

Anecdotal.

Not Afraid

When the British ships under Lord Nelson were hearing down to attack the combined fleet off Trafalgar, the first lieutenant of the Revenge discovered an fishman devoutly kneeling at the side of his gun. So very unusual an attitude exciting his surprise and curiosity, he asked the man if he was afraid. "Afraid!" answered the tar; "No, your honor; I was only praying that the enemy's shot may be distributed in the same proportion as the prize money—the greatest part among the officers."

Big Ants

The American truth-teller was in form. "Talking of ants," he said, "we've got 'em as big as crabs out West. I guess I've seen 'em fight with long thorns, which they used as lances, charging each other like savages." "They don't compare to the ants I saw in the East," said an inoffensive individual nearby. "The natives have trained them as beasts of burden. One of 'em could trail a ton load for miles with ease. They worked willingly, but occasionally they turned on their attendants and killed them."

But this was drawing the long bow a little too far.

"I say, old chap," said a shocked voice from the corner, "what sort of ants were they?"

"Elephants," said the quiet man.

A Big Business

An ignorant countryman who saw the sea for the first time was much impressed with the effect of the blue water, and asked a fisherman if he could tell him the owner, as he would like to buy a gallon to take home to his wife. The fisherman replied proudly: "Is, me man we own it!" Land's sakes!" exclaimed the rustic. "Could you sell me a gallon for fifty cents?" "Sure," said the fisherman; and he disappeared, returning in a few moments with a jar of water, for which he received the countryman's fifty cents. The latter departed with his purchase. Returning later in the day, after the tide had gone out, gazed in, silent wonder at the water, which had receded far from the beach. "Lumme!" he exclaimed, "don't they do a trade!"

Master and Pupil

Appropos of the discussion in France of a proposition to abolish the Bachelor's Degree and some of the examinations that go with it, some stories are told of famous examiners in the colleges. One of the most redoubtable of these was the elder Ampere, the famous man of science, who was for a time a professor in the College of France.

Ampere was kind-hearted to a fault, but eccentric; and the erratic character of his examinations made them a sort of a show, to which people resorted as to an entertainment.

Though kind, he was hot-tempered, and occasionally gave way to outbursts, of which he instantly repented. Once, at an examination, some mistaken response of a student led him to lose his temper and to exclaim to the youth, "You are a donkey!"

The student was as hot-blooded as he. "It's you who are the donkey!" he shouted back.

By this time Ampere's anger was all gone, and the philosopher and gentleman asserted himself. "Perhaps it is—perhaps it is," he answered, "but, nevertheless, I imagine that if you began your demonstration anew, you will recognize the fact that you are mistaken."

The student recommenced his demonstration, and under this temperate admonition, he discovered his mistakes and acknowledged that he was wrong.

"And now, my dear boy," said the professor, "you see that I am not a donkey, and that you are not one either. I had no right to call you by the name of that animal—whiff, however, is so patient, calm, faithful and laborious a creature that I am not sure but it was he whom you and I were insulting just now, and not each other!"

Too Long

Heads of departments, used to long and tedious complaints, are undoubtedly glad when a malcontent will confine himself to the facts of his case. The Youth's Companion tells us of such a man who was an assistant surgeon in the navy during the Civil War:

He was six feet four inches tall, and was serving on board the Penobscot, which was only five feet eight inches between decks. His bunk was hardly six feet long, so that he was uncomfortable even when lying down. In bad weather, on the blockade, when the spray was breaking over the ship, he was deprived even of the comfort of unclogging on deck. He considered the matter thoroughly, and remembered that long letters to departments were not always read or considered. So he wrote as follows:

Hon. Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy:

Sir:—Length of surgeon, six feet four. Height of wardroom, five feet eight.

Respectfully,

E. C. Ver Mulen,
Assistant Surgeon.

The department promptly detached him "until such time as a more suitable ship could be found for his assignment."

Never Say Die

A. P. Vredenburg, the Secretary of the American Kennel Club, was praising the pluck of dogs. "A good dog," he said, "has the same kind of pluck that old Jerome McWade used to show."

"Jerome McWade was a farmer seventy years old, but still hale and gay. One morning he and his two sons got to wrangling over their strength, and Jerome declared that he could load hay quite as fast as they could pitch it."

"You, at your age, do that?" said the young men. "Never!"

"We'll have a trial," said Jerome. "Come out to the fields, and we'll have a trial now."

"So to the fields they went, and Jerome got into a hay wagon with his fork, and the two boys, down below, began to pitch the hay up to him as fast as they could pitch it."

"The old man stood up to his work stoutly. He loaded with lightning speed, and all the while he kept calling down: 'More hay! More hay!'

"The boys worked hard. Their youth told in their favor. Old Jerome got to loading more and more untidily. Still, though, as he scrambled about on top of the uneven mounds he continued to shout: 'More hay!'

"More hay."

"All of a sudden he tripped as he dug in his fork, and fell from the wagon to the ground."

"Aha," said his eldest son, "what are you doing here?"

"Jerome, as he arose, answered: 'I came down for more hay.'"

Not Intended for Use

There are some things which no man can ever learn, no matter how intelligent and earnest a student he may be.

"My dear, you look perfectly discouraged," said little Mrs. Nash's most intimate friend. "What is the matter?"

"I am perfectly discouraged," said Mrs. Nash, tearfully. "You know that footrest with the handsome embroidered top that I gave George for Christmas? Well, I've noticed it had begun to look almost a little shabby, and I couldn't imagine why, for it stands from the windows and I've taken great care of it. And when I came down earlier than usual from putting Janey to bed last night, what do you suppose I saw?"

The friend shook her head helplessly. "I found," said Mrs. Nash, with bitterness, "that George Nash had taken that footstool out into the centre of the room, near his Morris chair, and had put his feet—with his boots on, too—right on it!"

Helping Him Out

One of the many amusing stories told of old Squire Latham, a Plymouth County attorney of a quarter of a century ago, has found its way to The Boston Herald:

For many years Squire Latham was a resident of Briggwater, and it was while he was living there that the incident occurred which is related below. It illustrates his habitual coolness and whimsical temper.

He was awakened one night by his wife, who told him she thought there were burglars in the house. The squire put on his dressing-gown and went downstairs. In the back hall he found a rough-looking man trying to open a door that led into the back yard.

The burglar had unlocked the door, and was pulling it with all his might.

"It don't open that way, you idiot!" shouted the squire, taking in the man's predicament instantly. "It slides back!"

Obeded Orders

It is a well established fact that the average schoolteacher experiences a great deal of difficulty when attempts to enforce the clear pronunciation of the terminal "g" of each present participle. "Robert," said the teacher of one of the lower classes during the progress of a reading exercise, "please read the first sentence." A diminutive lad arose to his feet, and amid a series of labored gasps breathed forth the following: "See the horse runnin'" "Don't forget the 'g' Robert," admonished the teacher. "Gee! See the horse runnin'!"

She Was Particular

An old woman who entered a country savings bank not long ago was asked whether she wanted to draw or deposit. "Nayther; OI wants to put some money in," was the reply. The clerk entered the amount and pushed the slip toward her to sign. "Sign on this line, please," he said. "Above or below it?" "Just above it." "Me whole name?" "Yes." "Before OI was married?" No; just as it is now. "OI can't write."