

**THE
IDLE MOMENT**

A SHABBY dressed man entered a busy office and, addressing a clerk who sat at work said: "My dear sir, do you know how much time you lose dipping a pen into the ink? Ten dips a minute means six hundred dips an hour or six thousand dips in ten hours, and each dip consumes—"

"Yes, I know," replied the clerk. "I have figured it all out."

"And yet I find you still writing in the old way."

"Yes, I am using the fountain pen you sold me about a month ago—using it in the old way because it won't write any other way."

"Beg pardon," remarked the caller, hurriedly. "I'm in the wrong office. Good-morning."

...

Puffing and blowing, the fat passenger began to climb to the upper berth in the sleeping car.

"Pretty hard work, isn't it?" said the commercial man in the lower berth.

"It is," answered the fat passenger, "for a man of my weight."

"How much do you weigh, may I ask?"

"Three hundred and eighty-seven pounds."

"Hold on: Take this one!" exclaimed the other, his hair beginning to rise on end. "I'd rather sleep in the upper berth anyway. The ventilation is better."

...

It was in a railway carriage, and the company consisted of several commercial travelers and a staid and pompous old gentleman. Various efforts were unsuccessfully made by the knights of the road to draw their companion into conversation. At length one of them said:

"Come, sir, I know you are one of us. Tell us what you are traveling in."

"Sir," answered the old gentleman, facing his interlocutor calmly, "I am traveling in very objectionable and inquisitive company, and the carriage is full of my samples."

...

The stationer attempted to sell the stranger a pack of playing-cards for twenty cents, and was surprised when the customer insisted on paying a nickel additional.

The mystery was rendered clear, however, when the stationer discovered that the stranger was a naval officer and was accustomed to nothing less than a quarter deck.

...

Proprietor Book-shop (in Lallahpooosa, Ind.).—Look here, young man! Why didn't you forward the list of our six-best-sellers to New York, last week?

The New Clerk.—'Cause we only sold five, sir.

...

He had invented a beetle powder, and he had advertised it far and wide.

There came a day when a customer rushed frantically into the shop owned by the distinguished inventor—a chemist. The customer showed signs of intense agitation.

"Give me another half-pound of your beetle powder! Quick!" he cried.

"I'm glad you like it," said the chemist, proceeding with the order.

"Yes," said the excited man. "I have one beetle al-

ready very ill, if I can only get home before he recovers and give him another half-pound, he'll die."

The chemist decided not to ask that customer for a testimonial to stick in his window.

...

"What is it?" asked the farmer, looking askance at the bag which the book canvasser had dropped on the ground with a weary air.

"I have some of the most entertaining and instructive literature of the day here, sir," answered the canvasser, endeavoring to brighten up a little in order to secure a purchaser. "In these days of education, when our sons and daughters have been trained—"

"Ain't got none," interrupted the farmer gruffly and ungrammatically.

"I have an assortment of books, sir, to suit all," continued the canvasser, "and any which I may not have in stock I can get on the shortest notice. Here are—" and he proceeded to rattle off the names of half-a-dozen as he pulled them out of his bag.

"I'm afeard you ain't got the kind I want," said the farmer, after a careful survey of the exteriors. "This one seems to be the nearest—how much is it?"

"That, sir, is five shillings," replied the canvasser.

"Here, take it back," said the farmer. "I want somethin' cheap. You see," he added, "I don't read 'em, but they comes in handy like. If it's got a leather cover, it does very well for a razor strop. If it's thick, it comes in fustrate to put under the drawers or the table when the foot or the castor comes off. If it's big, it'll do to hold the winder up. And I like 'em with a fastener, so as the book won't fly open and get the leaves smeared with mud when I throw it at the dog. No, don't think you've got any as will do for me."

CONDENSED OR "WANT" ADVERTISEMENTS.

Advertisements under this heading, 2c. a word first insertion; 1c. a word each subsequent insertion.

Contractions count as one word, but five figures (as \$1,000) are allowed as one word.

Cash remittance to cover cost **MUST** accompany all advertisements. **In no case** can this rule be overlooked. Advertisements received without remittance cannot be acknowledged.

Where replies come to our care to be forwarded, five cents must be added to cost to cover postage, etc.

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