

## ASPIRATION.

Fallen again? No—I give up the fight.  
What boots it to strive, if forever and ever,  
In spite of one's utmost pain and endeavor,  
Still to climb to the right,  
Still to follow the light,  
One falls from each height?

What boots it? Oh, better to climb and to fall,  
To strive and to fail, to fight and to win,  
Than to grovel content on the soul's lowest  
plane.

At the spirit's clear call  
Whom stars not at all—  
His cup shall be gall!

—Joseph R. Gilder in Youth's Companion.

## NEWGAG.

It was not his real name or his stage name, but it was the one under which he was best known by those who best knew him. It had been thrown at him in a cafe one night by a newspaper man after the performance, and had clung to him. Its significance lay in the fact that his "gags"—supposedly comic things said by presumably comic men in nominal opera or burlesque—invariably were old. The man who bestowed the title upon him thought it a fine bit of irony.

Newgag received it without expressed resentment, but without mirth, and he bore its repetition patiently as seasons went by. He was accustomed to enduring calmly the jests, the indignities that were heaped upon him by his peculiar appearance, his doleful expression, his slow and bungling speech and movement, his diffident manner. He was one of the forbearing men, the many who are doomed to continual suffering of a kind that their sensitiveness and timidity make it the more difficult for them to bear. Undying ambition burned beneath his unobtrusive surface; dauntless courage lay under his lack of ability.

He was an extremely spare man, of extraordinary height and the bend of his shoulders gave the small head a comical thrust forward. His black hair was without curl and it would tolerate no other arrangement than being combed back straight. It was allowed to grow down until it scraped the back of Newgag's collar, a device for concealing the meagerness of his neck.

He had a smooth, pale face, slanting from ears to nose like a wedge; and the dimness of the blue eyes added to its introspective cast. He blushed, as a rule, when he met new acquaintances or was addressed suddenly. He had a gloomy look and a hesitating way of speech. An amusing spectacle was his mechanical looking smile, which, when he became conscious of it, passed through several stages expressive of embarrassment until his normal mournful aspect was reached.

As he usually appeared in a sack coat when off the stage, the length of his legs was divertingly emphasized. After the fashion of great actors of a bygone generation, he wore a soft, black felt hat, dinged in the crown from front to rear.

He had entered "the profession" from the amateur stage, by way of the comic opera chorus, and to that chance was due his being located in the comic opera wing of the great histrionic edifice. He had originally preferred tragedy; but the first consideration was the getting upon the stage by any means. Having industriously worked his way out of the chorus he had been reconciled by habit to his environment and had come to aspire to eminence therein. He had reached the standing of a secondary comedian—that is to say, a man playing secondary comic roles in the pieces for which he is cast. He was useful in such companies as were directly or indirectly controlled by their leading comedians; for there never could be any fear of his outshining those autocratic personages. Only in his wildest hopes did he ever look upon the center of the stage as a spot possible for him to attain.

His means of evoking laughter upon the stage were laborious upon his part and mystifying to the thoughtful observer. He took noticeable pains to change from his real self. It mattered not what were the nature of the part he filled, he invariably assumed an unnatural, strained, rasping voice; he stretched his mouth to its utmost reach and lowered the extremities of his lips; he turned his toes inward (naturally his feet described an abnormal outward angle) and bowed his arms. Brought up in the school which teaches that to make others laugh one must never smile one's self, he wore a grotesquely ludicrous and changeless countenance. Such was Newgag in his every impersonation. When he thought he was funniest he appeared to be in most pain and was most depressing.

"My methods are legitimate, anyhow," he would say when he had elicited one's attention and apparent admiration across a table bearing beer bottles and sandwiches. "The people want horse play nowadays. But when I've got to descend to that sort of thing I'll go to the variety stage or circus ring at once—or quit."

"That's a happy thought, old man," said a comedian of the younger school one night, when Newgag had uttered his wanted speech. "Why don't you quit?"

Such a speech sufficed to rob Newgag of his self-possession and to reduce him to silence. He could not cope with easy, off-hand, impromptu jesters. In truth, no one tried more than Newgag to excel in "horse play," but his temperament or his training did not equip him for excelling in it; he defended the monotony, emptiness and tediousness of his humor on the ground that it was "legitimate."

One night Newgag drank two glasses of beer in rapid succession and looked at me with a touching countenance.

"Old boy," he said, in his homely drawl, "I'm discouraged! I begin to think I'm not in it!"

"Why, what's wrong?"

"Well—I've dropped to the fact that after all these years in the business I can't make them laugh."

I was about to say, "So you've just awakened to that?" but pity and politeness deterred me. Every one else had known it, all these years. Newgag, to be sure, should naturally have been, as he was, the last to discover it.

Newgag thus went one step further than any comedian I have ever known. Having detected his inability to amuse audiences, he confessed it.

People who know actors and read this, will already have said that it is a fiction

## GETTING IT DONE.

It is a Simple Affair if You Only Know How.

"It's strange I can't get my wife to mend my clothes," remarked Mr. Hridle disgustedly. "I asked her to sew the buttons on this vest this morning, and she has never touched it."

"You asked her?" observed Mr. Norris, with a slight shrug of his shoulders.

"Yes. What else should I do?"

"You haven't been married very long, and perhaps you'll take a pointer from me," remarked Mr. Norris, with a fatherly air. "Never ask a woman to mend anything. That's fatal."

"Why, what do you mean?"

"Do as I do. When I want to have a shirt mended, for instance, I take it in my hand and hunt up my wife. 'Where's that rag-bag, Mrs. Norris?' I demand fiercely."

"What do you want the ragbag for?" she says suspiciously.

"I want to throw this shirt away. It's all worn out," I reply.

"Let me see it," she demands.

"But I put the garment behind my back."

"No, my dear, I answer. 'There is no use of your attempting to do anything with it. It needs—'

"Let me see it," she reiterates.

"But it's all worn out, I tell you."

"Now, John, you give me that shirt," she says in her most peremptory tones.

"I hand over the garment."

"Why, John Norris," she cries, with womanly triumph. "This is a perfectly good shirt. All it needs is a new neckband."

"And the cuffs are ragged, too," I answer mildly.

"And new wristbands, and the button-holes worked over," she adds.

"Well, never mind what it needs. I don't intend you shall bother with it. You'll only waste your time. You'll never get it to fit in the neck anyway," I throw in as a final clincher.

"That's just like your extravagance," she cries. "I'm going to fix that shirt. The idea of throwing away a perfectly good garment! I'll fix it so you can never tell the difference." And she does.

"That's the way I get my clothes mended," concluded Mr. Norris. "Just tell a woman she can't do anything and then stand aside and see how quickly it is done."—Brooklyn Life.

## To Soothe the Savage Beast.



It seemed odd that it should have suited the proud spirit of Mrs. Bowler to carry home her savage thus.



But to the canine population 'twas a case of music having charms.—Truth.

## The Cause of It.

Softly blew the June breeze through the grand old woods. Feathered songsters flew joyously from branch to branch, the rippling brook murmured an accompaniment to their vocal melody and danced coyly in and out of the shadows, while the moss covered monarchs of the forest themselves waved their leafy plumes as if in applause, and the sun beamed his approval from an unclouded sky.

"This isn't exactly art," he said to me the other night, with a tinge of self-rebuke, "but it's success!"

And the history of Newgag is the history of many.—R. N. Stephens in Philadelphia Press.

## Manx Humor.

Even narrow-mindedness has its humorous side. "He's nice enough," said an old farmer, a stanch churchman of the Isle of Man, speaking of an acquaintance, "but he's a Methodist—not that he's on the 'plan' at all, but he's next door to it." The degree of comparison suggested here are delicious. The old fellow had no intention of being amusing, yet was not by any means destitute of humor, as the following advice, full of worldly wisdom, which he gave to a peddler and local preacher, will testify. "I was tellin him," said he, with a twinkle in his gray eyes, "people would be thinkin far more of him and his things if he joined the church, and maybe the bishop himself would buy somethin'."—London Saturday Review.

## Not Utterly Blind.

A young man and his sweetheart were walking down Woodward avenue. On the other side of the street was an old gentleman picking his way along with a cane. The young lady asked the young man if he knew the old gentleman was stone blind.

"But," she added, "there is one thing he can see as readily as we can."

Young Man—Indeed, is that possible?

Young Lady—Yes, it's a fact.

Young Man—For goodness sake, what is it?

Young Lady—A joke.—Detroit Free Press.

## Destined for Great Uses.

It is estimated by a Swiss engineer that 600,000 horse power for electric transmission of power can be easily obtained from the waterfalls of that country.—New York Journal.

## A Heifer in a Bath-tub.

A number of cattle were landed at the Weems line wharf yesterday morning. Their driver was James Groucher. The animals seeming quiet, Groucher started to drive them without any ropes. On reaching Conway street a heifer, which had been moving along very placidly, became very much animated, and made things very interesting for the balance of the herd. The street being too wide for her she danced up an alley between 129 and 131 Conway street. A gate blocked her way, but only momentarily. Through it she went, and then another obstacle presented itself, Mrs. Emma A. Poole, who proved to be no more of a stop to the heifer's onward progress than Fort Carroll would be to a modern man-of-war. In a moment Mrs. Poole was knocked to the ground, and in the kitchen it went. There some destruction of property was committed, but not enough to satisfy the heifer.

The dining room was next entered, where the well known quadruped-in-a-china-shop scene was re-enacted. The hallway was then taken in, and a lamp was knocked down. The heifer wanted to conquer higher worlds, so she went upward into a bedroom. Here, temporarily, repose was sought on the bed, but it fell under the animal's weight, other damage being done during this occurrence. From here, the weather being warm, her heifership went into the bathroom and hopped into the bath-tub. Mrs. Poole then commenced calling for help, and, with the assistance of a blue coated soldier, drove the animal out, and she at once sailed up Hanover street and there entered another house, but did no damage. The driver finally caught the animal—Baltimore American.

## An Infatuated Tomcat.

Miss Ethel, daughter of D. W. Peace, of West Carrollton, is the possessor of a Maltese cat. Early in the spring the cat deserted his place in the house and took up his abode with the chickens, remaining day and night in the chicken yard. He soon formed an attachment for an old black hen, which was reciprocated, and the two became inseparable. Thus matters went on for some time, when the hen, remembering that the usual season for multiplying and replenishing her species had arrived, selected a nest in the poultry house and made known her intentions in the usual way. She was at once supplied with the necessary eggs and commenced business. This, it was supposed, would end the rather strange flirtation and Tommy would return to his mat on the porch, but not so. Judge of the surprise of the family on going to the poultry house the next day to find that his catship had taken possession of the adjoining nest with the nest egg and was sitting in the most approved fashion.—Cor. Dayton (O.) Herald.

## A Gandy Uniform.

Warden Aull has adopted a novel method of keeping track of such convicts as are continually planning to escape. Thursday morning he surprised three of the most incorrigible by dressing them up with a flaming red flannel blouse and cap. Across the back of the blouse in plain view is a broad white strip of canvas marked in large, plain letters, "Convict No. —." The pants are the regulation stripes. It was a great surprise to the convicts.

As they marched to the canal they were subjected to a great deal of raillery.

The warden says these three have kept the officers and guards busy for some time trying to keep run of them. With these suits on they can be easily watched from the various posts and their every movement noted. All who attempt to escape hereafter will be treated in like manner.—Folsom (Cal.) Telegraph.

## Georgia's Profits from Peaches.

The Georgia fruit crop is a big thing this year, and everybody is interested in knowing what the growers will make out of it. In the peach and grape crops alone conservative estimates show that about 500 carloads of peaches and 100 carloads of grapes will leave the state for foreign markets during the present season. The estimated receipts for the peach and grape crops combined are \$750,000.

Reports show that the peaches are well formed, of good size and perfectly sound, and this, together with the decrease in yield from last year, makes good prices and ready sales an assured fact. Other important fruit crops will largely swell the total sales, and lots of summer money will be put in circulation where it will do good.—Columbus (Ga.) Enquirer-Sun.

## A Fine Point of Law.

The ideas of the colored man in the south are somewhat confused on some subjects. An old Texas negro applied to a lawyer to bring suit against Uncle Mose for \$10 borrowed money.

"You must have a witness who saw you lend him the money."

"Boss," replies the colored agriculturist after a minute's pause, "if I brings two witnesses what seed me loan him de \$10, kin I make him pay me back \$20?"—Texas Siftings.

## At the Fair.

Ellen—Do you see that woman talking so excitedly to the young lady typewriter? What do you suppose is the matter with her?

John—Oh, she is the one who is going to deliver a lecture this afternoon on "Why a Woman Should Receive the Same Wages as a Man," and she is kicking about paying the young lady's price for typewriting her speech.—Boston Courier.

## NO CAPTAIN'S TABLE FOR HIM.

He Thought That the Big Man of the Ship Ate with the Deck Hands.

He was pacing the promenade deck of an ocean steamer. One of his eyes was blackened, and his red nose and swollen features wore a careworn expression. The breeze played gently with the tails of his long ulster, and he could scarcely keep his feet. A sudden lurch of the ship sent him sprawling on the deck in front of one of the passengers, who helped him up and asked him if he were sick.

"No, my friend," he answered gravely, "but I'm afraid I've made a big mistake. Ever crossed the ocean before?"

"Two or three times," was the modest answer.

"Well, then," he continued, "perhaps you can tell me whether I was right or wrong."

"How was it?"

"Well, you see it was this way. The other day I was appointed United States consul to a little port over here across the pond. I'm on my way there now. I took cabin passage on this boat and I was having a tiptop time until today. This morning I had just sat down to breakfast when a big waiter came up behind me, and said he, 'beg pardon, sir, but the captain requests that you be seated at his table.' 'What's that?' said I, 'sit at the captain's table. Not much, sir. I'm no plug of a common sailor. I'm a United States consul. I paid for first class passage on this craft and I'm going to have first class grub."

"Sit at the captain's table! You must be crazy, man. No, sir, I'm going to sit right here and take my meals like the other first class passengers. I'm a gentleman. I'm an American sovereign, sir, and I stand on my rights. The next thing you'll want me to go down and take pot luck with the coal heavers. I'm no steerage passenger. If you don't believe it here's my ticket. I don't eat with sea captains, do you see?"

"Everybody at the table began to look astonished like, and the waiter said: 'I'm sorry, sir, but orders is orders. I wouldn't dare tell the captain that you had refused to come to his table. He would be much insulted, sir.' 'Then let him get insulted,' said I, getting a bit riled. 'It's none of his business where I sit. I don't have to eat with my social inferiors. I'm going to sit right here, and if you don't take your hand off my shoulder I'll paste you one right between the eyes.'"

"But you don't understand"—he began, and put his hand on me again. "With that I got up and hit him. He struck back and we clinched, rolled over on the floor and gouged each other. A lot of the waiters ran up and parted us. I got up and left the room without any breakfast. Just as I went out I heard somebody remark that I was the biggest fool that ever stepped off dry land. 'Now tell me, stranger, is a man a fool because he stands up for his rights?'"

"Certainly not," answered the other passenger, "but don't you know that it is considered a great honor to be invited to the captain's table? It is an honor accorded only to people of high social rank or official position. The captain's table is considered the finest in the dining room."

"In the dining room?" he gasped. "Then it ain't down in the forecastle! Ah, now I catch on. What a tarnation fool I've been, anyhow. I'm going to get the biggest deck hand on board to kick me all over the ship, and then I'm going to my stateroom, and I won't stick my nose outside until we get to Queenstown. Goodbye, my friend."—New York Tribune.

## Literary Inspiration.

"Do you know," said the author, "I am a firm believer in inspiration, and I believe it is far more common among authors than most people suppose. The poets by no means monopolize it. In almost every author's work there are sentences, scenes or chapters that are genuine inspirations, born of the moment, flashing upon the author's mind without the least warning. In my own case many of the best things I have written have come to me in that way. See here, let me show you how I work."

And he took a long blank book from his desk. "This is the kind of a book I write the first drafts of my stories in before having them copied on a typewriter."

"You see, I write on only one side of the page, while on the other side you will see occasional lines hastily jotted down diagonally across the page. Those are my 'inspirations,' and they come about in this way: While I am writing suddenly an idea will pop into my head, often utterly irrelevant to the particular part of the work on which I am engaged—some scene later on in my story, or it may be only a sentence or two—the happy expression of some thought. I turn instantly and jot it down on the opposite page, then go on with my work, and when I have reached the point in my story where my 'inspiration' is needed I turn back and copy it."

"I used to try to remember these things, believing that when I wanted the sentence the association of ideas would bring it back to me, but I found that unwise. These little 'inspirations,' in my case, are very fleeting, and I have to nail them at once or they escape."—New York Epoch.

## Some Curious Book Titles.

In the sixteenth century we find the greatest extravagance displayed in the titles of books. These may be taken as examples: "The Spiritual Snuff Box, to Lead Devoted Souls to Christ," and "The Spiritual Springs for Souls Steeped in Devotion." A work on Christian charity published in 1587 is entitled "Buttons and Button Holes for Believers' Breaches." The editor of this paper has Father La Chancie's work entitled "Bread Cooked on the Ashes; Brought by an Angel to the Prophet Elijah (Elijah) to Comfort the Dying." Another was issued with the curious title of "The Lamp of St. Augustine, and the Flies That Flit Around It."

The following very attractive title appeared in a book published at Newcastle in 1636: "Some Beautiful Biscuits Cooked in the Oven of Charity and Put Aside for the Fowls of the Church, the Sparrows of the Spirit and the Swallows of Salvation."—St. Louis Republic.

## Had a Better Job.

Employer (Impulsively)—Miss De Pinkie—Clara, will you marry me?  
Pretty Typewriterist—What! And give up my twenty dollars a week salary? Not much!—New York Weekly.