

RELIGIOUS

What They Had in Common.

"I was a good deal disappointed at not finding anybody there to meet me," said Mrs. Wilkins, on her return to her home in Vermont, "for I had expected my son-in-law John, at least, and I thought maybe Melinda would come with him; but there was some delay in getting my letter, and John was away, and Melinda couldn't come."

"She sent a little note, telling me I needn't be at all timid about coming with the driver she had sent. And who do you think the driver was? Well, he was a real Indian! His name was Standing Bear. He didn't wear any warpaint and feathers, but he couldn't talk ten words of English. And to think of me, of all women on earth, riding twenty miles with a man and not talking!

"Well, we did talk, and I don't really know how we did it, either; but I remember part of it, and I will say I'd rather ride with a man who can't talk but feels sociable than with one who talks so much he don't give anybody else a chance.

"I think it was about the children we began. I asked him, somehow or other, if he had any children, and he understood me after I had asked the question two or three different ways, and he said 'Long boy,' and he opened and shut his hands three times, like this.

"I understood him. And I told him I, too, had a 'long boy' fifteen years old, the same as he had; and then he told me about the other children, and I told him about mine, and he knew John and Melinda and the grandchildren, of course.

"Well, I knew from Melinda's letters about the mission over on the reservation beyond their farm, and I knew this man was a Christian, from the way he acted, and I knew Melinda wouldn't have sent any one after me that wasn't a good man.

"After we had talked over all the things that we could talk about in the eight or nine words he knew of English, and the signs we could make, I asked about the mission.

"I couldn't understand much that he told me, only I could understand that the love of God was very precious to him, and that made me feel more than ever that even if we couldn't talk much, we had a good deal in common. For when a man has a 'long boy' fifteen years old and loves him, and loves God besides, I don't feel like a stranger with such a person.

"Well, I finally made out to ask him if he could sing, and he smiled and pulled out of his pocket a hymn book. I couldn't read a word of it, but the tunes were in English, if the words weren't, and I began to sing in English, 'Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing.'

"Well, he sang it, too, in his own language, and if his voice wasn't very musical, at least we understood each other. We sang 'A Charge to Keep I Have,' and oh, ever so many others. We had a real concert. We didn't sing every minute, of course; but I kept looking through the book, and when I found a hymn I knew and felt like singing, I'd just start in, and he'd join in.

"I wasn't sorry when the journey ended, for of course I was pretty tired from the cars and twenty-eight miles is a long ride. I was glad to see the house ahead, and Melinda waiting for me at the gate. She told me how sorry she was that they hadn't been able to meet me themselves, and how good a man it was she'd sent to meet me; but she didn't need to tell me much about him, for I'd become well acquainted with him.

"When I told her how much I'd been able to talk with him she laughed. And she said, 'Well, mother, you'd get acquainted with the Sphinx if you had to ride with her.'

"I told her I didn't know how I'd get on making friends with the Sphinx, but I'd got well acquainted with Mr. Standing Bear, and found we had much in common."—Youth's Companion.

Veteran Hymn Writers.

Living quietly in retirement at his home at Oosterdock, Iowa, is Eden Reeder Latta, who is the author of that well known gospel hymn entitled "Whiter Than Snow." Mr. Latta has composed between 1,600 and 1,700 hymns and has revised hundreds more. He was born in Noble County, Indiana, in 1839, and his first poem was published when he was a lad.

"Whiter Than Snow," his masterpiece, has been published and translated in several languages for the use of missionaries in foreign lands and is still popular and to be found in many hymnals. Another popular song, "Wandering Away," was written by Mr. Latta several years ago for the great Baptist evangelist, Dr. Penn of St. Louis.

At Mount Vernon, Iowa, resides Rev. Louis Hartough, who wrote "I Hear Thy Welcome Voice," another popular gospel hymn which has done much good and has been used with great effect at various revival meetings since it was written at Epworth during a revival meeting in the early eighties.

Dr. Hartough is now past 80, yet is an active religious worker, and each Sunday has a class of forty men. During the war he was stationed in the

east and had much to do with the chaplain service in the army.—Minneapolis Journal.

Eternal Joy.

They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. Rev. iv. 8.

O blessed rest! When we rest not day and night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty"—when we shall rest from sin, but not from worship; from suffering and sorrow, but not from joy! O blessed day, when I shall rest with God, when I shall rest in knowing, loving, rejoicing, and praising; when my perfect soul and body shall together perfectly enjoy the most perfect God; when God, who is love itself, shall perfectly love me, and rest in my love to Him; when He shall rejoice over me with joy, and joy over me with singing, and I shall rejoice in Him!—Richard Baxter.

The Christian's Happiness.

Christianity is the happiest of all religions, but it digs deep to find the source and spring of its joy. It gives us satisfaction, but it is the satisfaction which arises from victory over, and repression of, our baser nature, our human weaknesses and cowardice. It is happiness, but happiness won by struggle and repression. The true follower of Christ must never forget this. "Then said Jesus to His disciples: 'If any man will come after Me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.'" Then He adds something further and deeper: "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it."—Dean Butcher.

The Fullness of His Grace.

It is no ordinary proof that will satisfy God as to the love of our hearts. He Himself did not rest satisfied with giving an ordinary proof. He gave His Son, and we should aim at giving very striking proofs of our love to Him who so loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses of sins. The sufficiency of His grace gives us ample ground for genuine gratitude. No condition of life is too hard for its generous help. No task is too great, no sin is too strong, no trial is too severe, for the one who literally and lovingly leans upon God's grace.

For Blessings Received.

"At evening . . . will I pray." Ps. lv. 17.

Close the day with thanksgiving and prayer. Review all the blessings of the day and thank God in detail for them. Nothing goes further to increase faith in God and His Word than a calm review at the close of each day of what God has done for you that day. Nothing goes further towards bringing new and larger blessings from God than intelligent thanksgiving for blessings already granted.—Rev. R. A. Torrey, D. D.

A Prayer.

Forgive us who live by Thy bounty,
That often our lives are so bare
Of the garland of praise that should render
All votive and fragrant each prayer.
Dear Lord, in the sharpness of trouble,
We cry from the depths of the throne!
In the long days of gladness and beauty
Take Thou the glad hearts as Thine own.

ONE OYSTER ENOUGH.

He Swallowed It Alive and Had to Kill It After It Was Down.

A farm laborer from the interior on his first visit to London dropped into a small oyster shop where a number of men were eating raw oysters. The extreme satisfaction displayed on the faces of those about him created longings of a gustatory nature in the new arrival, who edged his way up to the counter in anticipation of eating a real live, juicy oyster.

It was the first time he had seen an oyster, and he became at once interested, and when the shellfish had been finally uncased he proceeded to balance it on the end of his fork, then, with a gulp of extreme satisfaction, gulped it down.

"Great Scott!" shouted a man standing near him. "You haven't swallowed the oyster alive, have you?"

There was a horrible pause.

"That critter will eat right through you!" shouted another.

By this time the poor countryman was shaking with fear and horror. He commenced to have terrible pains in his abdomen and was soon doubled up in his agony. He begged some one to go for a doctor to get the thing out.

He continued to grow worse, when some one suggested that he take a dose of tabasco sauce, which it was claimed would kill the object that was creating such terrible commotion in his internal arrangement.

He grasped the bottle with avidity and took a draft. His condition, which before had been alarming to the victim, now assumed a serious phase to the perpetrators of the hoax.

The man gasped and choked. He became black in the face, and tears were running down his face, when some one thrust a bottle of oil into his mouth, and he was forced to drink copious drafts.

The effect was magical. The oyster was evidently "dead." He became more composed, and when he finally recovered his breath he said:

"We killed it. But when that darned stuff got into my stomach that oyster rushed around as if a shark was after it."—London Scraps.

* A writer of epitaphs should be conversant with the dead languages.



Weeds and Flowers.

The big dahlias in mother's garden were withered by the frost, even the little red asters were dull and wilted, and Philip and Doris Grant looked about anxiously, for it was father's birthday, and they had thought out a nice surprise for him. They wanted to put a border of flowers all round the dinner table, so that when he came in he would ask, "Who did that?" And then mother would say, "The children."

Back of the garden was a field which sloped down to the brook, and the children walked slowly across the field. They had nearly reached the brook when Doris called out, "Look! Look, Philip!" and pointed toward a bunch of fine yellow blossoms.

"Those are weeds!" said Philip. "Just yellow weeds. They grow everywhere, by the road and all along the brook."

"But they are as fine as the garden blossoms," said the little girl. "Probably they don't want to be weeds. Perhaps it's just like some children who don't have anybody to love them, and have to grow up where they can. You know Aunt Sue told us about children that didn't have homes; and I guess weeds are just blossoms that don't have gardens."

"They're pretty," agreed Philip. And then they began picking the yellow blossoms.

That night, when Mr. Grant came in to dinner, he looked at the table with the lovely sprays of yellow blossoms all about it.

"Well, well," said father, "I'm glad you selected goldenrod. I think it ought to be our national flower."

"What is a national flower?" asked Philip.

"It is a flower selected by the people of a country as their floral emblem," explained Mr. Grant, "just as each nation has a flag of its own."

Doris' face was full of delight. "I told you weeds were just as good if their blossoms were lovely," said Doris.—Youth's Companion.

Another Kind of Address.

A man named Brown was invited to speak at a town meeting, and when he seated himself on the platform and looked over the program he discovered that his name was the last one. Considering himself somewhat of an important personage, this fact made Mr. Brown exceedingly angry, and during the entire meeting he sat and thought over the insult.

The speakers during the evening were unusually stupid and by the time Mr. Brown's turn came the audience was paying scant attention.

The master of ceremonies finally stood up to introduce the last speaker, saying as he did so, "Ladies and gentlemen, my esteemed friend, Mr. Brown, will now favor us with his address."

"Certainly," said Mr. Brown, springing to his feet, his face purple with indignation. "My address is Claremont street, Seattle, Washington. Now, good-night, I'm going home!"

See-Saw.



See-saw, see-saw; away up in the air!
See-saw, see-saw; going everywhere.
See-saw, see-saw; visiting the moon;
See-saw, see-saw; coming back so soon!
See-saw, see-saw; Mary, Tom and Joe;
See-saw, see-saw; to the clouds do go.
See-saw, see-saw; hear their glad some song
As they see-saw, see-saw all day long.

Teddy, Terry and Tommy.

TEDDY.
When I grow up I think I'll be
A soldier, strong and brave;
With all my might I'll fight for right,
That none may be a slave.

TERRY.
When I grow up I think I'll be
A sailor bold and true;
I'll learn the sea from A to Z,
And own a ship and crew.

TOMMY.
When I grow up I think I'll be—
Oh, dear, I've made no plan!
Well, anyway, I guess I'll say
I'll simply be a man.

An Alphabet Story.

Each person must write a story in twenty-six words, every word to begin with a different letter of the alphabet in its natural order. For instance: A brilliant creature discoursed every Friday, giving her interpretations jocosely. Kindly lawyer, Mr. Norton, objected, professing quite rudely some trumpety unbeliefs, varied with (e)xalted yells—Zounds!
This may be varied by using the letters backward, from Z to A. For the best (or least bad story) some humorous trifle can be presented.

Floral Decorations.

Jennie is only five, and her brother Rob is six; so, of course, she asks all sorts of questions, and he always answers them.
The other day she heard some one

talking about "Floral Decorations" and immediately asked Rob what it meant. "Why don't you know even that!" exclaimed Rob scornfully. "Why, floral decorations are rugs or carpet or matting, or anything else you use to decorate the floor!"

Ball on Horseback.

For this game half the players must be mounted on the backs of the other half. Catch-ball is then played in the ordinary way, the riders doing the throwing and catching whilst the steeds do their best to help them by running to where the ball seems likely to fall.

The stronger boys should be the horses and take the smaller ones for riders.

WAGNER TO HIS FIRST WIFE.

Letters of Great Musician Throw Light on His Unhappy Life.

The musical world, says the book reviewer of the London Morning Post, is once more indebted to Ashton Ellis for contributions to the Wagner literature. The subject of his latest volume is the letters written by Richard Wagner to his first wife Minna, the name by which he called the actress Christine Wilhelmine Planer, to whom he was married at the age of 23 at Magdeburg in 1836. Minna Wagner died in 1866, after she had been separated from her husband for about four years. It is a question whether she was ever united to him in that bond of sympathy and interest which should exist between husband and wife. The whole story is extremely sad and painful. When promoted from the post of choromaster at Wurzburg to that of conductor at Magdeburg in 1834 Wagner met Minna Planer, who was engaged at the theater as an actress for juvenile parts. She was in reality his senior by three and a half years, although she claimed to be of the same age. The marriage itself was inauspicious, for it took place while Wagner was out of an engagement. The wife very soon began to exercise an influence over her husband. Had she been a woman of intellect and education, or possibly of insight and sympathy, matters might have been different, but she was, Mr. Ellis tells us, the daughter of a mechanic and brought up in a degree of ignorance that did not permit of her acquiring a knowledge of how to write until she had reached maturity.

The letters, of which there are 269 in the two volumes, unfold a very unhappy story of willful misunderstanding and wild imaginings on the part of Wagner's unsympathetic wife. In fact, save for the light they throw on the character of a great man, they would be but the reopening of a chapter of extreme sadness. They show an unflinching spirit of consideration and forgiveness on the part of Wagner—perhaps too much consideration and forgiveness for the shortcomings of a nature like that of Minna Wagner. Apart from the fact that the letters are addressed to his wife they contain much detail hitherto lacking with regard to the early days, and herein we must consider that their value lies. As a record of the relations between husband and wife, the one with his way to make along a difficult path of his own creating, and the other determined beforehand to oppose him at every step, it is all almost too painful. The student of physiognomy will, however, find an explanation of Minna's nature in the portrait given in the second volume, and will be able to judge from the portrait of Wagner himself which prefaces the first volume how unlikely it was that there could ever be perfect accord between the two natures.

A Native Product.

Sometimes the thought that is most labored for proves most elusive. Many persons who believe that they can say what they mean are surprised by this discovery in trying to compose a concise, effective letter, or advertisement, or after-dinner speech, or even a telegram. The commonplace inscriptions which may often be read on medals, and public monuments and tombstones, were no doubt chosen after much thought, and in despair of the inspiration that failed to come.

The inhabitants of a French village built a bridge. It was a fine structure, and ought to be decorated with a suitable inscription. The brightest minds of the village grappled with the problem, but nothing quite expressed the pride and satisfaction of the townspeople.

The tablet that was finally put up read, "This bridge was made here."

Appreciation.

The Lady Fare—You cannot cheat me, my man, I haven't ridden in cabs for twenty-five years for nothing. The Cabby—Haven't you, mum? Well, you've done your best.—New Zealand Free Lance.

Did Not so Regard Himself.

"You're always kicking about the high price of things. I suppose you are one of the ultimate consumers we hear so much about."

"No, sir, I'm one of the ultimate cough-uppers!"

Eggs-actly.

Fuddy—I see there's a paper called "The Red Hen."

Duddy—Started by some Nestor of journalism, I suppose.—Boston Transcript.

A Sad Tale.

Once a young fellow named T8 Asked K8 if she'd be his m8.
"I'm sorry to say
I'm married," said K8,
And such was the young fellow's f8
—London Tit-Bits.

THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN



BUSY AT OVERAMMERGAD.

Already Preparing for the Presentation of the Passion Play.

Overammergad is already busy with preparations for the performance of the passion play, which will take place next year, a London letter to the New York Sun says. Thirty dates have been fixed between May 16 and Sept. 25, of which nineteen are Sundays. Extra performances are sometimes given on Mondays, when there are more people in the village on the preceding Sundays than can find places in the theater.

The great problem of the passion play committee is to prevent the performances from degenerating into commercialism. The play commemorates the departure of the plague from the village in 1633 and the devoutness of the actors is no less now than it has ever been; but already this autumn agents have canvassed the village to buy up sleeping accommodations for next summer and prices have been offered for single rooms which have almost turned the heads of the peasants.

No one can witness the passion play who has not spent the previous night in the village itself. Every house is registered as possessing a certain amount of sleeping accommodations, and the total number of beds in the village is approximately the number of seats in the theater—4,200. One-third of the beds in each house must be placed at the disposal of the local official lodging bureau. The householders may make their own terms for the other beds, with a maximum charge rigidly fixed by the committee.

Three great tourist offices of London, Berlin and Munich have secured a certain number of beds for the night before each performance. Many of the villagers are reserving accommodations for visitors of 1900 to whom they are pledged and whom they regard as friends.

The burgomaster, Herr Bauer, has promised all his available beds to an English woman, who has taken a villa at Garmisch, twelve miles away, and will convey her guests to the village in a motor car. She has already received 200 applications for the accommodation.

The large firms of tourist agents have already about 3,000 applications and the local bureau is receiving scores daily. Offers of \$6 and \$7 a night for convertible sitting rooms, which the villagers would gladly let in ordinary seasons for 25 cents a day, are being made by agents, but such speculative offers have no chance of acceptance.

Anton Lang, who will be the Christus, as in 1900, is now 35. Since the last performance he has married a pretty young woman and they have three children. He is still a working potter, and his little shop is constantly invaded by visitors. He played Christus in 1905 in a special play on the history of David, and his wife complains that he often spent five hours a day signing photographs.

All profits from the sale of seats will be administered by the committee for the benefit of the village as usual. The actors are only nominally compensated. For them it is a labor of love and devotion.

It is expected that about 200,000 persons will go to the play next year, including fully 40,000 English and Americans.

Why Are the Old Poor?

"Is it not the old man's fault that he is poor?" you ask. Often it is. The aged man and women who drag out their weary lives in a hopeless effort to hold on are often the victims of their own sins, says Walter Weyl, in Success Magazine. A man may drink to excess for forty years, and wonder that at 60 he is not an established and respected citizen. The old man who waits at midnight in the bread line for crust and coffee, may be a wretched record of an ill-spent life.

And yet he may not be. He may be more sinned against than sinning; he may be turned out into the storm, as was King Lear, by his ungrateful children, or by the ungrateful children of his neighbors. The tottering, decrepit, dissolute old man may be the senile child of the boy who worked at 8, of the young fellow who was cast into jail for a trivial offense.

It is not true to-day that the righteous in their old age never beg bread. The chances of life are many, and a man may work and save, and yet in the last hour be penniless and friendless. The honored bank may break, the trusted friend defraud; even the insurance company may fail to insure. And there are men, honest and intelligent men, and great men and geniuses, too, who cannot keep their heads above water, and who are driven by their very humanity into a penniless old age.

Power with Safety.

"I think," said the ambitious man, "that I would like to be a king of finance."

"Don't think of it," said the great European money lender. "Think of the dangers that beset a throne. What you should say is that you would like to be a financier of kingdoms."—Washington Star.

Theory and Practice.

Geraldine—A rose by any other name would smell as sweet. Gerald—I have never been able to make you believe it when I brought you flowers.—New York Press.

After a woman makes up her mind it doesn't take her long to make up her face.

It's so much easier to gossip about people than to pray for them.