

A MEAN ADVANTAGE.

There were a score or more of women gathered together at Mr. Johnson's house. Mr. Johnson is a good hearted man and a respected citizen, though he is rather skeptical in some things. The women had just organized "The Foreign Benevolent Society" when Mr. Johnson entered the room. He was at once appealed to, to donate a few dollars as a foundation to work on, and then Mr. Graham added:

"It would be so pleasant in after years for you to remember that you gave this Society its very first dollar and its first kind word.

He slowly opened his wallet and drew out a \$10 bill, and as the ladies smacked their lips and slapped their hands, he asked:

"Is this Society organized to aid the poor of foreign countries?"

"Yes—yes—yes!" they chorused.

"And it wants money?"

"Yes—yes."

"Well, now," said Johnson, as he folded the bill in a tempting shape, "there are twenty married women here. If there are fifteen of you who can make oath that you have combed the children's hair this morning, washed the dishes, blackened the cook stove, and made the beds, I'll donate ten dollars.

"I have," answered two of the crowd, and the rest said:

"Why now, Mr. Johnson?"

"If fifteen of you can make oath that your husbands are not wearing socks with holes in the heels, the money is yours," continued the wretch.

"Just hear him!" they exclaimed, each one looking at the other.

"If ten of you have boys without holes in the knees of their pants, this X goes to the Society," said Johnson.

"Such a man!" they whispered.

"If there are five pairs of stockings in this room that do not need darning, I'll hand over the money," he went on.

"Mr. Johnson," said Mrs. Graham, with great dignity, "the rules of this Society declare that no money shall be contributed except by members, and, as you are not a member, I beg that you will withdraw and let us proceed with the routine business."

THE CAUSE OF THE 'SPLOSION.

"I would invite you to my house, Brudder Jackson," said Deacon Johnston, as he emerged from church last Sunday evening, "but I dunno as we'll get any supper dis night, de cock stove am so dreffully out of repair.

"What's de matter wid de stove?"

"Why, you see, cold wedder am comin' on and wood is gettin' skese an' high, an' I've 'structed de folks to be very ekoneconomical in de usin' ob it. We'se bin buyin' in small lots, an' last night, bein' out ob fuel, I sent one ob my boys ober to a neighbor's to borrow a few sticks. De man an' his family had gone to bed, owin' to de lateness ob de hour, an' dat boy, who would 'spise to do an dishonest transaction, wrote out his note for de value ob de wood, and droppin' it in a prominent place in de wood-shed, shouldered an armful, an' brought it home."

"Jess so."

"Well, a fire was kindled, the tea-kettle put on, de ole woman she is gittin' de supper. All ob a sudden, puff went de stove, zoom; keewish, kuslush went something, an' as I tumbled over, I saw de old woman makin' for de roof wid de tea-kettle an' de stove-plates followin' her, while de boys and de gals was as brack wid smut as de ace of spades. De stove's goose was cooked fur a fact."

"What was de cause of de 'splosion?"

"I'm strongly 'clined to believe dat dar was powder in dat wood, an' dat de powder was done put in by dat white man to ketch some thievinn' darkies what nebber buys no wood, an' bressed ef I don't think dat man 'spects me, kase he couldn't find dat note, and won't make any 'pologies."

"Dat am an outrage."

"Fur a fact, an' de children's supper was spiled, too."

"GOING TO BED" ETIQUETTE.

It is always a debatable point of etiquette, whether hostess or guest make the first movement to go to bed, and thus break up the evening gathering. The guest may be overcome with fatigue from a day's journey, the host may be fidgeting under the strain of entertaining, and longing for the guest to show some signs by which he can gracefully and hospitably suggest that it is growing late, yet neither quite like to appear, as they think, impolite. In fact many visitors have suffered agonies in trying to be agreeable, while the host and hostess were doing their best to suppress their yawns and "make conversation," until chance offered a solution of the difficulty. There is, however, but one rule to be followed in this relationship of host and hostess and the hour of retirement. The host or hostess must always take the initiative and say an appropriate word as to the lateness of the hour and the desirability of going to bed.—*Boston Beacon*.

THE HEIR APPARENT has the reputation of being able, on an emergency, to sustain the dignity of his exalted position, and a recent incident supports this conclusion. It will be remembered that the Prince of Wales presided at the recent banquet, in connection with the Gordon Boys Home, which was attended by an unusual number of persons of distinction in all ranks of life. After the dinner, most of the company, his Royal Highness included, withdrew to the drawing-room, where tea and coffee were served, and among these was Cardinal Manning. The Prince sent a message to his Eminence that he should like to speak with him, and the Cardinal, apparently thinking it necessary to support his pretensions as a "Prince of the Church," simply replied: "I stand here." The answer was conveyed to his Royal Highness, who took no notice whatever, though Dr. Manning (says our informant) began to show signs of being uncomfortable, and to edge forward nearer to the royal circle. But it was in vain. The Prince of Wales left before long, and having vindicated his dignity, his Royal Highness, as he was passing out of the room, followed by his suite, made a slight detour, and good humouredly wished the somewhat discomfited Cardinal good night.—*Nonconformist and Independent*.