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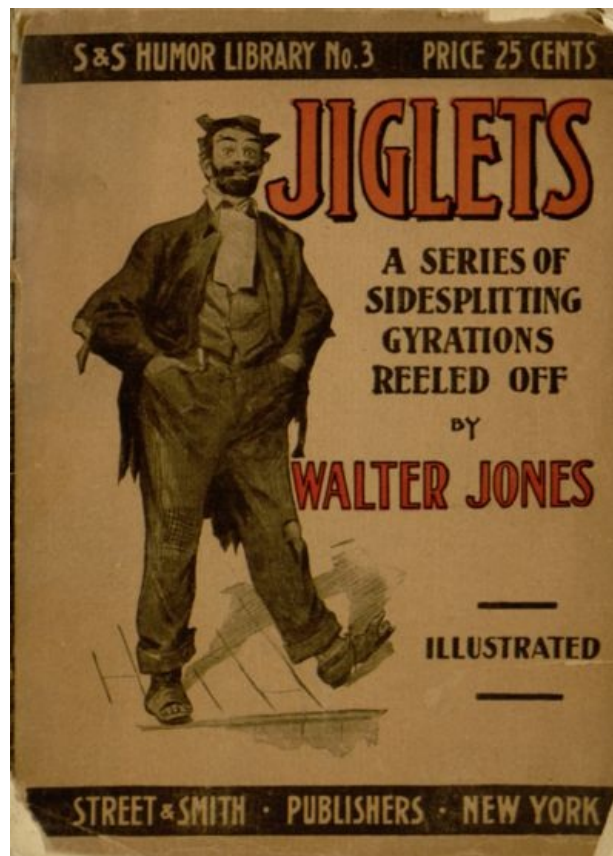
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK JIGLETS: A SERIES OF SIDESPLITTING GYRATIONS REELED OFF— ***



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JIGLETS

**A SERIES OF
SIDESPLITTING
GYRATIONS
REELED OFF**

BY

WALTER JONES

ILLUSTRATED

STREET & SMITH · PUBLISHERS · NEW YORK

"JIGLETS"

A SERIES OF SIDESPLITTING
GYRATIONS REELED OFF..

By
WALTER JONES



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Jiglets

IMPORTANT

DEAR READER:

While an artist has been engaged at a great expense to illustrate this volume of funniness, I want it distinctly understood that the illustrations are purely ornamental and are not intended to be diagrams of or keys to the jokes.

Between you and me, any one of the jokes—if you like it—is worth eleven times the price asked for the book. But, like the filigree work on a lemon merangue pie, the decoration may not make the pie any more palatable—but, it looks a whole lot better.

Confidentially yours,

JIGLETS

Ha! Ha! Ha! I am astonished. I didn't expect to find more than ten persons in the house to-night, and I see there are eleven.

I want to thank that gentleman in the first row—the man with the



vigorous growth of hair. It's such a relief to see a man with some hair, in the front row.

Say, I don't think I ever told you of the time I went with a Shakespearian company to tour the New England States.

Never knew I was an actor? Why, of course.

Wouldn't have thought it? Neither would I, if I didn't know to what extremes a man of my attainments may be driven, when his bread-basket is empty.

Well, I signed for a hundred a week and all expenses.

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I got expenses all right, part of the time, and had to employ one of Pinkerton's men to look after the salary.

Up to yesterday, he hadn't found it; but no actor who goes out of New York town ever expects to get any salary, and I didn't.

I played Hamlet, Egglet, Eyelet, Omelet and To Let.

Every time I played Hamlet, I got an Egglet in the Eyelet, and I saved them up and made an Omelet, which caused such a disturbance among the other boarders, that my landlady told me my room was To Let.

I was in hard luck all around.

The worst blow that ever struck yours truly, was when we hit a little town in Maine called Haystack Mountain.

People there didn't appreciate good acting and the show went busted.

Well, the manager had an urgent engagement with a sick friend in New York, and he left us high and dry.

Some of the girls wept a little and asked how far it was to the railroad station.

I didn't ask how far it was to the station. I knew what to do. I began to walk.

Do you know, I never struck such a confounded lot of ties in all my life.

The railroad must have employed non-union help. You couldn't judge them at all. You'd strike a lot that were three feet apart and think they were all that way. You'd go to sleep until you struck one at a four-foot interval; then you'd wake up pretty quick and murmur gentle nothings about the company.

About the second day out, I landed at the town of Bridgewater. I walked into the only hotel of the place and thought I'd bluff 'em a little.

"What are the rates?" says I.

"Five dollars a day and up," says the clerk.

"Oh, come off," says I, "I'm an actor."

"In that case," says he, "it's five dollars a day, down."

Toward evening, I came to a siding where a lot of box-cars were stalled. I crept on one of the trucks and went to sleep. I woke up to find I was traveling at the rate of forty miles an hour.

Suddenly I became aware that I had a visitor, and I knew my visitor had visitors, too—because I could hear him scratching.

"Say," says I, "who the dickens are you and what do you want?"

"Look here, young feller," says the visitor, "I'm Cornelius Vanderbilt out for a spin in my new automobile, and I won't be disturbed by the likes of you."

"Where do you come from?" says I.

"Maryland," says he. "My father is a great farmer



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down there. He raised a cabbage last year that weighed four hundred pounds. Now, who are you?"

"Why," says I, "I'm Admiral Dewey on a tour of inspection in my private car. I'm going back to Brooklyn Navy Yard to superintend the manufacture of a boiler, so large that it takes two hundred and fifty men to drive one of the rivets."

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"Go slow, there," says he. "What could they do with a boiler so large as that?"

"Why," says I, "they're going to boil that cabbage your father raised."

After a little while he told me his name was Percival Reginald Van Dusenberry. He was an actor, but he had been walking longer than I.

When we struck the town of Grafton, we got off our Pullman, and began looking for the graft.

Percy went up to a cottage and rapped at the door, intending to ask for some cold victuals.

A hand shoved out and gave him a roll of greenbacks. Percy was dumfounded, but took to his heels.

When we were about two miles away, Percy looked at me, and said:

"Those lobsters took me for the landlord."

We located a restaurant presently, and sat waiting at a table for an hour and a half.

Finally, Percy said to the fellow behind the desk:

"Are you the proprietor of this hash house?"

"Yes," says he.

"Well, then I want to know if you sent your waiter away, when you saw us coming, so you could charge us for a night's lodging."

Just then the waiter came in.

"Say," says I, "do you know we have been waiting here for an hour and a half?"

"That's nothing," says he, "I've been waiting here for ten years."

He placed a carafe of water on the table.



"Look here," says Percy, "I never drink water unless it's absolutely pure and healthy. Is this all right?"

"Sure," says the waiter.

Percy took a glassful, and most of it was pollywogs.

"Look here," says he, "I thought you said this water was healthy. Look at those bugs."

"That only proves what I said," says the waiter. "If it wasn't healthy the bugs couldn't live in it."

Just then Percy's eye caught a sign that read:

"All the pancakes you can eat for ten cents."

"I'm going to have some pancakes," says he. "What's yours?"

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"Chicken," says I.

Percy kept eating pancakes.

When he had eaten twenty plates the boss of the joint began to get interested.

Percy was certainly getting the biggest ten cents' worth I ever saw, when he stepped over and says:

"Don't you think you have had enough?"

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"Just one more plate and then—" says Percy.

"Then what?" says the boss.

"Then you can tell the cook to make them a little bit thicker," says Percy.

I tried to chew my chicken, but couldn't get it down. I managed to catch the waiter on his fifteenth lap between the kitchen and Percy's plate, and says:

"Waiter, this chicken is awfully tough."

"Have some pancakes, then," says Percy. "They're good and come cheap."

"Well," says the waiter, "that chicken always was a Jonah. When we tried to kill it, the darned thing flew to the top of the house and we had to shoot it."

"Oh, that accounts for it," says I. "Your aim was bad and you shot the weather cock by mistake."

Percy finally got enough pancakes and paid his ten cents like a man.

We traveled along the road that leads from the hash house, and met a farmer with a gun.

"Say," says I, "have you seen anything worth shooting around here?"

"Not until you came," says he.

I don't blame him though.

Talking of shooting, I don't think I ever told you of the time I went shooting with Teddy.

Teddy is a great shot, but he can't compare with me. I'm going to sing you a song about it, entitled:

"Snap Shot, Half Shot, All Shot; or, It Costs Money To Get Loaded."

On the farms there's consternation,
And there's wide-spread agitation,
For the hunting season's opened up again.
In the paths and in the by-ways,
In the woods and in the highways,
There are packs of dogs and scores of shooting
men.

Now and then a pig is squealing,
Or a hen or rooster keeling
Over suddenly in some sequestered spot.
Upon a close examination,
You may glean the information,
That by some lobster of a gunner it was shot.

Now and then a cow is snorting,
And around a field cavorting,
All because a load of shot has come its
way.
Now and then a horse is rearing,
And in greatest pain appearing,
For it stopped another charge that
went astray.

'Tis no wonder that the granger
Growls each time he sees a stranger,
Prowling through the woods and
fooling with a gun;
For the shooting is alarming,
To the man who does the farming,
And he won't rest easy till the season's
done.

That's a very fine song, I'll admit. Percy is just dead in love with it. He makes me sing it about ten times a day.

He says he can sympathize with the horses and cows, for he has "stopped many a charge that went astray" and knows how it feels.

We left the farmer with the gun, and Percy began to get woefully dry.



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"Great Scott," says he, "I'd give almost anything for a drink of whiskey."

He spied an old gent with a kind face, tottering along the road.

"Just wait a minute," says Percy, "I'll see if that old gent carries a pocket flask."

So he went over and says:

"Kind sir, can you give a poor man who has heart trouble a drop of whiskey?"

"You should not drink that stuff," says the old man, "why do you do it?"

"Because I'm thirsty," says Percy.



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"Then why don't you drink milk?" says he. "Milk, you know, makes blood."

"But," says Percy, "I'm not blood-thirsty."

"The doctors," continued the old man, "say that whiskey ruins the coat of the stomach. What would you do if that happened in your case?"

"I'd mighty soon make the darn thing work in its shirt-sleeves," says Percy.

We walked on and saw a farmhouse through the trees.

Percy went up to ask for some cold victuals and actually got the cold shoulder.

Then we struck the town of Freysburg. There's where poor Percy got fried to a rich, golden brown.

It happened this way.

We saw a large tent in which a revival meeting was going on.

"I'm going to take part," says Percy.

I tried to dissuade him, but it wouldn't go.

The deacon looked him over and says:

"Will the brother relate his experiences?"

I judged that Percy would have a very large contract on his hands, but he went at it like a man.

Everybody was shouting something, so every time Percy said anything, I shouted:

"Thank Heaven for that."

"Ladies and gentlemen," says he, "I've been a villain of the deepest dye."

"Thank Heaven for that," says I.

Percy looked at me and continued:

"Often I have felt tempted to commit suicide."

"Thank Heaven for that," says I.

"I'm heart and soul in the noble cause, but I'm penniless."

"Thank Heaven for that," says I.

Percy went on:

"I know that these noble men and women will raise a subscription to enable me to carry out my aims."

"Thank Heaven for that," says I.

Say, the way Percy got money surprised me.

Finally, we got clear of the tent and just sloped for it.

The next town a constable was waiting for us.

He spotted Percy right away.

"You're wanted for obtaining money under false pretenses," says he.

He took Percy to the court, which was held in the rear of a grocery store.

Going in, I knocked a big cheese off the counter and stooped to pick it up.

"That's all right," says the grocer, "it knows its own way around the counter by this time."



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The judge asked Percy what his profession was.

"I'm an actor," says Percy. "When I'm on the stage I become so absorbed in my part that the theatre vanishes, the audience disappears——"

"Yes," commented the judge, "they go out and ask for their money back. What were you before you became a loafer?" asked the judge.

"I was a gentleman," says Percy.

"That's a good business, but you're not the only one who failed in it," says the judge. "Now what have you to say in your defense?"

"I must wait till my lawyer arrives," says he.

"Why," says the judge, "you were caught red-handed with the goods on. What could your lawyer say that would influence my decision?"

"That's just what I want to find out," says Percy. "But give me a little time and I will explain all."

"All right," says the judge. "Six years at hard labor. I hope you will be able to explain when you get out, or back you'll go for another six." [Pg 16]

I was so afraid that the judge would give me time to explain why I was with Percy that I started to run and didn't stop until I got to Boston.

Now I'm going to sing you a little song, entitled: "He Made a Foolish Break And Got The Laugh; or, Wedded Persons' Compliments."

Said a young and tactless husband
To his inexperienced wife:
"If you would but give up leading
Such a fashionable life,
And devote more time to cooking—
How to mix and when to bake—
Then, perhaps you might make pastry
Such as mother used to make."

And the wife, resenting, answered
(For the worm will turn, you know):
"If you would but give up horses
And a score of clubs or so,
To devote more time to business—
When to buy and what to stake—
Then, perhaps, you might make money,
Such as father used to make."



There! I'm greatly relieved now that I've got that song off my mind. I was afraid I might break down, because it's so touching.

Talking of relief, puts me in mind of a friend of mine who wanted to be relieved, in the worst way, of a barrel of over-ripe sauerkraut. When I heard his tale of woe, I laughed so that I had to go and buy a new pair of suspenders.

You see, he had a German friend who had the kraut and didn't know what to do with it, so he offered to send it home to my friend Jenkins. Jenkins accepted and stored it in his cellar.

The next day, the fellow upstairs, named McCarthy, came down and raised thunder with his wife. When Jenkins came home he heard all about it. He went upstairs and saw the offender.

"Say," says he, "I understand you object to the smell down in my cellar."

"No," says McCarthy, "I don't object to it down there, but when it opens the cellar door and creeps upstairs I do object. It kept me awake all last night."

"Well," said Jenkins, "I'll put it out in the yard behind the dog house."

And he did.

The next morning he went out to feed the dog and found him—dead.

That day



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nine families moved out of Jenkins' flat, and the tenth was just going when he donated the kraut to an orphan asylum. The orphans broke loose and took leg bail.



he threatened to quit.

The last Jenkins heard of the kraut, it was about to be shipped to Dick Croker to sod his lawn at Wantage.

I came near being put under the sod myself the other day.

I heard that one of my best and oldest friends, J. Fishpond O'Morgan, was down with rheumatism in his arm, so I went around to see him. [Pg 19]

As soon as I showed my face in the door, Fishpond howled:

"I'm saved."

I did not know what he was driving at, so I said:

"Sure."

"I want you to do me a favor," says he. "Go around to Prof. Sockem's and tell him to give you some of the usual medicine."

I went to old Sockem's, and just caught him in.

"Doctor," says I, "my friend O'Morgan sent me around for some of the usual for gout."

"All right," says he. "Arm, I suppose. Just roll up your sleeve."

I thought I had struck a maniac, so I tried to humor him.

He came back with a suspicious-looking black bottle and I thought I was a gone goose sure. You see, I had heard so much about the black bottle.

He grabbed my wrist in a grip of iron, poured some of the black bottle stuff on my arm and began to rub it, gently. [Pg 20]

Then he began to rub harder and faster, and I could see my arm swell up like a pillow under the fearful treatment.

I kicked, and finally managed to break loose.

"You confounded scoundrel," I says, "what do you mean by assulting me?"

"Assulting you?" says he; "you wanted some of the usual and you got it good and hard, but let me sell you some of my medicine for swollen arms. It's the best thing in the world for such cases."

Did you ever notice what a lot of trouble a simple, little girl may make? Oh! you girls. You're never happy unless you're making some poor lobster show how much money he has, by blowing it in on you.

You know, though, girls, I appreciate you, if no one else does.

If it weren't for you, I'll bet a dollar to Rockfeller's oil-can that none of the young fellows I see here to-night would have ever thought of coming here. [Pg 21]

Now I'm going to sing you a little warble entitled:

"What a Surprisingly Fresh Man That Jones Is; or, I'd Like to Meet Him Outside."

Many a man has often cussed,

For only an innocent maid;
 Many a bank has gone in the dust,
 For just an innocent maid;
 Many a judge has not been just,
 To only an innocent maid;
 Many a saint went on a bust,
 For just an innocent maid.

Cho. When Johnny goes to his lady's house
 She greets him with a smile;
 At once she starts the glim to douse
 So he can propose in style.

Many a milkman has got the sack,
 For only an innocent maid;
 Many a dude has been knocked on his back,
 For just an innocent maid;
 Many a doctor has had to quack,
 For only an innocent maid;
 Many a dollar is won on the track,
 For just an innocent maid.

Cho. When Johnny takes her to the altar,
 He may think it's for his good,
 In his opinion soon he'll falter,
 When she makes him split the wood.

Many a cop has left his beat,
 For only an innocent maid;
 Many a gambler has had to cheat,
 For just an innocent maid;
 Many a commuter has given his seat,
 To only an innocent maid;
 Many a lover has known pa's foot,
 For just an innocent maid.

Cho. Johnny thinks he's caught a prize,
 When he's only been married a week;
 But when she feeds him on apple pies,
 He feels like taking a sneak.

Did you hear that peculiar toot the fellow with the big horn
 gave when I finished up?

That means "Rotten" in his low vocabulary. He's got a
 grudge against me.

Once, when he didn't occupy his present high position, he
 came to me and wanted me to stake him the price of the
 horn he just insulted me with.

"What!" says I. "Are you going to learn to be a blower? Don't
 you think you are nuisance enough already?"



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[Pg 23]



You
 see,
 I



wanted to save the money. He stood firm
 though, and I had to cough up.

About a week later he came around looking a perfect wreck. His eye was closed, his head
 bandaged, and his clothes in shreds.

"What's the matter?" says I. "Couldn't you manage the horn."

"Well, you see, Brother Jones," says he, "I could manage the horn all right, but I could not manage the neighbors."

This same fellow is a bird fancier. He breeds all kinds of birds.

I asked him to blow me to a small hot bird and a cold bottle now that he was so wealthy, and the stare he gave me was so cold that it froze the highball I carry in my pocket flask.

I don't care, though, if I didn't have the hot bird I had a cold bottle.

He has a great flock of homing pigeons.

The other day he bet a fellow named Robinson, that he could select two out of the bunch that would come home no matter where they were taken.



Robinson thought a while, and then said he'd bet they couldn't come home from Coney Island. I held the stakes.

When the birds were selected and put in the basket, Robinson slyly clipped their wings.

The next day the fellow came to me and claimed the bet.

"What!" says I. "Did those birds come home?"

"Sure," says he. "But their feet are awfully sore."

Say, the other night I was coming down from Yonkers in a trolley car.

No, I wasn't loaded. Do you think every fellow who goes to Yonkers, has to get loaded to drown his sorrow? No, I was quite sober.

One fellow got up in a hurry to leave and brought up plump against a stunning Fire-Island Cinnamon-Bear blond, on the platform. [Pg 25]

"It's a wonder you wouldn't be careful," says she of the red cranium.

"I am," says he, "but I was dazzled by your head-light."

The ruddy complexioned damsel came in and sat beside me.

In the natural course of events we got to talking and swapped childhood memories.

She told me that she was married, but didn't live with her husband.

"In that case," says I, "you must be a grass widow."

"Why, yes," she assented. "By the way, are you a lawn mower?"



I hastened to assure her that I was a married man.

"Do you know," she says, as we were crossing the Harlem River, "I was walking over this bridge one time and suddenly a man ran up, seized me, and before I could cry out, hurled me over the rail."

"Can you swim?" says I.

"No," says she.

"Then how were you saved?"

"Well, you see, I walked ashore."

"Walked ashore," says I. "How could you walk ashore?"

"Well, I had rubber boots on."



I thought that was pretty hard on the Harlem.

Say, that reminds me of a friend of mine who is the most spiteful cuss alive.

The other day he went to visit his uncle whose name is John Smith. He hadn't been to see him in so long that he mistook the house, went up the stoop of the house next door, and rang the bell.

A maid came to the door, evidently very much out of humor.

"Is this John Smith's house?" he asked.

"No, it ain't," she snapped, and slammed the door in his face.

Smith walked the distance of several doors, then went back and rang the same bell.

The identical girl came to the door, and Smith up and said:

"Who the devil said it was John Smith's?" and walked away.

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Smith has a wife who is dead stuck on fortune tellers and palmists.

The other day she called upon an East Indian Prince on Thompson Street and had her fortune told.

Among other things, he told her that she would have visitors soon who would come to stay. She couldn't think who it could be.

One night Smith came home, and his wife rushed up to him and cried:

"Now, don't say again there is nothing in fortune telling. He told me that we would have visitors who'd come to stay, and we have. Our cat has just had kittens."

Another time she went to a palmist, who rambled on telling her the usual stuff they tell every one.

Finally, she says:

"There is a line on your hand that indicates you are a very beautiful woman."

"Does my hand tell that?" says Smith's wife.

"Sure," says the palmist. "You don't suppose I could tell that by looking at your face, do you?"

Yeow—by James, I thought I heard a cat that time.



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Say, I had an accident with a cat the other night, and I'm nervous for fear the S. P. C. A. will get after me.

You see I came home pretty early and, just as I got my key in the door, I heard something behind me.

I didn't pay any attention, and as I opened the door that something scooted past me and slipped upstairs.

I took off my boot, got a light, and—the rest I'll tell you in my latest sonata, entitled:

"Oh, Bring Back My Tabby To Me."



[Pg 29]

Not a mew was heard, not a feline note,
As his corpse to the back yard I hurried;
For I laid him low with my trusty boot,
And thought it was time he was buried.
So I sallied forth, in the dead of the night,
My head meanwhile cautiously turning,
For I feared that his mistress, the old maid next
door,
Might catch on and give me a burning.

No orthodox coffin enclosed the defunct,
Not in paper or rag did I wind him;
But I shoveled him into his cold, narrow bed,
Where no one was likely to find him.
Yes, softly she'll call to the spirit that's gone,
From his new home in vain to allure.

But little he'll care; for Tom will sleep on—
He has an illness no doctor can cure.

That's a pretty good song, if I do say so myself. I always feel like laughing when I sing it, though. It reminds me of my dear departed friend, Tom O'Moore.

This Tom was the brightest fellow that ever lived.

One day he was greatly troubled with an aching tooth. He went to the dentist and exhibited his swollen jaw.

"Which tooth do you want extracted?" asked the dentist.

Tom pointed to a tooth opposite the swelling.

"Why," says the dentist, "the swelling is on the other side."

"Och," says Tom, "is it that small lump you mane, that's nothin'. That's only where Bridget hit me with the lifter."

Tom had the troublesome tooth taken out and left the place.

Outside, he met his dear friend O'Holleran who, as he saw Tom, yelled:

"I say, Tom, did you hear of the frightful miscarriage of justice that McCarthy was the victim of?"

"No," says Tom, "what was it?"

"Well," says O'Holleran, "they locked poor Mac up for being drunk when he was clane sober."

"Begob," says Tom, "I don't belave it at all, at all. Mac must have been drunk to let them lock him up when he was sober."

"I say, Tom," says O'Holleran, "do you believe in drames?"

"Sure, I do," says Tom. "Whoi?"

"Then what's it a sign of when a married man drames he's a bachelor?"

"Begob," says Tom, "it's a sign of disappointment—when he wakes up."

"Do you know, Tom," says O'Holleran, "I'd give a hundred dollars to know the exact spot I'm going to die on."

"Whoi?" says Tom.

"Whoi, you gossoon, I'd never go near the ould spot at all, at all."

Tom and O'Holleran took a walk through the suburbs, and came upon some blackberry bushes laden with half-ripe fruit.

"I say," says O'Holleran, "what kind of bushes do you call those, Tom?"

"Whoi, you fule," says Tom, "they're blackberries."

"Get out," says O'Holleran, "they're red."

"Sure," says Tom, "but every fule knows that blackberries are always red when they're green."

A little way beyond, they came to a crossroad. Tom said they ought to go to the right and O'Holleran said to the left.

They argued for a while, and Tom says:

"I'll tell you what we'll do. You go by one and I'll take the other. If I get home first, I'll put a chalk mark on the door, and if you get there first you rub it out."

Tom recently imported one of his poor relatives to this country. His name was Pat Sullivan.

Pat was a very thick Irishman, and as he had never seen a railroad in Erin-Go-Bra-a-a-ha, he couldn't get it into his head how it worked.

Finally Tom took him up a railroad track to explain the matter to him.

When they were rounding a curve, between two high embankments, a train came thundering behind them.

"Run up the bank for your life," cried Tom, and set a good example by doing it himself.

Pat, however, dug straight down the track, and it was not long before the train overtook him and hurled him forty feet



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away.

"Ye lobster," says Tom, "whoi didn't you run up the bank as I told you?"

"Begob," says Pat, "if I couldn't beat that bloomin' thing on the level, what chance did I stand running uphill?"

By the way, did you ever get into one of those lunch counter, go-outside-and-get-something-fit-to-eat

restaurants? I did, and it's a regular circus. If you've never been, you want to take it in.

The other day I had sixteen cents with which to get something to eat, and I thought I'd chance it.

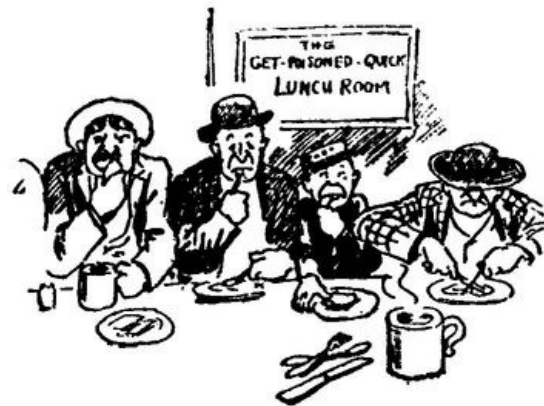
I stepped into one of these holy terrors and sat down on a revolving stool similar to those they have in dry goods stores.

These seats are placed so closely together that your neighbor's business is your own.

You try to eat your soup. He nudges you and sends it back in your plate.

He tries to eat his pork and beans. You nudge him and he fishes in his vest pocket for pork, and down his shirt front for beans.

Well, I picked up the bill of fare and glanced over it. Really, I hadn't been out late for a week and I didn't know what to make of it.



The first entree was:

"Omelette a la Creole."

"Good heavens!" I thought. "Do they slice Creoles and serve them as omelettes?"

I wasn't very anxious to find out.

The next was:

"Rice soup a la Bellevue."

"Holy smoke, I have the rum habit so bad, I imagine I see Bellevue everywhere I go. I wonder what would happen if I were to take that?"

I got nervous and prepared to leave.

The last thing I saw on the calender was

"Croquettes a la D'Esprit."

"That's it exactly," I thought, "they get so desperate in these places that they hash up all the leavings and call them by their right name."

When I passed the manager of the shebang, he says:

"What's the matter? Are you dissatisfied with what you've had?"

"Not a bit of it," says I, "it's what I haven't had that I am dissatisfied with."

When I got outside of the restaurant, who should I run into but my dear friend, Rufus Sage.

"Hello, Rufus," says I, "how's business?"

"Candidly," says he, "it's rotten. I made only three millions this morning, and I've got to get a new suit this afternoon that will cost all the way from ten to fifteen dollars."

"Too bad," says I.

"Then, besides, I'm liable to be inconvenienced any time," he says, "through an argument I had with a friend of mine this morning. He said I was extravagant, and I said I wasn't."

"Well," says I, "did you succeed in getting him to think



the same as yourself?"

"Yes," says he, "but I may get arrested any minute for assault and battery, and they'll fine me not less than five dollars."

I don't think I ever told you of the awful time I had, when I went yachting with my friend Rufus Sage, did I?

Oh! It was a swell time, indeed.

It began to swell the minute we struck the swell outside the harbor, and my poetic soul swelled up within me in great shape.

I was leaning over the rail looking at the beautiful green waves and the reflection of my beautiful face in them (no, I wasn't doing anything else), when my dear friend, Rufus, came to me and said:

"Cheer up, old man, things will get pleasanter, when the moon comes up."

"Damnation," says I, "it has come up, if I ever swallowed it."

Right after that, we encountered a most terrific gale. The wind blew, the storm howled, the ship tossed, and the lightning flashed. In fact, we were in a devil of a mess all around.



signal of distress."

It flew fine, until a gust of wind took it away. But, as you know, I am a man of resource.

I took off my jacket and hoisted it in the place of the flag.

Another gust of wind came and blew my jacket away. Then I hoisted my shirt. That blew away and I hoisted my socks. Those followed, and I hoisted my trousers.

Say, but it was good I had that barrel. Those pajamas saved my life, though. A week later a passing steamer caught sight of my signal of distress and rescued me.

The first thing I asked the captain was if Rufus had been saved.

"Why," says he, "haven't you heard? He landed at Savannah and cornered the cotton market to the tune of ten million dollars, but he says he's a ruined man because he lost his yacht."

Say, how do you stand on the servant question? I had a girl that beat all outdoors for intelligence.

The other day my wife went out to do some shopping and left Bridget in charge of the house.

When she returned she asked Bridget if any one had called for her.

"Sure, mum," says she, "the babbie called for you all the while you were gone."

That night, when I came home to dinner, I couldn't eat a thing. Everything that wasn't glowing embers, was charcoal. I gave my wife a lecture and told her to fire the girl at once.

My wife went down to Bridget's stronghold and said:

"Bridget, I'm sorry, but I'm afraid you'll have to find another



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I found my ear in the captain's mouth and he was telling me something I didn't want to know.

The captain found my right boot exactly where it should have been under the circumstances.

The last thing I saw was Rufus running to his cabin to get a two-for-five collar button he had left in his trunk.

All hands got safely into the boat but me. There was so much of me overboard already that I didn't care how soon my skeleton followed.

Finally the ship sank and I found myself astride a big hogshead. I was in an awful situation.

Suddenly, I sighted a flagstaff with a flag attached, and within an hour was in grabbing distance.

"This," I says, "is all right. I'll put the staff in the bung-hole of the barrel and fly a



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place."

"Whoy so, mum?" asked Bridget.

"Well, my husband thinks there's too much waste in the kitchen."

"For the land's sakes, if you'll only let me stay, mum, I'll get a twenty-two corset and lace it until I can't breathe."

One day a friend of mine came to me and says:

"I see you have Bridget Harrohan around the house."

"Yes," says I.

"Do you know that she was in her last situation five years."

"No," says I; "where was that?"

"Sing Sing," says he.

I went home and sent Bridget away.

My wife, in sympathy, recommended her to one of her dearest friends. That sympathy was beautiful to see.

A little later Bridget came back and announced that the friend had engaged her.

"So the lady engaged you, at once, when you told her you had been with me," says she.

"Oh, yes!" says Bridget. "She said any one who could stay with you three months, must be an angel."

Say, I picked up a newspaper this morning, and I was astonished at the great events that are taking place.

I see that George Washington, colored, was appointed postmaster of the town of Gooseberry, N. C., at 9:15 yesterday morning, took up his situation at 9:30, and was lynched at 9:45.

I see that Mark Hanna has donated two millions to be spent in buying ice-cream and ginger snaps for the w-o-r-k-i-n-g-m-a-n.

I had a terrible dream about Mark, last night. It was so terrible that I got right up and dedicated a song to it.

It's entitled:

"What Did I Have For Supper; or, If I Knew What It Was I'd Eat It Again."

A low key, professor. Not a latchkey.

I dreamt I dwelt in marble halls,
And lived in regal state;
That aldermanic feasts were mine,
Served up in Rogers' plate.

I dreamt I once met dear old Ted,
And shook him by the hand;
He said he'd make the niggers
The first men in the land.

I dreamt I saw Mark Hanna
In the Presidential chair;
He had J. P. Morgan seated
Right beside him there.

I dreamt I saw coal king Baer
Stand out upon the street,
Giving tons of coal to all
Within a hundred feet.

I dreamt I saw good Russell Sage
Give millions by the score,
To every poor man in the land,
And some came back for more.

I dreamt that all the Vanderbilts
Had reduced the railroad fare,
And were giving round-trip tickets



To almost everywhere.

I dreamt I had a fortune left
 By dear old Harold Payne;
 A hundred thousand down, or so,
 The lawyers did explain.

I dreamt the Senate quickly passed
 The anti-combine laws;
 And sent the trusts all limping off
 With dislocated jaws.

I dreamt that William Jennings Bryan
 Was eventually elected;
 They couldn't tell by just what means,
 But Dave Hill was suspected.

I dreamt I saw shrewd Tommy Platt
 Give doughnuts to the poor,
 And when they wouldn't take them
 He threw them down the sewer.

I dreamt our friends at Congress
 Were running ten-round bouts;
 That McLaurin went on with Tillman,
 And scored some clean knockouts.

I dreamt there was no grafting,
 That politics were clean;
 But then, you bet, I just woke up,
 I knew that was a dream.

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Verily, verily, Republics and friends are ungrateful.
 Do you know, all the gentlemen I mentioned in that song I just sang are my friends?
 Talking of friends, puts me in mind of an ungrateful cuss I once called by this over-worked figure of speech.



He met me on the street, slapped me on the back, and said:
 "Hello, old man!"
 "Hello!" says I, "what do you want?"
 "What do I want?" says he. "I want ten dollars."
 "That's an awful large sum of money, and I'm afraid I haven't got it to lend," says I.
 "You've got it in the bank?" says he.
 "Yes," says I.
 "Now, look here," says he. "The Good Book teaches us that we are all brothers."
 "Granted," says I.
 "Well," says he, "if I am your brother, by moral right what's yours is mine, and what's mine is yours. If I had the money I'd give it to you so quick it would take your breath away. Now, what you ought to do is to draw that money from the bank."

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I rushed down to the bank, and says to the teller:
 "Is the cashier in?"
 "No," says he, "he's out. Are you a depositor?"
 "Yes," says I.
 "Then you're out, too; the police are on the trail now."
 I went back to Harris, and gave him the last cent I had. He promised to pay me back in an hour.
 A month after I met him.
 "Say," says I, "how about that money I lent you? You said you only wanted it for a short time."
 "That's right," says he, "I only had it for ten minutes. I went into a faro game."
 Some time ago, Harris visited a tailor and had an overcoat made. He wanted trust, and the tailor, of course, wanted references.
 Harris put up such a bluff that the tailor gave him the overcoat. He certainly played his game to perfection.
 Then Harris wouldn't pay.



The tailor came around and said:

"See here, Harris, wasn't I kind enough to let you have that coat on tick? And now you won't pay. I'm sure it was the best that I could make, and it must have worn well."

"Certainly," says Harris, "all my nephews wore it."

"There, didn't I tell you it—" began the tailor.

"Yes," said Harris, "every time it got wet it shrunk so that the next youngest one could wear it."

Then the fun began.

The tailor put the bill into a collector's hands.

The collector called upon Harris.

"I'm sorry for you, old man," said the collector, "but your tailor has put your account into my

hands for collection."

"Indeed, I'm so sorry for you. And you say you're going to try to collect it eh?" says Harris. "Well, I am so sorry for you."

The collector couldn't get a cent. Every time he called after that, Harris threw him downstairs.

Why, he got so after a while, that as soon as Harris appeared at the door, he would rush to the stairs and throw himself down.

Harris had him trained.

The tailor hit upon a brilliant scheme.

He hired a woman to collect the bill.

Harris was in a dilemma. He couldn't throw a woman downstairs.

He told me about it, and asked my advice, but I had none to give.

The next time I met him he shook me by the hand and said:

"I got around that woman-collector business all right. She never went back to the bloomin' tailor after the second time she called."

"Why," says I, "how did you manage it?"

"Oh!" says he, "that was dead easy. I just married her."



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Did you ever strike one of those people who are dead stuck on their lineage and have charts tacked on their bedroom door, showing how many thousand years they can trace their ancestors?

I struck a "she" specimen the other day.

As soon as we were introduced, she says: "Jones, Jones, surely you are a descendant of the famous family of Joneses, who had their origin in the stone age and lived in a cave on the Palisades, about a mile from Hoboken?"

"I can't remember," says I, "it's so long ago and I have a poor memory."

"Yes, but let us come nearer to the present generation," says she. "You surely are a relative of the Joneses, the

Milwaukee millionaires of the same name."

"Yes," I says, "a distant relative."



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"How distant?" she says.

"As distant as they can keep me," says I.

"Have you any poor relatives?" says she.

"None that know me," says I.

That got her mad. She says:

"If I were your wife, I would put poison in your coffee."

"And if I was your husband," says I, "I'd drink it."

The other day I met Charlie de Hopen Dagen, the Scotchman, who had just enlisted for service in the Philippines.

"Hello, old man!" says he, "come and have a drink."

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I wasn't feeling very thirsty, but I went.

It seemed to me that I had about ten thousand Manhattans, and then we had nine thousand and forty-eight whiskey sours to counterbalance them and try to sober up.



Something made Charlie rampageous, and he began to scrap with the barkeeper and almost killed him.

I finally got Charlie, seeing four moons and ten gangplanks, on board his vessel which was just about to leave.

The next day I met his brother Jim.

"Hello, Walter, I hear you saw Charlie off last night," says he.

"Yes," says I, "he was very much off."

"Was he in good spirits when you left him?" says he.

"Sure," says I, "the best that money could buy. He was a little sick, though."

"I hope it wasn't anything contagious," says he.

"If you could see the barkeeper up in Dan Mulligan's place," says I, "you'd thought it was."

Say, every one says Lakewood is so healthy, know why?

I heard only the other day, from a man who knew all about it.

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I went down there, and the first thing I struck was one of those watering carts, plastered over with a patent medicine ad.

"Holy smoke!" says a fellow who stood beside me on the station. "No wonder Lakewood is so healthy. They water the streets with Fakir's Sarsaparilla."

Did you ever notice that when you have been taking liquid refreshments and are feeling good, and can't walk straight, then is the time you meet all your dearly beloved friends who like to talk about you?

The other night I went to a beer party, and when it got time to go home, I felt pretty much so-so.

I started out and the very first fellow I met was Jenkins.

"Why, my dear Walter," says he, "I am surprised. Don't give way to strong drink. Verily, verily, put it behind you."

"Why, parson," says I, "I am very much surprised that you can't see that I've got it behind me now."

"Say," says I, "I fell down stairs last night, parson, with twenty bottles of beer, and didn't break one of them."

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"Verily, verily," says he, "that was indeed marvelous. How did you accomplish that extraordinary feat?"

"I had them inside me," says I.

The parson passed on and the next fellow I met was Dr. Brown of Spotless Town.

"What!" says he, "drinking beer again, friend Jones? I thought I told you that every glass of beer you took put a nail in your coffin."

"Can't give it up, doctor," says I. "Then, too, what does it matter after you're dead and gone if your coffin is as full of nails as the new East River Bridge is full of rivets."

I began to get a little confused, and couldn't see very clearly.

I met a friend and says:

"Say, Tom, can you tell me what has become of Walter Jones?"





"Why," says he, "you're Walter Jones yourself, ain't you?"

"I know it," says I, "but I want to know where he's got to."

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He took me home.

The next morning my wife thought I was down-hearted. So I was. She tried to cheer me up.

"Oh, Walter! look here, the morning paper says that in Yumyami, Africa, a wife may be bought for twenty yards of cotton cloth."

"Well," says I, "I guess a good wife is worth it."

Then she started on another tack.

"By the way, you know Charlie Benson, don't you?"

I admitted that I did.

"Well," says she, "of late he has become quite attentive. I really think he means to run away with me."

"I'd like to see him do it," says I.

"Why," says she, "here's an account of a very intrepid photographer, who took a picture of a wildcat, just as it was about to spring at him."

"That's nothing," says I. "Jimmy Peck has a snap shot of his wife coming at him with a kettle of boiling water."

"It says here that lightning never strikes twice in the same place. I wonder why?"

"Any fool knows that," says I. "When the lightning comes again the place isn't there to strike."

"Say," says she, "I heard that you spoke to that ugly Mrs. De Fashion yesterday."

"Yes," I assented.

"She had a new hat on; did you notice what it was like?" says she.

"Well," says I, "it had a cowcatcher front, a battered-down funnel, a tailboard behind, a flower garden on top, and a job lot of ribbons streaming down in back. You can easily make one like it."

She soon got tired of trying to cheer me up and quit in disgust. It's a pretty hard job to cheer me up when I'm down-hearted.



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Just then the bell rang, and the maid announced the doctor. He came in looking like a big sunflower.

"Sorry, old man, to see you in such a condition last night," says he.

"Bad condition, doctor," says I. "Why, that wasn't a flea bite to the condition I'm in this morning."

"I called upon Rollins this morning," says he, "and I never saw a man in such a complete state of mental depression. He says he was out with you last night. Can't you go around and convince him that his life still holds some future brightness for him?"

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"Doctor," says I, "that's impossible. He's drawn his salary three weeks in advance and spent it all last night."

"Do you know," says the doctor, "I had a very remarkable experience last night. A young fellow came to me and said he had swallowed a cent and I made him cough up two dollars."

That doctor has a son that beats anything you ever heard tell of. He has made all his money on apples.

No, he don't grow them. He's a doctor.

It's little green apples I'm talking about now.

When leaving, the doctor told me I must take to automobiling and I would soon get well. I told my wife about it.

"Doc is simple to throw money away like that," says she.

"Don't worry about that," says I. "He charges double price for surgical visits."

"Well," says she, "with all his faults, Dr. Brown has never had a patient die on his hands."

"Get out," says I, "is that so?"

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"Yes," says she. "When he





sees that they are doomed, he sends them to a specialist.

"Oh, Walter!" says she. "By the way, are we all out of debt?"

"Thank Heaven, we are," I replied.

"Then let's give a swell dinner."

"But that would throw us into debt again."

"Of course it would, but what is the use of having good credit unless you can use it?"

I suppose after that I ought to sing you my latest howling success, entitled "No New Proverbs for Your Willie Boy; or,

Some of the Fifty-seven."

They say that if you have too many cooks
You ruin your Sunday joint;
But if you give them nothing to cook
The proverb loses its point.

They say that if you're a rolling stone
You'll pass through the poorhouse door;
But Germany's doing a roaring trade,
And her travelers say they'll do more.

They say that if you go early to bed
You'll prosper, if early you'll rise;
But if you held gas shares, and other folks
Did the same, would that be so wise?

They say that you shouldn't throw stones about
If your house is made of glass;
But if it's insured for more than its worth
The proverb will hardly pass.

The point is just this: that proverbs, though wise,
Are changed by modern inventions;
And to add to this bushel of old-time lies
Would give rise to mighty dissensions.

Say, do you know I'm always afraid to carry that song about with me, for fear that some burglar will follow me home and steal it while I'm asleep.

The truth is I'm somewhat afraid of burglars.

The other night my wife woke me up and said:

"Walter, Walter, there are burglars in the house."

"All right, just take a light and turn them out," says I.

"I'm afraid they might run away with me," says she.

"No fear of that if you take a light," says I. "By the way, dear, do you know that a Washington man was shot by a burglar and his life was saved by a pajama button, which the bullet struck?"

"Well, what of it?" says she.

"Nothing," says I, "except that the button must have been on."

Well, she wailed and went on so bad, that I had to go down and see what the racket was.

I went into the dining-room and there stood the burglar.

"Hold up your hands," says he.

"I'm darned if I do," says I. "My wife rules me by day, and you're not going to butt in and do it by night."

I grabbed a chair and went at him.

We finally compromised.

He was to take everything of any value if he would only let me—I mean if I would only let him up.



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He took all the silverware off the sideboard and began to pack it up.

Just then my little Josephine called from the cradle.

"Say," says my visitor, "I've spotted this house for two weeks and didn't know you had a baby. If you call that sharp-nosed woman, wifie, and that kid yonder, baby, I guess you're blessed enough and in need of sleep. Let's call it a draw. Thank Heaven I ain't married."

"You'll be sorry you didn't get married, if you don't," says I.

"That's all right," says he, "I'd a heap rather that I wasn't, than be married and sorry that I was."

Well, after much mutual congratulation, the midnight visitor finally took his leave.

I was about to go upstairs, when I heard talking down in the basement.

I thought that perhaps there were a few more poor devils down there who would sympathize with me, and went down to make their acquaintance.

I was mistaken.

It was only my servant, Bridget, talking to a policeman stationed on the beat.

I have a friend who had a very wild son about sixteen years of age. He could do absolutely nothing with him.

One day the youngster was offered a job in a big tinware factory.

His father, thinking it might tone him down a bit, consented to let him go.

The first Saturday night the kid lost his week's wages in a crap game and was afraid to go home.

Finally he hit upon a bright scheme. He took his trousers, turned them inside out and had them galvanized.

That night he went home and his father prepared to give him a spanking.

He used his hand first, but the blow almost killed his father.

Then he used a club, but failed to make any impression upon his son.

Then he got out of patience and said to his wife:

"Maria, confound it, get me a can opener."

Now this same Billy got so educated in that factory, that he wanted to go West and shoot millionaires, so he just sloped.

His father telegraphed all over the country, and then, as a last resort, rang up police headquarters.

"Well," says the chief, "it ought to be easy to find him. Has he any marks by which he can be identified?"

"N-o-o!" says the father. "But confound him, just let me get a hold of him and he will have."

They finally located Willie comfortably settled on a farm. There was a job open and he advised his father to come out and take it, and make a few million growing wheat for the food trust.

His father went and they got along swimmingly.

One day a neighbor came across Willie hustling like old Sam Hill to reload a wagon of hay which had overturned.

"Well, Willie, I see you are in trouble."

"Yes," says Willie, working for dear life.

"Suppose you come to the house and have dinner with me," says the neighbor.

Willie wouldn't hear of it. The man finally persuaded him to go.

All the way to the house and at dinner Willie kept saying:

"I shouldn't have come. I know dad won't like it."

"Why," says the neighbor, "your father will never know unless you tell him."

"I know, I know," says Willie, "but I'm sure father won't like my going to dinner with you."

"Darnation," says the neighbor, now thoroughly worked up.



"Why won't he?"

"Well, you see," says Willie, "dad's under the load of hay on the road."

Speaking of Willie puts me in mind of another boy I know.

He's the brightest chap for his years to be found in a day's walk.

Why, when the boy was six months old, he howled all night and slept all day.

They fooled him though, by putting an electric light in front of his parent's door, while he slept one day.

When he woke up to give his usual nightly concert, he found the room as bright as day.

He just turned over and went to sleep again.



That boy is a genius though, in his way.

Why, do you know that they have had thirty-four examinations since he's been going to school, and he's managed to dodge every one of them.

I went down to one of the big department stores the other day and met my old friend Matt Wheeler looking over some furniture.

"Hello, Matt," says I, "how's Mamie?" Mamie is his sweetheart, you know.

"Oh!" says Matt, "I've thrown her over."

"Well, that was a foolish thing to do," says I. "Mamie was a good and beautiful girl."

"I know it," says he, "but her father offered to give us

enough money to furnish a home, if we got married. I'm going with another girl now."

"What sort of a girl is she," says I, and that started him off.

Have you ever noticed how easy it is to start a fellow extolling the virtues and graces of his chosen before he is married?

If you ask him how his wife is after the ceremony, all you get out of him is something resembling a grunt.

Well, this fellow rambled.

"She's an angel. She isn't like other girls. She's got the loveliest complexion. The handsomest face, the finest figure, the sweetest nature that ever woman had."

"Good," says I, "but how about her feet?"

"Feet, man," says he, "what are you talking about? Are you demented?"

"No," says I, "but you ought to have looked at her feet."

"What has her feet got to do with it?" says he, "I'm marrying the girl, not her feet."

"That's right," says I, "but you'll get her feet thrown into the bargain. Never marry a club-footed girl, because she's always got something to hit you with in case of an argument."

Even that didn't shut him up.

"Let me tell you how I got engaged to her," says he.

"Go ahead," says I.

"I was down to her house one night and stayed until almost one o'clock.

"Finally her old man hollered downstairs and asked the girl if I didn't think it was about time to go to bed.

"I hollered up that it was all right, I'd excuse him if he wanted to go.

"Then we got talking about birds, birdlets and birdies.

"I said I loved birdies of all kinds.

"She tore over to the piano and began to play: 'I Wish I Were a Birdie.' Yes, we're looking for a nest now."

Now I'm going to sing you a song about this foolish couple.



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Just sit back and hold tight.

It's entitled "What a Difference When the Preacher Says You're Wed; or, I Wonder Why Mary Jones Married a Man Twice Her Age."

He has ceased to call her "darling,"
She has ceased to call him "dear";
He has ceased composing sonnets
To her "shell-like little ear."

She has ceased to hurry madly
To the mirror when he calls;
He has ceased to buy her chocolates
And ice cream at high-toned balls.

This is not because these lovers
Have been mixed up in a row—
No, the plain truth is that they
Are a married couple now.



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That song always makes me sad.

It's founded upon one of my actual experiences.

I was a married man, once, though I may not look it.

One night I came home late and knocked at the door.



My wife shoved her head out of the window, and says:
"Is that you, Billy, dear?"

My name's not Billy. I got divorced.

Talking of graveyards, I took a trip to Philly last week.

Say, I never had such fun since I sold my automobile.

The circus began at Hoboken and continued all the way down.

When I got to the station I noticed an Irishman sitting out of harm's way, holding his jaw.

"What's the matter, old man?" says I; "toothache?"

"Yes, bedad," says he, "but I'm going to get rid of it."

He got a strong piece of twine, tied one end to the offending molar, and the other to the rail of the last car of the Washington express.

Soon the train started.

The twine held and so did the tooth.

You never saw any one run to beat that fool Irishman. He had Duffy beaten to death.

Finally after he had run a two-mile straight-away, the cord snapped, but the tooth stayed in. Pat came back.

"Be jabbers," says he, "the dum thing fooled me that time, but I'll get even. I'll go to a dentist."

I got on my train and took a seat in the forward car.

Just opposite, a very stylish, rather beautiful lady sat next to a clerical-looking chap.

When the conductor came around for her ticket, she fumbled for her purse, then grew pale and gasped:

"I've been robbed. There is nothing in my pocket but a piece of orange peel, some cloves, and a bottle of whiskey."

Then she began to throw the articles on the floor.

"Madam," said the deep bass voice of the clerical-looking chap, "I'll thank you to take your hands out of my pocket and leave its contents alone."

Then I began to look around for some other diversion, and got it.

In front of me sat an old gentleman with a man-servant in attendance.

He was greatly bothered by a fly, which used to go in one ear and out the other.

You know how they do, sometimes.

The fly had made ten laps, and was comfortably along on its



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eleventh, when the old fellow called his servant.

"John," says he, quietly, "catch the little creature as gently as possible and put it out of the window. Don't hurt it, though, or I shall be angry."

John, who evidently knew his master's weakness, caught the bothersome fly and carried it to an open window.

"Ah, master," pleaded he, "just look, it is beginning to rain. Shall I not give the poor little fly a mackintosh and an umbrella?"

Just then the train stopped at a way station and I got off to get a bite to eat. As usual, I got left.

While waiting, my attention was attracted to an elderly couple, who had approached the ticket agent as he came out of his coop.

"Say, boss," says the old man, "can you tell me if the three-fifteen has left?" [Pg 67]

"Oh, yes," says the agent, "it went by ten minutes ago."

"And when will the four-thirty be along, do you think?"

"Not for some time, of course," was the answer.

"Are there any expresses before then?"

"Not one."

"Any freight trains?"

"No."

"Nothing at all?"

"Nothing whatsoever."

"Are you quite sure?"

"Of course I am, or I wouldn't have said so," yelled the agent.

"Then, Maria," says the old man, "if we're quite careful, I guess we can cross the tracks."

My train arrived a minute before it was scheduled to leave. A kid stepped up to the conductor.

"Say, mister, there are two men on this train who came all the way from New York, and didn't pay any fare."

The conductor thought that some fellows were beating the company and went through the whole train, but couldn't find any one who didn't have his proper ticket.

So, seeing the kid, he says:

"Hey, where are the two men?"

"On the engine. The engineer and fireman," shrieked the kid.

After the train got in motion, I suddenly espied my old friend Joe Dempsey, who is an insurance agent.

"Hello, Joe," says I, "why so glum?"

"Well, you see, Walter," says he, "I proposed to old Billion's daughter and she refused to have me."

"Well," says I, "that's nothing. There are other girls."

"Yes, of course," says he, "but I can't help feeling sorry for the poor girl."

I looked around for something to throw.

"Yes," he continued, "especially after the beautiful dream I had about her the other night. I dreamt that I had married her and that she had settled \$14,000,000 on me."

"Yes, and then you woke up," says I.

"No," says he, "that's the funny part of it. I put that money in the bank."

"Well, that's all right," says I, "but you'll have a dickens of a time in getting it out again."

"That's easy," says he, "I'll just go to sleep again. I guess I'll do that now and draw some of the interest."

We got to the city of the dead and, having nothing else to do, I went with Joe on a scout for business.

While we were out in the suburbs, he struck a man putting up some kind of a building, for he had a large pile of bricks.

"Good-morning, neighbor," says Joe. "I'd like to insure this new cottage you are putting up."



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"It isn't a cottage at all," began the man.

"Ah, well, my good man," says Joe, "if it's only a dog-house, you'd better have it insured."

"Confound you," says the suburbanite, now in a rage, "get out of this. I'm rebuilding my well."

Joe, soon after this, decided to stay in the carpetbaggers' city and take the agency of a large insurance company.

One day there was a very destructive fire at Cohen & Wosislosmitdewhiskey's clothing store.

Joe took the company's adjuster and went down to investigate. [Pg 70]

A good deal of discussion resulted, in which the cause of the fire figured principally.

Cohen said it was due to the electric wiring, and his partner claimed it was the gas-light.

Finally the adjuster called upon Joe to render his opinion.

"Look here, Joe," says he. "This man claims it was the Arc-light and this fellow that it was the Gas-light. Now what do you think it was?"

"Well," says Joe, "if you want my candid opinion, I think it was neither. I'll bet a dollar that it was the Israelite."



Joe at last got married and, when his son was still quite young, it bothered him somewhat to know just what trade or profession he ought to select for him.

So at last he told his wife to get the boy a box of paints, a toy steam engine, a printing press, and see what the boy would take to most readily.

When Joe got home at night, he asked his wife how the plan had succeeded.

"Well, I'm a bit puzzled," says she, "he has smashed the whole lot to atoms." [Pg 71]

"The very thing," says Joe. "We'll make him a furniture mover."

That didn't suit Mrs. Dempsey though, and

she said they ought to have the boy a musician.

"All right," says Joe, "we'll let him learn the clarionette."

"Why, Joe!" says his wife. "Whoever heard of such a thing. I say, let him learn to play the violin. Think what an unhandy thing a clarionette is to carry."

"That's right, my dear," says Joe, "but think what a darn handy thing it is in case of a scrap."

Now I'll try to amuse you by singing my latest dead march, entitled "The Moth and the Flame; or, My Kingdom For a Fire."



They howl of the creature who uses the hoe,
Of the farmer behind the plow;
They warble a song to the horny palm,
And they garland the sunburned brow.

There's praise for the soldier behind the gun,
Who fights after others tire;
But here's to the victim of fate's worst blow,
The Hebrew who don't have a fire.

There's flame in his optic that bodeth ill,
There's a dangerous set of jaw;
There's a mighty unrest in his heaving chest,
And he scoffs at the moral law.

Then woe to the creature—or man, or beast—
That rouseth the smoldering ire
Of the Jew who heavily insures his place,
Then finds he can't have a fire.

That song always gives my friend Rosensky a bad attack of indigestion.

All the time I'm singing it he keeps moaning:



"Dink if that was me. Dink!"

The time I was boarding, my landlady's name was Mrs. Closefist.

One day she went to the grocery store and says:

"I'd like to have some more of that bad butter you sold me last week."

"Why," says the grocer, "if it was bad, what do you want more for?" [Pg 73]

"Well, you see," says she, "it lasts longer."

This same woman had a calf. That calf was taken sick and died. We had veal for the next three weeks.

She had a pig and that pig died. We had pork for the next four weeks.

She had a mother-in-law. That mother-in-law was taken sick—but we fooled her, we all moved.

One morning my egg wasn't fried right, so I blew the girl up.

She blew the servant up, the servant blew the cook up, and the gasoline stove blew the frying pan up.

It was a case of blow-up all around.

Mrs. Closefist had a daughter named Jane, who was taking painting lessons at the time.

She also took pains to let every one within a hundred miles know about it.

One day she brought down a thing that looked to me like a green shutter in a cloud of steam.

"Look here," says she, "isn't this pretty?"

"I'm enraptured," says I. "Such a wealth of detail, such a display of budding genius! The perspective is simply perfect. It-it-it—is—so—clever. Oh! confound it, I can't find words to express my admiration. By the way, what is it?"

"Why," says she, "I am surprised. It represents a green field on a cloudy day. Can't I paint well?"

"Fine," says I. "In fact you have done so well, I am going to recommend you to a friend of mine who wants a fence whitewashed."

Mrs. Closefist, whose reputation for meanness was well known, was in the habit of giving a soiree once a year, "just to liven the boarders up."

I don't know whether it made any of the other fellows particularly lively, but I know that on such occasions was the only time I ever managed to get any sleep.

There were very few outsiders who attended, because the "racket" usually partook very much of the chief trait of the hostess.

Once, when she was making preparations for one of these soul-stirring affairs, she says to me:

"I'd like to give my guests a pleasant surprise. Something distinctly original."

I thought a moment and then says:

"Madam, countermand the invitations."

That woman was the meanest thing in the form of a human being I ever struck.

No, I'm wrong; for meanness I give the palm to a certain car driver.

Once, when I was a kid, I footed it out to a resort near my home.

The only cars that ran out there were those little "jiggers."

Well, I was pretty tired when I got out, and didn't feel like walking back.

So I asked one of the drivers to let me hitch behind.

"Where's your fare?" says he.

"Ain't got none," says I.



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"Then you can't ride," says he. "But look here, I'll tell you what I'll do. Take those buckets and go to that well up the road, and water that horse and I'll let you ride free."

And he pointed to a skinny-looking little horse.

I got two buckets and the horse drank them off quick as a wink. I got four, I got six, I got ten, a dozen, always with the same result.

Finally the fellow who owned the well refused to let me have any more water, and I went back and told the driver that the man who leased the Great Lakes from St. Peter had locked them up and gone to bed.

"Well," says he, "you didn't fill your contract and I can't let you ride."

As I was going away, a fellow stepped up to me and says:

"You darn fool, they brought all the horses in the stable out and you've watered them one by one."



[Pg 76]

Say, I don't think I ever told you of the time I went to England. You see, I arrived at Liverpool and took the train for London.

The train seemed to me to be going remarkably fast for that country and I got sort of uneasy.

At the first stop, I went to the guard and said:

"Say, this is pretty fast traveling, isn't it?"

"Oh, no, you needn't be alarmed, we never run off the line here." [Pg 77]

"Oh, it's not that I'm afraid of," says I. "I'm afraid you'll run off your blamed little island."

While out for a stroll the other afternoon, I reached the foot of a steep hill just in time to see a fellow with an automobile come skating down faster than he intended.

When he had reached the bottom and the dust had



settled, I walked over and asked him if he was hurt.

He said he wasn't, but looked ruefully at his auto.

"This darned thing cost a cool two thousand the other day, but I'd be willing to sell it for fifty now," says he.

I looked it over and it seemed a pretty likely sort of machine and not very much hurt, so I took him up.

He got out of the way mighty quick, and three minutes after he disappeared two mounted policemen came dashing up.

"Ha!" says one of them, "we've got you. Come right along."

Do you know, I had a deuce of a time in convincing them that it was not I who had stolen the machine? [Pg 78]

I went to a real old-fashioned wake the other night.

It was the most entertaining innovation I ever attended.

I got there pretty late and all the beer had flown down where the Wurzbürger usually flows.

I sat down beside my old friend, McGarrigan.

"What, Mac, you one of the mourners, too?"

"Whoi not?" says he. "Didn't the corpse owe me ten dollars?"

"Well," says I, "cheer up."

"I can't," says he, "the beer is all gone."

Just then I saw his face brighten up.

I followed the direction of his glance and saw it rested on a gallon jug.

Mac got up quietly and took the jug into the hallway.

He came back in ten seconds looking more mournful than ever.

"What's the matter, Mac," says I, "was the jug empty?"

"No," says he.



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"Wasn't the wine good?" says I.

"It wasn't wine," says he.

"What was in the jug, Mac?" says I.

He gave me a sheepish, sidelong glance and says:

"Water."

Mac is a boss carpenter.

The other day he called his assistant and says:

"Here, Jim, I'm going out for a few minutes and you can plane down this beam until I return."



He pointed to a big beam about eighteen inches square.

But, alas! when poor Mac got out on the street, he slipped and sprained his ankle.

They took him home and it was the next day, toward evening, before he could hobble around to his shop.

His assistant was nowhere in sight.

The only thing that met his gaze, was an enormous pile of shavings.

So he bawled out:

"James!"

"Hello," came the far off response.

"Where are you?" says Mac.

"Here under this pile of shavings," says Jim.

"What are you up to, anyway?" says Mac.

"Planing that beam. You told me to plane it until you came back. If you had come an hour later there wouldn't have been anything left of it."

Poor Mac sprained his ankle again.

Say, did you ever go to a dime museum?

If not you want to take it in by all means. It's a sure cure for glanders.

I went to one last week, and had more fun than if I came here and listened to these dispensers of heavenly harmony.

Say, wasn't that last part fine? I'm coming up, I am!

I hope to be in the same class as Chuck Connors some day.

Well, as I said, I went to this shelter for freaks and looked them over.

There was the fat lady who was blown up twice a day with the air pump.

A kid in front of me stuck a pin in her arm and punctured her.

There was the living skeleton who was fed on pork and beans three times a day.

There was the Circassian girl who paid twelve dollars for her wig.

When we got to the glass eater, the real fun began.

There was a yap and his wife standing where they could get a good view of the performance.



They watched him, enraptured for a time, and finally the woman says:

"Hiram, just look at that fellow eating window glass."

"That's nothing," says Hiram, "our little Reuben can do the same thing."

"G'wan," says the woman, "how's that?"

"Why, if he eats little green apples, won't he have pains on the inside?"

Then we passed on to the ventriloquist.

"What's a ventriloquist, Hiram?" says Mandy.

"Why," says Hiram, "it's a fellow what stands on one side of the room and talks to hisself from the other."

But the climax came when we got to the wonderful wax figure, recently imported from Paris at the unheard of price of ten thousand dollars.



I looked that wax figure over and something about it struck me as being familiar. [Pg 82]

Finally it came to me all at once.

It was Sim Johnson, who borrowed twenty dollars from me out in Chicago. So I went over.

"Hello, Sim," says I. He never moved a muscle.

"Don't you know me, Sim?" says I.

"Go 'way," says he, without moving his lips.

That made me mad as a hornet, and I says:

"Go 'way? Not much. Who is the wall-eyed, bandy-legged, beer-guzzling harp, who borrowed twenty dollars from me, out in Chicago?"

He never said a word. That got me madder.

I continued to pay my respects in this fashion:

"You miserable, consumptive-looking ingrate. You sea-sick-looking, despicable turkey hen; I'd like to kill you. You mean to rob me."

"You lie," shrieked Sim, now warmed up.

Then I had to run. He caught up a big glass case of butterflies and heaved it in my direction.

But the way the butterflies flew wasn't a patch to the way I flew when the porters got hold of me. [Pg 83]

Talking of wax men, puts me in mind of a fellow who lives in the flat opposite mine.

He's about the most miserable specimen of a man I ever struck.

His wife is always quarreling with him; he's always quarreling with his wife.

When he proposed to her he said, as we all have said:

"Darling, if you will only marry me, I will make you the best husband in the world."

"Never fear, sweet," says she, "if I marry you, I'll make you that all right, all right."

One afternoon, I heard her giving him a Sam Hill of a blow-up and met him in the hall soon afterward.

"Say," says I, "why in thunder don't you assert your independence?"

"Independence," he wailed, "why she won't even grant me home rule."

"What were you scrapping about just now?" says I.

"Well, you see," says he, "when I married her I told her I delighted in cleanliness. When I got home to-day, she told me she had just paid a dollar to have the coal bin scrubbed out and we expect a load of coal to-morrow. Then, too, she told me she had bought a dream of a hat at a bargain, and I asked her whether there ever was a time she didn't get a bargain, and she says: 'Yes, when I married you.'" [Pg 84]

Well, late that night the unhappy couple got to scrapping again, and the worm turned and gave his wife a most unmerciful beating.

I thought he was going to kill her, so I went in search of a policeman.

I looked around for about an hour and finally located one talking to Billyon's cook.

"Say," says I, "you're wanted around the corner. A man has nearly killed his wife."

"How big is the man?" says he.

"Oh, he's bigger than you."

"Well," says he, "I'm sorry, old man, but it's off my beat." [Pg 85]

I went to the race track the other day and met a bookmaker I know.

"Hello," says he.





"What brings you here? Do you know anything?"

"No," says I, "if I did, I wouldn't be here."

I finally placed a small bet on a couple of horses, and when the first race was run off, anxiously watched the ponies.

They soon got so far away that I couldn't keep track of them, and noticing a fellow with a pair of field glasses next to me,

who seemed to be seeing everything going on, I says:

"How does Sunflower stand?"

Sunflower was the horse I bet on, you know.

"I don't know," says he, "I'm only watching the first ten horses."

Just to liven things up a bit, I'll sing you a song entitled "Music On The Installment Plan; or, How Would You Like To Be The Piano Man?"

"I love thee, ah, yes, I love thee,"
She sang in notes of joy;
And like a darned big fool
He married the maiden coy.

But now she never shrieks the song
She howled in days of yore;
She never thumps the keyboard now
Until her thumbs are sore.

Alas! upon her latest grand,
She never more will play;
She failed with the installments,
And they've taken it away.

I don't know whether to laugh or cry when I sing that song, but I guess I'll laugh.

Crying doesn't suit my complexion; then, too, I've enough to be sad about already.

I live in the suburbs.

You see if a man lives in the city, his wife always wants to go to some show or other, and that costs money.

We have a fine lot of neighbors out our way, I can tell you. They're so friendly.

The other day the woman next door stepped in, as I was coming to New York, and wanted to know if I wouldn't stop at Cooper & Siegel's and get her goods for a dress. I promised I would.

When I got there, I found an old maid ahead of me.

The shop-girl had evidently taken down almost every roll of cloth in the place, but as each new one was unfolded, the old maid would say:

"No, no, I don't think that would do."

All the rolls had been exhibited except one, when the old maid says:

"Never mind taking that down, I won't buy any cloth to-day. I was only looking for a friend."

"But, madam," says the girl, "if you think there's any possibility of her being in this roll, I'll open it up."

Just as I was about to say that I wanted some kind of cloth that would suit a red-headed woman, a little dapper chap butted in and says to the girl:

"Ah, darling Louisa, I have thought of you all week. How I love



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[Pg 87]

you dear. Will you give me your heart?"

I was just drawing back my foot to give him a number eight where it would wake him up, when the girl says:

"Certainly, dearest Harold. Cash! Cash!! Cash!!! Where will you have it sent?"



I was just about to say what I wanted, when another tall, lanky, moth-eaten-looking fellow stepped in and engaged the girl's attention for half an hour.

Finally he turned and went out without buying anything.

The floorwalker stepped up to the girl and says:

"You let that man go out without buying anything."

"Yes, sir."

"He was at your counter for a half hour."

"I know it," says the girl.

"In spite of all the questions he asked, you rarely answered him."

"I know it," says the girl, "but then, you see, I didn't have what he wanted."

"And what's that?" asked the floorwalker.

"Five dollars. He wanted me to subscribe to a life of Mark Hanna, compiled by a workingman."



I finally got what I wanted and left the store.

It was a very pleasant day and I thought I'd take a short walk.

I came to a large building in the course of construction. Just outside was a crowd of workingmen who had some argument.

I crossed over to see what was the matter and found two men pummeling each other unmercifully.

Finally the one who was getting the worst of it cried out:

"Say, I thought this was to be a fair, stand-up fight?"

"That's right," said a number of his companions.

"Well, how the devil can it be a fair, stand-up fight if he keeps knocking me down all the time?"

All at once a cop put in an appearance and arrested the principals, and some of the bystanders as witnesses.

I thought I would see the thing out, so I went to court where one of the men entered the charge of assault against the other.



The whole crowd wanted to explain, but they only succeeded in getting the judge sadly mixed up.

He told them to be quiet and addressed himself to one of the witnesses.

"Now, look here," he says. "As the court understands it, the defendant here began the quarrel, because the plaintiff hurled a vile epithet at him. Was that the way of it?"

"No, your honor," says the man. "Nobody chucked an epithet. Mike called John a bad name and John heaved a brick at him. Nobody hurled nothing else."

After leaving court one of my teeth pained me dreadfully, so I went to the dentist to have it attended to.

He advised me to take gas.

"All right," says I. "What is the effect of gas?"



"Why," says he, "it simply makes you totally insensible. You don't know anything that's taking place."

"Go ahead," says I, and I put my hand in my pocket and pulled out all the money I had.

The dentist, thinking that I was about to pay him, says:

"Oh, don't bother about that now. You have plenty of time."

"That's all right," says I. "I just wanted to see how much money I had before the gas took effect." [Pg 91]

I took a walk up Broadway the other night and ran into my old friend Jenkins.

After numerous liquid greetings, I asked him how Mrs. Jenkins was.

"Well," says he, "she isn't well at all. You see, she had an awful experience last night.

"I was out and she was all alone in the house.

Suddenly she heard muffled footsteps on the porch. They came nearer and finally sounded in the dining-room.

"Bravely she faced the midnight marauder, who pointed a pistol at her head.



"Tell me where the money is hid,' he hissed, 'or I'll fire.'

"Never,' she answered determinedly. 'Villain, do your worst.'

"I will,' snarled the scoundrel, baffled but not beaten. 'Tell me instantly where that money is hid, or I'll drop this big woolly caterpillar down your neck.'

"Two minutes later that darned burglar crept out of the house with my hard-earned money. I tell you, Jones, he was a genius." [Pg 92]

I left Jenkins.

I had walked only a block when I met old Bilgewater, an English sea captain.

He was delighted to see me and insisted that I take luncheon with him.

We went to a nearby restaurant and sat down at a table near the door.

I noticed as old Bilgewater sat down, he did it very stiffly. He didn't act as though he was at all comfortable.

Pretty soon he reached into his hip pocket and brought out a large telescope.

"That's a pretty hefty thing to sit on, ain't it?" says he, by way of introduction.

I said it was.

"Well, I never let that 'scope out of my sight," says he.

"Why?" says I. "Valuable?"

"Yes," says he, "werry. It were given me by my old friend Nelson, in return for services rendered in licking the French." [Pg 93]

"Why, man," says I, astounded at the barefaced lie, "Nelson has been dead for over a hundred years!"

"Well, well," says he, "so he has. How time does fly."

I think it's almost time I warbled something. How's this?

She was a maid of high degree,
To her came wooing, suitors three,
The first was rich, as rich could be,
The second nobly born was he.
But nothing in the world had three,
In fact he was a nobody;

And this fair maid of



high degree
Could not decide
between the
three.

So to their every sigh
and plea,
She only answered,
"Wait and see."
Until the rich one, off
went he,
To wed in the nobility!
The poor young lord
then met, you see,
A girl with hundred
thousands three!
And this fair maid of
high degree,
Was left with one
instead of three.

So lonely and deserted,
she

Was bound to smile on number three.
"He's nobody, of course," said she,
"I'll take and make him somebody."
So they were married, he and she,
And wisely, too, it seems to me.
'Twas Hobson's choice, as you can see,
'Twas either he, or nobody.

Now, considering that I've got to do some hundred-yard dashes
up and down a twenty-foot flat with my youngest son, I think I'll
say good-night.

May your slumbers be more peaceful than mine.



[Pg 94]



The End.

Transcriber's Notes:

The copy used as the basis for this digital edition was missing its back cover, so some advertising is omitted.

Some questionable spelling (e.g. merangue, assault) has been retained from the original where other contemporary uses of the same spelling have been found.

Some inconsistent hyphenation retained (working-man vs. workingman).

Images may be clicked to view larger versions.

Some image alignments have been changed from the original to better accommodate free-flowing text.

Page 3, changed "Shakesperian" to "Shakespeareian."

Page 9, added missing comma after "then" in "Have some pancakes, then," and fixed punctuation in: "I'm going to have some pancakes," says he.

Page 11, changed "it's way" to "its way."

Page 13, changed "it's shirt-sleeves" to "its shirt-sleeves" and "vituals" to "victuals."

Page 15, changed "it's own way" to "its own way."

Page 47, changed "decendant" to "descendant."

Page 48, changed comma to question mark after "left him" and changed "so healthy. know why" to "so healthy, know why?"

Page 61, changed "Mame" to "Mamie" and period at end of page to question mark.

Page 65, added missing period after "whiskey."

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK JIGLETS: A SERIES OF SIDESPLITTING
GYRATIONS REELED OFF— ***

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