

HUMOROUS.

A young lady was caressing a pretty spaniel and murmuring: "I do love a nice dog!" "Ah!" sighed a dandy, standing near, "I would I were a dog!" "Never mind," retorted the young lady, sharply, "You'll grow."

"Yes," remarked a musical critic, recently from K. usas, "the fiddlin' was bully, but I tell you, when the fat chap with the big mustache laid hold of that bass fiddle and went for them low notes in the violin-cellar, I just felt as if a buzz-saw was a playin' Yankee Doodle on my back-bone."

Late the other evening a merchant of this city was playing cards with a railroad official, who was rather sleepy at the time. "I pass," said the merchant. The railroad man was awake in an instant. "No road don't," said he, "not on this line. You pay your fare or walk."

A man who never has money enough on hand to pay his bills bought a pair of boots on credit. "How much are they?" "Five dollars, if you buy on credit, as usual, but \$6 if you pay cash down."

"How is that?" "Well, you see," said the simple-minded shoemaker, "when I sell on credit I know it is a dead loss, so I make de loss so schmall as possible."

An old colored minister, in a sermon on hell, pictured it as a region of ice and snow, where the damned freeze through-out eternity. When privately asked what his object was in representing Gehenna in this way, he said: "I don't dare tell dem people hell is fire. Why, if I was to say hell was warm, some of dem old rheumatic niggers would be wanting to start down dar de berry fast frost."

An old mountaineer visiting Sacramento and unacquainted with street cars, dropped a whole dollar into the box, and was astonished to learn that he could not get it out. The Con. says: "Finally he solved the problem of getting even with the railroad company by notifying the driver that he would use up the money he put in the box in rides. This he did by remaining on the car for twenty trips, and armed with a flask of whiskey and a bunch of crackers and cheese, the old fellow had a picnic all to himself."

A Vermont man in a sleeping car was accosted by his neighbor opposite, who was also putting on his shoes, with the enquiry, "My friend, are you a rich man?" The Vermontier looked astonished, but answered the pleasant, tired-looking gentleman with a "Yes, I'm tolerably rich." A pause occurred and then came another question. "How rich are you?"

He answered, "About \$700,000 or \$800,000. Why?" "Well," said the old man, "if I were as rich as you say you are, and snored as loud as I know you do, I would hire a whole sleeper every time I travelled."

"Ah, that's what I like! that's what I like!" chirped old Mr. Whistleblow, as he came carefully down the hill where the boys were exercising the sleds. "If there is anything really lovely, it is to see the boys full of annual spirits, enjoying the wintery sports," and just at that instant a hundred and fifty pounds of animal spirits came dashing down the hill on a double-runner, and caught the unsuspecting Mr. Whistleblow between the heels. There was a sound of sledging, and when he awoke he found himself in the hands of a gentleman, and had pinned together the ruptured back of his coat, he remarked, in a tone so gentle, that it made him quite black in the face, that the city government who would refuse to pass a law making it a reform school crime to slide on the streets was a set of pusillanimous yahoos.

A Chat with Josh Billings. BY HOWARD PAUL. I was sitting down to lunch one morning with an old friend at "Delmonico's," the famous New York restaurant (it is Bignon's and Tortoni's in one, with a dash of the Maison Doree), when there entered a gunt, tall man with stooping shoulders, a slouching walk, iron-grey hair, and a pair of keen, bright eyes, who deposited himself heavily upon a chair at the nearest vacant table. My friend touched my foot to direct my attention to the newcomer, and softly said:

"Do you know who that is?" "That's Josh Billings," he whispered; "I'll ask him to join us."

My friend arose, went to his table, grasped his hand, and in another instant I was introduced to the author of a vast amount of misapprehension.

"How's every body in your body?" said Josh to my friend; then turning to me, he said, "Glad to see you, sir. Just arvo. Bring my cutlet and coffee here;" and he inserted his long, lean legs under our table.

"I've just had a droll experience," remarked Josh. One felt it was an impertinence to call him "Josh" the moment one knew him; his sobriety was so transparent, his cordiality so unaffected. I've been studying the genus Tramp of late on the wharves and quays. He is a different order of being to the loafer of the highways and byways of the country. The City Tramp and the Country Tramp are as wide apart in habits of all kinds as Alpha and Omega."

"This morning I strolled down to the river-side, and was watching a sloop being emptied of a cargo of lobsters. I hadn't been long thus engaged when a broken-down, battered man, with a seedy coat and the merest parody of a hat, sidled up and regarded me for a moment as though he tally taking my measure, and estimating the extent of my good-nature. "I beg your pardon," said he; "them's a beautiful sight!"

"What?" "Them lobsters." "Yes, sir; and I'm going to ask you a favor. I've been statched more 'an sixty-five times from the jaws of trink; and I'm hungry. It's been so long since I've eaten that my food has forgotten its way down my throat. I haven't tasted a lobster for ten years, sir; would you kindly give me twenty-five cents that I might bear this 55 in memory. Twenty-five cents won't hurt you, an' it will make a new man of me."

The outcast threw so much pathos into his voice—though I knew he was simply acting—that comedians these tramps are!—that I gave him the sum desired.

He fairly snatched the money, leaving a monogram of his filthy paw on my sleeve, and in another instant darted into a squalid public house at the corner of the street. I watched till he came out, when I tackled him.

"You impostor," said I, "you told me you were hungry, and that you hadn't tasted lobsters for ten years!" "And it's the Bible-truth, my good sir," replied the fellow, with an exasperating grin. "But just as you gave me the money I remembered I hadn't tasted whiskey for eleven years, and I said to myself, 'I'll not give lobsters the preference. Then I remembered they were indigestible and couldn't be eaten raw, like oysters and other vegetables. Good morning, sir—good luck to you!"

And wiping great sodden purple lips with the sleeve of his coat, he disappeared. I pass, perhaps, the same antic imposture on some other simple-minded philanthropist."

And so Josh rattled on, telling us strings of adventures, and now and then uttering a quaint, wise thought. One remark I remember. He was saying that a friend of his had been on a spree for a fortnight, and that "he had a whiskey head on him."

"What's that?" I asked. "Why, his head was so swollen that he had to work on his hat with a shoe-horn."

"Mr. Billings," I said, in parting, "I'm astounded how your wise saws and comical stories float all over Christendom. One can scarcely pick up a paper in any part of the world where the English language is spoken but there, in an odd corner, nestles one of your little grains of philosophy. You keep yourself well before the public."

His reply was compact, pertinent and to the point. "Yes, sir; I keep myself just sufficient in the Public Eye without putting it out."

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