

**JACK WITHINGTON.
The Man Behind the Scenes.**

Mrs. Hazelrigg shrinks, cringing from the haughty nabob's door. Instructed, with a parting curse, to darken it no more; The snowflakes patter on her hair; the biting winter blast Shrieks up and down the treble scale; the darkness gathers fast— And then the curtain rustles down; there comes a breathless pause, And lo! the audience roars forth tumultuous applause.

And then it is that Withington, who made the wind to blow, Who throttled down the twilight and let fall the mantling snow, Lights suddenly his cigarette among the shadows dim; He knows he made the show a go, but no one claps for him!

The smoke is thick, the cannon boom, the fight is nearly lost. "Help! help!" Art Burgess shouts, "Send help at any cost!" Then hoofbeats clatter on the road; and Walters smeared with mud, And with a towel on his brow, all blotted red with blood, Strides in and waves a shining sword; the serried foes retreat And we extract a victory from terrible defeat.

But ah! then old Jack Withington, whose earnestness and force Ground out of the "clat-clat" machine the hoofbeats of the horse, Who rambled on the big bass drum, the cannon's deafening boom, Slinks glumly and unnoticed to the dingy smoking room.

Beware, I say, of Withington. Should he get sore because He gets the work and worry, and the actors the applause, And sift the snow from smiling skies, or grind the horse machine, Inopportune in the midst of some great shipwreck scene, Or let the moon rise slowly up the nabob's parlor wall, He might cause some disturbances. So beware of him, that's all!

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She Knows the Day Well.

A poor little faded woman had been brought into court as witness in a case involving very important issues. The entire case depended on the fact that a paper had been signed on a certain day, and this the forlorn little woman was prepared to prove.

"You saw the paper signed?" asked the opposing counsel in cross examination.

"Yes, sir."

"And you take your oath that it was the 13th of August?"

"I know it was, sir."

The lawyer, who thought another date could be proved, assumed an exasperating smile and repeated her words.

"You know it was? And now be so good as to tell us how you know it."

The poor little creature looked from one countenance to another with wide, sorrowful eyes, as if she sought understanding and sympathy; then her gaze rested on the kindly face of the judge.

"I know," she said, as if speaking to him alone, "because that was the day my baby died."—Pearson's Weekly.

Opportunity.

In one of the old Greek cities there stood long ago a statue. Every trace of it has vanished now, but there is still in existence an epigram which gives us an excellent description of it, and as we read the words we can surely discover the lesson which those wise old Greeks meant that the statue should teach to every passerby. The epigram is in the form of a conversation between a traveler and the statue:

"What is thy name, O statue?"

"I am called Opportunity."

"Who made thee?"

"Opportunity."

"Why art thou on thy toes?"

"To show that I stay but a moment."

"Why hast thou wings on thy feet?"

"To show how quickly I pass by."

"But why is thy hair so long on thy forehead?"

"That men may seize me when they meet me."

"Why, then, is thy head so bald behind?"

"To show that when I have once passed I cannot be caught."

Dropping the Curtain.

"No, Mr. Slowin," said the fair possessor of the square chin, "I must respectfully decline to become your other half."

"But why?" asked the astonished young man, who had believed that he was the favored one.

"Because," replied the female extender of the frosty digit, "the man I marry must be brave and fearless. Tonight you let out the information that you have loved me for five long, weary years, but have not dared mention it until the present meeting. A man who has no more nerve than that would hide under the bed while his wife went downstairs to interview a burglar who was making a raid on the family larder. Therefore, Mr. Slowin, I will work the piano for a little slow music while the curtain drops on the farewell scene. You will find your hat on the usual peg of the hall rack. Good evening!"—London Mail.

The Pitt Diamond.

While Pitt, the grandfather of Lord Chatham, was governor of Fort St. George in 1698 he became acquainted with a jewel merchant named Jamchund, who brought a diamond of great size for sale. He asked £30,000 for it in the rough. It should, of course, have been bought on behalf of the company, but Pitt, seeing money in it, could not resist the temptation of making a private bargain. He became the possessor of the stone for the sum of £20,000, and he was quite satisfied that he had behaved honorably when he paid the man, who on his part was also content. But the diamond was known to be worth more than Jamchund had received, and the transaction gave rise to a good deal of gossip, which in no way decreased when later on Pitt had the stone cut in England and sold it to the regent of France for £135,000. Even that enormous sum did not represent its true value. The stone was set in the royal crown of France. It weighed 410 carats in the rough, but the cutting reduced it to 136 carats.—Mrs. Penney's "Fort St. George, Madras."

A Tartar Courtship.

Among the Tschulian Tartars a curious mode of "popping the question" exists. The Tschulian bachelor in search of a wife, having filled a brand new pipe with fragrant tobacco, stealthily enters the dwelling of the fair one upon whom he has bestowed his affections, deposits the pipe upon a conspicuous article of furniture and retires on tip-toe to some convenient hiding place in the neighborhood, local etiquette requiring that he should execute this strategic movement apparently undetected by the damsel of his choice or any other member of her family. Presently he returns without further affectation of secrecy and looks into the apartment in a casual sort of way. A single glance at the pipe he left behind him enables him to learn the fate of his proposal. If it has been smoked he goes forth an accepted and exultant bridegroom; if not, the offer of his hand and heart has been so irrevocably rejected as not to be even worth a pipe of tobacco.

Value of Laughter.

"Having vainly tried many and various remedies to restore to health a business man whom I know and who had fallen into a morbid condition owing to years of overwork, a famous Baltimore physician at last persuaded his patient to take a course of funny stories, one at each meal, with an extra two at dinner," said a Baltimore man. "The patient, a spleen and gloomy fellow, at first rebelled, but finally, falling in with the idea, adopted the course recommended and was in the end restored to health, the effect of laughter being entirely to change his mental and bodily condition. Laughter, in fact, is one of the cheapest and most effective of medicines, breaking up stagnation of mind and body and sending a healthy vibration through one's system. There is very little the matter with the man who can enjoy a hearty laugh."—Nashville Tennessean.

Sleepy Sermons.

"Some men preach," said Sydney Smith, "as if they thought sin is to be taken out of a man as Eve was taken out of Adam, by casting him into a profound slumber."

Wade not in unknown waters.—German Proverb.

The Grouchy View.

Secretary (writing advertisement)—Wanted, an intelligent young man, unmarried—Old Grouch—Leave out the "unmarried." You said intelligent, didn't you?—Exchange.

She Knew the Saint.

Margery's cousin, Cecilia, was eighteen and pretty. She was also devoted to music and spent hours practicing on a large pipe organ. This, together with the fact that she invariably wore a rapt expression when so engaged, earned for her the nickname of St. Cecilia. It happened that Margery's mamma was called to town and left her five-year-old daughter in charge of an obliging neighbor. This lady undertook to amuse her young guest by showing her a collection of prints, among which was a copy of the familiar presentation of the patron saint of music seated at the organ.

"This, my dear," said the obliging hostess, "is a picture of St. Cecilia."

"It doesn't look a bit like her," spoke up the tiny visitor.

"Why, how do you know?" inquired the astonished owner of the print.

"How do I know?" returned the equally astonished Margery. "Why, St. Cecilia is my own first cousin. She taught me my prayers and how to play jackstones."

When Children Smoked.

In the seventeenth century in England the practice of juvenile smoking was almost universal, at least according to Jorevin de Rochefort, a French traveler of that period. In an account published in 1671 he gives a description of an evening he spent in Worcester. He was catechized by one of the townsmen as to the habits of the French people. "While we were walking about the town," he writes, "he asked me if it was the custom in France as in England that when the children went to school they carried in their satchel with their books a pipe of tobacco, which their mother took care to fill early in the morning, it serving them instead of breakfast, and that at the accustomed hour every one laid aside his book to light his pipe, the master smoking with them and teaching them how to hold their pipes and draw in their tobacco, thus accustoming them to it from their youths, believing it absolutely necessary for a man's health."

Dobbin's Journey.

The family horse, who rejoiced in the eminently proper equine name of Dobbin, had earned a rest by long service and was accordingly sent away to the country to spend his declining years in the broad pastures of a farmer friend of his owner. The distance being somewhat excessive for his rheumatic legs, he was shipped to his new home by rail.

Little Edna, the family four-year-old, viewed the passing of Dobbin with unfeigned sorrow. She sat for a long time gazing disconsolately out of the window. At last, after a deep sigh, she turned with a more cheerful expression and said:

"Did old Dobbin go on the choo-choo cars, mamma?"

"Yes, dear," answered her mother.

A broad grin spread over the little girl's face. "I was just thinking," she said, "how funny he must feel sitting up on the plush cushions."—Woman's Home Companion.

An Indignant Beggar.

Flashing a roll of bills in the face of a haughty individual who had refused to give him alms and who had added further insults to this injury by heaping ridicule upon him, a very typical beggar at Coyoacan pulled off a stunt that brought down jeers upon the uncharitable young man. This beggar would have passed muster anywhere for one of the finished type and could safely have walked unarmed at midnight through a wilderness infested with thieves without his poverty once being questioned. There was not a whole thread in the warp and woof of his shirt that extended from seam to seam, and only an expert sartorial artist could have detected which openings were those originally made in the garment for putting it on and off. Just what portion of those rags was solid and strong enough to retain the roll of bills is a marvelous enigma.—Mexican Herald.

A Test of Friendship.

Just before Artemus Ward's death Robertson poured out some medicine and offered it to the sick man, who said, "My dear Tom, I won't take any more of that horrible stuff."

Robertson urged him to swallow the mixture, saying: "Do, now—there's a dear fellow—for my sake. You know I would do anything for you."

"Would you?" said Ward feebly, grasping his friend's hand for the last time.

"I would indeed," said Robertson. "Then you take it."

Ward passed away a few hours afterward.—"Recollections of the Banquets."

A Great Career Ahead.

"Are you the professor?"

"Yes, sir. What can I do for you?"

"I have a daughter and I'd like to know what it will cost me to have her taught to sing. I think she will become a great operatic star if her voice is properly trained."

"Does she seem to have extraordinary gifts as a vocalist?"

"Well, no; we haven't noticed that her vocal gifts are out of the ordinary, but nobody seems to be able to manage her."—Chicago Record-Herald.

The Bishop's Visit.

Bishop (who has "looked in" at rural Sunday school)—Now, children, can any of you tell what is meant by the visitation of the bishop? Little Girl (after a long pause)—Pleas, sir, an affliction sent from heaven.—London Telegraph.



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