

Humorous Department.

THE COURTING OF A SHARP MAN OF BUSINESS.—Pitts is a fast man, a sharp man, a man of business tact, and when Pitts goes into a store to trade, he always gets the lowest cash price; and he says: "Well, I'll look about, and if I don't find anything that suits me better, I'll take this!"

Pitts, like all fast men, is partial to women, and young ones in particular. Now, quite lately, Pitts said to himself: "I'm gettin' rather 'long in years and I guess I'll get married."

His business qualities wouldn't let him wait, so off he travels and calling upon a lady friend, opens the conversation by remarking that he would like to know what she thought about his getting married.

"Oh, Mr. Pitts, that is an affair in which I am not greatly interested, and I prefer to leave the matter with yourself."

"But," says Pitts, "you are interested, and my dear girl, will you marry me?"

The young girl blushed very red, hesitated and finally, as Pitts was very well-to-do in the world, and morally, financially and politically of good standing in society, she accepted him. Whereupon the matter-of-fact Pitts responded:

"Well, well, I'll look about, and if I don't find any that suits me better than you, I'll come back."

A YANKEE CAPTAIN OUTWITTED.—Captain Farrow, of Islesboro, tells a good story of himself which occurred a few years ago, while he was trading at Key West. It was a case where a Yankee was outwitted by a Southerner.

The captain was trading in a small vessel, and had been up the coast to Tampa bay, where he purchased 20 dozen chickens, paying \$4 a dozen. The chickens ran all the way in size from a few days old to full-grown ones.

At Key-West a hotel landlord came along and asked the captain how he sold his chickens. The captain replied: "If you pick them out I shall charge \$6 per dozen; if you let me pick them out, you can have them at \$3 per dozen."

"All right," said the hotel man, "you pick them out." The captain selected several dozen of the smallest, when the man said: "Go ahead; I want more." The captain was now among his largest fowls, and wished the man would stop, but he still said, "go on." The captain saw the point at last. The man kept him selecting until he purchased the entire lot at a loss of \$20 to the owner.

After this the captain sold his chickens on a different plan.

A BUSINESS TRANSACTION.—Sam Oppenheimer, of San Antonio, was one of the passengers on the San Saba stage that was robbed a few weeks ago.

"Shell out your money, or off goes the top of your head," remarked one of the robbers, holding a pistol under Sam's nose.

"Three hundred dollars vash every cent I got so hellup me schiminy grashus."

"Han'm over!"

Sam quickly did so, keeping back \$6.

"What are you keeping back them \$6 for?" mildly inquired the robber, pressing his pistol against Sam's head.

"Mine Gott! don't you let a man take out 2 per cent, when he advances money without securities?" asked Sam.—Texas Siftings.

A COLORED MAN'S HINT.—Colonel Witherspoon, of Austin, is a very close man. Not long ago he lost his pocket-book containing a large sum of money.

It was found by a poor, old, but honest Negro, who asked:

"Is dis heah de portmonia, yer lost?"

"Why, yes. I'm a thousand times obliged to you."

"Thank you, boss. You is welcome. And if ever you lose your pocket-book, and I should happen to find it, I'll give it back to you; and it shan't cost you a cent unless you want to reward me for my honesty."

A YOUNG BROTHER'S PRIDE.—Featherly was making an evening call and had just complimented Miss Smith on the beauty of her teeth.

"Yes," interposed Bobby, "an they are all natural teeth too, an' every one of 'em is sound."

"There, there, Bobby," said his sister sternly, but her face flushed with pleasure, "little boys should be—"

"Yes, sir," repeated Bobby, proudly, "they're all sound, an' pa says that for a woman of her age, it is quite remarkable."

IMPRESSING HIM.—"Well, you had quite a siege with that California real estate agent. I never saw a man gesticulate so violently. What ailed him?"

"Oh, the fellow has just heard of the German professor's theory that the Garden of Eden was located in the United States, and now he claims that he has seen the impression of Adam's fall on a rock in the neighborhood of the land he has to sell."

"Betty," said the learned lady to her dingy Abigail, "go for some spirits for the lamps, and tell Mr. Mixum that the last was so very weak that it only served to make the darkness visible."

"Yes'm," replied Betty; and away she ran with the message, which she delivered as follows: "Missus says the last sperrets you sent wa'n't good for nuthin' and it only served to make the darkies miserable, it was so weak it was."

THEY ALL ANSWERED ALIKE.—A Texas man made a bet that he could invent a question to which 50 people would all give the same answer. He won the bet. The question was:

"Have you heard that Smith has committed suicide?"

The answer in each case was: "What Smith?"

Wayside Gatherings.

Why are chickens liberal? Because they give a peck when they take a grain.

The hens of this country earn as much as do the iron mines and the sheep together, and yet many eggs are still imported.

The exact distance from the equator to either the north or south pole is 6,000 miles, when measured along the surface.

Of what advantage is it to the youth who gets a bicycle free, if he smokes enough cigarettes to kill him in order to get the wheel coupons.

"When er man declahs he doan regret nuffin' he ever done," said Uncle Eben, "he's either got er mighty good conscience er none at all."

It costs \$50 to kiss a woman in Connecticut. That is to say, against her will. When the woman is willing, it oftentimes costs very much more than \$50.

Russian railways not only have the usual smoking cars attached to all trains, but there is another smoker for ladies only, which no man may enter to remain.

"Can you give me change for \$5?" inquired the usually impecunious friend. "Certainly," was the unguarded reply. "Then lend me three."

"Mary, I hope you took good care of my animals while I was away?" "Indeed I did; only once I forgot to feed the cat." "I hope she didn't suffer." "Oh, no; she ate the canary and the parrot."

Jefferson said of agriculture that it is the grand exchequer of the world, that honors all drafts, however large. To express the idea otherwise, all the world stands with open mouth, waiting for the farmer to fill it with food.

A writer in Blackwood says: "When people want to speak of a native of Holland, they call him an Amsterdam Dutchman; but when they speak of one of the German race generally, they leave out the Amster."

Twenty years ago there was only one decent hotel in Jerusalem, whereas now there are at least six good hotels in the city, two being first-class, besides several boarding-houses and hospices for the accommodation of pilgrims.

Japan's population at the close of 1894 was 42,000,000, to which must be added the 3,000,000 in Formosa. That puts her 6th in the list of countries according to population, China, India, Russia, the United States, and Germany surpassing her.

There is no building material so durable as well-made bricks. In the British Museum are bricks taken from the buildings in Nineveh and Babylon which show no sign of decay or disintegration, although the bricks did not burn or bake them, but dried in the sun.

"I will issue a proclamation," said the Spanish commander, "giving the rebels 15 days to surrender."

"And if they won't surrender?" inquired his lieutenant. "Well," answered the general, "if they won't we'll be no worse off than we are now, will we?"—Puck.

One of the bills recently signed by Governor Morton, of New York, provides that 60 hours a week shall be the maximum of work for women and children, that chairs shall be provided for women clerks, and that all places where women and children are employed shall be subject to sanitary inspection.

The amount of loss suffered by coal from exposure to the weather is considerable—far greater, indeed, than is generally known. The results of recent analyses show in some cases a total loss in weight from this cause amounting to 33.08 per cent., while the deterioration in quality for purposes of fuel or gas making reaches a still higher figure.

By means of a microscope, Prof. Wolskoff has discovered many interesting details connected with the life of the ancient Egyptians, in a brick taken from the ruins of the pyramid of Dashour. The brick itself is made of mud from the Nile, chopped straw, and sand, thus confirming what the Bible and Herodotus had handed down to us as the Egyptian method of brickmaking.

A minister noted for combining the somewhat incongruous professions of preaching and money lender, was offering a prayer in which was the following petition: "Grant that we may have more interest in heaven!" "Don't do it!" exclaimed one of the congregation; "don't do it! The old sinner gets five per cent. a month now, and that's enough, the Lord knows!"

Intemperance cannot be treated like theft, or lying, or covetousness. "Look not upon the wine-cup," and "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink," have been in the Bible from the beginning, and yet public sentiment has been so low that they have been greatly overlooked. The church, surely, must lead in this matter.

Canon Farrar says: "If Buddhism has succeeded in making Mohammedan lands temperate, surely the church of God should blush that she has not done so much."

The Soar family of Ambaston, Derbyshire, England, have a curious heirloom in the shape of a loaf of bread which is now over six hundred years old. The founders of the family, it appears, were great friends of King John. When that monarch died, he made several land grants to the Soars. One of these tracts, it appears, had always been conveyed with a loaf of bread, as a witness of good faith.

When King John made over the papers to the original Soar, he sent the traditional loaf along with the "writings," and the deed and the loaf are both kept to this day as sacred relics.

For the Home Circle.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

LESSON II, THIRD QUARTER, INTERNATIONAL SERIES, JULY 12.

Text of the Lesson, II Sam. v. 1-12—Memory Verses, 10-12—Golden Text, II Sam. v. 10—Commentary by the Rev. D. M. Stearns.

1. "Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh."

Both Ishbosheth and Abner, the king and the captain of his host, were now dead, and all Israel are united to make the man of God's choice their king. The oneness suggested by one's bone and flesh is first found in Gen. ii, 23, in reference to Adam and Eve, and for the last time in Eph. v, 30, in reference to Christ and the church. It is also found in Gen. xxix, 14; Judg. ix, 2; II Sam. xix, 13, 18; I Chron. xi, 1.

2. "The Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel." They knew this. Then why had they not thought of it before? How many truths we know, but by some blindness or hardness of heart fail to appropriate and enjoy. Our Lord had to say unto those who ought to have known Him best, "Have I been so long time with you and yet have ye not known Me, Philip?" (John vi, 9.) See chapter vii, 7, and Ps. lxxviii, 70-73, on David's feeding Israel. See Isa. xl, 11; Mic. v, 4; vii, 14, on Christ feeding or ruling His people, and contrast in Ezek. xxxiv the Good Shepherd who feeds His flock and the false shepherds who feed themselves and not the flocks.

3. "King David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel." Thus the purpose of the Lord concerning David was in due time performed. There is great comfort for every child of God in Isa. xiv, 24. "The Lord of Hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand." Whether it be the Lord's purpose concerning the Jew, the gentile, or the church of God (I Cor. x, 16), the nations or an individual (Job xxxiv, 29), the counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations, and every purpose of the Lord shall be performed (Ps. xxxiii, 11; Jer. li, 29).

4. "David was 80 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned 40 years." It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord (Lam. iii, 26), and David had patiently waited many years. Consider the long years of waiting of Abraham, Joseph, the slave and prisoner; Moses, the shepherd. See the Lord Jesus patiently waiting as Nazareth subject to Mary and Joseph till he was 30 years of age (Luke ii, 51; III, 23), and if ever tempted to become faint and weary consider Him (Heb. xii, 3).

5. "In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah." The kingdom over which the Son of David shall rule must include all Israel. They shall be gathered from all nations and be one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and the sanctuary of the Lord shall be in the midst of them forevermore (Ezek. xxxvii, 21-28). Then shall Jerusalem be the throne of the Lord, and all nations be gathered into it to the name of the Lord to Jerusalem (Jer. li, 17).

6. "David cannot come in hither." Thus thought and spake the Jebusites, who formerly inhabited Jerusalem. Jesus was a former name of Jerusalem (I Chron. xi, 4), and the children of Benjamin, instead of driving out the Jebusites, allowed them to dwell with them in Jerusalem (Judges i, 21). See also Joshua xv, 63. If the Jebusites may represent to us the old things in us before Christ comes in, we see here the danger of in any way tolerating them, lest they get the mastery.

7. "Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion." The same is the city of David. This was the southwest hill of Jerusalem, the older and higher part of the city. Another hill in the city was called Moriah, and on this hill the temple was builded (II Chron. iii, 2). Here was the threshing floor of Araunah, and here, long before, had Abraham offered up Isaac.

8. "So David dwelt in the fort and called it the city of David." David offered the chief captivity to whoever would first smite the Jebusites, and the successful man was his own sister's son, Joab, the son of Zeruah (I Chron. xi, 6; 2-16). Nothing can stand before a man in whom God is. One such shall chase 1,000, and two put 10,000 to flight (Deut. xxxii, 30). We think of Caleb, who asked for Hebron, where the giants were, and of David when he slew Goliath. Although David dwelt in this visible fort, he knew of and dwelt in a much stronger one, invisible to men, for he was wont to sing, "The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer, My God, my strength, in whom I will trust" (Ps. xviii, 2).

9. "And David went on and grew great, and the Lord God of Hosts was with him." The margin has "going and growing." In I Chron. xi, 9, it is written, "So David waxed greater and greater," or, in the margin, "went in going and increasing." The R. V. has in both texts, "David waxed greater and greater." The reason is that "the Lord was with him." It seems to me increasingly clear that the promise, "I am with you," or "I will be with you," is about the greatest that God can give us. See Ex. xii, 12; I Cor. xv, 58; Josh. i, 5; Judg. vi, 16; Jer. i, 8, 19; Isa. xli, 10; Math. xxviii, 20, etc.

10. "And David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel and that He had exalted his kingdom for His people Israel's sake." The growth of David's kingdom and its establishment is typical of the kingdom of the son of David, of whom it is written, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon His kingdom, to order it and to establish it from henceforth even forever" (Isa. ix, 7). Hiram, king of Tyre, with his carvings and masons building a house for David, makes us think of the time when the wealth of all nations shall come into Israel and serve her (Isa. lx, 8, 11, 12), when all kings shall fall down before her King and all nations serve Him (Ps. lxxii, 11).

The same Lord who previously established Samuel as His prophet (I Sam. iii, 30) now establishes David as His king. The recipe for being established is found in II Chron. xx, 20, "Believe in the Lord your God; so shall ye be established." The opposite is seen in Isa. vii, 9. "The word for us is, 'Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord'" (I Cor. xv, 58). How can we? By letting the government of ourselves and all our affairs be upon His shoulder and by our believing that He is ever with us and thus walking before Him sincerely.

Farm and Fireside.

HISTORY OF THE POTATO.

When the Spaniards conquered Peru, in the 16th century, they carried some potatoes to Europe and sent them to the pope. The raw plant was cultivated a little in Spain, Italy, Burgundy and the Netherlands, and from a certain resemblance to the truffe, an esculent fungus growing in the earth, the Italians gave them the name of Tattuffi, or Taratuffia, whence the Germans derive their word Kartoffel. The French called them "Apples of the earth," Pommes de terre; while in Austria and portions of Germany, the equivalent expression Erd apfel is used.

John Hawkins first introduced them into England in 1565. Walter Raleigh brought them here in 1584, and finally Admiral Drake in 1586. The latter, sent some to a friend to plant, with the remark that the fruit was excellent and nutritious, so that it would be very useful in Europe. His friend actually planted the tubers, and they grew nicely. But when the seed balls were ripe, he took these instead of the tubers and fried them in butter, and sprinkling sugar and cinnamon over them, placed them before some company as a great rarity. Of course these balls tasted disgustingly, and the assembly concluded that the fruit would not ripen in Europe. The gardener pulled up the plants and burned them. The gentleman, who chanced to be present, stepped upon one of the baked potatoes as it lay in the ashes, when it broke open and he noticed that it was white as snow and mealy, and had such an agreeable smell that he tasted it, and found it very palatable. The new vegetable was thus rescued, but for a century after, it was only cultivated in his garden, and in 1600 the queen of England made the remark in her house book that a pound of potatoes cost two shillings, (about 50 cents).

From England the plant was gradually introduced into Holland and France, but at first it only appeared as an expensive rarity on royal tables, or a decoration in princely rooms. Louis XIV was accustomed to wear a potato blossom in his button hole, and his queen wore a wreath of them as a head ornament at court balls. As in many other instances, scarcity and hunger accomplished a general distribution. The grain crops had failed for several years, and in 1771 a nourishing plant was sought to relieve this need. In 1778 an apothecary, name Parmentier, wrote an essay, to which was awarded a prize by the Academy of Natural Science, and in this he directed the attention of political economists to the potato. He also cultivated several acres of them himself. The king was so delighted with the excellent yield that he exclaimed, "You have found bread for the poor!" But the poor, and especially the peasants, would not try them, but despised and scorned the strange bulb. Parmentier now adopted a stratagem. He made a public announcement, that his potatoes were now ripe, but that they were so valuable that he had obtained from the king a special protection, and every one who stole a potato would suffer a double penalty. This worked perfectly. The peasants came at night and stole the potatoes, carried them home, and on trial found them so good that in a short time every corner of the field was dug over and cleaned out, and the next spring hundreds of peasants planted stolen potatoes.

The potato was introduced into Germany still later, although planted in the botanical gardens as early as 1588. In many parts they were introduced in the years of famine in the Thirty Years' war, and then in the beginning of the 18th century they were cultivated and prepared in various ways as food for feeding hogs, for powder, and in making starch. Every time the grain harvest failed, the potato made rapid advances into favor. The manner in which the Prussian government aided its introduction is well told by the celebrated Nettlebeck in his autobiography: "I was a youngster about 6 or 7 years old, and just putting on trousers—say about 1743 or 1744—when there was a dreadful scarcity, so that many persons died of hunger. In the following year the city of Kolberg received a present by the favor of Frederick the Great, a thing utterly unknown up to that time. A large freight wagon full of potatoes came to the market place, and an announcement was made throughout the city and suburbs that every owner of a garden should be at the city hall at a certain hour, and by the grace of the king a benefit was to be conferred on them. People began to conjecture what that had to do with the gift, and the less they knew the more they wondered. The city fathers now exhibited the fruit to the assembled multitude, and a long lecture was delivered on planting, cultivating and cooking them. It would certainly have been much better to have given them out written or printed instructions, for in the noise and tumult very few paid any attention to the lecture. On the contrary, the good people took the highly praised tubers with wonder, smelled and tasted and shook their heads. Some were thrown to the dogs, who snuffed about them, and of course rejected them with disdain. Judgment was pronounced against them. "See," said they, "they have no smell, no taste, and even the dogs will not eat them; what help will they be to us?"

The belief was general that they grew on trees. Very few were planted as they should have been, some sticking single ones in the ground here and there, paying no further attention to them. Others piled them in heaps and threw a little dirt over them.

"The next year another load of potatoes was sent, but experience had taught them something, and a person was sent along who understood the cultivation, and who aided in the plant-

ing and took care that they were attended to."

In many places the government was obliged to use compulsory measures, and dragoons watched the peasants to see that they planted potatoes. In other places the priests and clergy endeavored to enlighten the people and stimulate them, but everywhere the progress was slow.

Before it had become fairly established, the disease appeared, which first, in 1764, infested Erzgebirge, then in 1780-1790 South Germany and Hanover, and in 1830 West Germany. In the great famine of 1770 in Bohemia, where they had no potatoes, 180,000 persons starved, while in Silesia, where potatoes were already cultivated, all lived.

In Switzerland, potatoes were frequently cultivated as early as 1730; in the famine of 1771, they saved thousands of lives, but they did not come into general use until the beginning of this century, and principally since the scarcity of 1817.

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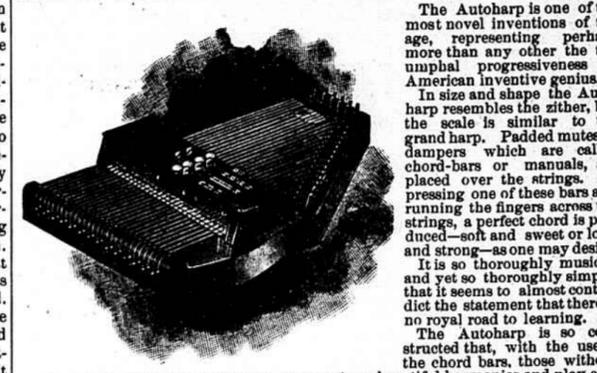


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