

"A Little Nonsense Now and Then"

An Iowa incident that is lacking in details is related by the Mercyville Banner as follows: Clare Duffy, the efficient foreman of our powder mill, went up Thursday.

Recently a visitor at a manse noticed the good behaviour of a child and said to her: "Are you always such a good little girl?" In answer to the query she reflected a moment and replied very seriously: "No, sir, sometimes I am very bad." "Indeed!" responded the visitor. "And what do your parents do when you are very bad?" "They spank me—they spank me behind my tummy!"

In a recent examination paper for a boy clerk's post in England was this question: "If the premier and all the members of the cabinet should die, who would officiate?" Robert, a boy of fourteen, thought for a time, trying in vain to recall who came next in succession. At last, however, a happy inspiration came to him, and he answered: "The undertaker."

Sir John Simon relished a good story, and one told concerns a group of Scots lawyers who met convivially at an Ayrshire inn one cold evening, according to the New York American. The conversation turned on pronunciation. "Now I," said one of the barristers, "always say neether, while John here says nyether. What do you say, Sandy?" The hot tippie had made Sandy doze, and at the sudden question he was aroused, and replied, "I? Oh, I say whusky."

A colored congregation in Louisiana, hearing that a college in Kansas was conferring the degree of D.D. for the reasonable "consideration" of fifty dollars, decided to add to their prestige by raising the required sum and having their pastor decorated with those dignified initials, relates Harper's. Strenuous effort failed to raise more than half the amount; but nothing daunted, they forwarded twenty-five dollars, with the request that the college would forward the first "D," so that they could begin addressing the reverend gentleman as Doctor, a favor which they were sure would assist them very much in collecting the price of his "Divinity."

Murphy was taking a day off, says an English weekly, and wishing to enjoy himself thoroughly, he walked round to watch "the boys." He was surprised to see his friend Kelly working as if carrying a hodful of mortar up and down a ladder was the only thing he took any real pleasure in.

"It's yourself that's working mighty hard to-day, Kelly!" expostulated Murphy.

"Whist! I'm just making a fool of the boss!" said Kelly, winking slyly.

"And how are you doing that, Kelly?"

"Sure, Murphy, it's as easy as kissing your hand! He sees me going up the ladder with my hod full of mortar and he thinks I'm working. But, Murphy, my boy, it's the same hodful I'm carting up and down all the time."—Youth's Companion.

A country vicar advertised for an "ineligible" to make himself useful, etc., in his grounds and garden. A likely candidate turned up and, after being questioned upon several points, the vicar said to him:

"You know, we are all vegetarians here and if I engage you I should like you to conform to our rules. Could you?"

The applicant entered into a brown study, and then at last he replied:

"I think so, sir. But I should like to ask an important question first. Do you reckon beer a vegetable?"

A lady called on a fire insurance agent, and inquired how much it would cost to insure her house for \$5,000.

"Twenty-five dollars for a three years policy, Madam," said the agent.

"And if the house burns, do I get \$5,000?"

"Certainly, Madam."

"And do you make any inquiries as to the cause of the fire?"

"Why yes; we make a full investigation in every case."

"Ah!" said the lady, with a toss of her head, "I thought there was some catch about it!"

Correspondence

U. S. WAR PROSPERITY.

Editor, JOURNAL OF COMMERCE:

The following is from a leading London journal.

"The influx of gold and the abnormal export trade of the United States is causing some alarm to American financiers and economists. The world's total supply of gold will, it is calculated, go into a sixty-foot cube, and the United States now holds between one-third and one-half of the total visible gold supply of the world. This, it is felt, creates an artificial basis of credits, which might collapse if the war caused the abandonment of the gold standard. During the last two years the United States has sent gold valued at £1,400,000,000 abroad, and has only imported goods of about half that value. The difference—£600,000,000—has been paid in gold, in the return of American securities and in bonds. The net import of gold has been £126,000,000. Brother Jonathan is getting fearful lest he should become a modern Midas, turning everything he touches into gold, only to find that the metal has lost its purchasing quality.

That is one side of the shield. There is another, and that apart from possible inflation, with a disastrous collapse in some directions, and that is the present struggle owing to the greatly increased cost of living.

While the leading industries have increased wages, a very large number of people see the purchasing value of the dollar decreasing and no increase in the income. Hence the cry in some quarters for an embargo on exports of foodstuffs, to arrest the growing increased cost of living and for other reasons not so supervident, come see in the embargo movement the hand of the Pro-German, and the Anti-British. That may be. The one thing manifest is that the flow of gold has caused a big unrest; that war-prosperity, being abnormal, has created abnormal conditions.

As to any embargo that is a question too complicated and too large to elucidate here, except to say the impression is that Congress will go slow where such vast clashing interests are involved.

"Feed America First" is a cry against which who can complain? As a domestic policy it is reasonable, presuming that this is the real motive. The shortage in last year's crop is admitted. That, with a world-wide increase in values, and the great demand combined, have been and are leading factors in creating present conditions with our great neighbor.

As neighbors, active in the war, which is our war, the embargo movement concerns us. We and the Allies, in this conflict, are one. Any embargo as "a weapon" to get back at "Great Britain," for black-listing American merchants, means "a weapon" against Greater Britain. Washington is apt to overlook that.

We are too near Christmas to add another faggot to the world's blaze. The wish is that no embargo may ensue save as to what may be created by necessity.

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