

THE NEER-DO-WEEELS.

Authors Whose Now Famous Works Were Once Laughed At—Story of the "Ugly Duckling"—Poe at West Point—Scott's Unfinished Manuscript.

The opinions of friends and neighbors as to a man's powers are rarely of any value. Sometimes they ridiculously overrate him and push some donkey forward into a conspicuous position where the length of his ears, as defined against the background of the horizon may be so curiously and publicly ascertained.

Montaigne tells us in his "Essays" that his attempt to become an author was laughed at in his own presence, and even after he had won his fame, he found that "at home he was obliged to purchase printers, while at a distance printers purchased him." Balzac's family were sarcastically indignant at his presuming to believe that he could write, and visited three failures with the usual exasperating "I told you so."

Andersen has allegorized his own fortune and unappreciated youth in the story of the "Ugly Duckling," which turned out to be a swan. This story is a favorite with Bunarek. "I was an ugly duckling myself," he once told a friend, "my poor old mother never would believe that there was any good in me."

Poe at West Point was a laughing stock to his schoolmates. Byron at Harrow was no wise distinguished above his fellows. Napoleon and Wellington in their school days were distinguished only for dullness. The mother of the latter must be added to our list of complimentary parents.

Robert Clive's family were thoroughly disgusted with him by the time he was 18 years old, his reputation for stupidity being then only equaled by his reputation for general wickedness, and gladly accepting an Indian clerkship for him, they shipped him off to Madras, "to make a fortune or die of a yellow fever."

Scott tells us in his "Diary" that for a time he was underrated by most of his companions, though subsequently getting forward and bold and clever fellow—contrary to the opinion of all who thought him a mere dreamer. "Dunce he is and dunce he will remain," was the sentence passed upon him by Professor Dalziel at the Edinburgh university.

When those read his two stories "The Pine and the Palm," he wrote which numbered such men as Voltaire, Schlegel, Chamisso, etc. they all burst into peals of inextinguishable laughter which well might put him out of countenance with a poem whose theme is now world-wide.

Wordsworth's friends all besought him to leave out of his volume of "Lyrical Ballads" the poem "We are Seven," as urging him that it would bring down upon him the laughter of all Britain. Pope had the pleasure of informing a friend who told him that there was a thing just out called "An Essay on Man," which was most admirable stuff, without coherence or connection that he had seen the "thing" before it went to press, since it was his own writing upon which the astonished critic seized his hat, "blushed, bowed and took his leave forever"—Lippincott's Magazine.

Mammoths Found in Siberia. The existence of ivory in Siberia in a subfossil condition but still sufficiently durable to be used for all the purposes to which recent ivory is applied has been known since the Middle Ages and formed one of the earliest exports from Siberia to China.

The very name given to the gigantic creature which produced its mammoth or mammoth—probably a corruption of behemoth—was introduced by the Arab traders who initiated the traffic in fossil ivory in the tenth century. It was not however until the middle of the Eighteenth century that the trade became considerable.

These buried herds of elephants abound throughout the frozen soil of Siberia but they are more numerous the further we advance northward and most plentiful of all on the islands above named and in those termed New Siberia. More remarkable still are the mammoth mummies—several of which have been disinterred whole carcasses not infrequently standing upright in the frozen soil with their flesh as fresh as if just taken out of an Esquimaux cache or a Yak out of a subterranean meat safe.

Many persons of both sexes are greatly troubled with cramps in one or both their legs. It comes on suddenly and is very severe. Most people jump out of bed if nearly always comes on either just after going to bed or while undressing; and ask some one to rub the leg. I have known it to last for hours till in despair they would send for the family physician and even then it would be hours before the spasm would let up.

There is nothing easier than to make the spasm let go its hold, and it can be accomplished without sending for a doctor who may be tired and in need of a good night's rest. When I have a patient who is subject to cramp I always advise him to provide himself with a good strong cord. A long garter will do if nothing else is handy.

Some days ago the manager of a panorama in this city sent some "scholar" tickets to the principals of the grammar schools, on presentation of which the pupils would be admitted for twenty five cents each instead of fifty cents, their usual price. I explained the nature of this offer to the boys, says a principal, "and one of them I regret to say he was a pupil of an upper grade, having grasped the idea that the possession of a ticket reduced the price of admission one half, propounded the following astonishing query: 'Please sir, if I had two of these tickets could I get in for nothing?'"

On the subject of the tall men of India, Vol Calkins was fluent to talk, and said among other things "The men of India were noted during the war for their stature and Gen. Terrell the statistician of Massachusetts wrote that they were the tallest and the finest men ever contributed to any army in the history of the civilized world."

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Well, said an undertaker "I'm not much of a fighter but when it comes to cutting I can easily lay out any man."—Undertaker's Journal.

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