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(of X.), by Marshall P. Wilder**

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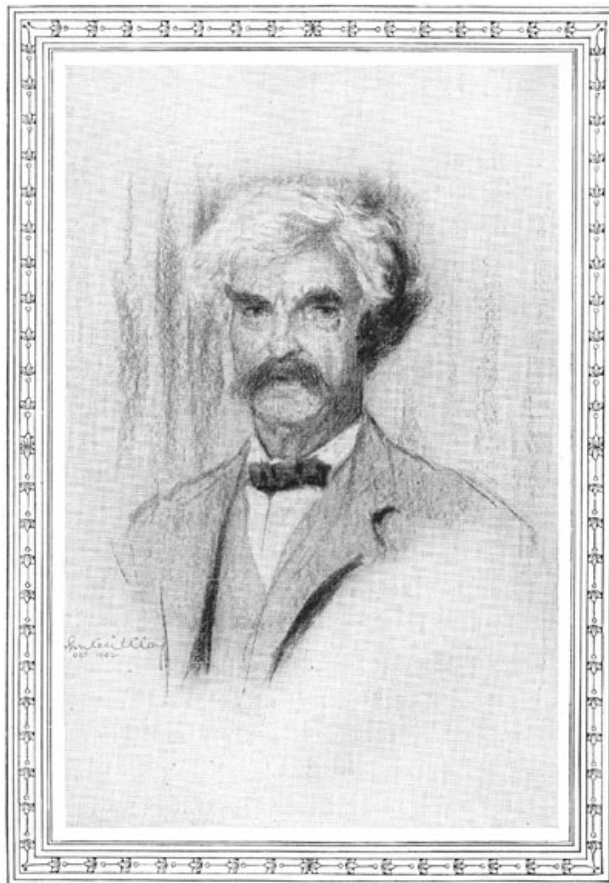
*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE WIT AND HUMOR OF AMERICA,
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Library Edition

THE WIT AND HUMOR OF AMERICA

In Ten Volumes

VOL. III



SAMUEL L. CLEMENS (MARK TWAIN)

THE WIT AND HUMOR OF AMERICA

EDITED BY MARSHALL P. WILDER

Volume III

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OUR NEW NEIGHBORS AT PONKAPOG

BY THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH

When I saw the little house building, an eighth of a mile beyond my own, on the Old Bay Road, I wondered who were to be the tenants. The modest structure was set well back from the road, among the trees, as if the inmates were to care nothing whatever for a view of the stylish equipages which sweep by during the summer season. For my part, I like to see the passing, in town or country; but each has his own unaccountable taste. The proprietor, who seemed to be also the architect of the new house, superintended the various details of the work with an assiduity that gave me a high opinion of his intelligence and executive ability, and I congratulated myself on the prospect of having some very agreeable neighbors.

It was quite early in the spring, if I remember, when they moved into the cottage—a newly married couple, evidently: the wife very young, pretty, and with the air of a lady; the husband somewhat older, but still in the first flush of manhood. It was understood in the village that they came from Baltimore; but no one knew them personally, and they brought no letters of introduction. (For obvious reasons, I refrain from mentioning names.) It was clear that, for the present at least, their own company was entirely sufficient for them. They made no advance toward the acquaintance of any of the families in the neighborhood, and consequently were left to themselves. That, apparently, was what they desired, and why they came to Ponkapog. For after its black bass and wild duck and teal, solitude is the chief staple of Ponkapog. Perhaps its perfect rural loveliness should be included. Lying high up under the wing of the Blue Hills, and in the odorous breath of pines and cedars, it chanced to be the most enchanting bit of unlaced disheveled country within fifty miles of Boston, which, moreover, can be reached in half an hour's ride by railway. But the nearest railway station (Heaven be praised!) is two miles distant, and the seclusion is without a flaw. Ponkapog has one mail a day; two mails a day would render the place uninhabitable.

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The village—it looks like a compact village at a distance, but unravels and disappears the moment you drive into it—has quite a large floating population. I do not allude to the perch and pickerel in Ponkapog Pond. Along the Old Bay Road, a highway even in the Colonial days, there are a number of attractive villas and cottages straggling off toward Milton, which are occupied for the summer by people from the city. These birds of passage are a distinct class from the permanent inhabitants, and the two seldom closely assimilate unless there has been some previous connection. It seemed to me that our new neighbors were to come under the head of permanent inhabitants; they had built their own house, and had the air of intending to live in it all the year round.

"Are you not going to call on them?" I asked my wife one morning.

"When they call on *us*," she replied lightly.

"But it is our place to call first, they being strangers."

This was said as seriously as the circumstance demanded; but my wife turned it off with a laugh, and I said no more, always trusting to her intuitions in these matters.

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She was right. She would not have been received, and a cool "Not at home" would have been a bitter social pill to us if we had gone out of our way to be courteous.

I saw a great deal of our neighbors, nevertheless. Their cottage lay between us and the post-office—where *he* was never to be met with by any chance—and I caught frequent glimpses of the two working in the garden. Floriculture did not appear so much an object as exercise. Possibly it was neither; maybe they were engaged in digging for specimens of those arrowheads and flint hatchets, which are continually coming to the surface hereabouts. There is scarcely an acre in which the plowshare has not turned up some primitive stone weapon or domestic utensil, disdainfully left to us by the red men who once held this domain—an ancient tribe called the Punkypoags, a forlorn descendant of which, one Polly Crowd, figures in the annual Blue Book, down to the close of the Southern war, as a state pensioner. At that period she appears to have struck a trail to the Happy Hunting Grounds. I quote from the local historiographer.

Whether they were developing a kitchen garden, or emulating Professor Schliemann, at Mycenæ, the newcomers were evidently persons of refined musical taste: the lady had a contralto voice of remarkable sweetness, although of no great compass, and I used often to linger of a morning by the high gate and listen to her executing an arietta, conjecturally at some window upstairs, for the house was not visible from the turnpike. The husband, somewhere about the ground, would occasionally respond with two or three bars. It was all quite an ideal, Arcadian business. They seemed very happy together, these two persons, who asked no odds whatever of the community in which they had settled themselves.

There was a queerness, a sort of mystery, about this couple which I admit piqued my curiosity, though as a rule I have no morbid interest in the affairs of my neighbors. They behaved like a pair of lovers who had run off and got married clandestinely. I willingly acquitted them, however, of having done anything unlawful; for, to change a word in the lines of the poet,

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"It is a joy to *think* the best
We may of human kind."

Admitting the hypothesis of elopement, there was no mystery in their neither sending nor receiving letters. But where did they get their groceries? I do not mean the money to pay for them—that is an enigma apart—but the groceries themselves. No express wagon, no butcher's cart, no vehicle of any description, was ever observed to stop at their domicile. Yet they did not order family stores at the sole establishment in the village—an inexhaustible little bottle of a shop which, I advertise it gratis, can turn out anything in the way of groceries, from a hand-saw to a pocket-handkerchief. I confess that I allowed this unimportant detail of their *ménage* to occupy more of my speculation than was creditable to me.

In several respects our neighbors reminded me of those inexplicable persons we sometimes come across in great cities, though seldom or never in suburban places, where the field may be supposed too restricted for their operations—persons who have no perceptible means of subsistence, and manage to live royally on nothing a year. They hold no government bonds, they possess no real estate (our neighbors did own their house), they toil not, neither do they spin; yet they reap all the numerous soft advantages that usually result from honest toil and skilful spinning. How do they do it? But this is a digression, and I am quite of the opinion of the old lady in "David Copperfield," who says, "Let us have no meandering!"

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Though my wife had declined to risk a ceremonious call on our neighbors as a family, I saw no reason why I should not speak to the husband as an individual, when I happened to encounter him by the wayside. I made several approaches to do so, when it occurred to my penetration that my neighbor had the air of trying to avoid me. I resolved to put the suspicion to the test, and one forenoon, when he was sauntering along on the opposite side of the road, in the vicinity of Fisher's sawmill, I deliberately crossed over to address him. The brusque manner in which he hurried away was not to be misunderstood. Of course I was not going to force myself upon him.

It was at this time that I began to formulate uncharitable suppositions touching our neighbors, and would have been as well pleased if some of my choicest fruit-trees had not overhung their wall. I determined to keep my eyes open later in the season, when the fruit should be ripe to pluck. In some folks, a sense of the delicate shades of difference between *meum* and *tuum* does not seem to be very strongly developed in the Moon of Cherries, to use the old Indian phrase.

I was sufficiently magnanimous not to impart any of these sinister impressions to the families with whom we were on visiting terms; for I despise a gossip. I would say nothing against the persons up the road until I had something definite to say. My interest in them was—well, not exactly extinguished, but burning low. I met the gentleman at intervals, and passed him without recognition; at rarer intervals I saw the lady.

After a while I not only missed my occasional glimpses of her pretty, slim figure, always draped in some soft black stuff with a bit of scarlet at the throat, but I inferred that she did not go about the house singing in her light-hearted manner, as formerly. What had happened? Had the honeymoon suffered eclipse already? Was she ill? I fancied she was ill, and that I detected a certain anxiety in the husband, who spent the mornings digging solitarily in the garden, and seemed to have relinquished those long jaunts to the brow of Blue Hill, where there is a superb view of all Norfolk County combined with sundry venerable rattlesnakes with twelve rattles.

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As the days went by it became certain that the lady was confined to the house, perhaps seriously ill, possibly a confirmed invalid. Whether she was attended by a physician from Canton or from Milton, I was unable to say; but neither the gig with the large white allopathic horse, nor the gig with the homœopathic sorrel mare, was ever seen hitched at the gate during the day. If a physician had charge of the case, he visited his patient only at night. All this moved my sympathy, and I reproached myself with having had hard thoughts of our neighbors. Trouble had come to them early. I would have liked to offer them such small, friendly services as lay in my power; but the memory of the repulse I had sustained still rankled in me. So I hesitated.

One morning my two boys burst into the library with their eyes sparkling.

"You know the old elm down the road?" cried one.

"Yes."

"The elm with the hang-bird's nest?" shrieked the other.

"Yes, yes!"

"Well, we both just climbed up, and there's three young ones in it!"

Then I smiled to think that our new neighbors had got such a promising little family.

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MY FIRST VISIT TO PORTLAND

BY MAJOR JACK DOWNING

In the fall of the year 1829, I took it into my head I'd go to Portland. I had heard a good deal about Portland, what a fine place it was, and how the folks got rich there proper fast; and that fall there was a couple of new papers come up to our place from there, called the "Portland Courier"

and "Family Reader," and they told a good many queer kind of things about Portland, and one thing and another; and all at once it popped into my head, and I up and told father, and says,—

"I am going to Portland, whether or no; and I'll see what this world is made of yet."

Father stared a little at first, and said he was afraid I would get lost; but when he see I was bent upon it, he give it up, and he stepped to his chist, and opened the till, and took out a dollar, and he gave it to me; and says he,—

"Jack, this is all I can do for you; but go and lead an honest life, and I believe I shall hear good of you yet."

He turned and walked across the room, but I could see the tears start into his eyes. And mother sat down and had a hearty crying-spell.

This made me feel rather bad for a minit or two, and I almost had a mind to give it up; and then again father's dream came into my mind, and I mustered up courage, and declared I'd go. So I tackled up the old horse, and packed in a load of axe-handles, and a few notions; and mother fried me some doughnuts, and put 'em into a box, along with some cheese, and sausages, and ropped me up another shirt, for I told her I didn't know how long I should be gone. And after I got rigged out, I went round and bid all the neighbors good-by, and jumped in, and drove off for Portland.

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Aunt Sally had been married two or three years before, and moved to Portland; and I inquired round till I found out where she lived, and went there, and put the old horse up, and eat some supper, and went to bed.

And the next morning I got up, and straightened right off to see the editor of the "Portland Courier," for I knew by what I had seen in his paper, that he was just the man to tell me which way to steer. And when I come to see him, I knew I was right; for soon as I told him my name, and what I wanted, he took me by the hand as kind as if he had been a brother, and says he,—

"Mister," says he, "I'll do anything I can to assist you. You have come to a good town; Portland is a healthy, thriving place, and any man with a proper degree of enterprise may do well here. But," says he, "stranger," and he looked mighty kind of knowing, says he, "if you want to make out to your mind, you must do as the steamboats do."

"Well," says I, "how do they do?" for I didn't know what a steamboat was, any more than the man in the moon.

"Why," says he, "they go ahead. And you must drive about among the folks here just as though you were at home, on the farm among the cattle. Don't be afraid of any of them, but figure away, and I dare say you'll get into good business in a very little while. But," says he, "there's one thing you must be careful of; and that is, not to get into the hands of those are folks that trades up round Huckler's Row, for ther's some sharpers up there, if they get hold of you, would twist your eye-teeth out in five minits."

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Well, arter he had giv me all the good advice he could, I went back to Aunt Sally's ag'in, and got some breakfast; and then I walked all over the town, to see what chance I could find to sell my axe-handles and things and to get into business.

After I had walked about three or four hours, I come along towards the upper end of the town, where I found there were stores and shops of all sorts and sizes. And I met a feller, and says I,—

"What place is this?"

"Why, this," says he, "is Huckler's Row."

"What!" says I, "are these the stores where the traders in Huckler's Row keep?"

And says he, "Yes."

"Well, then," says I to myself, "I have a pesky good mind to go in and have a try with one of these chaps, and see if they can twist my eye-teeth out. If they can get the best end of a bargain out of me, they can do what there ain't a man in our place can do; and I should just like to know what sort of stuff these 'ere Portland chaps are made of." So I goes into the best-looking store among 'em. And I see some biscuit on the shelf, and says I,—

"Mister, how much do you ax apiece for them 'ere biscuits?"

"A cent apiece," says he.

"Well," says I, "I shan't give you that, but, if you've a mind to, I'll give you two cents for three of them, for I begin to feel a little as though I would like to take a bite."

"Well," says he, "I wouldn't sell 'em to anybody else so, but, seeing it's you, I don't care if you take 'em."

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I knew he lied, for he never seen me before in his life. Well, he handed down the biscuits, and I took 'em and walked round the store awhile, to see what else he had to sell. At last says I,—

"Mister, have you got any good cider?"

Says he, "Yes, as good as ever ye see."

"Well," says I, "what do you ax a glass for it?"

"Two cents," says he.

"Well," says I, "seems to me I feel more dry than I do hungry now. Ain't you a mind to take these 'ere biscuits again, and give me a glass of cider?"

And says he,—

"I don't care if I do."

So he took and laid 'em on the shelf again, and poured out a glass of cider. I took the cider and drinkt it down, and, to tell the truth, it was capital good cider. Then says I,—

"I guess it's time for me to be a-going," and I stept along towards the door; but says he,—

"Stop, mister: I believe you haven't paid me for the cider?"

"Not paid you for the cider!" says I. "What do you mean by that? Didn't the biscuits that I give you just come to the cider?"

"Oh, ah, right!" says he.

So I started to go again, and says he,—

"But stop there, mister: you didn't pay me for the biscuits."

"What!" says I, "do you mean to impose upon me? do you think I am going to pay you for the biscuits and let you keep them, too? Ain't they there now on your shelf? What more do you want? I guess, sir, you don't whittle me in that way."

So I turned about and marched off, and left the feller staring and scratching his head, as though he was struck with a dunderment. [Pg 413]

Howsomever, I didn't want to cheat him, only jest to show 'em it wa'n't so easy a matter to pull my eye-teeth out; so I called in next day and paid him two cents. [Pg 414]

WILD ANIMALS I HAVE MET

BY CAROLYN WELLS

THE LION

I've met this beast in drawing-rooms,
'Mong ladies gay with silks and plumes.
He looks quite bored, and silly, too,
When he's held up to public view.
I think I like him better when
Alone I brave him in his den.

THE BEAR

I never seek the surly Bear,
But if I meet him in his lair
I say, "Good day, sir; sir, good day,"
And then make haste to get away.
It is no pleasure, I declare,
To meet the cross, ill-natured Bear.

THE GOOSE

I know it would be of no use
To say I'd never met a Goose.
There are so many all around,
With idle look and clacking sound.
And sometimes it has come to pass
I've seen one in my looking-glass.

THE DUCK

This merry one, with laughing eyes,
Not too sedate nor overwise,
Is best of comrades; frank and free,
A clever hand at making tea;

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A fearless nature, full of pluck,
I like her well—she is a Duck.

THE CAT

The Cat's a nasty little beast;
She's seen at many a fête and feast.
She's spiteful, sly and double-faced,
Exceeding prim, exceeding chaste.
And while a soft, sleek smile she wears,
Her neighbor's reputation tears.

THE PUPPY

Of all the animals I've met
The Puppy is the worst one yet.
Clumsy and crude, he hasn't brains
Enough to come in when it rains.
But with insufferable conceit
He thinks that he is just too sweet.

THE KID

Kids are the funniest things I know;
Nothing they do but eat and grow.
They're frolicsome, and it is said
They eat tin cans and are not dead.
I'm not astonished at that feat,
For all things else I've seen them eat.

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A BALLADE OF THE "HOW TO" BOOKS

BY JOHN JAMES DAVIES

That time when Learning's path was steep,
And rocks and fissures marred the way,
The few who dared were forced to creep,
Their souls oft quaking with dismay;
The goal achieved, their hairs were gray,
Their bodies bent like shepherds' crooks;
How blest are we who run to-day
The easy road of "How To" books!

The presses groan, and volumes heap,
Our dullness we no more betray;
To know the stars, or shear a sheep—
To live on air, or polo play;
The trick is ours, or we may stray
Beneath the seas, with science cooks,
And sprint by some reflected ray
The easy road of "How To" books!

Who craves the boon of dreamless sleep?
Who bricks would make, *sans* straw or clay?
"Call spirits from the vasty deep,"
Or weave a lofty, living lay?
Let him be heartened, jocund, gay,
Nor hopeless writhe on tenter-hooks,—
They meet no barriers who essay
The easy road of "How To" books!

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ENVOY

The critics still *will* slash and slay
Poor hapless scribes, in sanctum nooks;
Lo! here's a refuge for their prey—
The easy road of "How To" books!

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THE TREE-TOAD

BY JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

"Scurious-like," said the tree-toad,
"I've twittered fer rain all day;
And I got up soon,
And I hollered till noon—
But the sun, hit blazed away,
Till I jest clumb down in a crawfish-hole,
Weary at heart, and sick at soul!

"Dozed away fer an hour,
And I tackled the thing agin;
And I sung, and sung,
Till I knowed my lung
Was jest about give in;
And then, thinks I, ef hit don't rain now,
There're nothin' in singin', anyhow!

"Once in awhile some farmer
Would come a-drivin' past;
And he'd hear my cry,
And stop and sigh—
Till I jest laid back, at last,
And I hollered rain till I thought my th'oat
Would bust right open at ever' note!

"But I *fetch*ed her! O *I fetch*ed her!—
'Cause a little while ago,
As I kindo' set,
With one eye shet,
And a-singin' soft and low,
A voice drapped down on my fevered brain,
Sayin',—'Ef you'll jest hush I'll rain!'"

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THE HIRED HAND AND "HA'NTS"

BY E.O. LAUGHLIN

The Hired Hand was Johnnie's oracle. His auguries were infallible; from his decisions there was no appeal. The wisdom of experienced age was his, and he always stood willing to impart it to the youngest. No question was too trivial for him to consider, and none too abstruse for him to answer. He did not tell Johnnie to "never mind" or wait until he grew older, but was ever willing to pause in his work to explain things. And his oracular qualifications were genuine. He had traveled—had even been as far as the State Fair; he had read—from *Robinson Crusoe* to *Dick the Dead Shot*, and, more than all, he had meditated deeply.

The Hired Hand's name was Eph. Perhaps he had another name, too, but if so it had become obsolete. Far and wide he was known simply as Eph.

Eph was generally termed "a cur'ous feller," and this characterization applied equally well to his peculiar appearance and his inquiring disposition. In his confirmation nature had evidently sacrificed her love of beauty to a temporary passion for elongation. Length seemed to have been the central thought, the theme, as it were, upon which he had been composed. This effect was heightened by generously broad hands and feet and a contrastingly abbreviated chin. The latter feature caused his countenance to wear in repose a decidedly vacant look, but it was seldom caught reposing, usually having to bear a smirk of some sort.

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Eph's position in the Winkle household was as peculiar as his personality. Nominally he was a hired servant, but, in fact, from his own point of view at least, he was Mr. Winkle's private secretary and confidential adviser. He had been on the place "ever sence old Fan was a yearlin'," which was a long while, indeed; and had come to regard himself as indispensable. The Winkles treated him as one of the family, and he reciprocated in truly familiar ways. He sat at the table with them, helped entertain their guests, and often accompanied them to church. In regulating matters on the farm Mr. Winkle proposed, but Eph invariably disposed, in a diplomatic way, of course; and, although his judgment might be based on false logic, the result was generally successful and satisfactory.

With all his good qualities and her attachment to him, however, Mrs. Winkle was not sure that Eph's moral status was quite sound, and she was inclined to discourage Johnnie's association with him. As a matter of fact she had overheard Johnnie utter several bad words, of which Eph

was certainly the prime source. But a mother's solicitude was of little avail when compared with Eph's Delphian wisdom. Johnnie would steal away to join Eph in the field at every chance, and the information he acquired at these secret séances, was varied and valuable.

It was Eph who taught him how to tell the time of day by the sun; how to insert a "dutchman" in the place of a lost suspender button; how to make bird-traps; and how to "skin the cat." Eph initiated him into the mysteries of magic and witchcraft, and showed him how to locate a subterranean vein of water by means of a twig of witch-hazel. Eph also confided to Johnnie that he himself could stanch the flow of blood or stop a toothache instantly by force of a certain charm, but he could not tell how to do this because the secret could be imparted only from man to woman, or vice versa. Even the shadowy domain of spirits had not been exempt from Eph's investigations, and he related many a terrifying experience with "ha'nts."

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Johnnie was first introduced to the ghost world one summer night, when he and Eph had gone fishing together.

"If ye want to ketch the big uns, always go at night in the dark o' the moon," said Eph, and his piscatorial knowledge was absolute.

They had fished in silence for some time, and Johnnie was nodding, when Eph suddenly whispered:

"Let's go home, sonny, I think I see a ha'nt down yander."

Johnnie had no idea what a "ha'nt" might be, but Eph's constrained manner betokened something dreadful.

It was not until they had come within sight of home that Johnnie ventured to inquire:

"Say, Eph, what is a ha'nt?"

"Huh! What is ha'nts? Why, sonny, you mean to tell me you don't know what ha'nts is?"

"Not exactly; sompin' like wildcats, ain't they?"

"Well, I'll be confounded! Wildcats! Not by a long shot;" and Eph broke into the soft chuckle which always preceded his explanations. They reached the orchard fence, and, seating himself squarely on the topmost rail, Eph began impressively:

"Ha'nts is the remains of dead folks—more 'specially them that's been assinated, er, that is, kilt—understan'? They're kind o' like sperrits, ye know. After so long a time they take to comin' back to yarth an' ha'ntin' the precise spot where they wuz murdered. They always come after dark, an' the diffrent shapes they take on is surprisin'. I have seed ha'nts that looked like sheep, an' ha'nts that looked like human persons; but lots of 'em ye cain't see a-tall, bein' invisible, as the sayin' is. Now, fer all we know, they may be a ha'nt settin' right here betwixt us, this minute!"

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With this solemn declaration Johnnie shivered and began edging closer to Eph, until restrained and appalled by the thought that he might actually sit on the unseen spirit by such movement.

"But do they hurt people, Eph?" he asked anxiously.

Eph gave vent to another chuckle.

"Not if ye understan' the'r ways," he observed sagely. "If ye let 'em alone an' don't go foolin' aroun' the'r ha'ntin'-groun' they'll never harm ye. But don't ye never trifle with no ha'nt, sonny. I knowed a feller't thought 'twuz smart to hector 'em an' said he wuzn't feared. Onct he throwed a rock at one—"

Here Eph paused.

"What h-happened?" gasped Johnnie.

"In one year from that time," replied Eph gruesomely, "that there feller's cow wuz hit by lightnin'; in three year his hoss kicked him an' busted a rib; an' in seven year he wuz a corpse!"

The power of this horrible example was too much for Johnnie.

"Don't you reckon it's bedtime?" he suggested tremblingly.

Thenceforth for many months Johnnie led a haunted life. Ghosts glowered at him from cellar and garret. Specters slunk at his heels, phantoms flitted through the barn. Twilight teemed with horrors, and midnight, when he awoke at that hour, made of his bedroom a veritable Brocken.

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It was vain for his parents to expostulate with him. Was one not bound to believe one's own eyes? And how about the testimony of the Hired Hand?

The story in his reader—told in verse and graphically illustrated—of the boy named Walter, who, being alone on a lonesome highway one dark night, beheld a sight that made his blood run cold, acquired an abnormal interest for Johnnie. Walter, with courage resembling madness, marched straight up to the alleged ghost and laughed gleefully to find, "It was a friendly guide-post, his wand'ring steps to guide."

This was all very well, as it turned out, but what if it had been a sure-enough ghost, reflected Johnnie. What if it had reached down with its long, snaky arms and snatched Walter up—and run

off with him in the dark—and no telling what? Or it might have swooped straight up in the air with him, for ghosts could do that. Johnnie resolved he would not take any chances with friendly guide-posts which might turn out to be hostile spirits.

Then there was the similar tale of the lame goose, and the one concerning the pillow in the swing—each intended, no doubt, to allay foolish fears on the part of children, but exercising an opposite and harrowing influence upon Johnnie.

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MAXIOMS

BY CAROLYN WELLS

Reward is its own virtue.
The wages of sin is alimony.
Money makes the mayor go.
A penny saved spoils the broth.
Of two evils, choose the prettier.
There's no fool like an old maid.
Make love while the moon shines.
Where there's a won't there's a way.
Nonsense makes the heart grow fonder.
A word to the wise is a dangerous thing.
A living gale is better than a dead calm.
A fool and his money corrupt good manners.
A word in the hand is worth two in the ear.
A man is known by the love-letters he keeps.
A guilty conscience is the mother of invention.
Whosoever thy hands find to do, do with thy might.
It's a wise child who knows less than his own father.
Never put off till to-morrow what you can wear to-night.
He who loves and runs away, may live to love another day.

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GARDEN ETHICS

BY CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER

I believe that I have found, if not original sin, at least vegetable total depravity in my garden; and it was there before I went into it. It is the bunch-, or joint-, or snake-grass,—whatever it is called. As I do not know the names of all the weeds and plants, I have to do as Adam did in his garden,—name things as I find them. This grass has a slender, beautiful stalk: and when you cut it down, or pull up a long root of it, you fancy it is got rid of; but in a day or two it will come up in the same spot in half a dozen vigorous blades. Cutting down and pulling up is what it thrives on. Extermination rather helps it. If you follow a slender white root, it will be found to run under the ground until it meets another slender white root; and you will soon unearth a network of them, with a knot somewhere, sending out dozens of sharp-pointed, healthy shoots, every joint prepared to be an independent life and plant. The only way to deal with it is to take one part hoe and two parts fingers, and carefully dig it out, not leaving a joint anywhere. It will take a little time, say all summer, to dig out thoroughly a small patch; but if you once dig it out, and keep it out, you will have no further trouble.

I have said it was total depravity. Here it is. If you attempt to pull up and root out sin in you, which shows on the surface,—if it does not show, you do not care for it,—you may have noticed how it runs into an interior network of sins, and an ever-sprouting branch of these roots somewhere; and that you can not pull out one without making a general internal disturbance, and rooting up your whole being. I suppose it is less trouble to quietly cut them off at the top—say once a week, on Sunday, when you put on your religious clothes and face,—so that no one will see them, and not try to eradicate the network within.

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Remark.—This moral vegetable figure is at the service of any clergyman who will have the manliness to come forward and help me at a day's hoeing on my potatoes. None but the orthodox need apply.

I, however, believe in the intellectual, if not the moral, qualities of vegetables, and especially weeds. There was a worthless vine that (or who) started up about midway between a grape-trellis and a row of bean-poles, some three feet from each, but a little nearer the trellis. When it came out of the ground, it looked around to see what it should do. The trellis was already occupied. The bean-pole was empty. There was evidently a little the best chance of light, air, and sole proprietorship on the pole. And the vine started for the pole, and began to climb it with determination. Here was as distinct an act of choice, of reason, as a boy exercises when he goes into a forest, and, looking about, decides which tree he will climb. And, besides, how did the vine

know enough to travel in exactly the right direction, three feet, to find what it wanted? This is intellect. The weeds, on the other hand, have hateful moral qualities. To cut down a weed is, therefore, to do a moral action. I feel as if I were destroying a sin. My hoe becomes an instrument of retributive justice. I am an apostle of nature. This view of the matter lends a dignity to the art of hoeing which nothing else does, and lifts it into the region of ethics. Hoeing becomes, not a pastime, but a duty. And you get to regard it so, as the days and the weeds lengthen.

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Observation.—Nevertheless, what a man needs in gardening is a cast-iron back, with a hinge in it. The hoe is an ingenious instrument, calculated to call out a great deal of strength at a great disadvantage.

The striped bug has come, the saddest of the year. He is a moral double-ender, iron-clad at that. He is unpleasant in two ways. He burrows in the ground so that you can not find him, and he flies away so that you can not catch him. He is rather handsome, as bugs go, but utterly dastardly, in that he gnaws the stem of the plant close to the ground, and ruins it without any apparent advantage to himself. I find him on the hills of cucumbers (perhaps it will be a cholera-year, and we shall not want any), the squashes (small loss), and the melons (which never ripen). The best way to deal with the striped bug is to sit down by the hills, and patiently watch for him. If you are spry, you can annoy him. This, however, takes time. It takes all day and part of the night. For he flieth in the darkness, and wasteth at noonday. If you get up before the dew is off the plants,—it goes off very early,—you can sprinkle soot on the plant (soot is my panacea: if I can get the disease of a plant reduced to the necessity of soot, I am all right); and soot is unpleasant to the bug. But the best thing to do is set a toad to catch the bugs. The toad at once establishes the most intimate relations with the bug. It is a pleasure to see such unity among the lower animals. The difficulty is to make the toad stay and watch the hill. If you know your toad, it is all right. If you do not, you must build a tight fence round the plants, which the toad can not jump over. This, however, introduces a new element. I find that I have a zoölogical garden. It is an unexpected result of my little enterprise, which never aspired to the completeness of the Paris "Jardin des Plantes."

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A TRAVELED DONKEY

BY BERT LESTON TAYLOR

But Buddie got no farther. The sound of music came to her ears, and she stopped to listen. The music was faint and sweet, with the sighful quality of an Æolian harp. Now it seemed near, now far.

"What can it be?" said Buddie.

"Wait here and I'll find out," said Snowfeathers. He darted away and returned before you could count fifty.

"A traveling musician," he reported. "Come along. It's only a little way."

Back he flew, with Buddie scrambling after. A few yards brought her to a little open place, and here was the queerest sight she had yet seen in this queer wood.

On a bank of reindeer moss, at the foot of a great white birch, a mouse-colored donkey sat playing a lute. Over his head, hanging from a bit of bark, was the sign:

<p>WHILE YOU WAIT OLD SAWS RESET</p>

After the many strange things that Buddie had come upon in Queerwood, nothing could surprise her very much. Besides, as she never before had seen a donkey, or a lute, or the combination of donkey and lute, it did not strike her as especially remarkable that the musician should be holding his instrument upside down, and sweeping the strings with one of his long ears, which he was able to wave without moving his head a jot. And this it was that gave to the music its soft and furry-purry quality.

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The Donkey greeted Buddie with a careless nod, and remarked, as if anticipating a comment he had heard many times:

"Oh, yes; I play everything *by ear*."

"Please keep on playing," said Buddie, taking a seat on another clump of reindeer moss.

"I intended to," said the Donkey; and the random chords changed to a crooning melody which wonderfully pleased Buddie, whose opportunities to hear music were sadly few. As for the White Blackbird, he tucked his little head under his wing and went fast asleep.

"Well, what do you think of it?" asked the Donkey, putting down the lute.

"Very nice, sir," answered Buddie, enthusiastically; though she added to herself: The idea of

saying sir to an animal! "Would you please tell me your name?" she requested.

The Donkey pawed open a saddle-bag, drew forth with his teeth a card, and presented it to Buddie, who spelled out the following:

**PROFESSOR BRAY
TENORE BARITONALE
TEACHER OF SINGING ALL
METHODS
CONCERTS AND RECITALS**

While Buddie was reading this the Donkey again picked up his instrument and thrummed the strings.

"Did you ever see a donkey play a lute?" said he. "That's an old saw," he added.

"I never saw a donkey before," said Buddie.

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"You haven't traveled much," said the other. "The world is full of them."

"This is the farthest I've ever been from home," confessed Buddie, feeling very insignificant indeed.

"And how far may that be?"

Buddie couldn't tell exactly.

"But it can't be a great way," she said. "I live in the log house by the lake."

"Pooh!" said the Donkey. "That's no distance at all." Buddie shrank another inch or two. "I'm a great traveler myself. All donkeys travel that can. If a donkey travels, you know, he *may* come home a horse; and to become a horse is, of course, the ambition of every donkey!"

"Is it?" was all Buddie could think of to remark. What could she say that would interest a globe-trotter?

"Perhaps you have an old saw you'd like reset," suggested the Donkey, still thrumming the lute-strings.

Buddie thought a moment.

"There's an old saw hanging up in our woodshed," she began, but got no farther.

"Hee-haw! hee-haw!" laughed the Donkey. "Thistles and cactus, but that's rich!" And he hee-hawed until the tears ran down his nose. Poor Buddie, who knew she was being laughed at but didn't know why, began to feel very much like crying and wished she might run away.

"Excuse these tears," the Donkey said at last, recovering his family gravity. "Didn't you ever hear the saying, A burnt child dreads the fire?"

Buddie nodded, and plucked up her spirits.

"Well, that's an old saw. And you must have heard that other very old saw, No use crying over spilt milk."

Another nod from Buddie.

"Here's my setting of that," said the Donkey; and after a few introductory chords, he sang:

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"Oh, why do you cry, my pretty little maid,
With a Boo-hoo-hoo and a Heigho?'
'I've spilled my milk, kind sir,' she said,
And the Cat said, 'Me-oh! my-oh!'"

'No use to cry, my pretty little maid,
With a Boo-hoo-hoo and a Heigho.'
'But what shall I do, kind sir?' she said,
And the Cat said, 'Me-oh! my-oh!'"

'Why, dry your eyes, my pretty little maid,
With a Boo-hoo-hoo and a Heigho.'
'Oh, thank you, thank you, sir,' she said,
And the Cat said, 'Me-oh! my-oh!'"

"How do you like my voice?" asked the Donkey, in a tone that said very plainly: "If you don't like it you're no judge of singing."

Buddie did not at once reply. A professional critic would have said, and enjoyed saying, that the voice was of the hit-or-miss variety; that it was pitched too high (all donkeys make that mistake); that it was harsh, rasping and unsympathetic, and that altogether the performance was "not convincing."

Now, Little One, although Buddie was not a professional critic, and neither knew how to wound nor enjoyed wounding, even *she* found the Donkey's voice harsh; but she did not wish to hurt his feelings—for donkeys *have* feelings, in spite of a popular opinion to the contrary. And, after all, it was pretty good singing for a donkey. Critics should not, as they sometimes do, apply to donkeys the standards by which nightingales are judged. So Buddie was able to say, truthfully and kindly:

"I think you do very well; very well, indeed."

It was a small tribute, but the Donkey was so blinded by conceit that he accepted it as the greatest compliment.

"I *ought* to sing well," he said. "I've studied methods enough. The more methods you try, you know, the more of a donkey you are." [Pg 432]

"Oh, yes," murmured Buddie, not understanding in the least.

"Yes," went on the Donkey; "I've taken the Donkesi Method, the Sobraylia Method, the Thistlefixu Method—"

"I'm afraid I don't quite know what you mean by 'methods,'" ventured Buddie.

The Donkey regarded her with a pitying smile.

"A method," he explained, "is a way of singing 'Ah!' For example, in the Thistlefixu Method, which I am at present using, I fill my mouth full of thistles, stand on one leg, take in a breath three yards long, and sing 'Ah!' The only trouble with this method is that the thistles tickle your throat and make you cough, and you have to spray the vocal cords twice a day, which is considerable trouble, especially when traveling, as *I* always am."

"I should think it *would* be," said Buddie. "Won't you sing something else?"

"I'm a little hoarse," apologized the singer.

"That's what you want to be, isn't it?" said Buddie, misunderstanding him.

"Hee-haw!" laughed the Donkey. "Is that a joke? I mean my *throat* is hoarse."

"And the rest of you is donkey!" cried Buddie, who could see a point as quickly as any one of her age.

"There's something to that," said the other, thoughtfully. "Now, if the *hoarseness* should spread —"

"And you became *horse* all over—"

"Why, then—"

"Why, then—"

"Think of another old saw," said the Donkey, picking up his lute. [Pg 433]

"No; I don't believe I can remember any more old saws," said Buddie, after racking her small brain for a minute or two.

"Pooh!" said the Donkey. "They're as common as, Pass the butter, or, Some more tea, please. Ever hear, Fair words butter no parsnips?"

Buddie shook her head.

"The wolf does something every day that keeps him from church on Sunday—?"

Again Buddy shook her head.

"It is hard to shave an egg—?"

Still another shake.

"A miss is as good as a mile? You can not drive a windmill with a pair of bellows? Help the lame dog over the stile? A hand-saw is a good thing, but not to shave with? Nothing venture, nothing have? Well, you haven't heard much, for a fact," said the Donkey, contemptuously, as Buddie shook her head after each proverb. "I'll try a few more; there's no end to them. Ever hear, When the sky falls we shall all catch larks? Too many cooks spoil the broth?"

"I've heard *that*," said Buddie, eagerly.

"It's a wonder," returned the Donkey. "Well, I have a very nice setting of that." And he sang:

"Some said, 'Stir it fast,'
Some said, 'Slow';
Some said, 'Skim it off,'
Some said, 'No';
Some said, 'Pepper,'
Some said, 'Salt';—
All gave good advice,
All found fault.

Poor little Tommy Trotsett!
Couldn't eat it when he got it."

"I like that," said Buddie. "Oh, and I've just thought of another old ax—I mean saw, if it *is* one— [Pg 434]
Don't count your chickens before they are hatched. Do you sing that?"

"One of my best," replied the Donkey. And again he sang:

"'Thirteen eggs,' said Sammy Patch,
'Are thirteen chickens when they hatch.'
The hen gave a cluck, but said no more;
For the hen had heard such things before.

The eggs fall out from tilted pail
And leave behind a yellow trail;
But Sammy,—counting, as he goes,
Upon his fingers,—never knows.

Oh, Sammy Patch, your 'rithmetic
Won't hatch a solitary chick."

"I like that the best," said Buddie, who knew what it was to tip over a pail of eggs, and felt as sorry for Sammy Patch as if he really existed.

"It's one of my best," said the Donkey. "I don't call it my very best. Personally I prefer, Look before you leap. You've heard that old saw, I dare say."

"No; but that doesn't matter. I shall like it just as well," replied Buddie.

"*That* doesn't follow, but *this* does," said the Donkey, and once more he sang:

"A foolish Frog, one summer day,
While splashing round in careless way,
Observed a man
With large tin can,
And manner most suspicious.
'I think I know,' remarked the Frog,
'A safer place than on this log;
For when a man
Comes with a can
His object is malicious.'

Thus far the foolish Frog was wise;
But had he better used his eyes,
He would have seen,
Close by, a lean
Old Pike—his nose just showing.
Kersplash! The Pike made just one bite....
The moral I need scarce recite:
Before you leap
Just take a peep
To see where you are going."

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Buddie, however, clung to her former opinion. "I like *Sammy Patch* the best," said she.

"That," rejoined the singer, "is a matter of taste, as the donkey said to the horse who preferred hay to thistles. Usually the public likes best the very piece the composer himself cares least about. So wherever I go I hear, 'Oh, Professor, do sing us that beautiful song about Sammy Patch.' And I can't poke my head inside the Thistle Club but some donkey bawls out, 'Here's Bray! Now we'll have a song. Sing us *Sammy Patch*, old fellow.' Really, I've sung that song so many times I'm tired of the sound of it."

"It must be nice to be such a favorite," said Buddie.

"Suppose we go up to the Corner and see what's stirring," suggested the Donkey, with a yawn.

"Oh, are *you* going up to the Corner, too?" cried Buddie. "I am to meet the Rabbit there at two o'clock. I hope it isn't late."

The Donkey glanced skyward.

"It isn't noon yet," said he.

"How do you tell time?" inquired Buddie.

"By the way it flies. Time flies, you know. You can tell a great many birds that way, too." As he spoke the Donkey put his lute into one of his bags and took down his sign.

"You can ride if you wish," he offered graciously.

"Thank you," said Buddie. And leaving the White Blackbird asleep on his perch,—for, as Buddie [Pg 436]

said, he was having such a lovely nap it would be a pity to wake him,—they set off through the wood.

It was bad traveling for a short distance, but presently they came out on an old log-road; and along this the Donkey ambled at an easy pace. On both sides grew wild flowers in wonderful abundance, but, as Buddie noticed, they were all of one kind—Enchanter's Nightshade.

Buddie had also noticed, when she climbed to her comfortable seat, a peculiar marking on the Donkey's broad back. It was bronze in color, and in shape like a cross.

"Perhaps it's a strawberry mark," she thought, "and he may not want to talk about it." But curiosity got the better of her.

"Oh, that?" said the Donkey, carelessly, in reply to a question. "That's a Victoria Cross. I served three months with the British army in South Africa, and was decorated for gallantry in leading a charge of the ambulance corps. I shall have to ask you not to hang things on my neck. It's all I can do to hold up my head."

"Oh, excuse me," said Buddie, untying the sign, OLD SAWS RESET WHILE YOU WAIT.

"Hang it round your own neck," said the Donkey, and Buddie did so.

"I often wonder," she said, "whether a horse doesn't sometimes get tired holding his head out at the end of his neck. And as for a giraffe, I don't see how he stands it."

"Well, a giraffe's neck runs out at a more convenient angle," said the Donkey. "Still, it *is* tiresome without a check-rein. You hear a great deal about a check-rein being a cruel invention, but, on the contrary, it's a great blessing. Now, a nose-bag is a positive outrage, and the more oats it contains the more of an imposition it is. People have the queerest ideas!"

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SELECTING THE FACULTY

BY BAYNARD RUST HALL

Our Board of Trustees, it will be remembered, had been directed by the Legislature to procure, as the ordinance called it, "Teachers for the commencement of the State College at Woodville." That business, by the Board, was committed to Dr. Sylvan and Robert Carlton—the most learned gentleman of the body, and of—the New Purchase. Our honorable Board will be more specially introduced hereafter; at present we shall bring forward certain rejected candidates, that, like rejected prize essays, they may be published, and *thus* have their revenge.

None can tell us how plenty good things are till he looks for them; and hence, to the great surprise of the Committee, there seemed to be a sudden growth and a large crop of persons even in and around Woodville, either already qualified for the "Professorships," as we named them in our publication, or who *could* "qualify" by the time of election. As to the "chair" named also in our publications, one very worthy and disinterested schoolmaster offered, as a great collateral inducement for his being elected, "*to find his own chair*!"—a vast saving to the State, if the same chair I saw in Mr. Whackum's school-room. For his chair there was one with a hickory bottom; and doubtless he would have filled it, and even lapped over its edges, with equal dignity in the recitation room of Big College.

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The Committee had, at an early day, given an invitation to the Rev. Charles Clarence, A.M., of New Jersey, and his answer had been affirmative; yet for political reasons we had been obliged to invite competitors, or *make* them, and we found and created "a right smart sprinkle."

Hopes of success were built on many things—for instance, on poverty; a plea being entered that something ought to be done for the poor fellow—on one's having taught a common school all his born days, who now deserved to rise a peg—on political, or religious, or fanatical partizan qualifications—and on pure patriotic principles, such as a person's having been "born in a canebrake and rocked in a sugar trough." On the other hand, a fat, dull-headed, and modest Englishman asked for a place, because he had been born in Liverpool! and had seen the world beyond the woods and waters, too! And another fussy, talkative, pragmatistical little gentleman rested his pretensions on his ability to draw and paint maps!—not projecting them in roundabout scientific processes, but in that speedy and elegant style in which young ladies *copy* maps at first chop boarding-schools! Nay, so transcendent seemed Mr. Merchator's claims, when his *show* or *sample* maps were exhibited to us, that some in our Board, and nearly everybody out of it, were confident he would do for Professor of Mathematics and even Principal.

But of all our unsuccessful candidates, we shall introduce by name only two—Mr. James Jimmy, A.S.S., and Mr. Solomon Rapid, A. to Z.

Mr. Jimmy, who aspired to the mathematical chair, was master of a small school of all sexes, near Woodville. At the first, he was kindly, yet honestly told, his knowledge was too limited and inaccurate; yet, notwithstanding this, and some almost rude repulses afterward, he persisted in his application and his hopes. To give evidence of competency, he once told me he was arranging a new spelling-book, the publication of which would make him known as a literary man, and be an

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unspeakable advantage to "the rising generation." And this naturally brought on the following colloquy about the work:

"Ah! indeed! Mr. Jimmy?"

"Yes, indeed, Mr. Carlton."

"On what new principle do you go, sir?"

"Why, sir, on the principles of nature and common sense. I allow school-books for schools are all too powerful obstruse and hard-like to be understood without exemplifying illustrations."

"Yes, but Mr. Jimmy, how is a child's spelling-book to be made any plainer?"

"Why, sir, by clear explifications of the words in one column, by exemplifying illustrations in the other."

"I do not understand you, Mr. Jimmy, give me a specimen—"

"Sir?"

"An example—"

"To be sure—here's a spes-a-example; you see, for instance, I put in the spelling-column, C-r-e-a-m, *cream*, and here in the explification column, I put the exemplifying illustration—*Unctious part of milk!*"

We had asked, at our first interview, if our candidate was an algebraist, and his reply was *negative*; but, "he allowed he could '*qualify*' by the time of election, as he was powerful good at figures, and had cyphered clean through every arithmetic he had ever seen, the rule of promiscuous questions and all!" Hence, some weeks after, as I was passing his door, on my way to a squirrel hunt, with a party of friends, Mr. Jimmy, hurrying out with a slate in his hand, begged me to stop a moment, and thus addressed me:

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"Well, Mr. Carlton, this algebra is a most powerful thing—ain't it?"

"Indeed it is, Mr. Jimmy—have you been looking into it?"

"Looking into it! I have been all through this here fust part; and by election time, I allow I'll be ready for examination."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, sir! but it is such a pretty thing! Only to think of cyphering by letters! Why, sir, the sums come out, and bring the answers exactly like figures. Jist stop a minute—look here: *a* stands for 6, and *b* stands for 8, and *c* stands for 4, and *d* stands for figure 10; now if I say *a* plus *b* minus *c* equals *d*, it is all the same as if I said, 6 is 6 and 8 makes 14, and 4 subtracted, leaves 10! Why, sir, I done a whole slate full of letters and signs; and afterward, when I tried by figures, they every one of them came out right and brung the answer! I mean to cypher by letters altogether."

"Mr. Jimmy, my company is nearly out of sight—if you can get along this way through simple and quadratic equations by our meeting, your chance will not be so bad—good morning, sir."

But our man of "letters" quit cyphering the new way, and returned to plain figures long before reaching equations; and so he could not become our professor. Yet anxious to do us all the good in his power, after our college opened, he waited on me, a leading trustee, with a proposal to board our students, and authorized me to publish—"as how Mr. James Jimmy will take strange students—students not belonging to Woodville—to board, at one dollar a week, and find everything, washing included, and will black their *shoes* three times a week to *boot*, and—*give them their dog-wood and cherry-bitters every morning into the bargain!*"

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The most extraordinary candidate, however, was Mr. Solomon Rapid. He was now somewhat advanced into the shaving age, and was ready to assume offices the most opposite in character; although justice compels us to say Mr. Rapid was as fit for one thing as another. Deeming it waste of time to prepare for any station till he was certain of obtaining it, he wisely demanded the place first, and then set to work to become qualified for its duties, being, I suspect, the very man, or some relation of his, who is recorded as not knowing whether he could read Greek, as he had never tried. And, besides, Mr. Solomon Rapid contended that all offices, from president down to fence-viewer, were open to every white American citizen; and that every republican had a blood-bought right to seek any that struck his fancy; and if the profits were less, or the duties more onerous than had been anticipated, that a man ought to resign and try another.

Naturally, therefore, Mr. Rapid thought he would like to sit in our chair of languages, or have some employment in the State college; and hence he called for that purpose on Dr. Sylvan, who, knowing the candidate's character, maliciously sent him to me. Accordingly, the young gentleman presented himself, and without ceremony, instantly made known his business thus:

"I heerd, sir, you wanted somebody to teach the State school, and I'm come to let you know I'm willing to take the place."

"Yes, sir, we are going to elect a professor of languages who is to be the principal and a professor
—"

"Well, I don't care which I take, but I'm willing to be the principal. I can teach sifring, reading, writing, joggerfee, surveying, grammur, spelling, definition, parsin—" [Pg 442]

"Are you a linguist?"

"Sir?"

"You, of course, understand the dead languages?"

"Well, can't say I ever seed much of them, though I have heerd tell of them; but I can soon larn them—they ain't more than a few of them I allow?"

"Oh! my dear sir, it is not possible—we—can't—"

"Well, I never seed what I couldn't larn about as smart as anybody—"

"Mr. Rapid, I do not mean to question your abilities; but if you are now wholly unacquainted with the dead languages, it is impossible for you or any other talented man to learn them under four or five years."

"Pshoo! foo! I'll bet I larn one in three weeks! Try me, sir,—let's have the furst one furst—how many are there?"

"Mr. Rapid, it is utterly impossible; but if you insist, I will loan you a Latin book—"

"That's your sort, let's have it, that's all I want, fair play."

Accordingly, I handed him a copy of *Historiæ Sacræ*, with which he soon went away, saying, he "didn't allow it would take long to git through Latin, if 'twas only sich a thin patch of a book as that."

In a few weeks, to my no small surprise, Mr. Solomon Rapid again presented himself; and drawing forth the book began with a triumphant expression of countenance:

"Well, sir, I have done the Latin."

"Done the Latin!"

"Yes, I can read it as fast as English."

"Read it as fast as English!!" [Pg 443]

"Yes, as fast as English—and I didn't find it hard at all."

"May I try you on a page?"

"Try away, try away; that's what I've come for."

"Please read here then, Mr. Rapid;" and in order to give him a fair chance, I pointed to the first lines of the first chapter, viz.: "In principio Deus creavit cœlum et terram intra sex dies; primo die fecit lucem," etc.

"That, sir?" and then he read thus, "In prinspo duse creevit kalelum et terrum intra sex dyes—primmo dye fe-fe-sit looseum," etc.

"That will do, Mr. Rapid—"

"Ah! ha! I told you so."

"Yes, yes—but translate."

"Translate!" (eyebrows elevating.)

"Yes, translate, render it."

"Render it!! how's that?" (forehead more wrinkled.)

"Why, yes, render it into English—give me the meaning of it."

"MEANING!!" (staring full in my face, his eyes like saucers, and forehead wrinkled with the furrows of eighty)—"MEANING!! I didn't know it *had* any meaning. I thought it was a DEAD language!!"

Well, reader, I am glad you are *not* laughing at Mr. Rapid; for how should anything *dead* speak out so as to be understood? And indeed, does not his definition suit the vexed feelings of some young gentlemen attempting to read Latin without any interlinear translation? and who inwardly, cursing both book and teacher, blast their souls "if they can make any sense out of it." The ancients may yet speak in their own languages to a few; but to most who boast the honor of their acquaintance, they are certainly dead in the sense of Solomon Rapid. [Pg 444]

BY JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

Little Orphant Annie's come to our house to stay,
An' wash the cups and saucers up, an' brush the crumbs away,
An' shoo the chickens off the porch, an' dust the hearth, an' sweep,
An' make the fire, an' bake the bread, an' earn her board-an'-keep;
An' all us other childern, when the supper things is done,
We set around the kitchen fire an' has the mostest fun
A-list'nin' to the witch-tales 'at Annie tells about,
An' the Gobble-uns 'at gits you

Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

Onc't there was a little boy wouldn't say his pray'rs—
An' when he went to bed at night, away up stairs,
His mammy heerd him holler, an' his daddy heerd him bawl,
An' when they turn't the kivvers down, he wasn't there at all!
An' they seeked him in the rafter-room, an' cubby-hole, an' press,
An' seeked him up the chimby-flue, an' ever'wheres, I guess;
But all they ever found was thist his pants an' roundabout!
An' the Gobble-uns'll git you

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Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

An' one time a little girl 'ud allus laugh an' grin,
An' make fun of ever' one, an' all her blood-an'-kin;
An' onc't when they was "company," an' ole folks was there,
She mocked 'em an' shocked 'em, an' said she didn't care!
An' thist as she kicked her heels, an' turn't to run an' hide,
They was two great big Black Things a-standin' by her side,
An' they snatched her through the ceilin' 'fore she knowed what she's about!
An' the Gobble-uns'll git you

Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

An' little Orphant Annie says, when the blaze is blue,
An' the lampwick sputters, an' the wind goes woo-oo!
An' you hear the crickets quit, an' the moon is gray,
An' the lightnin'-bugs in dew is all squenched away,—
You better mind yer parents, and yer teachers fond and dear,
An' churish them 'at loves you, an' dry the orphant's tear,
An' he'p the pore an' needy ones 'at clusters all about,
Er the Gobble-uns'll git you

Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

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HANS BREITMANN'S PARTY

BY CHARLES GODFREY LELAND

Hans Breitmann gife a barty,
Dey had biano-blayin;
I felled in lofe mit a Merican frau,
Her name vas Madilda Yane.
She hat haar as prawn ash a pretzel,
Her eyes vas himmel-plue,
Und ven dey looket indo mine,
Dey shplit mine heart in two.

Hans Breitmann gife a barty,
I vent dere you'll pe pound.
I valtzet mit Madilda Yane
Und vent shpinnen round und round.
De pootiest Fraeulein in de House,

She vayed 'pout dwo hoondred pound,
Und efery dime she gife a shoomp
She make de vindows sound.

Hans Breitmann gife a barty,
I dells you it cost him dear.
Dey rolled in more ash sefen kecks
Of foost-rate Lager Beer.
Und venefer dey knocks de shpicket in
De Deutschers gifes a cheer.
I dinks dat so vine a barty,
Nefer coom to a het dis year.

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Hans Breitmann gife a barty;
Dere all vas Souse und Brouse,
Ven de sooper comed in, de gompany
Did make demselves to house;
Dey ate das Brot and Gensy broost,
De Bratwurst and Braten fine,
Und vash der Abendessen down
Mit four parrels of Neckarwein.

Hans Breitmann gife a barty;
We all cot troonk ash bigs.
I poot mine mout to a parrel of bier
Und emptied it oop mit a schwigs.
Und denn I gissed Madilda Yane
Und she shlog me on de kop,
Und de gompany fited mit duple-lecks
Dill de coonshtable made oos shtop.

Hans Breitmann gife a barty—
Where ish dat barty now!
Where ish de lofely golden cloud
Dat float on de moundain's prow?
Where ish de himmelstrablende Stern—
De shtar of de shpirit's light?
All goned afay mit de Lager Beer—
Afay in de ewigkeit!

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ROLLO LEARNING TO READ

BY ROBERT J. BURDETTE

When Rollo was five years young, his father said to him one evening:

"Rollo, put away your roller skates and bicycle, carry that rowing machine out into the hall, and come to me. It is time for you to learn to read."

Then Rollo's father opened the book which he had sent home on a truck and talked to the little boy about it. It was Bancroft's History of the United States, half complete in twenty-three volumes. Rollo's father explained to Rollo and Mary his system of education, with special reference to Rollo's learning to read. His plan was that Mary should teach Rollo fifteen hours a day for ten years, and by that time Rollo would be half through the beginning of the first volume, and would like it very much indeed.

Rollo was delighted at the prospect. He cried aloud:

"Oh, papa! thank you very much. When I read this book clear through, all the way to the end of the last volume, may I have another little book to read?"

"No," replied his father, "that may not be; because you will never get to the last volume of this one. For as fast as you read one volume, the author of this history, or his heirs, executors, administrators, or assigns, will write another as an appendix. So even though you should live to be a very old man, like the boy preacher, this history will always be twenty-three volumes ahead of you. Now, Mary and Rollo, this will be a hard task (pronounced tawsk) for both of you, and Mary must remember that Rollo is a very little boy, and must be very patient and gentle."

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The next morning after the one preceding it, Mary began the first lesson. In the beginning she was so gentle and patient that her mother went away and cried, because she feared her dear little daughter was becoming too good for this sinful world, and might soon spread her wings and fly away and be an angel.

But in the space of a short time, the novelty of the expedition wore off, and Mary resumed running her temper—which was of the old-fashioned, low-pressure kind, just forward of the fire-

box—on its old schedule. When she pointed to "A" for the seventh time, and Rollo said "W," she tore the page out by the roots, hit her little brother such a whack over the head with the big book that it set his birthday back six weeks, slapped him twice, and was just going to bite him, when her mother came in. Mary told her that Rollo had fallen down stairs and torn his book and raised that dreadful lump on his head. This time Mary's mother restrained her emotion, and Mary cried. But it was not because she feared her mother was pining away. Oh, no; it was her mother's rugged health and virile strength that grieved Mary, as long as the seance lasted, which was during the entire performance.

That evening Rollo's father taught Rollo his lesson and made Mary sit by and observe his methods, because, he said, that would be normal instruction for her. He said:

"Mary, you must learn to control your temper and curb your impatience if you want to wear low-neck dresses, and teach school. You must be sweet and patient, or you will never succeed as a teacher. Now, Rollo, what is this letter?"

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"I dunno," said Rollo, resolutely.

"That is A," said his father, sweetly.

"Huh," replied Rollo, "I knowed that."

"Then why did you not say so?" replied his father, so sweetly that Jonas, the hired boy, sitting in the corner, licked his chops.

Rollo's father went on with the lesson:

"What is this, Rollo?"

"I dunno," said Rollo, hesitatingly.

"Sure?" asked his father. "You do not know what it is?"

"Nuck," said Rollo.

"It is A," said his father.

"A what?" asked Rollo.

"A nothing," replied his father, "it is just A. Now, what is it?"

"Just A," said Rollo.

"Do not be flip, my son," said Mr. Holliday, "but attend to your lesson. What letter is this?"

"I dunno," said Rollo.

"Don't fib to me," said his father, gently, "you said a minute ago that you knew. That is N."

"Yes, sir," replied Rollo, meekly. Rollo, although he was a little boy, was no slouch, if he did wear bibs; he knew where he lived without looking at the door-plate. When it came time to be meek, there was no boy this side of the planet Mars who could be meekeer, on shorter notice. So he said, "Yes, sir," with that subdued and well pleased alacrity of a boy who has just been asked to guess the answer to the conundrum, "Will you have another piece of pie?"

"Well," said his father, rather suddenly, "what is it?"

"M," said Rollo, confidently.

"N!" yelled his father, in three-line Gothic.

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"N," echoed Rollo, in lower case nonpareil.

"B-a-n," said his father, "what does that spell?"

"Cat?" suggested Rollo, a trifle uncertainly.

"Cat?" snapped his father, with a sarcastic inflection, "b-a-n, cat! Where were you raised? Ban! B-a-n—Ban! Say it! Say it, or I'll get at you with a skate-strap!"

"B-a-m, band," said Rollo, who was beginning to wish that he had a rain-check and could come back and see the remaining innings some other day.

"Ba-a-a-an!" shouted his father, "B-a-n, Ban, Ban, Ban! Now say Ban!"

"Ban," said Rollo, with a little gasp.

"That's right," his father said, in an encouraging tone; "you will learn to read one of these years if you give your mind to it. All he needs, you see, Mary, is a teacher who doesn't lose patience with him the first time he makes a mistake. Now, Rollo, how do you spell, B-a-n—Ban?"

Rollo started out timidly on c-a—then changed to d-o,—and finally compromised on h-e-n.

Mr. Holiday made a pass at him with Volume I, but Rollo saw it coming and got out of the way.

"B-a-n!" his father shouted, "B-a-n, Ban! Ban! Ban! Ban! Ban! Now go on, if you think you know how to spell that! What comes next? Oh, you're enough to tire the patience of Job! I've a good

mind to make you learn by the Pollard system, and begin where you leave off! Go ahead, why don't you? Whatta you waiting for? Read on! What comes next? Why, croft, of course; anybody ought to know that—c-r-o-f-t, croft, Bancroft! What does that apostrophe mean? I mean, what does that punctuation mark between t and s stand for? You don't know? Take that, then! (whack). What comes after Bancroft? Spell it! Spell it, I tell you, and don't be all night about it! Can't, eh? Well, read it then; if you can't spell it, read it. H-i-s-t-o-r-y-ry, history; Bancroft's History of the United States! Now what does that spell? I mean, spell that! Spell it! Oh, go away! Go to bed! Stupid, stupid child," he added as the little boy went weeping out of the room, "he'll never learn anything so long as he lives. I declare he has tired me all out, and I used to teach school in Trivoli township, too. Taught one whole winter in district number three when Nick Worthington was county superintendent, and had my salary—look here, Mary, what do you find in that English grammar to giggle about? You go to bed, too, and listen to me—if Rollo can't read that whole book clear through without making a mistake to-morrow night, you'll wish you had been born without a back, that's all."

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The following morning, when Rollo's father drove away to business, he paused a moment as Rollo stood at the gate for a final good-by kiss—for Rollo's daily good-byes began at the door and lasted as long as his father was in sight—Mr. Holliday said:

"Some day, Rollo, you will thank me for teaching you to read."

"Yes, sir," replied Rollo, respectfully, and then added, "but not this day."

Rollo's head, though it had here and there transient bumps consequent upon foot-ball practice, was not naturally or permanently hilly. On the contrary, it was quite level.

SPELL AND DEFINE:

Tact	Imperturbability	Ebullition
Exasperation	Red-hot	Knout
Lamb	Philosopher	Terrier

Which end of a rattan hurts the more?—Why does reading make a full man?—Is an occasional whipping good for a boy?—At precisely what age does corporal punishment cease to be effective?—And why?—State, in exact terms, how much better are grown up people without the rod, than little people with it.—And why?—When would a series of good sound whippings have been of the greatest benefit to Solomon, when he was a godly young man, or an idolatrous old one?—In order to reform this world thoroughly, then, whom should we thrash, the children or the grown-up people?—And why?—If, then, the whipping post should be abolished in Delaware, why should it be retained in the nursery and the school room?—Write on the board, in large letters, the following sentence:

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If a boy ten years old should
be whipped for breaking a window,
what should be done to a man
thirty-five years old for breaking
the third commandment?

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ELIZABETH ELIZA WRITES A PAPER

BY LUCRETIA P. HALE

Elizabeth Eliza joined the Circumambient Club with the idea that it would be a long time before she, a new member, would have to read a paper. She would have time to hear the other papers read, and to see how it was done; and she would find it easy when her turn came. By that time she would have some ideas; and long before she would be called upon, she would have leisure to sit down and write out something. But a year passed away, and the time was drawing near. She had, meanwhile, devoted herself to her studies, and had tried to inform herself on all subjects by way of preparation. She had consulted one of the old members of the Club as to the choice of a subject.

"Oh, write about anything," was the answer,—"anything you have been thinking of."

Elizabeth Eliza was forced to say she had not been thinking lately. She had not had time. The family had moved, and there was always an excitement about something, that prevented her sitting down to think.

"Why not write on your family adventures?" asked the old member.

Elizabeth Eliza was sure her mother would think it made them too public; and most of the Club papers, she observed, had some thought in them. She preferred to find an idea.

So she set herself to the occupation of thinking. She went out on the piazza to think; she stayed [Pg 455]

in the house to think. She tried a corner of the china-closet. She tried thinking in the cars, and lost her pocket-book; she tried it in the garden, and walked into the strawberry bed. In the house and out of the house, it seemed to be the same,—she could not think of anything to think of. For many weeks she was seen sitting on the sofa or in the window, and nobody disturbed her. "She is thinking about her paper," the family would say, but she only knew that she could not think of anything.

Agamemnon told her that many writers waited till the last moment, when inspiration came, which was much finer than anything studied. Elizabeth Eliza thought it would be terrible to wait till the last moment, if the inspiration should not come! She might combine the two ways,—wait till a few days before the last, and then sit down and write anyhow. This would give a chance for inspiration, while she would not run the risk of writing nothing.

She was much discouraged. Perhaps she had better give it up? But, no; everybody wrote a paper: if not now, she would have to do it some time!

And at last the idea of a subject came to her! But it was as hard to find a moment to write as to think. The morning was noisy, till the little boys had gone to school; for they had begun again upon their regular course, with the plan of taking up the study of cider in October. And after the little boys had gone to school, now it was one thing, now it was another,—the china-closet to be cleaned, or one of the neighbors in to look at the sewing-machine. She tried after dinner, but would fall asleep. She felt that evening would be the true time, after the cares of the day were over.

The Peterkins had wire mosquito-nets all over the house,—at every door and every window. They were as eager to keep out the flies as the mosquitoes. The doors were all furnished with strong springs, that pulled the doors to as soon as they were opened. The little boys had practised running in and out of each door, and slamming it after them. This made a good deal of noise, for they had gained great success in making one door slam directly after another, and at times would keep up a running volley of artillery, as they called it, with the slamming of the doors. Mr. Peterkin, however, preferred it to flies.

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So Elizabeth Eliza felt she would venture to write of a summer evening with all the windows open.

She seated herself one evening in the library, between two large kerosene lamps, with paper, pen, and ink before her. It was a beautiful night, with the smell of the roses coming in through the mosquito-nets, and just the faintest odor of kerosene by her side. She began upon her work. But what was her dismay! She found herself immediately surrounded with mosquitoes. They attacked her at every point. They fell upon her hand as she moved it to the inkstand; they hovered, buzzing, over her head; they planted themselves under the lace of her sleeve. If she moved her left hand to frighten them off from one point, another band fixed themselves upon her right hand. Not only did they flutter and sting, but they sang in a heathenish manner, distracting her attention as she tried to write, as she tried to waft them off. Nor was this all. Myriads of June-bugs and millers hovered round, flung themselves into the lamps, and made disagreeable funeral-pyres of themselves, tumbling noisily on her paper in their last unpleasant agonies. Occasionally one darted with a rush toward Elizabeth Eliza's head.

If there was anything Elizabeth Eliza had a terror of it was a June-bug. She had heard that they had a tendency to get into the hair. One had been caught in the hair of a friend of hers, who had long, luxuriant hair. But the legs of the June-bug were caught in it like fishhooks, and it had to be cut out, and the June-bug was only extricated by sacrificing large masses of the flowing locks.

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Elizabeth Eliza flung her handkerchief over her head. Could she sacrifice what hair she had to the claims of literature? She gave a cry of dismay.

The little boys rushed in a moment to the rescue. They flapped newspapers, flung sofa-cushions; they offered to stand by her side with fly-whisks, that she might be free to write. But the struggle was too exciting for her, and the flying insects seemed to increase. Moths of every description—large brown moths, small, delicate white millers—whirled about her, while the irritating hum of the mosquito kept on more than ever. Mr. Peterkin and the rest of the family came in to inquire about the trouble. It was discovered that each of the little boys had been standing in the opening of a wire door for some time, watching to see when Elizabeth Eliza would have made her preparations and would begin to write. Countless numbers of dorbugs and winged creatures of every description had taken occasion to come in. It was found that they were in every part of the house.

"We might open all the blinds and screens," suggested Agamemnon, "and make a vigorous onslaught and drive them all out at once."

"I do believe there are more inside than out now," said Solomon John.

"The wire nets, of course," said Agamemnon, "keep them in now."

"We might go outside," proposed Solomon John, "and drive in all that are left. Then to-morrow morning, when they are all torpid, kill them and make collections of them."

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Agamemnon had a tent which he had provided in case he should ever go to the Adirondacks, and he proposed using it for the night. The little boys were wild for this.

Mrs. Peterkin thought she and Elizabeth Eliza would prefer trying to sleep in the house. But perhaps Elizabeth Eliza would go on with her paper with more comfort out of doors.

A student's lamp was carried out, and she was established on the steps of the back piazza, while screens were all carefully closed to prevent the mosquitoes and insects from flying out. But it was no use. There were outside still swarms of winged creatures that plunged themselves about her, and she had not been there long before a huge miller flung himself into the lamp and put it out. She gave up for the evening.

Still the paper went on. "How fortunate," exclaimed Elizabeth Eliza, "that I did not put it off till the last evening!" Having once begun, she persevered in it at every odd moment of the day. Agamemnon presented her with a volume of "Synonymes," which was a great service to her. She read her paper, in its various stages, to Agamemnon first, for his criticism, then to her father in the library, then to Mr. and Mrs. Peterkin together, next to Solomon John, and afterward to the whole family assembled. She was almost glad that the lady from Philadelphia was not in town, as she wished it to be her own unaided production. She declined all invitations for the week before the night of the Club, and on the very day she kept her room with *eau sucrée*, that she might save her voice. Solomon John provided her with Brown's Bronchial Troches when the evening came, and Mrs. Peterkin advised a handkerchief over her head, in case of June-bugs.

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It was, however, a cool night. Agamemnon escorted her to the house.

The Club met at Ann Maria Bromwick's. No gentlemen were admitted to the regular meetings. There were what Solomon John called "occasional annual meetings," to which they were invited, when all the choicest papers of the year were re-read.

Elizabeth Eliza was placed at the head of the room, at a small table, with a brilliant gas-jet on one side. It was so cool the windows could be closed. Mrs. Peterkin, as a guest, sat in the front row.

This was her paper, as Elizabeth Eliza read it, for she frequently inserted fresh expressions:—

THE SUN

It is impossible that much can be known about it. This is why we have taken it up as a subject. We mean the sun that lights us by day and leaves us by night. In the first place, it is so far off. No measuring-tapes could reach it; and both the earth and the sun are moving about us, that it would be difficult to adjust ladders to reach it, if we could. Of course, people have written about it, and there are those who have told us how many miles off it is. But it is a very large number, with a great many figures in it; and though it is taught in most if not all of our public schools, it is a chance if any one of the scholars remembers exactly how much it is.

It is the same with its size. We can not, as we have said, reach it by ladders to measure it; and if we did reach it, we should have no measuring-tapes large enough, and those that shut up with springs are difficult to use in a high places. We are told, it is true, in a great many of the school-books, the size of the sun; but, again, very few of those who have learned the number have been able to remember it after they have recited it, even if they remembered it then. And almost all of the scholars have lost their school-books, or have neglected to carry them home, and so they are not able to refer to them,—I mean, after leaving school. I must say that is the case with me, I should say with us, though it was different. The older ones gave their school-books to the younger ones, who took them back to school to lose them, or who have destroyed them when there were no younger ones to go to school. I should say there are such families. What I mean is, the fact that in some families there are no younger children to take off the school-books. But even then they are put away on upper shelves, in closets or in attics, and seldom found if wanted,—if then, dusty.

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Of course, we all know of a class of persons called astronomers, who might be able to give us information on the subject in hand, and who probably do furnish what information is found in school-books. It should be observed, however, that these astronomers carry on their observations always in the night. Now, it is well known that the sun does not shine in the night. Indeed, that is one of the peculiarities of the night, that there is no sun to light us, so we have to go to bed as long as there is nothing else we can do without its light, unless we use lamps, gas, or kerosene, which is very well for the evening, but would be expensive all night long; the same with candles. How, then, can we depend upon their statements, if not made from their own observation,—I mean, if they never saw the sun?

We can not expect that astronomers should give us any valuable information with regard to the sun, which they never see, their occupation compelling them to be up at night. It is quite likely that they never see it; for we should not expect them to sit up all day as well as all night, as, under such circumstances, their lives would not last long.

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Indeed, we are told that their name is taken from the word *aster*, which means "star;" the word is "aster—know—more." This, doubtless, means that they know more about the stars than other things. We see, therefore, that their knowledge is confined to the stars, and we can not trust what they have to tell us of the sun.

There are other asters which should not be mixed up with these,—we mean those growing by the wayside in the fall of the year. The astronomers, from their nocturnal habits, can scarcely be acquainted with them; but as it does not come within our province, we will not inquire.

We are left, then, to seek our own information about the sun. But we are met with a difficulty. To know a thing, we must look at it. How can we look at the sun? It is so very bright that our eyes are dazzled in gazing upon it. We have to turn away, or they would be put out,—the sight, I mean. It is true, we might use smoked glass, but that is apt to come off on the nose. How, then, if we can not look at it, can we find out about it? The noonday would seem to be the better hour, when it is the sunniest; but, besides injuring the eyes, it is painful to the neck to look up for a long time. It is easy to say that our examination of this heavenly body should take place at sunrise, when we could look at it more on a level, without having to endanger the spine. But how many people are up at sunrise? Those who get up early do it because they are compelled to, and have something else to do than look at the sun.

The milkman goes forth to carry the daily milk, the ice-man to leave the daily ice. But either of these would be afraid of exposing their vehicles to the heating orb of day,—the milkman afraid of turning the milk, the ice-man timorous of melting his ice—and they probably avoid those directions where they shall meet the sun's rays. The student, who might inform us, has been burning the midnight oil. The student is not in the mood to consider the early sun.

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There remains to us the evening, also,—the leisure hour of the day. But, alas! our houses are not built with an adaptation to this subject. They are seldom made to look toward the sunset. A careful inquiry and close observation, such as have been called for in preparation of this paper, have developed the fact that not a single house in this town faces the sunset! There may be windows looking that way, but in such a case there is always a barn between. I can testify to this from personal observations, because, with my brothers, we have walked through the several streets of this town with note-books, carefully noting every house looking upon the sunset, and have found none from which the sunset could be studied. Sometimes it was the next house, sometimes a row of houses, or its own wood-house, that stood in the way.

Of course, a study of the sun might be pursued out of doors. But in summer, sunstroke would be likely to follow; in winter, neuralgia and cold. And how could you consult your books, your dictionaries, your encyclopædias? There seems to be no hour of the day for studying the sun. You might go to the East to see it at its rising, or to the West to gaze upon its setting, but—you don't.

Here Elizabeth Eliza came to a pause. She had written five different endings, and had brought them all, thinking, when the moment came, she would choose one of them. She was pausing to select one, and inadvertently said, to close the phrase, "you don't." She had not meant to use the expression, which she would not have thought sufficiently imposing,—it dropped out unconsciously,—but it was received as a close with rapturous applause.

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She had read slowly, and now that the audience applauded at such a length, she had time to feel she was much exhausted and glad of an end. Why not stop there, though there were some pages more? Applause, too, was heard from the outside. Some of the gentlemen had come,—Mr. Peterkin, Agamemnon, and Solomon John, with others,—and demanded admission.

"Since it is all over, let them in," said Ann Maria Bromwick.

Elizabeth Eliza assented, and rose to shake hands with her applauding friends.

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MR. STIVER'S HORSE

BY JAMES MONTGOMERY BAILEY

The other morning at breakfast Mrs. Perkins observed that Mr. Stiver, in whose house we live, had been called away, and wanted to know if I would see to his horse through the day.

I knew that Mr. Stiver owned a horse, because I occasionally saw him drive out of the yard, and I saw the stable every day,—but what kind of a horse I didn't know. I never went into the stable, for two reasons: in the first place, I had no desire to; and, secondly, I didn't know as the horse cared particularly for company.

I never took care of a horse in my life; and, had I been of a less hopeful nature, the charge Mr. Stiver had left with me might have had a very depressing effect; but I told Mrs. Perkins I would do it.

"You know how to take care of a horse, don't you?" said she.

I gave her a reassuring wink. In fact, I knew so little about it that I didn't think it safe to converse more fluently than by winks.

After breakfast I seized a toothpick and walked out towards the stable. There was nothing particular to do, as Stiver had given him his breakfast, and I found him eating it; so I looked around. The horse looked around, too, and stared pretty hard at me. There was but little said on either side. I hunted up the location of the feed, and then sat down on a peck measure and fell to studying the beast. There is a wide difference in horses. Some of them will kick you over and never look around to see what becomes of you. I don't like a disposition like that, and I wondered if Stiver's horse was one of them.

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When I came home at noon I went straight to the stable. The animal was there all right. Stiver hadn't told me what to give him for dinner, and I had not given the subject any thought; but I went to the oat-box and filled the peck measure and sallied boldly up to the manger.

When he saw the oats he almost smiled; this pleased and amused him. I emptied them into the trough, and left him above me to admire the way I parted my hair behind. I just got my head up in time to save the whole of it. He had his ears back, his mouth open, and looked as if he were on the point of committing murder. I went out and filled the measure again, and climbed up the side of the stall and emptied it on top of him. He brought his head up so suddenly at this that I immediately got down, letting go of everything to do it. I struck on the sharp edge of a barrel, rolled over a couple of times, then disappeared under a hay-cutter. The peck measure went down on the other side, and got mysteriously tangled up in that animal's heels, and he went to work at it, and then ensued the most dreadful noise I ever heard in all my life, and I have been married eighteen years.

It did seem as if I never would get out from under that hay-cutter; and all the while I was struggling and wrenching myself and the cutter apart, that awful beast was kicking around in the stall, and making the most appalling sound imaginable.

When I got out I found Mrs. Perkins at the door. She had heard the racket, and had sped out to the stable, her only thought being of me and three stove-lids which she had under her arm, and one of which she was about to fire at the beast.

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This made me mad.

"Go away, you unfortunate idiot!" I shouted: "do you want to knock my brains out?" For I remembered seeing Mrs. Perkins sling a missile once before, and that I nearly lost an eye by the operation, although standing on the other side of the house at the time.

She retired at once. And at the same time the animal quieted down, but there was nothing left of that peck measure, not even the maker's name.

I followed Mrs. Perkins into the house, and had her do me up, and then I sat down in a chair and fell into a profound strain of meditation. After a while I felt better, and went out to the stable again. The horse was leaning against the stable stall, with eyes half closed, and appeared to be very much engrossed in thought.

"Step off to the left," I said, rubbing his back.

He didn't step. I got the pitchfork and punched him in the leg with the handle. He immediately raised up both hind legs at once, and that fork flew out of my hands, and went rattling up against the timbers above, and came down again in an instant, the end of the handle rapping me with such force on the top of the head that I sat right down on the floor under the impression that I was standing in front of a drug-store in the evening. I went back to the house and got some more stuff on me. But I couldn't keep away from that stable. I went out there again. The thought struck me that what the horse wanted was exercise. If that thought had been an empty glycerin-can, it would have saved a windfall of luck for me.

But exercise would tone him down, and exercise him I should. I laughed to myself to think how I would trounce him around the yard. I didn't laugh again that afternoon. I got him unhitched, and then wondered how I was to get him out of the stall without carrying him out. I pushed, but he wouldn't budge. I stood looking at him in the face, thinking of something to say, when he suddenly solved the difficulty by veering about and plunging for the door. I followed, as a matter of course, because I had a tight hold on the rope, and hit about every partition-stud worth speaking of on that side of the barn. Mrs. Perkins was at the window and saw us come out of the door. She subsequently remarked that we came out skipping like two innocent children. The skipping was entirely unintentional on my part. I felt as if I stood on the verge of eternity. My legs may have skipped, but my mind was filled with awe.

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I took the animal out to exercise him. He exercised me before I got through with it. He went around a few times in a circle; then he stopped suddenly, spread out his forelegs, and looked at me. Then he leaned forward a little, and hoisted both hind legs, and threw about two coal-hods of mud over a line full of clothes Mrs. Perkins had just hung out.

That excellent lady had taken a position at the window, and, whenever the evolutions of the awful beast permitted, I caught a glance of her features. She appeared to be very much interested in the proceedings; but the instant that the mud flew, she disappeared from the window, and a moment later she appeared on the stoop with a long poker in her hand, and fire enough in her eye to heat it red-hot.

Just then Stiver's horse stood up on his hind legs and tried to hug me with the others. This scared me. A horse never shows his strength to such advantage as when he is coming down on you like a frantic pile-driver. I instantly dodged, and the cold sweat fairly boiled out of me.

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It suddenly came over me that I had once figured in a similar position years ago. My grandfather owned a little white horse that would get up from a meal at Delmonico's to kick the President of the United States. He sent me to the lot one day, and unhappily suggested that I often went after that horse and suffered all kinds of defeat in getting him out of the pasture, but I had never tried to ride him. Heaven knows I never thought of it. I had my usual trouble with him that day. He tried to jump over me, and push me down in a mud-hole, and finally got up on his hind legs and

came waltzing after me with facilities enough to convert me into hash, but I turned and just made for that fence with all the agony a prospect of instant death could crowd into me. If our candidate for the Presidency had run one-half as well, there would be seventy-five postmasters in Danbury to-day, instead of one.

I got him out finally, and then he was quiet enough, and I took him up alongside the fence and got on him. He stopped an instant, one brief instant, and then tore off down the road at a frightful speed. I lay down on him and clasped my hands tightly around his neck, and thought of my home. When we got to the stable I was confident he would stop, but he didn't. He drove straight at the door. It was a low door, just high enough to permit him to go in at lightning speed, but there was no room for me. I saw if I struck that stable the struggle would be a very brief one. I thought this all over in an instant, and then, spreading out my arms and legs, emitted a scream, and the next moment I was bounding about in the filth of that stable-yard. All this passed through my mind as Stiver's horse went up into the air. It frightened Mrs. Perkins dreadfully.

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"Why, you old fool!" she said; "why don't you get rid of him?"

"How can I?" said I, in desperation.

"Why, there are a thousand ways," said she.

This is just like a woman. How differently a statesman would have answered!

But I could think of only two ways to dispose of the beast. I could either swallow him where he stood and then sit down on him, or I could crawl inside of him and kick him to death.

But I was saved either of these expedients by his coming towards me so abruptly that I dropped the rope in terror, and then he turned about, and, kicking me full of mud, shot for the gate, ripping the clothes-line in two, and went on down the street at a horrible gallop, with two of Mrs. Perkins' garments, which he hastily snatched from the line, floating over his neck in a very picturesque manner.

So I was afterwards told. I was too full of mud myself to see the way into the house.

Stiver got his horse all right, and stays at home to care for him. Mrs. Perkins has gone to her mother's to recuperate, and I am healing as fast as possible.

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THE CRIMSON CORD^[1]

BY ELLIS PARKER BUTLER

I had not seen Perkins for six months or so and things were dull. I was beginning to tire of sitting indolently in my office with nothing to do but clip coupons from my bonds. Money is good enough, in its way, but it is not interesting unless it is doing something lively—doubling itself or getting lost. What I wanted was excitement—an adventure—and I knew that if I could find Perkins I could have both. A scheme is a business adventure, and Perkins was the greatest schemer in or out of Chicago.

Just then Perkins walked into my office.

"Perkins," I said, as soon as he had arranged his feet comfortably on my desk, "I'm tired. I'm restless. I have been wishing for you for a month. I want to go into a big scheme and make a lot of new, up-to-date cash. I'm sick of this tame, old cash that I have. It isn't interesting. No cash is interesting except the coming cash."

"I'm with you," said Perkins, "what is your scheme?"

"I have none," I said sadly, "that is just my trouble. I have sat here for days trying to think of a good practical scheme, but I can't. I don't believe there is an unworked scheme in the whole wide, wide world."

Perkins waved his hand.

"My boy," he exclaimed, "there are millions! You've thousands of 'em right here in your office! You're falling over them, sitting on them, walking on them! Schemes? Everything is a scheme. Everything has money in it!"

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I shrugged my shoulders.

"Yes," I said, "for you. But you are a genius."

"Genius, yes," Perkins said smiling cheerfully, "else why Perkins the Great? Why Perkins the originator? Why the Great and Only Perkins of Portland?"

"All right," I said, "what I want is for your genius to get busy. I'll give you a week to work up a good scheme."

Perkins pushed back his hat and brought his feet to the floor with a smack.

"Why the delay?" he queried, "time is money. Hand me something from your desk."

I looked in my pigeonholes and pulled from one a small ball of string. Perkins took it in his hand and looked at it with great admiration.

"What is it?" he asked seriously.

"That," I said humoring him, for I knew something great would be evolved from his wonderful brain, "is a ball of red twine I bought at the ten-cent store. I bought it last Saturday. It was sold to me by a freckled young lady in a white shirtwaist. I paid—"

"Stop!" Perkins cried, "what is it?"

I looked at the ball of twine curiously. I tried to see something remarkable in it. I couldn't. It remained a simple ball of red twine and I told Perkins so.

"The difference," declared Perkins, "between mediocrity and genius! Mediocrity always sees red twine; genius sees a ball of Crimson Cord!"

He leaned back in his chair and looked at me triumphantly. He folded his arms as if he had settled the matter. His attitude seemed to say that he had made a fortune for us. Suddenly he reached forward, and grasping my scissors, began snipping off small lengths of the twine.

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"The Crimson Cord!" he ejaculated. "What does it suggest?"

I told him that it suggested a parcel from the druggist's. I had often seen just such twine about a druggist's parcel.

Perkins sniffed disdainfully.

"Druggists?" he exclaimed with disgust. "Mystery! Blood! 'The Crimson Cord.' Daggers! Murder! Strangling! Clues! 'The Crimson Cord'—"

He motioned wildly with his hands as if the possibilities of the phrase were quite beyond his power of expression.

"It sounds like a book," I suggested.

"Great!" cried Perkins. "A novel! The novel! Think of the words 'A Crimson Cord' in blood-red letters six feet high on a white ground!" He pulled his hat over his eyes and spread out his hands, and I think he shuddered.

"Think of 'A Crimson Cord,'" he muttered, "in blood-red letters on a ground of dead, sepulchral black, with a crimson cord writhing through them like a serpent."

He sat up suddenly and threw one hand in the air.

"Think," he cried, "of the words in black on white with a crimson cord drawn taut across the whole ad!"

He beamed upon me.

"The cover of the book," he said quite calmly, "will be white—virgin, spotless white—with black lettering, and the cord in crimson. With each copy we will give a crimson silk cord for a book-mark. Each copy will be done up in a white box and tied with crimson cord."

He closed his eyes and tilted his head upward.

"A thick book," he said, "with deckel edges and pictures by Christy. No, pictures by Pyle. Deep, mysterious pictures! Shadows and gloom! And wide, wide margins. And a gloomy foreword. One fifty per copy, at all booksellers."

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Perkins opened his eyes and set his hat straight with a quick motion of his hand. He arose and pulled on his gloves.

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"Contracts!" he said. "Contracts for advertising! We must boom 'The Crimson Cord.' We must boom her big!"

He went out and closed the door. Presently, when I supposed him well on the way down town, he opened the door and inserted his head.

"Gilt tops," he announced. "One million copies the first impression!"

And then he was gone.

II

A week later Chicago and the greater part of the United States was placarded with "The Crimson Cord." Perkins did his work thoroughly and well, and great was the interest in the mysterious title. It was an old dodge, but a good one. Nothing appeared on the advertisements but the mere title. No word as to what "The Crimson Cord" was. Perkins merely announced the words and left them to rankle in the reader's mind, and as a natural consequence each new advertisement

served to excite new interest.

When we made our contracts for magazine advertising—and we took a full page in every worthy magazine—the publishers were at a loss to classify the advertisement, and it sometimes appeared among the breakfast foods, and sometimes sandwiched in between the automobiles and the hot water heaters. Only one publication placed it among the books.

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But it was all good advertising, and Perkins was a busy man. He racked his inventive brain for new methods of placing the title before the public. In fact so busy was he at his labor of introducing the title that he quite forgot the book itself.

One day he came to the office with a small, rectangular package. He unwrapped it in his customary enthusiastic manner, and set on my desk a cigar box bound in the style he had selected for the binding of "The Crimson Cord." It was then I spoke of the advisability of having something to the book besides the cover and a boom.

"Perkins," I said, "don't you think it is about time we got hold of the novel—the reading, the words?"

For a moment he seemed stunned. It was clear that he had quite forgotten that book-buyers like to have a little reading matter in their books. But he was only dismayed for a moment.

"Tut!" he cried presently. "All in good time! The novel is easy. Anything will do. I'm no literary man. I don't read a book in a year. You get the novel."

"But I don't read a book in five years!" I exclaimed. "I don't know anything about books. I don't know where to get a novel."

"Advertise!" he exclaimed. "Advertise! You can get anything, from an apron to an ancestor, if you advertise for it. Offer a prize—offer a thousand dollars for the best novel. There must be thousands of novels not in use."

Perkins was right. I advertised as he suggested and learned that there were thousands of novels not in use. They came to us by basketfuls and cartloads. We had novels of all kinds—historical and hysterical, humorous and numerous, but particularly numerous. You would be surprised to learn how many ready-made novels can be had on short notice. It beats quick lunch. And most of them are equally indigestible. I read one or two but I was no judge of novels. Perkins suggested that we draw lots to see which we should use.

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It really made little difference what the story was about. "The Crimson Cord" fits almost any kind of a book. It is a nice, non-committal sort of title, and might mean the guilt that bound two sinners, or the tie of affection that binds lovers, or a blood relationship, or it might be a mystification title with nothing in the book about it.

But the choice settled itself. One morning a manuscript arrived that was tied with a piece of red twine, and we chose that one for good luck because of the twine. Perkins said that was a sufficient excuse for the title, too. We would publish the book anonymously, and let it be known that the only clue to the writer was the crimson cord with which the manuscript was tied when we received it. It would be a first-class advertisement.

Perkins, however, was not much interested in the story, and he left me to settle the details. I wrote to the author asking him to call, and he turned out to be a young woman.

Our interview was rather shy. I was a little doubtful about the proper way to talk to a real author, being purely a Chicagoan myself, and I had an idea that while my usual vocabulary was good enough for business purposes it might be too easy-going to impress a literary person properly, and in trying to talk up to her standard I had to be very careful in my choice of words. No publisher likes to have his authors think he is weak in the grammar line.

Miss Rosa Belle Vincent, however, was quite as flustered as I was. She seemed ill-at-ease and anxious to get away, which I supposed was because she had not often conversed with publishers who paid a thousand dollars cash in advance for a manuscript.

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She was not at all what I had thought an author would look like. She didn't even wear glasses. If I had met her on the street I should have said: "There goes a pretty flip stenographer." She was that kind—big picture hat and high pompadour.

I was afraid she would try to run the talk into literary lines and Ibsen and Gorky, where I would have been swamped in a minute, but she didn't, and, although I had wondered how to break the subject of money when conversing with one who must be thinking of nobler things, I found she was less shy when on that subject than when talking about her book.

"Well now," I said, as soon as I had got her seated, "we have decided to buy this novel of yours. Can you recommend it as a thoroughly respectable and intellectual production?"

She said she could.

"Haven't you read it?" she asked in some surprise.

"No," I stammered. "At least, not yet. I'm going to as soon as I can find the requisite leisure. You see, we are very busy just now—very busy. But if you can vouch for the story being a first-class article—something, say, like 'The Vicar of Wakefield' or 'David Harum'—we'll take it."

"Now you're talking," she said. "And do I get the check now?"

"Wait," I said; "not so fast. I have forgotten one thing," and I saw her face fall. "We want the privilege of publishing the novel under a title of our own, and anonymously. If that is not satisfactory the deal is off."

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She brightened in a moment.

"It's a go, if that's all," she said. "Call it whatever you please, and the more anonymous it is the better it will suit yours truly."

So we settled the matter then and there, and when I gave her our check for a thousand she said I was all right.

III

Half an hour after Miss Vincent had left the office Perkins came in with his arms full of bundles, which he opened, spreading their contents on my desk.

He had a pair of suspenders with nickel-silver mountings, a tie, a lady's belt, a pair of low shoes, a shirt, a box of cigars, a package of cookies, and a half-dozen other things of divers and miscellaneous character. I poked them over and examined them, while he leaned against the desk with his legs crossed. He was beaming upon me.

"Well," I said, "what is it—a bargain sale?"

Perkins leaned over and tapped the pile with his long fore-finger.

"Aftermath!" he crowed, "aftermath!"

"The dickens it is," I exclaimed, "and what has aftermath got to do with this truck? It looks like the aftermath of a notion store."

He tipped his "Air-the-Hair" hat over one ear and put his thumbs in the armholes of his "ready-tailored" vest.

"Genius!" he announced. "Brains! Foresight! Else why Perkins the Great? Why not Perkins the Nobody?"

He raised the suspenders tenderly from the pile and fondled them in his hands.

"See this?" he asked, running his finger along the red corded edge of the elastic. He took up the tie and ran his nail along the red stripe that formed the selvedge on the back, and said: "See this?" He pointed to the red laces of the low shoes and asked, "See this?" And so through the whole collection.

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"What is it?" he asked. "It's genius! It's foresight."

He waved his hand over the pile.

"The aftermath!" he exclaimed.

"These suspenders are the Crimson Cord suspenders. These shoes are the Crimson Cord shoes. This tie is the Crimson Cord tie. These crackers are the Crimson Cord brand. Perkins & Co. get out a great book, 'The Crimson Cord!' Sell five million copies. Dramatized, it runs three hundred nights. Everybody talking Crimson Cord. Country goes Crimson Cord crazy. Result—up jump Crimson Cord this and Crimson Cord that. Who gets the benefit? Perkins & Co.? No! We pay the advertising bills and the other man sells his Crimson Cord cigars. That is usual."

"Yes," I said, "I'm smoking a David Harum cigar this minute, and I am wearing a Carvel collar."

"How prevent it?" asked Perkins. "One way only,—discovered by Perkins. Copyright the words 'Crimson Cord' as trade-mark for every possible thing. Sell the trade-mark on royalty; ten per cent. of all receipts for 'Crimson Cord' brands comes to Perkins & Co. Get a cinch on the aftermath!"

"Perkins!" I cried, "I admire you. You *are* a genius. And have you contracts with all these— notions?"

"Yes," said Perkins, "that's Perkins' method. Who originated the Crimson Cord? Perkins did. Who is entitled to the profits on the Crimson Cord? Perkins is. Perkins is wide awake *all* the time. Perkins gets a profit on the aftermath and the math and the before the math."

And so he did. He made his new contracts with the magazines on the exchange plan—we gave a page of advertising in the "Crimson Cord" for a page of advertising in the magazine. We guaranteed five million circulation. We arranged with all the manufacturers of the Crimson Cord brands of goods to give coupons, one hundred of which entitled the holder to a copy of "The Crimson Cord." With a pair of Crimson Cord suspenders you get five coupons; with each Crimson Cord cigar, one coupon; and so on.

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IV

On the first of October we announced in our advertisement that "The Crimson Cord" was a book; the greatest novel of the century; a thrilling, exciting tale of love. Miss Vincent had told me it was a love story. Just to make everything sure, however, I sent the manuscript to Professor Wiggins, who is the most erudite man I ever met. He knows eighteen languages, and reads Egyptian as easily as I read English. In fact his specialty is old Egyptian ruins and so on. He has written several books on them.

Professor said the novel seemed to him very light and trashy, but grammatically O.K. He said he never read novels, not having time, but he thought that "The Crimson Cord" was just about the sort of thing a silly public that refused to buy his "Some Light on the Dynastic Proclivities of the Hyksos" would scramble for. On the whole I considered the report satisfactory.

We found we would be unable to have Pyle illustrate the book, he being too busy, so we turned it over to a young man at the Art Institute.

That was the fifteenth of October, and we had promised the book to the public for the first of November, but we had it already in type and the young man, his name was Gilkowsky, promised to work night and day on the illustrations. [Pg 480]

The next morning, almost as soon as I reached the office, Gilkowsky came in. He seemed a little hesitant, but I welcomed him warmly, and he spoke up.

"I have a girl to go with," he said, and I wondered what I had to do with Mr. Gilkowsky's girl, but he continued:

"She's a nice girl and a good looker, but she's got bad taste in some things. She's too loud in hats, and too trashy in literature. I don't like to say this about her, but it's true and I'm trying to educate her in good hats and good literature. So I thought it would be a good thing to take around this 'Crimson Cord' and let her read it to me."

I nodded.

"Did she like it?" I asked.

Mr. Gilkowsky looked at me closely.

"She did," he said, but not so enthusiastically as I had expected.

"It's her favorite book. Now, I don't know what your scheme is, and I suppose you know what you are doing better than I do; but I thought perhaps I had better come around before I got to work on the illustrations and see if perhaps you hadn't given me the wrong manuscript."

"No, that was the right manuscript," I said. "Was there anything wrong about it?"

Mr. Gilkowsky laughed nervously.

"Oh, no!" he said. "But did you read it?"

I told him I had not because I had been so rushed with details connected with advertising the book.

"Well," he said, "I'll tell you. This girl of mine reads pretty trashy stuff, and she knows about all the cheap novels there are. She dotes on 'The Duchess,' and puts her last dime into Braddon. She knows them all by heart. Have you ever read 'Lady Audley's Secret'?" [Pg 481]

"I see," I said. "One is a sequel to the other."

"No," said Mr. Gilkowsky. "One is the other. Some one has flim-flammed you and sold you a typewritten copy of 'Lady Audley's Secret' as a new novel."

V

When I told Perkins he merely remarked that he thought every publishing house ought to have some one in it who knew something about books, apart from the advertising end, although that was, of course, the most important. He said we might go ahead and publish "Lady Audley's Secret" under the title of "The Crimson Cord," as such things had been done before, but the best thing to do would be to charge Rosa Belle Vincent's thousand dollars to Profit and Loss and hustle for another novel—something reliable and not shop-worn.

Perkins had been studying the literature market a little and he advised me to get something from Indiana this time, so I telegraphed an advertisement to the Indianapolis papers and two days later we had ninety-eight historical novels by Indiana authors from which to choose. Several were of the right length, and we chose one and sent it to Mr. Gilkowsky with a request that he read it to his sweetheart. She had never read it before.

We sent a detective to Dillville, Indiana, where the author lived, and the report we received was most satisfactory.

The author was a sober, industrious young man, just out of the high school, and bore a first-class reputation for honesty. He had never been in Virginia, where the scene of his story was laid, and they had no library in Dillville, and our detective assured us that the young man was in every way fitted to write a historical novel. [Pg 482]

"The Crimson Cord" made an immense success. You can guess how it boomed when I say that although it was published at a dollar and a half, it was sold by every department store for fifty-four cents, away below cost, just like sugar, or Vandeventer's Baby Food, or Q & Z Corsets, or any other staple. We sold our first edition of five million copies inside of three months, and got out another edition of two million, and a specially illustrated holiday edition and an *edition de luxe*, and "The Crimson Cord" is still selling in paper-covered cheap edition.

With the royalties received from the aftermath and the profit on the book itself, we made—well, Perkins has a country place at Lakewood, and I have my cottage at Newport.

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THE RHYME OF THE CHIVALROUS SHARK^[2]

BY WALLACE IRWIN

Most chivalrous fish of the ocean,
To ladies forbearing and mild,
Though his record be dark, is the man-eating shark
Who will eat neither woman nor child.

He dines upon seamen and skippers,
And tourists his hunger assuage,
And a fresh cabin boy will inspire him with joy
If he's past the maturity age.

A doctor, a lawyer, a preacher,
He'll gobble one any fine day,
But the ladies, God bless 'em, he'll only address 'em
Politely and go on his way.

I can readily cite you an instance
Where a lovely young lady of Breem,
Who was tender and sweet and delicious to eat,
Fell into the bay with a scream.

She struggled and flounced in the water
And signaled in vain for her bark,
And she'd surely been drowned if she hadn't been found
By a chivalrous man-eating shark.

He bowed in a manner most polished,
Thus soothing her impulses wild;
"Don't be frightened," he said, "I've been properly bred
And will eat neither woman nor child."

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Then he proffered his fin and she took it—
Such a gallantry none can dispute—
While the passengers cheered as the vessel they neared
And a broadside was fired in salute.

And they soon stood alongside the vessel,
When a life-saving dingey was lowered
With the pick of the crew, and her relatives, too,
And the mate and the skipper aboard.

So they took her aboard in a jiffy,
And the shark stood attention the while,
Then he raised on his flipper and ate up the skipper
And went on his way with a smile.

And this shows that the prince of the ocean,
To ladies forbearing and mild,
Though his record be dark, is the man-eating shark
Who will eat neither woman nor child.

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THE PLAIN OF JONAH

BY ROBERT J. BURDETTE

Why should I live, when every day
The wicked prospers in his way,

And daily adds unto his hoard,
While cutworms smite the good man's gourd?

When I would rest beneath its shade
Comes the shrill-voiced book-selling maid,
And smites me with her tireless breath—
Then am I angry unto death.

When I would slumber in my booth,
Who comes with accents loud and smooth,
And talks from dawn to midnight late?
The honest labor candidate.

Who pounds mine ear with noisy talk,
Whose brazen gall no ire can balk
And wearies me of life's short span?
The accident insurance man.

And when, all other torments flown,
I think to call one hour mine own,
Who takes my leisure by the throat?
The villain taking up a vote.

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A DOS'T O' BLUES

BY JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

I' got no patience with blues at all!
And I ust to kindo talk
Aginst 'em, and claim, 'tel along last Fall,
They was none in the fambly stock;
But a nephew of mine, from Eelinoy,
That visited us last year,
He kindo convinct me differunt
While he was a-stayin' here.

Frum ever'-which way that blues is from,
They'd tackle him ever' ways;
They'd come to him in the night, and come
On Sundays, and rainy days;
They'd tackle him in corn-plantin' time,
And in harvest, and airy Fall,
But a dose't of blues in the wintertime,
He 'lowed, was the worst of all!

Said all diseases that ever he had—
The mumps, er the rheumatiz—
Er ever'-other-day-aigger's bad
Purt' nigh as anything is!—
Er a cyarbuncle, say, on the back of his neck,
Er a felon on his thumb,—
But you keep the blues away from him,
And all o' the rest could come!

And he'd moan, "They's nary a leaf below!
Ner a spear o' grass in sight!
And the whole wood-pile's clean under snow!
And the days is dark as night!
You can't go out—ner you can't stay in—
Lay down—stand up—ner set!"
And a tetch o' regular tyfoid-blues
Would double him jest clean shet!

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I writ his parents a postal-kyard,
He could stay 'tel Spring-time come;
And Aprile first, as I rickollect,
Was the day we shipped him home!
Most o' his relatives, sence then,
Has either give up, er quit,
Er jest died off; but I understand
He's the same old color yit!

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MORRIS AND THE HONORABLE TIM^[3]

BY MYRA KELLY

On the first day of school, after the Christmas holidays, teacher found herself surrounded by a howling mob of little savages in which she had much difficulty in recognizing her cherished First-Reader Class. Isidore Belchatosky's face was so wreathed in smiles and foreign matter as to be beyond identification; Nathan Spiderwitz had placed all his trust in a solitary suspender and two unstable buttons; Eva Kidansky had entirely freed herself from restraining hooks and eyes; Isidore Applebaum had discarded shoe-laces; and Abie Ashnewsy had bartered his only necktie for a yard of "shoe-string" licorice.

Miss Bailey was greatly disheartened by this reversion to the original type. She delivered daily lectures on nail-brushes, hair-ribbons, shoe polish, pins, buttons, elastic, and other means to grace. Her talks on soap and water became almost personal in tone, and her insistence on a close union between such garments as were meant to be united, led to a lively traffic in twisted and disreputable safety-pins. And yet the First-Reader Class, in all other branches of learning so receptive and responsive, made but halting and uncertain progress toward that state of virtue which is next to godliness.

Early in January came the report that "Gum Shoe Tim" was on the war-path and might be expected at any time. Miss Bailey heard the tidings in calm ignorance until Miss Blake, who ruled over the adjoining kingdom, interpreted the warning. A license to teach in the public schools of New York is good for only one year. Its renewal depends upon the reports of the Principal in charge of the school and of the Associate Superintendent in whose district the school chances to be. After three such renewals the license becomes permanent, but Miss Bailey was, as a teacher, barely four months old. The Associate Superintendent for her vicinity was the Honorable Timothy O'Shea, known and dreaded as "Gum Shoe Tim," owing to his engaging way of creeping softly up back-stairs and appearing, all unheralded and unwelcome, upon the threshold of his intended victim.

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This, Miss Blake explained, was in defiance of all the rules of etiquette governing such visits of inspection. The proper procedure had been that of Mr. O'Shea's predecessor, who had always given timely notice of his coming and a hint as to the subjects in which he intended to examine the children. Some days later he would amble from room to room, accompanied by the amiable Principal, and followed by the gratitude of smiling and unruffled teachers.

This kind old gentleman was now retired and had been succeeded by Mr. O'Shea, who, in addition to his unexpectedness, was adorned by an abominable temper, an overbearing manner, and a sense of cruel humor. He had almost finished his examinations at the nearest school where, during a brisk campaign of eight days, he had caused five dismissals, nine cases of nervous exhaustion, and an epidemic of hysteria.

Day by day nerves grew more tense, tempers more unsure, sleep and appetite more fugitive. Experienced teachers went stolidly on with the ordinary routine, while beginners devoted time and energy to the more spectacular portions of the curriculum. But no one knew the Honorable Timothy's pet subjects, and so no one could specialize to any great extent.

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Miss Bailey was one of the beginners, and Room 18 was made to shine as the sun. Morris Mogilewsky, Monitor of the Gold-Fish Bowl, wrought busily until his charges glowed redly against the water plants in their shining bowl. Creepers crept, plants grew, and ferns waved under the care of Nathan Spiderwitz, Monitor of the Window Boxes. There was such a martial swing and strut in Patrick Brennan's leadership of the line that it inflamed even the timid heart of Isidore Wishnewsy with a war-like glow and his feet with a spasmodic but well-meant tramp. Sadie Gonorowsky and Eva, her cousin, sat closely side by side, no longer "mad on themselves," but "mit kind feelings." The work of the preceding term was laid in neat and docketed piles upon the low book-case. The children were enjoined to keep clean and entire. And Teacher, a nervous and unsmiling Teacher, waited dully.

A week passed thus, and then the good-hearted and experienced Miss Blake hurried ponderously across the hall to put Teacher on her guard.

"I've just had a note from one of the grammar teachers," she panted. "'Gum Shoe Tim' is up in Miss Green's room! He'll take this floor next. Now, see here, child, don't look so frightened. The Principal is with Tim. Of course you're nervous, but try not to show it, and you'll be all right. His lay is discipline and reading. Well, good luck to you!"

Miss Bailey took heart of grace. The children read surprisingly well, were absolutely good, and the enemy under convoy of the friendly Principal would be much less terrifying than the enemy at large and alone. It was, therefore, with a manner almost serene that she turned to greet the kindly concerned Principal and the dreaded "Gum Shoe Tim." The latter she found less ominous of aspect than she had been led to fear, and the Principal's charming little speech of introduction made her flush with quick pleasure. And the anxious eyes of Sadie Gonorowsky, noting the flush, grew calm as Sadie whispered to Eva, her close cousin:

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"Say, Teacher has a glad. She's red on the face. It could to be her papa."

"No. It's comp'ny," answered Eva sagely. "It ain't her papa. It's comp'ny the whiles Teacher takes

him by the hand."

The children were not in the least disconcerted by the presence of the large man. They always enjoyed visitors, and they liked the heavy gold chain which festooned the wide waistcoat of this guest; and, as they watched him, the Associate Superintendent began to superintend.

He looked at the children all in their clean and smiling rows; he looked at the flowers and the gold-fish; at the pictures and the plaster casts; he looked at the work of the last term and he looked at Teacher. As he looked he swayed gently on his rubber heels and decided that he was going to enjoy the coming quarter of an hour. Teacher pleased him from the first. She was neither old nor ill-favored, and she was most evidently nervous. The combination appealed both to his love of power and his peculiar sense of humor. Settling deliberately in the chair of state, he began:

"Can the children sing, Miss Bailey?"

They could sing very prettily and they did.

"Very nice, indeed," said the voice of visiting authority. "Very nice. Their music is exceptionally good. And are they drilled? Children, will you march for me?" [Pg 492]

Again they could and did. Patrick marshaled his line in time and triumph up and down the aisles to the evident interest and approval of the "comp'ny," and then Teacher led the class through some very energetic Swedish movements. While arms and bodies were bending and straightening at Teacher's command and example, the door opened and a breathless boy rushed in. He bore an unfolded note and, as Teacher had no hand to spare, the boy placed the paper on the desk under the softening eyes of the Honorable Timothy, who glanced down idly and then pounced upon the note and read its every word.

"For you, Miss Bailey," he said in the voice before which even the school janitor had been known to quail. "Your friend was thoughtful, though a little late." And poor palpitating Miss Bailey read:

"Watch out! 'Gum Shoe Tim' is in the building. The Principal caught him on the back-stairs, and they're going round together. He's as cross as a bear. Greene in dead faint in the dressing-room. Says he's going to fire her. Watch out for him, and send the news on. His lay is reading and discipline."

Miss Bailey grew cold with sick and unreasoning fear. As she gazed wide-eyed at the living confirmation of the statement that "Gum Shoe Tim" was "as cross as a bear," the gentle-hearted Principal took the paper from her nerveless grasp.

"It's all right," he assured her. "Mr. O'Shea understands that you had no part in this. It's all right. You are not responsible."

But Teacher had no ears for his soothing. She could only watch with fascinated eyes as the Honorable Timothy reclaimed the note and wrote across it's damning face: "Miss Greene may come to. She is not fired.—T. O'S." [Pg 493]

"Here, boy," he called; "take this to your teacher." The puzzled messenger turned to obey, and the Associate Superintendent saw that though his dignity had suffered his power had increased. To the list of those whom he might, if so disposed, devour, he had now added the name of the Principal, who was quick to understand that an unpleasant investigation lay before him. If Miss Bailey could not be held responsible for this system of inter-classroom communication, it was clear that the Principal could.

Every trace of interest had left Mr. O'Shea's voice as he asked:

"Can they read?"

"Oh, yes, they read," responded Teacher, but her spirit was crushed and the children reflected her depression. Still, they were marvelously good and that blundering note had said, "Discipline is his lay." Well, here he had it.

There was one spectator of this drama, who, understanding no word nor incident therein, yet dismissed no shade of the many emotions which had stirred the light face of his lady. Toward the front of the room sat Morris Mogilewsky, with every nerve tuned to Teacher's, and with an appreciation of the situation in which the other children had no share. On the afternoon of one of those dreary days of waiting for the evil which had now come, Teacher had endeavored to explain the nature and possible result of this ordeal to her favorite. It was clear to him now that she was troubled, and he held the large and unaccustomed presence of the "comp'ny mit whiskers" responsible. Countless generations of ancestors had followed and fostered the instinct which now led Morris to propitiate an angry power. Luckily, he was prepared with an offering of a suitable nature. He had meant to enjoy it for yet a few days, and then to give it to Teacher. She was such a sensible person about presents. One might give her one's most cherished possession with a brave and cordial heart, for on each Friday afternoon she returned the gifts she had received during the week. And this with no abatement of gratitude. [Pg 494]

Morris rose stealthily, crept forward, and placed a bright blue bromo-seltzer bottle in the fat hand which hung over the back of the chair of state. The hand closed instinctively as, with dawning curiosity, the Honorable Timothy studied the small figure at his side. It began in a wealth of loosely curling hair which shaded a delicate face, very pointed as to chin and

monopolized by a pair of dark eyes, sad and deep and beautiful. A faded blue "jumper" was buttoned tightly across the narrow chest; frayed trousers were precariously attached to the "jumper," and impossible shoes and stockings supplemented the trousers. Glancing from boy to bottle, the "comp'ny mit whiskers" asked:

"What's this for?"

"For you."

"What's in it?"

"A present."

Mr. O'Shea removed the cork and proceeded to draw out incredible quantities of absorbent cotton. When there was no more to come, a faint tinkle sounded within the blue depths, and Mr. O'Shea, reversing the bottle, found himself possessed of a trampled and disfigured sleeve link of most palpable brass.

"It's from gold," Morris assured him. "You puts it in your—'scuse me—shirt. Wish you health to wear it."

"Thank you," said the Honorable Tim, and there was a tiny break in the gloom which had enveloped him. And then, with a quick memory of the note and of his anger:

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"Miss Bailey, who is this young man?"

And Teacher, of whose hobbies Morris was one, answered warmly: "That is Morris Mogilewsky, the best of boys. He takes care of the gold-fish, and does all sorts of things for me. Don't you, dear?"

"Teacher, yiss ma'an," Morris answered. "I'm lovin' much mit you. I gives presents on the comp'ny over you."

"Ain't he rather big to speak such broken English?" asked Mr. O'Shea. "I hope you remember that it is part of your duty to stamp out the dialect."

"Yes, I know," Miss Bailey answered. "But Morris has been in America for so short a time. Nine months, is it not?"

"Teacher, yiss ma'an. I comes out of Russia," responded Morris, on the verge of tears and with his face buried in Teacher's dress.

Now Mr. O'Shea had his prejudices—strong and deep. He had been given jurisdiction over that particular district because it was his native heath, and the Board of Education considered that he would be more in sympathy with the inhabitants than a stranger. The truth was absolutely the reverse. Because he had spent his early years in a large old house on East Broadway, because he now saw his birthplace changed to a squalid tenement, and the happy hunting grounds of his youth grown ragged and foreign—swarming with strange faces and noisy with strange tongues—Mr. O'Shea bore a sullen grudge against the usurping race.

He resented the caressing air with which Teacher held the little hand placed so confidently within her own and he welcomed the opportunity of gratifying his still ruffled temper and his racial antagonism at the same time. He would take a rise out of this young woman about her little Jew. She would be comforted later on. Mr. O'Shea rather fancied himself in the rôle of comforter, when the sufferer was neither old nor ill-favored. And so he set about creating the distress which he would later change to gratitude and joy. Assuredly the Honorable Timothy had a well-developed sense of humor.

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"His English is certainly dreadful," remarked the voice of authority, and it was not an English voice, nor is O'Shea distinctively an English name. "Dreadful. And, by the way, I hope you are not spoiling these youngsters. You must remember that you are fitting them for the battle of life. Don't coddle your soldiers. Can you reconcile your present attitude with discipline?"

"With Morris—yes," Teacher answered. "He is gentle and tractable beyond words."

"Well, I hope you're right," grunted Mr. O'Shea, "but don't coddle them."

And so the incident closed. The sleeve link was tucked, before Morris's yearning eyes, into the reluctant pocket of the wide white waistcoat, and Morris returned to his place. He found his reader and the proper page, and the lesson went on with brisk serenity; real on the children's part, but bravely assumed on Teacher's. Child after child stood up, read, sat down again, and it came to be the duty of Bertha Binderwitz to read the entire page of which the others had each read a line. She began jubilantly, but soon stumbled, hesitated, and wailed:

"Stands a fierce word. I don't know what it is," and Teacher turned to write the puzzling word upon the blackboard.

Morris's heart stopped with a sickening suddenness and then rushed madly on again. He had a new and dreadful duty to perform. All his mother's counsel, all his father's precepts told him that it was his duty. Yet fear held him in his little seat behind his little desk, while his conscience insisted on this unalterable decree of the social code: "So somebody's clothes is wrong it's polite you says 'scuse' and tells it out."

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And here was Teacher whom he dearly loved, whose ideals of personal adornment extended to full sets of buttons on jumpers and to laces in both shoes, here was his immaculate lady fair in urgent need of assistance and advice, and all because she had on that day inaugurated a delightfully vigorous exercise for which, architecturally, she was not designed.

There was yet room for hope that some one else would see the breach and brave the danger. But no. The visitor sat stolidly in the chair of state, the Principal sat serenely beside him, the children sat each in his own little place, behind his own little desk, keeping his own little eyes on his own little book. No. Morris's soul cried with Hamlet's:

"The time is out of joint;—O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!"

Up into the quiet air went his timid hand. Teacher, knowing him in his more garrulous moods, ignored the threatened interruption of Bertha's spirited résumé, but the windmill action of the little arm attracted the Honorable Tim's attention.

"The best of boys wants you," he suggested, and Teacher perforce asked:

"Well, Morris, what is it?"

Not until he was on his feet did the Monitor of the Gold-Fish Bowl appreciate the enormity of the mission he had undertaken. The other children began to understand, and watched his struggle for words and breath with sympathy or derision, as their natures prompted. But there are no words in which one may politely mention ineffective safety-pins to one's glass of fashion. Morris's knees trembled queerly, his breathing grew difficult, and Teacher seemed a very great way off as she asked again:

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"Well, what is it, dear?"

Morris panted a little, smiled weakly, and then sat down. Teacher was evidently puzzled, the "comp'ny" alert, the Principal uneasy.

"Now, Morris," Teacher remonstrated, "you must tell me what you want."

But Morris had deserted his etiquette and his veracity, and murmured only:

"Nothings."

"Just wanted to be noticed," said the Honorable Tim. "It is easy to spoil them." And he watched the best of boys rather closely, for a habit of interrupting reading lessons, wantonly and without reason, was a trait in the young of which he disapproved.

When this disapprobation manifested itself in Mr. O'Shea's countenance, the loyal heart of Morris interpreted it as a new menace to his sovereign. No later than yesterday she had warned them of the vital importance of coherence. "Every one knows," she had said, "that only common little boys and girls come apart. No one ever likes them," and the big stranger was even now misjudging her.

Again his short arm agitated the quiet air. Again his trembling legs upheld a trembling boy. Again authority urged. Again Teacher asked:

"Well, Morris, what is it, dear?"

All this was as before, but not as before was poor harassed Miss Bailey's swoop down the aisle, her sudden taking Morris's troubled little face between her soft hands, the quick near meeting with her kind eyes, the note of pleading in her repetition:

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"What do you want, Morris?"

He was beginning to answer when it occurred to him that the truth might make her cry. There was an unsteadiness about her upper lip which seemed to indicate the possibility. Suddenly he found that he no longer yearned for words in which to tell her of her disjointment, but for something else—anything else—to say.

His miserable eyes escaped from hers and wandered to the wall in desperate search for conversation. There was no help in the pictures, no inspiration in the plaster casts, but on the blackboard he read, "Tuesday, January twenty-first, 1902." Only the date, but he must make it serve. With teacher close beside him, with the hostile eye of the Honorable Tim upon him, hedged round about by the frightened or admiring regard of the First-Reader Class, Morris blinked rapidly, swallowed resolutely, and remarked:

"Teacher, this year's Nineteen-hundred-and-two," and knew that all was over.

The caressing clasp of Teacher's hands grew into a grip of anger. The countenance of Mr. O'Shea took on the beautiful expression of the prophet who has found honor and verification in his own country.

"The best of boys has his off days and this is one of them," he remarked.

"Morris," said Teacher, "did you stop a reading lesson to tell me that? Do you think I don't know what the year is? I'm ashamed of you."

Never had she spoken thus. If the telling had been difficult to Morris when she was "glad on him," it was impossible now that she was a prey to such evident "mad feelings." And yet he must make some explanation. So he murmured: "Teacher, I tells you 'scuse. I know you knows what year stands, on'y it's polite I tells you something, und I had a fraid."

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"And so you bothered your Teacher with that nonsense," said Tim. "You're a nice boy!"

Morris's eyes were hardly more appealing than Teacher's as the two culprits, for so they felt themselves, turned to their judge.

"Morris is a strange boy," Miss Bailey explained. "He can't be managed by ordinary methods—"

"And extraordinary methods don't seem to work to-day," Mr. O'Shea interjected.

"And I think," Teacher continued, "that it might be better not to press the point."

"Oh, if you have no control over him—" Mr. O'Shea was beginning pleasantly, when the Principal suggested:

"You'd better let us hear what he has to say, Miss Bailey; make him understand that you are master here." And Teacher, with a heart-sick laugh at the irony of this advice in the presence of the Associate Superintendent, turned to obey.

But Morris would utter no words but these, dozens of times repeated: "I have a fraid." Miss Bailey coaxed, bribed, threatened and cajoled; shook him surreptitiously, petted him openly. The result was always the same: "It's polite I tells you something out, on'y I had a fraid."

"But, Morris, dear, of what?" cried Teacher. "Are you afraid of me? Stop crying now and answer. Are you afraid of Miss Bailey?"

"N-o-o-oh m-a-a-an."

"Are you afraid of the Principal?"

"N-o-o-oh m-a-a-an."

"Are you afraid,"—with a slight pause, during which a native hue of honesty was foully done to death—"of the kind gentleman we are all so glad to see?"

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"N-o-o-oh m-a-a-an."

"Well, then what is the matter with you? Are you sick? Don't you think you would like to go home to your mother?"

"No-o-o-oh m-a-a-an; I ain't sick. I tells you 'scuse."

The repeated imitation of a sorrowful goat was too much for the Honorable Tim.

"Bring that boy to me," he commanded. "I'll show you how to manage refractory and rebellious children."

With much difficulty and many assurances that the gentleman was not going to hurt him, Miss Bailey succeeded in untwining Morris's legs from the supports of the desk and in half carrying, half leading him up to the chair of state. An ominous silence had settled over the room. Eva Gonorowsky was weeping softly, and the redoubtable Isidore Applebaum was stiffened in a frozen calm.

"Morris," began the Associate Superintendent in his most awful tones, "will you tell me why you raised your hand? Come here, sir."

Teacher urged him gently, and like dog to heel, he went. He halted within a pace or two of Mr. O'Shea, and lifted a beseeching face toward him.

"I couldn't to tell nothing out," said he. "I tells you 'scuse. I'm got a fraid."

The Honorable Tim lunged quickly and caught the terrified boy preparatory to shaking him, but Morris escaped and fled to his haven of safety—his Teacher's arms. When Miss Bailey felt the quick clasp of the thin little hands, the heavy beating of the over-tired heart, and the deep convulsive sobs, she turned on the Honorable Timothy O'Shea and spoke:

"I must ask you to leave this room at once," she announced. The Principal started and then sat back. Teacher's eyes were dangerous, and the Honorable Tim might profit by a lesson. "You've frightened the child until he can't breathe. I can do nothing with him while you remain. The examination is ended. You may go."

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Now Mr. O'Shea saw he had gone a little too far in his effort to create the proper dramatic setting for his clemency. He had not expected the young woman to "rise" quite so far and high. His deprecating half-apology, half-eulogy, gave Morris the opportunity he craved.

"Teacher," he panted; "I wants to whisper mit you in the ear."

With a dexterous movement he knelt upon her lap and tore out his solitary safety-pin. He then clasped her tightly and made his explanation. He began in the softest of whispers, which increased in volume as it did in interest, so that he reached the climax at the full power of his boy soprano voice.

"Teacher, Missis Bailey, I know you know what year stands. On'y it's polite I tells you something, and I had a fraid the while the 'comp'ny mit the whiskers' sets und rubbers. But, Teacher, it's like this: your jumper's sticking out und you could to take mine safety-pin."

He had understood so little of all that had passed that he was beyond being surprised by the result of this communication. Miss Bailey had gathered him into her arms and had cried in a queer helpless way. And as she cried she had said over and over again: "Morris, how could you? Oh, how could you, dear? How could you?"

The Principal and "the comp'ny mit whiskers" looked solemnly at one another for a struggling moment, and had then broken into laughter, long and loud, until the visiting authority was limp and moist. The children waited in polite uncertainty, but when Miss Bailey, after some indecision, had contributed a wan smile, which later grew into a shaky laugh, the First-Reader Class went wild.

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Then the Honorable Timothy arose to say good-by. He reiterated his praise of the singing and reading, the blackboard work and the moral tone. An awkward pause ensued, during which the Principal engaged the young Gonorowskys in impromptu conversation. The Honorable Tim crossed over to Miss Bailey's side and steadied himself for a great effort.

"Teacher," he began meekly, "I tells you 'scuse. This sort of thing makes a man feel like a bull in a china shop. Do you think the little fellow will shake hands with me? I was really only joking."

"But surely he will," said Miss Bailey, as she glanced down at the tangle of dark curls resting against her breast. "Morris, dear, aren't you going to say good-by to the gentleman?"

Morris relaxed one hand from its grasp on his lady and bestowed it on Mr. O'Shea.

"Good-by," said he gently. "I gives you presents, from gold presents, the while you're friends mit Teacher. I'm loving much mit her, too."

At this moment the Principal turned, and Mr. O'Shea, in a desperate attempt to retrieve his dignity, began: "As to class management and discipline—"

But the Principal was not to be deceived.

"Don't you think, Mr. O'Shea," said he, "that you and I had better leave the management of the little ones to the women? You have noticed, perhaps, that this is Nature's method."

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THE GENIAL IDIOT SUGGESTS A COMIC OPERA

BY JOHN KENDRICK BANGS

"There's a harvest for you," said the Idiot, as he perused a recently published criticism of a comic opera. "There have been thirty-nine new comic operas produced this year and four of 'em were worth seeing. It is very evident that the Gilbert and Sullivan industry hasn't gone to the wall whatever slumps other enterprises have suffered from."

"That is a goodly number," said the Poet. "Thirty-nine, eh? I knew there was a raft of them, but I had no idea there were as many as that."

"Why don't you go in and do one, Mr. Poet?" suggested the Idiot. "They tell me it's as easy as rolling off a log. All you've got to do is to forget all your ideas and remember all the old jokes you ever heard. Slap 'em together around a lot of dances, write two dozen lyrics about some Googoo Belle, hire a composer, and there you are. Hanged if I haven't thought of writing one myself."

"I fancy it isn't as easy as it looks," observed the Poet. "It requires just as much thought to be thoughtless as it does to be thoughtful."

"Nonsense," said the Idiot. "I'd undertake the job cheerfully if some manager would make it worth my while, and what's more, if I ever got into the swing of the business I'll bet I could turn out a libretto a day for three days of the week for the next two months."

"If I had your confidence I'd try it," laughed the Poet, "but alas, in making me Nature did not design a confidence man."

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"Nonsense again," said the Idiot. "Any man who can get the editors to print Sonnets to Diana's Eyebrow, and little lyrics of Madison Square, Longacre Square, Battery Place and Boston Common, the way you do, has a right to consider himself an adept at bunco. I tell you what I'll do with you. I'll swap off my confidence for your lyrical facility and see what I can do. Why can't we collaborate and get up a libretto for next season? They tell me there's large money in it."

"There certainly is if you catch on," said the Poet. "Vastly more than in any other kind of writing that I know. I don't know but that I would like to collaborate with you on something of the sort. What is your idea?"

"Mind's a blank on the subject," sighed the Idiot. "That's the reason I think I can turn the trick. As

I said before, you don't need ideas. Better off without 'em. Just sit down and write."

"But you must have some kind of a story," persisted the Poet.

"Not to begin with," said the Idiot. "Just write your choruses and songs, slap in your jokes, fasten 'em together, and the thing is done. First act, get your hero and heroine into trouble. Second act, get 'em out."

"And for the third?" queried the Poet.

"Don't have a third," said the Idiot. "A third is always superfluous—but if you must have it, make up some kind of a vaudeville show and stick it in between the first and second."

"Tush!" said the Bibliomaniac. "That would make a gay comic opera."

"Of course it would, Mr. Bib," the Idiot agreed. "And that's what we want. If there's anything in this world that I hate more than another it is a sombre comic opera. I've been to a lot of 'em, and I give you my word of honor that next to a funeral a comic opera that lacks gaiety is one of the most depressing functions known to modern science. Some of 'em are enough to make an undertaker weep with jealous rage. I went to one of 'em last week called 'The Skylark' with an old chum of mine, who is a surgeon. You can imagine what sort of a thing it was when I tell you that after the first act he suggested we leave the theater and come back here and have some fun cutting my leg off. He vowed that if he ever went to another opera by the same people he'd take ether beforehand."

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"I shouldn't think that would be necessary," sneered the Bibliomaniac. "If it was as bad as all that why didn't it put you to sleep?"

"It did," said the Idiot. "But the music kept waking us up again. There was no escape from it except that of actual physical flight."

"Well—about this collaboration of ours," suggested the Poet. "What do you think we should do first?"

"Write an opening chorus, of course," said the Idiot. "What did you suppose? A finale? Something like this:

"If you want to know who we are,
Just ask the Evening Star,
As he smiles on high
In the deep blue sky,
With his tralala-la-la-la.
We are maidens sweet
With tripping feet,
And the Googoo eyes
Of the Skippity-hi's,
And the smile of the fair Gazoo;
And you'll find our names
'Mongst the wondrous dames
Of the Whos Who-hoo-hoo-hoo.

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"Get that sung with spirit by sixty-five ladies with blonde wigs and gold slippers, otherwise dressed up in the uniform of a troop of Russian Cavalry, and you've got your venture launched."

"Where can you find people like that?" asked the Bibliomaniac.

"New York's full of 'em," replied the Idiot.

"I don't mean the people to act that sort of thing—but where would you lay your scene?" explained the Bibliomaniac.

"Oh, any old place in the Pacific Ocean," said the Idiot. "Make your own geography—everybody else does. There's a million islands out there of one kind or another, and as defenseless as a two weeks' old infant. If you want a real one, fish it out and fire ahead. If you don't, make one up for yourself and call it 'The Isle of Piccolo,' or something of that sort. After you've got your chorus going, introduce your villain, who should be a man with a deep bass voice and a piratical past. He's the chap who rules the roost and is going to marry the heroine to-morrow. That will make a bully song:

"I'm a pirate bold
With a heart so cold
That it turns the biggest joys to solemn sorrow;
And the hero-ine,
With her eyes so fine,
I am going to-marry—to-morrow.

CHORUS:

"He is go-ing to-marry—to-morrow
The maid with a heart full of sorrow;
For her we are sorry

For she weds to-morry—
She is go-ing to-marry—to-morrow.

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"Gee!" added the Idiot enthusiastically. "Can't you almost hear that already?"

"I am sorry to say," said Mr. Brief, "that I can. You ought to call your heroine Drivelina."

"Splendid," cried the Idiot. "Drivelina goes. Well, then on comes Drivelina and this beast of a Pirate grabs her by the hand and makes love to her as if he thought wooing was a game of snap the whip. She sings a soprano solo of protest and the Pirate summons his hirelings to cast Drivelina into a Donjuan cell when, boom! an American warship appears on the horizon. The crew under the leadership of a man with a squeaky tenor voice named Lieutenant Somebody or other comes ashore, puts Drivelina under the protection of the American flag while his crew sings the following:

"We are Jackies, Jackies, Jackies,
And we smoke the best tobaccys
You can find from Zanzibar to Honeyloo.
And we fight for Uncle Sammy,
Yes indeed we do, for damme
You can bet your life that that's the thing to do—doodle-do!
You can bet your life that that's the thing to doodle—doodle—doodle—doodle-
do.

"Eh! What?" demanded the Idiot.

"Well—what yourself?" asked the Lawyer. "This is your job. What next?"

"Well—the Pirate gets lively, tries to assassinate the Lieutenant, who kills half the natives with his sword and is about to slay the Pirate when he discovers that he is his long lost father," said the Idiot. "The heroine then sings a pathetic love song about her Baboon Baby, in a green light to the accompaniment of a lot of pink satin monkeys banging cocoa-nut shells together. This drowsy lullaby puts the Lieutenant and his forces to sleep and the curtain falls on their capture by the Pirate and his followers, with the chorus singing:

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"Hooray for the Pirate bold,
With his pockets full of gold,
He's going to marry to-morrow.
To-morrow he'll marry,
Yes, by the Lord Harry,
He's go-ing—to-marry—to-mor-row!
And that's a thing to doodle-doodle-doo.

"There," said the Idiot, after a pause. "How is that for a first act?"

"It's about as lucid as most of them," said the Poet, "but after all you have got a story there, and you said you didn't need one."

"I said you didn't need one to start with," corrected the Idiot. "And I've proved it. I didn't have that story in mind when I started. That's where the easiness of the thing comes in. Why, I didn't even have to think of a name for the heroine. The inspiration for that popped right out of Mr. Brief's mouth as smoothly as though the name Drivelina had been written on his heart for centuries. Then the title—Isle of Piccolo—that's a dandy and I give you my word of honor I'd never even thought of a title for the opera until that revealed itself like a flash from the blue; and as for the coon song, 'My Baboon Baby,' there's a chance there for a Zanzibar act that will simply make Richard Wagner and Reginald De Koven writhe with jealousy. Can't you imagine the lilt of it:

"My Bab-boon—ba-habee,
My Bab-boon—ba-habee—
I love you dee-her-lee
Yes dee-hee-hee-er-lee.
My Baboon—ba-ha-bee,
My Baboon—ba-ha-bee,
My baboon—Ba-hay-hay-hay-hay-hay-hay-
bee-bee.

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"And all those pink satin monkeys bumping their cocoanut shells together in the green moonlight —"

"Well, after the first act, what?" asked the Bibliomaniac.

"The usual intermission," said the Idiot. "You don't have to write that. The audience generally knows what to do."

"But your second act?" asked the Poet.

"Oh, come off," said the Idiot rising. "We were to do this thing in collaboration. So far I've done the whole blooming business. I'll leave the second act to you. When you collaborate, Mr. Poet, you've got to do a little collabbing on your own account. What did you think you were to do—"

collect the royalties?"

"I'm told," said the Lawyer, "that that is sometimes the hardest thing to do in a comic opera."

"Well, I'll be self-sacrificing," said the Idiot, "and bear my full share of it."

"It seems to me," said the Bibliomaniac, "that that opera produced in the right place might stand a chance of a run."

"Thank you," said the Idiot. "After all, Mr. Bib, you are a man of some penetration. How long a run?"

"One consecutive night," said the Bibliomaniac.

"Ah—and where?" demanded the Idiot with a smile.

"At Bloomingdale," answered the Bibliomaniac severely.

"That's a very good idea," said the Idiot. "When you go back there, Mr. Bib, I wish you'd suggest it to the Superintendent."

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WAMSLEY'S AUTOMATIC PASTOR

BY FRANK CRANE

"Yes, sir," said the short, chunky man, as he leaned back against the gorgeous upholstery of his seat in the smoking compartment of the sleeping-car; "yes, sir, I knew you was a preacher the minute I laid eyes on you. You don't wear your collar buttoned behind, nor a black thingumbob over your shirt front, nor Presbyterian whiskers, nor a little gold cross on a black string watch chain; them's the usual marks, I know, and you hain't got any of 'em. But I knew you just the same. You can't fool J.P. Wamsley. You see, there's a peculiar air about a man that's accustomed to handle any particular line of goods. You can tell 'em all, if you'll just notice,—any of 'em,—white-goods counter, lawyer, doctor, travelin' man, politician, railroad,—every one of 'em's got his sign out, and it don't take a Sherlock Holmes to read it, neither. It's the same way with them gospel goods. You'll excuse me, but when I saw you come in here and light a cigar, with an air of I-will-now-give-you-a-correct-imitation-of-a-human-being, I says to myself, 'There's one of my gospel friends.' Murder will out, as the feller says.

"Experience, did you say? I must have had considerable experience? Well, I guess yes! Didn't you never hear of my invention, Wamsley's Automatic Pastor, Self-feedin' Preacher and Lightning Caller? Say, that was the hottest scheme ever. I'll tell you about it.

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"You see, it's this way. I'm not a church member myself—believe in it, you know, and all that sort of thing,—I'm for religion strong, and when it comes to payin' I'm right there with the goods. My wife is a member, and a good one; in fact, she's so blame good that we average up pretty well.

"Well, one day they elected me to the board of trustees at the church; because I was the heaviest payer, I suppose. I kicked some, not bein' anxious to pose as a pious individual, owin' to certain brethren in the town who had a little confidential information on J.P. and might be inclined to get funny. But they insisted, allowin' that me bein' the most prominent and successful merchant in the town, and similar rot, I ought to line up and help out the cause, and so on; so finally I give in.

"I went to two or three of their meetin's—and say, honest, they were the fiercest things ever."

The minister smiled knowingly.

"You're on, I see. Ain't those official meetin's of a church the limit? Gee! Once I went—a cold winter night—waded through snow knee-deep to a giraffe—and sat there two hours, while they discussed whether they'd fix the pastor's back fence or not—price six dollars! I didn't say anything, bein' sort o' new, you know, but I made up my mind that next time I'd turn loose on 'em, if it was the last thing I did.

"I says to my wife when I got home, 'Em,' says I, 'if gittin' religion gives a man softenin' of the brain, like I see it workin' on them men there to-night, I'm afraid I ain't on prayin' ground and intercedin' terms, as the feller says. The men in that bunch to-night was worth over eight hundred thousand dollars, and they took eleven dollars and a half's worth o' my time chewin' the rag over fixin' the parson's fence. I'm goin' to bed,' I says, 'and if I shouldn't wake up in the mornin', if you should miss petty in the mornin', you may know his vital powers was exhausted by the hilarious proceedin's of this evenin'.'

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"But I must get along to my story, about my automatic pastor. One day the preacher resigned,—life probably hectored out of him by a lot o' cheap skates whose notion of holdin' office in church consisted in cuttin' down expenses and findin' fault with the preacher because he didn't draw in sinners enough to fill the pews and pay their bills for 'em.

"When it come to selectin' a committee to get a new pastor, I butted right in. I had an idea, so—me to the front, leadin' trumps and bangin' my cards down hard on the table. Excuse my gay and festive reference to playin'-cards, but what I mean is, that I thought the fullness of time had

arrived and was a-hollerin' for J.P. Wamsley.

"Well, sir, it was right then and there I invented my automatic pastor, continuous revolving hand-shaker and circular jolly-hander.

"I brung it before the official brethren one night and explained its modus operandi. I had a wax figger made by the same firm that supplies me with the manikins for my show-windows. And it was a peach, if I do say it myself. Tall, handsome figger, benevolent face, elegant smile that won't come off, as the feller says, Chauncey Depew spinnage in front of each ear. It was a sure lu-lu.

"'Now,' I says to 'em, 'gentlemen, speakin' o' pastors, I got one here I want to recommend. It has one advantage anyhow; it won't cost you a cent. I'll make you a present of it, and also chip in, as heretofore, toward operatin' expenses.' That caught old Jake Hicks—worth a hundred thousand dollars, and stingier 'n all git-out. He leaned over and listened, same as if he was takin' 'em right off the bat. He's a retired farmer. If you'll find me a closer boy than a retired farmer moved to town, you can have the best plug hat in my store.

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"'You observe,' I says, 'that he has the leadin' qualifications of all and comes a heap cheaper than most. He is swivel mounted; that is, the torso, so to speak, is pinioned onto the legs, so that the upper part of the body can revolve. This enables him to rotate freely without bustin' his pants, the vest bein' unconnected with the trousers.

"'Now, you stand this here, whom we will call John Henry, at the door of the church as the congregation enters, havin' previously wound him up, and there he stays, turning around and givin' the glad hand and cheery smile, and so doth his unchangin' power display as the unwearied sun from day to day, as the feller says. Nobody neglected, all pleased. You remember the last pastor wasn't sociable enough, and there was considerable complaint because he didn't hike right down after the benediction and jolly the flock as they passed out. We'll have a wire run the length of the meetin' house, with a gentle slant from the pulpit to the front door, and as soon as meetin's over, up goes John Henry and slides down to the front exit, and there he stands, gyratin' and handin' out pleasant greeting to all,—merry Christmas and happy New Year to beat the band.

"'Now as for preachin',' I continued, 'you see all you have to do is to raise up the coat-tails and insert a record on the phonograph concealed here in the back of the chest, with a speakin' tube runnin' up to the mouth. John Henry bein' a regular minister, he can get the Homiletic Review at a dollar and a half a year; we can subscribe for that, get the up-to-datest sermons by the most distinguished divines, get some gent that's afflicted with elocution to say 'em into a record, and on Sunday our friend and pastor here will reel 'em off fine. You press the button—he does the rest, as the feller says.'

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"'How about callin' on the members?' inquires Andy Robinson.

"'Easy,' says I. 'Hire a buggy of Brother Jinks here, who keeps a livery stable, at one dollar per P.M. Get a nigger to chauffeur the pastor at fifty cents per same. There you are. Let the boy be provided with an assortment of records to suit the people—pleasant and sad, consolatory and gay, encouragin' or reprov'in', and so forth. The coon drives up, puts in a cartridge, sets the pastor in the door, and when the family gets through with him they sets him out again.

"'There are, say about three hundred callin' days in the year. He can easy make fifteen calls a day on an average—equals four thousand five hundred calls a year, at \$450. Of course, there's the records, but they won't cost over \$50 at the outside—you can shave 'em off and use 'em over again, you know.'

"'But there's the personality of the pastor,' somebody speaks up. 'It's that which attracts folks and fills the pews.'

"'Personality shucks!' says I. 'Haven't we had personality enough? For every man it attracts it repels two. Your last preacher was one of the best fellers that ever struck this town. He was a plum brick, and had lots o' horse sense, to boot. He could preach, too, like a house afire. But you kicked him out because he wasn't sociable enough. You're askin' an impossibility. No man can be a student and get up the rattlin' sermons he did, and put in his time trottin' around callin' on the sisters.

"'Now, let's apply business sense to this problem. That's the way I run my store. Find out what the people want and give it to 'em, is my motto. Now, people ain't comin' to church unless there's somethin' to draw 'em. We've tried preachin', and it won't draw. They say they want sociability, so let's give it to 'em strong. They want attention paid to 'em. You turn my friend here loose in the community, and he'll make each and every man, woman and child think they're it in less'n a month. If anybody gets disgruntled, you sic John Henry here on 'em, and you'll have 'em come right back a-runnin', and payin' their pew rent in advance.

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"'Then,' I continued, 'that ain't all. There's another idea I propose, to go along with the pastor, as a sort of side line. That's tradin' stamps. Simple, ain't it? Wonder why you never thought of it yourselves, don't you? That's the way with all bright ideas. People drink soda water all their lives, and along comes a genius and hears the fizz, and goes and invents a Westinghouse brake. Same as Newton and the apple, and Columbus and the egg.

"'All you have to do is to give tradin' stamps for attendance, and your church fills right up, and John Henry keeps 'em happy. Stamps can be redeemed at any store. So many stamps gets, say a parlor lamp or a masterpiece of Italian art in a gilt frame; so many more draws a steam cooker or

an oil stove; so many more and you have a bicycle or a hair mattress or a what-not; and so on up to where a hat full of 'em gets an automobile.

"I tell you when a family has a what-not in their eye they ain't goin' to let a little rain keep 'em home from church. If they're all really too sick to go they'll hire a substitute. And I opine these here stamps will have a powerful alleviatin' effect on Sunday-sickness.

"And then,' I went on, waxin' eloquent, and leanin' the pastor against the wall, so I could put one hand in my coat and gesture with the other and make it more impressive,—'and then,' I says, 'just think of them other churches. We won't do a thing to 'em. That Baptist preacher thinks he's a wizz because he makes six hundred calls a year. You just wait till the nigger gets to haulin' John Henry here around town and loadin' him up with rapid-fire conversations. That Baptist gent will look like thirty cents, that's what he'll look like. He'll think he's Rojessvinsky and the Japanese fleet's after him. And the Campbellites think they done it when they got their new pastor, with a voice like a Bull o' Bashan comin' down hill. Just wait till we load a few of them extra-sized records with megaphone attachment into our pastor, and gear him up to two hundred and fifty words a minute, and then where, oh, where is Mister Campbellite, as the feller says.

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"Besides, brethren, this pastor, havin' no family, won't need his back fence fixed; in fact, he won't need the parsonage; we can rent it, and the proceeds will go toward operatin' expenses.

"What we need to do,' I says in conclusion, 'is to get in line, get up to date, give the people what they want. We have no way of judgin' the future but by the past, as the feller says. We know they ain't no human bein' can measure up to our requirements, so let's take a fall out of science, and have enterprise and business sense."

J.P. Wamsley reached for a match.

"Did they accept your offer?" asked his companion. "I am anxious to know how your plan worked. It has many points in its favor, I confess."

"No," replied J.P. Wamsley, as he meditatively puffed his cigar and seemed to be lovingly reviewing the past. "No, they didn't. I'm kind o' sorry, too. I'd like to have seen the thing tried myself. But," he added, with a slow and solemn wink, "they passed a unanimous resolution callin' back the old pastor at an increased salary."

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"I should say, then, that your invention was a success."

"Well, I didn't lose out on it, anyhow. I've got John Henry rigged up with a new bunch of whiskers, and posin' in my show-window as Dewitt, signin' the peace treaty, in an elegant suit of all-wool at \$11.50."

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THE BOHEMIANS OF BOSTON

BY GELETT BURGESS

The "Orchids" were as tough a crowd
As Boston anywhere allowed;
It was a club of wicked men—
The oldest, twelve, the youngest, ten;
They drank their soda colored green,
They talked of "Art," and "Philistine,"
They wore buff "wescoats," and their hair
It used to make the waiters stare!
They were so shockingly behaved
And Boston thought them *so* depraved,
Policemen, stationed at the door,
Would raid them every hour or more!
They used to smoke (!) and laugh out loud (!)
They were a very devilish crowd!
They formed a Cult, far subtler, brainier,
Than ordinary Anglomania,
For all as Jacobites were reckoned,
And gaily toasted Charles the Second!
(What would the Bonnie Charlie say,
If he could see that crowd to-day?)
Fitz-Willieboy McFlubadub
Was Regent of the Orchids' Club;
A wild Bohemian was he,
And spent his money fast and free.
He thought no more of spending dimes
On some debauch of pickled limes,
Than you would think of spending nickels
To buy a pint of German pickles!
The Boston maiden passed him by

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With sidelong glances of her eye,
 She dared not speak (he *was* so wild),
 Yet worshipped this Lotharian child.
 Fitz-Willieboy was so *blase*,
 He burned a *Transcript* up one day!
 The Orchids fashioned all their style
 On Flubadub's infernal guile.
 That awful Boston oath was his—
He used to 'jaculate, "Gee Whiz!"
 He showed them that immoral haunt,
 The dirty Chinese Restaurant;
 And there they'd find him, even when
 It got to be as late as ten!
 He ate chopped *suey* (with a fork)
 You should have heard the villain talk
 Of one *reporter* that he knew (!)
 An artist, and an actor, too!!!
 The Orchids went from bad to worse,
 Made epigrams—attempted verse!
 Boston was horrified and shocked
 To hear the way those Orchids mocked;
 For they made fun of Boston ways,
 And called good men Provincial Jays!
 The end must come to such a story,
 Gone is the wicked Orchids' glory;
 The room was raided by police,
 One night, for breaches of the Peace
 (There had been laughter, long and loud,
 In Boston this is not allowed),
 And there, the sergeant of the squad
 Found awful evidence—my God!—
 Fitz-Willieboy McFlubadub,
 The Regent of the Orchids' Club,
 Had written on the window-sill,
 This shocking outrage—"Beacon H—ll!"

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A LETTER FROM HOME^[4]

***From the Princess Boo-Lally, at Gumbo Goo, South Sea Islands, to Her
 Brother, Prince Umbobo, a Sophomore at Yale.***

BY WALLACE IRWIN

"It is spring, my dear Umbobo,
 On the isle of Gumbo Goo,
 And your father, King Korobo,
 And your mother long for you.

"We had missionaries Monday,
 Much the finest of the year—
 Our old cook came back last Sunday,
 And the stews she makes are *dear*.

"I've the *loveliest* string of knuckles
 Which dear Father gave to me,
 And a pair of shin-bone buckles
 Which I *so* wish you could see.

"You remember Mr. Booloo?
 He is coming over soon
 With some friends from Unatulu—
 We all hope they'll call at noon.

"Mr. Booloo's rather slender,
 But we'll fix him up with sage,
 And I think he'll be quite tender
 For a fellow of his age.

"Genevieve O-loola's marriage
 Was arranged so *very* queer—
 Have you read 'The Bishop's Carriage'?

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Don't you think it's just *too dear*?

"I am hoping next vacation
I may visit you a while.
In this out-of-way location
It's *so* hard to know the style.

"Will you try and match the sample
I enclose—be sure it's green.
Get three yards—that will be ample.
Velvet, mind, not velveteen.

"Gentle mother worries badly,
And she thinks it is a shame
That a man like Dr. Hadley
Lets you play that football game.

"For the way they hurt each other
Seems so barbarously rude—
No, you've not been raised, dear brother,
To do anything so crude.

"And those horrid meals at college—
Not what you're accustomed to.
It is hard, this quest for knowledge,
But be brave.
"Your sister, Boo."

"P.S.—
"If it's not too great a bother
And a mental overtax,
Would you send your poor old father,
C.O.D., a battle-axe?"

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THE COURTIN'

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

God makes sech nights, all white an' still
Fur 'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
All silence an' all glisten.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru' the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'Ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side
With half a cord o' wood in—
There warn't no stoves (tell comfort died)
To bake ye to a puddin'.

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out
Towards the pootiest, bless her,
An' leetle flames danced all about
The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,
An' in amongst 'em rusted
The old queen's-arm that Gran'ther Young
Fetched back f'om Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,
Seemed warm f'om floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
Ez the apples she was peelin'.

'T was kin' o' kingdom-come to look
On sech a blessed cretur;
A dogrose blushin' to a brook
Ain't modester nor sweeter.

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He was six foot o' man, A 1,
Clear grit an' human natur';
None couldn't quicker pitch a ton
Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He'd sparked it with full twenty gals,
He'd squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,
Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells—
All is, he couldn't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run
All crinkly like curled maple;
The side she breshed felt full o' sun
Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

She thought no v'ice bed sech a swing
Ez hisn in the choir;
My! when he made Ole Hundred ring,
She *knowed* the Lord was nigher.

An' she'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,
When her new meetin'-bunnet
Felt somehow thru its crown a pair
O' blue eyes sot upun it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *some!*
She seemed to 've gut a new soul
For she felt sartin-sure he'd come,
Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
A-raspin' on the scraper—
All ways to once her feelin's flew
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
Some doubtfle o' the sekle;
His heart kep' goin' pity-pat,
But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yit she gin her cheer a jerk
Ez though she wished him furder,
An' on her apples kep' to work,
Parin' away like murder.

"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?"
"Wal ... no ... I come dasignin'—"
"To see my Ma? She's sprinklin' clo'es
Agin to-morrer's i'nin'."

To say why gals act so or so,
Or don't, 'ould be presumin';
Mebby to mean *yes* an' say *no*
Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
Then stood a spell on t' other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
He couldn't ha' told ye nuther.

Says he, "I'd better call agin";
Says she, "Think likely, Mister";
Thet last word pricked him like a pin,
An' ... Wal, he up an' kist her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips
An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind
Whose naturs never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind
Snowhid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued
Too tight for all expressin',

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Tell mother see how matters stood,
An' gin 'em both her blessing'.

Then her red come back like the tide
Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
An' all I know is they was cried
In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

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THE TOWER OF LONDON

BY ARTEMUS WARD

Mr. Punch, *My Dear Sir*—I skurcely need inform you that your excellent Tower is very pop'lar with pe'ple from the agricultooral districks, and it was chiefly them class which I found waitin at the gates the other mornin.

I saw at once that the Tower was established on a firm basis. In the entire history of firm basisis I don't find a basis more firmer than this one.

"You have no Tower in America?" said a man in the crowd, who had somehow detected my denomination.

"Alars! no," I anserd; "we boste of our enterprise and improovements, and yit we are devoid of a Tower. America oh my onhappy country! thou hast not got no Tower! It's a sweet Boon."

The gates was opened after a while, and we all purchist tickets, and went into a waitin-room.

"My frens," said a pale-faced little man, in black close, "this is a sad day."

"Inasmuch as to how?" I said.

"I mean it is sad to think that so many peple have been killed within these gloomy walls. My frens, let us drop a tear!"

"No," I said, "you must excuse me. Others may drop one if they feel like it; but as for me, I decline. The early managers of this institootion were a bad lot, and their crimes were trooly orful; but I can't sob for those who died four or five hundred years ago. If they was my own relations I couldn't. It's absurd to shed sobs over things which occurd during the rain of Henry the Three. Let us be cheerful," I continnered. "Look at the festiv Warders, in their red flannil jackets. They are cheerful, and why should it not be thusly with us?"

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A Warder now took us in charge, and showed us the Trater's Gate, the armers, and things. The Trater's Gate is wide enuff to admit about twenty traters abreast, I should jedge; but beyond this, I couldn't see that it was superior to gates in gen'ral.

Traters, I will here remark, are a onfornit class of peple. If they wasn't, they wouldn't be traters. They conspire to bust up a country—they fail, and they're traters. They bust her, and they become statesmen and heroes.

Take the case of Gloster, afterward Old Dick the Three, who may be seen at the Tower on horseback, in a heavy tin overcoat—take Mr. Gloster's case. Mr. G. was a conspirator of the basist dye, and if he'd failed, he would have been hung on a sour apple tree. But Mr. G. succeeded, and became great. He was slewed by Col. Richmond, but he lives in history, and his equestrian figger may be seen daily for a sixpence, in conjunction with other em'nent persons, and no extra charge for the Warder's able and bootiful lectur.

There's one king in this room who is mounted onto a foaming steed, his right hand graspin a barber's pole. I didn't learn his name.

The room where the daggers and pistils and other weppins is kept is interestin. Among this collection of choice cuttlery I notist the bow and arrer which those hot-heded old chaps used to conduct battles with. It is quite like the bow and arrer used at this day by certain tribes of American Injuns, and they shoot 'em off with such a excellent precision that I almost sigh'd to be an Injun when I was in the Rocky Mountain regin. They are a pleasant lot them Injuns. Mr. Cooper and Dr. Catlin have told us of the red man's wonerful eloquence, and I found it so. Our party was stopt on the plains of Utah by a band of Shoshones, whose chief said:

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"Brothers! the pale-face is welcome. Brothers! the sun is sinking in the west, and Wa-na-bucky-she will soon cease speakin. Brothers! the poor red man belongs to a race which is fast becomin extink."

He then whooped in a shrill manner, stole all our blankets and whisky, and fled to the primeval forest to conceal his emotions.

I will remark here, while on the subjeck of Injuns, that they are in the main a very shaky set, with even less sense than the Fenians, and when I hear philanthropists be-wailin the fack that every year "carries the noble red man nearer the settin sun," I simply have to say I'm glad of it, tho' it is

rough on the settin sun. They call you by the sweet name of Brother one minit, and the next they scalp you with their Thomas-hawks. But I wander. Let us return to the Tower.

At one end of the room where the weppins is kept, is a wax figger of Queen Elizabeth, mounted on a fiery stuffed hoss, whose glass eye flashes with pride, and whose red morocker nostril dilates hawtily, as if conscious of the royal burden he bears. I have associated Elizabeth with the Spanish Armady. She's mixed up with it at the Surrey Theater, where *Troo to the Core* is bein acted, and in which a full bally core is introjooiced on board the Spanish Admiral's ship, giving the audiens the idee that he intends openin a moosic-hall in Plymouth the moment he conkers that town. But a very interesting drammer is *Troo to the Core*, notwithstandin the eccentric conduct of the Spanish Admiral; and very nice it is in Queen Elizabeth to make Martin Truegold a baronet.

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The Warder shows us some instruuments of tortur, such as thumbscrews, throat-collars, etc., statin that these was conkered from the Spanish Armady, and addin what a crooil peple the Spaniards was in them days—which elissited from a bright-eyed little girl of about twelve summers the remark that she tho't it *was* rich to talk about the crooilty of the Spaniards usin thumbscrews, when he was in a Tower where so many poor people's heads had been cut off. This made the Warder stammer and turn red.

I was so pleased with the little girl's brightness that I could have kissed the dear child, and I would if she'd been six years older.

I think my companions intended makin a day of it, for they all had sandwiches, sassiges, etc. The sad-lookin man, who had wanted us to drop a tear afore we started to go round, fling'd such quantities of sassige into his mouth that I expected to see him choke hisself to death; he said to me, in the Beauchamp Tower, where the poor prisoners writ their onhappy names on the cold walls, "This is a sad sight."

"It is indeed," I anserd. "You're black in the face. You shouldn't eat sassige in public without some rehearsals beforehand. You manage it orkwardly."

"No," he said, "I mean this sad room."

Indeed, he was quite right. Tho' so long ago all these drefful things happened, I was very glad to git away from this gloomy room, and go where the rich and sparklin Crown Jewils is kept. I was so pleased with the Queen's Crown, that it occurd to me what a agree'ble surprise it would be to send a sim'lar one home to my wife; and I asked the Warder what was the vally of a good, well-constructed Crown like that. He told me, but on cypherin up with a pencil the amount of funs I have in the Jint Stock Bank, I conclooded I'd send her a genteel silver watch instid.

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And so I left the Tower. It is a solid and commandin edifis, but I deny that it is cheerful. I bid it adoo without a pang.

I was droven to my hotel by the most melancholly driver of a four-wheeler that I ever saw. He heaved a deep sigh as I gave him two shillings.

"I'll give you six d.'s more," I said, "if it hurts you so."

"It isn't that," he said, with a hart-rendin groan, "it's only a way I have. My mind's upset to-day. I at one time tho't I'd drive you into the Thames. I've been readin all the daily papers to try and understand about Governor Eyre, and my mind is totterin. It's really wonderful I didn't drive you into the Thames."

I asked the onhappy man what his number was, so I could redily find him in case I should want him agin, and bad him good-by. And then I tho't what a frolicsome day I'd made of it.

Respectably, etc.
ARTEMUS WARD.

—*Punch*, 1866.

SCIENCE AND NATURAL HISTORY

MR. PUNCH, *My Dear Sir*:—I was a little disapinted at not receivin a invitation to jine in the meetins of the Social Science Congress....

I prepared an Essy on Animals to read before the Social Science meetins. It is a subjeck I may truthfully say I have successfully wrastled with. I tackled it when only nineteen years old. At that tender age I writ a Essy for a lit'ry Institoot entitled, "Is Cats to be trusted?" Of the merits of that Essy it doesn't becum me to speak, but I may be excoos'd for mentionin that the Institoot parsed a resolution that "whether we look upon the length of this Essy, or the manner in which it is written, we feel that we will not express any opinion of it, and we hope it will be read in other towns."

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Of course the Essy I writ for the Social Science Society is a more finisheder production than the one on Cats, which was wroten when my mind was crood, and afore I had masterd a graceful and ellygant stile of composition. I could not even punctooate my sentences proper at that time, and I observe with pane, on lookin over this effort of my youth, that its beauty is in one or two instances mar'd by ingrammaticisms. This was inexcusable, and I'm surprised I did it. A writer who can't write in a grammerly manner better shut up shop.

You shall hear this Essay on Animals. Some day when you have four hours to spare, I'll read it to you. I think you'll enjoy it. Or, what will be much better, if I may suggest—omit all pictures in next week's *Punch*, and do not let your contributors write anything whatever (let them have a holiday; they can go to the British Museum;) and publish my Essay entire. It will fill all your columns full, and create comment. Does this proposition strike you? Is it a go?

In case I had read the Essay to the Social Sciences, I had intended it should be the closing attraction. I intended it should finish the proceedings. I think it would have finished them. I understand animals better than any other class of human creatures. I have a very animal mind, and I've been identified with 'em during my entire professional career as a showman, more especially bears, wolves, leopards and serpents.

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The leopard is as lively an animal as I ever came into contact with. It is true he cannot change his spots, but you can change 'em for him with a paint-brush, as I once did in the case of a leopard who wasn't naturally spotted in an attractive manner. In exhibiting him I used to stir him up in his cage with a protracted pole, and for the purpose of making him yell and kick up in a leopardish manner, I used to occasionally whack him over the head. This would make the children inside the booth scream with fright, which would make fathers of families outside the booth very anxious to come in—because there is a large class of parents who have an uncontrollable passion for taking their children to places where they will stand a chance of being frightened to death.

One day I whacked this leopard more than usual, which elicited a remonstrance from a tall gentleman in spectacles, who said, "My good man, do not beat the poor caged animal. Rather fondle him."

"I'll fondle him with a club," I answered, hitting him another whack.

"I prithy desist," said the gentleman; "stand aside, and see the effect of kindness. I understand the idiosyncracies of these creatures better than you do."

With that he went up to the cage, and thrust in his face in between the iron bars, he said, soothingly, "Come hither, pretty creature."

The pretty creature come-hithered rather speedy, and seized the gentleman by the whiskers, which he tore off about enough to stuff a small cushion with.

He said, "You vagabone, I'll have you indicted for exhibiting dangerous and immoral animals."

I replied, "Gentle Sir, there isn't an animal here that hasn't a beautiful moral, but you mustn't fondle 'em. You mustn't meddle with their idiosyncracies."

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The gentleman was a dramatic cricket, and he wrote an article for a paper, in which he said my entertainment was a decided failure.

As regards Bears, you can teach 'em to do interesting things, but they're unreliable. I had a very large grizzly bear once, who would dance, and lark, and lay down, and bow his head in grief, and give a mournful wale, etc. But he often annoyed me. It will be remembered that on the occasion of the first battle of Bull Run, it suddenly occurred to the Federal soldiers that they had business in Washington which ought not to be neglected, and they all started for that beautiful and romantic city, maintaining a rate of speed during the entire distance that would have done credit to the celebrated French steed *Gladiator*. Very naturally our Government was deeply grieved at this defeat; and I said to my Bear shortly after, as I was giving an exhibition in Ohio—I said, "Brewin, are you not sorry the National arms has sustained a defeat?" His business was to wale dismal, and bow his head down, the band (a barrel organ and a violin) playing slow and melancholy music. What did the grizzly old cuss do, however, but commence darning and larking in the most joyous manner? I had a narrow escape from being imprisoned for disloyalty.

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DISLIKES

BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

I want it to be understood that I consider that a certain number of persons are at liberty to dislike me peremptorily, without showing cause, and that they give no offense whatever in so doing.

If I did not cheerfully acquiesce in this sentiment towards myself on the part of others, I should not feel at liberty to indulge my own aversions. I try to cultivate a Christian feeling to all my fellow-creatures, but inasmuch as I must also respect truth and honesty, I confess to myself a certain number of inalienable dislikes and prejudices, some of which may possibly be shared by others. Some of these are purely instinctive, for others I can assign a reason. Our likes and dislikes play so important a part in the order of things that it is well to see on what they are founded.

There are persons I meet occasionally who are too intelligent by half for my liking. They know my thoughts beforehand, and tell me what I was going to say. Of course they are masters of all my knowledge, and a good deal besides; have read all the books I have read, and in later editions; have had all the experiences I have been through, and more too. In my private opinion every

mother's son of them will lie at any time rather than confess ignorance.

I have a kind of dread, rather than hatred, of persons with a large excess of vitality; great feeders, great laughers, great story-tellers, who come sweeping over their company with a huge tidal wave of animal spirits and boisterous merriment. I have pretty good spirits myself, and enjoy a little mild pleasantry, but I am oppressed and extinguished by these great lusty, noisy creatures, and feel as if I were a mute at a funeral when they get into full blast.

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I can not get along much better with those drooping, languid people, whose vitality falls short as much as that of the others is in excess. I have not life enough for two; I wish I had. It is not very enlivening to meet a fellow-creature whose expression and accents say, "You are the hair that breaks the camel's back of my endurance, you are the last drop that makes my cup of woe run over;" persons whose heads drop on one side like those of toothless infants, whose voices recall the tones in which our old snuffing choir used to wail out the verses of

"Life is the time to serve the Lord."

There is another style which does not captivate me. I recognize an attempt at the *grand manner* now and then, in persons who are well enough in their way, but of no particular importance, socially or otherwise. Some family tradition of wealth or distinction is apt to be at the bottom of it, and it survives all the advantages that used to set it off. I like family pride as well as my neighbors, and respect the high-born fellow-citizen whose progenitors have not worked in their shirt-sleeves for the last two generations full as much as I ought to. But *grand-père oblige*; a person with a known grandfather is too distinguished to find it necessary to put on airs. The few Royal Princes I have happened to know were very easy people to get along with, and had not half the social knee-action I have often seen in the collapsed dowagers who lifted their eyebrows at me in my earlier years.

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My heart does not warm as it should do towards the persons, not intimates, who are always *too* glad to see me when we meet by accident, and discover all at once that they have a vast deal to unbosom themselves of to me.

There is one blameless person whom I can not love and have no excuse for hating. It is the innocent fellow-creature, otherwise inoffensive to me, whom I find I have involuntarily joined on turning a corner. I suppose the Mississippi, which was flowing quietly along, minding its own business, hates the Missouri for coming into it all at once with its muddy stream. I suppose the Missouri in like manner hates the Mississippi for diluting with its limpid, but insipid current the rich reminiscences of the varied soils through which its own stream has wandered. I will not compare myself to the clear or the turbid current, but I will own that my heart sinks when I find all of a sudden I am in for a corner confluence, and I cease loving my neighbor as myself until I can get away from him.

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UNCLE SIMON AND UNCLE JIM

BY ARTEMUS WARD

Uncle Simon he
Clumb up a tree
To see
What he could see,
When presentlee
Uncle Jim
Clumb up beside of him
And squatted down by he.

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THE LITTLE MOCK-MAN

BY JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

The Little Mock-man on the Stairs—
He mocks the lady's horse 'at rares
At bi-sickles an' things,—
He mocks the mens 'at rides 'em, too;
An' mocks the Movers, drivin' through,
An' hollers "Here's the way *you* do
With them-air hitchin'-strings!"
"Ho! ho!" he'll say,
Ole Settlers' Day,
When they're all jogglin' by,—
"You look like *this*,"

He'll say, an' twis'
His mouth an' squint his eye
An' 'tend like *he* wuz beat the bass
Drum at both ends—an' toots and blaes
Ole dinner-horn an' puffs his face—
The Little Mock-man on the Stairs!

The Little Mock-man on the Stairs
Mocks all the peoples all he cares
'At passes up an' down!
He mocks the chickens round the door,
An' mocks the girl 'at scrubs the floor,
An' mocks the rich, an' mocks the pore,
An' ever'thing in town!
"Ho! ho!" says he,
To you er me;
An' ef we turns an' looks,
He's all cross-eyed
An' mouth all wide
Like Giunts is, in books.—
"Ho! ho!" he yells, "look here at *me*,"
An' rolls his fat eyes roun' an' glares,—
"You look like *this!*" he says, says he—
The Little Mock-man on the Stairs!

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The Little Mock—
The Little Mock—
The Little Mock-man on the Stairs,
He mocks the music-box an' clock,
An' roller-sofy an' the chairs;
He mocks his Pa an' spec's he wears;
He mocks the man 'at picks the pears
An' plums an' peaches on the shares;
He mocks the monkeys an' the bears
On picture-bills, an' rips an' tears
'Em down,—an' mocks ist all he cares,
An' EVER'body EVER'wheres!

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MAMMY'S LULLABY

BY STRICKLAND W. GILLILAN

Sleep, mah li'l pigeon, don' yo' heah yo' mammy coo?
Sunset still a-shinin' in de wes';
Sky am full o' windehs an' de stahs am peepin' froo—
Eb'ryt'ing but mammy's lamb at res'.
Swing 'im to'ds de Eas'lan',
Swing 'im to'ds de Souf—
See dat dove a-comin' wif a olive in 'is mouf!
Angel hahps a-hummin',
Angel banjos strummin'—
Sleep, mah li'l pigeon, don' yo' heah yo' mammy coo?

Cricket fiddleh scrapin' off de rozzum f'um 'is bow,
Whippo'will a-mo'nin' on a lawg;
Moon ez pale ez hit kin be a-risin' mighty slow—
Stahbled at de bahkin' ob de dawg;
Swing de baby Eas'way,
Swing de baby Wes',
Swing 'im to'ds de Souflan' whah de melon grow de bes'!
Angel singers singin',
Angel bells a-ringin',
Sleep, mah li'l pigeon, don' yo' heah yo' mammy coo?

Eyelids des a-droopin' li'l loweh all de w'ile,
Undeh lip a-saggin' des a mite;
Li'l baby toofies showin' so't o' lak a smile,
Whiteh dan de snow, or des ez white.
Swing 'im to'ds de No'flan',
Swing 'im to'ds de Eas'—
Woolly cloud a-comin' fo' t' wrap 'im in 'is fleece!
Angel ban' a-playin'—

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MY SWEETHEART

BY SAMUEL MINTURN PECK

Her height? Perhaps you'd deem her tall—
To be exact, just five feet seven.
Her arching feet are not too small;
Her gleaming eyes are bits of heaven.
Slim are her hands, yet not too wee—
I could not fancy useless fingers,
Her hands are all that hands should be,
And own a touch whose memory lingers.

The hue that lights her oval cheeks
Recalls the pink that tints a cherry;
Upon her chin a dimple speaks,
A disposition blithe and merry.
Her laughter ripples like a brook;
Its sound a heart of stone would soften.
Though sweetness shines in every look,
Her laugh is never loud, nor often.

Though golden locks have won renown
With bards, I never heed their raving;
The girl I love hath locks of brown,
Not tightly curled, but gently waving.
Her mouth?—Perhaps you'd term it large—
Is firmly molded, full and curving;
Her quiet lips are Cupid's charge,
But in the cause of truth unswerving.

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Though little of her neck is seen,
That little is both smooth and sightly;
And fair as marble is its sheen
Above her bodice gleaming whitely.
Her nose is just the proper size,
Without a trace of upward turning.
Her shell-like ears are wee and wise,
The tongue of scandal ever spurning.

In mirth and woe her voice is low,
Her calm demeanor never fluttered;
Her every accent seems to go
Straight to one's heart as soon as uttered.
She ne'er coquets as others do;
Her tender heart would never let her.
Where does she dwell? I would I knew;
As yet, alas! I've never met her.

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THE AUTO RUBAIYAT^[5]

BY REGINALD WRIGHT KAUFFMAN

Move!—Or the Devil Red who puts to flight
Whate'er's before him, to the Left or Right,
Will toss you high as Heaven when he strikes
Your poor clay carcass with his master-might!

As the Cock crows the "Fiends" who stand before
The Starting-Point, amid the Stream's wild roar,
Shake hands, make wills, and duly are confess'd,
Lest, once departed, they return no more.

For whether towards Madrid or Washington,
Whether by steam or gasoline they run,
Pedestrians keep getting in their way,

Chauffeurs are being slaughtered one by one.

A new Fool's every minute born, you say;
Yes, but where speeds the Fool of Yesterday?
 Beneath the Road he sleeps, the Autos roar
Close o'er his head, but can not thrill his clay.

Well, let him sleep! For what have ye to do
With him, who this or Anything pursue
 So it take swiftness?—Let the Children scream,
Or Constables shout after—heed not you.

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Oh ye who anti-auto laws would make
And still insist upon the silly brake,
 Get in, and try a spin, and then you'll see
How many fines you will impose—and take!

Ah, my Beloved, fill the Tank that cheers,
Nor heed the Law's rebuke, the Rabble's tears,
 Quick! For To-morrow you and I may be
Ourselves with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand Years.

A pair of Goggles and a Cap, I trow,
A Stench, a Roar, and my Machine and Thou
 Beside me, going ninety miles an hour—
Oh, Turnpike-road were Paradise enow!

Ah, Love, could we successfully conspire
Against this sorry World for our desire,
 Would we not shatter it to bits without
So much of damage as a busted tire?

With Gasoline my fading Life provide,
And wash my Body in it when I've died,
 And lay me, shrouded in my Cap and Cape,
By some not Autoless new Speedway's side.

Yon "Devil" that goes pricking o'er the Plain,
How oft hereafter will she go again!
 How oft hereafter will she seek her prey?
But seek, alas, for one of us in vain!

And when, like her, O Love, you come to take
Your morning spin for Appetite's sweet sake,
 And pass the spot where I lay buried, then,
In memory of me, fling wide the Brake!

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THE TWO LADIES

BY CAROLYN WELLS

Once on a Time there were Two Ladies at a Shop where Gorgeous and Expensive Silks were temptingly displayed. "Only Six Dollars a Yard, Madam," said the Shopman to One of the Ladies, as he held up the Lustrous Breadths in those Tempting Fan-shaped Folds peculiar to Shopmen.

The Lady hesitated, and looked Dubiously at the Silk, for she knew it was Beyond her Means.

The Shopman Continued: "Very Cheap at the Price, and I have Only this One Dress Pattern remaining. You will Take it? Yes? Certainly, I will Send it at Once."

The Lady went away filled with Deep Regret because she had squandered her Money so Foolishly, and wished she had been Firm in her Refusal to buy the Goods.

The Other Lady saw a similar Silk. She felt it Between her Fingers, Measured its Width with her Eye, and then said Impulsively, "Oh, That is just What I Want. I will Take Twenty Yards."

No Sooner was the Silk cut off than the Lady felt Sharp Twinges of Remorse, for she knew she must Pay for it with the Money she had Saved Up for a new Dining-Room Carpet.

MORALS:

This Fable teaches that the Woman Who Deliberates Is Lost, and That We Should Think Twice Before We Speak Once.

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THE DIAMOND WEDDING

BY EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

O Love! Love! Love! What times were those,
 Long ere the age of belles and beaux,
And Brussels lace and silken hose,
When, in the green Arcadian close,
You married Psyche under the rose,
 With only the grass for bedding!
Heart to heart, and hand to hand,
You followed Nature's sweet command,
Roaming lovingly through the land,
 Nor sighed for a Diamond Wedding.

So have we read in classic Ovid,
How Hero watched for her belovèd,
 Impassioned youth, Leander.
She was the fairest of the fair,
And wrapt him round with her golden hair,
Whenever he landed cold and bare,
With nothing to eat and nothing to wear,
 And wetter than any gander;
For Love was Love, and better than money;
The slyer the theft, the sweeter the honey;
And kissing was clover, all the world over,
 Wherever Cupid might wander.

So thousands of years have come and gone,
And still the moon is shining on,
 Still Hymen's torch is lighted;
And hitherto, in this land of the West,
Most couples in love have thought it best
To follow the ancient way of the rest,
 And quietly get united.

But now, True Love, you're growing old—
Bought and sold, with silver and gold,
 Like a house, or a horse and carriage!
 Midnight talks,
 Moonlight walks,
The glance of the eye and sweetheart sigh,
The shadowy haunts, with no one by,
I do not wish to disparage;
 But every kiss
 Has a price for its bliss,
In the modern code of marriage;

 And the compact sweet
 Is not complete
Till the high contracting parties meet
 Before the altar of Mammon;
And the bride must be led to a silver bower,
Where pearls and rubies fall in a shower
 That would frighten Jupiter Ammon!

 I need not tell
 How it befell,
 (Since Jenkins has told the story
Over and over and over again
In a style I can not hope to attain,
 And covered himself with glory!)
How it befell, one summer's day,
The king of the Cubans strolled this way—
King January's his name, they say—
And fell in love with the Princess May,
 The reigning belle of Manhattan;
Nor how he began to smirk and sue,
And dress as lovers who come to woo,
Or as Max Maretzek and Julien do,
When they sit full-bloomed in the ladies' view,
 And flourish the wondrous baton.

He wasn't one of your Polish nobles,
Whose presence their country somehow troubles,

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And so our cities receive them;
 Nor one of your make-believe Spanish grandees,
 Who ply our daughters with lies and candies
 Until the poor girls believe them.
 No, he was no such charlatan—
 Count de Hoboken Flash-in-the-pan,
 Full of gasconade and bravado—
 But a regular, rich Don Rataplan,
 Santa Claus de la Muscovado,
 Señor Grandissimo Bastinado.
 His was the rental of half Havana
 And all Matanzas; and Santa Anna,
 Rich as he was, could hardly hold
 A candle to light the mines of gold
 Our Cuban owned, choke-full of diggers;
 And broad plantations, that, in round figures,
 Were stocked with at least five thousand niggers!
 "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may!"
 The Señor swore to carry the day,
 To capture the beautiful Princess May,
 With his battery of treasure;
 Velvet and lace she should not lack;
 Tiffany, Haughwout, Ball & Black,
 Genin and Stewart his suit should back,
 And come and go at her pleasure;
 Jet and lava—silver and gold—
 Garnets—emeralds rare to behold—
 Diamonds—sapphires—wealth untold—
 All were hers, to have and to hold:
 Enough to fill a peck measure!

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He didn't bring all his forces on
 At once, but like a crafty old Don,
 Who many a heart had fought and won,
 Kept bidding a little higher;
 And every time he made his bid,
 And what she said, and all they did—
 'Twas written down,
 For the good of the town,
 By Jeems, of *The Daily Flyer*.

A coach and horses, you'd think, would buy
 For the Don an easy victory;
 But slowly our Princess yielded.
 A diamond necklace caught her eye,
 But a wreath of pearls first made her sigh.
 She knew the worth of each maiden glance,
 And, like young colts, that curvet and prance,
 She led the Don a deuce of a dance,
 In spite of the wealth he wielded.
 She stood such a fire of silks and laces,
 Jewels and gold dressing-cases,
 And ruby brooches, and jets and pearls,
 That every one of her dainty curls
 Brought the price of a hundred common girls;
 Folks thought the lass demented!
 But at last a wonderful diamond ring,
 An infant Kohinoor, did the thing,
 And, sighing with love, or something the same,
 (What's in a name?)
 The Princess May consented.

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Ring! ring the bells, and bring
 The people to see the marrying!
 Let the gaunt and hungry and ragged poor
 Throng round the great cathedral door,
 To wonder what all the hubbub's for,
 And sometimes stupidly wonder
 At so much sunshine and brightness which
 Fall from the church upon the rich,
 While the poor get all the thunder.

Ring, ring! merry bells, ring!
 O fortunate few,
 With letters blue,

Good for a seat and a nearer view!
 Fortunate few, whom I dare not name;
 Dilettanti! Crème de la Crème!
 We commoners stood by the street façade,
 And caught a glimpse of the cavalcade.
 We saw the bride
 In diamond pride,
 With jeweled maidens to guard her side—
 Six lustrous maidens in tarletan.
 She led the van of the caravan;
 Close behind her, her mother
 (Dressed in gorgeous *moire antique*,
 That told as plainly as words could speak,
 She was more antique than the other)
 Leaned on the arm of Don Rataplan,
 Santa Claus de la Muscovado,
 Señor Grandissimo Bastinado.
 Happy mortal! fortunate man!
 And Marquis of El Dorado!

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In they swept, all riches and grace,
 Silks and satins, jewels and lace;
 In they swept from the dazzled sun,
 And soon in the church the deed was done.
 Three prelates stood on the chancel high:
 A knot that gold and silver can buy,
 Gold and silver may yet untie,
 Unless it is tightly fastened;
 What's worth doing at all's worth doing well,
 And the sale of a young Manhattan belle
 Is not to be pushed or hastened;
 So two Very-Reverends graced the scene,
 And the tall Archbishop stood between,
 By prayer and fasting chastened;
 The Pope himself would have come from Rome,
 But Garibaldi kept him at home.
 Haply those robed prelates thought
 Their words were the power that tied the knot;
 But another power that love-knot tied,
 And I saw the chain round the neck of the bride—
 A glistening, priceless, marvelous chain,
 Coiled with diamonds again and again,
 As befits a diamond wedding;
 Yet still 'twas a chain, and I thought she knew it,
 And half-way longed for the will to undo it,
 By the secret tears she was shedding.

But isn't it odd to think, whenever
 We all go through that terrible River—
 Whose sluggish tide alone can sever
 (The Archbishop says) the Church decree,
 By floating one into Eternity
 And leaving the other alive as ever—
 As each wades through that ghastly stream,
 The satins that rustle and gems that gleam,
 Will grow pale and heavy, and sink away
 To the noisome River's bottom-clay!
 Then the costly bride and her maidens six,
 Will shiver upon the banks of the Styx,
 Quite as helpless as they were born—
 Naked souls, and very forlorn;
 The Princess, then, must shift for herself,
 And lay her royalty on the shelf;
 She, and the beautiful Empress, yonder,
 Whose robes are now the wide world's wonder,
 And even ourselves, and our dear little wives,
 Who calico wear each morn of their lives,
 And the sewing-girls, and *les chiffonniers*,
 In rags and hunger—a gaunt array—
 And all the grooms of the caravan—
 Ay, even the great Don Rataplan
 Santa Claus de la Muscavado
 Señor Grandissimo Bastinado—
 That gold-encrusted, fortunate man—
 All will land in naked equality:

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The lord of a ribboned principality
Will mourn the loss of his *cordon*;
Nothing to eat and nothing to wear
Will certainly be the fashion there!
Ten to one, and I'll go it alone;
Those most used to a rag and a bone,
Though here on earth they labor and groan,
Will stand it best, as they wade abreast
To the other side of Jordan.

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AN ARKANSAS PLANTER

BY OPIE READ

Slowly and heavily the Major walked out upon the veranda. He stood upon the steps leading down into the yard, and he saw Louise afar off standing upon the river's yellow edge. She had thrown her hat upon the sand, and she stood with her hands clasped upon her brown head. A wind blew down the stream, and the water lapped at her feet. The Major looked back into the library, at the door wherein Pennington had stood, and sighed with relief upon finding that he was gone. He looked back toward the river. The girl was walking along the shore, meditatively swinging her hat. He stepped to the corner of the house, and, gazing down the road, saw Pennington on a horse, now sitting straight, now bending low over the horn of the saddle. The old gentleman had a habit of making a sideward motion with his hand as if he would put all unpleasant thoughts behind him, and now he made the motion not only once, but many times. And it seemed that his thoughts would not obey him, for he became more imperative in his pantomimic demand.

At one corner of the large yard, where the smooth ground broke off into a steep slope to the river, there stood a small office built of brick. It was the Major's executive chamber, and thither he directed his steps. Inside this place his laugh was never heard; at the door his smile always faded. In this commercial sanctuary were enforced the exactions that made the plantation thrive. Outside, in the yard, in the "big house," elsewhere under the sky, a plea of distress might moisten his eyes and soften his heart to his own financial disadvantage, but under the moss-grown shingles of the office all was business, hard, uncompromising. It was told in the neighborhood that once, in this inquisition of affairs, he demanded the last cent possessed by a widowed woman, but that, while she was on her way home, he overtook her, graciously returned the money and magnanimously tore to pieces a mortgage that he held against her small estate.

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Just as he entered the office there came across the yard a loud and impatient voice. "Here, Bill, confound you, come and take this horse. Don't you hear me, you idiot? You infernal niggers are getting to be so no-account that the last one of you ought to be driven off the place. Trot, confound you. Here, take this horse to the stable and feed him. Where is the Major? In the office? The devil he is."

Toward the office slowly strode old Gideon Batts, fanning himself with his white slouch hat. He was short, fat, and bald; he was bow-legged with a comical squat; his eyes stuck out like the eyes of a swamp frog; his nose was enormous, shapeless, and red. To the Major's family he traced the dimmest line of kinship. During twenty years he had operated a small plantation that belonged to the Major, and he was always at least six years behind with his rent. He had married the widow Martin, and afterward swore that he had been disgracefully deceived by her, that he had expected much but had found her moneyless; and after this he had but small faith in woman. His wife died and he went into contented mourning, and out of gratitude to his satisfied melancholy, swore that he would pay his rent, but failed. Upon the Major he held a strong hold, and this was a puzzle to his neighbors. Their characters stood at fantastic and whimsical variance; one never in debt, the other never out of debt; one clamped by honor, the other feeling not its restraining pinch. But together they would ride abroad, laughing along the road. To Mrs. Cranceford old Gid was a pest. With the shrewd digs of a woman, the blood-letting side stabs of her sex, she had often shown her disapproval of the strong favor in which the Major held him; she vowed that her husband had gathered many an oath from Gid's swollen store of execration (when, in truth, Gid had been an apt pupil under the Major), and she had hoped that the Major's attachment to the church would of necessity free him from the humiliating association with the old sinner, but it did not, for they continued to ride abroad, laughing along the road.

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Like a skittish horse old Gid shied at the office door. Once he had crossed that threshold and it had cost him a crop of cotton.

"How are you, John?" was Gid's salutation as he edged off, still fanning himself.

"How are you, sir?" was the Major's stiff recognition of the fact that Gid was on earth.

"Getting hotter, I believe, John."

"I presume it is, sir." The Major sat with his elbow resting on a desk, and about him were stacked threatening bundles of papers; and old Gid knew that in those commercial romances he himself

was a familiar character.

"Are you busy, John?"

"Yes, but you may come in."

"No, I thank you. Don't believe I've got time."

"Then take time. I want to talk to you. Come in."

"No, not to-day, John. Fact is I'm not feeling very well. Head's all stopped up with a cold, and these summer colds are awful, I tell you. It was a summer cold that took my father off."

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"How's your cotton in that low strip along the bayou?"

"Tolerable, John; tolerable."

"Come in. I want to talk to you about it."

"Don't believe I can stand the air in there, John. Head all stopped up. Don't believe I'm going to live very long."

"Nonsense. You are as strong as a buck."

"You may think so, John, but I'm not. I thought father was strong, too, but a summer cold got him. I am getting along in years, John, and I find that I have to take care of myself. But if you really want to talk to me about that piece of cotton, come out where it's cool."

The Major shoved back his papers and arose, but hesitated; and Gid stood looking on, fanning himself. The Major stepped out and Gid's face was split asunder with a broad smile.

"I gad. I've been up town and had a set-to with old Baucum and the rest of them. Pulled up fifty winner at poker and jumped. Devilish glad to see you; miss you every minute of the time I'm away. Let's go over here and sit down on that bench."

They walked toward a bench under a live-oak tree, and upon Gid's shoulder the Major's hand affectionately rested. They halted to laugh, and old Gid shoved the Major away from him, then seized him and drew him back. They sat down, still laughing, but suddenly the Major became serious.

"Gid, I'm in trouble," he said.

"Nonsense, my boy, there is no such thing as trouble. Throw it off. Look at me. I've had enough of what the world calls trouble to kill a dozen ordinary men, but just look at me—getting stronger every day. Throw it off. What is it anyway?"

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"Louise declares that she is going to marry Pennington."

"What!" old Gid exclaimed, turning with a bouncing flounce and looking straight at the Major. "Marry Pennington! Why, she shan't, John. That's all there is of it. We object and that settles it. Why, what the deuce can she be thinking about?"

"Thinking about him," the Major answered.

"Yes, but she must quit it. Why, it's outrageous for as sensible a girl as she is to think of marrying that fellow. You leave it to me; hear what I said? Leave it to me."

This suggested shift of responsibility did not remove the shadow of sadness that had fallen across the Major's countenance.

"You leave it to me and I'll give her a talk she'll not forget. I'll make her understand that she's a queen, and a woman is pretty devilish skittish about marrying anybody when you convince her that she's a queen. What does your wife say about it?"

"She hasn't said anything. She's out visiting and I haven't seen her since Louise told me of her determination to marry him."

"Don't say determination, John. Say foolish notion. But it's all right."

"No, it's not all right."

"What, have you failed to trust me? Is it possible that you have lost faith in me? Don't do that, John, for if you do it will be a never failing source of regret. You don't seem to remember what my powers of persuasion have accomplished in the past. When I was in the legislature, chairman of the Committee on County and County Lines, what did my protest do? It kept them from cutting off a ten-foot strip of this county and adding it to Jefferson. You must remember those things, John, for in the factors of persuasion lie the shaping of human life. I've been riding in the hot sun and I think that a mint julep would hit me now just about where I live. Say, there, Bill, bring us some mint, sugar and whisky. And cold water, mind you."

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"Ah," said old Gideon, sipping his scented drink, "virtue may become wearisome, and we may gape during the most fervent prayer, but I gad, John, there is always the freshness of youth in a mint julep. Pour just a few more drops of liquor into mine, if you please—want it to rattle me a trifle, you know. Recollect those come-all ye songs we used to sing, going down the river? Remember the time I snatched the sword out of my cane and lunged at a horse trader from

Tennessee? Scoundrel grabbed it and broke it off and it was all I could do to keep him from establishing a close and intimate relationship with me. Great old days, John; and I gad, they'll never come again."

"I remember it all, Gid, and it was along there that you fell in love with a woman that lived at Mortimer's Bend."

"Easy, now, John. A trifle more liquor, if you please. Thank you. Yes, I used to call her the wild plum. Sweet thing, and I had no idea that she was married until her lout of a husband came down to the landing with a double-barrel gun. Ah, Lord, if she had been single and worth money I could have made her very happy. Fate hasn't always been my friend, John."

"Possibly not, Gid, but you know that fate to be just should divide her favors, and this time she leaned toward the woman."

"Slow, John. I gad, there's your wife."

A carriage drew up at the yard gate and a woman stepped out. She did not go into the house, but seeing the Major, came toward him. She was tall, with large black eyes and very gray hair. In her step was suggested the pride of an old Kentucky family, belles, judges and generals. She smiled at the Major and bowed stiffly at old Gid. The two men arose.

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"Thank you, I don't care to sit down," she said. "Where is Louise?"

"I saw her down by the river just now," the Major answered.

"I wish to see her at once," said his wife.

"Shall I go and call her, madam?" Gid asked.

She gave him a look of surprise and answered: "No, I thank you."

"No trouble, I assure you," Gid persisted. "I am pleased to say that age has not affected my voice, except to mellow it with more of reverence when I address the wife of a noble man and the mother of a charming girl."

She had dignity, but humor was never lost upon her, and she smiled. This was encouraging, and old Gid proceeded: "I was just telling the Major of my splendid prospects for a bountiful crop this year, and I feel that with this blessing of Providence I shall soon be able to meet all my obligations. I saw our rector, Mr. Mills, this morning, and he spoke of how thankful I ought to be—he had just passed my bayou field—and I told him that I would not only assert my gratitude, but would prove it with a substantial donation to the church at the end of the season."

In the glance which she gave him there was refined and gentle contempt; and then she looked down upon the decanter of whisky. Old Gideon drew down the corners of his mouth, as was his wont when he strove to excite compassion.

"Yes," he said with a note of pity forced upon his voice, "I am exceedingly thankful for all the blessings that have come to me, but I haven't been very well of late; rather feeble to-day, and the kind Major noticing it, insisted upon my taking a little liquor, the medicine of our sturdy and gallant fathers, madam."

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The Major sprawled himself back with a roaring laugh, and hereupon Gid added: "It takes the Major a long time to get over a joke. Told him one just now and it tickled him mighty nigh to death. Well, I must be going now, and, madam, if I should chance to see anything of your charming daughter, I will tell her that you desire a conference with her. William," he called, "my horse, if you please."

The Major's wife went into the house as Batts came up, glancing back at him as she passed through the door; and in her eyes there was nothing as soft as a tear. The old fellow winced, as he nearly always did when she gave him a direct look.

"Are you all well?" Gideon asked, lifting the tails of his long coat and seating himself in a rocking chair.

"First-rate," the Major answered, drawing forward another rocker; and when he had sat down, he added: "Somewhat of an essence of November in the air."

"Yes," Gid assented; "felt it in my joints before I got up this morning." From his pocket he took a plug of tobacco.

"I thought you'd given up chewing," said the Major. "Last time I saw you I understood you to say that you had thrown your tobacco away."

"I did, John; but, I gad, I watched pretty close where I threw it. Fellow over here gave me some stuff that he said would cure me of the appetite, and I took it until I was afraid it would, and then threw it away. I find that when a man quits tobacco he hasn't anything to look forward to. I quit for three days once, and on the third day, about the time I got up from the dinner table, I asked myself: 'Well, now, got anything to come next?' And all I could see before me was hours of

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hankering; and, I gad, I slapped a negro boy on a horse and told him to gallop over to the store and fetch me a hunk of tobacco. And after I broke my resolution I thought I'd have a fit there in the yard waiting for that boy to come back. I don't believe that it's right for a man to kill any appetite that the Lord has given him. Of course, I don't believe in the abuse of a good thing, but it's better to abuse it a little sometimes than not to have it at all. If virtue consists in deadening the nervous system to all pleasurable influences, why, you may just mark my name off the list. There was old man Haskill. I sat up with him the night after he died, and one of the men with me was harping upon the great life the old fellow had lived—never chewed, never smoked, never was drunk, never gambled, never did anything except to stand still and be virtuous—and I couldn't help but feel that he had lost nothing by dying."

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THE TWO YOUNG MEN

BY CAROLYN WELLS

Once on a Time there were Two Young Men of Promising Capabilities.

One pursued no Especial Branch of Education, but Contented himself with a Smattering of many different Arts and Sciences, exhibiting a Moderate Proficiency in Each. When he Came to Make a Choice of some means of Earning a Livelihood, he found he was Unsuccessful, for he had no Specialty, and Every Employer seemed to Require an Expert in his Line.

The Other, from his Earliest Youth, bent all his Energies toward Learning to play the Piano. He studied at Home and Abroad with Greatest Masters, and he Achieved Wonderful Success. But as he was about to Begin his Triumphant and Profitable Career, he had the Misfortune to lose both Thumbs in a Railway Accident.

Thus he was Deprived of his Intended Means of Earning a Living, and as he had no other Accomplishment he was Forced to Subsist on Charity.

MORALS:

This Fable teaches that a Jack of all Trades is Master of None, and that It Is Not Well to put All our Eggs in One Basket.

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THE TWO HOUSEWIVES

BY CAROLYN WELLS

Once on a Time there were Two Housewives who must Needs go to Market to purchase the Day's Supplies.

One of Them, who was of a Dilatory Nature, said:

"I will not Hurry Myself, for I Doubt Not the Market contains Plenty for all who come."

She therefore Sauntered Forth at her Leisure, and on reaching the Market she found to her Dismay that the Choicest Cuts and the Finest Produce had All been Sold, and there remained for her only the Inferior Meats and Some Withered Vegetables.

The Other, who was One of the Hustling, Wide-awake Sort, said:

"I will Bestir myself Betimes and Hasten to Market that I may Take my Pick ere my Neighbors appear on the Scene."

She did so, and when she Reached the Market she Discovered that the Fresh Produce had not yet Arrived, and she must Content herself with the Remnants of Yesterday's Stock.

MORALS:

This Fable teaches that The Early Bird Gets the Worm, and that There Are Always as Good Fish In the Sea as Ever were Caught.

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IN PHILISTIA

BY BLISS CARMAN

Of all the places on the map,

Some queer and others queerer,
Arcadia is dear to me,
Philistia is dearer.

There dwell the few who never knew
The pangs of heavenly hunger
As fresh and fair and fond and frail
As when the world was younger.

If there is any sweeter sound
Than bobolinks or thrushes,
It is the *frou-frou* of their silks—
The roll of their barouches.

I love them even when they're good,
As well as when they're sinners—
When they are sad and worldly wise
And when they are beginners.

(I say I do; of course the fact,
For better or for worse, is,
My unerratic life denies
My too erotic verses.)

I dote upon their waywardness,
Their foibles and their follies.
If there's a madder pate than Di's,
Perhaps it may be Dolly's.

They have no "problems" to discuss,
No "theories" to discover;
They are not "new"; and I—I am
Their very grateful lover.

I care not if their minds confuse
Alastor with Aladdin;
And Cimabue is far less
To them than Chimmie Fadden.

They never heard of William Blake,
Nor saw a Botticelli;
Yet one is, "Yours till death, Louise,"
And one, "Your loving Nelly."

They never tease me for my views,
Nor tax me with my grammar;
Nor test me on the latest news,
Until I have to stammer.

They never talk about their "moods,"
They never know they have them;
The world is good enough for them,
And that is why I love them.

They never puzzle me with Greek,
Nor drive me mad with Ibsen;
Yet over forms as fair as Eve's
They wear the gowns of Gibson.

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THE DYING GAG

BY JAMES L. FORD

There was an affecting scene on the stage of a New York theater the other night—a scene invisible to the audience and not down on the bills, but one far more touching and pathetic than anything enacted before the footlights that night, although it was a minstrel company that gave the entertainment.

It was a wild, blustering night, and the wind howled mournfully around the street corners, blinding the pedestrians with the clouds of dust that it caught up from the gutters and hurled into their faces.

Old man Sweeny, the stage doorkeeper, dozing in his little glazed box, was awakened by a suddengust that banged the stage door and then went howling along the corridor, almost

extinguishing the gas-jets and making the minstrels shiver in their dressing-rooms.

"What! You here to-night!" exclaimed old man Sweeny, as a frail figure, muffled up in a huge ulster, staggered through the doorway and stood leaning against the wall, trying to catch his breath.

"Yes; I felt that I couldn't stay away from the footlights to-night. They tell me I'm old and worn out and had better take a rest, but I'll go on till I drop," and with a hollow cough the Old Gag plodded slowly down the dim and drafty corridor and sank wearily on a sofa in the big dressing-room, where the other Gags and Conundrums were awaiting their cues.

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"Poor old fellow!" said one of them, sadly. "He can't hold out much longer."

"He ought not to go on except at matinees," replied another veteran, who was standing in front of the mirror trimming his long, silvery beard, and just then an attendant came in with several basins of gruel, and the old Jests tucked napkins under their chins and sat down to partake of a little nourishment before going on.

The bell tinkled and the entertainment began. One after another the Jokes and Conundrums heard their cues, went on, and returned to the dressing-room, for they all had to go on again in the after-piece. The house was crowded to the dome, and there was scarcely a dry eye in the vast audience as one after another of the old Quips and Jests that had been treasured household words in many a family came on and then disappeared to make room for others of their kind.

As the evening wore on the whisper ran through the theater that the Old Gag was going on that night—perhaps for the last time; and many an eye grew dim, many a pulse beat quicker at the thought of listening once more to that hoary Jest, about whose head were clustered so many sacred memories.

Meanwhile the Old Gag was sitting in his corner of the dressing-room, his head bowed on his breast, his gruel untasted on the tray before him. The other Gags came and went, but he heeded them not. His thoughts were far away. He was dreaming of old days, of his early struggles for fame, and of his friends and companions of years ago. "Where are they now?" he asked himself, sadly. "Some are wanderers on the face of the earth, in comic operas. Two of them found ignoble graves in the 'Tourists' company. Others are sleeping beneath the daisies in Harper's 'Editor's Drawer.'"

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"You're called, sir!"

The Old Gag awoke from his reverie, started to his feet, and, throwing aside his heavy ulster, staggered to the entrance and stood there patiently waiting for his cue.

"You're hardly strong enough to go on to-night," said a Merry Jest, touching him kindly on the arm; but the gray-bearded one shook him off, saying hoarsely:

"Let be! Let be! I must read those old lines once more—it may be for the last time."

And now a solemn hush fell upon the vast audience as a sad-faced minstrel uttered in tear-compelling accents the most pathetic words in all the literature of minstrelsy:

"And so you say, Mr. Johnson, that all the people on the ship were perishing of hunger, and yet you were eating fried eggs. How do you account for that?"

For one moment a deathlike silence prevailed. Then the Old Gag stepped forward and in clear, ringing tones replied:

"The ship lay to, and I got one."

A wild, heartrending sob came from the audience and relieved the tension as the Old Gag staggered back into the entrance and fell into the friendly arms that were waiting to receive him.

Sobbing Conundrums bore him to a couch in the dressing-room. Weeping Jokes strove in vain to bring back the spark of life to his inanimate form. But all to no avail.

The Old Gag was dead.

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IN ELIZABETH'S DAY

BY WALLACE RICE

Who would not give the treasure
Of very many lives
If some kind fate would pleasure
To let him be where Ben is
A-playing Kit at tennis,
Or playing Will at fives?

The racquet ne'er so deftly

Is turned, whoever strives,
The ball flies ne'er so swiftly
As thought and tongue where Ben is
A-playing Kit at tennis,
Or playing Will at fives.

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THE TWO AUTOMOBILISTS

BY CAROLYN WELLS

Once on a Time there were Two Young Men, each of whom Bought an Automobile.

One Young Man, being of a Bold and Audacious nature, said:

"I will make my Machine go so Fast that I will break all Previous Records."

Accordingly, he did So, and he Flew through the Small Town like a Red Dragon Pursuing his Prey.

Unheeding all Obstacles in his Mad Career, his Automobile ran into a Wall of Rock, and was dashed to Pieces. Also, the young Man was killed.

The Other Young Man, being of a Timorous and Careful Disposition, started off with great Caution and Rode at a Slow Pace, pausing now and then, Lest he might Run into Something.

The Result was, that Two Automobiles and an Ice Wagon ran into him from behind, spoiling his Car and Killing the Cautious Young Man.

MORALS:

This Fable teaches Us, The More Haste The Less Speed, and Delays Are Dangerous.

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THE NEW VERSION

BY W.J. LAMPTON

A soldier of the Russians
Lay japanned at Tschrtzvjkjskivitch,
There was lack of woman's nursing
And other comforts which
Might add to his last moments
And smooth the final way;—
But a comrade stood beside him
To hear what he might say.
The japanned Russian faltered
As he took that comrade's hand,
And he said: "I never more shall see
My own my native land;
Take a message and a token
To some distant friends of mine,
For I was born at Smnlxzrskgqrxzski,
Fair Smnlxzrskgqrxzski on the Irkztrvzkimnov."

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SOUTHERN SKETCHES

BY BILL ARP

JIM ALLCORN

I was only thinkin' how much better it is to be in a lively humor than be goin' about like a disappointed offis seeker. Good humor is a blessed thing in a family and smooths down a heap of trubble. I never was mad but a few times in my life, and then I wasn't mad long. Foaks thought I was mad when I fout Jim Allcorn, but I wasent. I never had had any grudge agin Jim. He had never done me any harm, but I could hear of his sayin' around in the naborhood that Bill Arp had played cock of the walk long enuf. So one day I went over to Chulio court ground to joak with the boys, and shore enuf Jim was there, and I soon perseewed that the devil was in him. He had never been whipped by anybody in the distrikt, and he outweighed me by about fifteen pounds. A drink

or two had made him sassy, and so he commenced walkin' around first to one crowd, and then to another, darin' anybody to fite him. He would pint to his forrerd and say, "I'll give anybody five dollars to hit that." I was standin' tawkin' to Frank Air and John Johnsin, and as nobody took up Jim's offer, thinks says I to myself, if he cums round here a huntin' for a fite he shall have one, by golly. If he dares me to hit him I'll do it if it's the last lick I ever strike on this side of Jordin. Frank Air looked at me, and seemed to know what I was a thinkin', and says he, "Bill, jest let Allcorn alone. He's too big for you, and besides, there ain't nothin' to fite about." By this time Jim was makin' rite towards us. I put myself in position, and by the time he got to us every muscle in my body was strung as tite as a banjo. I was worked up powerful, and felt like I could whip a campmeetin' of wild cats. Shore enuf Jim stepped up defiantly, and lookin' me rite in the eye, says he, "I dare anybody to hit that," and he touched his knuckles to his forrerd. He had barely straightened before I took him rite in the left eye with a sock-dolyger that popped like a wagin' whip. It turned him half round, and as quick as lightnin' I let him hav another on the right temple, and followed it up with a leap that sprawled him as flat as a foot mat. I knowed my customer, and I never giv him time to rally. If ever a man was diligent in business it was me. I took him so hard and so fast in the eyes with my fists, and in his bred basket with my knees, that he didn't hav a chance to see or to breathe, and he was the worst whipped man in two minets I ever seed in my life. When he hollered I helped him up and breshed the dirt off his clothes, and he was as umble as a ded nigger and as sober as a Presbyterian preacher. We took a dram on the strength of it, and was always good frends afterwards.

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But I dident start to tell you about that.

JIM PERKINS (COUSIN OF ELI)

I jist wanted to say that I wasent mad with Jim Allcorn, as sum peepul supposed; but it do illustrate the onsertainty of human kalkulashuns in this subloonery world. The disappointments of life are amazin', and if a man wants to fret and grumble at his luck he can find a reesunable oppertunity to do so every day that he lives. Them sort of constitutional grumblers ain't much cumpany to me. I'd rather be Jim Perkins with a bullit hole through me and take my chances. Jim, you know, was shot down at Gains' Mill, and the ball went in at the umbilikus, as Dr. Battey called it, and cum out at the backbone. The Doktor sounded him, and sez he, "Jeems, my friend, your wound is mortal." Jim looked at the Doktor, and then at me, and sez he, "That's bad, ain't it?" "Mighty bad," sez I, and I was as sorry for him as I ever was for anybody in my life. Sez he, "Bill, I'd make a will if it warn't for one thing." "What's that, Jim?" sez I. He sorter smiled and sez, "I hain't got nothin' to will." He then raised up on his elbow, and sez he, "Doktor, is there one chance in a hundred for me?" and the Doktor sez, "Jest about, Jim." "Well, then," sez he, "I'll git well—I feel it in my gizzard." He looked down at the big hole in his umbilikus, and sez he, "If I do get well, won't it be a great *naval* viktry, Doktor Battey?" Well, shore enuff he did git well, and in two months he was fitin' the Yanks away up in Maryland.

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But I didn't start to tell you about that.

IKE MACKOY

I jest stuck it in by way of illustratin' the good effekts of keepin' up one's spirits. My motto has always been to never say die, as Gen. Nelson sed at the battle of Madagascar, or sum other big river. All things considered, I've had a power of good luck in my life. I don't mean money luck, by no means, for most of my life I've been so ded poor that Lazarus would hev been considered a note shaver compared with me. But I've been in a heap of close places, and sumhow always cum out rite side up with keer. Speakin' of luck, I don't know that I ever told you about that rassel I had with Ike McKoy at Bob Hide's barbyku. You see Ike was perhaps the best rasler in all Cherokee, and he jest hankered after a chance to break a bone or two in my body. Now, you know, I never hunted for a fite nor a fuss in my life, but I never dodged one. I dident want a tilt with Ike, for my opinyun was that he was the best man of the two, but I never sed anything and jest trusted to luck. We was both at the barbyku, and he put on a heap of airs, and strutted around with his shirt collar open clean down to his waist, and his hat cocked on one side as sassy as a confedrit quartermaster. He took a dram or two and stuffed himself full of fresh meat at dinner time. Purty soon it was norated around that Ike was going to banter me for a rassel, and, shore enuff, he did. The boys were all up for some fun, and Ike hollered out, "I'll bet ten dollars I can paster the length of any man on the ground, and I'll giv Bill Arp five dollars to take up the bet." Of course there was no gittin' around the like of that. The banter got my blood up, and so, without waitin' for preliminaries, I shucked myself and went in. The boys was all powerfully excited, and was a bettin' evry dollar they could raise; and Bob Moore, the feller I had licked about a year before, jumped on a stump and sed hed bet twenty dollars to ten that Ike would knock the breath out of me the first fall. I jest walked over to him with the money and sed, "I'll take that bet." The river was right close to the ring, and the bank was purty steep. I had on a pair of old breeches that had been sained in and dried so often they was about half rotten. When we hitched, Ike took good britches hold, and lifted me up and down a few times like I was a child. He was the heaviest, but I had the most spring in me, and so I jest let him play round for sum time, limber like, until he suddenly took a notion to make short work of it by one of his backleg movements. He drew me up to his body and lifted me in the air with a powerful twist. Just at that minit his back was close to the river bank, and as my feet touched the ground I giv a tremenjius jerk backwards, and a shuv forwards, and my britches busted plum open on the back, and tore clean off in front, and he fell from me and tumbled into the water, kerchug, and went

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out of sight as clean as a mud turtle in a mill pond. Such hollerin' as them boys done I reckon never heard in them woods. I jumped in and helped Ike get out as he riz to the top. He had took in a quart or two of water on top of his barbyku, and he set on the bank and throwed up enuf vittels to feed a pack of houns for a week. When he got over it he laffed, and sed Sally told him before he left home he'd better let Bill Arp alone—for nobody could run agin his luck. Ike always believed he would hav throwd me if britches holt hadent broke, and I reckon may be he would. One thing is sertain, it cured him of braggin', and that helps anybody. I never did like a braggin' man. As a genrul thing they ain't much akkount, and remind me of a dog I used to have, named Cesar.

Dogs

But I didnt start to tell you a dog story—only now, since I've mentioned him, I must tell you a circumstance about Cees. He was a middlin' size broot, with fox ears and yaller spots over his eyes, and could out bark and out brag all creation when he was inside the yard. If another dog was goin' along he'd run up and down the palins and bark and take on like he'd give the world if that fence wasent there. So one day when he was showin' off in that way I caught him by the nap of the neck as he run by me, and jest histed him right over and drapped him. He struck the ground like an injun rubber ball, and was back agin on my side in a jiffy. If he had ever jumped that fence before I didnt know it. The other dog run a quarter of a mile without stoppin'. Now, that's the way with sum foaks. If you want to hear war tawk jest put a fence between 'em; and if you want it stopped, jest take the fence away. Dogs is mighty like peepul anyhow. They've got karakter. Sum of em are good, honest, trusty dogs that bark mity little and bite at the right time. Sum are good pluk, and will fite like the dickens when their masters is close by to back em, but ain't worth a cent by themselves. Sum make it a bizness to make other dogs fite. You've seen these little fices a runnin' around growlin' and snappin' when two big dogs cum together. They are jest as keen to get up a row and see a big dog fite as a store clerk or a shoemaker, and seem to enjoy it as much. And then, there's them mean yaller-eyed bull terriers that don't care who they bite, so they bite sumbody. They are no respekter of persons, and I never had much respekt for a man who kept one on his premises. But of all mean, triflin', contemptible dogs in the world, the meanest of all is a country nigger's houn—one that will kill sheep, and suck eggs, and lick the skillet, and steal everything he can find, and try to do as nigh like his master as possibul. Sum dogs are filosofers, and study other dogs' natur, just like foaks study foaks. It's amazin' to see a town dog trot up to a country dog and interview him. How quick he finds out whether it will do to attack him or not. If the country dog shows fite jest notis the consequential dignity with which the town dog retires. He goes off like there was a sudden emergency of bisness a callin' him away. Town dogs sumtimes combine agin a country dog, jest like town boys try to run over country boys. I wish you could see Dr. Miller's dog Cartoosh. He jest lays in the piazzer all day watchin' out for a stray dog, and as soon as he sees him he goes for him, and he can tell in half a minit whether he can whip him or run him; and if he can, he does it instanter, and if he can't he runs to the next yard, where there's two more dogs that nabor with him, and in a minit they all cum a tarin' out together, and that country dog has to run or take a whippin', shore. I've seen Cartoosh play that game many a time. These town pups remind me powerfully of small editurs prowlin' around for news. In my opinyun they is the inventors of the interview bisness.

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INTERVIEWERS

If it ain't a doggish sort of bisnes I'm mistaken in my idees of the proprieties of life. When a man gits into trubble, these sub editurs go fur him right strait, and they force their curosimy away down into his heart strings, and bore into his buzzom with an augur as hard and as cold as chilld iron. Then away they go to skatter his feelins and sekrets to the wide, wide world. You see the poor feller can't help himself, for if he won't talk they'll go off and slander him, and make the publik beleieve he's dun sumthing mean, and is ashamed to own it. I've knowd em to go into a dungeon and interview a man who didnt have two hours to live. Dot rot em. I wish one of em would try to interview me. If he didn't catch leather under his coat tail it would be bekaus he retired prematurely—that's all. But I like editurs sorter—especially sum. I like them that is the gardeens of sleepin' liberty, and good morals, and publik welfare, and sich like; but there's sum kinds I don't like. Them what makes sensation a bizness; feedin' the peepul on skandal, and crime, and gossip, and private quarrels, and them what levies black mail on polytiks, and won't go for a man who won't pay em, and will go for a man that will. Them last watch for elekshun times jest like a sick frog waitin' for rain.

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As Bill Nations used to say, I'd drather be a luniak and gnaw chains in an asylum, than to be an editur that everybody feard and nobody respekted.

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THE TWO BUSINESS MEN

BY CAROLYN WELLS

Once on a Time two Business Men were Each Confronted with what seemed to be a Fine Chance to Make Money.

One Man, being of a Cautious and Prudent Nature, said: "I will not Take Hold of this Matter until I have Carefully Examined it in All its Aspects and Inquired into All its Details."

While he was thus Occupied in a thorough Investigation he Lost his Chance of becoming a Partner in the Project, and as It proved to be a Booming Success, he was Much Chagrined.

The Other Man, when he saw a Golden Opportunity Looming Up Before him, Embraced it at once, without a Preliminary Question or Doubt.

But alas! after he had Invested all his Fortune in it, the Scheme proved to be Worthless, and he Lost all his Money.

MORALS:

This Fable teaches that you should Strike While the Iron is Hot, and Look Before you Leap.

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THE RETORT

BY GEORGE P. MORRIS

Old Nick, who taught the village school,
Wedded a maid of homespun habit;
He was stubborn as a mule,
She was playful as a rabbit.

Poor Jane had scarce become a wife,
Before her husband sought to make her
The pink of country polished life,
And prim and formal as a Quaker.

One day the tutor went abroad,
And simple Jenny sadly missed him;
When he returned, behind her lord
She slyly stole, and fondly kissed him.

The husband's anger arose—and red
And white his face alternate grew.
"Less freedom, ma'am!"—Jane sighed and said,
"Oh dear! I didn't know 'twas you!"

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