

John and the Ghosts

By A. T. QUILLER-COUCE

IN the kingdom of Ilyria lived not long ago a poor woodcutter, with three sons, who in time went forth to seek their fortune...



John thought it time to interfere.

At either end you entered the roadway (if you were allowed by an iron gate). And each gate had a sentry box beside it and a tall bandle and a notice board to save him the trouble of explanation...

He thought and thought until one fine afternoon he snuffed his fingers and after that went about whistling...

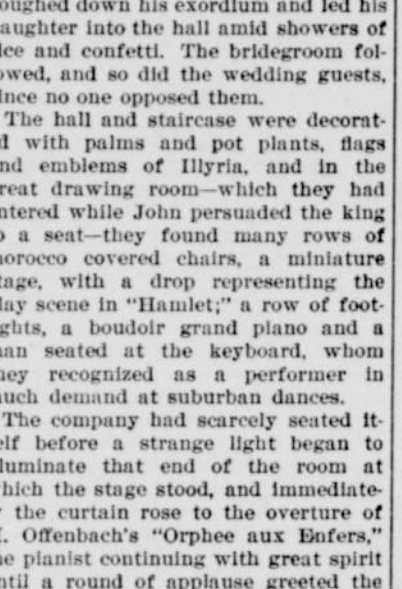
John looked at the face on his medal, and, sure enough, there was a resemblance. "But all the same, your majesty carries a burden" - here he pointed to the notice board - and the folks along this road are mighty particular...

NEW SHORT STORIES

When Read Worked.

Opie Read, the novelist, recently attended a press club reception given in honor of F. Hopkinson-Smith...

Surely Nonpartisan. Congressman Richard Bartholdt of Missouri, chairman of the congressional committee which acted the role of host to the visiting peace delegates...



Four Democrats, of course.

Emerson Stories. Emerson enjoyed quoting certain sayings of Thoreau, as: "Some circumstantial evidence is very strong, as when you find a trout in the milk..."

More Bowling Harmless. His former parishioners in his city recall now many just and smart observations of the late Rev. Dr. George Lorimer in his private intercourse...

A Good Rule. Delegate McGuire of Oklahoma tells of a conversation between two Irishmen living in that territory...

Two of a Kind. "Yes," said the young drug clerk who had been trotting in double harness for nearly two weeks...

Very Careless. Mrs. Taft - Didn't Mrs. Green leave her car? - The New Maid - Yes, she blocks it, an' I had to chase her two blocks to give it back to her...

Some people are not better than others, but they are more cautious - Atchison Globe.

MENTAL PROPS.

Various Things That Give Us Confidence in Ourselves.

We each have the need of our mental "props." One woman tells me that when she wishes to give decided orders to her cook, she always puts on her hat and gloves...

The doctor depends much upon his gloves. He can be busy with them when vital or difficult questions are asked. They are a sort of moral safety valve...



The Robin.

The robin is a very adaptive bird. It adjusts itself readily to new conditions, but it falls far short of the intelligence that is often ascribed to it...

History of the "Five Minutes' Bell." There is a history attached to the tolling of a single bell after a meal which is generally known. Popularly it is described as the "five minutes' bell" and it is thought to be a final warning to the people that if they do not really hurry up at the end they will be late...

Words Without Rhyme. Bulb has no rhyme. Calm, cusp, rebus, gulf, month, doth, amongst, are other rhymous words having the sound of u as in but. Few patriotic words in the language have this vowel sound, so commonplace and without dignity...

A Pleasant Prospect. He - Here is good news for women. A high medical authority says that the little toe will gradually disappear. She - Why is that good for women? He - Why, if the little toe disappears, why not the others? And if they all disappear women will be able to wear smaller shoes - Brooklyn Life.

Not Up to the Mark. Bragg - No man can call me a liar with impunity. I'd fight him if he was seven feet high. Quirns - I said you were a liar. What are you going to do about it? Bragg - Huh! You're not seven feet high - Philadelphia Ledger.

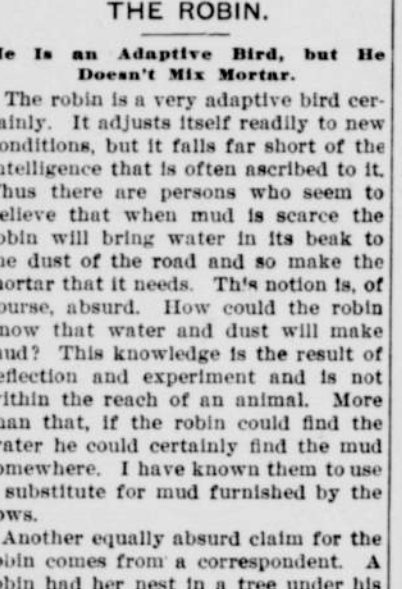
Pat's Trouble. An Irishman came to a doctor complaining that he had noises in his head. "Oh have them art the toime," he said, "an' sometimes Oh can hear them fifty feet away!" - Lippincott's Magazine.

HUMOR OF THE HOUR

Paradise Found.

Little Willie's father, being a kind man, had taken him to the circus. It was the child's first experience, and with his eyes bulging he watched the performers as they made "the grand entrance." His little hand stole into his father's as he moved as closely as he could to his proprietor's side...

The Hopeful Young Man. The hopefulness of some young men is unbounded. At a dinner table the other night some one said to a medical student: "Don't you despair of ever building up a practice in medicine?" "Indeed, no," he answered. "But you will admit that the profession is already overcrowded." "Oh, perhaps it is," said the young man, and then, with a laugh, he added, "But I propose to graduate in medicine just the same, and those who are already in the profession will have to take their chance." - Baltimore Sun.



The Return Invitation.

When Old Age Comes. Gray hairs do not make a patriarch make. Nor wrinkles brow a sage; In subtler ways we deftly take The finger marks of age. Ceasing to love; forgetting friends; When the warm heart turns cold; Then the recording angel bends And writes, "He's growing old!" - Woman's Life.

WHERE UNCLES RULE. Peculiar Custom That Prevails in Northern Australia. Uncles rule among the native tribes bordering Torres Strait, where the relationship between maternal uncle and nephew is regarded as being closer than that between father and son. There a man is bound to stop fighting when ordered to do so by his mother's brother, and the uncle is entitled to bid his sister's husband cease any hostilities in which he may be engaged. Moreover, the quelled combatant is required to make a present to the uncle or brother-in-law, as the case may be, who stops him. When a man marries in these parts his father provides the wherewithal to purchase the bride, but it is the maternal uncle who makes the actual payment and who acquires the credit attached thereto. A man in those parts may not utter the names of his wife's relations, and when he speaks to his father or mother-in-law he must lower his voice and speak humbly, the underlying idea being probably a pretense that he has carried his spouse away forcibly from her home and must sue for peace.

POINTED PARAGRAPHS. Business, like your salary, might always be better. The croquet is the old fashioned hash ball after it gets into society. Some people are too insistent on the right to be fools in their own way. When a young man refuses to work, that is the beginning of all his other troubles. When you abuse a boy for being worthless, remember how worthless you were at his age. Some people say farming is so much easier than it used to be. Still, if a farmer does his duty even in these days he knows he has a job. There is a good deal in print about the contagious laugh, but how often do you hear it? The writer of this knows but two people of all his acquaintance who have a laugh that is contagious - Atchison Globe.

The Kicker's Trademark. In the English hunting field it is the custom to mark kicking horses by tying a piece of red ribbon around their tails. Experienced hunters are on the careful lookout for all such animals, and should it happen that the steeds are running close to one another the equine with the ribbon bedecked tail is given a wide berth, as it is more than probable that it will lash out with its hind legs to the serious disadvantage of its neighbors. In the excitement of the chase horses almost lose their heads, and an animal that is naturally in no way vicious or inclined to be bad tempered will do the most unexpected things in the way of kicking, rearing and biting - London Telegraph.

Not That Kind of a Dog. Friendly Old Lady (to little girl sitting on porch beside dog) - Ah, my dear, your dog is a setter, isn't he? Little Girl - Oh, no, ma'am. He sets up an' plays around sometimes. - Harper's Weekly.

Squaring a Clever. "He is considering a clever financier, is he not?" "Why, where did you get that idea? He never beat anybody out of anything in his life!" - Cleveland Leader.

Gems In Verse

Paradise Found.

Hark to the bird in the wilderness singing in the fullness of joy to the air. Hark to the lark in the blue heaven singing. Bidding the weary heart listen and share. Music flung free as the air he is cleaving. Joy mingled strains in a wonderful weaving. Of melody. Hush, then, my heart and its grieving. Hark to the wild bird and banish thy care.

Far, far above the dull earth he is soaring. Drifts the song downward from heaven to me. Floods of sweet, unstudied music are pouring. Tides ebb and swell of his rare melody. Rising now further, returning now nearer. Ebbing now fainter and swelling now clearer. God made these careless that thy entranced hearer. Forget his grief when he listens to thee. What careth he of the world? He is fleeing. Heaven born songs of delight to the air. God made him hood earth with rapturous singing. That the soul, weary, might listen and share. Heaven, if thou hast me with melody gifted. Teach me the heights where the wild bird is lifted; Let thou my song like the lark song be lifted. Into some sad heart to banish its care. - J. W. Foley in New York Times.

The Man Who Is Twelve Years Old. There's a man that I know, and he lives near you. In a town called Everywhere. You must not think he's a man from his hat. Or the clothes he may chance to wear. But under the jacket with many a patch is a heart more precious than gold. The heart of a man 'neath the coat of a boy. A man who is twelve years old. He is waiting to wear the crown that is already made for his brow. And I pray that his mind will always be clear. His body as pure as snow. His heart always fresh and sunny and warm. And free from life's canker and mold. And may he be worthy his waiting estate. This man who is twelve years old! We never may know what the future will make. Of the boys that we carelessly meet. For many a statesman is doing the chores. And presidents play in the street. The hand that is busy with playthings now. The reins of power will hold; So I take off my hat and say salute. This man who is twelve years old. - Maurice Snyler in Collier's.



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