

Uncle Walt's Story

Walt Mason

GAY OLD MEN

"SAM JAGWAY was trying to be funny, this morning," related the horse doctor. "He saw some boys turning handspins, and undertook to show them how the trick used to be done in the halcyon days, and the doctor says he wrenched his back so he'll be in bed for several days."



"Disasters of that sort usually happen to the graybeard who tries to demonstrate that he isn't any older than he was forty years ago," commented the village patriarch. "It's always being tempted to do some idiotic thing, and have to suppress such impulses with a mallet flat. It's all the outcome of vanity. A man hates to admit that he's a back number. He wants to assure the plain people that, notwithstanding his gray whiskers and stringhalted legs, he's a four-horse team with a dog under the wagon, when it comes to athletic skill."

"I was in the livery barn the other evening, when young Fretzinger began explaining that he had been taking boxing lessons from one of the old masters. He had learned all the tricks of the game, and was just suffering agonies because there was nobody present who would stand up and exchange scientific swats with him."

"In my younger days, if I do say it myself, I was a star performer in the ordinary knock-down-and-drag-out form of combat, but I never was worth shucks at boxing. Nobody knows that better than I do. Why, then, did I inform Fretzinger that I would be glad to spar a few rounds with him? It surely was vanity and nothing else. I had an idea that, while he might have plenty of the fancy stuff on hand, I might land one of my old-time thymesters; in which case I felt sure the town would soon be riving with the story of an old man's prowess."

"So I took off my long flannel coat, and my vest, and stood up for battle. If anybody tells you, my friends, that Fretzinger doesn't know how to wield his hands, you may regard the story as a rookback. I never saw fists so numerous as on that occasion. I couldn't see anything else for a while, and they landed on me in many unexpected places, and I don't remember a time when I was so embarrassed."

"Fretzinger explained afterward that he merely tapped me gently because I was a venerable man, old enough to be his grandfather. In that case I never want to become involved in an argument with him when he is in earnest. I had a black eye for a week after this recital, and my nose has never satisfied me since. Every time I came downtown, I had to explain to a thousand people that I blackened my eye while sparring kindling or that I dropped a sad-iron on it. There is nothing more humiliating than a black eye, and I made up my mind that I'd try to realize my advanced age thereafter, and behave myself like a grave and reverend man."

"But no sooner had my eye recovered than I was in trouble again. I saw some young men wrestling, and paused to point out that they didn't know the rudiments of the game. I assured them that in my younger days I was a holy terror, and I didn't think that my hand had lost its cunning. It would afford me genuine happiness, I said, to show them how wrestling was done in the palmy days of Muldoon and Whistler."

"So I removed my coat and vest and went into executive session with a husky young man who had no respect for gray hairs. I am not sure about what followed, but I think he must have thrown me over his head. Anyhow, I made a great dent in the earth with my person, and I was so sore for two weeks that I had to take myself around in a wheelchair. Of course, I am determined to make no more bad breaks of the kind, but I haven't much confidence in myself, and tomorrow you may see me climbing a tree half a mile high, to show some boys how to rob birds' nests."

Economy.

"Here is a fine tonic which will quickly bring back your husband's appetite."

"Dear me, doctor, I've been getting along so fine with my market money since he lost his appetite."—Boston Transcript.

Diagnosis.

A party of soldiers stopped some laborers to search their dinner pails for hidden arms.

All at once a soldier gave a cry and pointed across to the officer in charge. "Look, sir, there's a hard, heavy one."

After this examination the officer pronounced it a suspicious mound which would endanger public safety, and ordered the workmen to disclose the possession it was found.

"And you think that's dynamite, do you?" asked Pat. "The laborers, I've been potting my head over it all day. You see, my old woman calls it cake."

Policewoman's Lot Not Happy

Mrs. Ellen O'Grady, deputy police commissioner of New York city, has resigned, asserting she had been hampered in her work and could not remain in her place and retain her self-respect. Her action followed attacks on the efficiency of the department made by several newspapers. Mrs. O'Grady, who declared she had a thousand and one things to tell about the police department later on, said in her statement:



"I have been told that my work is 'too strenuous' looking after the morals of girls in moving picture houses and told to 'go slow.' When my detectives went to enforce the law in a number of moving picture houses, the managers showed them receipts stating that they had contributed to the police hospital fund, and they had been promised that no police action would be taken against them."

Mrs. O'Grady charged that no attention had been paid to complaints lodged with the bureau of missing persons and that she had been unable to assign women for this work because they had been taken from her for the police hospital drive.

Mrs. O'Grady, whose resignation took effect immediately, was appointed in 1918 by Commissioner Enright. At that time he issued a statement saying that her time "will be particularly devoted to the investigation of the white slave traffic."

American Flyer Escapes From Russia



Capt. Meriam C. Cooper of Jacksonville, Fla., a member of the Kosciuszko squadron, who was shot down in Russia by Bolshevik troops, and who since that time has been a prisoner in Moscow, Russia, is reported to have made his escape into Riga. The photograph shows Captain Cooper before making the attack on Russian troops which resulted in his capture.

WORLD NOT YET FILLED UP

There Are Many Places Where the Lover of Solitude Can Find What He Is Looking For.

Crowded as the world seems to be getting, Robinson Crusoe could find a haven today, and he would not have to resort to the polar regions, either. Numerous islands still dot the seas where a visitor would find no living soul, and there are others where the inhabitants are living in almost primitive simplicity, says a bulletin from the Washington headquarters of the National Geographic society.

Nor is it necessary for you to choose a plot of land belonging to any other than the United States. There is Baker's Island, 3,725 miles out from San Francisco, as well as many other such isolated dots in the Pacific, where there will be no chance of getting even a faithful Friday to share your lot. Vessels used to haul guano from the island, but today the deposits are practically worked out. If you feel that you must have your wife somewhere in the offing you can send her on to Howland Island, 25 miles to the westward, an equally deserted spot, and row over to see her when you get bored with you freedom.

Progress on Isle of Man.

On the quaint and picturesque Isle of Man, made famous by Hall Gulliver's fiction, an ancient pump of the charcoal-briquet variety, built into a masonry abutment of the face of a rock cliff, lifts its endless load of water some eighty feet from the pool below, says Popular Mechanics Magazine. For many years a big steam engine of obsolete form, slow and extravagant of fuel, attended to the duty of turning the chain shaft. But now the old boiler and cylinder are gone, and in their place a modern wind motor has been installed, its slim, efficient steel form rising from the cliff top in striking, yet not unharmonious, contrast with the primitive ruggedness that marks the earlier work of man and nature. The whirling 20-foot wheel of the new motive power now is drawing up 14,300 gallons of water an hour, as an average figure, and it is significant of the value of modern methods that the saving of fuel, no longer needed for a hungry boiler, soon paid the cost of the mill.

The Tip-Hunter's Guide.

Speaking of tips and tipping, a New York bellhop not long ago formulated a set of rules, a few of which we give below:

- Don't waste time on "big bugs."
 - Show attention on women; if they tip at all, they tip liberally.
 - Don't persecute tightwads; shame them with faithful service.
 - Play the heavyweights hard, steady and long. Don't make a mistake by trying to be too good.
 - Don't get angry when a guest doesn't without tipping you. Keep a heart. Perhaps the fellow cleaned him out.
- Boston Transcript.

Ecuador.

It was one hundred years ago that Ecuador liberated itself from Spanish rule. To commemorate the anniversary, Ecuador has issued a series with nineteen denominations—one centavo to one sucre—each bearing a portrait of some man who won renown in Ecuador's history. The dates 1820 and 1920 are a part of the design. Greatly to the surprise of collectors, no 20-centavo denomination appeared as part of the set, for Ecuador's sets for forty years have included one of that value. Inquiry brought the disclosure that 62,000 copies of a 20-centavo were printed, but the value "descriptio, velute, meaning "twenty," was through an error spelled veinte instead. The postal authorities destroyed the entire lot, and a 20-centavo will appear as soon as a new plate has been made.—Youth's Companion.

The Catch.

A New England spinster was much enamored of a neighboring farmer, but the affection was not returned. One day, starting on one of his weekly visits to town, the maiden came rushing out, crying:

"You-hoo, Mr. Simpkins, do you mind taking me with you?"

The farmer considered warily and finally allowed her to climb in.

In vain the lady tried every topic of conversation without eliciting response and finally in desperation fell back on the passing bits of scenery. Going by the minister's house, she cried: "Oh, Mr. Simpkins, what a beautiful hitching post Pastor Watson has!"

"Gad darn," cried the other cracking his whip. "I knowed there was a hitch in it somewhere. Pothole, goat-pole, Ma'am, that's fer losses only."—American Legion Weekly.

One Thing After Another.

It is many years since man was so beset of all his ills by the removal of a largely superfluous appendix. When the angle of that operation began to pall pyorrhea became the chief criminal and the substitution of "dentures" for the untidy teeth of nature was still indifferent, and the discovery of the "dead tooth" in all its peril promised a pathway to centenarian vigor. Passing by mottley glands, we now come to the nerve centers of the spine as the seat of all trouble and to a delicate combination of osteopathy and massage as the infallible recipe for perfect health.—London Express.

Another Victory for Machinery.

From Lyons, France, comes the report that a machine has been developed for making raised embroidery in gold and silver. It is stated that the sketch is a copy of an ancient form of embroidery and gives an impression of handwork, and is also the first machine that has been successful in using the needle thread. It is stated that the machine is the result of seven years of study, and that the results are very satisfactory.—Scientific American.

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