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XMAS—1908

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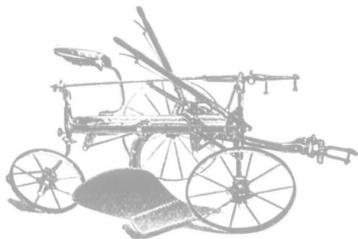
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Wit and Humor

Thomas Riley, a former attorney of Boston, was famous for his wit and powers of repartee. Once in trying a case, he found himself opposed by a lawyer named Lowe. Matters had not gone far before Riley became impatient, and, turning to the jury, said: “Gentlemen, I have heard of Lo, the poor Indian, but who ever heard of Lowe, the poor lawyer?”

Mrs. Blank knew that the girl was raw, but she had engaged her for that very reason, feeling that by careful instruction she might be able to develop Norah's latent possibilities into a fairly expert handling of the affairs in her dining room. Taking her into the dining room, she showed her in detail where everything was, from the salt cellar to the fish forks; initiated her into the mysteries of the china closet, and otherwise gave her a pretty comprehensive first lesson in domestic economy. “Now, at dinner, Norah,” she went on, “we always begin with oysters on the shell. Mr. Blank is very fond of them.”

“Yis, ma'am,” said Norah, a gleam of intelligence lighting up her blue eyes. “And do I be ather puttin' on th' moot-crackers wid 'em?”

“Nut-crackers?” demanded Mrs. Blank. “What for?”

“To break open th' isthers, ma'am,” explained Norah. “Sure they do be harrd tings to crack wid yer teeth.”

Lucile, a carefully brought up little girl of five years, returned from her first party in great glee.

“I was a good girl, mamma,” she announced, “and talked nice all the time.”

“Oh, yes, I did,” was the enthusiastic reply. “I smiled and said, ‘I enjoyed myself, Mrs. Townsend; I had a lots better dinner than I thought I'd have.’”

An official of the United States who had, in the course of his duty, to make up a summary of the conclusions of certain distinguished authorities on engineering, met with disaster not long ago when he had occasion to refer to certain statements of Mr. A. R. Colquhoun, the British engineer.

The official had been told that after Mr. Colquhoun's name there should be placed the letters “M. I. C. E.” (Member of the Institute of Civil Engineers). “That's easy to remember,” the official had said, adopting an easy method of memorizing, “M. I. C. E. spells ‘mice.’”

This memory system was of little avail, however, for when the official handed in his summary the letters after Mr. Colquhoun's name were “R. A. T. S.”

CAN SUCH THINGS BE?

He went at dawn where waters wimple
The fishes to trepan,
An honest, straight, God-fearing, simple,
Upright, veracious man;
And yet, at twilight home returning
With nary a one to fry,
He felt a burning and a yearning,
Though spurning it, to lie.

For truth he did not care a copper,
Oho, but it was sad,
The joy with which he told a whopper
About the fish he had!
It would require at least a column
That story to relate,
What brought about this change so solemn?
It must have been the bait.

—Field and Stream.

An inquiring person in England came upon a veteran soldier sitting hunched in front of a public house in Devonshire, and began to talk to him about the campaigns and the leaders he had fought under. “Did you ever see Wellington?” asked the inquirer.

“Did I ever see Wellington?” asked the veteran. “No, but I saw a picture of him at Waterloo.”

“osses’ 'oofs, and then a voice called out, “Is that you, Saunders?”

“I knowed the voice in an instant—it was the Dook of Wellington.”

“Yes, sir,” says I, most respectful.

“Come 'ere,” says the dook.

“I riz reluctant from the ground, for I was tired out.”

“I want you should go back 'ome,” 'e says.

“Why?” says I.

“Becos you're killing too many men,” says 'e.

“And back 'ome I went,” concluded the veteran, shifting his 'game' leg into a more comfortable position.—*Youth's Companion.*

“Oh, would ye hear, and would ye hear
Of the windy, wide North-West?
Faith! 'tis a land as green as the sea,
That rolls as far and rolls as free,
With drift of flowers, so many there be,
Where the cattle roam and rest.

“Oh, could ye see, and could ye see,
The great gold skies so clear,
The rivers that race the pine shade dark,
The mountainous snows that take no
mark,
Sunlit and high on the Rockies stark,
So far they seem as near.

“Then could ye feel, and could ye feel,
How fresh is a western night!
Where the long land breezes rise and pass
And sigh in the rustling prairie grass,
Where the dark blue skies are clear as
glass,
And the same old stars are bright.

“But could ye know, and forever know
The word of the young North-West!
A word she breathes to the true and
bold,
A word misknown to the false and cold,
A word that never was spoken or sold,
But the one that knows is blest.”

—MOIRA O'NEILL

A lady who was perfectly well, but fancied she was suffering from fever called on an old and experienced physician to consult him. She described her symptoms at some length, and he listened patiently. At last he said:

“I think I understand your case, madam. Sit perfectly still a few moments, and let me look at you.”

She complied, and he eyed her attentively for nearly a minute, glancing at his watch once or twice in the meantime.

“There is nothing the matter with you, madam,” he said. “You haven't the slightest indication of fever. Your heart beat is perfectly normal.”

“Why, how do you know, doctor?” she asked, in surprise. “You didn't feel my pulse.”

“I didn't need to,” he answered, “I counted the vibrations of the ostrich feather on your hat.” And he bowed her out.

“It's awful trying, this catering to a sick girl!” Mrs. Douglas confessed to the friendly visitor who had called to inquire for Amy.

“I believe this convalescent business comes harder on me than her real sickness,” continued Mrs. Douglass, with a deep sigh. “I'm that put to it to get something that she'll eat with a relish I get all riled up sometimes trying to tempt her.”

The visitor murmured something sympathetic, and, thus encouraged, Mrs. Douglas went on:

“Only yesterday,” she said, “I got her a pork chop and five cents' worth of marshmallows for her dinner, and if you'll believe me she turned up her nose and said she couldn't eat a bite.”—*Youth's Companion.*

I heard a story lately of a Highlander who had been persuaded to buy a ticket for a train.

He won the first prize, a bicycle, but having had a bit of good fortune, instead of being himself with delight he had

“Well, it's just ma luck, buying a bicycle when yin wad 'a' done better to have your money wasted.”—*Dundee.*