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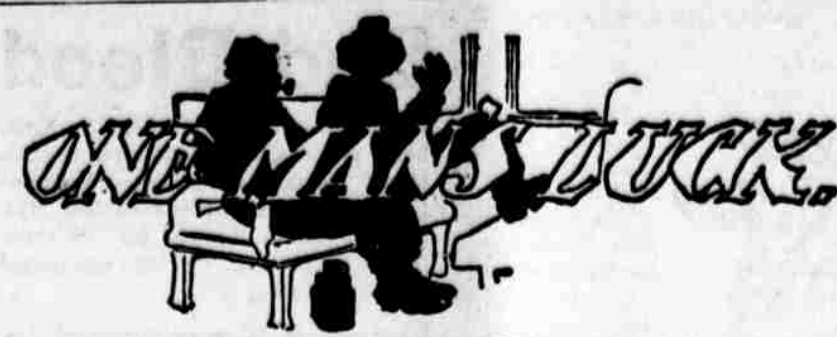
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The artisan with the beard frowned as he struck his fifth match on the leg of his overalls. "If I had him around I'd break his neck," he said. "I get mad every time I go by the house."

"I don't see how they live, m'self," remarked the lean toiler with the tobacco-stained shirt, elevating his muddy feet to the seat opposite.

"They wouldn't live, they'd die or they'd be in the poorhouse if the old woman didn't get out an' hustle. She's a worker, all right. Takes washin' in the house an' goes out washin' or scrubbin'. She's on the go the whole time, the old woman is. She'd fire him if she had a lick o' sense."

"Didn't he never work?"

"Not since I've known him. Never done nothin' 's far's I can see except loaf around and smoke his pipe, but the old woman says he uster be a hot worker afore he hur' his back. He's pickin' up a rock an' bakin' as good as mine is. I've hurt my back afore now, but I think I see my woman hustlin' around while I was settin' in a rockin' chair. I'd find myself outside on the back o' my neck, that's where I'd be."

"Same here. I couldn't work my woman that way. She wouldn't stand for it. Back or no back, I'd have to get out an' dig."

"They ought to tar an' feather him, that's what they ought to do. He is too worthless to live. If somebody'd get out an' make up a party to do it, I'd make one o' em. I'd ride him on a rail until his back got limbered up. Give him a little exercise like that an' I'll bet you wouldn't hear nothin' more about his back."

"That's what! Why don't you do it some time? The old woman wouldn't make any holler, would she?"

"Would she? Well, I guess!"

"She would?"

"I'd hate to be the first man to try it if she was anywhere around. She's a pretty husky woman, she is. She needs to be, all right. Say, that feller's got a snap. If I had his job I wouldn't want no better."

"It certainly is a puddin'."

"Puddin's no name for it. Why, just think! Three good, square meals a day, all the terbacker you can smoke an' a rockin' chair out on the porch in summer an' up alongside o' the stove in winter an' not a hand's turn o' work to do. Why, if I had that I'd think I was fixed for sure. On'y thing he ever does is to whittle out some trinkets for the kids with his knife. She buys the papers for him, too."

"Say, she's all right. If I had that kind of a woman I'd be in luck, eh?"

"Well, you ain't."

"That's no lie."

"It makes me mad to see him. I get up an' go to my work an' I see a light in the kitchen an' I know she's up an' got the fire built an' gittin' him his breakfast. I'll bet it's a good one, too. If he don't feel like it he don't git up all mornin' at all. Say, I feel like pickin' up a rock an' bakin' it through the bedroom window. Many's the time I've thought I'd like to give him a little surprise like that. In the summer I'd watch 'em evenin's settin' out in front; her knittin' stockin's an' shawls to sell an' him readin' out loud in the paper to her. Or else she'd be at her tub an' him leavin' back in his chair smokin' his pipe as happy an' contented as you please, watchin' her. When I see that I want to take hold o' the back rockers o' that chair an' shoot him out down the steps an' tell him to get to work."

"Maybe he has got something the matter with him."

"Him! If he is he don't look it. He's rollin' hog fat. He don't look no more sick than I do an' I'll bet you he ain't. She told my wife once he was just about the best man breathin'. Always kind an' cheerful an' never complainin'. Say, I'd like to know what he's got to complain of. She's afraid she won't have him to work for much long. I'd be scared to death if I was her."

"Some men is mighty queer, that's a fact," said the toiler with the tobacco-stained shirt.—Chicago Daily News.

**Topics of Times**

Seventeen distinct languages, besides English, are spoken in India.

It is claimed that 45 per cent of lithographers die of tuberculosis.

The potato crop of the United Kingdom is worth annually over \$1,000,000,000.

Bishop Berry of the Methodist Church has charge of seventeen conferences.

A hundred years ago two "enterprising" merchants were ducked once for every missing ounce.

A Young Men's Christian Association building costing \$500,000 is soon to be erected in Detroit, Mich.

Refrigerators are for the first time coming into general use in France. The patterns being sold are of the style used in the United States fifty years ago.

The Boston Y. M. C. A. is to give a winter course of talks to shoe workers. The aim is to give the workmen a wider and more thorough knowledge of the industry.

A pageant will be held at Ramsey, England, on June 18, 19 and 20 next in honor of the one-thousandth anniversary of the founding of Ramsey Abbey by King Edward the Elder.

The contention that Iowa soil could be made to produce, with good seed and proper cultivation, 100 bushels of corn to the acre is being proved correct at the county farm near Des Moines.

The Amalgamated Copper Company alone employs about 10,000 persons at Butte, Mont., in addition to about 1,500 at Great Falls, 2,000 at Anaconda, and 2,000 more at its coal mines and lumber camps.

Billiard balls, boxes for handkerchiefs, ink wells, combs, etc., are now made from skimmed milk. Milk stone or "galalith," as it is called, is a combination of skimmed milk and formalin, and is made by a simple process.

The parson's wife had sent an order for a leg of mutton and received in reply the following note: "Dear Madam—I have not killed myself this week, but can get you a leg off my brother if that will do. Your affectionate butcher, John Smith."

Sunny Slope, Cal., enjoys the distinction of being the largest vineyard in the world. It is situated amidst the most beautiful scenery of that favored land, two miles from San Gabriel. Of a total of 1,900 acres, 735 are devoted to grapevines, the remainder being distributed among orange, lemon and olive trees.

The biggest high-pressure pump in the world is installed in the Dry Diggings placer fields of southern Oregon, on Rogue River, and is used to operate a battery of hydraulic monitors in the mines. This pump is tested to withstand a maximum pressure of 250

pounds to the square inch. Its capacity is 13,000,000 gallons a day of twenty-four hours, or 9,000 gallons a minute.—Technical World Magazine for January.

There is a "black list" of habitual drunkards in Germany and one Henry Schivertdferger had the misfortune to be placed on it. He is now off—as the following official notice, issued by the chief constable of Hildesheim, indicates: "Henry Schivertdferger, master furrier, having died May 22, 1906, the warning against serving him with alcoholic liquors is now superfluous. For the present his name is removed from the black list."

The village inn at Addington, England, has been tenanted by the members of one family since the reign of Henry VII. On the death of the mother of the present hostess she left no son, but only three daughters survive her. The three sisters in turn took possession, and the present hostess is the last of them. The Jolly Millers' inn, at Newnham, Cambridgeshire, has been kept by a family of the name of Musk for the last 400 years. It is recorded in Cambridge annals that Queen Elizabeth once stopped here.

A land improvement company employed a novel means to reduce the height of a hill near Baltimore recently. The summit of the hill was to be lowered nine feet. The operations covered an area 1,500 feet long and 300 feet wide. From a stream near by water was forced at 80-pound pressure through 8-inch pipes to a 5-inch reducing nozzle, and then against the wall of earth. This fell in cartloads every few minutes, and so thin was it, with the water added, as to be easily conveyed through pipes to an abandoned pond which the company wished to fill as a part of the improvement plans.

The old astronomical clock in the first and second quadrangles at Hampton Court palace, London, which has gone continuously for many years without stopping, has suddenly ceased to keep time. It stopped at 10:55 a few weeks ago through the slipping of a pin in the mechanism and is now being thoroughly overhauled. The circumstance is of interest, as there is a tradition at the palace that the clock had not stopped from any accidental cause for over a century. The present clock is a restoration of the original clock, erected about 1540, when Henry VIII and Queen Catherine Howard lived at Hampton Court.

**Dosing in Church.**

"Lots of people," remarked the tireless talker, "are said to have fallen asleep in the Lord," who merely died and went to the other place."

"Yes," said Wiseman, "the nearest they ever got to it was to fall asleep in the house of the Lord."—Philadelphia Press.

Nature unadorned is said to be adorned the most, but the bare truth isn't always a thing of beauty.

Many a man becomes weary from trying to dodge people who make him tired.

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