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SHORT STORIES.

TO BE OR NOT TO BE.

I'd rather be a Could Be
If I could not be an Are;
For a Could Be is a Maybe,
With a chance of touching par.
I'd rather be a Has Been
Than a Might Have Been by far;
For a Might Have Been has never been,
But a Has was once an Are.

—Stanford Chaparral.

NEEDLESS.

"Can your little baby brother talk yet?"
a kindly neighbour inquired of a small lad.

"No, he can't talk, and there ain't no reason why he should talk," was the disgusted reply. "What does he want to talk for, when all he has to do is yell a while to get everything in the house that's worth having?"

Foreman: 'Ere, do you know 'Opkins carries twice as much as you at a time?
Workman: Yus. I've told 'im abaht it, but 'e will do it.

NOT HER IDEA OF HEAVEN.

The conversation around the long dinner table ended, as do most conversations nowadays, with the subject of spiritualism. The guests and the members of the family gave their opinions as to whether or not the dead could communicate with the living, but it remained for "Sweet Sixteen" to present the only original thought on the subject.

"It's hard enough now for me to keep up my correspondence," she said. "When I die I want a rest."

AS USUAL.

"Oh, Mr Mark, please buy a ticket to our entertainment! It is for a most worthy cause, I assure you."

"Certainly, Mrs Clatter! And what is that cause?"

"Paying the expenses of the entertainment we gave last week for a worthy cause."

A POPULAR AUTHOR.

"It took me nearly ten years to learn that I couldn't write stories."

"I suppose you gave it up then?"

"No, no. By that time I had a reputation established and didn't have to."

NOT SO FUNNY.

Mrs Perkins and Mrs Johnson had met on the street and were discussing the frailties of their mutual friends when Mrs Johnson's little daughter, who was interestedly regarding Mrs Perkins' new spring chapeau, suddenly burst out:

"Mother, I—"

"Hush, darling," said the mother.

"Mother—"

"Will you be quiet!,"

"Mother, Mrs Perkins' hat doesn't make me laugh!"

A SPORTING PARSON.

Mistress: I see the new curate has called. What is he like, Smithers?

Butler (who had noticed that the curate was dressed for golf): He had the appearance, my lady, of being out of 'oly orders for the day.

IN NEW YORK.

"Did the captain do anything to clean up the precinct?"

"Some say he got sixty thousand in a month."

There are people who, instead of listening to what is being said to them, are listening already to what they are going to say.

An acre of ground planted with bananas will, it is estimated, produce nearly 20 tons of fruit, as each bunch of bananas weighs from 70lb to 80lb.

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Printed by the Southland News Co., Ltd.
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Returned Soldiers' Association, by
Frederick George Blake, 93 Lewis street,
Gladstone, Invercargill.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1920.

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