

HOW ELI SPRAINED HIS ANKLE

DID you ever hear how Eli Perkins sprained his ankle? Well, neither has anyone else, though Perkins is willing to tell the story—on one condition. That condition is that no one laugh until he finishes the story, and invariably his auditors fail to meet this requirement.

This is how he began the story at the banquet given to the American Press Humorists by the Business Men's League of St. Louis:

"Your toastmaster, Mr. Frank, has asked me to tell you how I sprained my ankle. Well, I shall tell you, if you will not laugh until I finish the story, but I am afraid you'll laugh, for I have tried to tell a number of people how I sprained my ankle, and they always laughed before I got through.

"This is how it happened. I was on a train going East, when there was a wreck. The train was derailed, and all the passengers were more or less shaken up. Everybody in the sleeping-car tried to get out as hurriedly as possible, and in the confusion our clothing got considerably mixed. I couldn't find my trousers at all, but finally I did find a pair of trousers, but I couldn't wear 'em. You see, they were not men's trousers—"

Here there was general laughter, and Perkins looked about in a pained sort of way, then went on: "There, you laughed. I knew you would. They were not men's trousers; they were boy's trousers. But I won't tell you how I sprained my ankle, because you laughed."

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"The bride was young, I believe, and the groom quite elderly?"

"Yes. She was seventeen and he eighty-three."

"Ah, I see! She was not old enough to know better, and he was too old not to know better."

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QUAY'S SIGNIFICANT VISIT

THE late Senator Quay was a secretive man, and as a consequence his comings and goings seemed mysterious to the newspaper men and others who were compelled to keep tabs on his movements. He frequently journeyed from Washington to Philadelphia and returned without any of his political friends being the wiser for it.

One morning he arrived at the Quaker City early, and a reporter who knew him intimately said: "Senator, is there any significance attached to your visit here to-day?"

"Yes," said the Senator, lowering his voice and looking shrewdly, "there is deep significance and importance."

The reporter's interest was aroused at once. "Might I ask what the business is?"

"Certainly," replied the Senator. "I am about to go down to the bank to try and have a note renewed, and I don't know whether I'll succeed or not."

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"Little Willie Littleboy, reading aloud: 'I can see through the widow—'"

Papa: "Tut, tut, my son! That word is 'window,' isn't it? Nobody can see through a widow."

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WHY THE DOG WAILED

OPHE READ and a traveling mate who were filling engagements for an entertainment bureau one day were standing on a railway-station platform in Texas, waiting for a train.

A negro boy came out as soon as the train signaled and began ringing a bell to attract customers to the eating-house. A lank dog that had followed howled lugubriously at the ringing of the bell. The boy gave the dog a look of ineffable contempt once or twice; but the sad-voiced animal continued his howl. Finally the boy said:

"Whut's de mattah wid you, dog? You doan hafter eat beah."

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The philosopher had been summoned back to work, although only one week of his fortnight's vacation had passed.

"Ah, well," he reflected, as he packed his trunk, "half a loaf is better than none."

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NEW-YORK vs. THE HOT PLACE

WHAT is the price of your peaches?" asked a New-Yorker of a ragged son of Erin, who was sitting beside a stall of magnificent fruit, on St. Charles-st., New-Orleans.

"Twenty-five cents th' peck, yer honor."

"Twenty-five cents for a peck of these splendid peaches? Why, my man, if you were in New-York you would be getting twenty-five cents apiece for them."

"An', may it plaze yer honor, sorr," said Pat promptly with a latent twinkle in his eye, "if you were in the Hot Place with a bucket of cold water, you'd be gettin' twenty-foive cents th' dipper, I'm thinkin'."

A PERFECT IGNORAMUS

By Emma C. Dowd

She can't play golf or tennis, and she doesn't ride a wheel;
She never pulled an oar in her life.
They say she truly couldn't tell a bowsprit from a keel—
A pretty woman is she for a wife!

She cannot read her Bible in Hebrew or in Greek;
She doesn't know a single geodetic rule;
Not a single word of Russian, French or Spanish can she speak—
I wonder where she ever went to school!

She sings and plays a little; but she hasn't studied art;
She never wrote a line for publication;
In a drama or a concert she has never taken part—
I really think she's far below her station.

She is beautiful and gracious; she reminds you of a flower;
With faultless taste she certainly is blest.
Her home's a feast of comfort—you may go there any hour—
They say it seems a very port of rest.

She never gives a party, though she entertains her friends—
Folks say her little suppers are superb.
To the welfare of her children she personally attends,
And nothing must her care of them disturb.

But her name is never mentioned when the great societies meet;
She has never served a day upon a Board.
She has never been a member of the clubs of the élite.
Oh, in public she is utterly ignored!

How her husband is contented we none of us can see—
He's a lawyer, and a good one, too, they say.
I wonder if he envies those wiser men than he
Who have wedded brilliant women of to-day?

He pays his wife devotion—oh, he acts the lover well!
Her admirers even hold her up to shame us.
How stupid to be humbugged by a little country belle!
For, truly, she's a perfect ignoramus!

Hot-Weather Philosophy

By Warwick James Price

Good things are not like fire-crackers—one should hang to them till the very last. It's easy to dream big things in a hammock.

It's lots more comfortable to point than to plod.

To some folks economy is like green grass in August—it comes only in spots.

There's a cooling puddle somewhere for every perspiring toad.

More men are governed by the thermometer than by their convictions.

Always put off till to-morrow what you are not compelled to do to-day; it may be cooler.

Plenty of men know exactly what ought to be done; but mighty few have the energy to get up and do it.

Chips From a Mental Woodshed

By Robert L. Jones

The fact that a poet's nose is red is no guaranty that his verses are.

Pedigrees and epitaphs are intended to perpetuate ready-made reputations.

Laughter may be the poor man's plaster; but it is not adhesive.

Girls think men are all soul; women know they are all stomach.

Affection before marriage is often overdone; but after marriage it usually is rare.

Hope is the poor man's bread, and charity sometimes supplies cheap butter.

It's a wise barber who never illustrates his stories with cuts.

HER REST

By F. P. Pitzer

The overworked type-writer hurries to a country-place.
She's very pale and nervous, there is sadness in her face;
She's got two weeks' vacation, and she leaves all care behind,
And goes to roam with Nature where the shaded paths they wind,
And dreamy cows they loiter knee-deep in the silver streams,
And city folks can lay out on the grass in pleasant dreams;
And to just such a comfortable, cozy, outdoor nest,
This overworked type-writer she is going for a rest.

On Monday night she gets out there. She's introduced to all,
And hardly has unpacked her trunks of sizes large and small.
When some of the young boarders take her to a dance with them
Held in a near-by village—she gets home at two A. M.;
And Tuesday night a straw-ride to a town twelve miles away,
Which winds up at a dance-hall, where they glide till break of day;
And Wednesday night a euchre party, followed by a dance—
The over-worked type-writer gets to bed at three, perchance.

And Thursday night a barn dance; Friday night a country reel;
And Saturday a minstrel show that ends up in aspiel;
And on the Sabbath they climb hills until they're stiff and sore;
On Monday they begin to hold their reels and hops once more;
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, *et cetera*.
Are passed like last week—ev'ry night a merry minuet.
The overworked type-writer comes back from her country nest,
She's thinner, sunburned, weary, tired, fagged out from her rest.

HAPPENED ON "LADIES' DAY"

LADIES' DAY at the Players' Club of New-York, which is celebrated on Shakespeare's birth anniversary, is a veritable "beauty show," for each member vies with his neighbor in bringing the two most attractive women he knows.

As the house is not large, and as each one invited considers that she has been paid a worthy compliment, the crush is worse than that around the bargain counter of a large dry-goods store, or in the lobby the first night at the opera. And, as in these two cases, it is not everyone who is successful in getting to the front.

But a young actress, who has made her career speedily, does not let mere tangle of petticoats and frock-coats impede her way.

At the last gathering one of the seniors of the reception committee, a widely-known poet, was slowly advancing through the narrow portion of the crowded rooms, when suddenly he felt two hands pressed against his back, and with an insistent shove was steered through the passageway.

Considerably surprised, he turned to find a demure young woman. At once, with a quiet gallantry, he remarked: "My dear, I have not the pleasure of knowing who you are, but you certainly are irresistible."

In the same afternoon, Oliver Herford, the humorist, was struggling in the vortex of femininity at the head of the stairs, when he was heard to exclaim: "Ugh! I have seen a maelstrom before, but never a femalestrom!"

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She evidently was determined to prevent his speaking. He was equally determined that he would speak, there, then and much to the point. With heavy earnestness, she asked:

"What tree do you love best?"

"Yew," was the laconic and instant answer, and then he was started.

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THE AIR OF HIS PARISH

ARCHBISHOP RYAN of Philadelphia is noted for the fatherly interest that he takes in the members of the clergy, but with it all he has the faculty of administering a rebuke when it is necessary in a shrewd, kindly way.

One of the clergymen who has a parish on the outskirts of the Quaker City was noted for the long periods of absence that he took from his parish; in fact it occurred so often that it became a matter of common talk. One day this man called on the Archbishop and asked for a month's leave of absence, saying that the doctor had recommended a change of air and scene.

The Archbishop looked up with a quizzical look in his eye and said:

"Well, I make the suggestion that you go to your parish and stay there. I think that would be a complete change of air and scenery."

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"A mighty poor sermon" said Knox, as they came out of church.

"What would you expect for a cent?" answered Cox, who had seen what the kicker had dropped into the plate.

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AN EXCUSABLE PUN

IT was tacitly agreed among the humorists at their convention that anyone who stooped to perpetrate a pun should be ostracized, and the inhibition was observed until the day of a reception at the Kentucky building.

There a group of the fun-makers was being photographed, and there was some difficulty in keeping the constituents still. The photographer of one of the papers had taken a picture, and it was, he feared, unsatisfactory. "Do be still a minute!" he pleaded.

"Yes, do," chimed in Strickland Gillilan, the new President of the association. "Be still a minute, for he wants to get a second!" But the "second" looked like the picture of a riot.

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Dunn: "Ah, you are in this time. I've called five times with this bill; but you've been out."

Owens: "Indeed? Well, you are out this time. Fine morning, isn't it?"

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SWEET CONSOLATION

IT happened at one of the banquets to the members of the International Press Congress. Commissioner De Olivarez of Argentine was ruefully regarding a beaver hat that had been crushed out of all resemblance to a hat. "Some one sat on it," he explained to his sympathizers.

"Cheer up!" said Sir Hugh Gilzean-Read, the Scotch editor. "Suppose you had had it on at the time!"