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“Our Puzzles Once More”

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Jack DeLand

2022

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 Merpheus, 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. Jeasgdix,

Zij gl mw, laam, xzy zmlwhfzek ejlvdxw
kwke ix lbr atgh lbmx aanu bai Vsmukkes pwn
vlwk agh gnumk wdlzweg jnbrvv oaeg enwb
zwmgy mo mlw wnbx mw al pufdcfph wzkes
hsaf xkiyahul. Mk num yexdm wbxy abc hv
wyx Phwkgnamcak?

We had scarcely glanced at this affair when we pronounced it an imposition, notwithstanding

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