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HUMOR

APPALLING FIGURES.

Mr. McSwat Has an Argument with His Better Half.
 Mrs. McSwat—Billiger, how often do you get shaved?
 Mr. McSwat—About four times a week on an average.
 "How much time does it usually require?"
 "About half an hour."
 "Half an hour four times a week! That's two hours a week, four and one-third days in a year, and nearly a month and a half in ten years. Think of it, Billiger. If you should let your beard grow you would save time enough in ten years!"
 "But look here, Lobelia! Great Scott! I don't want to let it grow. Did you ever see me with a full set of whiskers?"
 "No, but—"
 "Well, let it be the cause of the most heartfelt joy and gratitude you ever experienced, Lobelia, that you never did! With a full beard, madam, I look like a coccinellid in a fit of delirium tremens. I tried it once years ago. Dogs barked at me on the street, children fled from me in terror, footpads who caught a glimpse of me by moonlight or the pale, flickering rays of a street lamp, dropped their sandbags and slunk trembling up the alleys, and I was offered sixty dollars a week and all expenses by a dime museum man for a year's engagement. My portrait was hawked all over the country as the most hideous!"
 "I don't believe any of that stuff, Billiger, and I'm sure!"
 "Don't interrupt me, madam. My beard grows straight out, up, down, sideways, every bristle for itself, like the spines on the fretful chestnut burr, and it grows in every shade and color, from brindle to vermilion and back again. If you could see me once with a hedge fence all over my face you would!"
 "But think of the time you lose!"
 "The time I lose! Look here! How often do you fix your hair?"
 "Every day of my life, of course, but that's different."
 "That's different, is it, hey! How long does it take you to fix it?"
 "I think you're just as!"
 "You needn't answer. I know how long it takes. I've seen you do it often enough. It takes you half an hour every blessed day of your life to look after your frizzes, if that's what you call them. Think of it! Half an hour a day, three hours and a half a week, nearly eight days in a year, an entire month in four years, a whole year in forty-eight years and over two years in a century! Lobelia, you'd better go and look after the baby."—Chicago Tribune.

Beautiful Hair.

The present bishop of Trinidad was once curate of St. John's, Chatham, England, and he had a beautiful head of ruddy hair. One day he went into Garthwaite's to have his hair cut in the usual manner.
 And Garthwaite admired the parson's hair as he passed his hands over it, and said that it was very beautiful. Whereupon the curate was well pleased, and Garthwaite passed his hand over the ruddy locks again, and murmured more approval.
 "Many a lady would give a great deal to have such a head of hair as yours, sir."
 "Indeed," said the barber's victim, now quite interested; "why so?"
 "Ah, sir, it would take the dye so well!" replied Garthwaite.
 And the conversation dropped.—Boston Globe.

Ingenious.

"The practice of smoking is so prevalent in Holland," once remarked a traveler, "that when you are in an alshouse, where everybody smokes, you cannot possibly recognize the person sitting next to you."
 "Then how does the waiter manage to distinguish the customers?"
 "Oh, easily enough. He always carries a pair of bellows about with him to blow away the smoke until he discovers the person who summoned him."—Tit-Bits.

Part Mourning.

"Mary Dasher's uncle is dead. Did he leave anything?"
 "Nothing."
 "Then she will not go into mourning for him?"
 "Yes, part mourning. She is going to wear black suspenders."—Exchange.

A Matter of Names.

"I say, old man," asked 'Arry First, "wot does this 'ere mean—this 'ere man and wot thing?"
 "W'y," said 'Arry Second, "cawn't ye see for yerself wot it means? One man, one wot, and there ye are."
 "Well, I don't see it."
 "Now look 'ere, it's heasy enough. One bloody man, one bloody wot."
 "W'y, yes! Great man, Gladston!"—New York Sun.

The Smoke from the Sunset Gun.

Next to the sunsets and the daily departure of the white fleet of sound steamers, nothing that is seen from the span of the Brooklyn bridge is better worth seeing than the firing of the evening gun at Castle William on Governor's island. The flash of startling brilliancy, and in calm weather it leaps nearly 500 feet from the mouth of the cannon. Even at that distance, however, it can be seen that it is not a sheet of flame, but a rocketlike shower of fire flakes—slow burning powder and wadding.—Exchange.

She Liked It.

He (tenderly)—And what do you think of the engagement ring I sent you, Gertrude?
 She (delightedly)—Oh, it is beautiful—in fact the handsomest one I ever had given me.—Exchange.

THE SAD TALE OF A PROTEGE.

A Youthful Artist Finds That She Does Not Have a Rosy Path to Travel.
 She came to see me the other day, looking tired and miserable, and while she rested in my biggest and comeliest chair I pressed her to tell me what was wrong.
 "Well," she said finally, "I will tell you. It all comes from being Mrs. Blank's latest fad. You are surprised, but it's quite true. You know, Mrs. Blank, having nothing else to occupy her mind, is always a slave to some fad or other. Once it was Browning, later on it was athletics and finally changed to china painting, and now I am her particular fad. You see, she met me when the china painting craze was on her, and as I have some little skill and reputation as a china decorator she came to see me frequently about her work. At last she veered around from china painting to me. When Mrs. Blank first 'took me up' it was a matter of considerable rejoicing, not only to my fellow artists, but to myself.
 "Mrs. Blank is a woman of wealth and prominence, and naturally any person whom she favored with her friendship and patronage would soon become well known and gain considerable custom. Well, I've had a few orders—not many. You see, Mrs. Blank's friends are so well aware of her habit of going daft about something or other at recurrent intervals that they don't put much faith in her recommendations. However, it's quite as well, for I shouldn't have time to do anything anyhow. I haven't had a chance to execute the orders I did receive.
 "Why not? Why simply because she monopolizes all my time. Do I get settled down to a good day's work in my studio, along comes Mrs. Blank and says:
 "Now you must come up to So-and-so's with me. It's an opportunity you can't afford to neglect. You'll get lots of new ideas. Got something to do? Oh, nonsense! Come along and do that afterward. Ideas are the thing—not labor! Or she sends me a note to come to luncheon, as she wants to see me particularly, and then she keeps me there all day. What does she want? Nothing, except to talk to me. That's why she likes me. She likes to talk. Now you know I do not shine in conversation and I can listen till the heavens fall. Well, she sits by the hour and pours into my ears the tale of her emotions, her ideas, her experiences, her views, her aspirations and her opinions of her neighbors. And I am weak enough to let her do it, all because people say, 'How lucky for you that Mrs. Blank is so interested in you!'"

"I used to be spoken of as 'Miss Smith, a promising young china painter.' Now I'm alluded to as 'Miss Smith, Mrs. Blank's young protege.'"
 "Oh, I tell you there's nothing in this protege business, be assured of that. It's hard lines being somebody's fad. To be sure, as a rule it is something that don't last long, but it's wearing while it does last."—New York Recorder.

Directions in England.

Speaking of "up" and "down" in England reminds me of a friend's experience. On his arrival in Liverpool he wished to visit a hat store without delay. He was conveyed by a fellow passenger to a large establishment, where he had to wait only one of a dozen things that were sold.
 "Where is the hat department?" inquired the newcomer.
 "Clear up to the top, sir, as far as you can go," was the answer of the clerk addressed, whose accompanying gesture showed that he did not mean the highest story of the building, but the extreme end of the shop.
 The next day my friend was in Chester cathedral. It was Sunday and at the hour of service, and the place was pretty full. Looking about for a seat, he was accosted by a verger, who informed him that "You can't get any seat, sir, unless you go clear down to the bottom." What the man meant by the "bottom" was the portion of the edifice nearest the altar.
 Londoners also speak of the "top" and "bottom" of a street, where New Yorkers say "head" and "foot."—Cor. New York Tribune.

How It Was Made Plain to Him.

London 'Arrys are apt to be loud, cheap and vulgar, but they are unconsciously amusing. Two of them were seated in a pothouse during the election excitement, when one noticed a glaring poster on the wall representing Mr. Gladstone shaking hands with Britannia and John Bull, and the army and navy in raptures at the spectacle. Beneath the picture was the legend, "One Man, One Vote."
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A SUICIDE'S LAST MOMENTS.

Nerved by Absinthe to the Point of Injecting the Fatal Drug.
 As to the question of the suicidal tendencies of absinthe drinking, there is a striking instance in one of Edgar Saltus' novels—"Mr. Incol's Misadventure." At least the musings and soliloquy during which suicide was determined upon was accompanied by a free indulgence in the dangerous beverage. Lennox Leigh is the young man who takes his own life as the only seemingly end to a charge of cheating at cards, of which he is innocent, but which he cannot refute. The charge is made by his vindictive enemy, Mr. Incol. The vivid portrayal of the condition of mind produced by the absinthe is remarkable. "On reaching his room," says the author, "he put his purchases (morphine intended for suicide) on a table, poured out a glass of absinthe, lighted a cigarette and threw himself down on a lounge. For awhile his thoughts roamed among the episodes of the day, but gradually they drifted into less personal currents.
 "He began to think of the early legends of Charon, the god, renouncing his immortality; of the Hyperborean, the fabled people, famous for their fidelity, who voluntarily threw themselves into the sea; of Juno bringing death to Biron and Cleobas as the highest recompense of their piety; of Agamemnon and Trophonius praying Apollo for whatever gift he deemed most advantageous, and in answer to the prayer receiving eternal sleep. He remembered how Plato had preached to the happiest people in the world the blessedness of ceaseless sleep; how the Buddha, teaching that life was but a right to suffer, had found for the recalcitrant no greater menace than that of an existence renewed through kalpas of time.
 "He mixed himself another glass of absinthe, holding the carafe high in the air, watching the thin stream of water coalesce with the green drug and turn with it into an opalescent milk. The soliloquy was renewed: 'After what has happened there is nothing left. I might change my name. I might go to Brazil or Australia, but with what object? I could not get away from myself. And yet life is pleasant; I'll spend as much as I like, many times have I found it grateful. After all, it is not life that is short; it is youth. When that goes, as mine seems to have gone, outside of solitude there is little charm in anything, and what is death but isolation, the most perfect and impenetrable that nature has devised? And whether that isolation came to me tonight or decades hence, what matters it?"

"He poured out more absinthe and put the bottle down empty. Before drinking he undid the package which he had bought from the chemist. First he took from it a box about three inches long. It was a tiny syringe and with it two little instruments. One of these he adjusted in the projecting tube and with his finger felt carefully the point. He threw off his coat and rolled up his sleeve. From the phial he filled the syringe and with the point pricked the bare arm and sent the liquid spurting into the flesh. Three times he did this. He reached for the absinthe and left it untasted. The lights turned pale and glowed less vividly, as though veils were being drawn between him and them. But still the languor continued, sweeter even, and more enveloping, till from sweetness it was almost pain. The room grew darker, the colors waned, the lights behind the falling veils sank thin, fading one by one; a single spark lingered; it wavered a moment and vanished into night."
 Leigh had ended his life by his own act in a condition to which large quantities of absinthe contributed.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Now Monkeys Treat a Sick One.

Monkeys, with some notable exceptions, are some degrees worse than savage men in their treatment of the sick. On the new Jumna canal at Delhi monkeys swarm in the trees on the banks and treat their sick comrades in true monkey fashion. The colony by the canal being overcrowded and as a consequence unhealthy, did, and probably does still, suffer from various unpleasant diseases. When one monkey is so obviously unwell as to offend the feelings of the rest a few of the larger monkeys watch it and taking a favorable opportunity knock it into the canal. If it is not drowned at once the sick monkey is pitched in again after it regains the trees, and either drowned or forced to keep aloof from the flock.—London Spectator.

Cleared by Opening a Grave.

A gentleman who had lived for a considerable time out of the country died apparently a few days after his return. It was alleged that his decease had followed suspiciously near the eating of a pudding prepared by his stepmother. She was hence arrested and charged with his murder. The grave was opened for the purpose of making an analysis of the contents of the man's stomach. It was then discovered that the man had turned completely over in his coffin and was lying on his face. He had been buried alive. This evidence of the cause of death was of course conclusive, and the woman was released.—Yankee Blade.

WHY GO?

It Is Easy Enough, Says the Philosopher, to Make a Living.
 "No man has any license to be broke in New York." The speaker was a well-dressed, keen-eyed youth of eighteen.
 "You can earn the undying gratitude of thousands in this city alone if you will tell them how to escape the discomforts, not of simple poverty, but of downright want," said a bystander.
 "What is your recipe?" inquired another listener.
 "You will all grant me," said the young man, "that even the poorest 'bum' or most incorrigible gamin that runs the streets can get a 'stake,' say twenty-five cents, without much trouble. All right. On that foundation any boy of six or a man of sixty can earn enough to live and keep him comfortably. How? Let him invest that sum in morning or evening newspapers, and keep turning over a fair percentage of his profits every day.
 "Even the largest of Park row newsboys seldom earn less than fifty cents a day on a smaller original investment than the one I have used for the sake of argument. I know what I am talking about, because five years ago I was hustling around in bare feet the same as the rest of them are now, and I could make my living expenses and have a little to spare at the end of every week. Show me a man, woman or child in this city who is a beggar and I will show you an individual who is too lazy to do even the lightest kind of work."

After these sententious remarks the youth turned and walked up Newspaper row. "There is a youngster who will be worth a big fortune in time," said a bystander. "I knew him well several years ago when he was regarded by the other newsboys as a hustler. His clothes were nearly as ragged and his face and hands as dirty as the street gamin's usually are. Five years ago he conceived an idea. He knew that there were several of his companions in the street who would rather stand behind a newsstand for a small daily remuneration than hustle around the streets and take chances of getting 'stuck' on their papers, as they express it. He picked out two honest boys and entered into a contract with them. He agreed to pay them forty cents a day to take care of small corner stands. The young man bought all the newspapers and stocked the stands himself, and the boys were held to a strict accounting. From those two stands and what he earned himself on the streets he put \$11.50 away clear at the end of the first week.
 "That money was put into two other stands that he established in the uptown district. All of them succeeded, and the number was gradually increased until a year ago he had thirteen boys at stands and eleven around the ferry entrances working for him. Today his staff is fifty strong at least. He owns two big stands under elevated stations where traffic is heaviest. The boy must be worth at least \$12,000 today if he is worth a cent. Last Christmas he bought a house in Jersey for his widowed mother, and I understand he owns some property in Yonkers that has greatly increased in value lately.
 "He is the pioneer of his business in New York, and he isn't a very old one at that, is he?" interrogated the boy's historian.—New York Advertiser.

Charles II's Ready Cash.

Lord Ailesbury thinks that just before Charles died his affairs were prosperous. "I will have no more parliaments," he said, "for, God be praised, my affairs are in so good a posture that I have no occasion to ask for supplies. A king of England that is not a slave to 500 kings is great enough." His heart was set to live at ease, and that his subjects might live under their own vine and fig tree. "I will have by me 100,000 guineas in my strongbox," the king used to say, and Lord Ailesbury heard that "there was found there at his death about £60,000."
 Concerning this Burnet says: "He left behind him about 90,000 guineas, which he had gathered either out of the privy purse or out of the money which was sent him from France, or by other methods, and which he had kept so secretly that no person whatsoever knew anything of it."—Blackwood's Magazine.

He Stopped.

A nervous little man sat on one side of the cross seats on the top of an omnibus the other day, back to back with a young woman of the "sweet girl graduate" species. The little man felt a piece of cloth tickle his neck, and thinking the ends of his cravat were sticking out he began to stuff the cloth down between the collar and waistcoat.
 He was nearly scared out of his seat a minute later by hearing the girl exclaim in a loud voice: "Now, you stop! Leave my hair ribbon alone!"
 The small man apologized and got off at once.—Boston Globe.

In Testing the Conditions of the Atmosphere Inside a Petroleum Tank if the Air at the Bottom is Found not Inflammable or Explosive the Air Above is Sure not to be so.

Preservatives for Grapes.

"I was surprised to learn a few days ago," said one gentleman to a companion, "that the grapes we eat at dessert, especially the white varieties, may have been plucked from the vines a month before. A few days ago I went to a fruit store near my home and asked for two pounds of white grapes, incidentally remarking that they were for my little boy, who was sick.
 "Why don't you take one of these 1-pound baskets?" asked the dealer. "They are somewhat cheaper when bought in such quantities, and besides I will put a preservative on the grapes that, while it will not impair their appearance or taste and is not in the least injurious to the stomach, will keep them for two or three weeks. Taste one of those grapes," and he pointed to a big basket of fine fruit.
 "The grapes were sound and of fine flavor." Those grapes you have eaten," he said, "have been kept in stock two months, and I can probably keep them as much longer. I do not know what the preservative is composed of. I get it from a big firm of chemists down town, and they guarantee there is nothing injurious in it. I have never tried it on any kind of fruit except grapes, but I guess it would prove just as efficacious on peaches or plums."—New York Advertiser.

Fossils in Maine.

The Rev. M. R. Keep, who is one of the best informed geologists in Maine, says that a very rare fossil is found in the limestone of Aroostook county. The most wonderful deposit of fossils in the world, says Mr. Keep, is at Square Lake, near Fort Kent. Here geologists of various countries have found between forty and fifty different species of trilobites. The encrinite or water lily of the Silurian age is frequently found at Square Lake, large masses of rock being composed of the stems of these lilies. The blooms and buds are seldom found, although a full blown head of the encrinite has been discovered at the lake. The fossil resembles a medium sized rose.—New York Sun.

The Dog and the Milk Pitcher.

A few days since a well known lady of Hugenot Springs missed from her pantry a pitcher of milk under circumstances most perplexing to account for. The empty pitcher being found near the house, suspicion of course began to fasten itself on some two legged subject of natural history.
 This solution of the mystery was dispelled when the owner met her 6-months-old setter puppy carrying carefully by the handle into her back yard a pitcher of milk, which he was seen to tit at the proper angle and drink. This statement, corroborated by the lady herself, presents an illustration of canine sagacity which "takes the cake."—Richmond Dispatch.

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