

The Joker Club.

"The Sun is mightier than the Sword."

DON'T SLOP OVER.

"Don't slop over," the old man said
As he placed his hand on the young man's head;
"Go it by all means, go it fast,
Go it while leather and horse-shoes last;
Don't slop over, distrust yourself,
Nor always reach the highest shelf;
The next to the highest will generally do,
And answer the need of such as you."

Don't slop over; the wisest men
Are bound to slop over now and then;
And yet the wisest at work or feast
Are the very ones that blunder the least.
Those who for spilt milk never wail
Are the ones who carry the steadiest sail;
Wherever you go, go in for the fat;
But don't slop over—and freeze to that.

Don't slop over. Great Solomon
Once went a little too far with his fun.
Louis Napoleon, as we all know,
Slopped over on Max in Mexico.
Horace Greely and Jefferson D.,
And Hinton, and Halpin, and Old J. B.,
And Andrew Johnson, the great I won't,
All slopped over—take care you don't.

A new song is entitled "Between the Green Corn and the Gold." It should be sung in a husky voice.—*Lowell Citizen*. And is easily learned by ear.—*Newton Republican*. There's only a small field to work in here. Let's stalk about something else.—*Louisville Courier Journal*. You fellows are fodder from a conclusion than you were when you started.

CATCHING A TARTAR.

"This is a glorious spot," said a rather doubtful looking personage to a very innocent and hay-seedy countryman. The pair were standing on the sands at Rockaway, and the countryman had only recently been joined by the doubtful party.

"Yes, it is kinder fine," said the countryman.

"You are a stranger here, I should judge," said the doubtful party.

"Wall yes, I be," said the countryman.

"Going to stay long?" asked the doubtful party.

"Wall, that depends," said the countryman. "You see I came on here with stock, and I thought I might just as well see a little o' your sights as not, long's as I was here."

"Cattle dealer, I suppose?" said the doubtful party.

"Yes, that's about my line," said the countryman.

"Nothing like a little pleasure now and then with business," said the doubtful one.

"No, them's my views," said the countryman.

"Suppose we do the day together," said the doubtful one, taking the countryman's arm. "I know this place like a book, and it's no more than right to show a stranger around."

"Don't care if I do. Was feeling a little lonesome like. Where'll we go, stranger?" asked the countryman.

"Well, we might as well commence with a drop of something. How does a drink strike you?"

"Never object to takin' a drink. Can't do it out our way—good as your life is worth"; and they indulged in a drink at the doubtful one's expense.

"How about lunch?" said the doubtful one.

"Wall, that hits me pretty near the spot. Hain't had nothin' to speak of 'cept a sandwich since six o'clock this mornin'," and they seated themselves at a table in the large hotel. The doubtful one threw the bill of fare toward the countryman and invited him to order anything he wished.

"Wall, I don't care if I have a chowder to start on," said the countryman.

"Take something to drink with it. Here, waiter, bring us in two chowders and a couple o' bottles of beer," said the doubtful one. After finishing the chowders the countryman ordered spring chicken, lobster salad, and one or two other expensive dishes. As he tucked the savory dishes away he complained now and then of his lack of appetite. "You see, stranger," he said, "I got kinder shook up like on the kirs, and it clean broke me up for eatin'." When I'm hum these fixin's wouldn't be nothin' for me. Here, waiter, bring me some roast beef and Saratoga potatoes, and let's have some more beer. I feel kind o' dry like. You don't seem to be eatin' very hearty, stranger!"

The doubtful one had indeed lost his appetite, and he was really growing nervous, and inwardly asking "when the fresh was going to let up."

"I've hearn tell o' your wines down here, stranger," said the countryman, leaning back and picking his teeth, after having finished six separate courses. "Suppose we try a bottle o' somethin' high toned. Waiter, bring us a bottle o'——what shall it be, stranger?"

A wild, restless look came into the eyes of the doubtful one. He made a movement to get up from the table, but the waiter was at his side in an instant with the check. He fumbled nervously in his vest pocket for a moment and then said:

"Awfully sorry to trouble you, my friend, but then one doesn't like to give these waiters a large bill. I haven't anything less than a twenty. If you will just settle for the lunch we'll get the bill changed, and fix it with you."

"Now, that's tarnation unlucky," said the countryman. "But I hain't got the cost o' even the chowder in my clothes. You see, I left all my money at the hotel, and—"

The doubtful one here interrupted him with an exclamation not used in polite society, paid the bill, and left.

"Well, these city chaps have queer ways," mused the countryman, as he sauntered off toward the boat.—*Stanley Huntley, Brooklyn Eagle*.

THE RETURN OF THE OYSTER.

The oyster is a peculiar article of diet. Other things are eaten as a matter of course—the oyster is eaten specially. He is customarily connected with conviviality. He is not eaten as chops and steaks are, because it is necessary to devour him that the pangs of hunger may be assuaged, but he is swallowed as a luxury, not that life may be sustained, but that it may be made more sedate and comfortable. Easy of digestion, he is an apology for midnight gourmandizing. He rounds off the theatrical and operatic dissipation, and like the stage and the assembly, he has his seasons. When others retire from urban dissipation he also retires. Like those who swallow him he has his vacation. For a while he is relieved from assassination and subsides into an aristocratic retirement. In this he is protected by legislation. He enjoys his honeymoon in tranquil waters. He spawns contentedly from May to September. He may be good enough to eat through all the summer, but he is protected by a prejudice against eating him as well as by law. Thus he is enabled to perpetuate his race, and to make sure that his descendants will be devoured gratefully by future ages. He did not, perhaps set the fashion of summer leisure, but he encourages it and shares its joys. Unlike mankind, he can be happy while staying at home. He is native to a watering place, and is not obliged, for hot weather happiness, to take ear or steam-boat. Safely lodged, at least somewhere in the neighborhood of his wife, the waters gently murmur above him, and he takes his constant bath without the trouble of undressing. The tradition is that he may be crossed in love, but the roughness of his amor-

ous wooing never makes him thin, though possibly it may sometimes make him green or yellow. But he tastes never a whit the worse for his chromatic changes, and is particularly good when there are shades of violet observable in his constitution. Deficient in power of locomotion, he is gently assisted when his apotheosis is at hand. He is carefully carried to the place in which he will receive his final culinary touches, and from which he will depart, only to be carried to the festive board, there to be washed down the throats of those who love him in a flood of mild Sauterne. A future which the most ambitious nature might revel in the prospect of is before him. He will bring a fillip to a bad appetite. He will lend a new charm to digestion. He will stimulate inventions of cookery, and give a peculiar thrill to deglutition. Morning and evening he will receive the attention of the swallows. He will be preliminary to chops and eggs and coffee and other first-fruits of the early day. He will modestly keep the soup company at dinner. He will pass through the ordeal of the fry in his delicate coat of crumbs and of butter. He will reach perfection upon the gridiron like the excellent St. Lawrence; he will even submit to the humble and somewhat commonplace stew; or, appearing in a naked simplicity of rawness, he will be brought forward reposing upon one-half of his original homestead, and being daintily taken upon the fork, will slip down perhaps the throat of beauty, to be followed by nameless delicacies by none of which he will be rivaled in relish. Who would not envy the fate of this lamellibranchiate mollusk?

The oyster is a fortunate creature, if it be fortunate to be much mentioned in history. The Roman who first formed oyster beds, which he did at Baise, is known to have been named Sergius Orata, who had the happiness to live in the time of Augustus, and who is known to have made a great deal of money by the exercise of his ingenuity. To-day it is mentioned in all encyclopedias that Apicius, a contemporary of Trajan, was the first who taught the world to pickle oysters. His fame rests upon that fact. There was another Apicius distinguished for the love of lobsters; there was another who started a school of cookery; but the oyster-pickling Apicius has a distinct fame, and survives freshly in classical dictionaries. When George the First came to England from Hanover, the royal cooks could not please the royal palate in the matter of oysters until it was discovered that his Majesty liked them stale, as he had always been in the habit of eating them. When Mr. Thackeray came first to Boston, certain of his admirers asked him to supper. There were, among other delicacies, gigantic oysters. The novelist could not comprehend that he was to swallow one of these in an undivided state, but being shown the way, and having accomplished the feat, he observed that he felt "as if he had swallowed a baby."

We do not know that it has ever occurred to anybody to make a gastronomical almanac, but it would certainly be a pleasanter compilation than those calendars which are put forth by the proprietors of patent medicines. Every month would be marked by the dainties which it produces in the greatest perfection; in one column should be glorified, and in another this fruit or that rare vegetable. Each season has its charms of production, whether fish, flesh, or fowl; yet nothing is so impatiently waited for as the oyster, nothing is more contentedly eaten, and nothing makes less trouble in the stomach, unless it happens to be stale. Then, indeed, he is diabolical, and so thoroughly incapable of digestion that the man who has bolted him might as well make his will and bid his weeping family farewell. To the whole body of oyster-eaters we present the compliments of the season; and may no such catastrophic befall them!