can be made by placing "*a*" first, are "*ah*," "*am*," "*an*," "*at*," and "*ay*." Now, placing "*e*" first, let us prefix it to every consonant in the same way—then place all the other vowels first, respectively; then place all the consonants first, respectively, adding the vowels. Having gone through the alphabet thus, we readily discover every word in the language, of two letters. There, in fact, are but thirty—*ah*, *am*, *an*, *at*, *ay*, *if*, *in*, *it*, *of*, *on*, *or*, *up*, *us*, *be*, *by*, *do*, *go*, *ha*, *he*, *ho*, *la*, *lo*, *ma*, *me*, *my*, *no*, *pa*, *so*, *to*, and *wo*. Now "*mw*," in the puzzle, must represent one of these thirty words. The word "*am*" we may as well strike out, for if "*mw*" were "*am*," it would be preceded or immediately followed by the pronoun *I*—but there is no single letter near it.

We now refer to the word "*mlw*." If "*mw*" is "*ah*," then "*mlw*" must be some word formed by the insertion of a letter between *a* and *h*. By running down the alphabet we immediately see that "*ash*" is the only word which can be thus formed. We now proceed to "*an*." If "*mw*" is "*an*," then "*mlw*" must be some word formed by the insertion of a letter between *a* and *n*. Running down the alphabet as before, we find that no word can be so formed—we therefore strike out *an* from the list of twenty-nine; for *mw* cannot be *an*. Going through the whole in this way, we see that *mw* must be either

<i>ah</i> ,	from which may be formed	<i>ash</i> ,
<i>at</i> ,	from which may be formed	<i>ast</i> , <i>alt</i> , <i>ant</i> , <i>spt</i> , & <i>art</i> ,
<i>ay</i> ,	"	<i>any</i> ,
<i>of</i> ,	"	<i>caf</i> ,
<i>on</i> ,	"	<i>own</i> ,
<i>or</i> ,	"	<i>oar</i> ,
<i>by</i> ,	"	<i>bay</i> , <i>bey</i> , <i>boy</i> , and <i>buy</i> ,
<i>he</i> ,	"	<i>hee</i> ,
<i>my</i> ,	"	<i>may</i> ,
<i>to</i> ,	"	<i>tho'</i> , and <i>two</i> .

We have thus narrowed the question in regard to *mw* very much—from thirty to ten words; one of which it must be. At the same time it is equally certain that *mlw* must be one of the words in the second column. Now we refer to the third italicized word *laam*.

If *mlw* be *ash*, then *laam* will be a word of this form, *s . . a*, in which the dots represent two unknown letters of the same kind. If *mlw* be *aft*, then *laam* will be a word of this form, *f . . a*. If *mlw* be *alt*, then *laam* will be *l . . a*, &c. &c. Going through the whole second column thus we get this schedule.

<i>s . . a</i>	<i>r . . a</i>	<i>o . . b</i>
<i>f . . a</i>	<i>a . . o</i>	<i>u . . b</i>
<i>l . . a</i>	<i>w . . o</i>	<i>o . . h</i>
<i>n . . a</i>	<i>a . . o</i>	<i>a . . m</i>
<i>p . . a</i>	<i>a . . b</i>	<i>h . . t</i>
<i>n . . a</i>	<i>e . . b</i>	<i>w . . t</i>

That is to say, we prove that *laam* must be some word which can be formed by placing double letters where the dots are in some one of the words in the schedule. The slightest inspection will satisfy the reader that *h . . t* must be the one, if any; for here alone can the category be fulfilled. By inserting *oo*, we get the word *hoot*. *Laam* is then *hoot* or nothing. But the hypothesis of the word *hoot* is founded upon that of the word *tho'* in the second column of the first schedule; and *tho'* upon *to*, in the first column. We now arrive at a definite conclusion. Either Mr. Kulp's puzzle is not genuine, or *mw* stands for *to*, *mlw* for *tho'*, and *laam* for *hoot*. But it is evident that this latter cannot be—for in that case both *w* and *a* represent the letter *o*. What

follows?—why that Mr. Kulp's puzzle is no puzzle at all. This demonstration is as absolutely conclusive as any mathematical one could be. The process of reasoning here employed is that employed also in the solution of the cyphers.
