Ten Minutes With The Funny Men.

SOME·OF·THE·QUIPS·AND·JESTS·FROM·PENS·OF·THE·NEWSPAPER·HUMORISTS.

Terse Tales From Humorous Pens

TRIED AND TRUE.

Mabel—I am sure he must have loved her very dearly.

Maude—I should say so. He married her in spite of the fact that he had been out in the rain with her all one afternoon, was seasick with her, and saw her unexpectedly at home the morning after a dance.—Puck.

NOT HER PLACE TO CHIDE.

"The trouble with you," said his wife, "is that you are always sacrificing your comfort on the altar of your ambition."

"I know it," he replied, "but you should be the last one to blame me for having an ambition to be able to pay the bills you run from month to month."—Chicago Record-Herald.

PRACTICALLY A STRANGER.

A St. Louis traveling man, making his first trip through North Dakota, woke up one May morning to find the ground white with snow.

"For heaven's sake," he asked the hotel clerk disgustedly, "when do you have Summer out in this God-forsaken country?"

"I don't know," replied the clerk; "I have only been here 11 months."—Success.

FULL INFORMATION.

"Good-by," said Mrs. James to her husband, as she left for a short visit to her mother. "I've put everything in order for you. If you can't find anything, write to me, and I'll let you know where it is."

Two days later Mr. James missed a favorite hat of his and wrote to ask where it had been put. This is the reply:

"I think I put it in the wardrobe in the front bedroom, but it it isn't there you might try in the hat-stand drawer or the hall table. Or perhaps it has fallen behind the dressing table in our bedroom. I think it's upstairs somewhere. P. S.—Perhaps, after all, I changed it at the door for some ferns."—Tit-Bits.

NO CASE FOR ARITHMETIC.

Judge A. A. Adams, of the Indiana Appellate Court, tells a story in the Indianapolis Star of a man who was a good horse trader, but, through lack of a mathematical education, was unable to determine his per cent of profits.

"This man," relates Judge Adams, "made a good trade and he was anxious to know his real per cent of profit, so he consulted a school teacher.

"'I bought a horse the other day for $25 and sold it for $175; now, what was my per cent of profit?' he asked the teacher.

"'That,' replied the teacher, 'was not profit! it was larceny.'"

THE POOR VEGETARIAN.

Dr. Archibald Henderson, author of the new life of Bernard Shaw, was talking about vegetarianism at a dinner in Hillsboro, according to the Globe-Democrat.

"Mr. Shaw," he said, "has been a vegetarian more than 20 years. He sticks to vegetables very strictly. At the same time he doesn't like their taste overmuch.

"Shaw, at his house at Ayot, St. Lawrence, once said to me:

"'You should have come in time for luncheon. We had a fine luncheon today.'

"'Good,' said I.

"'Yes,' said Shaw, 'a fine luncheon. Salad, lentils, cress, greens, a luncheon fit for a cow—excuse me, I mean for a king.'"

ALMOST AN ANGEL.

George Ade was talking at a June wedding in Chicago about matrimony.

"Matrimony is perhaps a little too much idealized," he said. "These June brides, radiant under their white veils in a glitter of June sunshine, seem capable of changing earth into heaven, but as a matter of fact they are not capable of anything of the sort.

"I am in hearty sympathy with old Brown, to whom young Black said at a wedding:

"'A good wife can make a veritable angel of a man.'

"'Yes, that's so,' old Brown agreed. 'My wife came near making one of me with her first batch of doughnuts.'"—Washington Star.

DIDN'T KNOW THE KING.

A service paper relates an amusing story of King Louis of Bavaria. His Majesty was much annoyed on one occasion when the soldier on guard at the palace gates neglected to present arms. The truth was the soldier did not know His Majesty by sight.

"Why don't you present arms?" the latter asked, angrily. "Don't you know to whom you are indebted for your daily bread?"

The sentry glared angrily at the King, and, imagining him to be the army baker, replied:

"So you are the miserable son of a baker who furnishes the soldiers with bread, are you? Well, I should like to have you by yourself in some quiet place. I'd spread your ungainly anatomy over three kingdoms! I'd make dough of you!"

SHIFTING THE BLAME.

It was a nice little house, built specially to the owner's plans, and had everything up to date, with a few reminders of the good old days. For instance, there was a sun-dial placed at the foot of the garden.

On the first sunny day the owner compared his own reliable gold chronometer with Old Sol's timepiece, and found there was a difference of two hours. Obviously the figures on the sun-dial had been misplaced. The builder was sent for and arrived.

"Have a look at that sun-dial again," said the owner, significantly; "it makes the time 11 A. M." when as a matter of fact, the correct time is 1 P. M."

The builder looked long and earnestly at his handiwork and then slapped his leg.

"Ah!" he exclaimed with a proud ring in his voice, "I see vot it is, sir. There's something wrong mit the sun!"

Ambassador Bryce, says the Boston Herald, was talking at a reception in Washington about the abolition of "birching" at Eton, the famous English public school.

"I am glad," said Mr. Bryce, "that Eton boys will be no longer birched. I am afraid that some of the masters of Eton have hitherto believed too strongly in the apaphthegm.

"'A pupil's extremity is a teacher's opportunity.'"

HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN DEAD.

Ex-Governor Alva Adams was the guest of honor at the recent alfalfa banquet in Rifle, Colo.—a banquet, says the Denver News, wherein appeared alfalfa biscuit, alfalfa stuffed turkey mashed alfalfa (far better than mashed potatoes), alfalfa-leaf spinach, alfalfa tea and cider, alfalfa salad and alfalfa toothpicks.

"Alfifa is delicious," said Mr. Adams at the banquet's end as he drew his napkin across his mouth. "I have eaten and drunk heartily of it. I can only speak of it in terms of the highest praise.

"The people misjudge alfalfa. They misjudge it as the 'biled clothes' story misjudges the civilization of the West.

"According to this libelous story, a Harvard professor visited the West on a geographical expedition. In Albertus he put up with a rancher. The first night on the ranch he slept in his clothes like the rest of the boys, out of politeness, but the second night he complained about this.

"'I can't stand it,' he said to the rancher. 'I don't seem to get my rest. My boots especially incommode me.'

"So the hospitable rancher stretched a cowskin across the shack and that night the Harvard professor slept in his long, white nightgorwn by himself.

"At daybreak the night foreman came in while the professor was still slumbering. The foreman cast one glance at the sleeper, then tiptoed forth and said to the rancher:

"'Rather sudden, wa'nt it?'

"'What?' the rancher asked.

"'Why, the death of the old pref.'

"'He's not dead,' said the rancher 'he's sleepin'.'

"'Then what in tarnation is he wearin' them biled clothes for?' snorted the foreman. 'Never saw a chap laid out in biled clothes afore 'cepting he was dead.'"

MOTHER TOOK THE POKER POT

"There are five boys in our family," said Charles B. Landis, late Congressman from Delphi, Ind., to the Washington Post, "and once a year we go to the old home for a Christmas dinner with father and mother and our two sisters, for, like the old story in verse, we are seven.

"Last Christmas we were all happy after a royal dinner, and the brothers decided to have a quiet little game of poker. Brother Walter, who is best known in Indiana as 'Happy Jack,' had come all the way from Porto Rico, where he holds a Government job—he wouldn't be a Landis otherwise—and he is known as the best poker player in Indiana; that is, in the little family game. Well, as usual, 'Happy Jack' was gathering in the shekels, and had about 11 good American iron dollars stacked on his corner of the table.

"Suddenly the door opened and in walked mother. We were all stunned and silent that the good woman should catch us, and no one spoke. Mother broke the silence, however, when she walked up to 'Happy Jack's' side and picked up the money. 'I will just save this for our next Christmas dinner,' said mother, as she carefully gathered in the coin and left the room smiling, and adding no further comment. There was another spell of silence as we heard her retreating footsteps, but you know Indiana politicians are a resourceful people, and we were not long dismayed."

APPEARANCES MISLEADING.

George Gould, at a dinner at Georgiancourt, said wittily of a suspected gold mine:

"Gold mines are like human beings—they can't be judged by their appearance. You know what Frank R. Stockton used to say about judging by appearances:

"'Don't trust a man because he carries a silk umbrella—he may have left a cotton one in its place.'"—Washington Star.

Quips and Flings

Willie—Did the doctor make you take nasty medicine when you were sick?

Freddie—No; it was father who made me take it.—Puck.

* * *

The Thin One—Remember, please, that I am a star.

The Other—Oh, I know you are a star, but you would look better, dear, if you were a little meteor!—London Opinion.

* * *

"Kitty," said her mother, rebukingly, "you must sit still when you are at the table."

"I can't mamma," protested the little girl. "I'm a figetarian."—Cricago Tribune.

* * *

Laborer—And hav they tall buildings in America, Pat?

Pat—Tall buildings hav they—faith, Mike, the last one I worked on we had to lay on our stomachs to let the moon pass.—Life.

* * *

Mrs. Nexdore—Why don't you let your Willie play baseball with the other boys?

Mrs. Greene—A part of the game, I understand, is stealing bases, and I'm afraid it might have a bad influence.—Boston Transcript.

* * *

"Are you going anywhere this Summer?"

"No, I can't get away. You see, we have two major league ball teams in this town and the schedules have been so arranged that there will be a game here every day during the season."—Judge.

* * *

He—Is Miss Smith in?

Maid—No, she's out.

He—Well, then, call Miss Smythe.

Maid—She's out, too.

He—I guess I'll sit by the fire and wait.

Maid—I'm sorry, but the fire is out.—Sphinx.

* * *

"Well, little boy, did you go to the circus the other day?" "Yes'm. Pa wanted to go, so I had to go with him."—Kansas City Journal.

* * *

"That heiress is going to marry a struggling young man." "If she is a sure enough heiress what's he struggling for?"—Houston Post.

* * *

Partiality.—"The Inspector twisted one ofh is long red mustaches and smiled a little grimly at the other."—Cassell's Magazine. Why this favoritism?—Punch.

* * *

"Grace is having a grand time at the seashore." "Met a millionaire, perhaps?" "No; she met a young fellow who went down with $300 saved up."—Washington Herald.

* * *

That Held Him for a While.—He (during the spat)—Well, if you want to know it, I married you for your money. She—I wish I could tell as easily what I married you for.—Boston Transcript.

* * *

Strong Enough for Her.—Authoress (in search of "copy")—And I suppose visitors are not common in this out-of-the-way place? Superior waiter—Hindeed they har—painfully so, most hof 'em!—London Opinion.

* * *

Mrs. Loudtone—John, do you think a scarlet hat would be too much for me?

Husband—I don't know. I've never heard you in one.—Life.

* * *

Our Touchy Head Mistress—You needn't get angry, Bridget. I merely asked you to try and not snore so loud nights. Bridget—It's interferin' ye are wid what Oi do outside the workin' hours, an' Oi'll not sthand it.—Exchange.

* * *

"Why, a year ago you told me this place was easily worth $15,000. Now you estimate its value at less than $10,000." "You must remember that I was trying to sell it to you then. Now you want me to sell it for you."—Chicago Record-Herald.

* * *

Figg—Well, you know the old saying: "Contentment is better than wealth."

Fogg—That's so; people don't try to borrow it from you.—Boston Transcript.

* * *

Howard—Did she refuse you, old man?

Coward—Well, in a delicate, indirect way. She told me she never wanted anything she could get easily.—Harper's Bazar.

* * *

"How did you get the black eye?"

"It happened in a billiard parlor. I forgot I wasn't on the bleachers and criticised a man's poor play."—Kansas City Journal.

* * *

Kicker—Our second baseman would make an excellent swimmer.

Snicker—Why so?

Kicker—He strikes out so boldly.—Judge.

* * *

"How are you at picture puzzles?"

"Pretty fair."

"Maybe you can put together these 40-odd parts I have taken out of my automobile."—Pittsburg Post.

* * *

"We countrymen have the best of it. When all else fails we can eat the forest preserves."

"I don't know that you have the best of it," retorted the city fellow. "We have our subway jam."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

* * *

"John, is that you?"

"Yesh, Mary."

"What are you doing down there? Why don't you come up to bed?"

"I'm afraid of gettin' hurt on these darned revolvin' stairsh."—Chicago Record-Herald.

* * *

"Yes, Charlie is as brave as a stack of lions. Did you hear about his daring a policeman to arrest him." "No, Gee! What happened?" "He was arrested."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

* * *

"Who says there are no women humorists?" "I don't know. Why?" "My typewriter spells as funny as Artemus Ward in his palmiest days."—Louisville Couprier-Journal.

* * *

LYulu was watching her mother working among the flowers. "Mamma, I know why flowers grow," she said; "they want to get out of the dirt."—Lippincott's.

* * *

"Waiter."

"Yes, sir."

"Have you ever been to the Zoo?"

"No, sir; why do you ask?"

"I was just thinking how thrilling you'd find it to sit and watch the tortoises whiss by."—The Tattler.

* * *

"Why has your son decided not to go into the ministry?" "Well, we've thought it all over and came to the conclusion that he ain't fitted for it. He don't like chicken."—Chicago Record-Herald.

* * *

Mrs. Grammercy—The number of buttons the present styles call for is a blessing in disguise, Mrs. Park—I quite agree with you. It's now possible to spend two hours dressing without wasting your time.—Life.

Among the Poets of the Daily Press

ECONOMY.

I used to get my dinners
At restaurants and such;
The check the waiter brought me
Was usually this much—
$2.80.

But now, since I've discovered
The joys of wedded bliss,
My Mary gets the dinners—
The cost for two is this—
$0.63.

However, there's a gas range
That ornaments our flat;
The way my Mary runs it
Brings monthly bills like that—
$43.20.

—Milwaukee Daily News.

NONCOMMITAL.

I do not like to speak of it,
Or call unto your notice now,
The weather, but I must admit
There are some sweat beads on my brow.

I will not say to you that I
Am sweltering, although I am.
Upon the heat today I'll try
To be as silent as a clam.

The fact that you are warm, I know,
I will not call it to our mind;
I will not say I wish for snow
And ice, for that would be unkind.
I will not even mention here
That I am almost overcome,
And wish a cool wave would appear;
Upon that subject I'll be dumb.

I only know I cannot do
Another bit of work today;
I'm quite worn out and weary, too,
And all my thoughts have gone astray.
I will not say why this is so,
Nor tell the cause of my distress.
Why I'm all in you'll never know
From me; it's up to you to guess.

—Detroit Free Press.

FUTILE WISHING.

O'er his right shoulder he saw the new moon,
And he wished for fortune and love and fame.
Then he stepped on an upturned nail, and the boon—
Or the several boons—he had craved ne'er came.

She found a clover, four leaves it possessed.
And she made a wish for his love that day;
But she happened to stand 'neath a hornets' nest—
And the world rolled on in the same old way.

—Record-Herald.

COUDN'T BE HAPPY.

He fretted as a boy,
He worried as a man,
He criticised and questioned
The universal plan;
He made all lives a burden
Through his everlasting "Why
Was ever man created,
Since he's only born to die?"

He prospered in his business,
But was always in the dumps,
Because the stocks he carried
Were liable to slumps;
When he made a strike he grumbled,
"Now, tell me, what's the use
Of heaping up great riches
When to live we've no excuse?"

He was married and was happy,
Till he chanced to think that fate
Might take away his loved ones
And leave him desolate.
Beneath a cloud of darkness
He always would abide,
And he never turned it over
To see the other side.

After years of this depression
He has riches and to spare,
But he cannot take his pleasure—
There is danger in the air.
So he worries and he worries
As he turns life's middle page,
For now he's looking forward
To a penniless old age.

THE M. C. TO HIS SECRETARY.

"Get ready, Johnson; take this down:
'We, Mr. Speaker, say
Our glorious Nation wears a crown.'
Put in: 'A shout "Hooray!"'
'No slavery is ever found
Within her honest laws.'
(Now write: 'The speaker's voice was drowned
With deafening applause.')

"'Shall Mammon, with its cloven foot,
Our sacred rights disjoint?'
(That's bully, Johnson, kindly put
'Long cheering' at that point.)
'Honor must reign as it has reigned—
Not be a thing of air.'
(It seems to me that 'Long-sustained
Applause' would fit in there.)

"'And shall our home of joy and peace
In pauperism bide?'
(Insert: 'The speaker had to cease
To let the cheers subside.')
Continue: 'Shall our native soil
But mark a hideous fate
For honest hands and honest toil?'
(That's time for 'Cries of "Great!"')

"'But, gentlemen, our hours are few
And very quickly gone;
I fear I am detaining you.'
(Insert: 'Shouts, 'No! Go on!'")
Johnson, you write the rest, my boy;
You know how I recite.
And every second phrase employ,
In brackets, 'Fine! You're right!'"

—New York World.

A ROBIN AT DAYBREAK.

'Tis 4 o'clock. Folks say,
The fatal ebb when sinks
The human pulse so low
That from this hour age shrinks,
Fearing the call to go
The ne'er-returning way.

But with such song to charm
The silence-wearied ear,
Who could evoke alarm
Or cherish thought of fear?

A robin, high in his nest,
Tells the departing night
The story of his quest
For life's love-born delight.

He eloquently sings
Beyond the ken of bird;
Even as genius wings
Above the written word.

Ere came man's mirth and woe,
Earth's primal joy he names,
Then, in prophetic guise,
He seeks beyond the flames
Where suns do wane or rise,
Stars that have yet to glow!

—Boston Transcript.

THE NEW FOOL.

The man who rocked the boat swam out.
He still bids timid folks complain
Of his bravado as we shout,
"Please do not tilt the aeroplane!"

—Washington Star.

THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5.

"I will do my best. How many Constables have you?"

"There are three within call."

"Excellent!" said Holmes. "May I ask if they are all large, able-bodied men with powerful voices?"

"I have no doubt they are, though I fail to see what their voices have to do with it."

"Perhaps I can help you to see that and one or two other things as well," said Holmes. "Kindly summon your men, and I will try."

Five minutes later, three policemen had assembled in the hall.

"In the outhouse you will find a considerable quantity of straw," said Holmes. "I will ask you to carry in two bundles of it. I think it will be of the greatest assistance in producing the witness whom I require. Thank you very much. I believe you have some matches in your pocket, Watson. Now, Mr. Lestrade, I will ask you all to accompany me to the top landing."

As I have said, there was a broad corridor there, which ran outside three empty Bedrooms. At one end of the corridor we were all marshalled by Sherlock Holmes, the Constables grinning and Lestrade staring at my friend with amazement, expectation, and derision chasing each other across his features. Holmes stood before us with the air of a conjurer who is performing a trick.

"Would you kindly send one of your constables for two buckets of water? Put the straw on the floor here, free from the wall on either side. Now I think we are all ready."

Lestrade's face had begun to grow red and angry.

"I don't know whether you are playing a game with us, Mr. Sherlock Holmes," said he. "If you know anything, you can surely say it without all this tomfoolery."

"I assure you, my good Lestrade, that I have an excellent reason for everything that I do. You may possibly remember that you chaffed me a little, some hours ago, when the sun seemed on your side of the hedge, so you must not grudge me a little pomp and ceremony now. Might I ask you, Watson, to open that window and then to put a match to the edge of the straw?"

I did so, and, driven by the draught, a coil of gray smoke swirled down the corridor, while the dry straw crackled and flamed.

"Now, we must see if we can find this witness for you, Lestrade. Might I ask you all to join in the cry of 'Fire!'? Now, then; one, two, three—"

"Fire!" we all yelled.

"Thank you. I will trouble you once again."

"Fire!"

"Just once more, gentlemen, and all together."

"Fire!" The shout must have rung over Norwood.

I had hardly died away when an amazing thing happened. A door suddenly flew open out of what appeared to be solid wall at the end of the corridor, and a little, wizened men darted out of it, like a rabbit out of its burrow.

"Capital," said Holmes calmly. "Watson, a bucket of water over the straw. That will do! Lestrade, allow me to present you with your principal missing witness, Mr. Jonas Oldacre."

The detective stared at the newcomer with blank amazement. The latter was blinking in the bright light of the corridor and peering at us and at the smouldering fire. It was an odious face—crafty, vicious, malignant, with shifty light grey eyes and white lashes.

"What's this, then?" said Lestrade at last. "What have you been doing all this time, eh?"

Oldacre gave an uneasy laugh, shrinking back from the furious red face of the angry detective.

"I have done no harm."

"No harm? You have done your best to get an innocent man hanged. If it wasn't for this gentleman here I am not sure that you would not have succeeded."

The wrethed creature began to whimper.

"I am sure, sir, it was only my practical joke."

"Oh! a joke, was it? You won't find the laugh on your side, I promise you. Take him down and keep him in the sitting-room until I come. Mr. Holmes," he continued, when they had gone, "I could not speak before the constables, but I don't mind saying, in the presence of Dr. Watson, that this is the brightest thing that you have done yet, though it is a mystery to me how you did it. You have saved an innocent man's life and you have prevented a very grave scandal, which would have ruined by reputation in the Force."

Holmes smiled and clapped Lestrade upon the shoulder.

"Instead of being ruined, my good sir, you will find that your reputation has been enormously enhanced. Just make a few alterations in that report which you were writing and they will understand how hard it is to throw dust in the eyes of Inspector Lestrade."

"And you don't want your name to appear?"

"Not at all. The work is its own reward. Perhaps I shall get the credit also at some distant day, when I permit my zealous historian to lay out his foolscap once more—eh, Watson? Well, now, let us see where this rat has been lurking."

A lath-and-plaster partition had been run across the passage six feet from the end, with a door cunningly concealed in it. It was lit within by slits under the eaves. A few articles of furniture and a supply of food and water were within, together with a number of books and papers.

"There's the advantage of being a builder," said Holmes, as we came out. "He was able to fix up his own little hiding-place without any confederates—save, of course, that precious housekeeper of his, whom I should lose no time in adding to your bag, Lestrade."

"I'll take your advice. But how did you know of this place, Mr. Holmes?"

"I made up my mind that the fellow was in hiding in the house. When I paced one corridor and found it six feet shorter than the corresponding one below, it was pretty clear where he was. I thought he had not the nerve to lie quiet before an alarm of fire. We could, of course, have gone in and taken him, but it amused me to make him reveal himself, besides, I owed you a little mystification, Lestrade, for your chaff in the morning."

"Well, sir, you certainly got equal with me on that. But how in the world did you know that he was in the house at all?"

"The thumb-mark, Lestrade. You said it was final, and so it was, in a very different sense. I knew it had not been there the day before. I pay a good deal of attention to matters of detail, as you may have observed, and I had examined the hall and was sure that the wall was clear. Therefore it had been put on during the night."

"But how?"

"Very simply. When those packets were sealed up Jonas Oldacre got McFarlane to secure one of the seals by putting his thumb upon the soft wax. It would be done so quickly and so naturally that I dare say the young man himself has no recollection of it. Very likely it just so happened, and Oldacre had himself no notion of the use he would put it to. Brooding over the case in that den of his, it suddenly struck him what absolutely damning evidence he could make against McFarlane by using that thumb-mark. It was the simplest thing in the world for him to take a wax impression from the seal, to moisten it in as much blood as he could get from a pin-prick and to put the mark upon the wall during the night, either with his own hand or with that of his housekeeper. If you examine among those documents which he took with him into his retreat, I will lay you a wager that you find the seal with the thumb-mark upon it."

"Wonderful!" said Lestrade. "Wonderful! It's all as clear as crystal, as you put it. But what is the object of this deep deception, Mr. Holmes?"

It was amusing to me to see how the detective's overbearing manner had changed suddenly to that of a child asking questions of its teacher.

"Well, I don't think that is very hard to explain. A very deep, malicious, vindictive person is the gentleman who is now waiting us downstairs. You know that he was once refused by McFarlane's mother? You don't! I told you that you should go to Blackheath first and Norwood afterwards. Well, this injury, as he would consider it, has rankled in his wicked, scheming brain, and all his life he has longed for vengeance, but never could see his chance. During the last year or two things have gone against him—secret speculation, I think—and he finds himself in a bad way. He determines to swindle his creditors, and for this purpose he pays large cheques to a certain Mr. Cornelius, who is, I imagine, himself under another name. I have not traced these cheques yet, but I have no doubt that they were banked under that name at some provincial town where Oldacre from time to time led a double existence. He intended to change his name altogether, draw this money and vanish, starting life again elsewhere."

"Well, that is likely enough."

"It would strike him that in disappearing he might throw all pursuit off his track and at the same time have an ample and crushing revenge upon his old sweetheart, if he could give the impression that he had been murdered by her only child. It was a masterpiece of villainy and he carrired it out like a master. The idea of the will, which would give an obvious motive for the crime, the secret visit unknown to his parents, the retention of the stick, the blood and the animal's remains and buttons in the woodpile all were admirable. It was a net from which it seemed to me, a few hours ago, that there was no possible escape. But he had not that supreme gift of the artist, the knowledge of when to stop. He wished to improve that which was already perfect—to draw the rope tighter yet round the neck of his unfortunate victim—and so he ruined all. Let us descend, Lestrade. There are just one or two questions that I would ask him."

The malignant creature was seated in his own parlor, with a policeman upon each side of him.

"It was a joke, my good sir—a practical joke, nothing more," he whined incessantly. "I assure you, sir, that I simply concealed myself in order to see the effect of my disappearance, and I am sure that you would not be so unjust as to imagine that I would have allowed any harm to befall poor young Mr. McFarlane."

"That's for a jury to decide," said Lestrade. "Anyhow, we shall have you on a charge of conspiracy, if not for attempted murder."

"And you'll probably find that your creditors will impound the banking account of Mr. Cornelius," said Holmes.

The little man started and turned his malignant eyes upon my friend.

"I have to thank you for a good deal," said he. "Perhaps I'll pay my debt some day."

Holmes smiled indulgently.

"I fancy that, for some years, you will find your time very fully occupied," said he. "By the way, what was it you put into the woodpile besides your old trousers? A dead dog, or rabbits, or what? You won't tell? Dear me, how very unkind of you! Well, well, I dare say that a couple of rabbits would account both for the blood and for the charred ashes. If you ever write an account, Watson, you can make rabbits serve your turn."

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Relics of a Touring Ship.

Manchester Guardian.

The Malampus, King George's old ship, in which he toured the world, has now been broken up, and the tons of material of which she was built will be brought under the hammer. Both King George and Queen Alexandra desire mementoes of the old vessel and they have given orders—the King for a garden chair and Queen Alexandra for a suite of garden furniture. These will be made of teak wood used in the fittings of the officers' apartments.

Bits of Trade Italy.

London Daily News.

Italy's principal imports are cereals, raw cotton, coal, machinery, lumber, raw silk, hides, horses, wool and hair, iron, mineral oil, seeds, coffee, colors and varnishes, copper, jute, mother of pearl, nitrate of soda, paraffin, phosphates, grease, precious stones, wood pulp, tobacco, railway cars, tin, sulphate of copper and sulphate of ammonia.

GREAT WHITE SERPENT OF THE MALORLI

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which he was sure would hold them, and the girth of the snake was so large that they would draw the skin clear over the top of the basketwork and lie inside until they were safe from observation. The head he could hold above water by running a pole up the neck, and a couple of poles spliced together would hold the tail out behind. The basketwork would give enough roundness to the body to deceive anybody, especially in the water, and as the snake swam up or down the river at pleasure no one would think anything strange at seeing it or would dare investigate too closely. It would certainly be a couple of days before they would be missed, perhaps longer, and by that time he hoped to be beyond pursuit. In any event, no more horrible fate could be theirs than the one to which they were doomed.

Haidee caught his enthusaism, and at once set to work. They really, upon sober second thought, had plenty of time, for the snake never was seen for at least two weeks after it had gorged a bullock, during which time it lay torpid in its hall digesting its meal, and until the end of that time it would excite suspicion at once if it were seen in the river.

The day at last dawned, however, when the Great White Serpent would again be stirring. Haidee's basketwork, made as nearly waterproof as possible, was ready, and the knife had been sharpened to a razor-edge upon a smooth stone Harding had found on the bank of the river. Grasping it firmly, he gave his wife a long embrace, and swinging open the door, stepped resolutely within the Hall of the Serpent.

There it lay, stretched at its enormous length, inert and motionless still from its gorge, the Great White Serpent of the Malorli. Softly but swiftly Harding dashed toward its head. As he approached, it opened its eyes lazily and fixed them full upon him with a sinister stare. There was something so evil, so malignant, so cruel and devilish in their pallid depths that for an instant they halted as an icy hand seemed to clutch his heart. The next he had taken the last stride, and surely and mightily struck the blow. The keen, heavy knife bit clear through the backbone, right at the base of the skull. There was a mighty heave of the huge body, and Harding leaped across it just in time to avoid being enveloped in the fatal embrace of its horrid folds. Writhing and twisting, coiling and uncoiling, now lashing out with tremendous force, next contracting into fearful knots, the enormous reptile thrashed wildly about the hall. A dozen times Harding missed an awful death by the least fraction of an inch before he gained the door his wife bravely held open for him. Breathless and panting they watched the earth-shaking death throes of the monster.

At last, with a mighty quiver from head to tail, it lay still in death. With a shout of triumph Harding sprang to its side, and slipped the point of his knife under the thick skin where his blow had laid it open. Rip, rip, rip, and he had it slit clear to the tail, still faintly moving. He worked with feverish energy, Haidee valiantly helping, for now they had little time to spare, and he found that before their strength was equal to drawing the skin from under he had to cut the body into lengths. They hardly took time to breathe. The sweat streamed from them. A dozen times their strength seemed exhausted. But, as night fell, the basketwork was in place, the thick skin drawn up around it and sewn up, except for a slit big enough to admit them, and made as waterproof at the seam as possible with melted beeswax, the pole holding the head above water propped securely in place, the other spliced one extended the tail, and as he held this oddest of vessels, buoyantly floating upon the stream running across the end of the hall, and noted its naturalness. Harding at last felt with an exultant thrill that escape was a possibility.

Haidee was already inside with a small store of provisions. Harding stepped lightly in and stretched himself upon the bottom, after one keen look around to see that all was right so far. He drew the skin together above them, and the current swept them out upon the broad bosom of the river. For good or ill their strange voyage had begun.

And it went better than even Harding, in his most sanguine moments, had dared hope. For three nights and two days they drifted with the current, without accident or molestation, and shortly after dawn of the third day he was suddenly awakened from the light doze he had permitted himself by the sound of rifle shots and the noise of bullets zipping into the water at his side. With his heart in his mouth he peered cautiously out. There hardly 100 yards away, came steaming up a little launch with a man, a white man, standing in the bow, blazing hopefully away at what he mistook for a snake.

With a joyous shout, Harding sprang to his feet. "Hold on! Hold on there!" he shouted, waving his arms with reckless disregard of an upset. "Do you want to start international complications by shooting us?"

"Ah, beg pardon, I'm sure," replied the sportsman, dropping his rifle in surprise. "I didn't know it was your private yacht, you know. But what the devil—oh, beg pardon, a lady, too."

Explanations were soon made. The stranger was an English sportsman exploring the river in his launch, but at once he turned back and carried them to the nearest port where steamships touched. The snake's skin probably adorns his home at this minute, as Harding, with great generosity, never wanting to set eyes on it again, presented him with it.

A few weeks later Harding and Haidee stood upon the deck of a vessel watching the shores of Africa fade into the distance.

"And now to get word of my safety to good old Sheik Iiderim," he murmured, looking fondly into her eyes, "and then home, my dearest."

And Haidee answered, the love-light shining back at him happily, "Where your home is, O beloved, there is mine."

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Have You Found It?

Dallas Lore Sharp, in the Atlantic.

There are beaters, brooms and Blank's sweepers; there are dry-mops turkey-wings, whisks, and vacuum-cleaners; there are—but no matter. Whatever other things there are, and however many of them in the closet, the whole dust-raising kit is incomplete without the Dustless-Duster.

For the Dustless-Duster is final, absolute. What can be added to or taken away from, a Dustless-Duster? A broom is only a broom, even a new broom. Its sphere is limited; its work is partial. Dampened and held persistently down by the most expert of sweepers, the broom still leaves something for the Dustless-Duster to day. But the Dustless-Duster leaves nothing for anything to do. The dusting is done. Because there are many who dust and because they have searched in vain for the Dustless-Duster, I should like to say that the thing can be bought at department stores, at those that have a full line of departments—at any department store, in fact; for the Dustless-Duster department is the largest of all the departments, whatever the store. Ask for it of your jeweler, grocer, milliner, or ask for "The Ideal," "The Universal," "The Indispensable," and you shall have it—the perfect thing which you have spent life looking for; which you have thought so often to have, but found as often that you had not. Yet you shall have it.

Flights of Gray Wagtails.

Philadelphia Press.

As indicative of the conservative nature of birds, a writer calls attention to the habit of the gray wagtail, which offers a striking example of the undeviating flight of certain species. This bird passes its Winters in the heart of Africa, and in Summer it is seen everywhere in Europe, in Asia and even in Greenland. It has never been known to travel to North America from Greenland. It goes to Greenland by way of England, the Faroe Islands and Iceland. The bird does not know and will not know any itinerary that has not been laid out by the birds of its species of the past.

Liverpool and Its Shipping.

Dundee Advertiser.

One quarter of all the British steam vessels afloat above 5000 tons is owned in Liverpool. One-fifth of all the British steam tonnage, of whatever size or description, is owned in Liverpool. The Liverpool Steamship Owners' Association at the end of last year owned nearly 4,000,000 tons of steam shipping.