

Behind the Curtain.

Everything is not lovely on all occasions in the theatre, even when a performance is a success. Discords will often arise that require both time and diplomacy to harmonize. A glimpse at something like such a scene will be found in

THE MANAGER'S OFFICE.

Patter go the footsteps
Up and down his stair.
Scraps of conversation
Float along the air.
"Play it? Never will I
So degrade my art!"
"Then you leave to-night, sir!"
"Then I'll play the part!"

Telegrams and letters—
Hark, we hear him speak.
"Quibble's Combination
Booked 'em for a week."
Ballets all complaining
"Shoes were made too small"—
"Have the dresses shortened;"
"Not the thing at all!"

Gay and truthful critic,
Smiling and serene,
"Writing up" a drama
That he hasn't seen;
Fascinating fairies,
Leaders of the dance—
Gloomy-looking actors
Seeking an advance!

Gayly-colored posters,
Wonderful to see;
Calm but chronic deadhead,
Wanting "seats for three."
So, from morn till midnight,
Busy is the brain
Of our worthy magnate,
With his Thespian train.

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and suppress the gambling hells.

Our Pat's Mistake.

Dr. Wellborn, a physician, a couple of years ago engaged a rather "green" Irishman to serve as coachman, and Pat was his name. After Pat had been in Dr. Wellborn's service about three months, he had no fault to find with him; in fact, Pat proved thoroughly trustworthy and diligent. Now, Dr. Wellborn had what some might consider a queer, perhaps vulgar—if it is really possible that anything in the eating line can be justly called vulgar—penchant: he was extremely fond of pickled pig's feet. It was probably the one thing that he cared about eating at any time and at all hours; so Mrs. Wellborn generally kept a jar of pig's feet in the doctor's study, that he might partake of them whenever he felt inclined. One night Dr. Wellborn was restless and feverish, so he rose from his bed and went below stairs to his study to read. It was a winter night, and a bright fire was still burning in the grate as he entered his cosy apartment; and by the light it gave out he beheld, to his great astonishment, Pat reclining, sound asleep, upon the lounge. He roused him. "Pat, what are you doing here at this time of night?" "Shure, sir, I beg your honor's pardon fur the liberty I took; but I wuz out, an' I wuz so cold whin I came in that I came in here ter warmin meself before goin' ter bed, an' I fell asleep unbeknown ter meself." The doctor was not a harsh master, so he excused the liberty Pat took of entering his study, and sent him off to bed. The next morning the doctor sent out to the stable, which was connected with the house, for Pat. When he entered, the doctor, with a queer smile on his face, said: "Pat, weren't you slightly drunk when you came home last night? I thought your breath smelt as if you'd been drinking. Tell the truth, Pat." Pat hung his head sheepishly, and said: "Yer know I always spake ther truth, sir, an' I'll spake it now. I wuz at a wake at me cousin's house last night, an' I think I did take a wee drop too much." "Well, Pat, when you came in here, before going to sleep last night, did you eat anything of mine—anything that you found in a jar on my desk?" Pat hung his head, but didn't answer. "Tell me the truth, Pat, else you leave my service at once," said the doctor,

scarcely able to suppress his laughter. "Yis, sir, I did ate the pig's feet," he at last replied; "but I wuz so hungry whin I got home that I couldn't resist atin' them. I saw them in the jar, and they looked so timptin'." The doctor could restrain his merriment no longer, and he gave it full vent before (for he was determined to cure Pat of all disposition to steal pig's feet) he laughingly said: "You have been sufficiently punished for your misconduct, Pat: you did not eat, as you thought you did, a couple of pig's feet, but a couple of human hands while you were drunk, mistaking them for pig's feet. I kept them in a glass jar as a medical curiosity." "O the devil!" cried Pat, with an expression of horror. "Shure it's joking yer are, docthor, jist ter frighten me." The doctor was determined to carry out his jest to the further end this time, and soon made Pat believe that he had devoured a pair of hands. "Och Moses, but I've got, then, a part of a corpse inside o' me," exclaimed Pat. "Och! murther, an' it'll kill me, fur I feel the pain creepin' over me," trembling with a terror born of fear and disgust. Though he really pitied him, the doctor could not help laughing at Pat's language, and the figure he cut. At last, yielding to the poor fellow's entreaties, he gave him an emetic; but Pat's imaginative powers were so great that, dwelling upon the horrible part of his supposed mistake, he actually became ill. Nothing could ever induce him to enter Dr. Wellborn's study again.

Can't Rub it Out.

"Don't write there," said a father to his son, who was writing with a diamond on his window. "Why not?" "Because you can't rub it out." Did it ever occur to you, my child, that you are daily writing what you can't rub out. You made a cruel speech to your mother the other day. It wrote itself on her loving heart and gave her great pain. It is there now and hurts her every time she thinks of it. You can't rub it out. You wished a wicked thought one day in the ear of your playmate. It wrote itself on his mind and led him to a wicked act. It is there now. You can't rub it out. All your thoughts, all your words, are written in the Book of God. Be careful. The record is everlasting. You can't rub it out.

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and honest administration of the City government.

The Paris police has forbidden the use of certain streets to people with velocipedes, and commanded that in all others they must carry bells by day, like sleighs, and a lantern at night.

In London five families have been trying the experiment of a confederated home. A large house in the Bloomsbury region was taken, and arrangements for the regulation of the household were made with perfection. There was a common dining-room, and each family had a set of rooms which it furnished at its own convenience. One cook prepared the meals, and a couple of servants did the other work. For two days affairs went well enough. Then trouble began. The dinner was a standing subject of dispute, the unfortunate cook being as unable to please five families as the two servants were to answer five bells, all ringing at the same time. The children of the different families quarrelled, and before the fortnight had elapsed the confederated home was broken up.

An insane young lady was being taken by her brother and husband from Texas to an asylum in St. Louis. In the cars sleeping berths were taken, and the men by turns watched her. Once both fell asleep together, and the lunatic chose to tell the conductor that she had been kidnapped. He at the next station telegraphed to St. Louis for officers to be on hand, noticed the watchfulness of the kidnappers, and proudly felt that a gross outrage would be prevented. When the husband and brother were about to hustle their charge into a carriage, they were arrested. So cunning was the lunatic that two days elapsed before her story could be disproved.

Jumping the Gap.

Tom Potts, a well-known locomotive engineer in England and the States, is the self-accredited hero of the following wonderful story of successful daring. I will narrate it as nearly as I can in his own words. I have heard him tell it often:

"Well, gentlemen, I'll say you'll think it's a lie, but I can't help that; you have asked me to tell it; and all I can say is, if you'd been in my place you'd have seen it. I had been driving the "Witch" for about seven months, and a sweet thing she was. I never was half as fond of an engine as I was of her. She was the kind of machine a man only gets once in a lifetime. She made her steam quick, was easy on fuel, started off lively, and went like a deer. Her cylinders were sixteen-inch, her stroke twenty-two; and her drivers seven feet six, and she was as kind to handle as a baby. To see her run off with a heavy load, light and gay, was enough to shame the "Juno," "Venus" and "Heleni," and other eighteen-inch machines. She never wanted fixing up, "Venus" was always going in and out of the shop to be titivated, and if there's anything I don't like, it's an engine that all the time wants to be titivated. She was always ready and willing for work. Why, bless you! she was only washed out for the sake of cleanliness—she didn't need it a bit. She was the tidiest thing I ever seen—seemed as though dirt wouldn't stick to her. Well, what I am going to tell came off years ago, before I left the old country, and it was one of the best railroads—single track then, three now, and four in some spots. Well, the "Witch" and I were put on the mail—one of the fastest trains, and they went like sixty in them days. The engineer was fined a shilling for every minute he lost. He durst not go slow for fog, unless he wanted to lose a day's pay. He had to keep going right along, and see things before he got in sight of 'em. We were running north one darkish, wintry, day, and were making out best streaks. I should reckon we were going fifty miles an hour, I was saying to myself, "She's going her prettiest," when we suddenly shot ahead, as if we had been fired out of a cannon. I knew what that meant: we had broke loose, we hadn't a car behind us. The coupling had broken between tender and first coach. How we flew to be sure! I whistled the guard to brake up the train. How we bounded along! I could make out no objects alongside—we seemed to get faster and faster; we must have got as fast as one hundred miles an hour! It was a straight piece of track for some miles. I did not shut off steam directly we broke, for I didn't want the train to run into us, which might happen if they did not hear my whistle for brakes. It was lucky I kept her going, for just as I had about enough of such flying, a man started out about six hundred yards before us holding a red flag. There was nothing in the way, so I knew something must be wrong with the track. You might as well try to stop a whirlwind as the "Witch" in that distance. Her speed was frightful. There wasn't much time to think, and as we could not stop, the faster we went the better; so I gave her what more steam there was. She seemed to have some "go" in reserve, for we shot past the red flag like a flash. I saw men standing horror-struck. "Bill! I said, 'quick! Get on the coke, and see what's ahead. He looked, and went deadly pale, tottered, and fell back in a faint. By this time I could see plain enough what was wrong. There was a gap in the track where a bridge had gone down. You can't fancy my feelings just then—going to death—death, swift and terrible—at about two miles a minute—getting nearer, nearer! An instant more—the gap! 'God have mercy!' I shrieked. Well, would you believe it? That engine just cleared that gap! It was fifteen feet across and about sixty feet deep. She jumped that gap like a stag, and what's more, she struck the rails all right on the other side, and kept right along, just as if she had not noticed the gap! I stirred Bill up, and with both of us at the break, we managed to stop the "Witch." She was on a tear that day, but I never dreamed she'd jump the gap—that's a fact."—*Taylor's "Fast Life on the Modern Highway."*

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