

A Busy Man

A Baltimore man tells of an address made to some school children in that city by a member of the board of trustees:

"My young friends," said the speaker, "let me urge upon you the necessity of not only reading good books, but also of owning them so that you may have access to them at all times. Why, when I was a young man I used frequently to work all night to earn money to buy books, and then get up before daylight to read them!"

Beyond the Pale

A friend of James Whitcomb Riley tells of an occasion when the humorist, who is, as a rule, extremely averse to social functions, was induced to attend a "literary" dinner at Indianapolis, given in honor of a novelist of that city.

Riley had been told off to take in to dinner the sister of his host, an excellent woman, though anything but "literary."

The conversation touched upon the beauties of Chaucer, about whom a certain set of the city was then cultivating a fad. A spirited discussion ensued, during which the bewildered sister caught from time to time only the name "Chaucer."

At last she whispered to Riley: "Who is this Mr. Chaucer they're talking about so much? Is he very popular in society?"

"Madam," solemnly responded Riley, "that man did something that forever shuts him out of society."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed the worthy dame; "and what was that?"

"He died several hundred years ago," said Riley.

Profound Knowledge

Charles T. Copeland, Harvard's well-known reader, during the course of one of his lectures at Radcliffe College had occasion to read a page or two from a book, the name of which he took care not to mention. Stopping suddenly in the middle of a sentence, he said: "Now, I don't believe there are a dozen in this room who can tell me the title of the book this is taken from. Can you, Miss A.? Miss B.? Next, next," he continued, rapidly running over some fifteen scattered around the room, all of whom shook their heads with an "I don't know."

At last he lighted on one pupil seated directly in front of him. "What is the book, Miss X.?" he asked.

Without a moment's hesitation Miss X. named it correctly. Mr. Copeland brought his fist down on the table with his characteristic bang.

"There, young ladies!" he said, "aren't you ashamed of yourselves? Did you read the book for your own pleasure, Miss X.?" he added, with an appreciative smile in her direction, "or was it prescribed reading in some course? Turn right around there, and tell all these less fortunate ones how you happened to know the name of this book."

Slowly Miss X. faced the class, slowly and distinctly she spoke. "I knew the title of the book," she remarked, "because I saw it on the outside cover while Mr. Copeland was reading."

Then, amid the laughter of the class, she sat down with the same deliberation. "Oh, Miss X., how disappointing!" was all Mr. Copeland sighed.

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