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The Man Who Laughs.

The man whose ha! ha! reaches from one end of the street to the other may be the same fellow who scalded his wife and spanked the baby before he got his breakfast, but his laughter is only the crackle of thorns under the pot. The man who spreads his laughter through his life—before a late breakfast when he misses the train; when his wife goes visiting and he has to eat a cold supper; the man who can laugh when he finds a button off his shirt, when the furnace fire goes out in the night, and both of the twins come down with the measles at the same time—he's the fellow that's needed. He never tells his neighbor to have faith; somehow he puts faith into him. He delivers no homilies; the sight of his beaming face, the sound of his happy voice, and the sight of his blessed daily life, carry convictions that words have no power to give. The blues flee before him as the fog before the west wind; he comes into his own home like a flood of sunshine over a meadow of blooming buttercups, and his wife and children blossom in his presence like June roses. His home is redolent with sympathy and love. The neighborhood is better for his life, and somebody will learn of him that laughter is better than tears. The world needs this man. Why are there so few of them? Can he be created? Can he be evolved? Why is he not in every house, turning rain into shine and winter into summer all round the year, until life is a perpetual season of joy?

Mr. Spiker Does Some Shopping.

"You had better put them down on a piece of paper," said Mrs. Spiker, on giving her order.  
"Oh, no," said Mr. S., "my memory is good."  
"Well, then, a spool of 60 Coates' black thread."  
"Yes."  
"A yard of not too light and not too dark calico."  
"Yes."  
"A small hammer, a can of peaches of the Pasadena brand, a dozen pearl buttons, two yards of cardinal ribbon, silk on one side satin on the other."  
"Yes," said Mr. S., thoughtfully.  
"A pair of slippers for baby, a dozen lemons, a good tooth-brush, a pineapple, two ounces of sky-blue German yarn, an ounce vial of homœopathic nux vomica pellets, a—"  
"Wait a second," said Mr. S., counting on his fingers.  
"And a bottle of vanilla extract, and a yard of triple box-plaited crepe lisse ruching, and three yards of a small-checked nainsook, and —"

But Mr. S. had seized his hat and was running for the station. What the poor man brought home was a yard of bed-ticking, and three yards of black crepe, a bottle of vinegar, eight yards of nankeen, a scrub-brush, a pound of green yarn, sixty spools of coat thread, a yard of very black calico, and a pint bottle of homœopathic pills.

The Woman Who Laughs.

For a good every-day household angel give us a woman who laughs. Her biscuit may not be always just right, and she may occasionally burn her bread and forget to replace dislocated buttons, but for solid comfort all day and every day she is a paragon. Home is not a battle-field, nor life one long, unending row. The trick of always seeing the bright side, or, if the matter has no bright side, of shining up the dark one, is a very important faculty, one of the things no woman should be without. We are not all born with the sunshine in our hearts, as the Irish prettily phrase it, but we can cultivate a cheerful sense of humor if we only try.

How to Train the Memory.

Sidney Woollett, the New York elocutionist, says that the way memory can be trained is by constant exercise. "I know thirteen of Shakespeare's plays and Tennyson's 'Idyls' by heart, besides a volume of miscellaneous poetry. My process was simple. I went hard to work and learned them by note. Sometimes I would read ten lines over carefully several times and then attempt to read them. If I failed I would keep at them till I knew the lines perfectly; then I would try ten lines more. By memorizing ten lines at a time thoroughly I had little trouble to repeat an entire poem of a thousand lines or more. My favorite way of memorizing is while I am

walking. Often I have walked fifteen or twenty miles repeating long poems like 'Miles Standish,' 'Enoch Arden,' and 'Elaine.' It somehow comes natural to me to memorize while walking. I seem to remember better what I have conned. Shakespeare's plays are difficult to memorize, because the author has so many striking lines and so many original characters. Naturally it is more difficult to recite dramas than poems. If I happen to make the slightest mistake in reading my lines I hear from it, so I am careful to know what I recite perfectly."

A Curse of Woman.

The most marked social change wrought in our time is the extraordinary increase in the number of educated women who voluntarily earn their living by work. As history shall look back and weigh our time it will pretty surely regard this change as the happiest of all that we have made.

The educated mind needs not only occupation, but the obligation of occupation. It is not enough that one shall know how to pass the time; one needs to have duties of a regular and constant character which must be discharged. In the absence of such obligation, in the absence of work that is interesting for its bread-winning or other practical value, there surely come ennui, discontent, unhealthy vague longings, and a weary life.

It is the curse of women that in our social arrangements they are in so great a degree excluded from systematic work. The very tenderness of our care for them has been, and is, an affliction to them. Their lives are arranged upon the assumption that they are to be idlers, or at least that their work is to be of an irregular and inconsequent sort, and a great sum of human suffering, immeasurable but omnipresent, is the consequence.

The trouble is that we have educated our women into an intellectual activity that demands earnest occupation, and have at the same time continued to maintain social arrangements and social prejudices that were born of a time when women were educated only to be the playthings of men, the companions of their relaxation, not of their endeavor.

Our women are of a larger mental and moral mold than were those of earlier times, and their needs are larger. Among them is the need of opportunity to use their faculties to the full measure, and they are beginning to find out the fact. It is the beginning of a revolution from which the world will greatly profit.

How a Great Man Proposed.

Abraham Lincoln's offer of marriage was a very curious one, and singularly enough, it has but recently come to light. Numerous as his biographers have been, and closely as they have gleaned for new facts and materials, it was left for the latest one, Mr. Jesse Welk, of Greencastle, to discover this unique and characteristic production of Mr. Lincoln's almost untutored mind. The letter is one of several written, presumably to the lady he afterward married. Addressed to "My Dear Mary," it reads thus: "You must know that I can't see you or think of you with entire indifference; and yet it may be that you are mistaken in regard to what my real feelings towards you are. If I knew you were not, I should not trouble you with this letter. Perhaps any other man would know enough without any other information; but I consider it my peculiar right to plead ignorance and your bounden duty to allow the plea. I want in all cases to do right, and most particularly so in all cases with women. I want at this particular time, more than anything else, to do right with you, and if I knew it would be doing right, as I rather suspect it would, to let you alone, I would do it. And for making the matter as plain as possible, I now say you can drop the subject, dismiss your thoughts—if you ever had any—from me forever, and leave this letter unanswered without calling forth one accusing murmur from me. And I will even go further, and say that if it will add anything to your comfort and peace of mind to do so, it is my sincere wish that you should. Do not understand by this, that I wish to cut your acquaintance. I mean no such thing. What I do wish is that our further acquaintance shall depend upon yourself. If such further acquaintance would contribute nothing to your happiness, I am sure it would not to mine. If you feel yourself in any degree bound to me, I am now willing to release you, provided you wish it; while, on the other hand, I am willing and even anxious to bind you faster if I can be convinced that it will in any degree add to your happiness. This, indeed, is the whole question with me. Nothing would make

me more miserable than to believe you miserable; nothing more happy than to know you were so. In what I have now said I think I can not be misunderstood; and to make myself understood is the only object of this letter. If it suits you best not to answer this, farewell. A long life and a merry one attend you. But if you conclude to write back, speak as plainly as I do. There can be neither harm nor danger in saying to me anything you think, just in the manner you think it.

"Your friend,  
"LINCOLN."

Probably this is the queerest love letter on record and the most remarkable offer of marriage ever made. It is a love letter without a word of love, and a proposal of marriage that does not propose.

Old Proverbs.

Better in the wrong with sincerity, than the right with falsehood.

A candid man blusheth not to own he is wiser to day than yesterday.

While a man liveth he may mend; count not thy brother reprobate.

A heresy is an evil thing, for its shame is its pride.

Men who jest at Revelation cling to a madman's prophecy.

Crosses are ladders leading to heaven.  
Death is deaf and hears no denial.

If you trust before you try, you may repent before you die.

I wept when I was born, and every day shows why.

It is better to do well than to say well.

If the parson be from home, be content with the curate.

Nothing is so bad as to be good for nothing.  
The crutch of Time does more than the club of Hercules.

A wise man knows he knows nothing, but the fool thinks he knows everything.

Two things a man should never be angry at; what he cannot help and what he cannot keep.

We were born crying, live complaining, and die disappointed.

When it pleaseth not God the saint can do little.

Alms-giving never made any man poor, nor robbery rich, nor prosperity wise.

A liar is a bravo towards God, and a coward towards men.

A man that breaks his word bids others be false to him.

A lie begets a lie till they come to generations.  
A good life keeps off wrinkles.

Arrogance is a weed that grows mostly on a dunghill.

Better to go to heaven in rags, than to hell in embroidery.

WORK is the holiest thing in earth or heaven;  
To lift from souls the sorrow and the curse,  
This dear employment must to us be given,  
While there is want in God's great universe.

—LUCY LARCOM.

I DON'T know what it proves, or whether it proves anything, but dentists say that women endure pain with far more pluck than men display.

Men howl aloud with the pain the dentist inflicts, while women endure it with silent suffering.

THE DEADLY COLD BED.—If trustworthy statistics could be had of the number of persons who die every year or become permanently diseased from sleeping in damp or cold beds, they would probably be astonishing and appalling.

It is a peril that constantly besets travelling men, and if they are wise they will invariably insist on having their beds aired and dried, even at the risk of causing much trouble to their landlords.

It is a peril that besides also in the home, and the cold "spare room" has slain its thousands of hapless guests, and will go on with its slaughter till people learn wisdom. Not only the guest, but the family, often suffer the penalty of sleeping in cold rooms and chilling their bodies, at a time when they need all their bodily heat, by getting between cold sheets. Even in warm summer weather a cold, damp bed will get in its deadly work. It is a needless peril, and the neglect to provide dry rooms and beds has in it the elements of murder and suicide.

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