

FANTASY



"A Very Able Man."
Of all the tantalizing things by which we are bested
The man who makes an "able" speech, he is the toughest yet.
The people stand and whisper, "Be as quiet as you can;
You mustn't interrupt him. He's a very able man."
And the boys get tired and wriggle,
And the girls all want to giggle,
And I lose his chain of logic and go drifting into doze.
And my head in rhythm nodding
With his cadences goes plodding,
While I wonder what the mischief he is holding about.
It really must be a most depressing mental strain
For a man to have an "able" reputation to sustain;
And know his fate not only with an anecdote or two,
To keep us all from wishing he would hurry and get through.
And just when I am dozing,
In comfort and in slumber,
Do yield my own opinions to this wondrous able chap.
His monotone he changes
And through wild crescendo ranges
In a series of exclamations, just to jar my little nap.
—Washington Star.

VOLUBLE EARNS A RAISE

Collects a Long-Overdue Account, by Strategy, Much to the Surprise All Hands.
It was my maiden trip on the road, and I was so full of instruction and good advice that I actually tipped the scales at 30 pounds more than I ever did before or have since. Presumably I had just accepted a position with Shout Loud & Co.; in reality I had begged for it. The firm manufactured a device for preventing trousers from bagging at the knees, and my fellows may not believe it, but those things sold like insurance in a town that's just had a big fire. My customers used to tell me that they couldn't get them fast enough to supply the demand. In order to appease the popular clamor for them they would send their draymen down the road to meet the incoming sales. Even boys in knickerbockers would buy them just to be in style, and several up-to-date women bought them to wear with bloomers.
Well, I started to tell about the collection of a bill. There was a man in Rochester by the name of Ikenstein who owned an \$800, and he was so slow that he couldn't keep up with his shadow. He had plenty of stuff and wouldn't stand a suit, but he'd hold off as long as he could in order to have the use of the money, and he used it almighty hard too. The firm knew that if they could threaten him personally with the service of a summons, he would settle; but he had a trick of keeping his eye on a representative called, and we didn't want the expense of collection fees when we knew he was good. The firm said to me: "Voluble, if you collect that bill, we will give you a raise of a week more than we agreed to." That settled me, and I made up my mind that I'd get those four hundred plunks, if I had to go to his place at night and crack the safe.
Asks for Mr. Ikenstein.
As was my my Ikenstein knew me when I went into Ikenstein's place. I walked up to a clerk and asked to see Mr. Ikenstein.
"In reply I was asked: 'Vat ees your business?'"
"I knew at once that it was an old trick, so I said, 'I want to see Mr. Ikenstein personally.'"
"I'm very sorry, mine friend, but Mr. Ikenstein is out about at present. Ees there anything I can do for you?"
"I finally learned from the clerk that Mr. Ikenstein was at home, so I decided to call on him there. After making a trip to his house his wife informed me that he was at the office, and I went back determined to see him, or do some one else mischief. On my way I saw a plan of strategy suggested itself to me that would render force unnecessary.
As I walked into his place a second time the same clerk approached me and I said to him, 'Now I owe your employer a considerable sum of money on a personal matter and I would like to pay it, as it will be some time before I'm this way again.'"
That clerk fairly gasped for breath in horror at his folly for deceiving me the first time, and the clerk called he'd had for missing the payment of that money. He assured me that Mr. Ikenstein would come in during my absence and would be glad to see me. Then he walked back to a private office, had a few moments' conversation with his employer, and called me to him.
I walked back to the office and there was the finest little man you ever saw; he weighed about 75 pounds. He didn't know me, but he had considerable money out and didn't know half the people that owed him. His eyes were dancing and his mouth was fairly watering in anticipation of drawing the next quarter's interest on the money that I was going to pay him. If I'd been a long-lost brother, he couldn't have greeted me more lovingly. I'm delighted to see you, mine friend. Sit down and make yourself comfortable. How can I be of service to you?"
Tells Him How.
"I'll tell you how you can be of service to me, Mr. Ikenstein. I represent Shout Loud & Co., and you have owed us \$400 for about a year. Now, I'm going out of here with your check for that amount, or your tire will be punctured before you go to bed tonight."
The clerk was still in the office and I think those words would have considered it a good transaction if they could have held out for 5 cents apiece. At first Ikenstein looked like a man who has just detected a disagreeable color and finally like a man with frozen feet. He sank feebly in his chair, as though he were ruined.
"Mine kind friend," said he, "about away to think of it. I hope to be right away, if I've got that much in the bank. I'm going dressed on all sides, and this will surely drive me to the wall. If I'm dressed for it now, I can't pay three and a half cents on a dollar."
"Oh, chop it, Ikenstein, chop it! We

know you've got the money and we're going to have it now. Sit right down like a little man and right that check and save the expense of having a summons served on you."
"With many groans and contortions of agony, Ikenstein took out his checkbook. His fingers wouldn't have trembled more if he had been signing his death warrant, but I walked out with the four hundred. I left him looking like a man that had been hit by a millstone.
After I'd walked up the street a ways, I looked back and saw that clerk come out of the door like a bolt out of a catapult and following him came a chair with equal velocity.
Well, boys, I'm going up to lay my body away for the night. Will you take something before you go up—Brooklyn Eagle.

"PAW" BUYS A FAIRY BOOK.
Reads It to the Family—"Maw" and "Bixby" Ask Questions.
Paw brot home a fairy book a few nites ago Becos they was a girl with him, and eyes came in the Office and told Him she was making a nonust living By selling books to people with literary tastes.
"How much did You pay for it?" maw ast.
"Only a dollar," paw told her.
"You could get it at the Department store for thirty-three cents," maw spd, "and I don't no what you Want with a fairy Book, ennyway."
"I'll come in handy sum time when we Haven't ennything Else to read to the Children," paw anserd.
"Yes," maw says, "and if sum creature that was all painted and Fixed up and pretended to be yung and innocous would want to Sell you a Glass eye that wasn't the Color of ennybuddy's in the hole wasn't you would Get persuaded that we to Have it Around the house in Case of a alimurgency."
"Maw, you rong me," paw told her. "You Haven't enny charutty in your hart. We need this Book. They are nothing like fairy stories to teach Children how rong it is not to be Good. They are always a helthy morral to fairy stories. That's why I that we better Have it around. Don't worry about the cost. A good thing is never Dear at enny price. That's my motto, and I love it."
A while after that Paw was reading in the Fairy book to me And little albert asked a girl that didn't Have good close to walk nor cake with Frost on to eat and queen. There was a fairy Took her to a bewtful pallas.
Gives Her the Keys.
They was one room in the pallas that the Little girl never got a Chancet to look in, and when the Fairy went away from Home she gave the Little girl the keys and told her she could go Enny whair only in that Room.
So as soon as the Fairy turned the next Corner the girl Took a peek in the Room where she had no Bixness and One of her fingers got all Covered with gold. When the Fairy came back she no what Happened by the gold Finger, but the girl sed she Didn't look in. Then she got sent out in the Woods, where she Had to live all Alone for lynn, till one day the King cowed an \$800, and he was so slow that he couldn't keep up with his shadow. He had plenty of stuff and wouldn't stand a suit, but he'd hold off as long as he could in order to have the use of the money, and he used it almighty hard too. The firm knew that if they could threaten him personally with the service of a summons, he would settle; but he had a trick of keeping his eye on a representative called, and we didn't want the expense of collection fees when we knew he was good. The firm said to me: "Voluble, if you collect that bill, we will give you a raise of a week more than we agreed to." That settled me, and I made up my mind that I'd get those four hundred plunks, if I had to go to his place at night and crack the safe.
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taken away by the Fairy and the people were going to burn the queen at the Stake becous they shot albert and the children. Then she got scared when the fire commment to make holes in Her silk stockings and give her the Prickelle Heat, and when the Fairy came along the Queen hailed out:
"Save me, fairy, save me. You gressed rite the first time. I done it. I'm gilty." Then the fairy put out the fire and gave the Queen her children back, and she and the King got happier than ennybuddy else on Erth.
"So," paw says, "you see that's what happens to people when they don't Tell the truth. If the little girl wouldn't of Looked in the room it would of been best, but that would of been too much to expect from ennybuddy That was going to go up to be a woman some day."
"Yes," little Albert says, "but s'posen she wouldn't of Lied about it?"
"Then she could of Lived with the fairy all the Time," paw says, "and wouldn't of never had to be sent out in the woods alone or nearly Got burnt at the stake."
"But how could she of got to be queen if she wouldn't of Lied?" little Albert ast.
Paw looked kind of scared at Maw, and she says:
"Yes, and if she would of Told the truth in the First place how could she ever of Got to Be the mother of the Babes and

It looks like them Germans was goin' to take a tight hold on Keeshoo-Chahoo." "Gesundheit," sez my daughter Elizabeth. She's been takin' a term in German at 't high school, an' they always sez 'gesundheit' when a feller sneezes, jest fer politeness.
"I said to Germans was goin' to hold on to Keeshoo-Chahoo, sez Bixby agin. "These dern Summer colds ain't no joke," sez I. An' then his face got red, an' he stiftened up.
"Keeshoo-Chahoo," he sez once more. "It seems a litle early fer hay fever," sez I.
"I'll bet you call it 'Cow-Cow,' he sez with a sneerin' smit.
"No, I don't," sez I. "That may be 'Lain fer' sez I, 'but I atick to 'hay fever' every time."
"I ain't sneerin'," said Bixby, lookin' blacker'n thunder.
"I looked at th' name he was pntin' out, an' it was 'Klau-Chau.'"
"Well," I sez, kind of sarcastic like,

paper from every department house in the city, cast-off corsets, old aprons, dishcloths, newspapers, blood-stained papers that had wrapped fresh meat, and bushes of strings and tags and bobtails.
One day last June some women who lived in the Ruskin had a meeting and talked up a plan for getting the McMurry corner cleaned. Enough money was subscribed to hire it done, but who would bell the cat? Who would go over and ask permission of McMurry to invade the sanctity of his private premises? For Jimmy was known to have a temper, and two sides to his Irish tongue.
Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Johns drew the black beans, and at once went and laid the case before the head of the McMurry family. At first Jimmy yielded to the smooth persuasiveness of the women ("I am always that soft with the wimmin, I am"), but pretty soon the gist of the thing got into his stomach, and he grow a litle red in the face and stood up a litle higher over his collar.
"Ladies," he said, clearing his throat, "I have lived in this ward twenty-two years, and never have I tuk help from man, woman or goat. I contract no own debts, and pay for me own bills. Never have I asked for drink, or clothes, or bed quilts. I am a self-made man, and my children are self-made children, and the

Matter enough! Didn't my wife and I trip for two months to have our wedding trip to ourselves and not be bothered by a lot of grinning strangers who think it funny to nudge one another whenever a newly married couple appear on the scene. And didn't that fool of a best man, just to be smart, go and upset all our cherished plans, and have us followed around like a couple of prize monkeys in a dime museum?"
"We managed to smuggle our trunks to the depot without having them tied all over with white ribbon and other fool things, and that was victory number one. Then, after we were married and every one was waiting on the front porch with rice and old shoes to throw at us, and make us feel miserable, we managed to slip through the back door and get away without their knowing it. That was victory number two, and we thought that that ended it, as we had carefully planned to act like old married folks on our wedding trip, and there was not the slightest doubt about our being successful. If we had been left alone."
"But what did that fool of a best man go and do but wire the hotels where we intended staying that we had just been married? An educated man like that, being as well as he was, why a chance to put a perfect lovely time! But when I meet that best man I expect to have a better time!"
—Detroit Free Press.

very unusual merits of his particular brand of bike, the man from the mountains got confused and explained that he had never ridden anything more complicated than a donkey; that this machine was the first one of the durned things that he ever saw and had a chance to look at, and he wanted to know what that hose pipe was on the wheels for.
That was getting back to first principles, but Percival was patient, and explained the origin of the pneumatic tire, but when he came to telling about pumping air into it to inflate the tire, it was too much for the donkey man, who exclaimed:
"Mister, you don't mean to tell me that you blow wind in there hard enough to make that hose pipe like that? I've seen wind blow pretty hard, but I never saw it blow quite as hard as a rock before. You're fool me, stranger, if I am from the hills."
Required Demonstration.
There was no other way to convince him than to deflate the tire and then pump it up again.
There was a good-sized crowd around by this time, and Brown was busy answering questions about what made the wheels go round, why the cranks didn't, and what made the coaster brake work, and how he managed to get a whole gas factory into the size of a tomato can. When he got to telling about the pump, he was interrupted by a man who said he would like to see the pump work. Percival Brown was one of them, with 'teen patent attachments on it. There is a wonderful lamp to begin with that would set Aladdin on the spot, beam it over his eyes. This lamp throws the moon and stars all in the shade and makes the rising sun look like a total eclipse. Then it has a steel spring, double-back-action back-em-off brake on the hind wheel and a stop-me-quick on the front wheel that puts a Westinghouse air brake back on the leg wagon.
Brown's wheel has everything but intellect. An educated man like that, being as well as he was, why a chance to put a perfect lovely time! But when I meet that best man I expect to have a better time!"
—Detroit Free Press.

A MATTER OF FORM



lived so happy with them and the king? Where does the morral come in, paw?" "Where do you get it in?" "In the fact," sez I, "th' way you put it we ain't none of us bright enuff over here to tell children from catarrh!" —Cleveland Plain Dealer.
MR. MEMURTY GETS WARM.
Resents Well-Meaned Interference With His Affairs.
Over on the West Side a certain large apartment-house faces a corner where a tumble-down frame house squats in the middle of the lot, and roofs in Jimmy McMurry and his family. We may call the apartment-house the Ruskin. Those who lived in it last Summer wondered why McMurry's corner was not sold to the ragman, for it was clothed in rags from head to heel.
There was no fence, but plenty of tall weeds and scrubby bushes, and these caught every rag and paper and string that came around the block, and never hauled down a flag once it was up. Jimmy had a sign on it that said "Washing Machine".
The women had gone, and the McMurry father lit his pipe and sat down on the doorstep.—Chicago Times-Herald.

He Thinks of Getting Out a Book of Bicycle Information.
Look out for the man with the new bicycle. He may start in to tell you all about it. The man with the new baby, the man with the smart boy, and the man who has just invented a new kind of machine to prevent whaladeros from blowing out the gas, all get out of the way, when the man with the brand new bike rolls in on his wind-jammed rubber plies.
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—Detroit Free Press.

WAIT TILL HE MEETS HIM!
Bridge-Owner Looking for Revenge on His "Best Man."
"I'm looking for that best man of mine," said the newly married man savagely. "When we meet there is going to be bloodshed! What is the matter? equals of enny kids that attend to the MacMaster's School. We hides up our bit yarrod when the day comes, and except no interbferen from people that live up an elevator, where the only yarrod there is, is the dirt they carry up on their feet. "Go home and swape under the beds," said he, "and I'll arrange my own premises. Will ye look at the dirty rag on that bush? That's the best curtain from one of the parlor windows of the Ruskin, and I'm blowed over here this mornin'." Mrs. McMurry would scorn it for a dish cloth. We intend to hire it plucked off, for we wouldn't touch it with a poker, for fear of blainin' it up. Go home and swape under—"
But the women had gone, and the McMurry father lit his pipe and sat down on the doorstep.—Chicago Times-Herald.

POEMS WORTH READING

Ministering Angela.
"Say, kids, I bin to 'saven. I bet you're all de place; Becos I seed de angels. Tah, sir-ree, face 'r' face."
"But dey aint got no feeders. Nor crowns, nor harps, nor wings. 'Cuz dey's got keps and aprons. An' lots o' odder 'tings."
"Yes, kyo' jest how I cum here; 'Twas cos I 'd de car 'Whit loadin' in de a-noon— 'Tis bet I seed a star."
"An' 'dat was all I cu'd see. 'Tufft struck de shoe, An' den I seed a angel— A angel—twain't no cop."
"Tee bet I 't dat trolly. She kin't me on de mou't An' sed, 'Fare little felio.' I wunn't wot about!"
"Dere ain't no ting wot 'urts me. 'Ceptin' I lies in bed— Dere's more no arse 'r' puttr, An' al' my eyes is red."
"An' den de doctor seed me, An' tuk me rit up stairs; An' 'ter a nice o' feller. Stud by me sayin' prars."
"I heerd 'im say, 'Our Farder— Like mudder us', yer koo. 'Fore her pitched in de river 'One day, long time ago."
"Saz, James, wix't yer feller 'Cud see de arch, such. An' 'stuz wot ladies gives me. O, say, it beats de Dutch!"
"Der doctor med me sleepy, I moe' forgot ter tell. 'Cept now he says dere's nuttin' 'An' fer me der get well."
"I wunn't wot de feelin'— I seen some angels—more— An' 'twaz de fat der's different. From 'dose wot cum before. An' 'ere's one runnin' quicker. 'Er arms out like a wing— 'Tis mudder! O, my mudder!"
An' St. Luke's angels sing. —F. L. S. in the Brooklyn Eagle.

Andre's Ride to Pont-du-lac.
When Andre rode to Pont-du-lac, With all his riders at his back, From the throat of many nations, marching amicably there, Oh, the patriotic odor of old schweitzer-case and cheese— Where the "Wacht am Rhein" is yielding to a wild Teutonic whoop— "Dere'll be ein hot time in der old town tonight—ain't it?"
Sweet the spring breeze is blowing from the silent paddy-fields, Where the overclouded land a glory crop of heather yields, There's the breath of sweet Italia in the song of the zephyr; And the soft Campanian cadences most languorously ring— "Da'll be a hotta time-a in da old town tonight—ain't it?"
And where the road is rocky and the moulk rains with toll— The thick North-hung—A solid cloud— Road, road and river, Men moved benumbed by day—by night The boldest durst not brounce. When Andre rode to Pont-du-lac.
When Andre rode to Pont-du-lac, We scarce could stem his swift attack. A hail, a cheer, a bugle call, Like wild oats they were up the wall. But still as each man won the town We tossed him from the ramparts down; And when at last the stragglers quailed And back the assassins shrunk assailed, Like wounded wasps that still could sting, Or Hiers that had misad their spring, They waded not by, but turned at bay. And fought it out all the dying day. Sweet saints! it was a crimson track That Andre rode to Pont-du-lac.
When Andre rode to Pont-du-lac, Said he: "A troop of girls could crack This business, then that bugs its heard But wists not how to wield a sword." It makes my blood warm now to know How soon Sir Crookern ceased to crow, And how I did de fat der's point, in Andre's harness found a joint; For I, who now am old, was young, And strong the there were, now unstrung. And deadly though our danger then, I would that dey were back again; Ay, would to God that dey were back. When Andre rode to Pont-du-lac. —A. H. Beesly in Longman's Magazine.

Along the Road to Peking.
All along the road to Peking there's a chorus in the air, From the throat of many nations, marching amicably there, Oh, the patriotic odor of old schweitzer-case and cheese— Where the "Wacht am Rhein" is yielding to a wild Teutonic whoop— "Dere'll be ein hot time in der old town tonight—ain't it?"
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Practice vs. Preaching.
It is easy to sit in the sun, And talk to the man in the shade. It is easy to foot in a well-trimmed waist, And point out the places to waste. But once we pass into the shadows We murmur and fret and frown, And our length from the bank, we shout for a plank.
Or throw up our hands and go down. It is easy to sit in your carriage And counsel the man on foot; But get down and walk, and you'll change your talk. As you feel the peg in your boot.
It is easy to tell the toiler How best he can carry his pack; But no one can rate a burden's weight Until it has been on his back.
The up-curled mouth of pleasure Can preach of sorrow's worth; But give it a slip, and a wryer lip We never made so earth.
—Ella Wheeler Wilcox in New York Journal.

"Sea Down Mo' Snow!"
Hit des so hot on 'er ban' You dunno whar 'ter go; En now his hard ter snowdat How ever in dis Georgy lan' We folks could growl at ondat!
But dat de way wid people! Can't please 'em, high or low; De Summer sun— He make 'em run. En holter loud fer snow!
De dusty fly hangs his head— De sun shine on him so; De "Whit-bee" dees his head; De Rose so hot his face that red! Good Lawd, sen' dem mo' snow!
But dis congratulee-people— Can't please 'em, high or low; De Summer sun— He make 'em run. En holter loud fer snow!
—F. L. S. in the Atlanta Constitution.

Manful Doctrine.
To get the good of living, You've got to live outright; Half way this and half way that Makes your life a blight; Stand with fight well fer the creed you hold; Win well, lose well, as your fate is told; For this is manful doctrine, sound from creation's birth, That a life that's worth the living should be lived for all it's worth!
—St. Louis Republic.

MR. MEDDLAR CAUSES TROUBLE.
Joins in a Telephone Conversation, With Dize Results.
When Mr. Meddlar tried to use his telephone a few days ago the "hello girl," probably dreaming of her social triumphs, instead of giving him the number he called for, connected him with a line over which a conversation already raged. Mr. Meddlar had listened for only a moment before he discovered that the line had a very irascible female at one end of it and a not overbright grocer's clerk at the other, and that the lady's order was being given somewhat tempestuously. He therefore decided to facilitate the proceedings, and the wires began to heat up in about this fashion:
"Woman's voice—And I want a dozen eggs; a dozen eggs—understand?"
"Mr. Meddlar—Yes, mum. Do you want them fresh, mum?"
"Woman's voice—Of course, stupid! Do you take us for cheap folks?"
"Clerk's voice—Yes, mum; a dozen eggs. Mr. Meddlar—Did you say a dozen or a bushel, mum?"
"Woman's voice—A dozen—a dozen—a dozen, Miss! And I want a bottle of pickles. Got that?"
"Mr. Meddlar—Yes, mum; a barrel of olives. Woman's voice—And I want a dozen eggs; a dozen eggs—understand?"
"Mr. Meddlar—Yes, mum. Do you want them fresh, mum?"
"Woman's voice—Of course, stupid! Do you take us for cheap folks?"
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