

# Gleanings from the Story Teller's Pack

THE British officers in the Transvaal who are inclined to enjoy a joke, whatever the reaction, are delighted with an anecdote relating to an interview between Kitchener and the Boer general, Botha, says Youth's Companion.

At the conclusion of the fruitless conference to arrange terms of peace Botha said:

"Well, I must be gone."  
"Don't be in a hurry," said Kitchener, hospitably. "You haven't got to catch a train."

"But that's just what I have got to do," answered Botha, as he took his leave.

And so he had, for two days later, he caught and looted a train on the Delagoa line not far from the place of meeting.

Good-natured May Irwin is excessively fond of children, reports the New York Times. It was, therefore, no surprise to the elevator man in one of the tall office buildings, where the actress has business frequently, when the woman looked with deep affection upon the form of a boy of 12 garbed in clothes that had the cut of those of a man. Finally Miss Irwin, bending down upon the diminutive form, said to the elevator man:

"Isn't he interesting?"  
"The interesting" little boy turned up to her a countenance that the years hadn't touched lightly.

"Madam," he said slowly. "If you please, I am 49."

The actress stammered in confusion.

"But really, you are interesting."

Then the two walked up Broadway together. In the dwarf Miss Irwin recognized Osman Sardon, one of the best known Lilliputians on the vaudeville circuit. That was how the acquaintance of the actress, who is certainly nothing of a Lilliputian, and the dwarf began.

Before Joseph Jefferson became so well known and during the memorable run of "Rip Van Winkle" at Booth's old theater, New York City, somebody sent him a check made payable to himself. The amount has no especial bearing upon the anecdote Jefferson needed the money and after endorsing the check presented it for payment at the bank.

"You will have to be accompanied by someone who will identify you before I am privileged to cash your check," said the paying teller politely.

Jefferson insisted that it was impossible for him to do so before the time came for the bank to close and that he was in immediate need of the money. But the paying teller was immovable. Turning away and walking toward the door Jefferson said sadly:

"If my dog Schneider was here he would identify me."

"Here," called the paying teller, "Mr. Jefferson, hand me your check. There's but one man in the world who can say those words."

Secretary Root has a gift, not unlike Lincoln's, of infusing humor into the laborious details of official duties. The war secretary's office has been throughout the administration an extremely busy one, relates the Saturday Evening Post. Now the hurrying demands of war have been supplanted by the exacting responsibilities of preparing military government for the colonies, not to speak of the multiplying affairs of regular army business.

But Secretary Root, although possessed of unusual capacity for hard and prolonged work, seems never to be hurried, and will occasionally pause in the midst of revolving routine to entertain his associates or visitors with some pleasant remark.

A few days ago he was superintending the work of revising the Cuban tariff. Item after item was drearily gone over, and to the assembled clerks it seemed that the secretary was not, on this occasion, to enlighten the proceedings with his customary wit. Suddenly his face lightened up. He had come across the word "luggage" written into the tariff, evidently by some Britisher among the clerks.

"Luggage?" exclaimed the secretary, "here at last is unmistakable evidence that our country is drifting into imperialism."

Paul Du Chailu, the noted traveler, who has a number of pleasant acquaintances in Chicago, was leading man in an odd little scene shortly before his recent departure for the old world. He was spending a few days at the house of a lifelong friend, whose pretty daughter has lately made her debut in society. One afternoon he quietly entered the library for a book and found the girl seated in a large chair by a window humming an old Scotch song. She made a pretty picture and Du Chailu stood watching her until she sang—

An' a laddie brang he'd be  
Who to touch my lips would dare.

The traveler decided to accept the challenge, as might a man old enough to be her grandfather and who had carried the singer in his arms when she was in long clothes. Stepping forward he gave an imitation of the "laddie" who "would dare." The tall young beauty rose in apparent wrath and, towering above the humiliated little man, delivered a declaration of independence and scathing rebuke that brought sauntering guests upon the scene.

"How dare you," concluded the glowing girl—  
M. Du Chailu had never seen her look so beautiful—"how dare you, Paul Du

Chailu, take advantage of my helplessness to steal a kiss from me!"

Then, with inimitable grace, sinking upon her knees so that her rosebud of a mouth was just temptingly below the old traveler's, she demanded with a bewitching smile: "Paul Du Chailu, put it back!"

The startled traveler was not slow to accept the invitation, though in doing so his manner lacked much of its accustomed grace because of his temporary confusion.

"Rear Admiral Schley is as brave as a lion," said First Sergeant George Boyce, formerly of the United States Marine corps, who drills the boys at the Brooklyn Truant school and Brooklyn Disciplinary Training school, to a New York World man. "I was master-at-arms aboard the Essex in the '70s and I saw Schley under conditions fit to try the bravest man. He was in command of the Essex."

"We were on the way from Montevideo to Rio Janeiro when a typhoon struck us. Our shaft was broken and our bulwarks swept away. For three days the hatches were battered down and Schley was lashed to the bridge. Even coffee-making was impossible and Schley lived on biscuit."

"When we got to the harbor outside Sugar Loaf mountain at Rio the weather fell dead calm and a tug came out to tow us in."

"How much?" asked Schley.

"Five hundred dollars," said the tugman.

"Wait till 2 o'clock and we'll tow you in," said Schley.

"He knew that at 2 o'clock each day there is a breeze at Rio which the people there call 'the doctor.'

"Sure enough, at 2 o'clock 'the doctor' came along and we gave the people of Rio the unusual spectacle of an American man-of-war under full sail. We sailed into the harbor in grand style and came to anchor as well as if we had had the tug."

One of the best known raconteurs in the south is Rev. Charles Lane of Atlanta, relates the New York Times. He is thoroughly unconventional, but is possessed of an inexhaustible supply of anecdotes. Mr. Lane was one of a party of ministers who were recently dining with Rev. Dr. T. De Witt Talmage at the home of Evan P. Howell in Atlanta. Dr. Talmage was personally a stranger to most of the preachers present and the dinner seemed rather cold and formal, differing in this respect from most southern gatherings. Finally some one suggested to Mr. Lane that he try to liven things up. He then proceeded to tell the following story, which completely fractured the ice and made everyone acquainted with everyone else that was there:

"A few years ago there might have been seen walking the decks of an Atlantic steamer a man, apparently a rustic inhabitant, seemingly in deep distress. A fellow passenger having observed the manifestations of the man's obvious grief for several days, finally went to him and asked, sympathetically:

"My friend, I have noticed your distress for several days and, thinking that perhaps I might be of some assistance, venture to ask if any member of your family is dead."  
"No," replied the man, "nobody dead."

"Well, you are probably suffering from some serious business misfortune, I presume," continued the questioner.

"No; no business trouble."

"Might I ask, then, what the trouble is?"

"Well, I'm on my weddin' trip," responded the man, seriously.

"On your wedding trip? Why, I always thought that was a time of great rejoicing."

"Yes, but my wife's not with me," replied the disturbed man.

"Your wife not with you? I never heard of a man taking a wedding trip when his wife was not with him."

"Well, you see, it was this way: We didn't have money enough for both of us to go, but as the thing had ter be tuck, I'm taking it by myself."

"There was an officer in the regular army who is stationed not a hundred miles away from Governor's Island this very day," said a West Pointer to a New York Journal man, "who would never have graduated at the academy had it not been for his cool nerve plus his quick wit on a trying occasion." And the West Pointer went on to tell of the cause and effect of that nerve and quick wit.

Twenty odd years ago, when he was at West Point, there was a cadet there who "funkt" in his final examination in his fourth year. He was a popular fellow and all his classmates felt sorry for him. They were all to doff the gray for the blue in a few days and the poor fellow—it had leaked out despite regulations—would be declared on graduation day "deficient"—the only one out of a class of more than sixty.

It so happened that a night or two before graduation day Mr. X—let him be called that—was obliged to be on sentry duty. The officer of the guard that night got a sudden idea into his head; the cadet might be so disheartened that he would be neglectful of his duty. He would test him—see if he had "soldier stuff" in him, even though all odds were against his future.

It was a dark, rainy night. The officer of the guard suddenly came across the cadet's post.

The click of steel at the same time warned the intruder that the sentry's keen eyes were upon him—at least, that his

quick hearing had detected the stealthy steps of the wet sod. Then came out in a half muffled voice: "Who goes there?"

This was the moment the officer of the guard had fixed in his mind for a test of the cadet's soldierly qualities. The answer came quickly to the sentry's challenge: "Nobody."

To the amazement of the officer, the cadet came to a "right shoulder shift," as it was called in those days, paced by him and said: "All right, my orders are to let nobody pass, major."

The cadet had recognized the officer. His answer, even if not regular in a military sense, was correct, but it was a tough one on the major. The story was so good it could not keep, and it went to Washington.

"To make a long story short," said the West Pointer, "that answer, under the circumstances, won influence enough for that cadet not to leave the academy as a 'deficient,' but merely to be put back for another year's chance. Result? He graduated with high honors in the following June and was my commander in the Philippines six months ago."

## Tom Johnson's Way

Major W. J. Gleason appeared before the board of control one day last month and announced that he wished to make a complaint.

"Go ahead," said Mayor Tom L. Johnson. "The Big Consolidated Street Car company is preparing to relay its tracks on Cedar avenue and put down the old cobble stones between tracks."

"What's the kick?"

"They're an eyesore and—"

"Come forward, Mr. McCormick," called the mayor of the manager of the Big Consolidated.

"We're only relaying one track," said McCormick, "next year we'll relay the other and put down Medina block stone between both tracks."

"Is that satisfactory, Mr. Gleason?" asked the mayor.

"Yes, if they do it."

"Will you write a letter to the board agreeing to do that?" inquired the mayor of Mr. McCormick.

"I will."

"Another thing," said Major Gleason, "they're putting these cobble stones on our lawns."

"Will you repair all lawns?" said the mayor, turning to McCormick.

"We are willing to do anything we can."

"Will you repair the lawns?"

"We'll put down boards and protect them."

"Will you repair the lawns?"

"Um-er-yes."

"Will you include that in your letter?"

"Yes."

"Are you satisfied, major?"

"I am."

"What's the next business?" inquired the mayor.

Before the board adjourned Manager McCormick returned with the letter in question.

"Hold on," exclaimed the mayor, "this don't say you are going to relay the second track next summer. If you don't agree to relay it we'll make you pave between the tracks you are now tearing up with block stone if we can."

"I think we will relay the second track next summer, but if you insist on that I want to consider the matter further."

"All right. How long do you want?"

"Until tomorrow."

"Have you begun laying any of those cobblestones?"

"Yes."

"Stop it, will you, until we agree as to that second track?"

"I don't know as I should."

"Then you won't?"

"I don't know why I should."

"Tom Galvin," cried the mayor. The deputy director of public works came forward.

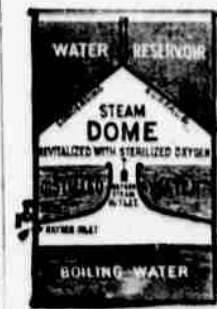
"Go right to Cedar avenue and stop the men who are relaying cobblestones there. Don't allow them to begin until you hear from this board."

Galvin hustled out. McCormick's face flushed, but he didn't have a word to say

## Meat

Detroit Free Press: They were speaking of the billionaire's insufferable pretensions. "Upon what meat does this our Caesar feed that he has grown so great?" exclaimed Mordant bitterly.

"Mint's meat, possibly!" observed Mel-travers, trying to be cheaply witty while yet preserving the easy grace of a man of the world.



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