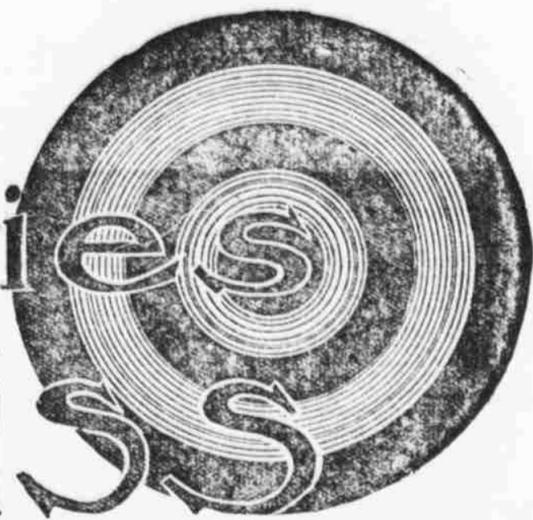


Random Stories

Hit or Miss



Looking Out for His Job.

IN the smoking rooms at Wiesbaden there came up one of those discussions as to the best form of government which are never any the less earnest because they happen to be impromptu. Among those who had the most to say was, as usual, the young American, loud in his defense of democracy, and this arguer finally noticed a tall, gray bearded gentleman sitting near, who smiled continually as he followed the conversation with evident interest.

"My argument does not seem to convince you, sir," said the American to this auditor of his eloquence. "Will you favor us with your reasons for not preferring that form of government?"

"Certainly," came the instant reply, "and I think you will agree with me that I have several most excellent reasons. The first is I am King Oscar of Sweden and Norway."

The American did not ask to hear the others.—New York Times.

Would Stop Runaway Horses.

Once, when Daniel Webster was riding along a New England road in a stage coach, so the story runs, he was annoyed by the jolting and poked his head out of the window to yell at the driver.

"Hey, can't you drive a little slower?"

"No," responded the coachman, "the horses are running away, sor."

"Run 'em into a fence corner," advised Daniel.

"Can't, sir," said the driver reluctantly and despairingly. "They've got the bits between their teeth, sir!"

"Well, run them into debt, then," thundered Daniel. "That'll stop anything!"—Detroit News.

From Bride to Bicycle.

Rev. George Wright, who for eighteen years has been a city missionary in Lowell, Mass., tells an interesting story of his efforts to prevent young mill operatives from marrying before their wages would support a home.

A young man who had not yet attained the voting age, and who frequently had attended the evening service at the Ministry-at-Large, called at his office one morning and told him that he had been keeping company with a girl for several weeks, and wanted to marry her at once.

The clergyman found that his wages left him a margin of only \$3 over his board, and advised him to wait for a year before taking the matrimonial step. The young man was reluctant to accept the advice, but finally agreed to think the matter over for six months.

Mr. Wright lost sight of him soon afterward, and did not come across him again in several months. Then the following conversation took place:

"Well, John, how are you getting along in the mill?"

"All right. I've got a steady job, and am doing well."

"And how about the marriage?"

"Oh, I gave that up."

"What was the matter?" asked the clergyman, seeing, as he thought, the fruit of his advice.

"Well," replied the young man, seriously, "I bought a bicycle instead."—Hartford Post.

Who Is the Best Man.

Congressman Mudd of Maryland recently told of a dispute on matters political between an Irishman of Baltimore and a friend from Montgomery county. During the course of their somewhat heated argument the Irishman announced with consid-

erable emphasis that he would never vote any save the democratic ticket.

"I'm glad to say that I am no such hide bound partisan as you," said the Montgomery county man. "I make it a rule to vote for the best man, no matter what his party is."

"I've no soul, I always thought ye mug-wumps and rayformers was a crazy lot," exclaimed the Celt, "and now I know it. How are you goin' to tell who is the best man till the votes are counted?"

Sick Room Bulletins.

Down in a Virginia town the aged pastor of one of the churches fell ill not long ago. He was beloved by all the neighborhood and a constant stream of anxious friends rang the bell to make inquiries. The nurse in charge was an intelligent negro woman and she decided to issue bulletins at frequent intervals. She wrote them herself and pinned them to the front door, and this is the way they read as they appeared successively:

"Rev. Blank am very sick."

"Later—Rev. Blank am worse."

"Night—Rev. Blank am sinking."

"Morning—Rev. Blank have sunk."—Washington Post.

Dodged the Blow.

Bishop Henry C. Potter tells a story of a clergyman out west who addressed a Sunday school class. After a short discourse he wound up by saying in a very paternal and condescending way:

"And now is there a-a-n-y little boy or a-a-n-y little girl who would like to ask a question?"

Getting no response, he repeated his query, and then a shrill, piping little voice in the rear of the room called out:

"Please, sir, why did the angels walk up and down Jacob's ladder when they had wings?"

"Ah—yes—I see," said the nonplused teacher. "And now, is there a-a-n-y little boy or girl who would like to answer little Mary's question?"

Suitable Pall Bearers.

They tell a good story of a well-known contractor in Chicago, named Coleseed, who had always been very active with all sorts of schemes. Although his means were not large, he had managed to keep his head above water through the aid of pretty nearly all the banks.

His wife was discussing with him the sudden death of Herman Butler and said:

"Mrs. Butler told me that her husband selected his pall bearers before he died. I think it was so nice of him, my dear; if you were taken before me, who would you like to have act as pall bearers?"

Coleseed thought a moment and then said:

"Well, dear, ask the presidents of the eight leading banks of Chicago. They have carried me all my life."—New York Times.

Horrors of Bible War.

The horrors of war have their alleviations. While the battle of the 6th was raging an officer of the Second Georgia discovered two privates of his regiment reconnoitering a position held by two Virginia girls.

"Why aren't you engaged?" yelled the officer.

"They haven't proposed yet," tittered the girls.

"I'll have them court-martialed for cowardice," said the gallant officer, raising his cap. "They are a disgrace to Georgia."

The Fifth Massachusetts lost two flags in Wednesday's fight, but not until every man was declared dead by the umpire. The unfortunate regiment suffered fearfully from the ungrammatical expressions of the

attacking party. Shortly after noon a split infinitive knocked the entire fourth company senseless.

In Tuesday's fighting the Ninth Massachusetts, which is composed of Irish-Americans, covered itself with glory. It had recklessly exposed itself to a crossfire from two batteries, and the umpires had pronounced it "dead entirely." A pained expression darkened the handsome face of Colonel O'Hooligan; but only for a moment. "Boys," he shouted to his stricken troops, "yez have died once for America; now once more for ould Ireland!" The umpires were powerless to save them. Both batteries were captured.—Atlanta News.

One of Lincoln's Stories.

This story of Lincoln seems to be a new one. It was related at an old settlers' meeting at Mt. Pleasant, Ia., by the late Senator James Harlan of Iowa, who served as secretary of the interior under Mr. Lincoln, and whose daughter Mary is the wife of Robert Lincoln, ex-secretary of war and now a leading lawyer and capitalist of Chicago.

Some politicians had called on President Lincoln to urge the appointment of some of their friends to positions in a certain department. By way of refusal the president told the following story:

"Gentlemen, the conditions in that department put me in mind of the time that a young friend and myself tried to court the two daughters of a peppery widow living near our homes. The old lady kept a lot of hounds.

"We had not been in the house long before one of the hounds came into the room and lay down before the fire. In a little while another one came to the door. He didn't get in, for the old lady gave him a kick, saying:

"Get out of here! There's too many dogs in here now!"

"We concluded to court some other girls."

Could Not Strike Less.

On the promenade deck of the Teutonic, on his way to America, John Redmond, the Irish nationalist leader, was interrupted one night by the musical clang of the ship's bell and the impressive call of the watch through the darkness—"All's well."

"That bell," said Mr. Redmond, "reminds me of a story. It is a story of one of those hard drinkers; those men of six and seven bottles, who were a feature of the rosy past rather than of the present century.

"This man, rosy and cheery, sat at a table one night with his boon companions. Bottles of port and Madeira, baskets of nuts, a jar of tobacco and a rack of pipes were banked on the board. The wine passed quickly from man to man. The pipes filled the air with smoke. Songs were sung. Stories were told. The hours passed like minutes.

"All of a sudden it stuck!

"The guests leaped up in consternation. They said it was late, and they must be going. They were amazed at the hour.

"But their hard drinking host roared at them to resume their seats.

"Struck it," he said. "What if it has? It can't strike less. Drink on, drink on!"

Extra Exercise.

Senator Cockrell of Missouri went fishing down the Potomac with a friend not long ago. A stone tied to a rope held the boat at the place where the two decided to try their luck. The fish did not bite, so after an hour or two the senator and his friend returned, the latter rowing. He noticed that the boat seemed to be very sluggish in responding to the oars, but had no idea

of the reason until the landing was reached. Then the man from whom they rented the boat said: "Judge, you don't look drunk and you haven't the smell of liquor on you, but this is the first time I ever saw two sober men pull a boat for three miles with the anchor dragging." "I paid for the boat, didn't I?" replied the senator testily, not caring to admit his forgetfulness. "Well, then, it is none of your damn business if we wanted to get a little extra exercise."

Up and Down.

The following telephone conversation, recently overheard between a woman whose home is in the suburbs and a business acquaintance of her husband, illustrates some of the curiosities of our language:

Business Acquaintance—Good morning, Mrs. —. I'd like to speak to Mr. — for a moment.

Mrs. ——I'm sorry, Mr. —, but my husband isn't down yet.

B. A. (Inquiringly)—Isn't down yet?

Mrs. ——I mean he isn't up yet. I'm letting him sleep late this morning; he was so down last evening over his office troubles that he was about ready to give up. He says he'll be down as soon as he gets up.—Harper's Weekly.

Marshall P. Wilder's Latest.

In Newport recently Marshall P. Wilder contributed to the gaily that followed an elaborate dinner given by Mrs. William B. Leeds at Fairlawn. He was feeling well—"as fit as a wasp at a camp meeting," was the simile that occurred to him as best describing his condition. But the breath was knocked out of his body by a preliminary request of the hostess. "Now, Mr. Wilder, you will give us some new jokes—at least one—won't you?" Thus, then, he led off:

"Ladies and gentlemen, the eyes of the world today are at the portholes. The men are looking at Port Arthur and the women at Newport."

There was a rustle of silken petticoats, a flutter of fans, and, bowing low in the direction of Mrs. Leeds, the triumphant humorist went on with the budget of polite ribaldry he has made familiar to the vaudeville houses of this country and Britain.

Later in the evening, during the dancing interval, Mrs. Leeds approached him, shaking a daintily gloved finger. "How could you do it—that wicked thing about ports?"

"Forgive me, madam, forgive me. 'Twas a case of any port in a storm."—New York Mail.

Medical Advice.

A doctor in a New England town had among his patients a Teuton whose sense of humor was a little blunted. Late one night, after an extremely hard day's work, the doctor went to bed feeling ill and exhausted. Ten minutes later his doorbell rang. He went to an open window and called out:

"Who is it?"

"It is me—Yawcob Heinschlatter."

"Well?"

"Mine vife she is seeck. She wants you to be there queeck."

"I am tired out and I'm not well. I can't go out to your house tonight. You go and get Dr. Blank; he lives within three minutes' walk of your house."

Three-quarters of an hour later the bell rang again; the doctor went to the window.

"Who is it?" he asked.

"Me—Yawcob Heinschlatter."

"Didn't I tell you to go to Dr. Blank?"

"Yaas, and I did go to heem, and he put his head out of the window and tell me 'go to the devil,' so I came right back to you."—Philadelphia Ledger.

