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Bits of Byplay

By Luke McLuke

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Cheer Up!

Laugh heartily and don't be sour. Smile sixty times in every hour. And you'll live long in spite of strife. A long face leads to a short life.

The Limit.

"The boob is an awful lazy cuss, isn't he?" remarked the old fogey.

"He sure is," agreed the grouch.

"Why, he can't even reach a conclusion without getting tired."

Giddy!

"The frog's a funny beast to me," remarked old Mr. Pitts.

"For when he runs he jumps, you see. And when he stands he sits."

He Was There.

The Fly by Night company was showing at the opera house in a little Minnesota town. Between the acts one of the performers came out before the curtain with a message.

"Is Mr. John Johnson in the house?" asked the performer. "He is wanted at the telephone in the box office."

And every man in the audience arose and started for the box office.

A Wise Man.

All peaceful men should now enroll. The plan of Ezra Hinks; He thinks just what he'll say before He says just what he thinks.

Opening Them.

"Our preacher certainly opened the eyes of the congregation last Sunday," said Brown.

"That so?" asked Jones. "What did he say?"

"He said, 'Amen,'" replied Brown.

Shortest Short Stories.

- Chapter I—Bill.
- Chapter II—Bill.
- Chapter III—Bill.
- Cincinnati Enquirer.
- Chapter I—Beau.
- Chapter II—Doug.
- Chapter III—Show.
- Zanesville (O.) Signal.
- Chapter I—D. T. A.
- Chapter II—M. D. A.
- Chapter III—D. A.
- Boston Advertiser.

Don't Forget the Raw Beef, Jos.

Jos—Thanks. I will be there on time. Have made arrangements for Black Eyes—Edith—Personal in San Francisco Chronicle.

Huh!

He is a warm friend, I'll agree. For with his cold cash He is free.

Me For the Tailor Bills.

Dear Luke—Would you rather hold a corn fed girl on your knee every night and pay a tailor for pressing your pants every morning or would you rather hold a thin girl on your knee every night and dodge the tailor bills?—Anxious, Troy, O.

Here's One More.

"Another thing's certain," said old Mr. Rice.

"A corn on the cob Is worth two on the toe."—Reader.

Ooo, Vot a Cannibal!

Dear Luke—Henriette Aunspauigh lives in Norfolk, Va.—P. B. A.

Is That So!

Dear Luke—This committee has been appointed to notify you that you will have to quit repeating the mistakes of the down-trodden tin operators. Signed, Etalon, Sardu, Cufwyp, committee.

Hello!

Dear Luke—Any time you need a good pure smoke or chew call me up—Alta Backer, St. Bernard, O.

Names Is Names.

Mr. I Will Be Patient lives at Stouedes, Miss.

Our Daily Special.

Some men never loosen up until they are tight.

Luke McLuke Says:

The natural waist line is once more the fashion, and hips are once more hips. Now you will see the thin girls going around with one hip higher than the other.

It is easy enough to learn to run a typewriter unless you happen to be married to her.

There are too many bachelors in this country when you consider how easy it is for a woman to make a man say "Uncle" when she wants him.

When the children have to take castor oil poor father is always the goat. He has to stall around and pretend to sip the stuff and then smack his lips and say how good it tastes. And then he is given the job of holding the children's noses, so they will swallow the dose. And later in life father will wonder why the children respect mother more than they do him.

The suffragettes claim that they are just as good as the men. And old nature seems to agree with them. "She is giving some of them as good a smooch as any man can raise."

There is nothing in a name. Light housekeeping often results in mighty heavy food.

You may think that you have a kick coming, but how about the man who never took a drink in his life and who has a brilliant red nose?

For the Honor Of the Flag

How a Man of Peace Was Stirred to Deeds of Daring.

By CLARISSA MACKIE

Luke Fraser twisted his sun bleached mustache into aggressive points and fixed his blue eyes on the rim of the desert where the horizon met the low serrated lines of the Dignus foothills. When he spoke he did not glance at his companion, but apparently addressed his remark to the distant hills.

"I usually tote a gun," he drawled smilingly. "When I meet a coyote—beast or human—I'm ready for him, and nine times out of ten when the coyote sees the gun he's plumb scared and he thinks to himself: 'Tain't no use monkeying with that galoot. He's too darned ready to shoot.'"

His companion smiled loftily. "Your argument doesn't hold water, Luke."

"You bet it doesn't," retorted Mr. Fraser, facing about. "There's more sand in my makeup than there is water, Humphrey."

"I'm a peaceable man," contended George Humphrey. "If a man does me an injury I try to return good for evil. I turn the other cheek to him."

Luke breathed faster.

"Being postmaster at Cactus Branch is kind of a peaceable job; when a man does you a bad turn you can hold up his mail, though it's unlawful and risky, but it's been done!"

Humphrey's lantern jaw snapped together. "When did I hold up your mail?" he demanded, but his eyes shifted from Luke's calm blue gaze.

"Mrs. Fancher was complaining she didn't get a letter I sent her," he accused.

"Maybe you didn't write it," sneered Humphrey.

"Maybe I"—Luke stopped abruptly and strained his eyes toward a couple of riders slowly approaching the ranch house. The man rode with an upright, military bearing, the woman with the graceful ease of one long accustomed to the saddle. She was young and pretty, with masses of soft black hair tucked under the wide brim of her white felt hat. They drew rein beside the corral gate where Luke and Humphrey were lounging.

"Good morning, gentlemen," smiled the Widow Fancher. "This is Captain Linney, from the Sandy Bluff barracks—oh, you have met before?" as the three men exchanged greetings. "You tell them, captain," she appealed prettily to her companion.

Captain Linney's unbroken countenance was grave. "I came over to tell you people that you had better pack up and come into town for a few days. There's going to be trouble by tomorrow night."

"Pedro at it again?" demanded Luke eagerly.

Linney nodded.

"Sorry, but I've got to stay and watch my stock," returned the rancher.

"Alone?" Linney's brows lifted in surprise.

"I reckon my men will stop along and help, and here's Humphrey, spoli-

When Mrs. Fancher turned and waved her hand he swung his hat in response, but the smile was gone from his eyes, and there was a bitter look about his mouth. Even a "gun tote" may induce in a few heart pulses when the woman he loves rides away with another man. And Linney was a good fellow in every respect, a more useful husband than either Luke Fraser or George Humphrey, for the two latter were rivals for the pretty widow's hand.

The stars were fading in the earliest dawn when Luke and five of his men rode into Sandy Bluff. The little town twinkled with lights, and horsemen appeared suddenly from unexpected places and challenged the approach of the men from Fraser's ranch.

The day passed in silent preparations against the expected attack of Pedro and his marauding band. In the beginning the half breed had confined his activities to cattle rustling; but, emboldened by his success, he had planned a raid on the thriving little colony at Sandy Bluff.

Luke found time to run into Mary Fancher's millinery shop and exchange a few words with the object of his adoration, but the little widow appeared sad and spiritless and even shivered when Luke referred to the coming encounter.

"There will be—killing, I suppose, Luke," she quavered as he was leaving.

"Sure thing," he returned briskly. "You better get some of the women folks together and fix a temporary hospital here—eh?"

She promised to go to work at once, and Luke left her and went to the postoffice for his letters. In the still air of the midsummer day the flag hung limply against its pole.

Luke lifted his hat in salute and entered the untidy general store, where Humphrey was flying around busily.

"Going to tote a gun tonight, Humphrey?" asked Luke.

"You know my sentiments," retorted the postmaster grimly.

"If Pedro or his men harm you—you'll slap somebody's wrist, eh?" grinned the rancher.

Humphrey scowled and said nothing. Luke bought some tobacco and cartridges and went back to his post to guard the mouth of Cactus bend, a waterless bed of a long forgotten creek, up which Pedro and his band could steal unobserved, hidden by the mesquite bushes on either side.

Night came on, and Luke with his companions crouched under the stars and thought of many things. He thought of his hopeless love for Mary Fancher—of his hearty dislike for George Humphrey—of the flag for whose honor he was ready to spill his life blood. There had always been fighting blood in the Fraser family.

Fraser had shed blood in every war of the Union from the battle of Bunker Hill—every emergency had found a Fraser ready to battle for his country. Luke Fraser himself had been one of a company of rough riders who had charged up San Juan hill.

But Pedro was a crafty foe. He did not approach Sandy Bluff by any expected route, but came creeping around under the adobe outer walls of the Branch hotel at the edge of the town where one of his spies admitted them through a gate. It was not until distant shots announced their presence in the town that Luke and his companions realized that Pedro had outwitted them.

In an instant they were running swiftly through the dark streets toward the center of the town. In front of the postoffice Pedro's men had massed themselves and were firing recklessly at the building, where a strong guard from the barracks had been placed.

But it was Humphrey's activity that astounded the ranchman as he now and then glimpsed the postmaster's huge form through the spitting fire.

One of the raiders had climbed to the porch roof and had torn the flag from its pole. Suddenly Humphrey appeared at an upper window—there was a crash of glass as he burst into view. In another moment the raider hurtled through the air and struck the ground and lay still. There was a yell of rage from below, and a shower of bullets spattered around Humphrey.

The postmaster appeared to have lost his reason. Like a maniac he swung the flag about his head and defied them. Others of the band swarmed up to the roof, and he flew at them like a wild man. After the third one had fallen to the ground, broken and groaning, Humphrey staggered and, clutching the flag, half fell into the open window, where he hung limply across the sill.

During the confusion of fighting on the roof the garrison had completely encircled the raiders, and when the sun lifted a red rim above the eastern horizon it shone on Pedro's dead face and the sullen countenances of his men, now prisoners.

Humphrey had been carried into



MARY FANCHER LINGERED AT THE GATE WITH HER SOLDIER LOVER.

Mary Fancher's shop, where Dr. Brown and the volunteer nurses were busy administering to the wounded. Luke Fraser, dusty and battle stained, came to the door, but Mrs. Fancher waved him out.

"It's so crowded, Luke," she whispered, "and these poor fellows need all the air possible."

"All wounded—none killed?" he questioned.

"Thank God, no. Captain Linney was slightly wounded, just a scratch on the shoulder, but poor George Humphrey is badly hurt—the doctor isn't sure—ah, I am needed!" and she vanished.

Luke came again toward night, and they told him Humphrey was better; he would live. The postmaster was lying on a cot in one corner of the little shop. His gaunt face looked grim and forbidding against the white bed linen. Mary Fancher admitted Luke and told him the patient was not to be excited; then she stole outdoors, where a soldierly form lingered at the gate.

Luke saw the morning ambushed and sat down by Humphrey's bed. "Better?" he asked awkwardly.

"Yep," croaked Humphrey feebly.

"Were—were there many dead ones?" "Oh, a few," croaked Luke.

Humphrey was silent for a few minutes. "I suppose you think it's queer the way I acted after I said what I did to you yesterday," he ventured.

"You're some hero, Humphrey," Luke chuckled.

"Oh, pshaw!" deprecated the postmaster. "But you know they touched the flag, Luke. I couldn't stand for that."

"Sure, you couldn't. You don't need to be a gun tote, Humphrey; not with those bony fists of yours so handy."

"I didn't know it was in me, Luke," groaned the other. "I thought I was a peaceable man. I didn't know it was in me to kill a man."

"You don't know what you can do till you're tried out," observed Luke.

"There's something I want to say right here, Luke, and I want you to believe me," said the postmaster earnestly.

"Fire away. I'm listening."

"I never touched any letter you or any man ever sent through the mail. Believe that?"

"I do. It was plumb mean of me to say what I did; but, honest, Linney, Humphrey, I was jealous of Mary Fancher. But I guess I never had any show there."

"Neither one of us had a look in Captain Linney's winner."

Their hands gripped in silent sympathy.

Humphrey broke the silence. "I didn't know it was in me, Luke; but, I guess, it's in every man who loves his country when the time's ripe and he's needed. I guess it kind of breaks loose."

As the twilight deepened Mary Fancher lingered at the gate with her soldier lover. In the dimly lighted room the discarded suitors talked in low tones not of women nor of love nor of personal disappointments and grudges, but of broader things—of the country that was theirs, of the men who had wrested it from the wilderness, of the gift of liberty—and the heroes who had died to defend it—and they knew that when the call came again that they would both be ready to fight side by side for the honor of the flag whose stars and stripes hung in a dim corner of the room.

PERSIA'S SORROWFUL TREE.

It Blooms Only at Night and Appears Withered in Daytime.

In faroff Persia there grows a shrub which is called the sorrowful tree. Another name for this tree is the night jessamine or the sad tree. The reason why it is called the sad or sorrowful tree is because it blooms only at night.

When the first star appears in the sky the first bud opens on the wonderful tree. As the evening advances the buds open more rapidly until the tree is covered with a delicate bloom and it appears like one vast flower. The bloom is quite fragrant and the odor is like the perfume of the evening primrose. As the stars begin to grow dim and the dawn approaches the flowers begin to fade, and by the time the sun has risen not a flower can be found on the tree.

During the hours of daylight the tree appears to be withering as if it had been injured in some manner, but in reality it is simply regaining strength in order to put new blossoms on the following night.

This tree is held in high esteem by the natives of the country where it grows and is looked upon as a curiosity by tourists throughout the world. When cut down these trees send up sprouts from the roots that will mature into a flowering tree in a very short time—Applies of Gold.

The Problem Solved.

Great Publisher—We find this novel of yours is twice as long as it should be. Great Author—But I can't waste all that material. Great Publisher—Certainly not. Our idea is to cut it in half and make two novels of it—Judge Weeds.

A rank growth of weeds becomes an asset when plowed under before they make seed.

The First Universities.

To fix precisely the date of the rise of the first universities is impossible for the reason that they were not founded, but grew. They were started by a few able men who had something they wished to teach and youths wished to learn. Gradually the free, voluntary center of learning became the organized affair we know as the university. Among the earliest of these centers of learning were Salerno, Naples and Bologna, Italy being the first land to experience the literary revival. We may say that Salerno university was fairly established by the year 1000, the University of Bologna by 1100 and the University of Naples by the year 1200. The University of Paris, which owes its existence to the genius of Abelard, was founded about the same time—New York American.

Common Color.

"Say," said the landlord to the tenant who was two months shy with his rent, "when am I going to see the color of your money?"

"Can't say," replied the party of the second part, "The color just now is an invisible green."—Indianapolis Star.

OREGON NEWS NOTES OF GENERAL INTEREST

Principal Events of the Week Briefly Sketched for Information of Our Readers.

At a meeting of farmers and fruit-growers held at Myrtle Creek a grange was organized.

The 11th annual convention of the Oregon Retail Merchants' association will be held in Portland February 19 to 21.

Committees have been appointed to proceed at once with the erection of a new \$25,000 Christian church at Milton.

Baker lumber mills were compelled to close down because of the car shortage. Nearly 200 men were thrown out of work.

Hundreds of acres of ground are being prepared this year for the growing of sugar beets for the Grants Pass sugar factory.

Cheese men of Coos and Curry county will make a campaign to standardize the manufacture of cheese in the two counties.

Thirteen hundred acres in the second unit of the West Umatilla irrigation project will be opened to homestead entry March 6.

The Willamette Valley Mint Growers' association was permanently organized at a meeting of the mint growers of the state at Albany.

Ashland has decided to repeat the Rogue River roundup and celebration upon an even larger scale than last year during the coming July.

Rogue river is to have a bridge 30 miles from its mouth. It will be the only bridge between Grants Pass and the ocean, more than 100 miles.

Reports sent in from county agents of Oregon show that numerous farm loan associations are being formed in accordance with the rural credits law.

A demonstration wool car of the department of agriculture, which is touring the United States at present, will visit Oregon from February 19 to March 3.

Ernest V. Jensen, of Portland has on exhibit at the state capitol a concrete model of the Ceclio canal which he is desirous to place on exhibit at the state fair.

Voters of West Linn at a mass meeting authorized an election on a \$14,000 bond issue for the construction of a modern school building in the district.

At a county meeting recently held by the Moro County Farmers' union resolutions were passed favoring the employment of a county agricultural agent for that section.

According to the figures of the semester just closed, the women of Pacific college and academy at Newberg are emphatically better from a standpoint of scholarship than the men.

Not willing to be outdone by the residents of Umatilla, the voters of Canyonville at the regular city election held there Tuesday elected women to all seats on the city council.

Births in Oregon for the year ending December 31, 1915, reached a total of 12,322, according to the report of the state board of health, just issued. During the same period there were 6718 deaths and 4983 marriages.

Seventeen young elk, the increase from the herd now in Wallawa county brought originally from Jackson Hole several years ago by the state fish and game commission, have been sent to Salem and Crater Lake national park.

The eastern half of the Christian Endeavorers of Oregon will convene at La Grande Friday, Saturday and Sunday, February 16, 17 and 18. This is the first Christian Endeavor convention ever held in eastern Oregon, and at least 250 delegates are expected.

Plans are being laid by the Stanfield Fruitgrowers' union for the construction of a cold storage and packing plant. The new plant will be equipped with gravity carriers and the latest types of grading machines, making it the most modern of any in the northwest.

A large attendance of growers, farmers and dealers of the northwest who are interested in the question of federal standardization of grain is expected at the meeting of the federal grain standard bureau in Portland on Wednesday and Thursday, February 14 and 15.

Governor Withycombe granted a conditional pardon to Edward B. Denison, indicted as George C. Huff, on a charge of extortion, tried in Jackson county, convicted, but released under bond pending appeal, and again taken into custody on the charge of a surety company, who alleged that Denison jumped his bond.

The waters of Klamath river and Spencer creek within certain boundaries are to be closed to fishermen this week for a period of four months, from February 15 to June 15, according to the state fish and game commission. The commission states that these streams will be closed during that season to protect the trout and other fish.

Sure.

Mrs. Smiley—Here we've been married ten years, and my husband still says I'm an angel. Her Friend—But does he really mean it, my dear? Mrs. S.—Perhaps not. But don't you think I'm lucky to have a husband who pretends to me?"—Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph.

Teeth of a Shark.

A shark's teeth are movable at will and become erect at the moment the animal is seizing its prey.

SCOTS AS FIGHTERS.

They Won Fame in Former Days Under Many Different Flags.

It would be difficult to find an army in Europe which did not contain descendants of the Scottish soldier of fortune. In Sweden Gustavus Adolphus had four lieutenant generals, twenty-two colonels and many other inferior officers, all Scotsmen, in his service. He owned that his conquests in Germany were due to the valor of these gallant soldiers.

In Muscovy the Bruces, the Gordons and the Douglasses were famous.

Even in Germany the ubiquitous Scot was to be found, and a General Ogilvy, whose grandfather was a Scotsman, was at one time field marshal of the empire.

It was in France, however, that the Scot was fated most highly, and the old saying ran, "Fidèle comme un Ecossais." Louis had such a respect for these soldiers that he ordained that his body should be guarded night and

day by twenty-four Scotsmen. This Scots bodyguard was continued under the reign of nine kings without interruption for 150 years.

King Charles VII. raised another company of Scots, called "Gens d'Armes d'Ecosse," consisting of 100 horses and 200 archers. This force had precedence of all the French troops.—London Chronicle.

Architecture.

A distinguished philosopher spoke of architecture as frozen music, and his assertion caused many to shake their heads. We believe this really beautiful idea could not be better reintroduced than by calling architecture silent music.—Goethe.

His Choice.

"A bad beginning means a good ending."

"That may be, but if I can have my choice I'll take the fine start every time."—Detroit Free Press.

California MORO

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In the concrete, recently completed, fully equipped, roomy garage of Walther-Williams Company. Competent workman always ready to help you in any way they can at least expense to you. For any service rendered the charge will always be reasonable.

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MORO BARBER SHOP Porcelain Bath Tub. Everything First Class and up to date. Agent for Model Steam Laundry of The Dalles Shop in Brick Building next Observer Office CHAS. McKINNEY, Proprietor. Moro, - - - - Oregon.

Notice to Horse Breeders MY PERCHERON HORSE TEDDY

Will make the season of 1917 at my place and at other places by appointment. Teddy is 15-16th Percheron and 1-16th Belgian.

TERMS—\$15.00 TO INSURE J. M. EDDY, Owner, MORO, OREGON