

# ZEPHYRS OF HUMOR FOR A WINTER SEASON

## CIRCUMSTANCES ALTER CASES

MRS. O'MULLIGAN lay very ill in bed and was not expected to live. All the members of the family were called to her bedside. They stood round, looking mournful and taking a sly inventory of the furniture.

"Mike," said the old mother, "you'll remember to give that dresser to Bridget?"

"I will that," I'll remember, sure. Faith, what a memory she has!"

"How generous she is, the dear creature," murmured Bridget, weeping and wondering what else she was going to get.

"She is, indeed," said the rest of the family.

"And, Mike, there's the horse for Tim; don't forget the horse for Tim." "No, mother; aye, isn't it wonderful, now? Conscious and reasonable to the last!"

"And mind you give my gold watch to Pat, Mike; I've wound it up for him and it's keeping good time. And there's the pig for you, Mike, and the cow for Kathleen, and the chest of drawers for Larry—"

"Aye, it's marvelous, indeed. Her memory is perfect to the end. She doesn't forget one single thing!"

"And, Mike, remember Donovan, the grocer, and pay him the fifteen pounds we owe him."

"Don't listen to her! Don't listen to her!" yelled the family. "She's raving! She's raving!"

## BOUND TO GRUMBLE

THEY still talk at Pentonville about the prisoner who always grumbled at everything. He was sentenced to death, and as he went down the stairs from the dock he grumbled: "Silly old duffer. What did he want to keep me waiting three weeks for?"

"The van was waiting, and he grumbled about having to ride in 'a grumbling baby-hutch like that,' and demanded a taxi."

Being in the condemned cell, he could order what he liked, and he had a steak. As soon as he got his knife into it he grumbled at "this 'ere confounded foreign meat' again."

At night he complained of his mattress, and by day he grumbled at his cell. At last the hangman called and got him in position, plumed, and said soothingly: "Now you're all right."

"I don't know about that," replied the grumbling prisoner. "This blooming plank don't seem any too safe to me."

## NOT SURPRISING

MR. UPTON SINCLAIR, the American author, became famous through his exposure of the methods of Chicago beef packers, was in this country for some time recently, but he has now returned to the States.

While over here he was telling a story of a game of cards in the Wild West. A tenderfoot, looking on, saw one of the players deal himself four aces from the bottom of the pack. The tenderfoot whispered indignantly to another onlooker: "Did you see that?"

"What?" asked the other.

"That swindler dealt himself four aces!" the tenderfoot hissed.

"What?" was the astonishing reply.

"Wasn't it his deal?"

## HER THREAT

A CERTAIN young couple who were married some months ago never had a cloud to mar their happiness until recently. One morning the young wife came to breakfast in an extremely sulky and unhappy mood. To all her husband's inquiries she returned snappish answers. She was in no better frame of mind when he came home that evening for dinner, all of which mystified the young husband.

Finally, late in the evening, in reply to his insistent demands to know what the matter was, the wife burst into tears and replied: "Henry, if ever I dream again that you have kissed another woman I'll never speak to you as long as I live!"

## GENEROUS



MISTRESS (engaging cook): "I can't pay you all the wages you want, but I'll give you all my cast-off clothes to wear."

## NOT RELIABLE



"No, I never take my wife to the theatre. Pieces I haven't seen before might be improper, and anything I go to a second time is sure to be."

## TRAVELER'S TACT

A YOUNG man who had just been engaged as commercial traveler by a Canadian firm was warned that the great fault of his predecessor had been want of tact. The young man started out, and, in the course of his employment, orders began to come in at a quite unprecedented rate.

The climax came when a big order was sent in from a firm with whom the wholesale house had had a bitter quarrel, ending in a total stoppage of business.

The traveler's employers sent for him on his return and asked him how he had managed that particular miracle.

"I used tact, sir," was the reply. "as you warned me to. When I got to Mr. B's shop he came up and asked me what firm I represented. Remembering the circumstances, I handed him my card and said, 'Why, these blooming idiots!'"

## YOUTH'S LIGHTNING CALCULATIONS

THE president of a Canadian college said of youth at a tea:

"I find youth modest, almost over-modest. I don't agree with the accepted idea of youth that is epitomized in the anecdote.

"According to this anecdote, an old man said to a youth:

"My boy, when I was your age I thought, like you, that I knew it all; but now I have reached the conclusion that I know nothing."

"The youth, lighting a cigarette answered carelessly:

"Hm! I reached that conclusion about you years ago."

## OUT OF DIFFICULTY

A CHARACTERISTIC story of Dr. Parker was told the other day by a clergyman, who had it from an old minister who was much interested in Joseph Parker's early work as a local preacher. One Saturday he met Parker and asked him whether he had an engagement for Sunday.

"Yes," was the reply, and Parker went on to specify the place.

"Are your sermons ready, Joseph?" asked the minister.

"I have the morning sermon," was the reply, "but I am not sure about the evening."

"Well, Joseph, what is your text for the morning and how do you treat it?" Parker went over his text and the outline of his sermon.

"But, Joseph," said the minister, "that is very clever, but it is not the real meaning of the text. If you will look at the commentaries you will see that you are wrong."

Parker thanked him and went his way. On the Monday the minister again met his friend.

"Well, Joseph, how did you get on yesterday?"

"Very well," was the reply. "How did you manage?"

"Well," he said, "in the morning I preached my sermon and explained the text in my way, and at the close I said, 'This is how I understand it. But I learned men understand it differently, and I will tell you in the evening how the learned men understand it.'"

They all came back in the evening, and Joseph had a happy day.

## DIFFERENT PICTURES

AN elderly gentleman in a railway compartment had been to the National Gallery and wanted to talk to somebody about it.

"Excuse me, sir," he said to the velvet-coated individual seated opposite to him. "You are something in the artistic line, aren't you?"

"I have exhibited many pictures in my time," replied the individual.

"Ah, dear me! Successfully, may I ask?"

"Sir, tens of thousands of people have paid to view my pictures."

"Really?" exclaimed the old gentleman. "You must be a great artist. Do you exhibit many pictures in the course of a year?"

"Miles of them," said the man in the velvet coat. "I'm a cinematograph operator."

## HOW IT SOUNDED

HE was about to ask her father for her hand in marriage, but he did not feel nervous. As he carefully vanished his hair he repeated, for the last time, the many little speech he had prepared.

"Mr. Smith, I have called to tell you, quite frankly, that Ethel and I love each other and to ask for your consent to our marriage. I am not a rich man, I know, but we are both willing to fight the battle of life together. And so on, and so on."

It was not until he found himself alone with her father that his courage grew suddenly tight and his eyesight faded.

He plunged:

"Mr. Smith, I—er—ahem!—I—ah—frankly come to—er—hem—tell you—er—quite frankly—that you—that we—that is, that I—ah—love your daughter! I—ahem—ah—have frankly called to—er—ask you to be my wife. That is—er—she—we—er—I—no! I hope, sir, you understand me!"

And father did—that's the wonder of it!

## FAIRLY CAUGHT

IN the university town of Dorpat, in Russia, a prosaic, plodding farmer complained to a justice of the peace that he had been defrauded by the defendant of twenty roubles—about three pounds.

"I bought a cow from him—he is a peasant, your honor," he explained, "and I first paid for the animal and then asked him to drive it from the market-place into my yard. This he agreed to do. Well, when he had the cow close to my barn he refused to budge a step farther unless I paid him twenty roubles, saying that he had received nothing from me. This was a barefaced lie, because I paid him the money a few minutes before."

"Where are your witnesses?" asked the judge.

"Witnesses! I have not a single witness. What are the witnesses for? Doesn't he know right well, the contemptible cur, that I paid him the money?"

"You must not call him names!" interposed the judge. "Did he pay you the money?" he asked the defendant.

"I never saw the color of it, your honor. Why, if he had paid me, do you think—"

"That will do!" exclaimed the judge. "The plaintiff's claim, unsupported by witnesses or evidence of any kind, cannot succeed. He seems an honest fellow, though, and has evidently lost his twenty roubles. Let us get up a subscription for him. I will head the list with five roubles. Won't you give something, too?" inquired the judge of the defendant.

"That I will," was the eager response, "with a whole heart! Will three roubles do? Here's the note."

The judge took the three-rouble note, examined it critically, looked suspiciously at the giver, and said: "You dare to utter false money in an imperial court of justice! Have you any more notes of this description? This is a very serious matter indeed. Where did you get this forged money?"

The man turned very white, gave a series of explanations that contradicted each other, muttered and floundered about from lie to lie, till at last in despair he cried out: "If you want to know the whole truth, here it is! This forged note belongs to the plaintiff. He did pay me twenty roubles for the cow, the rascal, but he paid me in forged notes and that's one of them! It all amounts to just what I said, that he didn't pay me at all, and it's he that must go to Siberia for uttering forged notes, not I. I am as innocent as the babe unborn!"

But the perjured defendant was as deaf about what he said as he had been cleverly tricked by the judge.

## NOTHING DOING



TEACHER (setting subject for composition): "What would you do if you suddenly came into possession of fifty thousand pounds?"

Tommy (speaking aloud): "Nuffink! Abso-bally-lutely—nuffink!"

## LOYAL TO HIS MATE

TWO men were shooting, little knowing that a policeman was watching them from behind a hedge, for his suspicions were aroused. Suddenly he darted out into the open and came upon them.

"I want to see your licences," he exclaimed.

Immediately one of the men ran away as hard as he could go. Convinced now that his suspicions were correct, the policeman pursued him up hill and down dale for about a couple of miles. At last he caught him and again demanded the licence.

To his surprise it was instantly produced.

"What on earth did you make me run all this way for if you've got a licence?" cried the police-officer angrily.

"Cause my friend hadn't got one!" was the reply.

## AND THAT WAS ALL



MAUD: "Well, how did he propose? Just tell me all about it." Phyllis: "Er—when he started he was on his knees, and—er—er—when he finished I was on them."

## WHY TRADE SLACKENS

BUSINESS was slack, but Jones, the barber, hearing a customer's footstep, immediately busied himself with the razor-stop.

His spirits dropped, however, when informed that the man wanted nothing more than to have his hair trimmed.

"Shave yourself, don't you, sir?" he inquired as he snipped the hair round the customer's ears.

"Yes. How did you know that?"

"No barber would turn out a job like that in these hard days. Besides, we might as well shave up shop if everybody shaved themselves."

"Perhaps," murmured the customer indifferently, adjusting the towel round his neck.

Jones snipped and cut in silence, but after a few moments broke out again in an aggrieved tone of voice:

"You're in business, ain't you, sir? Well, suppose no barbers ever bought anything of you, how would you like it?"

"Shouldn't mind," answered the customer off-handedly. "I sell mouth-organs!"

The barber finished hurriedly and in silence.

## ANTICIPATED

HE was full of zeal for the temperance cause and was holding a series of lectures in a workman's hall. But the audience were very unkind and kept interrupting. So much so that at last he hired an ex-prize-fighter to keep order. That night the orator contrasted the contents of home-life with the squalor of drunkenness.

"What is it we want when we return home from our daily toil?" he asked.

"What do we want to ease our burden, to gladden our hearts, to bring smiles to our faces and joyous songs to our lips?"

He paused for effect, and in the silence could be heard the voice of the keeper of the peace.

"Mind," he said, "the first bloke that says 'beer,' out he goes with a bang."

## HE TOOK CHANCES

THE judge in the wild and woolly West had declared that he would stop the carrying of firearms in the street. Before him appeared for trial a tough youth charged with getting drunk and firing his revolver in a crowded street.

"Twenty dollars and costs," said the judge.

"But, your honor," interposed counsel for the prisoner, "my client did not hit anybody."

"Why, you admit that he fired the gun?"

"Yes, but he fired it into the air," explained the lawyer.

"Twenty dollars and costs," repeated the judge. "He might have shot an angel."

## HE DIDN'T MIND WAITING

A CANADIAN, wishing to know his fate at once, telegraphed a proposal of marriage to the lady of his choice. After spending the entire day at the telegraph office he was finally rewarded late in the evening by an affirmative answer.

"If I were you," suggested the operator, "I'd think twice before I'd marry a girl that kept me waiting all day for my answer."

"No, no," retorted the man. "The girl who waits for the night rates is the girl for me."

## SOMETHING CHEAP

MRS. WIGGINS had "run in" for a minute to talk over the latest news of the village with her friend, Mrs. Hopkins.

"Do you know," she said, "they tell me that old Mr. Magee only subscribed two shillings to the minister's salary. That doesn't seem possible, does it?"

"To anybody that knows Silas Magee real well, it does," replied Mrs. Hopkins. "You haven't lived in this town all your life, Mrs. Wiggins, and you don't know what Silas is capable of. Why, I remember once when he was a young fellow, going to singing school with the rest of us, we got up a picnic."

"One of the girls spoke up and said she'd bring some chicken sandwiches. 'I'll bring some sultana cake,' says another."

"I'll fetch some jelly and buns," says somebody else; and so it went on till we had most everything we could eat promised. Then one of the boys, who had no sisters, said he would bring the coffee. That gave Silas his chance. He'd been sitting by, listening to it all, and now he spoke up real brisk, and says he:

"I'll bring the water for the coffee!"

"No, Mrs. Wiggins. I ain't surprised a mile at his subscribing only two shillings. The surprising thing is that it wasn't one."

## MADE IT CLEAR

LAWYERS have a way of making things so clear that no one but a lawyer can understand them. A distinguished member of the profession was recently probing a witness.

"My good woman," he said in a clear, distinct voice, "you must be specific; you must give an answer, in the fewest possible words of which you are capable, to the plain and simple question whether you were crossing the street with the baby on your arm and the omnibus was coming down on the right side and the cab on the left and the brougham was trying to pass the omnibus, and you saw the plaintiff, between the brougham and the cab, or whether, and when you saw him at all, and whether near or not near the brougham, cab, or omnibus, or either, or any two, and which of them respectively—or how was it?"

"Yes, sir!" ventured the witness in utter confusion.

## MISSED

HE was a countryman on a visit to London, and one evening he dropped into a suburban music hall, where the "star" turn was a Mexican knife thrower.

Being ignorant of the Mexican's intentions, he stared hard when a colored lady with a repulsive countenance stood up in front of the board.

The Mexican walked majestically across the stage, and after several flourishes, threw a knife which whizzed past the lady's ear and stuck in the board, quivering, within an inch of her head, at which the countryman fell back in his seat with a gasp, exclaiming: "Good Heavens, he's missed!"

## A SLIGHT MISTAKE

BROWN is a very good fellow, but alas! he has one bad habit. It is that of never reaching home until the small hours of the morning.

Mrs. Brown hit upon a plan. If she could not persuade him out of the habit perhaps she could frighten him out of it.

Consequently, when he reached home one night he was confronted by a tall, white-shrouded figure, which glided up to him.

"Wh-wha's that?" gasped poor Brown.

"I am the family ghost," replied a sepulchral voice.

Brown heaved a sigh of relief. "Great Scott!" he said. "How you frightened me. I thought you were the misus."

## MAKING SURE



LION TAMER: "Five pounds to anyone who will enter the tiger's cage." Onlooker: "I accept the offer on one condition." Lion Tamer: "What's that?" Onlooker: "That you take the tiger out first!"