

THE HUMORIST AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE.



"WERE you at the concert last evening? Tony affair, wasn't it—baritony—as it were. In fact one of the most unforzando occasions I ever experienced. Did you not admire that charming rendition by Miss Schqualler?"

"She squirmed and grimaced terribly over it," said the law student.

"Yes—'twas a madrigal—mad-wriggle—see? And she refused to respond to an *encore*. These musicians are crotchety folks. The ballad by Madame Pfinkel-schnoufski was exquisite. It had a beautiful and touching refrain; I did so admire it, and I could not help thinking that if she would refrain more and sing less, she would be a greater success. Prof. Boomplugger didn't do so badly with the selections from Meyerbeer—which reminds me of the Dutch musical enthusiast. 'Hans,' said a friend, 'who you dinks vash-der besht muzikal gomposer, heh?' 'Vell, some beebles dey likes Handel and Beethoven, and dem vellers, but I go fur Meyerbeer (*Mehr-bier*) efery time, dond id?'"

I had to explain that "mehr" was German for more before most of them saw the point.

"Hoot, mon," said the Scotch boarder, "Jairman, ye ca't! Its jist gude Scotch. Mair beer—varra gude."

A day or two afterwards I heard that the Scotchman had tried to tell this story, but failed completely, because he tried to improve it by substituting "mair-whiskey" for "Meyerbeer," and as nobody ever heard of a composer of the former name, it fell somewhat flat.

"The defeat of the Democratic candidate for the Presidency does not seem to have put a stop to the everlasting commercial union discussion. The *World* still keeps doing its little best to discredit Erastus Wiman, but with about as much success as a grasshopper attacking an elephant. Perhaps you may not be aware that Shakespeare, with his usual foresight, sized up the situation accurately in his play of Julius Cæsar, in which Cassius observes:—

"'Wi-man he doth bestride the narrow *World*
Like a colossus.'

"O-o-oh!" ejaculated somebody.

"Oh, it's all very well for you people who couldn't make a joke to sneer at the efforts of the humorist, but did you ever think of the mental strain involved in getting off even a fair-to-middling witticism? I know a man who has been trying ever so hard to get off a joke on the name of President Cleveland. The nearest he has got yet is this: 'What's the difference between President Lincoln and the present President? Why, one split rails and the other Cleve-land.' Pretty sick one? Perhaps it is; but try to improve on it if you can. In the following verses I have attempted to depict the state of mind in which the attempt to evolve humor under unfavorable conditions frequently results:—

Oh, why does that man look so solemnly down,
With his face over-shrouded in gloom?
And why do his features contract with a frown,
His fingers convulsively clutching his crown,
As he moodily paces the room?

How wildly he passes his hands through his hair,
While frenzy seems racking his brain!
He suddenly throws himself down on a chair
Though nothing he says, yet he surely "think swear,"
And writhes as in bitterest pain.

Now growing more calm, he is buried in thought,
With a far away look in his eyes;
A faint gleam of sunlight his visage has caught,
It passes—and once more with agony fraught,
The hideous spell on him lies!

Is he suffering under the pangs of remorse,
Or passion's o'erwhelming control?
Of some wasting disease is he feeling the force?
Has the path of true love run its usual course?
What is racking his body and soul?

Oh, come off! How absurd are the questions you ask!
It's the regular way of such folks.
As they're seen by the public 'tis under a mask—
'Tis an eminent humorist hard at his task—
And it isn't a good day for jokes.

HAMILTON AGAIN.

MISS GIRTON (to Mr. A. W. K. Ward, showing him photos of her college chums)—"Which of these do you admire most, Mr. Ward?"

MR. WARD (choosing one)—"This one, I think."

MISS GIRTON—"Yes, Miss Carmel is considered the prettiest girl in the school, but then, you know, she is not clever."

MR. WARD—"Well, do you know, Miss Girtton, I have always thought that it is the ugly girls that are the cleverest—ahem! that is, you know—I mean—haven't we been having very hot weather?"

"GIVE IT UP."

BROWN—"I say, Smith, why is that girl across the road like Tom Ruffen, who has been sent down thirty-seven times?"

SMITH—"Don't know. Give it up, old boy."

BROWN—"Well, it's because she moves in a pelisse circle—see?"

(After a long time Smith sees and faints.)



THE RULING PASSION.

LAWYER (to Theatrical Manager who has become insolvent)—
"Then this is the full list of your liabilities?"
MANAGER—"No, there are other little debts."
LAWYER—"Well, hadn't I better set them all down in detail?"
MANAGER—"Oh, no; just say 'for further particulars see small bills.'"