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THE PARSON'S MISTAKE.

It Changed His Mind About the Customs of the Fine Folks.

A Scottish parson whose parish was remote from great cities was invited to a house party at a certain castle, and after much persuasion from his family and friends accepted. Mrs. Walford in "Memories of Victorian London" says that the elderly clergyman had never before been inside a large country house and was not at all familiar with the customs in vogue. He arrived about 5 o'clock and found the men just returned from shooting and the ladies from driving, all being at tea in the hall.

It seemed nice and sociable on a chilly November afternoon, and delighted to find such simplicity prevailing where he had not looked for it, he partook heartily of cake, sandwiches and so forth.

At a little before 7 o'clock some neighbors, who were merely calling, took themselves off, and the rest of the company broke up and went upstairs with bedroom candles in their hands.

"Well, this is better still," thought his humble friend, and he rehearsed to himself the phrases he would use to describe the situation afterward. He would emphatically repudiate the notion that the "aristocracy" kept late hours and were too much addicted to conviviality. He heard himself saying: "Late hours, indeed? I haven't been to bed so early since I was a boy."

He judged that he had been asleep some time when the sound of a gong reverberating through the passages made him start up in bed. What was the meaning of it? What terrible thing had happened? Could the house be on fire?

Finding the back stairs close by, down he rushed to the housekeeper's room and electrified the good woman by demanding breathlessly: "What is it? What's the matter?" "Lor', sir, nothing ain't the matter," said she reprovingly, "except that you'll be late to dinner. The second gong sounded five minutes ago, and you're not half dressed!"

Such speed did he make, however, on being thus enlightened that he actually got into his evening clothes and was in the drawing room before half the other guests appeared. "But," said he, "I never had the chance of delivering the speech I had so carefully prepared exculpating great folks from the charge of evil ways."

A THREE FOOT LEAP.

As Thrilling Behind the Scenes as For the Audience in Front.

The opera is "Tosca." You sit breathless in your seat in the last act waiting for the climax, when Tosca shall find Cavaradossi not shamming, but dead by the trickery of the slain Scarpia, and shall run and leap over the parapet to be dashed to pieces far below. The captain and his guards look over the edge, aghast at the sight. You rise from your seat thrilled.

Now go behind the scenes and watch Tosca leap. Nearly every one who can leave his post does go back stage, left, for this climax, which is as exciting in the reality as it is in the pretense for those who sit on the other side of the footlights. Before the curtain went up a stage hand had dragged across and thrown down just beneath the parapet a mattress some twelve inches thick and the size of an ordinary bed. The opera moves swiftly. The soldiers fire the volley, and Cavaradossi falls. Tosca, learning the truth, rushes to the parapet, looks backward toward the audience, stands magnificently defiant and leaps.

It is a good three feet in the vertical to the mattress. Do not think that the prima donna, however plump she may be, strives to save or catch herself. That leap is too great an opportunity for histrionic realism to lose one little part of its effect. She lands plump at full length, fairly taking the breath out of her, while the back stage watchers get the real gasp. It is perhaps half a minute before she recovers herself. Then she gathers herself together, all businesslike again, and hurries through the press of stage hands, chorus, supes, principals, down front stage to receive the curtain calls.—New York Post.

Paper Money.

The earliest paper money issued in America was in Massachusetts in 1690 in order to satisfy the demands of clamorous soldiers. The first authorized by the Continental congress was in May, 1775. Six years later it ceased to circulate as money.

Benjamin Franklin and his partner, D. Hall, printed the bills of the colony of Delaware. On the face of the note in conspicuous letters was the warning, "To counterfeit is death."

An Endearing Act.

Wife (bleedingly)—I'm afraid, Jack, you don't love me any more—anyway, as well as you used to. Husband—Why? Wife—Because you always let me get up to light the fire now. Husband—Nonsense, my love! Your getting up to light the fire makes me love you all the more.—Lippincott's.

Why They Are Happy.

"There goes the beautiful Elsie! They say she is very happy with her husband, the young artist!" "Happy? Well, as you take it! It is true they harmonize splendidly. He does not understand her, and she does not understand him!" Fliegende Blatter.

Nothing can possibly be conceived in the world or even out of it which can be called good without qualification except a good will. Kant.

RAILROADS IN GERMANY.

No Danger of a Train Starting Until Everything is "Ready."

A returned traveler who spent much of his time in Germany drifted into the observation of railroading in the empire. He rode the most on local trains, though not having a set purpose, and proceeded only for short distances.

On one of these vagrant trips he had surrendered his ticket and had nothing on his mind but his destination when the conductor came and said: "Extra fare, please."

"Why?" demanded the experienced voyager.

"Because," answered the conductor, "we have cut out five stops and the train is now an express."

The recollection of the writer runs back to the time when as a small boy he first beheld the start of a German railroad train. The impression is self-evidently vivid to have lasted so long.

First there was a prodigious pow-wow between the head baggage man and the porters, who argued excitedly over the disposal of trunks. Everything awaited the conclusion of their jabbering and the loading of the car. Nobody else seemed animated or even concerned. The conductor looked on stolidly, and the engineer phlegmatically talked to a bystander on the platform.

The last trunk in the baggage smashers retired, still arguing. The conductor went to the end of the train, and the guards stationed themselves alongside at intervals. All eyes were on the engineer. He climbed into his cab, disposed himself on his seat in a leisurely way and protruded his head from the window.

"Fertig?" he inquired of the first guard, who turned to the second also to ask "fertig?" This was repeated along to the last car, where the signal system doubled on its trail. It having been ascertained that everything was "fertig," the information was relayed to the engineer, who nodded solemnly and turned to his seat. A bell tinkled, the crossing gates (numerously manned to prevent suicide) arose, and the train pulled out with the pomposity that characterizes everything official in Germany—the "verboten" land.

This extreme caution amuses the visitor, but it also makes him reflect. The government's paternalism may not be affectionate, but it is far-reaching. There are no handy ways to die when danger can be forestalled.—Chicago Post.

His Dose of Senna Tea.

"When my landlady tells me that anything is good for me," said the boarder, "I always recall the halcyon days of my boyhood. There were occasions then when, after eating profusely of green apples or other unripe vegetables, my works became disorganized and caused me intense distress. At such times my mother stepped into the imminent deadly breach with a remedy that was good for me."

"She had a partiality for senna tea, a beverage which tastes like the interior of a Russian jail. I had to swallow this fluid until it was necessary to put hoops on me so I could hold it all, and for several days thereafter my mother continued to flood my insides with senna tea, always insisting that it was good for me. Now that I am an aged man I love peace better than anything else, but I'll climb the frame of any gentleman who mentions senna tea to me."—Walt Mason in Chicago News.

Bread That Intoxicates.

Throughout the eastern part of Siberia it is no extraordinary sight to see peasants in the hilarious stages of intoxication brought on by eating bread. In the region between the sea and the river called Missouri the humidity of the climate as well as the soil is remarkable. In many parts the humidity is so intense that there grows upon ears of corn a species of fungus. As a result of this the bread made from the corn gives all the results of an overdose of alcohol. Whole districts are sometimes inebriated by this strange kind of "alcoholic" bread.—Leslie's Weekly.

If Lion Pulls and Horse Pulls.

If a lion and a strong horse were to pull in opposite directions the horse would pull the lion backward with comparative ease. But if the lion were hitched behind the horse and facing in the same direction and were allowed to exert his strength in backing he could easily pull the horse down upon his haunches or drag him across the ring, so much greater is his strength when exerted backward from the hind legs than in forward pulling.

An Unusual Look.

"Do you think this new photograph of mother looks like her father?" asked the daughter.

"No; I don't," replied the father. "What do you suppose is the matter with it?"

"Why, I suppose the man told your mother to look pleasant and she was trying to do it."—Yonkers Statesman.

How Could She Tell?

"Norah," said the mistress, "are these French sardines that you have given me?"

"Shure, O' den't know, ma'am," said the new waitress. "They were pash spashin' when I opened the box."—Ladies' Home Journal.

Damp Sheets.

She—I hear you snored out when it was raining heavily and that you were without bedding. He—Oh, no; we were enveloped in a wet blanket, and there were sheets of rain!

Be sure you can obey good laws before you sifer bad ones.—Euskia.

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Find out how many names of Canadian cities, towns, villages, counties and townships you can make out of the letters which form the words:

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Each correct name will count as one point and ten points will be added for penmanship and neatness. Send your completed list to G. C. McLEAN, Sec'y, Brockville Fair, or to W. T. ROGERS, Principal Brockville Business College. N.B.—Every person is eligible no matter where residence may be. Successful competitors not wishing to use tuition may transfer same. The above contest is in connection with the Brockville Fair. The awards will be announced in due time in the press.

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