

LITERAL ANSWERS.

A lady noticed a boy sprinkling salt on the sidewalk to take off the ice, and remarked to a friend, pointing to the salt ;

"Now that's benevolence."

"No it ain't," said the boy, somewhat indignant, "it's salt."

So when a lady asked her servant girl if the hired man cleaned off the snow with alacrity, she replied :

"No, ma'am, he used a shovel."

The very same literal turn of mind which we have been illustrating is sometimes used intentionally and perhaps a little malicious, and thus becomes the property of wit instead of blunder. Thus we hear of a very polite and impressive gentleman who said to a youth in the street :

"Boy, may I inquire where Robinson's drug store is?"

"Certainly, sir," replied the boy, very respectfully.

"Well sir," said the gentleman, after waiting awhile, "where is it?"

"I have not the least idea, yer honor," said the urchin.

There was another boy who was accosted by an ascetic middle-aged lady with—

"I want to go to Dover."

"Well, ma'am," said the boy, "why don't you go then?"

One day, at Lake George, a party of gentlemen strolled among the beautiful islands on the lake, with bad luck, espied a little fellow with a red shirt and a straw hat, dangling a line over the side of a boat.

"Hallo, boy!" said one of them, "what are you doing?"

"Fishing," came the answer.

"Well, of course," said the gentleman, "but what do you catch?"

"Fish, you fool; what do you s'pose?"

"Did any of you ever see an elephant's skin?" inquired a teacher of an infant class.

"I have," exclaimed one.

"Where?" asked the teacher.

"On the elephant," said the boy, laughing.

Sometimes this sort of wit degenerates or rises, as the case may be, into punning, as when Flora pointed pensively to the heavy masses of clouds in the sky, saying :

"I wonder where those clouds are going?" and her brother replied :

"I think they are going to thunder."

Also the following dialogue :

"Hallo, there! how do you sell your wood?"

"By the cord."

"How long has it been cut!"

"Four feet."

"I mean how long has it been since you cut it?"

"No longer than it is now."

And also when Patrick O'Flynn was seen with his collar and his bosom sadly begrimed, and was indignantly asked by his officer :

"Patrick O'Flynn! how long do you wear a shirt?"

"Twenty-eight inches, sir."