

the cluster of pins, his annoyance began to show out through his clothes. He wouldn't let it show in his face; but after another fifteen balls he was not able to control his face,—he didn't utter a word; but he exuded mute blasphemy from every pore. He asked permission to take off his coat, which was granted; then he turned himself loose, with bitter determination, and although he was only an infantry officer he could have been mistaken for a battery, he got up such a volleying thunder with those balls. Presently he removed his cravat; after a little he took off his vest; and still he went bravely on.

Higgins was suffocating. My condition was the same; but it would not be courteous to laugh; it would be better to burst, and we came near it. That officer was good pluck. He stood to his work without uttering a word, and kept the balls going until he had expended the outfit four times, making four times forty-one shots. Then he had to give

it up, and he did; for he was no longer able to stand without wabbling. He put on his clothes, bade us a courteous good by, invited us to call at the fort, and started away. Then he came back, and said:

"What is the prize for the ten-strike?"

We had to confess that we had not selected it yet.

He said gravely that he thought there was no occasion for hurry about it.

I BELIEVE Bateman's alley was a better one than any other in America, in the matter of the essentials of the game. It compelled skill; it provided opportunity for bets; and if you could get a stranger to do the bowling for you, there was more and wholesomely and delightful entertainment to be gotten out of his industries than out of the finest game by the best expert, and played upon the best alley elsewhere in existence.

To be continued Sunday after next

## OLD TIME DARKY HUMOR

By Webster Davis

THERE are many kinks on the inside of the negro's head as well as on the outside. His humor itself is a sort of kink or curl in the ordinary straight strand of normal thought.

Of African humor as illustrated in the negroes of the South, one may say that it has many of the qualities that have made Irish humor so irresistible to English speaking peoples. There is a certain nimble agility in dodging a point or in making one, like unto the frolics of gleeful kittens. In negro humor, however, there is wholly lacking the familiar bull that has been the sire of so many Irish jokes. Close observers have pointed out another notable limitation: the typical negro rarely if ever makes a pun.

It is the typical negro of whom this article treats. We are considering the characteristics of native, old fashioned, darky mentality and such survivals thereof as yet remain, without reference to modifications due to a fuller assimilation of Caucasian habits of thought.

Such a negro well understands how to appeal to the sense of humor in order to escape censure or punishment. Thus, on one occasion, the wife of a prominent attorney in Georgia taxed Mose her butler with having carelessly broken a valuable cut glass pitcher in which iced tea was customarily served. By way of reply, Mose shuffled round and round the dining table, mumbling to himself, until finally turning to his mistress with an air of grieved indulgence he said:

"Lawd, Miss Annie! I didn't bre'k dat pitcher. I se done been tellin' you befo' dis you oughtn't put dat strong tea in dat fine pitcher. Now, you see, dat tea was so strong it jest natcherly drawed dat pitcher up an' cracked it." And Mose went out of the room shuffling and mumbling, "I se done told ev'ybody 'bout puttin' dat strong tea in dat pitcher. I knowed it was gwine to bre'k it!" while the "Missus" sat down and roared.

### Jim's Valuable Graveyard

AN instance of sophisticated absurdity cropped out in the case of Jim, the elderly valet of several "young white gem'en" whose bachelor apartments he was supposed to keep in more or less—generally less—orderly condition. Jim was always taking up a collection among his young white friends for the purpose of burying some member of his family. First he buried his grandparents; then his parents; then several uncles and aunts; until at length he had laid away enough relatives to fill quite a fair sized private burying ground.

This mortality among Jim's near kin became a matter of serious concern to the young men that helped to defray the funeral expenses. They were greatly puzzled; but responded like men whenever Jim levied his sad assessments.

At last Jim's wife, the washwoman of one of the young fellows, let the cat out of the bag. She and Jim had fallen out; and in her anger she told all about his burial funds. Jim's deceased relatives proved to be empty whisky bottles, which he had named for lamented dear ones, and scrupulously buried in his back yard as soon as he had drained their life blood.

Jim, be it known, was a pillar in his church, and could not bear to tell a lie. Thus ingeniously, with the help of a lively fancy, while committing patricide, matricide, and various other crimes, he deemed himself safe from the awful fate of Ananias.

Needless to say that after Mrs. Jim's revelations, Jim's mortuary collections failed to collect; though to this day "Jim's graveyard" is a mellow memory among those "young white gem'en" now well advanced in years. Alas for Jim! Long ago his sodden self was joined unto his sodden kin.

### What the Dog Wanted

THE negro's humor seems born of happiness, or at least of contentment with his lot in life. It is simple, homely, spontaneous, and above all full

of good humor. In the days of slavery he had no care for the morrow, because he looked to his master for freedom, as a rule the future troubles him but little. He is possessed of that delightfully irresponsible spirit with which children look on the world, which makes the intangible and unrul'd realm of Bohemia so wonderfully charming.

Of this simplicity, which approaches the unconscious funmaking of childhood, the following story is illustrative:

Before the open fireplace in the sitting room of a well known Virginia woman there lay a rug on which was woven the figure of a large dog. It was the owner's custom to place the rug so that the feet of the dog would be toward the door of the room, in order that visitors might get at first view the noble proportions of the animal. She noticed, however, that when her man of all work shook out the rug he invariably reversed its position, so that the dog's back was to the door.

"Sam," said she, "don't you know that I always put that dog's feet to the door? Why do you always turn him round?"

"Yessum, miss," replied Sam, "I know you does; but dogs always lays wid dey feet to de fire, an' I jest natcherly put him like he wants to put hisself. Now cats turn dey backs to de fire; an' ef dis rug had a cat on it, 'stead of a dog, I'd turn it round de udder way."

### His Value Went Up

IN the same category was a pious old negro's enthusiastic indorsement of a New York man who had established a chain of five- and ten-cent stores in Southern cities. This man was attending service at a negro church, and when the collection was taken up he put a substantial bill into the basket. Whereupon, the old darky spoke up in open meeting:

"Bress dis young man! I knows him, and I knows his business. He may be a five- and ten-cent man eve'y day in de week; but, bress de Lawd! he's a five-dollar man on Sundays!"

Which was a pretty good advertisement for the liberal giver.

### A Hot Day

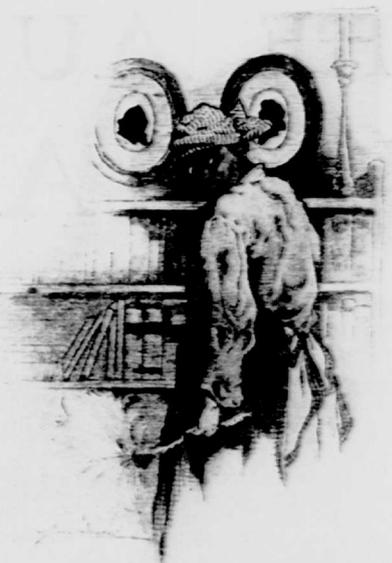
AS a bit of homely drollery, it would be hard to find a better example than the following story related by a prominent Connecticut peach grower who also has large orchards in Georgia.

"Well Joe," said he to his driver, "this is a very hot day."

"Yessir, boss," replied Joe. "Ef I owed a man a hot day, an' he wouldn't tek dis 'un, I dun'no whar I'd ever git one to pay him wid."

### In the Home Portrait Gallery

THE two following stories are sufficient aptly to illustrate the homely frankness and



"Was Dey Black Folks?"

primitive simplicity to be found in the negro mind. On the library wall of a Southern home there hung two black silhouettes of revolutionary ancestors of the family. One day, Cora the maid, in dusting the pictures, turned to her mistress and asked:

"Miss Mary, who is dem folks in dat picture?"

"They are my great-grandfather and great-grandmother, Cora. He was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and a great man in his day," proudly replied the woman.

"Lawd, Miss Mary!" responded Cora with wide open eyes and in an awestruck whisper, "was dey black folks?"

Cora had a near neighbor, Susan, who was the author of an original opinion of Rosa Bonheur. Susan's mistress had among her photographs one of the famous animal painter, taken in her usual working costume of bloomers and blouse.

"Miss Jennie," asked Susan, "who is dat quare lookin' man?"

"That is not a man, Susan," replied the mistress; "it is Rosa Bonheur the great painter."

"Well," replied Susan after a prolonged inspection, "she sho' do favor her pa."

### Got His Sweets

THE happy humility of the oldtime darky and his joy over the good things that came into his lowly life were constitutional traits not to be possessed or even thoroughly understood by the masterful Anglo-Saxon race.

A reminiscence of the childhood days of a lawyer of national fame serves to illustrate some of the comic features of that unquestioning and even grateful enjoyment of the sweets of life, come they by whatsoever route they would. Says Mr. E:

"When I was very young, my father gave me as my special property a little negro boy about my own age. The boy (Jerry, his name was) and I became devoted chums. One day I saw him eagerly scraping the sugar from the bottom of a coffee cup which had just come from the table. Sugar, or 'short sweet'ning,' as it was called, was a rarity in the plantation kitchen, where molasses or 'long sweet'ning' was the rule. I shall never forget Jerry's eager enjoyment of that sugar, and it immediately suggested to me a scheme which I at once put into effect. I began filling my cup half full of sugar at each meal; and then, after drinking my coffee or tea, I would see to it that Jerry got the remaining sugar, and he would dispose of it with the greatest satisfaction. This smuggling operation went on for weeks, and Jerry was getting his fill of sugar, when suddenly the scheme was discovered and stopped, in time, as they thought, to prevent the complete demoralization of Jerry and his stomach."

### Caught the Cigar

A SECOND instance came under my own observation some twenty-five years after the Civil War. A railway train had stopped at a village in Northern Alabama where was the usual crowd of idle, happy darkies standing round hoping to pick up a stray nickel or dime. One was laughing boisterously in very joy of living, when a passenger on the train carelessly tossed out of the car window a half-smoked cigar. By an odd chance the end of the cigar that had been in the smoker's mouth landed pat between the darky's teeth just as he closed them together.

Did he spit it out with indignant disgust? Not a bit

Continued on page 18



"He's a Five-Dollar Man on Sundays!"



A Colored Philosopher.