

'You are in the minstrel business, I believe?' inquired the lawyer.

'Yes, sir,' was the reply.

'Is not that rather a low calling?'

'I don't know but what it is, sir,' replied the minstrel, 'but it is so much better than my father's that I am rather proud of it.'

The lawyer fell into the trap. 'What was your father's calling?' he inquired.

'He was a lawyer,' replied Clarke, in a tone that sent the whole court into a roar of laughter as the discomfited lawyer sat down.

### THE OAK AND THE WILLOW

One morning, after a dreadfully stormy night, Richard went out with his son James into the field to see whether the storm had done any injury.

'Oh, look, father,' said little James, 'the great strong oak lies yonder on the ground, and the feeble willow is still standing slim and upright by the brook here. I thought that the tempest would have destroyed the willow more easily than the proud oak, which has hitherto withstood every blast.'

'My child,' said the father, 'the stout oak was broken because it could not bend; but the pliant willow yielded to the storm, and so could suffer no harm.'

### PROOF POSITIVE

Magistrate: 'And what was the prisoner doing?'

Constable: 'He was having a heated argument with a cab-driver, your worship.'

Magistrate: 'But that doesn't prove he was drunk!'

Constable: 'Ah! But there wasn't no cab-driver there, your worship!'

### WAKING HIM UP

A young married lady one morning gave her husband a sealed letter, which he was to read when he got to his office. He did so, and the letter ran as follows:—

'I am obliged to tell you something that may give you pain, but there is no help for it. You shall know everything, whatever be the consequences. For the last week I have felt that it must come to this, but I have waited until the last extremity, and can remain silent no longer. Do not overwhelm me with bitter reproach, for you will have to put up with your share of the trouble as well as myself.'

Cold perspiration stood in thick drops on the brow of the husband, who was prepared for the worst. Tremblingly he read on:—

'Our coal is all gone. Please order a ton to be sent this afternoon. I thought you might forget it for the tenth time, and therefore wrote you this letter.'

But he didn't forget it that time!

### PLENTY OF TIME

The salesman praised his incubator with fervid eloquence. He declared that there was nothing like it on the market. But to all his arguments the farmer shook his head.

'But, think, sir,' cried the salesman warmly, 'think of the time an incubator saves!'

The old farmer sneered. 'What do I care for a hen's time?' he replied.

### THE LAST STRAW

At a recent banquet David Belasco was being congratulated on the success of his play, 'The Governor's Lady,' to which he responded:

'Writing plays is risky business. Past triumphs don't count. He who has written 20 superb pieces is just as likely to be damned on his 21st piece as any tyro. For instance:

'A playwright of my acquaintance sat in the front row on a first night of a new piece of his own. The

play was a complete failure. As my friend sat, pale and sad, amid the hisses, a woman sitting behind him leaning forward and said:

'Excuse me, sir; but, knowing you to be the author of this play, I took the liberty, at the beginning of the performance, of snipping off a lock of your hair. Allow me to return it to you.'

### A DILATORY PAINTER

There are many stories of the dilatoriness of Sir Thomas Lawrence, whose studio was usually crowded with unfinished portraits. The Lord Mexborough of that time, after much letter-writing about the portrait of his wife and child, said he could wait no longer.

Lawrence pleaded for more time; he was well forward with the lady, but the baby wanted finishing; could he not have one more sitting?

'My wife will be happy to give you another sitting whenever you like,' was the answer, 'but the baby is now in the Guards!'

### JUDGE RENTOUL'S CHEERS

Judge Rentoul told a story against himself at the annual dinner of the Glamorgan Society in London, at the Holborn Restaurant recently. Once he went to a Welsh constituency to 'tell the voters what they ought to do.' He spoke first, and in English, all the subsequent speakers using Welsh as the medium of their thoughts. As a matter of policy he applauded strongly whenever there was a clap among the audience, although he could not understand a single word that was said.

'I learned afterwards,' said Judge Rentoul, 'that every time I applauded a speaker it was when he had paid a strong personal compliment either to myself or my speech.'

### BUT ZE DOG

Recent shows have brought to the surface one or two new dog stories. One of the best is of a Frenchman who called on the owner of a rather ferocious dog. When he tried to get near the house the dog barred his way, barking furiously, and the Frenchman paused irresolutely. His friend, the dog's owner, came to the door.

'It's all right!' he said, 'don't be alarmed! You know the proverb, "Barking dogs don't bite!"'

'Ah, yes,' said the Frenchman, very sensibly. 'I know ze proverb, you know ze proverb, but ze dog—does he know ze proverb?'

### FAMILY FUN

The Mango Trick Exposed.

The growing mango tree is generally performed on the sand outside a bungalow, and the effect of the trick is that the Indian squats down upon the ground and, after covering the sand in front of him with a brilliantly-colored silk shawl, removes it and shows a tiny mango tree—a mere twig with a few leaves—starting to grow. He covers it again, and it has grown a little more; and again, and again, and again, until it is a tall tree bearing a ripe mango upon it. The explanation is simplicity itself. Overnight the Indian has secretly dug a little pit in the sand, and into this he sinks a long tin cylinder, something like a coffee-can. In this he places the full-grown mango tree attached to a disc of thick cork the circumference of the cylinder. The top of the mango tree just reaches the surface of the sand on which he is seated. When he covers it with his silk shawl he scoops away with his fingers a little of the covering sand, with the result that the few green leaves on the top of the tree become visible. Then he takes a pitcher of water and waters the plant to make it grow. Obviously, the more water which he pours into the cylinder the more it forces the cork up and the more the tree, fixed to this thick base of cork, rises to the surface. He continues to scoop away the sand as it is pushed up by the water, until at last the full-grown tree, with the ripe mango on it, is exposed.

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