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In Lighter vein.

Behind the Footlights.

Some provincial touring companies make a profit from their audiences in more ways than one.

Such a company was playing "The Broken Vow" in a small town in Manitoba.

The audience didn't appreciate the performance, and eggs, cabbages, and potatoes rained upon the stage with striking persistency.

Still the play went on. The hero raved and tore his hair, dodging the bouquets of turnips that were also hurled upon him.

Finally, a gallery auditor, in a paroxysm of rage, hurled a heavy boot, and the actor, thoroughly alarmed, started to retreat.

"Keep on playing, you fool!" hissed the manager from the wings as he hooked in the boot with an umbrella. "Keep on till we get the other one!"

An Important Person.

There are not a few men who fancy that because they are persons of wealth and consequence they are exempt from the duties of the ordinary citizen. A man of this sort was drawn to serve upon a jury, and did not appear when his name was called in court. The Court ordered that he be fined five pounds.

About half an hour afterward the man appeared in the court-room to answer tardily to his name.

"You have been fined five pounds for non-attendance," said the judge.

"But I had a very important business engagement," said the man.

"Did you suppose that that an engagement would excuse you for not answering the summons of the Court?" asked the judge, rather angrily.

The juror, who was a pompous man with an important air began to grow indignant at being addressed in this way.

"I would have your honor understand," he exclaimed, "that I am one of the most prominent business men in this community!"

"Oh! In that case," said the judge, quietly, "you will be able to stand a larger fine. Mr. Clerk, you will increase this gentleman's fine for non-attendance to ten pounds!"

A Mighty Country.

An Irish contractor in San Francisco sent to Ireland for his father to join him. The journey was a great event to the old man, who had lived in rural districts all his life, and he reached San Francisco much excited.

After several days of sight-seeing his son resumed his business, and suggested that his father should visit the Presidio.

"The Presidio, father, is the Government reservation for the soldiers—a fine bit of park, and you'll enjoy yourself."

At the end of a strenuous day the old man stood gazing at the big buildings, comparing them with the small huts of his old home. Seeing a soldier near he tapped him on the shoulder.

"Me bye, phwat's that string of houses forninst us?"

"Why, those are the officers' quarters."

"And that wan with the big smoke-stack?"

"That's the cook's shanty."

"Shanty, is it? Well, 'tis a great country! 'Tis palaces they're using."

The young man offered to show him the new gymnasium. On the way the sundown gun was discharged just as they passed. The old man, much startled, caught his companion's arm.

"Phwat's that now?"

"Sundown," replied his friend, smiling.

"Sundown, is it? Think of that, now! Don't the sun go down with a terrible bump in this country?"

Very Smart.

Strange to say, when a bottle is full it is possible to put still more in it. At a certain race-course a sharper wagered a sovereign he could put more water into a black bottle than any person present. An onlooker immediately accepted the challenge, filled a bottle with water, and passed it to the sharper, saying:—

"There, I think she's as full as she can hold. If you crowd any more water into her, mister, I'll pay up."

Without saying another word, the sharper corked the bottle tightly. Then he turned it upside down, and in the hollow that is found in most large bottles he poured about a gill of water.

"I'll trouble you to hand over the money," he said to the other man when he had done the trick.

He received the stakes, and coolly walked off.

Correct.

"Who can tell me who our first President was?" asked the teacher in a Chicago school.

"George Washington," instantly answered a bright boy.

"George Washington was our first President," replied the teacher, "and this is what you should have said. Never reply to such questions in monosyllables. Now, who can tell me what I have on my feet?"

"Shoes," spoke up one boy.

"You have not answered correctly. Who can answer that question in a correct manner?"

"Stockings," suggested another boy.

"No, no, no! That is not the way."

At this a boy in a back seat began to wave his hand eagerly.

"Well, what have I on my feet, Johnnie?"

"Corns," replied Johnnie, triumphantly.

The Intelligent Goat.

Three colored men were discussing the intelligence of different animals. One favored the dog; another, the horse; but old Peter Jackson said, "In my opinion de goat am de 'teligencest critter livin'." De goat kin read, I saw him do it. Once I wuz walkin' down street dressed in mah suit, an' wearin' mah new plug hat. When I got down on de main street, I seed a billboa'd on which it said: 'Chew Jackson's Plug.' A goat wuz standin' thar when I passed an' when I wuz about ten feet away he must hab recognized me, for the next thing I knew, I went sailin' in de mud. When I looked 'roun' dat goat wuz chewin' mah plug hat for all he wuz worth. Gem'men, da is no question in mah mind about de 'teligence ob de goat. He am a wondah.

The Useful Wish-Bone.

It was at the Thanksgiving dinner, and the little daughter of the house had partaken of the turkey with great freedom.

"I want some more turkey," said Frances.

"I think you have had as much as is good for you, dear," said Frances' mamma.

"I wan't more." And Frances pouted.

"You can't have more now; but here is a wish-bone that you and mamma can pull. That will be fun. You pull one side, and I will pull the other; and whoever gets the longer end can have her wish come true. Why, baby, you've got it. What was your wish, Frances?"

"I wish for some more turkey," said Frances, promptly.

She got it this time.

A Foregone Conclusion.

"Pa, what is a foregone conclusion?"

"Something that you know will

happen before it does. For instance, it's a foregone conclusion that if your mother should come into this room now and see me with my feet cocked up and my cigar going nicely, as you see me, she would immediately think of something that — Ah, here she comes! Listen!"

"Henry," she said, "I wish you'd see if you can't do something to the dining-room window. I can't get it up or down. And when you get that fixed oil the hinge on the kitchen-door. It squeaks terribly."

Gun in the Way.

During the Spanish war the men of a certain New York regiment, recruited on the East Side, were spoiling for a fight and it became necessary to post a sentry to preserve order. A big, husky Bowery recruit, of pugilistic propensities, was put on guard outside, and given special orders to see that quiet reigned, and, if trouble came his way, not to lose possession of his rifle. Soon a general row began. The soldier walked his post nervously, without interrupting, until the corporal of the guard appeared on the scene with reinforcements. "Why didn't you stop this row?" shouted the corporal. The sentry, balancing his rifle on his shoulder, raised his arms to the boxing position, and replied: "Shure, phat could I do wid this gun in me hands!"

How it Happened.

"If yo' will dess puhmit me to specify a word or two, Pahson," respectfully said a stranger who had entered Ebenezer Chapel just before the beginning of the sermon. "I'll take pleasure in infawmin' de brudren and sistahs yuh dissembled dat Puhsideing Eldah Fishback enawmously regrets dat he can't be wid yo' all today, as expected, uh-kaze why, he's dead."

"Muh name am Magoon—Brudder 'Lonzo Magoon, yo' mought call it fum over beyant Timpkinsville; and Eldah descended upon muh household yisto'day, and we had chicken potpie, squinch p'serves, baked shoat and mince pie for dinner, and somehow or nudder in her zeal, muh wife—fine a lady as dere is in de land, to!—she took and anonymously put hoss-liniment stiduh brandy into de mince-meat, and it killed de Eldah plumb dead! 'Twuz a glorious death, and he met it half way! And I s'picions all de rest of us would be dis minute uh-walkin' on de glory-lit hills of immawtality hand in hand wid de Eldah, if 'twuzn't for de fact dat de good man beat us to dat 'ar pie. Yaas!—he beat us to it. Ladies and gentlemen, I thank yo' fo' yo' attenshun!"

It Got Mixed.

In small newspaper offices in remote country places, where the "copy" goes direct from the editor to the compositor, without the formality of "licking into shape," the need of a proofreader is often felt. For example, in a certain provincial office, a short time ago, the printer in "making up" the paper got the galley mixed.

The first part of the obituary of a townsman had been dumped into the forms, and the next handful of type came from a galley in which was a description of a fire. The country folk were much startled when they came to the paragraph which read thus:

"The pall-bearers lowered the body to the grave. It was consigned to the flames. There were few, if any, regrets, for the old wreck had been an eyesore to the town for years. Of course, there was individual loss, but that was fully covered by insurance."

Finding a Horseshoe.

There is a man who has a very poor idea of the horseshoe as a bringer of good luck.

"I found one in the road some time ago," he remarked. "As a matter of fact, another old gentleman found it also about the same time. We both