

The Home Circle.

Theodore Hook's Stratagem For A Dinner.

The following characteristic anecdote of Theodore Hook is given in Barham's life of that extraordinary man.

Hook was lounging up one of those streets in company with Terry, the actor, when they saw through a kitchen window preparations for a handsome dinner.

"What a feast!" said Terry. "Jolly dogs! I should like to be one of them."

"I'll take my bet," returned Hook, "that I do; call for me here at ten o'clock and you'll find that I shall be able to give a tolerable account of the worthy gentleman's champagne and venison."

So saying he marched up the steps, gave an authoritative rap, and was quickly lost to the sight of his astonished companion.

"I beg your pardon," he said, contriving at last to get in a word; "but your name, sir—I did not quite catch it—servants are so abominably incorrect, and I am really a little at loss."

"Don't apologize, I beg," graciously replied Theodore. "Smith—my name is Smith—and, as you justly observe, servants are always making some stupid blunder or another. I remember a remarkable instance, etc."

"But really, my dear sir," continued the host at the termination of the story illustrative of stupidity in servants, "I think the mistake of the present does not originate in the source you allude to; I certainly did not expect the pleasure of Mr. Smith's company at dinner to-day."

"No, I dare say not; you said four in your note I know, and it is now, I see, a quarter past five—you are little fast by the way; but the fact is, I have been detained in the city, and I was about to explain when—"

"Pray," exclaimed the other as soon as he could stay the volubility of his guest, "whom may I ask, do you suppose you are addressing?"

"Whom? Why Mr. Thompson, of course—old friend of my father; I have not the pleasure, indeed, of being personally known to you, but, having received your kind invitation on my arrival from Liverpool—Firth street, four o'clock, family party—come in boots—you see I have taken you at your word. I am only afraid I have kept you waiting."

"No, no, not at all. But permit me to observe, my dear sir, my name is not exactly Thompson—it is Jones, and—"

"Jones," repeated the self-styled Smith, in admirably assumed consternation, "Jones? Why surely I cannot have—yes, I must—good heavens! I see it all. My dear sir, what an unfortunate blunder—wrong house—what must you think of such an intrusion? I am really at a loss for words in which to apologise. You will permit me to retire at present, and to-morrow—"

"Pray don't think of retiring," exclaimed the hospitable old gentleman; "your friend's table must have been cleared long ago, if, as you say, four was the hour named; and I am only too happy to offer you a seat at mine."

Hook, of course, could not think of any such thing—could not think of trespassing on the kindness of a perfect stranger; if too late for Thompson, there were plenty of chop-houses at hand.

The unfortunate part of the business was, he had made an appointment with a gentleman to call for him at ten o'clock. The good-natured Jones, however, positively refused to allow so entertaining a visitor to withdraw dinnerless; Mrs. Jones joined in the solicitation; the Misses Jones smiled bewitchingly and at last Mr. Smith, who soon recovered from his confusion, was prevailed upon to offer his arm to one of the ladies, and take his place at the well-furnished board.

In all probability the family of Jones never passed such an evening before. Hook naturally exerted himself to the utmost to keep the party in an unceasing roar of laughter, and make good the first impression. The mirth grew fast and furious, when by the way of a coup de grace, he seated himself at the pianoforte, and stuck off into one of those extemporaneous effusions which had filled more critical judges than the Jones's with delight and astonishment. Ten o'clock struck, and, on Mr. Terry being announced, his triumphant friend wound up the performance with the explanatory stanza:

I am very much pleased with your fare. Your collars as prime as your cook; My friend's Mr. Terry the player, And I'm Mr. Theodore Hook.

A SIMPLE ORNAMENT.—A pretty mantle-piece ornament may be obtained by suspending an acorn, by a piece of thread tied around it, within half an inch of the surface of some water contained in a vase, tumbler, or saucer, and allowing it to remain undisturbed for several weeks. It will soon burst open, and small roots will seek the water; a straight and tapering stem, with beautiful, glossy, green leaves, will shoot upward, and present a very pleasing appearance. Chestnut trees may be grown in the same manner, but the leaves are not so beautiful as those of the oak. The water should be changed once a month, taking care to supply water of the same warmth; bits of charcoal added to it will prevent the water from souring. If the little leaves turn yellow, add one drop of ammonia into the vessel which holds the water, and they will renew their luxuriance.

Some Sagacious Animals.

The Spottsylvania Dog.

There are few observant ones who have been long in Columbus who have not noticed the large, intelligent, and splendid dogs belonging to Messrs. Chas. Heyman, Henry Averett, and W. R. Brown. Their progenitor has a history. At the battle of Spottsylvania Court-house Mahone's division of Confederates, in which was Gen. A. B. Wright's brigade of Georgians, was charged by tremendous lines of Federals. The attacking party was repulsed with terrible loss. In front of the advancing column was a large dog, who advanced ferociously and barking to our lines. Not a gun was pointed at him. Of all the terrible odds advancing, eleven to one, only this dog got over the Confederate breast-works and he was captured by some members of the City Light Guard, of the Second Georgia Battalion. He was brought to Columbus—loved his Southern master better than life. His progeny embrace the smartest dogs in the country. The Yankee-Southern dog died here some months ago at a good old age.—Columbus Sun.

A Grateful Horse.

A curious incident occurred at Messrs. Williams & Cassidy's coal-yard at the Covington depot a few days ago. An old black horse had just been driven into the yard hitched to a watering cart. The belly-band, an antiquated concern, gave way in an attempt to back the cart to its place, and as the water was heavier than the horse, the cart dropped and the shafts rose, the horse going with them, and hanging by his neck, his hind feet two or three feet from the ground. The animal struggled and kicked in terror. His eyeballs became distended in the excess of his fear, and froth stood upon his lips. He was rescued from his dangerous situation after much trouble. When he touched the ground, the poor beast stood for a moment apparently bewildered, and then, recovering himself, he looked around among his rescuers, and approaching them quietly rubbed his nose against the shoulder of one of them.—Lexington Press.

A Very Obedient Dog.

Late Tuesday night, a stranger, just for amusement, gave several bystanders specimens of his dog's acquirements, at the corner of Perdido and St. Charles streets. The master quietly, without gesture of any kind, told his dog to walk across the street, find a little wagon and get into it. Doggy obeyed, though reluctantly, as the wagon was a cart, but he finally complied. He was then told to hunt a fire plug and mount it. His keen eyes searched a moment, and on the instant poor Tray pleased his owner. He was then commanded to hunt a lamp-post and put his fore feet on it. This done, he was told to go into a Pelican saloon, find a chair and sit in it, then to look up a beer-barrel and stand on it; then to lie down and act like a poisoned dog. These orders were given in the most common-place tone of voice, and most of the time he could not see his master, and yet he obeyed quite as readily as a willing servant, apparently understanding the English language very well. Of all the dogs that ever showed off on St. Charles street, that one is entitled to the premium. Those who witnessed the performances were not only amused, but greatly astonished; in fact, one individual having witnessed a portion of the antics, declared that he would not and could not suffer himself to view acts that looked so altogether unnatural.—New-Orleans Republican.

A Horse Car "Spotter" Dog.

Among the attachés of the Fifth Street Railway Line is one who has exhibited most remarkable fidelity in his attention to the interests of the company. The phenomenon referred to is a medium-sized dog that has been for a long time kept about the car stables, and has of late become a kind of inspector or overseer of the line. Every morning he goes out on a car and rides along for some distance, when he jumps down and waits at a crossing for the next coach. This he boards, as it passes, and after a thorough scrutiny of conductor, driver, horses, and all the appointments of the outfit, he visits some other in like manner. In this way he passes the entire day, usually going over the whole line and inspecting a great many cars. Sometimes he stops at one end of the road and sometimes at the other. He is well acquainted with every conductor and driver in the employ of the company, and is a general favorite. A few days since they all elbowed together and contributed a nickel each, for the purpose of buying the sagacious canine a license and a collar. He certainly ought to wear the popular "brass collar," for he is ahead of all his tribe so far as heard from. At night he keeps vigilant watch at the stables, and seems to have devoted his whole existence to the service of the corporation. He takes his beef with good relish, as though he had earned it, and has apparently settled down for life in his position.—Cincinnati Gazette.

Another Sagacious Dog.

Who has not seen a fine-developed, raven-colored terrier dog invariably standing by the side of James K. Martin, the veterinary surgeon? On Friday night last, about the hour of 11 o'clock, the animal referred to became alarmingly uneasy, pitifully supplicating his master to allow him to go into the stable-yard. Twice he was gratified. Each time he ran to the front gate. The doctor compelled him to return to the office, when the dog became quite unmanageable, specially pleading that the office door be opened. Obtaining his wish, again he speedily rushed to the front gate, and commenced a most mournful howl that the gate might be opened. It was unlocked with speed, and the noble animal rushed out of the gate to No. 169 Orange street, occupied by Mr. Peloubet. The doctor followed his "hair at law," as he styles him, when to his astonishment he found the premises on fire, and Mr. Peloubet's family absent. As the flames were making rapid headway, the doctor aroused the neighbors. Help came, and after an hour's hard work the fire was extinguished. Thirty minutes later discovery would, no doubt, have caused a serious conflagration, as the

tenement on fire was frame, as were also the adjoining buildings. The duty of this four-footed friend is to guard and protect the doctor's office.—Newark Journal.

A Horse With a Long Memory.

Many years ago, Mr. Abram Dodge, of the town of Ipswich, Mass., owned a beautiful horse which was the pet of the family. He was admired by all who knew his playfulness and good qualifications. In the summer it was Mr. Dodge's habit occasionally to have a frolic with his horse in his barn-yard, then let him out alone, and he would go to the river, which was about one-third of a mile distant, where he would bathe, then go to a common and roll on the grass, then with the freedom of air start for his home. His stable was renovated for him while he was gone, and his breakfast put in his crib. If he met his master he would show some coltish pranks, bound for the stable, pull out the wooden pin that fastened the door with his teeth, and rush to the manger where he expected to find his food. One night the horse was stolen from the stable. After the expiration of sixteen years Mr. Dodge was at the tavern when a man drove a horse up to the door. Mr. Dodge at once recognized his horse, and he told the driver his reason for believing it to be his; the man told of whom he bought the horse, and said that he had owned him for several years. Mr. Dodge claimed his horse, and it was finally agreed that if the horse would, on being taken to his old stable, go through the habit of bathing, rolling on the grass, and pulling the pin from the stable-door as above described, that Mr. Dodge should have him. When the horse was let out into his old yard he reviewed the premises for a moment, then started for his old bath-tub, then for his green towel on the common, then to his old stable, pulled the wooden pin, won for himself a good meal, and his old master his favorite horse. These facts are vouchsafed for by reliable old residents of the beautiful, picturesque old town, and show conclusively the long memory of our noblest animal.—Lowell Mass. Courier.

The Most Remarkable of All.

It simply amounted to a necessity with us, on account of the wonderful stories our exchanges are telling about the intelligence of animals; and we have engaged a man to come in once a week and tell us a veritable history of some bird or beast, which shall enable us to keep up with our contemporaries. Walker is his name. His first story is the following: Mrs. Wilkins, who lives four miles from Point Shirley, has a tame catamount. Until last week it never displayed any extraordinary intelligence, but it seems that last Wednesday, having noticed that once a week the windows were cleaned, what did this catamount do but go out in the back yard and get a ladder; then into the kitchen and get a pail, turn on the faucet, fill the pail, go up on the ladder, and wash all the front windows, wiping them with its own fur, a portion of which it had stripped off for the purpose. Mr. Walker considers this a most wonderful case of intelligence, but hopes to beat it next week.—Boston Traveler.

Ideas.

[From the Pacific Rural Press.]

"Yes, I wish to borrow some ideas, cousin," said a little friend of mine, as she came bounding in from school. But I had been overtasked all day, and everything had gone wrong. My head was totally devoid of ideas; the thinking apparatus entirely run down.

My little friend seemed very much disappointed and went away with tears in her eyes, while I felt mortified and ashamed, to think I had not some ready ideas to help her along.

Evening had come, the intolerable heat of the day had passed, and I sat thinking, or trying to think pleasantly; but this one little word, "ideas," banished it all. The dear little child seemed reproving me with tears in her sweet blue eyes, and a disappointed look in her face. I sat swaying back and forth in the easy rocker, until a drowsy feeling stole over me, when the whole atmosphere seemed full of ideas—quite little figures, in quaint costumes, talking and laughing merrily; when all at once they became frightened at my presence. They seemed to know that I wished to adopt some of their number; and not knowing but I might prove a cross step-mother, they all fled in terror, and left me quite disconsolate again. But presently I heard the pattering of little feet, and close beside me stood a curious little elf, named Good Nature. He turned his little head to one side and looked at me curiously, asking if I loved Good Nature; if I did, I might adopt him, as his parents thought he would be very useful to me, since I had lost my good nature. Before I had time to reply, he gave a silvery laugh and fled.

While wondering what had become of him, I heard approaching footsteps. I did not exactly like their sound, however. Presently a little figure stood before me, and a jerky little voice asked why I did not give him a seat; as he was my own brother, the same name exactly. "What name?" I asked. "Ill Nature," of course you know your own name. I was filled with astonishment; but before I had time to express myself at any great length, this unwelcome guest had departed; and I felt almost happy when I knew that he was really gone.

Again came the sound of pattering feet, and many strange little voices fell on my ear. One little figure exclaimed, "You are my own cousin, and I have come to pay you a long visit. My name is Selfishness; I think you will like me. We are said to be very much alike." All this in one breath.

My senses were becoming confused, but were as suddenly rescued, by another voice exclaiming, "I am your cousin also, and you have not so much as spoken to me either, and you ought to have known me somehow. My name is Jealousy." Other disagreeable little voices chimed in saying, "It's real mean of you not to speak

to your relatives," whereupon they all seemed to have new cause for insult, and left in a body. I felt very much gratified at their departure, and was wondering if I, who was so much alone in the world, really had so many disagreeable relatives.

Sweet sleep again stole over me. I was forgetting the world and my troubles, when a clamor in the distance brought me back to a realization of the same. Presently voices close beside me made me aware that I was not entirely rid of my unwelcome visitors. A little voice piped out "Here I am at last. Your cousin, if you please. My name is I Can't. I hear you have not forgotten me, but often speak my name. This lady here is another cousin, her name is Envy. Miss Envy, if you please." Many voices filled the room, and amid great confusion these unwelcome visitors took their departure.

I am alone once more. I resolve to banish these from my mind. Soft, gentle zephyrs play with the curtains at my window, and toy with the locks on my brow. A calm sensation steals over me. Little figures flit before me; while sweet, low voices fall on my ear. A sweet faced lady comes near. "Excuse me, but I once had the pleasure of your acquaintance. Have you forgotten me? My name is Hope." And another spoke out, "My name is Courage, and I have a message for you. A dear friend of yours, whose name is Peace, will be here to-morrow to spend the day." Instantly they all disappeared, and I—well, I had been asleep, and had a dream from which I shall profit on the morrow. MINNIE MORTON.

Young Folks' Column.

The Smallest Post-Office.

"Now, where do you suppose the smallest post-office is?" asked Uncle Clarence, one evening, as he laid down a magazine he had been reading.

"Away off in Colorado or Montana, or some of those new sections of the country," answered Lewis.

"There are some pretty small ones there, no doubt; but the one I refer to, beats them all, for littleness. It is kept in a barrel."

All the children laughed, and practical Jenny remarked, "I should not think there would be much room for the post-master to turn around."

"It has no post-master," said Uncle Clarence, "it keeps itself."

Curiosity was now wide awake, to know all about this wonderful post-office.

"It is situated, or rather hung, on the outermost rock of the mountains, overlooking the Straits of Magellan, opposite Terra del Fuogo. Every passing ship opens it to place letters in, or take them out. Every ship undertakes to forward all letters in it, that it is possible for them to transmit. How many homes have been made bright by these messages, left in the barrel post-office. It hangs there by its iron chain, beaten and battered by the winds and storms but no locked and barred office on land is more secure. It is not on the track of mail robbers.

"How I should like to get a letter from it," said Jenny. "I would put it in my cabinet as a curiosity."

"Would it be the next best thing to have a letter somebody else got through it? If so I can oblige you. I have one which my Cousin Tom dropped in there for me, when he was on his long voyage. It was post-marked across one end, by the Captain of the Gold Hunter, whose ship brought it on to Boston. It was a pretty good letter too, and will interest you."

Jenny was delighted with the proposition, for she had a passion for collecting all sorts of curiosities, out of the way articles, and her cabinet was worth seeing. Uncle Clarence did not forget his promise and the letter arrived in due time; and was read with as much interest as if it had been whisked down by the tail of a comet or dropped from the wallet of the man in the moon.—Schoolboy Magazine.

The Drove of Shetland Ponies.

EDITORS RURAL PRESS:—A Mr. Cory, of Suisun City, has been away across the Atlantic Ocean to the Shetland Isles, and brought back with him a drove of horses. And Oh! such horses. The largest one in the band is just a little taller than the dining table.

Many of them are so small that if you were to ride them, you would have to be careful, else they might walk under the dining table and push you off. Mr. Cory paid \$150 for the large one in Shetland. He is twice as large as many of the drove; and he is just forty inches high on the withers. This one is held by Mr. Cory at one thousand dollars.

None can be had without paying a big price. Mr. Cory sold one medium sized one for six hundred dollars, last week. They are poor and not over the voyage yet.

Can you tell me where Shetland Isles are? [The Shetland Islands—for they are quite an archipelago—lie off the north coast of Scotland.—Ems. Press.]

INSECT MUSIC.—The chirping and singing of cricket and grasshopper are frequently spoken of; but they do not sing; they fiddle. By rubbing legs and wings together, each in a manner peculiar to the species, those insects produce the sounds which characterize them. Perhaps our best insect instrumental performer is the "Katydid." Each wing contains a little tambourine; and by the opening and shutting of the wings these are rubbed against each other, and produce the sounds of "Katy did she did," which can be heard at such a long distance.

Tux little boy, at his first concert, innocently asked when the soprano was called back. "What's the matter, mother? Didn't she do it right?"

"What is your name, little girl?" "Minnie." "Minnie what?" "Minnie Don't, mamma calls me."

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