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R. CREECH, Acton, Jan. 7, 1878.

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UNDERTAKING. The undersigned begs leave to inform the people of Acton and surrounding neighborhood that he has procured a magnificent HEARSE, and is prepared to attend and conduct Funerals on the shortest notice and most moderate terms.

JOHN SPEIGHT, Acton, Feb. 10, 1877.

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JOHN MANEY, Office at the Free Press Building, Acton, Ontario.

IS IT ANYBODY'S BUSINESS?

Is it anybody's business if a gentleman should choose to wait upon a lady, or if the lady don't refuse? Or, to speak a little plainer, Is it anybody's business if a lady has a beau? Is it anybody's business when that gentleman does call, or when he leaves the lady, or if he leaves at all? Or is it necessary that the curtain should be drawn, to save from further trouble? The outside lookers on? Is it anybody's business But the lady's, if her beau rides out with other ladies, and doesn't let her know? Is it anybody's business But the gentleman's, if she should accept another escort, where he doesn't chance to be? Is a person on the sidewalk, whether great or whether small, Is it anybody's business Where that person means to call? Or, if you see a person, As he's calling anywhere, Is it any of your business? (What his business may be there? The substance of our query, Simply stated would be this: Is it anybody's business? What another's business is? If it is, or if it isn't? For we're certain if it isn't, There are some who make it so.

A MAN'S MISTAKE.

Two gentlemen sat at the little round table in the cafe of the St. Dennis Hotel, discussing the five o'clock dinner. At an adjacent table, half hidden behind a newspaper, sat another gentleman, waiting for his order to be delivered. So Glenham had been caught at last! You've heard of his engagement, of course? The gentleman addressed laid down his knife, in the very act of carving a slice of roast duck. "Glenham to be married! Mark, where did you hear such astounding news? Nonsense; it can't be true!" "Glenham," why he must be—well, nearly fifty. "Forty-four—I happen to know. Well, he certainly is engaged to be married—in a very short time, to Miss Baldwin." "Miss Baldwin? Miss Lillian Baldwin? O-h, and the tone of voice said as plainly as words would have said: "Well, if that is the case, I don't wonder, Miss Baldwin is a young, pretty, and a society belle, and she has always been understood that she was to marry money, and Glenham has any quantity of it."

Yes, she is the lucky girl who has secured the greatest match of the day. Of course it is his money that has done it—only, with his well known horror of being married for it, it is decidedly very much to the fair young girl's credit.

"It's all very very well, but you see I am not so sure of it. I tell you Glenham hasn't the girl's heart for I know it to a certainty."

Then his worst fears had their solid foundation, and John Glenham's hand trembled so he could hardly control his hold of the paper.

"Well, I can't say I uphold you in your wish, Miss Baldwin. I am an old fashioned enough to think, when an engagement is entered into, it ought to be kept. Still, if you are convinced you are dissatisfied—if you are sure you will be miserable—if you suppose there's nothing to do but break it."

Lily laughed joyously. John Glenham could hardly endure to hear the sweet, light-hearted melody, while he sat there almost beside him with anguish.

"You dear, good old friend! Of course it's best I should get out of it. The only thing that worries me, it is so near the wedding-day; but, then, I know I will be so much better off, and Mr. Marion will be so grateful, that I can afford to put some other people out."

Mr. Marion! She was going to throw him over for Harry Marion! Great drops of cold perspiration were on Mr. Glenham's hands.

"O-h-h!" expired Mr. Delarcher, half dubiously. "So it's Marion you're going to be good to, is it? Have you thought what Mr. Glenham will think?"

"John! Oh, he won't care!" "And then Mr. Glenham found it impossible to remain quiet. His eyes were full of hot indignation, his face was stern and pale, and altogether he looked quite what he felt as he walked into the president's private office unannounced.

Lily gave a little, startled, subdued exclamation. "Why, John?"

Mr. Delarcher looked a little annoyed at the intrusion, but he bowed courteously. "Ah, Mr. Glenham! Good afternoon!"

And Mr. Glenham comprehended them both in the cold bow he gave them.

"I have been waiting outside several minutes, and from what I have heard, I took the liberty of forcing myself upon you, as I believe I am equally interested in the matter under discussion."

"I believe Lily loves me. I won't believe she is so false as these tonguey, jealous fellows would make out. There is no reason why I should fret myself into a state of misery until I have some foundation, at least."

And he bravely strove to put the horrid suspicion out of his mind, and went on with his dessert as if he had risen superior to the disturbances that annoy ordinary mortals.

But after he had got into his carriage, and was being driven slowly up Broadway, the thoughts came back again with redoubled force.

"If she doesn't love me! I wonder whether I could be mistaken in thinking she could? How could she act and look as she does if she were playing a game? My precious little girl! Am I wrong here, and pushing myself by such thoughts? Or is it one of those subtle instincts of warning? If I thought her people had forced her into this, I'd release her now, for her own sweet sake even if it killed me! Ought I to speak to her about it?"

The self-pat question was still unanswered when Mr. Glenham jumped out of his carriage at the bank.

He went in, and was told by some one of whom he enquired that the president of the bank, Mr. Delarcher, whom he wished to see was specially engaged at the moment, but would see him very shortly. Would he be seated a moment? He would inform him instantly of Mr. Delarcher's leisure, etc.

So Mr. Glenham took off his hat, and picked up a last edition of the News, and prepared himself to be patient, when all at once he heard knocking from the side of the walnut and plate-glass partition that divided off Mr. Delarcher's private office that made him wonder if Fate was in league with him that day, since it was the second time he had heard his own name discussed.

Only besides the wonder he felt the pain and heart sickness—for the cruel words he heard were spoken in Lily Baldwin's sweet contralto voice.

"But I am very much in earnest, Mr. Delarcher. I am determined to back out of the engagement somehow, and I came to you to help me."

"Back out of the engagement somehow?" "Ah, how it cut and thrust him, that sword speech from the lips of his darling!"

Then his worst fears had their solid foundation, and John Glenham's hand trembled so he could hardly control his hold of the paper.

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He Didn't Treat.

The miser is, perhaps, the most incorrigible of men. Piggledy is a young man of means about town, always ready to accept the invitation of friends to an oyster, glass, or a cigar, but who has never, in a solitary instance, been known to return the compliment.

One day, as he was standing on the sidewalk, in front of a fashionable St. James street restaurant, three of his comrades spied him from afar, and Laws, the wag of the party, said:

"There's Piggledy. Let's make him treat."

"Impossible!" exclaimed the other two. "I'll bet you I succeed."

"Done." Piggledy was accosted, the usual salutations were exchanged, and the four entered the gilded saloon. The first treated to a Malaga. The second, to a toothful of Montillado.

The third, to a Golden Eagle. Piggledy enjoyed all these, but still made no sign.

Laws was sharply eyed by his companions, who were inwardly chuckling over the waggish of the wager. He saw his straits, and resolved on a coup d'etat.

"Piggledy," said he abruptly, "do you know that I had a very curious dream last night?"

"Indeed?" "And all about you."

"Yes. I dreamed that I had died and had gone down to the wrong place. When Satan saw me at the gate, he expressed surprise and pity, saying that he didn't believe that I was so bad as all that."

"I replied, of course, that the thing couldn't be helped, and put on such an air of resignation as I could, which, so moved the old fellow that, after mumbling a while, he suddenly said:

"Laws, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give you a chance. If you can mention three things, one of which I can't perform, I'll let you off. Now reflect."

"I knew it was an almost hopeless undertaking, but as there is nothing like trying, I returned thanks to my benefactor and began to reflect.

"At last I said: 'I see a wall over yonder, five million feet high and as many feet thick. You can't knock it down.' Satan quietly raised his hoof, and the masonry toppled over as easy as the walls of Jericho."

I hesitated a long time before making a second attempt, but, looking hard at a mountain that was about two thousand miles off (vision is very keen in the lower regions), I said:

"You can't blow that away." Lucifer gave a gentle puff, and the mountain disappeared.

I was desperate now, and inclined to give up, but my friend encouraged me to make a final effort. I took courage, and began to think again. Finally an inspiration seized me, and, looking steadily at the devil, I said:

"Do you know Montreal?" "Very well. Have plenty of friends there."

"And do you know a man named Piggledy?" "Yes. He is one of my best customers."

Then, clapping my hands, I exclaimed: "I'll bet that you can't make him treat."

"Get out of here, you rascal, as fast as you can," roared the Prince of Darkness, in a voice of thunder, as he opened the black gate for me.

I awoke, and found I was safe. The whole crowd received this story with shouts of merriment, in which Piggledy joined loudly, but—but—he didn't treat.

So He Thought. Yesterday forenoon a sedate-looking young man of five, and twenty walked into the Central Station and said:

"I was sitting in a saloon down here apiece, minding my own business and saying nothing to nobody, when a big fellow with a double chin walked up and spit on my head."

"Did, eh?" queried the captain. "Yes, and then—he said he begged my pardon—thought my head was a wood-box."

"And what did you say?" "Why, I didn't say nothing, but I've been thinking it over and there's a deep mystery about the transaction."

A Colored Skeptic.

When schools were established in the South for the education of the negro, they were eagerly patronized by the colored folks of all ages. Coy maidens of 30, and bashful lads equally old, gayly trudged to school with diminutive primers in their hands, while the small fry swarmed in the school houses, and wore enthusiastic on the education question. Of Pete, the subject of our anecdote, it might be truly written that "ne'er did pencil trace a whiter eye or blacker face."

His former master, Dr. H— had taken great pains with him instructing him daily in reading and writing. In the fall, Pete was to go to school, and anxiously looked forward to it. This was in 1869, when the sun was in total eclipse in August.

There were all sorts of rumors among the colored people about calamities which would happen at the time of this phenomenon. A few days before it occurred, the following conversation took place between Pete and a friend:

"Pete, did you know there was gwine to be a 'clipse ob de sun next week?"

"Yes," said Pete, "I heard de folks talkin' 'bout it."

"Pete, I hear dat awful things is gwine to happen when it comes. Dey say dat de worl' is gwine to come to an end."

Churling his lip in scorn and fixing his big white eyes on him, Pete answered with contempt, "Go 'way, niggah. Don't you know dat school opens in September? How den, can de worl' come to an end in August?"

A Laughable French Miracle.

Father Bridaine was always poor, for the simple reason that he gave away everything he had. One evening he asked for a night's lodging of the curate of the village through which he passed, and the worthy man having only one bed, shared it with him. At daybreak he rose according to custom, and went to say his prayers at the neighboring church. Returning from his sacred duty, he met a beggar, who asked alms. "Alas, my friend, I have nothing!" said the good priest, mechanically putting his hand into his beseecher's pocket, where to his astonishment he found something hard, a piece of paper, which he knew he had not left there. He hastily opened the paper, and seeing four half crowns in it cried out that it was a miracle.

He gave the money to the beggar and hastened to the church to announce the miracle. The curate soon after arrived there, and Father Bridaine related the miracle with the greatestunction; the curate turned pale, put his hand in his pocket, and in an instant perceived the Father Bridaine in getting up in the dark, had taken the wrong pair of breeches. He had performed the miracle with the curate's crowns.

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"And what did you say?" "Why, I didn't say nothing, but I've been thinking it over and there's a deep mystery about the transaction."

"He didn't think your head was a wood-box,"—he meant to insult you," replied the captain. "That's just what I think!" said the young man. "Wood-boxes are always square, while my head is round, and I don't believe he could have made such a mistake, and the young man went out musingly."

Samanthy's Elopement.

"Yes," said the old lady, as she wiped her eyes and proceeded to tell the story of her daughter, "yes, Mrs. Slob, you may say it's a dreadful stroke. I ain't had such a shock since that last spell of rheumatism. To think that a darter o' mine would do such a disgraceful act after all the care an' affection me an' her father lavished wash her from her infancy up. I couldn't bear up under the affliction nohow."

"Did you not have some suspicion that they were contemplating such a move?" asked the neighbor.

"No, we never suspicioned any contemplation. After I'd run the conceited upstart off the premises with the mop, I didn't think he'd have the insurance to speak to Samantha again. And she appeared to be so consoled, that I never suspected her of having any under-handed intentions. But all the time—so I have heard since—when I used to meet clandestinely, when I thought Samantha was at the meetin', an' decoy their plan to elope. Well, Samantha has made her bed an' she will have to lie on it. I wash my hands of the congratulatory gift from this time forthwith."

"Did you not see some effort to intercept them?"

"No; you see we didn't know it, or else we'd intercepted them within an inch o' their lives."

"I mean did you try to have them stopped when you found they were gone?"

"Yes, indeed. Father teleported to five or six towns, and gave their prescription cost him lots of money, too; but he said he would not mind spendin' the price of a cow to get Samantha back. But we never heard anything from them, an' I told father to let 'em alone, and they'd come home after a while with five or six children behind 'em. But I tell you, Mrs. Slob, they shan't set a foot in this house except over the dead body of my defunct corpus. You just remember that."

On Smoking.

A hater of tobacco asked an old negro woman, the fumes of whose pipe was annoying to him, if she thought she was a Christian.

"Yes, honey, I think I is."

"Do you believe in the Bible?" "Yes, brudder."

"Do you know there is a passage in the Scriptures which says that nothing unclean shall inherit the kingdom of Heaven?"

"Well, Chlo, you smoke, and you cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven, because there is nothing so unclean as the breath of a smoker. What do you say to that?"

"Why, I spects to leave my breech behind when I go dar."

Josh Billing's Proverbs.

There are but piew things a man dug in this life, be they good, bad, or indifferent; but what can be traced to success.

Good clothes make the impression, but they don't make the man.

I have got a patent rice way we induces people to be happy. It is this, make everybody think they are better off than you are.

There are certain things in this world that are bound twain. I don't care what trumps are.

It is kind or plummy that the more christianized the world becoms, the more laws, and officers of the law, we hav tew hiv.

"Around Town."

It is surprising to think of the widespread interest taken in scientific thought and study by our young people. Astronomical, geological, biological, etc., discoveries are read with a real interest and zest, unknown a few years ago, and not only are there great readings, but experimentalists abroad. The solution of the question, "Is diphtheria transmitted by kissing?" involves many experiments before a satisfactory answer can be hazarded, and the numbers engaged would largely swell the list of martyrs to science.

As the result of the young man's experiments, we learn that there is danger in even the ordinary friendly salutation; but when it comes to one of those red-hot, hang-quill your-breath-gone slobbers, if the young lady has even the slightest symptom of a cold or red flannel, was earnestly advising the young man to run home, soak his feet in a pail or tub (according to the size of the feet) of hot water, put on as many mustard plasters as there is room for, swallow a pint of flour of sulphur, and go to bed, because he has the "diphthery," sure.