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### Humor and Philosophy

By DUNCAN M. SMITH

#### THE CHARM IN ART.

Pray, who would raise or raise a row  
About the gentle bossy cow  
If he should see the creature pass  
Or pause to take a bite of grass?  
E'en for a herd of eight or ten  
He wouldn't turn his head again,  
And yet, to see her done in oil,  
With trees and bushes and some soil,  
Beside a cool and limpid stream,  
He'd pause and say it was a dream.  
No matter if the price were high,  
He'd pull his wallet out and buy.

An old and much time beaten shack  
On which a man would turn his back  
Or pause to wonder why the town  
Or some one did not tear it down,  
A novel he would hardly care  
To tell his favorite son and heir,  
With not a single window light  
And not a streak of paint in sight,  
Were he to see it in a frame  
He'd have a fit about the same.  
To buy he would not hesitate,  
Although it cost two-ninety-eight.

Some land for which he would not give  
A dollar if he had to live  
Upon its bare and barren sands  
And make a living with his hands,  
A bleak and quite forbidding spot,  
Would strike his fancy like a hot  
If some bum artist took his paint  
And framed up something he called  
quaint—  
Some bushes and a bunch of grass  
Would doubtless all the critics pass  
And be, indeed, beyond a doubt,  
A thing to make a fuss about.

Oh, Art, it really is a shame  
Things that are practiced in your name!  
But still an artist must supply  
The things the people want to buy.

#### No Wonder.



"He can paint a portrait so natural  
that you almost expect it to speak."  
"What kind of paint does he use?"  
"I don't know. It comes in tubes."  
"Speaking tubes, no doubt."

#### Getting Rid of It.

While Mrs. Russell Sage has not had  
a large and varied experience in giving  
away money, yet there is no danger  
that she will be obliged to take lessons  
from a correspondence school in the art  
of giving away a large fortune.

Thousands of persons, who know all  
about it in theory, if not in practice,  
will be willing to assist her either with  
liberal advice or ablebodied help, preferably  
the latter.

Of course, she may not take all of  
the advice that is offered to her by  
mail and otherwise, but if she prefers  
to struggle along unaided with the task  
that is her own lookout.

But if she doesn't find any way in  
which she can use the proffered help, it  
is to be hoped that she will appreciate  
the truly noble and self sacrificing  
spirit in which it is offered by her  
unknown wellwishers.

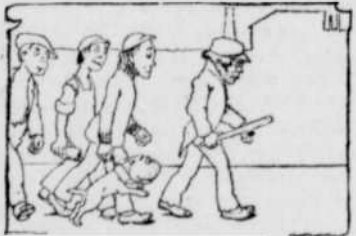
#### Natural Inference.

"How old is Miss Juvenile?"  
"I believe she has seen twenty-five  
summers."  
"Do you mean to say that the lady  
has been blind a part of her life?"

#### Not Then.

"Experience keeps a dear school."  
"Not if you acquire it at the other  
fellow's expense."

#### Human Nature.



The man who fights and runs away,  
Though no one is pursuing,  
Brings back his gang with him some day,  
And there is something doing.

#### PERT PARAGRAPHS.

People affected with hollow heads  
always make a roaring noise.

Dignity is an uncomfortable perch  
when the taffy is being passed.

When your enemy is anxious to do  
you a kindness turn him over to your  
mother-in-law.

People who never say anything may  
not mean half of it.

If he doesn't have a daily stomach  
ache the vacation boy feels that he  
isn't eating up to his opportunities.

An appearance of meekness often  
covers up a lot of unholy mischief.

It is as easy to pay a penance that  
doesn't punish as to play postoffice  
with a pretty girl.

Poverty is a blessing that ranks with  
adversity in the development of char-  
acter, and most people are quite willing  
that their enemies should have them.

The tongue's chief mission is to dis-  
tract attention from the delinquencies  
of other members of the body.

It is a good thing that we gain  
strength from our burdens, for it is the  
only reward we get for serving some  
people.

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### THE INCONVENIENCE OF SUPERSTITION

(Original.)

Returning to the city after a six months' absence I hastened to congratulate my intimate friend Tom Funk on his engagement, which he had announced to me by letter a few days after my departure. I found him in his den at home smoking an after dinner cigar. He listened to all the pleasant things I had to say to him about entering upon the happy engagement period, then, after waiting for me to light a cigar he handed me, settled back in his chair and said:

"You're too late. It's off."  
"Off?"  
"Yes, off—off for good."  
"What's the trouble?"  
"There is or was just one fault in Molly, and, though I admit there are a great many in me, her one fault is a staggerer."

"Extravagance?"  
"No. Quite economical."  
"Fond of admiration?"  
"No more than any woman."  
"Hot tempered?"  
"On the contrary, she's very amiable."

"I give it up. Tell me what it is."

"She's chock full of petty superstitions. You know how long I was trying to get her. Well, the reason was that she was consulting fortune tellers to find out whether the match would be a lucky or an unlucky one. The witch she had most confidence in told her that there was a dark gentleman wanting her (that's me), but if she married him she'd be very unhappy. It took me a year to find out about this, but when I did I fixed the witch with a five dollar bill and she told Molly she'd got the light and dark gentlemen mixed, and Molly was to marry the dark one. This settled it, and I supposed the coast was clear when Molly informed me that my original proposal had been made on a Friday and I must do it over. I was to call and take her by surprise just as I had done on the first occasion. I agreed, and do you know I struck the thirteenth day of the month. I had to wait a few weeks in order to surprise her again, and this time I didn't strike any bad luck. I proposed for the third time.

"Stupid ass that I was, I went off and bought an opal engagement ring. When I offered it Molly almost fainted. She said that even to offer an opal would involve a never ending chain of bad luck. The engagement must be broken and we must begin all over. This made me tired, but I was very much in love and consented to what I couldn't help. It took us two months to get around to where I could give her another ring. I bought one with a number of stones in the setting, a big one in the center, with two outer circles, the whole for a ring a cluster. As soon as she saw it she be-

gan to count the stones and in another moment turned pale and dropped the ring.

"What is the matter now? I gasped.

"There are thirteen jewels."

"I swore. Then I told her that she must either wear that ring or go without one. Her amiability conquered, and I consented to begin over once more. The next time I got ahead of the fates by giving a solitaire diamond. That was four months after she had accepted me.

"I was invited to her house to a dinner to celebrate our engagement. Molly and I sat side by side. I accidentally upset the saltcellar between us.

"Throw it over your shoulder, quick!" she screamed. I grabbed the heavy cut glass saltcellar and, throwing it over my shoulder, smashed a mirror on the sideboard.

"The salt! The salt!" she cried.

"Not the saltcellar."

"Confound the salt!" I blurted.

"She grabbed a fistful of the salt and tried to throw it over my shoulder; but, being in a hurry, she threw it into my eyes. Great heavens, how it smarted! I lost my temper and said a lot of things that shocked my prospective mother-in-law, but the father-in-law looked at me approvingly, and I knew he was on my side, though he didn't dare say so.

"Molly wet her napkin in a finger bowl and wiped the salt out of my eyes. She was so lovely about it all that I quieted down, and, though the rest of the dinner was not exhilarating, there was at least no bad feeling.

"Of course I insisted on replacing the mirror, and, of course, I was not permitted to do so. My own celebration of our engagement was to be a party to the opera. I paid \$25 for a box and invited the whole of Molly's family—seven persons. Everything looked promising, the weather was fine and we had every reason to believe we would have a good time. But just as we were entering the opera house Molly and I both stubbed our toes on a half step between the entrance passage and the foyer. Do you know, that girl turned and led the whole party out on to the sidewalk, where she declared that nothing could induce her to go in again, for the opera house would burn down if she did and there would be a holocaust. So we all went home.

"I treated her so coldly after that that I supposed she would break the engagement. She bore it all beautifully. But I had had enough of it and determined to get my freedom. I went to a seventh daughter of a seventh daughter and paid her well to give me an unlucky horoscope. She said that I was born on the unluckiest day of the year at the dark of the moon, with all the unlucky stars in the firmament in the ascendant. This I sent to Molly, who in a tearful letter broke the engagement. Thank heaven I'm a free man."

RUSSELL THORNE

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