A MAN WHO AMUSED THE WORLD

Gems of Humor from the Life of Mark Twain.

It is one of the most difficult things in the world to make the world laugh, and great humorists, being few and far between, should be valued accordingly. Mark Twain, the American author, was one of the privileged few with this gift of laughter-making. Here is an illustration, being a true story told by himself:—

He once arrived to lecture in a certain town, and as there was nobody there to receive him, he went on to the lecture hall and tried to gain admittance, but was stopped by the ticket collector:—

"Ticket, please."

Mark Twain bent over and whispered: "It's all right. I am the lecturer."

One Too Many.

The man closed one eye impressively and said, loud enough for all the crowd to hear, "No you don't. Three of you have got in up to now, but the next lecturer that goes in here tonight pays."

The above is taken from "Mark Twain's Autobiography," which was dictated by the famous author before he died fourteen years ago, and which he stipulated should not be published until after his death. Here are some more of the many "gems" in the book:

Once during a visit to Dr. John Brown, the Edinburgh physician-author, Mark Twain and his wife went with him on his round of visits to patients. When the doctor was disembarking from the carriage at his first stopping-place to see a patient, he remarked: "Entertain yourselves while I go in here and reduce the population."

The New Dish.

One of Mark Twain's stories of his childhood concerns Dr. Meredith, the family physician, who saved Mark's life several times. Which leads Mark Twain to remark: "Still, he was a good man and meant well. Let it go."

He was a sickly child, often tiresome; and when his mother was in her eighty-eighth year he once said to her: "I suppose you were uneasy about me?" "Yes, the whoe time." "Afraid I wouldn't live?' "No, afraid you would.'

Of his daughter, Susy's, childhood, he relates a number of amusing incidents. When she was six she was with her father and mother in Germany. One day she found a new dish on her table and inquired concerning it, and learned that it was made of snails. She was awed and impressed, and said, "Wild ones, mamma?"

As he says himself, Mark Twain was "born lazy." Once he went to see Governor (afterwards President) Cleveland—he had known Cleveland before he rose to fame—and he sat on the corner of a table while Cleveland and another friend remained standing and talking. There appeared to Mark to be about sixteen doors to the spacious room.

His Wife's Advice.

"From each door," he declares, "a young man now emerged, and the sixteen lined up and moved forward and stood in front of the Governor with an aspect of respectful expectancy in their attitude. No one spoke for a moment. Then the Governor said: 'You are dismissed, gentlemen. Your services are not required. Mr. Mark Twain is sitting on the bells.'

On another occasion, when Cleveland had become President, he called at the White House. While there he turnd to Mrs. Cleveland and gave her his card, on which he had written, "I did not," and asked her to sign it. She could not understand, but at length she consented, and Mark Twain then handed her a note written by his wife. It read: "Don't wear your goloshes in the White House." This was Mark's device for proving to his wife that he had remembered to obey orders.

Another new and amusing book of reminiscences is Mr. Frank Rattigan's "Diversions of a Diplomat."

The permanent head of the Foreign Office, of which Mr. Rattigan became an official, was a martinet of the old order.

"The first occasion on which I had to wait upon him with a sample of my handwriting, he glared at me for a moment and then snapped, 'This handwriting is allowable in a genius, but until we have had the opportunity of judging whether you are one, you must write more clearly.'

The Clerk's Ambition.

"I remember a discussion amongst a number of clerks when one of them remarked to another, 'I can't think why a rich man like yourself can stay on in a life of slavery like this.' Well, if you feel like that," was the reply, 'why don't you go? . . . I have a definite object in staying on.' On being pressed to tell us his object, he explained that it was in order to refuse to subscribe to the wreath which would be sent to the Foreign Office on the demice of our formidable chief!"

During the visit of the King and Queen to Gibraltar on their return from the Delhi Durbar, the author at a certain function was seated next to the Governor of Algeciras, who pointed to a woman seated at another table, and said, "The guapa!" which roughly translated, means in English, "What a darling." The author replied, "Does your Excellency think so?" and this launched him on a flood of eloquence ending in a protest against anyone who could remain unmoved by such beauty.

"I disclaimed any intention to disagree with him," Mr. Rattigan declares. "It was much later in the evening when the excited Governor clutched me by the hand and begged me to forgive his outspoken remark about my wife."

William T. Cosgrave, president of the Irish Free State, poses for his bust, which is being executed by George F. Waters, the American sculptor, in his Auteuil studio.

The Grass.

How is the grass set free?
What liberates the green?
Is there some urging need,
Some inkling of that upper, far-spread scene,
Wedged in the seed,
That wills: Go forth and be?

How can the tiny grains,
Held under heavy earth,
In that moist, smothering brown
Foresee the sunlight's worth,
Or dare, when that hard surface holds them down,
To suffer thrusting pains?

Is it from earth's deep heart,
That edict: Unhusk; go!
You shall behold a sky.
Undoubtedly, blades know
A motion to leap high,
Something that makes them start.

Or, from an ambient sun,
Perhaps, through miles of air
There falls a foreign word
Descriptive of how fair
To see the thunderous rain—the singing bird—
The white snow lightly spun!

Now the brave answer spreads—
Even the rock is glad;
The green—the green is here!
The naked suffering of the earth is clad;
A velvet folds the sphere;
The cattle bend their heads.

—May Lewis.

Interrupted Flow.

1st Comedian—"Did your song of the Mill-Stream flow smoothly?"

2nd Comedian — "Well, no; the audience constructed it with dams."

Service.

Since a man has only one life to lead, he wants it to count, and is bound to invest it where it yields the largest returns, not in ephemeral pleasure, not in the chaff which the wind driveth away, but in service "simply given to his own kind in their human need."

When he first chooses a calling, he carefully balances the claims of several trades or professions in the light of his own training and his peculiar aptitude. There are grown men and women on the concert platform who are miscast because they wanted the glamour and applause; they would have done better to follow some prosaic occupation outside the spotlight.

A rich merchant took a fancy to the son of his chauffeur, bought him a costly violin, and was bound to make him a concert virtuoso. The boy took a lot of expensive lessons and made no progress to speak of. Did that mean that chauffeurs' sons ought not to try to be artists? No; but in this instance it is probable that the lad was wasting time in the studio that might well have been spent on learning at the bench to be a good mechanic.

The old adage that you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear was slightly varied by Abraham Lincoln, who was in the habit of observing that you can't make a whistle cut of a pig's tail, till a farmer at Hartford, Conn., made one and sent it to him. It just proved that we mustn't lay down the law in such matters as unexceptionable. But if the probabilities are that a girl will make a better seamstress than she will a singer, or that a boy will make a good engineer and a poor sculptor, each should have the training that will enable him or her to qualify for the highest value, instead of that which will produce disheartened muddlers in fields of effort for which they are inept.

The successful employer is the man who finds what the employee can do best and sets him at it. The world at large, as a vast employment bureau, will sooner or later discover each man's ability; and if he refuses to do what he is best able to do, he is an economic superfluity and cannot expect to receive the wage that goes to the valuable laborer. "Save he serve, no man may rule"; and only when he serves in some fashion is he anything more than a drone and a social burden. But it must be remembered that constructive thought, creative criticism and the power of sympathy are among the most helpful influences, so that no invalid who thinks and guides, who soothes and encourages another human being, is useless or need be without employment.

Complete Wireless to Yukon.

Wireless communication between the Northwest and Yukon Territories and other parts of the Dominion was officially inaugurated at midnight, on December 5 when the first message, signed by Hon. Charles Stewart, Minister of the Interior, was transmitted from Ottawa to Dawson. The recent completion of the southernmost terminal at Edmonton opened the way for the inauguration of the new service, the stations at Fort Simpson and Dawson having been already put in operation.

The Canadian Corps of Signals, in co-operation with the North West Territories and Yukon Branch of the Department of the Interior, installed the wireless apparatus in the four stations completed, namely, Edmonton, Fort Simpson, Mayo, and Dawson. Work on the northermost station, that at Herschel, had to be postponed owing to the loss of equipment and supplies with the steamship Lady Kimberley.

Vancouver is Busy Port.

Vancouver is assured of shipping in the present crop season, at least 18,000,000 bushels of grain, and prospects are considered to be good for moving a total between 20,000,000 and 25,000,000 bushels, it was learned at the Vancouver Merchants' Exchange recently. About 13,000,000 bushels have been shipped from Vancouver to date since the beginning of the present crip year. Bookings are on the "boards" for between four and five million bushels to be moved in the next two months.

Preserving the Fish.

Minnesota has nine fish refuges either closed to fishing at all times or during specified seasons.

Fifteen Thousand for Social Hygiene.

That the rural as well as urban dweller is vitally concerned in Social Hygiene as a means of definitely prolonging the average length of human life has been shown recently by the announcement of a grant of $15,000 from an American Life Insurance Company to the Canadian Social Hygiene Council for the extension of its specialized public health work all over the Dominion.

The grant is to be used in spreading the gospel of social health to all the outlying parts of Canada and in making possible a national scheme for the adequate education of all parents and children in the essential meaning and vital importance of the fundamentals of social hygiene.

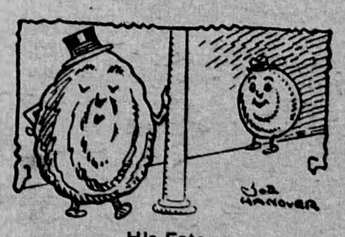
It is understood that this offer has come through the very favorable reports made by the officials at the Canadian headquarters of this company in Ottawa, regarding the activities and program of the Social Hygiene Council.

In speaking of the uses to which this money is likely to be put Dr. Gordon Bates, General Secretary of the Council, said: "Though we have fifty branches of our Council throughout Canada, and a national program of social hygiene, there have been two definitely weak spots in our movement, and these we now hope to remedy. One has been the need of organizers in both Eastern and Western Canada. These we hope to appoint at once. The second weakness has been in our failure to work out a national scheme for the adequate scientific education of adolescents and children in the meaning of social hygiene, so that from the earliest years onward, there may come to them through proper channels a gradual, but accurate knowledge regarding certain biological facts, and the maintenance of clean standards of conduct. In our work so far, we have aimed at these objectives by educative work for adults and parents. But we feel that there should be a more aggressive and definite plan to ensure child education along all these lines. This $15,000 grant will enable us to put our plans into immediate effect."

Ancient Courtesy to Medical Profession in Paris Theatres

Paris physicians have been in danger of losing one of the perquisites of their profession — a free orchestra stall at the theatre. Police regulations require every theatre to have a medical man on service at each performance, for whom a seat is reserved. Often enough the doctor sends a friend to replace him, but always arranges so that the theatre can find him rapidly in case of need.

Theatre managers recently started agitation to obtain freedom from this tax, arguing it was unfair, unnecessary and not known in other countries, like the United States and England. They seemed to be winning their point, with special medical service at the nearest police station as a substitute, when within one week two theatre patrons died while witnessing performances—one at the opera and the other in a playhouse—and the managers decided to let the question drop.



His Fate.

Clam—"There's Mr. Oyster, stewed again!"

A Snowflake.

What heart would have thought you?
Past our devisal
(O filagree petal!)
Fashioned so purely,
Fragilely, surely,
From what paradisal
Imagineless metal,
Too costly for cost?
Who hammered you, wrought you,
From argentine vapour?

"God was my shaper,
Passing surmisal,
He hammered, He wrought me;
From curled silver vapour,
To wish of His mind—
Thou couldst not have thought me!
So purely, so palely,
Finely, surely,
Mightily, frailly,
Inscupled, embossed
With His hammers of wind,
And His graver of frost."

—Francis Thompson.

Natural Resources Bulletin.

The Natural Resources Intelligence Service of the Department of the Interior at Ottawa says:

Canada's dairy products are making a name for themselves in many countries and are meeting world competition with increasing success. During the twelve months ending November last, Canada increased her exports of dairy products in nearly all lines. This was especially the case with butter, milk powder, and cream. To the supply of butter for outside markets Canada contributed 21,676,038 pounds the past twelve months, as against 12,935,279 pounds a year ago. This butter, than which no better is made, was supplied to twenty countries. The United Kingdom is, of course, the largest consumer, while Germany, Belgium and Newfoundland are heavy purchasers. It is of interest to note that China and Japan are in the market for Canadian butter, taking between them over 100,000 pounds in November.

Milk powder is another of our rapidly growing exports having as its primary source the dairy farm.

In the above twelve months' period 7,717,576 pounds of milk powder was exported, as compared with 3,981,502 pounds a year ago. The amount of condensed milk exported increased from 37,059,600 pounds last year to 43,736,000 pounds this year. During the same period, also, our cheese exports increased from 116,982,500 pounds in 1923 to 120,116,200 pounds in 1924.

The United States takes practically our entire exports of cream, notwithstanding the increased tariff. The twelve months ending November, 1924, showed deliveries of 3,287,452 gallons across the line, compared with 2,555,758 gallons in 1923.

Dairying is closely allied with development of the land. Raising the feed, feeding it to live stock, and using the resultant fertilizer upon the land is a conservation measure that will ensure the continuous productivity of Canada's greatest natural resource —her agricultural lands.

Cornelius T. Cramp, chairman of the British Labor party, says his impressions of New York will always be of "untidy prosperity," where people erect skyscrapers, but neglect t sweep their side streets.

What Some Plants Can Do.

Some kinds of plants have been found which can be made to photograph themselves.

A beam of light is turned on them, the plants absorb it, just as phosphorus will absorb light, and then give it out again. A photographic plate is placed over the plants, and when the light is yielded up by them they photograph the outlines of thir own form and structure on the sensitive plate.

They are very small plants which thus supply their own photographs, so small as to be seen properly only under the microscope; but they may be very important for good or evil, for the bacteria, the yeasts and the moulds, are all microscopic plants.

It has always been difficult to obtain trustworthy portraits of the insides of these tiny things, but now it has been found that in many of them the substances which color them have this power of giving out light again, and so producing the color photographs.

Animal Believed to be Extinct Reappears in California

The California grizzly bear, supposed extinct, has appeared after a lapse of forty years in the Sequoia National Forest, according to a reliable report from San Francisco.

At one time the California grizzly ranged the Sierra Nevada and Coast ranges in such large numbers that he was made the official emblem of the state and still graces the state flag. He is considerably larger than the Rocky Mountain grizzly, is of a grayish tinge and has a distinct hump on top of his shoulders. As a fighter he was feared by all other animals of the early California days. Yet he was not considered by men a dangerous animal, and he usually took to flight on man's approach.

A gentleman has ease without familiarity, is respectful without meanness, genteel without affectation, insinuating without seeming art.—Chesterfield.

Mme. Yoko Takahashi is the first woman of Japan to be made a college professor. She was photographed, following her appointment recently, for the first time.

The Author of the Three Bears.

It was Robert Southey, once poet laureate of England, who wrote the Three Bears, the children's classic. He wrote a story that is known and loved the wide world over and never dreamed that he had created a masterpiece. So completely has this tale entered into the folklore of the race that we think of it as a tale of unimaginable antiquity. The great big bear, the middle-sized bear and the little bear seem to have first eaten their breakfast porridge long ages ago. Indeed, we half expect the geologists to discover their three-sized footprints in fossil rocks.

The truth is, however, that the tale is modern. It was first read by delighted children in 1837. You will find the story as Southey wrote it in volume four of a curious work entitled the Doctor, which he wrote for his own amusement and afterwards published anonymously in London. The fictitious character, Dr. Daniel Dove, is credited with having repeated the story as it was told to him by his equally fictitious uncle William Dove. Robert Southey, writing as the unknown bioggrapher of Daniel Dove, the Doctor, says of the most interesting chapter of the entire work:

"So there should be one (chapter) at least for the nursery. With such a chapter therefore will I brighten the countenance of many a dear child and gladden the heart of many a happy father and tender mother and nepotious uncle or aunt and fond brother or sister. For their sakes I will relate one of William Dove's stories with which he used to delight young Daniel and with which the Doctor in his turn used to delight his young favorites, and which never fails of effect with that fit audience for which it is designed if it be told with dramatic spirit in the manner that our way of printing it may sufficiently indicate without the aid of musical notation. Experto crede. Prick up your ears then, my good little women and men, and ye who are neither so little nor so good, favete linguis., for here follows the story of the Three Bears, 'a tale which may content the minds of learned men and grave philosophers.'"

And so he begins the story: "Once upon a time there were Three Bears who lived together in a house of their own in a wood." All the speeches of the huge bear appear in big Old English type; the middle-sized bear's lines are printed in big letters, and the little bear's words are in small italics.

As a story-teller for children Robert Southey learned his art from much practice, for he was the delightful father of seven children. It is safe to say that his own little sons and daughters were the first little boys and girls who ever heard the Story of the Three Bears.

Answer.

Had I been one of those proud lilies
When he said "Consider,"
I would have shot up to a star, quick with red!

Or had I been a small loaf near a dazed multitude,
I would have widened with laughter's leaven
Till the grass was fed!

But if I had been thorns in that crown,
I would have shrunk with shame
Till a tree died alone, without a name.

—Lena Hall.

Wittersham, a tiny village in Kent, England, of 600 inhabitants, was recently in danger of complete isolation by the floods. The photograph shows a field nearby, which looked like a raging sea.