

Stories With a Smile

SMILES weaved through the features of Congressman Asher C. Hinds of Maine the other evening when the talk drifted to domestic felicity. He said he was reminded of an incident in the home of Jones.

Jones was sitting in the den one night glancing over the sporting pages. Opposite him sat little wifey making something with a knitting needle. Suddenly mother glanced up.

"John Henry," said she, "drop that paper a minute. I want to ask you a question."

"What is it, dear?" was the obedient response of John Henry.

"It's just this," returned wifey. "If you were single again and I were single again, would you ask me to marry you?"

"Look here, Mary," exclaimed father a little energetically, "what do you want to start something for when we have settled down for a nice quiet evening?"

Johnson's Enlistment.

They were speaking of army service at a social session the other night when Congressman Henry T. Helgensen of North Dakota smilingly said he was reminded of the enlistment of Jim Johnson.

Johnson enlisted with the usual enthusiasm, the Congressman said, but he had not been in the army two days before he made the mistake of twisting his face into the shape of disdain while the hash was being served.

"What's the matter with you there, Johnson?" imperiously demanded an officer who had observed the facial contortion. "Don't you like that soup?"

"No, sir," was the frank rejoinder of Johnson, "it is full of sand and grit, sir."

"It is, is it?" loftily returned the officer. "Well, did you come here to grumble, or to serve your country?"

"I came here to serve my country, sir," politely answered Johnson, "but not to eat it."

Applied Natural Philosophy.

Pat had been engaged to take a trunk across the lake. He placed the trunk in the bow of the boat, with the result that the boat tipped forward.

Man (on the dock)—What are you rowing with that trunk in the bow of the boat for, Pat?

Pat—Sure, an' if it was in the stern wouldn't I be rowin' uphill all the time? An' this way I'm rowing downhill all the time!

Suitable.

"I suppose," remarked Mrs. Brown, "now aviators are becoming so numerous and are actually holding aeroplane contests that we may expect to see a weekly paper published in their interests."

"Oh," said Smith, "there has been a suitable paper on sale for a long time now."

"Indeed! What's its name?"

"Fly paper."

He Learned His Value.

A tourist in Scotland came to a wide ferry. It was stormy and the wind was constantly increasing. The Scotch ferryman agreed to take the tourist across, but told him to wait until he had first taken a cow across.

When he had returned and started across with the traveler the latter became curious.

"Will you tell me why you took the cow across and made me wait?" he asked.

"Well, now," explained the ferryman, "you see the cow was valuable, and I feared th' wind wud increase so th' boat might upset on th' second trip!"

Obedience.

Mrs. Flint always demanded instant and unquestioning obedience from her children. One afternoon a storm came up, and she sent her son John to close the trapdoor leading to the roof.

"But, mother—" said John.

"John, I told you to shut the trapdoor."

"Yes, but, mother—"

"John, shut that trapdoor!"

"All right, mother, if you say so, but—"

"John!"

John slowly climbed the stairs and shut the trapdoor. The storm howled and raged. Two hours later the family gathered for tea. When the meal was half over, Aunt Mary had not appeared, and Mrs. Flint started an investigation. She did not have to ask many questions: John answered the first one:

"Please, mother, she is up on the roof."

How She Was Recognized.

Mary met Emily on the street. They had not seen each other for many years.

"Why, how do you do!" exclaimed Mary, effusively, topping off the salutation with a few vague pecks at Emily's face.

"Now this is delightful," said Emily, who was older than Mary. "You haven't seen me for eleven years, and yet you know me at once. I couldn't have changed so dreadfully in all that time. It flatters me."

Said Mary: "I recognized your bonnet."

Didn't Need a Vehicle.

An affable agent approached a Texan whose record he had previously acquainted himself with. "Colonel," said he, "those are mighty fine boys of yours."

"The finest ever, stranger," acquiesced the colonel. "The finest in Texas."

"I reckon you buy them anything they want?"

"Why sure, stranger; I buy them anything they need, whether they want it or not."

"Then, colonel, let me sell you a cyclopaedia for them. There's nothing else that will benefit them so much."

The colonel looked at the agent in astonishment. "Why, stranger," said he, "them boys of mine don't need no cyclopaedia. They ride hosses."

Mental Reserve.

Gentlemen, I can't lie about the horse; he is blind in one eye," said the auctioneer.

The horse was soon knocked down to a citizen, who had been greatly struck by the auctioneer's honesty, and after paying for the horse he said:

"You were honest enough to tell that this animal is blind in one eye. Is there any other defect?"

"Yes, sir; there is. He is also blind in the other eye," was the prompt reply.

A Dirty Job.

"Just look at the wonderful color of the sea!" exclaimed a tourist on his first Mediterranean cruise. "See how blue it is!"

"That's not strange," growled a traveler who had lately run the gamut of the Neapolitan pensions and was therefore disillusioned. "No wonder it's blue. You'd be blue yourself if you had to wash the shores of Italy!"

Hard on Father.

Do you try to make home life pleasant for your son?"

"Yes," replied Farmer Cornstassel. "But it's mighty hard to live up to the refined ways he insists on. I'm annoyin' him terrible because when I'm workin' around the barn I keep forgettin' to refer to the hay loft as the mezzanine floor."

Overtaken.

It was a wizened little man who appeared before the judge and charged his wife with cruel and abusive treatment. His better half was a big, square-jawed woman, with a determined eye.

"In the first place, where did you meet this woman who has treated you so dreadfully?" asked the judge.

"Well," replied the little man, making a brave attempt to glare defiantly at his wife, "I never did meet her. She just kind of overtook me."

Preparing the Way.

Claude had disobeyed his parents, and his mother knew it.

"I am afraid," she said, "that when I tell your father what you have been doing this forenoon he will punish you severely."

"Have you got to tell him, Mother?" asked the boy.

"Yes," was the reply; "I shall tell him immediately after dinner."

"Well, Mother," said the boy, "give him a real good dinner, won't you? You might do as much as that for me."

Wonderful Training.

Mr. Craig was reading the evening paper, while his wife sat near by, knitting.

"Just listen to this, Debby," he said.

"It says here in the paper that more than 5,000 elephants a year go to make our piano keys."

"Gracious!" cried the wife. "Ain't it just wonderful, Dan, what some animals can be trained to do!"

Utterly Useless.

"John," asked Mrs. Dorkins, "what is a 'political con game'?"

"Why, it's—it's a frame-up, you know."

"Yes, but what is a frame-up?"

"A—er—piece of bunk, of course; can't you—?"

"What is a piece of bunk?"

"Oh, shucks!" exclaimed Mr. Dorkins. "What's the use of trying to tell a woman anything about politics?"

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