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STORY TELLING OWLS

THEIR FUNNY YARNS MADE THE ADIRONDACKS RING WITH MIRTH.

The Jovial Birds Were So Laughter Provoking That the Side Splitting Contagion Spread to Their Human Auditors, and Even the Loons Howled With Delight.

"What amused our party most up in the Adirondacks," said a Scranton man, "was an entertainment given to us by a flock of story telling owls. Our camp was away back in the wilderness of Herkimer county, and we had hardly turned in for the night when a flock of owls alighted on a tree over us and began to tell stories and laugh. Every owl listened in silence to the one that was talking, and when the tale was finished the whole flock laughed as though they were tickled half to death.

"They reminded us of a lot of drummers in a smoking car, and they had such jolly fun it became contagious. We all rolled and laughed over the fun the big eyed birds were having up in the tree, and before long the side splitting contagion attacked some loons out on the lake, which fairly yelled with delight whenever the fun loving owls guffawed and shrieked and shouted over a right good yarn told by one of their number.

"Once in a while a story was so funny before the knob was reached that we could hear two or three of the feathered listeners snicker and chuckle under their breath, and when the end came the entire flock made the woods ring. The jovial birds had met expressly to swap experiences of the night before, and they talked so plainly that we could easily keep a run of their anecdotes as we lay on our beds of spruce boughs.

"One of the owls told about how a big rat that he had caught by the back yanked itself loose and showed fight. The owl described how he had let the rat flatter itself that it was going to lick him, how he finally bit his tail off at the root, and how the rat then went squealing and zigzagging around with no rudder to guide its movements. The picture so amused the eager auditors that they fell into the most violent fits of laughter, some of them tumbling from their perch, they were so tickled.

"Another owl described the tussle he had had with a tough old jack hare in a swamp. He said that the hare had carried him along through the rushes and over logs for some distance after he had got his claws in his back, and that he at last brought the hare up standing by keeping one claw in his hide and catching hold of a bush with his other claw. The hare rolled over and over as soon as the owl let go of the bush, and the owl said that his feathers pointed in all directions when he finally got the best of the hare. Peal after peal of laughter followed the narrative.

"Another owl told about biting a snake's head off and trying to swallow it. The head stuck in his throat, and he would surely have choked to death, he said, if his mate hadn't come along just then and pulled it out with her claw. The story teller's predicament was such a funny picture to the imagination of the listening owls that they responded with yells of wild delight.

"But the story that fairly upset the whole party of nocturnal roasters and made them hoot and screech and flutter all over the tree for at least five minutes was told by an owl with an alto voice. He said that he felt like kicking up some mischief the night before, so he sailed out to the settlement, settled down on the window sill of a house in which there was no light and began to tap on the panes with his bill. The folks were asleep, so he flitted to the opposite side of the house and tapped there. Nobody stirred, and he kept going from one side of the house to the other till a woman got up, struck a light and began to try the windows to see if they were fast.

"When she came to his window, he peered in at her, and she started to scream so hard that in a moment her husband sprang out of bed, and four children in their nightclothes came running down stairs and shouting, 'Mamma, what's the matter?' The woman couldn't tell what the matter was, although her husband and young ones kept coaxing her long enough to say she had seen a spook at the window.

"At that the man dashed out and began to search around the house, and the owl said he flew to the top of a balsam tree, where he sat till the man went back, when he alighted on the window sill again. The man was angry at his wife for making such a rumpus about nothing, so he drove the children back to bed and went to jaxing his like six. She jawed back, and they had it hot and heavy till the man got up and cuffed her. Then she threw a dipper of water on him in the bed, and jumping out at her he knocked the lamp off the stand and put out the light. The owl said he listened to their quarreling and fighting in the dark till he could stand it no longer, when he flew back to the woods. His recital filled his listeners with merriment, and it was several minutes before they calmed down for another anecdote.

"Well, sir, those jovial owls continued to tell stories till 2 o'clock, when we all became so sleepy that we lost all interest in their amusing tales. The loons out on the lake laughed like all possessed whenever the owls did, and the two gangs of midnight merry-makers kept up their racket till we had to go out and drive the owls away by firing our revolvers."—Scranton Letter.

Colored Servants. "Do you still have colored servants, Hicks?" "Well, in a sense. We don't have negroes any more, but we've got three of the greenest girls you ever saw in the house now."—Harper's Bazar.

No Ideals Shattered. She—Why don't you marry her? He—Because it is so much more delightful to love her.—Truth.

HUMORS OF BANN PUBLISHING.

Announcements of Marriages That Have Been Unceremoniously Interrupted. A few years ago a ludicrous, albeit vexatious, incident occurred at a church in Larkhall. A rustic couple, after having had the banns published, proceeded to the church to be joined in holy wedlock. The service was conducted without a hitch until the officiating clergyman arrived at that part where he asked, "William Wisner, wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife?" when the bridegroom replied with some astonishment that his name was not William Wisner.

The ceremony was of course suspended, and on investigation being made as to the cause of the mistake it transpired that the bridegroom had written to the sexton of the church requesting him to have the banns published, and concluded his letter thus, "So no more from your well wisher and Mary Williams." The sexton, supposing that William Wisner was the name of the intending bride, published the banns accordingly, and the disappointed couple were compelled to await the publication of the banns in their proper names.

The preacher of a country parish church near Arbroath one Sunday announced from his place that "there was a solemn purpose of marriage between Alexander Spink of Fisher's loan and Elsiebeth Hackett of Burn wynd," when the parish beadle, who was something of a character, suddenly arose and unceremoniously interrupted the proceedings by exclaiming: "That's wrong! That's wrong! It's no Sanders Spink o' Fisher's loan that's gaun to marry Elsiebeth Hackett, but Lang Sanders Spink o' Smiddy croft." The name of one of the parties had been wrongly stated in the proclamation paper, and this was the way the beadle took to correct it.

Some years ago a middle aged agricultural laborer called upon the session clerk of Alloa and asked him what the charge was for publishing the "cries"—i. e., banns of marriage—three times on the same Sunday. "A pound," replied the clerk. "Aye," said the other, "an what d'ye tak' when ye tak' two Sundays to do it?" "Half a guinea," was the reply. "An what d'ye charge when ye tak' three Sundays to do it?" was the rustic's next query. "Seven and six," answered the clerk, with an amused air. "Aye, man," rejoined the querist, "I see; the langer ye tak' to do it the cheaper ye gets. Just cry awa' till ye pay yerself!" And he took his departure without more ado.—London Tit-Bits.

Milord, Miss and the Dog. A traveler's tale of British plegm told in the following terms: A Frenchman was seated in a smoking carriage and had for his companion a "milord Anglais." Enter a British miss-of-course with a plaid and protruding teeth and a Skye terrier. She sat opposite the milord. He politely informed her that she had by mistake got into a smoking carriage. She made not the slightest answer, but sat grimly on.

The milord threw away his cigar, much to the astonishment of the Frenchman, who, according to the story, sat watching what would happen. When they reached the next station, the milord said, with the cold dignity of his race and cast: "Madam can now change into a nonsmoking carriage. If she does not, I shall assume that she does not mind smoke and shall light another cigar."

Madam said not a word, but stared in front of her. The train went on again, and the milord lighted up. When his cigar was well alight and the train in motion, the lady bent forward, took the cigar out of the milord's mouth, and threw it out of the window. The milord not only did not make any remark, but he did not even seem disturbed. All he did was to wait a minute, and then to bend over the lady, seize the Skye terrier, which was lying in her lap, and fling it out of the window.

"Of this act the lady, to the complete astonishment of the French spectator, took no notice whatever. At the next station both the lady and the milord got out, but without exchanging a word in regard to the cigar and dog incident, while the Frenchman turned over in his head an etude on the subject of "Les Anglais takes turns."—London Spectator.

A Metal That Hardens Steel. The reason that the mixture of tungsten with steel gives the latter so great a degree of hardness that it readily scratches glass and quartz seems to be revealed by a discovery recently made in Germany. A definitely crystallized compound of iron and tungsten has been discovered, the crystals being so hard as to scratch topaz. Tungsten is a brittle white metal, almost as heavy as gold. The crystals, remarks The Paper Trade, as formed by its combination with iron, in the proportion of one atom of iron to two of tungsten, are silver gray and very brilliant. It is thought that when tungsten is alloyed with steel some of the compound just described is formed in the mass, thereby producing the remarkable increase in the hardness of the steel. This is an interesting example of the value that one metal may lend to the other, for, until the discovery that it could be used in hardening steel, tungsten, although it occurs in considerable abundance, was practically useless and without value.—New York Times.

One of His Tricks. "I thought you said you were going to bring a friend home to dinner with you," said Mrs. Chugwater. "He couldn't come, Samantha," replied Mr. Chugwater as he sat down with great satisfaction to the first good dinner he had had a chance to attack for a long time.—Chicago Tribune.

Rooms to Let. Mrs. Fangle—Have you secured a lodger for your second floor yet, Mr. Goslin? Goslin (horrified)—I haven't been looking for a lodger, madam. Mrs. Fangle—Why, I'm certain my husband told me you had rooms to let in your upper story.—Waif.

WILY HETTY GREEN.

PECULIARITIES OF A WOMAN WORTH \$60,000,000.

She Is Old Fashioned in Appearance, Severely Plain in Dress, but the Personification of Shrewdness When Financial Transactions Are Involved.

Not a small part of the fame of Brooklyn can be laid to the credit of the remarkable woman who has lived and live now within its borders—women who have taken rank and honor in almost every walk of life. It is a well known fact that a very large proportion of the real estate of the city is held in the names of women. It is not a widely known fact that the woman who is reputed to be the richest in the United States lives in the City of Churches and right in the classic section known as the heights too. Her wealth is variously estimated at from \$40,000,000 to \$60,000,000, and her name is Mrs. Hetty Green. Her name and personality are more familiar to Wall street than they are to Brooklyn society.

That is because Mrs. Green has chosen to devote all her time to the manipulation of her fortune and has let society get along without her. Hetty Green at an Iphigonia hall would create a sensation indeed, but it is not likely that such an occasion will ever be recorded by society writers.

Hosts of people have brushed elbows with a shrewd and rather calm faced woman, apparently 50 years old, rather short, wearing a plain, old fashioned shawl and a bonnet so far beyond fashion's pale that no one would ever suspect it had been in it, even years ago. No body ever saw her with a dress which was not severely plain, and seldom has she been noticed when she did not carry an old style and well worn black satchel. Her appearance would never cause the uninitiated to think that she was anything more extraordinary than an old fashioned woman of moderate means and simple tastes, who was on her way to the corner grocery or the bakery on the block below. Yet, if money is power, this same staid looking person is one of the most powerful human beings in the country.

In an old fashioned house on a corner in Pierrepont street Mrs. Green and her daughter Sylvia have lived for several years. The modest apartments they occupy are hired from a pleasant faced woman, who keeps the house and who has an admiration for Mrs. Green, which she does not conceal. The richest woman in the United States has a son, who has been spending some time in Florida seeking to improve his health. Mrs. Green has been a widow for many years, and her daughter is about 20 years old. Since the death of her husband Hetty Green has become a financier of unusual shrewdness. She has indicated by her actions that she has small faith in brokers, and that if she wants anything done the best way is to do it herself.

The weather beaten satchel has carried securities representing millions of dollars. It has knocked about New York and Brooklyn and other big financial centers with previous burdens, and Hetty Green has always had a tight grip on it. She does not believe in spending her money on things she does not want, and as she wants very little she spends but little. Her children and her fortune are the sole objects of her solicitude. Mrs. Green is said to be very anxious to have her daughter become one of the leading actors in the famous Four Hundred of Manhattan island. Something of an obstacle in the way of this is the daughter herself, according to report. Miss Green is credited with caring as little for the dazzle and newspaper notoriety of a social career as her mother. She is a girl whose tastes are quiet and to whom dress is a matter of little consideration.

Mrs. Green, by way of a foundation for her daughter's social debut, some time ago settled a large sum of money on that young woman in government bonds. The amount is stated to be \$5,000,000.

Incidents in the career of this remarkable woman have stamped her as a bold yet cautious operator in stocks and securities. When the financial panic of 1884 occurred, Mrs. Green had a large deposit in a firm of Canadian bankers named Cisco & Co. of New York. Information reached her that the bank was in an unsafe condition, and without waiting to hear more she went to the institution and withdrew her entire deposit. The firm had no alternative, and after paying her her money was compelled to suspend and finally failed completely. Hetty Green is the largest property owner in the city of Chicago. She holds title to block after block of land in the business section, and her son is looking after her interests there. For many years she lived in the western metropolis, and she spends much of her time there when away from Brooklyn.

Her characteristic bargain with ex-Judge Henry Hilton is fresh in the minds of financiers. The money which the judge wanted so badly is generally conceded to have been used in buying out the interest of his son, Henry G. Hilton, in the dry goods firms of Hilton, Hughes & Co. and Hilton, Bros. He went to Mrs. Green, or his lawyers did, and made a request for a loan of \$1,250,000 in cash. Mrs. Green was willing to lend, but insisted on having a mortgage on the marble palace at the corner of Broadway and Chambers street, New York, the Stewart building, which, with the land, is supposed to be worth \$3,000,000. She would take no other security, and after a two months' search of the title the largest mortgage ever given on a single piece of property in New York was recorded. But Judge Hilton needed the money before the search had been concluded, and after he had placed in the hands of Hetty Green title deeds representing \$15,000,000 worth of property she advanced him the \$800,000. And in addition to this the shrewd speculator forced him to sign a paper agreeing that she should hold the deeds until the mortgage was executed.—Brooklyn Eagle.

THE STUDY OF A WORD.

The Resources and Variety of Information It Is Likely to Furnish.

The great dictionaries are a library in themselves and furnish an exhaustless source of information. A study of a single word like cross in the Century Dictionary shows the resources and variety of information that a familiar word may furnish. There are 154 columns devoted to this word and its combinations. There are 24 pictorial illustrations. All in all there are 257 different words made out of cross which have to be defined. In the great Oxford Dictionary there are 11 pages given to this word, or twice as much as in the Century. In the Century the study is highly fascinating. There are 14 radically different sets of definitions to the word itself.

The fundamental idea is, of course, the cross, the crux for crucifying, but it has come to have a variety of meaning as a monument, a crucifix, the atonement, the Christian religion itself, any suffering for Christ's sake, anything that thwarts or vexes, a mixing of breeds in animal breeding, a term used in changing plants, a joint in a pipe, the accidental contact of two electric wires, a sportsman phrase for a contest dishonestly decided.

Then cross becomes an adjective, with several meanings, as falling, thwarting, passing from one of two positions, perverse, etc., to the other, being opposed, being peevish or fretful, ill tempered, thoroughly contrary, in the breeder's vocabulary. Then it becomes an adverb, meaning transversely or adversely. Then it becomes a verb, with all kinds of significance, from the running of a line to cross a man, to cancel by crossing, to cross one's self in devotion, passing from side to side of a man, to go over a body of water, to obstruct, to cause to interfere, to cross plants, to hoist from the deck to its place on the mast any of the lighter yards.

Then there is the preposition, in riding cross-country or walking cross-lots. All this with the simple word itself, which goes cavorting from the most sacred thought in the world to the breeder's and the sportsman's language of the coop and ranch.

After this the mysteries begin. There are crosses—unsalted, arellane, bezanaty, bretteuse, catoused, commisse, crenele, estolle, fliche, fleury, gringole, lambeau, moline, norved, nyle, quatrefoil, saltier, sarle, resarole, etc. There are the innumerable compounds of cross from cross-armed, cross-bated, cross-biter, cross-bar and cross-bun, through cross-fucan, cross-ruff, cross-sower and cross-spale to cross-wort.

Then there are a cross-grained set of crosses, such as crossarchal, cross arbus, crosscotte, crossopal, crossopterygia, crossopterygian, crossopterygidae, crossopterygii, crossopterygia, crossopterygium, crossopus, crossrhimed and crossrhinnine.

It is incomprehensible that a word so simple should have come collecting all over the earth, into the bowels of the earth, into the depths of the sea, among the fowls of the air, the horse upon the turf, to card table, to the ships upon the sea, to the fishes in their glee, to the sharks in their ferocity, to the architect and plumber, to the farmer in his harrowing, to the railroad in its building, to the engine in its working, to the seamstress in her labors, to the spider in his webbing, to the spinner at his loom, to the lawyers in their pleading, to a shrew in her wrangling, to the gunner in the fort, to the miner at his loade, to the Turk as he sits, to the sword of the gladiator, to the expert with his telescope, to the woman in her gazing and in her dressing, to the athletes in their wrestling and to the windler at his arts.—A. E. Winship in Journal of Education.

Queer Phenomena of Falling Bodies. I am unable to say who first noticed the peculiar caprices of a stone or other heavy body dropped from the top of a high tower, but it is nevertheless a curious fact that such objects invariably fall slightly to the east of the perpendicular line. Persons of inquiring turn of mind who ask why this is as it is may find an answer in the following: All falling bodies partake of the earth's eastward motion to a greater or lesser extent. Therefore during the time occupied by a stone in falling from the top of a high tower or other eminence the earth's rotary motion has carried it an appreciable distance to the east. The initial impetus of the stone has carried it to the eastward also, therefore it strikes the earth to the east of the perpendicular, varying in degree according to the height from which it has fallen.

A curious article on this subject may be found in the Leipzig Zeitung of May 9, 1883, page 3. The author of the article, who has given it the title of "The Nonperpendicularity of High Towers," claims that the tower on St. Peter's cathedral at Rome leans 18 inches to the east.—St. Louis Republic.

A Singular Coincidence. The chaplain of an American jail vouches for the following. A little boy was taken by his parents to visit the prison, and on passing one of the cells in which a notorious criminal had been incarcerated his father playfully pushed him in and closed the door upon him. The child, overcome by some vague terror, screamed aloud and could scarcely be comforted by his mother's caresses.

Years passed. The lad half thoughtlessly fell into crime and was only recalled to his better nature on finding himself, having been sentenced to a term of imprisonment, in the identical cell into which he had been momentarily thrust as a child.

Spent Only One. Little Dot—Mamma gave me two quarters to buy candy, but I only spent one of them. Father—That's something like. Now I'll give you another quarter to put with the other. Little Dot—Thank you, but I can't put it with the other till I find it. It dropped out of my pocket on the way to the candy store.—Good News.

LONDON BY GASLIGHT

SATURDAY NIGHT STREET SCENES IN THE CITY OF THE DOCKERS.

A Break in the Fearful Dreariness That Marks the Life of the Tolling Thousands of the East Side of the Great Metropolis. Music, Songs and Dances.

The memory of a Saturday night in the City of the Dockers is like the recollection of a troubled dream, for on this last night of the week the great, hot streets are filled with the pentup life of 500,000 houses (one cannot call them homes), and all the varied phases of this hand to hand struggle for existence appear. The dockers are prodigal of his few shillings on Saturday night, the maximum of his liberality being shown most often in the public house and on the catch penny street conjurer, while the minimum is apparent at the stalls of the grocer and the butcher. But men, women and children are out on the streets, and, whatever else it be, Saturday night is something of a break in the fearful dreariness that marks the life of the east London tolling thousands.

The people love music. Their interpretation of music is rather rough and loud. The bass drum of every band that parades in a labor demonstration before a Sunday gets terribly punished before the day is over, but it commands a great following, and on Saturday night the street musicians and singers easily gather their crowds and reap an abundant harvest. The barrel organ is found everywhere, and wherever it rattles out the popular "Daisy" or "The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo" the sidewalks will be crowded, while two or three couples of little girls dance on the flagstones.

Nearly every girl of 8 can dance, many of them have already appeared in public at the cheap concert halls, and as one watches them, hatless, dirty, but with faces beaming with delight, he does not know whether to be glad of their joy or to pity their hollow present and hopeless future the more. Often a part in these street dances will be taken by the older girls, factory girls, as they are all called in east London, who are out in crowds on Saturday night. They are an untamed, fantastic lot. All wear enormous hats, adorned with feathers, and train their hair about the forehead by curling it forward quite fiercely. They are intensely loyal to the customs and traditions of their own "set," and forced as they are to subsist on an income of 6 to 8 shillings per week they are a vexing problem to the east London philanthropist and reformer.

Besides the barrel organs, there are violins, accordions and any number of soloists unaccompanied by an instrument. Blind women, old men and poor wrecks of this awful struggle for existence here stand at the curbstone, and in weak, thin voices sing their songs. The restless crowd moves on, save when some one more curious or more kindly than the rest stands near to look or listen. A bent woman, whose thin shawl was thrown over her shoulders, was feebly singing some old song in the midst of the jostling throng around a public house. I saw a strong young girl of 14 come kindly toward her, drop a penny in the little box held by the feeble hand and then hurry away out of sight. Happy will the strong young lass be if the swirl of the turbid stream of east London life does not bring her some time to the place of the curbstone singer. Indeed there is no place that I have ever seen where mirth and pathos, vice and virtue, meet and mingle as on these streets in a night like this.

One sees very little begging. There is not much street begging anyway—there's no use begging; the people are too poor. The mendicant flees Canning town for the wealthier residential quarters. Of course the children best can. The sidewalk artist is sometimes found, but the most common form of appeal is from the ragged little fellows who turn handsprings or stand on their heads for you. They really do their athletics very nicely, and there is something so appealing and "old mannish" in their looks that it is hard to resist them. I was hurrying through the crowds in Victoria docks one night about 10 when a boy of 7 came out and ran beside me, relating some sort of verse, I thought. Three repetitions made it clear: "Happy won't 'it yer, 'Fanny won't 'it yer, 'Fanny won't 'it yer."

He was evidently working on a "graduated scale of benevolence adapted to the abilities of the donor." I believe by the emphasis laid on the last item that he estimated me from my gold bowed spectacles at 10 pence.

The barrows of east London delicacies abound in the streets where marketing goes on. The woman who sells cold pickled pigs' feet is in fair demand. The man who retails shrimps at a penny a bag gets a good trade, but the couple who preside at the barrow filled with "cockles and winkles" have their hands full. The delectable mollusks are displayed on little dishes as large as "individual butlers," with a bit of garnishing of parsley, and are eaten with vinegar on the spot.

These barrows are found especially at the entrance of Victoria Docks road, a great marketing place in Canning town on Saturday night. Clothing (very cheap and shoddy and called "slops"), little tools for household use, cheap lace, flannels, "red bandanna" handkerchiefs and horn combs are some of the many articles sold from barrows in the street, outside the regular shops for meat, fruit and fish. On the whole, trade is carried on with great briskness, but more quietly than in market streets at home. The butchers are the most noisy. They delight in wearing tall hats and screaming odd calls at the fall of their lungs. A penny is the standard unit here in Canning town. The buyers are poor, and everything that can be called at a penny is. A common cry is: "A penny a pun, a pun a penny. At the barrows, where a pound of anything can be sold at this low rate.—Hartford Courant.