



# HUMOR

## NEGRO WIT.

Some Specimens of Rich and Rare Colored Philosophy.

It was just before the war. Squire Johnson had been to Nashville, and on his return brought Ole Mose, the favorite slave on the plantation, a new hat. Mose was very proud of it. The next Sunday the squire was driving home from church with his family, and the carriage overtook Mose and his "ole miss" trudging along afoot. It was raining slightly, and the squire noticed that Mose was burrowing and was carefully protecting his new hat with his coat.

"Why don't you wear your new hat, Mose?" inquired the squire. "You'll get that ole head of yours wet."

"Dat's so, Mass' Johnson," replied Mose; "but dat ole head's yours, and de hat's mine."

The squire used to miss a chicken now and then, and at length the mysterious disappearances were laid at the door of one Zekiel, who was accused of the theft by his master.

Zeke was a dandy of exceptional wit. He had picked up a little arithmetic and prided himself on his sentences. When charged with the chicken taking, he asked warily:

"Now, Marse Johnson, if I can show you dat I only tek dem fowls for yoh good, will you let me go jus' dis time?"

The squire was curious to hear his defense and told him he would do so.

"Well, you juss' yoh paid \$500 for me, and I weighs juss' 'bout hundred an fifty pounds. Dat makes \$6 a pound. Now, if I turn yoh chicken meat dat ain't wuff mo' an 10 cents a pound into nigger meat dat's wuff \$6, yoh juss' dat much better off, don't yoh see?"

Of course the squire saw, and he used often to repeat the story and laugh at the dandy's ingenuity.

The war came on, and Zeke was one day detailed off the plantation to help throw up some earthworks. The enemy observed the defensive preparations and began to shell the place. The first missiles went wide of the mark, but after a few rounds the range was found more accurately, and the shells began to burst uncomfortably close to Zekiel.

He stood his ground as long as he could, but at last dropped his shovel and ran for his life. The officer in charge of the operations met him a little distance down the road, and halting him ordered him to explain his flight. Zeke was trembling with fright, but found breath to say:

"Dey's shootin' over dare, and Marse Johnson he's a poh man. He paid \$500 for me in Memphis, and he can't afford to have me killed." And with that he took to the woods.—Youth's Companion.

Made Him Tired.

"Whenever I see a sarsaparilla advertisement for that tired feeling, it reminds me of the Turkish village at the World's fair," remarked a Toledo man reflectively.

"How so?" asked a friend.

"Well, I happened to see a handsome glovebox of some eastern wood as I was passing through that Turkish village, and I stopped and asked the price of it."

"Three dollars," said the Turk.

"I'll give you \$2.50," said I.

"Three dollars," said the Turk.

"Two dollars and a half," said I.

"He said he would go and ask the proprietor about it, and when he returned he said, 'The proprietor says you can have it for \$2.75.'"

"Two dollars and a half," said I firmly.

"The Turk rolled up the box in a piece of paper."

"Here," he said, "take it for \$2.00. This is the first box we have sold as cheap as that."

"There was a woman standing next to me, and while the clerk was at the rear making change she said:

"Did you buy one of those gloveboxes?"

"Yes," I answered politely.

"How much?"

"Well, he wanted \$3, but I wouldn't pay any such price as that, and I only gave \$2.50."

"Two and a half, hey?" she said, pityingly. "I bought one yesterday and only paid \$1.75. It was two sizes larger than yours too."

"I didn't answer. Outside in the Midway I saw a man renting campstools with three inch seats for 2 cents an hour. I went out and hired one and sat down in the shade."—Detroit Free Press.

A Sensitive Man.

Jack—I thought you were very attentive to Miss Compson?

Tom—I was, but after what she said I shall have nothing more to do with her.

Jack—What did she say?

Tom—She said "No."—Puck.

An Oversight.

Yardmaster—Hey, Bill! Just switch that east bound express over on track 7, between those two freights.

Engineer—What for?

Yardmaster—Why, you're left that train just where it was when the people went into the station for dinner, and if you don't look sharp they won't have no trouble in finding their cars when they come out again.—Brooklyn Life.

## TWO MEETINGS WITH A BEGGAR.

One Was Surprising, and the Other More Surprising Still.

One of the most peculiar beggars in the city may be found almost any evening parading up and down the Bowery, with occasional wanderings on the side streets. He is a very tall, gaunt man with deep set eyes, sharp features, a very gruff voice and a manner which, to put it mildly, may be called abrupt. Unlike the ordinary beggar, he does not accost every man who comes along, but picks his men according to some process of selection, which is probably a trade secret. For 15 or 20 minutes he will saunter along speaking to no one, then suddenly he will dart up to a stranger, thrust his face down close to the man and say something in a low tone. The peculiar part of it is that he rarely fails to get money.

A Sun reporter who had noticed this peculiar mendicant a dozen times, but had never been approached by him before, met him on the Bowery a few nights ago. The beggar was walking along with a contemplative air. When his eye fell on the reporter, his air suddenly became businesslike, and rushing up to the reporter he said sharply:

"How're y' fixed for cash, young feller?"

"Fairly well," replied the reporter, taken off his guard. Then recovering himself he added, "I don't see that it's any of your business, however."

"Oh, well," said the man, with a nonchalant air, "I didn't know but what y' might want to lend a feller a quarter."

"What do you want to do with the quarter?"

"Buy whisky. Do I look like a mug who'd try to buy champagne with a quarter?"

There was something so attractive and frank in the man, so much a favor faire about this tramp of the Bowery, that the reporter decided to "lend" him the desired quarter.

Three nights later the reporter met his man on Grand street, and approaching him said, "When are you going to pay me back that loan?"

The beggar looked around in astonishment. Then a grim smile relaxed his features.

"You're the mug that giv' up a quarter on the Bowery, ain't you?" he observed. "I don't s'pose you'd ask it back unless you wanted it."

And to the intense amazement of the reporter the man, producing from a pocket of his ragged clothes a fist full of small change, selected two dimes and a nickel, put them in the reporter's hand and departed, whistling a cheerful ditty.—New York Sun.

Economy in Electricity.

A novelty in electric lighting is being practically tested in a large building in New York city. Instead of arranging the incandescent lamps on one circuit and feeding them continuously from the same source, they are arranged on a number of separate circuits, say four, and the current is alternately switched from one to the other in regular succession, the idea being that the current, having heated each successive circuit of lamps to incandescence, will be returned again to that series before the lamp filaments have time to cool.

The means by which this is accomplished is the employment of a special interrupter or rotary cylinder, on which the segments are so arranged that a system of brushes, with which they make contact, carries the current alternately to each series of lamps. The periodicity of the current in this device is about 70 per second. Notwithstanding the loss of energy in the interrupting mechanism, the inventor claims that between two and three times as many lamps can be operated from a given source of energy by his system as by any other system now in use.—New York Letter.

An Editor's Awful Blunder.

The editor of a weekly journal lately lost two of his subscribers through accidentally departing from the beaten track in his answers to correspondents. Two of his subscribers wrote to ask him his remedy for their respective troubles. No. 1, a happy father of twins, wrote to inquire the best way to get them safely over their teething, and No. 2 wanted to know how to protect his orchards from the myriads of grasshoppers.

The editor framed his answer upon the orthodox lines, but unfortunately transposed their two names, with the result that No. 1, who was blessed with the twins, read in reply to his query, "Cover them carefully with straw and set fire to them, and the little pests, after jumping about in the flames a few minutes, will speedily be settled," while No. 2, plagued with grasshoppers, was told to "Give a little castor oil and rub their gums gently with a bone."—Richmond Star.

Mummy's View of It.

An old colored woman, who came up from the south with her "white folks" to see the fair, was shown by her young "missus" the Intramural railroad and told that it was run by electricity. The colored "mammy" listened, and later in the day, when she met some of her own race, she surprised them by saying the fair was the wickedest place she was ever in. This was explained in the following remark: "Dey got in dar an immoral railroad, and it am done elected too."—Chicago Tribune.

Early Printing.

The following are the earliest known examples of printing—two indulgences, printed usually on one side only of a single piece of vellum and two magnificent Bibles. Of these one is known to be the first complete book that ever was printed by the wonderful new invention, which, as the early printers so often proudly state in their colophons, produced "letters without the aid of any sort of pen, whether of quill, of reed or of metal."

The first piece of printing which is actually dated is the famous indulgence of Nicholas V to such as should contribute money to aid the king of Cyprus against the Turks. This indulgence has the printed year date 1454, and a copy in The Hague museum has the date "Nov. 15" filled in with a pen. Mr. Duff tells us that "in the years 1454 and 1455 there was a large demand for these indulgences and seven editions were issued. These may be divided into two sets, the one containing 31 lines, the other 30 lines, the first dated example belonging to the former."

This 30 line edition is shown to have been printed by Peter Schoeffer de Gernsheim, by the fact that some of the initial letters which occur in it appear in another later indulgence of 1483, which is known to have come from his press.—Saturday Review.

Low Temperatures.

Some recent results in French chemical experience have attracted considerable attention from the fact that by new methods a temperature has been obtained far lower than hitherto known—namely, 273 degrees C. below zero or 491 degrees F. below the freezing point of water. This temperature was obtained, it seems, by using a series of cold wells according to a simple and original plan. In the first of these wells there was used a mixture of carbonic acid and sulphurous acid and by their evaporation a temperature was secured of 110 degrees C. below zero. In this cold well was then immersed a condenser in which the vapors of a still more volatile liquid, protoxide of nitrogen, or ethylene, were condensed and thus reached 150 degrees below zero. In another well 210 degrees was marked and again 273 degrees. In the case of these last named wells, nitrogen, carbonic oxide, marsh gas and atmospheric air under pressure of 40 atmospheres were employed, and the instruments with which measurement of the lower temperatures were made consisted of hydrogen thermometers graduated by comparison with the sulphuric ether instruments. It is thought that the low temperatures obtained by these experiments will lead to some new chemical combinations of an important character.—New York Sun.

Significance of "Van" and "Yon."

It is a common mistake of Americans to think that the prefix "van" before a Dutch name signifies nobility. In the low countries—that is, in the kingdoms of the Netherlands and of Belgium—"van" has no particular meaning. Names with "van" are apt to be read on shops as well as on the doors of the most aristocratic mansions. The humblest persons have it as well as the most refined. On the other hand, a great number of the very oldest families are without it.

In Germany "von" means noble, and all persons belonging to the nobility have "von" before their family names without any exception. Persons who do not belong to the nobility cannot put "von" before their names, as they have no right to do so and would be found out directly if they assumed it and make themselves ridiculous. But in case of a man being knighted for some reason or other he has the right to put "von" before his family name. For instance, when Alexander Humboldt was knighted he became Alexander von Humboldt, and all his descendants, male and female, take the prefix.—Harrison's Magazine.

Professional Rivalry.

A surgeon met the son of a friend of his in the Calle Alcala and said to him:

"How is this, Pepito? You here! Is your leg all right now?"

"Yes," replied Pepito.

"Who cured it for you?"

"Your colleague, Dr. Galindez."

"Allow me one question. How much did Dr. Galindez charge for his attendance?"

"Fifteen hundred pesetas."

"That's a lot of money. If you had called me in, I would for the same price have cut off your leg!"—Epoca.

Three Great Enemies.

"For over twenty years I suffered with Neuritis, Rheumatism, Dropsy, etc., and it has done me a vast amount of good. Since beginning to take I have not had a sick day. I am 72 years old and my good health which I attribute to Hood's Pills cure liver, kidney, and blood diseases, sick headache, indigestion, etc."—Mrs. E. M. Burt.

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ERIE MEDICAL CO. BUFFALO, N. Y.

IN THE FIELDS.

I stood among the marvellous clover blooms When the soft air was pleasant on my face With burdens of bird songs and sweet perfume

And hints of delicate essences, that trace Their birth to odoriferous gardens and fair groves Where clustering thrushes sing and downy doves

The sunbeams glared from the morning sky— And every rippling blade in the valley wide Was hushed and still, and the river, where it lies Among the green hills, lashed its lingering tide

And sleeping in ecstasies of peace untroubled Against the heavens lay an untroubled child.

I know not why, but o'er my spirit there A sadness fell that bowed my soul in woe, The bird songs came like dirges through the air.

The daisies trembled as the breeze drifted slow The clover's scent and murmur of the bees Were fraught with lost hopes and dead memories

Then, swiftly, withering from the zenith, fell The harrier's harsh, sharp screaming, and a deep, Funeral stillness settled o'er the dell—

It seemed the very life had fallen asleep— And fear, with underbreathings scarcely heard, Made mute the voice of each bird.

On wide wings poised that falcon: wheeling viewed The slumberous valley, then, like mistle foot, Shot through blue depths of air beyond the wood

Where hills rose smiling heaven's soft kiss to meet, And as he vanished from the skies anew The stir of life was roused the valley through.

And from the grove came by a clear voice came, A thrush's warble, wild and weird and soft, Like a young poet's song, a living flame

Lighting the utterance, that, repeated oft, Awakened answering echoes full of love And happiness and peace through field and grove.

All fear was down; the woods were loud again With various voices, and the noise of bees Swelled on the air once more, while o'er the plain

Bearing soft odors floated the slow breeze So, full of eager joy, I stood alone, The blossoming clover, listening to the song.—Boston Transcript.

Seen in Ceylon.

The dress of the women is almost identical with that of the men, though sometimes varied by a low white muslin bodice and a string of coral, replaced in the higher classes by sparkling circlets of rubies or sapphires on dusky necks and arms. Moormen descended from ancient Arab traders, who migrated hither from Red sea ports, and distinguishable by their voluminous red or white robes, and tall hats glittering with tinseled, smoke their ghariehs in dim arcades filled with gorgeous silks and delicate embroideries.

Malays with flat Mongolian features and dull blue garb drive a brisk trade in the artificially woven cloth and cotton of their native peninsula. Stolid Bombay merchants and keen faced Jews with long, black ringlets preside over stores of shining gems, for this favored island, together with the pearl fisheries of the western coast, possesses the further treasure of inexhaustible sapphires and the minor wealth of tourmalines, moonstones and garnets.

The rubies and emeralds of Burmah and Siam, which appear plentiful as the native jewels, are received in exchange for the splendid sapphires and the rare specimens of alexandrite and jacinth obtained from the quarries of Ratnapur, famous for unique crystallizations which rank amid the phenomena of nature.—Cornhill Magazine.

Funerals in the Middle Ages.

In the middle ages it was customary at the funeral of any great person to have his horse led and armor borne before his corpse, the horse being afterward claimed as a mortuary due to the church at which the burial took place. The armor was either reserved for the next of kin of the deceased or else was hung up in the church. No doubt much of the armor suspended over tombs is mere "undertakers' trappings," although often considered genuine and of antiquity.

Over the tombs of bishops the episcopal mitre and pastoral staff were sometimes suspended, as in the case of those in Winchester cathedral hanging over the tomb of Bishop Morley, who died in 1696, and of those in Bromsgrove church, Worcestershire, suspended over the monument of Dr. Hall, bishop of Bristol, who died in 1710.—Westminster Gazette.

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