

Stories World Meets With Smiles

An Incident at Liege.

EVEN as I read of the campaign in Northern Belgium there comes the memory of an incident which occurred several years ago on the station platform at Liege.

In the company of two Americans, who had been studying at German universities, I was traveling from Berlin to Paris. We spent the night at Liege, and in the morning were on hand to take the Paris express.

As my knowledge of both French and German was decidedly limited, it fell to my lot to look after the hand luggage, while my companions saw to the tickets and the checking of the trunks. While I was thus engaged, a well-dressed, portly gentleman, of distinctly German type, stepped up and spoke to me.

I shook my head. "Nicht versteh," said I.

He tried again, and then I asked him a question in my limited German.

"Nicht versteh," he replied in turn. We began to make gestures with our arms. I repeated all the German words I know, which were about nine. They didn't seem familiar to him. We began again to make gestures, but of no avail. Finally a brilliant idea occurred to me.

"Parlez-vous Francaise?" said I.

"Oui, oui," he replied eagerly. He mopped his brow, then said something that sounded suspiciously like French to me.

"Je ne comprend pas," said I. Finally I managed to ask him a question.

"Je ne comprend pas," said he. And once more we began gesticulating.

At this juncture I espied one of my companions and hailed him with relief. "Here, Robinson, for heaven's sake, help this poor devil out! I've been trying to find out for the last 10 minutes what he wants."

The stranger literally fell upon my neck. "By cracky!" he cried, "can you talk English?"

"You bet," I boasted. "I'm an American."

"Then, for the love of Mike, why didn't you say so!" said he. "I'm from Kansas City."—K. R. in L. A. Times.

Unbelievably Big.

English as she is spoke in England opens pitfalls almost as numerous as those of a foreign language to an American.

A Los Angeles society matron was guest of honor at a London dinner last Summer. Of course California became the topic of general conversation and she was asked many weird questions.

"Do pines grow in California?" queried the host.

"Oh, yes, many varieties of them." "What's the favorite variety?"

"The sugar pine, I think." "How large is the sugar pine?"

"Very often as much as sixteen feet in circumference."

The Englishman gasped, then stared at his guest as if suddenly convinced that he was entertaining the Baroness Munchausen unawares. He asked no more questions for the time being. But after dinner he again approached the American lady. "Are they edible?" he said with explosive suddenness. "Those big pines, you know. Fancy!"

"Edible!" echoed the puzzled lady. "How can a tree be edible?"

"But the pine isn't a tree," persisted the Englishman. "It's a fruit. With prickles, you know."

"Oh, I see. You mean a pineapple."

"We call them pines here," answered the Englishman stiffly. "Your American language is very strange."—L. A. Times.

An Inattentive Schoolboy.

Of course, little Johnny's full attention should have been upon the recitation in history that afternoon, but it wasn't. Through the window he could see a squirrel scampering up a tree and darting into his hole, only to poke his funny little nose out again presently and scuttle down for another nut to deposit in his storehouse. Wherefore, when the teacher asked him a question, Johnny was

blissfully unaware that he had been called upon.

"Johnny!" exclaimed the teacher. "Johnny Jones!"

Johnny's head came round with a jerk—and so did his straying attention.

"Johnny Jones," said the teacher, sternly, "I don't believe you've heard a word I've said! If you can't pay attention you can stay in after school, and—and give me your individual attention! I asked you how many years has Captain John Smith been dead?"

"Huh," exclaimed the flustered Johnny. "Dead? Why, teacher, this is the first I've heard about his even being sick."

Didn't Like the Taste.

Representative William A. Ashbrook, of Ohio, received an almost tearful letter from a woman in his district, imploring him not to send any more Government seeds or bulbs into their once tranquil home. It seems that Ashbrook, not content with sending a few radish and lettuce seeds, had franked a large consignment of narcissus and tulip bulbs as nuggets of good cheer to a few of the more fortunate among his constituents.

One woman set only part of the bulbs into the ground and put the others away for future reference. Then she hired a new cook and shortly thereafter gave a dinner, a feature of which was to be a certain kind of salad containing onions. Many a thoughtful reader has doubtless guessed by now what happened—how the bitter taste of the narcissus bulbs inadvertently substituted for onions complicated the feast—and how all was woe.

"We will not care for any more Government bulbs," the woman wrote to Ashbrook; "the flowers could not possibly recompense for the trouble we had over the salad."—Fred C. Kelly.

An Indelicate Remark.

"One cannot be too careful in his remarks on some occasions," said a young clergyman, in speaking of a tour of inspection which he, in company with older divines, made of a penal institution.

"The leader of our little expedition, a truly good man, was so impressed by what he learned from the story of one young man imprisoned for burglary that he felt he should offer him some encouragement, of what kind he hardly knew. So, after many hems and haws, he delivered himself of the following:

"Ah, my friend, we must not lose sight of the fact that we are here today and gone tomorrow."

"You may be, sir," rejoined the burglar, "but I ain't."—Harper's Magazine.

Proud of Their Capacity.

Apropos of West Virginia's dryness, Mayor Rockwell, of Pleasant Farms said:

"On account of its high Summer temperature the consumption of beer in this state from June to September

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used to be remarkable. There were some ill-advised West Virginians who were even proud of it.

"Two such men, residents of Grafton, spent their Summer vacation in New York. Their first evening in New York was devoted to roof gardening. On a cool roof garden, under the shining stars, they saw on every side well-dressed people drinking iced drinks through straws.

"This sight amused them, and, when the waiter came for their order, the older Graftonian said:

"We're from Grafton. Bring us two buckets of beer and two gas pipes."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

She Wasn't Pretty.

We met him leaving his office during working hours, the other day.

"Where are you going at this time of day?" we asked.

"Got to go to the train and meet my wife's older sister who is coming to make us a visit," he responded, not very enthusiastically.

"Can't she get to your house without being met. You only live a short walk from the station."

"Yes, that's what my wife suggested. But I'd rather meet her. You see, if I meet her in public I will have an excuse for not kissing her. And if I meet her in my own home I'll—well, don't you see why I'm going to the depot?"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Accidentally.

"I wonder how so many forest fires catch?" said Mrs. McBride.

"Perhaps they catch accidentally from the mountain ranges," suggested Mr. McBride.

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