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The gravest Beast is the Ass; the gravest Bird is the Owl; The gravest Fish is the Oyster; the gravest Man is the Fool.

A Romance of Leap Year.

MARMADUKE MCGUIRE MCCARTY

Was a youth of birth and rank,
Stylish he, and strong and hearty.

Kept the ledger in a bank;

Took his soda at the club, or

Else perhaps at friendly house,

Made a point in friendly rubber,

Or whirled his girl to waltz of STRAUSS.

MARMADUKE MCGUIRE MCCARTY,

On New Year's day set out to call

On her, who at an evening party

Stole away his heart last fall.

MARMADUKE, although his passion

For the lady was most warm,

Knew she was a belle of fashion

While all that he possessed was "four."

MARMADUKE MCGUIRE MCCARTY

Thought for sure beyond all doubt,

Should he propose, old MARIANNE,

Would "sit on him" or "fire him out;"

For her papa had oft been known to

Take a youth who did propose,

When at the door, where he'd been shown to,

And bang the suitor on the nose.

And with his form mop the verandah.

Then march him to the postern gate.

Boot him till he could not stand, or

Fire him forth in the darkness straight.

And now it was that young MCCARTY

With fear and trembling called at noon,

Enquired for Miss MARIANNE,

Who led him into the drawing room.

He bowed his best, and Miss MARIANNE

Blushed, when he wished him, "happy new year."

Electrified was the young MCCARTY

When she smiled and said "My dearest dear

"Four years I've waited for this *leap* a

"*Te* with you—'tis Leap Year now,

"A.D. One thousand eight hundred and eighty."

And she rested her ear on his manly brow.

And the old man came in and caressed them,

And cordially gave his consent,

Behold how kind LEAP YEAR has blessed them,

"They'll married be before it's Lent.

No CARDS.

Mrs. Perkins on Buttons.

It was one of those charming and peaceful interiors that the domestic artist so loves to portray. The hour was evening. The last meal of the day was over, the music of the children hushed in balmy repose. Mr. PERKINS, on one side of the table, read his paper by the light of the glowing lamp. Mrs. PERKINS, on the other, and by the aid of the same luminary, worked an antimacassar in a new crewel stitch. The pleasing silence had for some time remained unbroken, when, upon turning over a page of the evening contemporary, Mr. PERKINS opened his mouth.

"Those brown trowsers of mine, MARIANNE," he began in a gentle, almost deprecatory tone.

"SAMUEL!" interrupted Mrs PERKINS so

shrilly that her husband gave a little jump in his chair. "Don't tell me that the buttons are off those trowsers again! I declare to goodness, I never in the whole course of my life met a woman who was such a martyr to buttons as I am. I don't say you cut them off, I don't say you do it on purpose, mind! You'll never have it to reproach me with, that I make an accusation I can't prove. Not at all. But I do say this, SAMUEL, that you're the unluckiest man with buttons I ever heard of. I believe its the way you bounce into a chair—though that wouldn't account for your wristbands, I suppose. Why can't you learn to walk differently, then? It must be the way you walk. I was looking after you, the other day, as you went down street trying to overtake that Mrs. RABESQUE. Horrid little flirt, don't you suppose she thought you a softy for your pains? And, I declare, the way you swaggered along was something too ridiculous in a man of your age. I wish you could have taken a lesson in walking from my dear father, SAMUEL. He stepped about so softly, I don't believe he ever lost a button in his life.

"Oh! I am sure, my dear," said Mr. PERKINS politely. "if I had been married to your mother I would have walked quite as meekly, myself. But as to those brown—"

"That's right! Sneer at your mother-in-law every chance you get. And you'll wear a thing without ever taking it off your back for three weeks at a time, and then blame me for not sewing the buttons on! I suppose you've got those identical trowsers on at this moment, with your suspenders pinned to them, and when the pin ran into your back just now, you thought it a fine opportunity to turn round and abuse me. I hope I do my duty every Saturday, SAMUEL, in the way of mending and darning, as a Christian woman should. But it's your buttons on the other days of the week that upset me, and I don't believe the consolations of religion take buttons into account. There! I tell you, SAMUEL PERKINS, it makes me feel wicked to see you coming round, with an injured air and a button off, at all times and seasons, and expect me to sew it on. It's no matter what I happen to be about: oh, no! Whether my hands are in pie-crust, or I'm dressing for a call, or—or—*anything*—I must stop and sew it on!"

"Yes, MARIANNE," said Mr. PERKINS who had caught a word here and there. "What you say has some elements of justice in it, I admit. But what I was about to remark was—"

"Some justice, indeed!" burst out Mrs. PERKINS afresh. "Is it to be expected that I should always have the exact button, the exact thread, and the exact needle at hand to suit all emergencies? Why, if you'd even pick up your coat and waistcoat buttons when you see them drop off, it would be a great point gained. But I suppose now you wouldn't take fifty dollars and run along the sidewalk on King street after a button you saw rolling away? oh, SAMUEL?"

"Well," said Mr. PERKINS slowly, "I don't know—"

Whereupon his wife burst into a triumphant laugh, exclaiming, "now isn't that too like a man? But you'd let me leave my work next day and go tramping a mile and a half into town looking in a dozen shops for a match to the button."

"The shops are very gay at this season, I believe," observed Mr. PERKINS.

"Very! But isn't it a curious thing that a woman doesn't lose her buttons so? You see this shabby old gown of mine? this is the third season for it, you know—and not one button gone!"

"Look here, MARIANNE, suppose you come down town with me to-morrow, and buy yourself a new one. It is a long time since we went shopping together, my dear, isn't it? About those trowsers I—"

"As to those brown trowsers, SAMUEL, you know how I have always hated them. I see you haven't got them on after all, and while I think of it, I believe I'll go and make them into a bundle, and lay them aside for Joe in the morning. He's kept the sidewalk so beautifully. Sew buttons on them again I won't, not for—"

"Why, MARIANNE, that's just what I've done myself," exclaimed Mr. PERKINS. "I've been trying to tell you all evening that Joe—"

"SAMUEL, I don't believe you!" said his wife promptly; but after a few minutes she took occasion to leave the room, or was for some time absent, examining the wardrobe upstairs. The conversation did not run on buttons after her return.

New Year Resolutions.

MAMMA to six-year-old son: You know, FRANKY dear, when the New Year comes, everybody makes new resolutions; and now, I want my little boy to tell me what he has resolved to do, or to keep from doing, all through this new year.

FRANKY, with a large piece of butter-toffee in his mouth: What are real lutions, mamma?

MAMMA, more distinctly: New Year resolutions, FRANKY. Whatever naughty things you did last year, you will determine to try and not do, this year. Now, dear, think of one.

FRANKY: I can't think. Tell me again.

MAMMA: Why, you see, good people want to get better every year they live. And on New Year's day, they begin to remember how much better they might have been in the past, and so resolve to be different in the future, and this is what is called making good resolutions. Now, FRANKY, I want you to make some.

FRANKY: I don't understand it yet, mamma. Say it some other way.

MAMMA: Why, dear, think of something you used to do last year that I wouldn't like you to do, and then make up your mind, very earnestly, that you won't do it this year. Now, darling, think hard! What is it you're not going to do?

FRANKY: Ain't butter toffee awfully sticky?

MAMMA: Why, yes, dear, it seems to be, but I want you to think about what I'm saying to you now, FRANKY. Aren't you going to be very much better than you ever have been next year?

FRANKY: Oh, mamma, you said *this year* the other time—you know you did!

MAMMA: Well, of course, dear, I mean this new year that we have just entered upon, and which we may speak of as next year, as so little of it has yet elapsed. So, tell me darling, are you going to try and be a good boy this year, or next year?

FRANKY: I don't care, that's not fair. That's two years, mamma, and you said only one year, at first, and FREDDY JACKSON'S waiting for me on the sidewalk, all this time, and if you make me be good for two years, he'll go home, and then I can't show him my new sleigh, and you said I might. So may I go now?

(Exit FRANKY, while mamma's face assumes a thoughtful expression.)

A fashion magazine says: "Usters will be worn somewhat longer this winter." Well, then, by George, the men who wear them have got to wear stilts, that's all.—*Burlington Hawkeye.*