

## GOOD Short Stories

A grasp of the main facts, rather than facility of expression, characterizes the following historical contribution from a school boy: "Henry the Eighth was brave, corpulent, and cruel; he was frequently married to a widow; had an ulcer on his leg; and great decision of character."

An English contemporary tells a story of an unusual exhibition of forethought by an Irishman. At a certain lecture there was a little disturbance, and the lecturer's head was broken. "It isn't much," he said; "it would be all right if we only had a bit of sticking plaster." "Here's a bit, sir," said a muscular spectator; "I always puts some in my pocket agin' the Saturday night."

Bismarck had to confer the Iron Cross on a hero in the ranks one day, and, thinking to try his humor, which was of the elephantine order, on the man, he said: "I am authorized to offer you, instead of the cross, a hundred thalers. What do you say?" "What's the cross worth?" quietly asked the man. "About three thalers." "Very well, then, your highness, I'll take the cross and ninety-seven thalers."

Secretary Hay, who has lately had to take a sea voyage on account of his health, is always cheerful, no matter what his physical condition. On one occasion, when his health was particularly bad, a friend asked him what his ailment was. "I am suffering from an incurable disease," Mr. Hay answered, gravely. "May I ask what is the disease?" asked the sympathetic friend. "Old age," said Mr. Hay with a chuckle.

Mark Twain was visiting H. H. Rogers, who led the humorist into his library. "There," he said, as he pointed to a bust of white marble, "what do you think of that?" It was a bust of a young woman colling her hair, a very graceful example of modern Italian sculpture. Mr. Clemens looked at it a moment, and then he said: "It isn't true to nature." "Why not?" Mr. Rogers asked. "She ought to have her mouth full of hairpins," said the humorist.

Robert Hunter, author of "Poverty," and worker in the New York slums, sat next to a rather insipid young lady at a recent dinner party. After an lrisome lull in the conversation, Mr. Hunter asked abruptly: "Are you interested in the settlement movement?" "Oh, immensely!" gushed the young lady. "Any particular settlement?" inquired Mr. Hunter. The young lady seemed at a loss for a moment. Then she replied: "Oh, I think the Jamestown settlement was just grand, don't you?" And Mr. Hunter admitted he did.

Drury Underwood, press agent for the Savage production of "Parsifal," tells the following: "I had to lay over in a little town in Wisconsin recently, and for lack of something better to do stayed over in the 'opry house.' There was a 'shine' opera troupe playing a matinee. Seven people in the chorus and seven dollars in the house. The manager was standing out in front, and I asked, 'Is business poor?' 'Yes,' he replied, dolefully; 'I think it's the fault of the advance man. When he gets to a big town he gets rattled, and doesn't know what to do.'"

### FERRYBOAT IS HUGE CRAFT.

California Vessel Largest of Its Kind—Used to Carry Trains.

What is beyond doubt the largest ferryboat in the world is owned by the Southern Pacific Railroad Company, says the Philadelphia Record, and is used in transferring trains across Carquinoz Strait, in Contra Costa County, California, between Benicia and Port Costa.

This colossal craft is christened the Solano. The boat is not only large in dimensions, but also in power. The Solano has a net tonnage of 3,057 tons, is 430 feet long, 116 feet wide and has a main draught of 15 feet. Her two engines have a combined strength of 2,100 I. H. P. This ferryboat is longer than most of the great battleships of the United States or other navies.

The Solano transfers on an average 10,000 trains a year—that is, all sorts of trains. Often the boat carries 40 large heavily loaded freight cars at one trip. Not less than 14 trains are handled each day. The boat has made as high as 42 trips during the 24 hours. Owing to the great length of this boat, says the American Inventor, it is unnecessary to ever cut a train, as she frequently carries a full train of cars, including two freight locomotives. There are four tracks extending the entire length, so that four trains may be accommodated at one time.

The Solano has four smokestacks and steel boilers. The two engines work entirely independent—one to each paddle wheel. This monster craft is constantly on duty—day and night. At the crossing point Carquinoz Strait is

about a mile wide and it requires from 11 to 13 minutes to make a trip each day—from slip to slip. On an average about 30 trips a day are made. So systematically and swiftly are the trips scheduled that there is very little, if any, delay to the many trains. Thousands of passengers traveling each way are transferred every day.

The maintenance of this transfer boat involves a very heavy expense to the railroad company. A bridge is the only solution of the problem; a suspension bridge of a mile in length would be too costly to be feasible for a private corporation and a drawbridge would prove a serious obstacle to navigation.

Bridge plans have just been forwarded to the war department for examination. According to the plans submitted the bridge will be 6,800 feet long. There will be a draw 200 feet wide in the clear on each side of the pivot pier. The average depth of water along the line of the proposed bridge is about 27 feet. The plans provide for a single track with the floor of the bridge 20 feet above low tide. It is estimated that such a structure will cost not less than \$3,000,000. It would be the most expensive bridge west of the Missouri River.

It is generally conceded that as the very heavy traffic is constantly increasing, in a few years at farthest a costly bridge will span Carquinoz Strait.

Probably the next largest railroad ferryboat in the world is the giant steel transfer North Pacific. This boat is employed in transferring the Northern Pacific Railroad Company's trains across the great Columbia River on their transcontinental line to Portland, Oregon—between Kalma and Globe Point.

### MEDICAL STUDY IN LONDON.

World's Biggest City Has No Great School of Medicine.

London possesses greater opportunities for the study of disease than any city in the world, says the London Chronicle. She is the metropolis of an empire which embraces every clime and almost every race; she is a great trading center and a great port, and within her boundaries is a larger accumulation of humanity and therefore of subjects of disease than is to be found in any other city on the globe. Yet London possesses no great school of medicine.

The entry of medical students in London has been steadily declining for years past, and last year it was smaller than ever. What is the reason? It is that want of organization which is the cause of so many of our national deficiencies. There are in London numerous small medical schools teaching a large number of subjects to a small number of students. The best teachers go to other places where medical students are more concentrated and the students follow them.

What is wanted—as our contemporary, the Hospital, points out in an excellent article—is better organization, greater concentration, fuller equipment. One suggestion has been to establish a new science school at South Kensington, where medical students might go before entering the hospitals. The cost of establishing this would be very great. Another suggestion is that university college and King's college should organize common courses of instruction, but to this scheme for utilizing existing institutions of proved efficiency the hospitals other than those attached to those two colleges, are said to object.

The Hospital favors the formation of a great neutral center for the preliminary study of medicine under the auspices of the Royal College of Surgeons and Physicians, but this again would involve a large expenditure of money on new buildings. It is devoutly to be hoped that one or other of the schemes will succeed, and that before many years have elapsed London may take its proper place as the home of "the greatest school of medicine in the world."

### Bad Effect of Bitters.

Luckily absinthe is not much drunk in this country, but other bitters are—some that are only less injurious. Your readers should know that all bitter tonics, habitually indulged in, are apt to do harm—to depress, not exhilarate. Such tonics should be taken rather as medicine than as every-day drinks. You could bring yourself to melancholy by means of gentian, quassa or columba, as well as by wormwood.—A Doctor in London Mail.

### Across the Styx.

Alexander the Great, Hannibal, Julius Caesar and Napoleon were reading the latest war news.

"Say, boys!" exclaimed Alexander. "It's lucky for us that we didn't know anything about the Japs, ain't it, now?"

"Bet yer life!" was the fervent chorus.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

### All Changed.

"How about Miss Sneering?" inquired the returned traveler. "I suppose you are still friends?"

"No, indeed," replied Snarley; "why, we've been married over a year." —Philadelphia Press.

## HUMOR OF THE WEEK

STORIES TOLD BY FUNNY MEN OF THE PRESS.

Odd, Curious and Laughable Phases of Human Nature Graphically Portrayed by Eminent Word Artists of Our Own Day—A Budget of Fun.

The through train had stopped at the little station for water.

"What do you people do to amuse yourselves here?" asked the passenger with the upturned moustache and the bored look, who had stuck his head out through a car window.

"Well, we git a lot 'o fun comin' to the deepo an' lookin' at the queer critters that goes through yere on the k'yars," replied the native who was lounging on the station platform.

### Judiciously Applied.

"I see the engagement of Jack Hark-along and Lulu Dillpickle has been announced. Wasn't there some opposition on the part of her parents?"

"Yes—just enough."

### Musical Critique.



We coaxed the maid to play, and then We watched the mangled moments flit And wished, and wished, and wished again

We dared to coax the maid to quit. —Chicago Tribune.

### The Cost.

"What," asked the young bard, "will it cost me to have these poems published in book form?"

"Oh," replied the publisher, after hastily reading the opening lines, "I should say about \$250—and your friends." —Chicago Record-Herald.

### The Butcher's Wax.

"I'd like to know a sure way to get fat," remarked the delicate young girl. "I'll tell you," replied Mrs. House-keep; "just send an order to your butcher for lean meat." —Philadelphia Press.

### What He Needed.

"Let me sell you a lock for your daughter's piano," said the agent. "It will keep people from hammering on it. When once locked no one can open it but her."

"H'm!" exclaimed the old gentleman. "Can't you sell me one that will keep her from opening it?"

### His Conversational Method.

"Yes, sir," said the eminent statesman, who had just returned from an extended trip, "in trying to learn the sentiment of the country as to our manner of dealing with the trust problem I have talked to more than 20,000 people in the last five days, and I tell you they are with us."

"But, Senator," said the reporter, "how could you talk to 20,000 people in so short a time?"

"Why, of course, I—er—did the talking, mostly."

### His Diagnosis.



The Doctor—What is your occupation, madam?

The Patient—I'm an opera singer.

The Doctor—Um! What you need is a change of air. Suppose you try singing in a choir choir.

### It's Better Now.

Mrs. Bender—Yes, I couldn't abide the neighborhood; it was unfashionable, you know.

Mrs. Harper—And you could think of no other way to improve it than by moving?—Chicago Journal.

### Too Good to Lose.

She—Oh, I detest sofa pillows and tidies! If I ever keep house I'll never have such things as—

He—Will you be my wife?—Chicago Record-Herald.



### SILENCE IN HEAVEN.

By Rev. Russell H. Conwell, D. D.

Text—"And when he had opened the seventh seal there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour."—Revelation viii:1.

I am one of those who believe that this book is not yet open; that in a great measure it is a sealed book, and that by and by, in the development of the years, men will understand the book of Revelation.

So I have found this verse. I do not understand its relationship; I would not undertake to give an exegesis of it, and I do not believe any man can. But there is a thought in it which we can comprehend. There is something here that is very useful; and as a marvelous illustration of a great gospel truth, there is nothing finer to be found in any of the literature of the world.

Think of the angels folding their wings and bowing in silence for half an hour in that eternal land above. Wonderful saying, this half an hour of silence in heaven!

It says here that when the seventh seal shall be opened, or was opened, as John related it in a vision he saw—there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. It calls attention to that which is to follow. It calls the whole mind's thought to that one great purpose of living in the earth—viz.: the heavenly things that are to come. It was the coming of the end. It is the judgment day; all mankind have reached the end of earthly existence, and it is a time when every man is to be judged according to the deeds done in the body. There is half an hour of silence—a perfectly awful thought. Yet, being here, it is here to be meditated upon and studied. Oh, what voices there are in the silence!

The coming of the King makes silence. Christ is come; I recall vividly a great demonstration in St. Petersburg, Russia, when the Czar Alexander was coming with the Czarina up the river into the city. He was to be announced by the firing of a gun on one of the bridges of the city, and the streets were thronged with people—the streets were black with the crowd, in their dark clothing of that north-land. They surged back and forth like the restless ocean bay. They were in the windows and doorways. The roofs and cornices were covered with people. They crowded in by the tens of thousands to welcome the Emperor on that fete day. When the time arrived, as announced, at quarter-past two, all were waiting for the gun. They waited and waited; and oh, the silence of that multitude of people, immovable, scarcely breathing. There was something so solemn, so oppressive that it seemed as though the earth must open unless they were permitted to move or speak or in some way to make a demonstration. But when the gun boomed then the people moved. Then they shouted. Then they swung their flags and their handkerchiefs, and the military uttered their huzzas, and it broke forth into a salvo of welcome, so great that the heavens themselves seemed to reply. But the silence that preceded it seemed to emphasize it and those who witnessed it were more impressed with the silence than with all the acclaim and all the parade and music afterwards.

The lesson to teach is the importance of men in every spare stopping, and meditating for half an hour. If you are going to change your business; if you are going to a new place; if you are going to be married; if you are going to join the church through your heart having been turned to Christ; if you are undertaking any new thing, stop for half an hour and in silence meditate. If you are undertaking the accomplishment of a day's work only, in the morning in silence meditate, meditate in your bed before you rise or afterwards sit by yourself and think a few minutes. It will save you time through the day, and will greatly increase your ability to do. It will give to you that day, no matter what your sphere, success, if you but stop and meditate.

### NEED OF MEDITATION.

By Rev. W. C. Covert

The conditions of life are unfavorable to the practice of religious meditation. This is the noisiest stage of the world's life. The world never was so filled with the loud jargon of men and the harsh clatter of things. Our civilization is a shrieking, roaring thing. A modern city is a perfect bedlam. Industry goes forward with a thousand coarse, grating

voices that spoil the silence and ravish our nerves. It knows no night of rest. It knows no Sabbath of quiet.

We are a thousand years from the silent life of our forefathers of fifty years ago. But the noisier the age the more men hunger for quiet. This is the day of all days for the practice of a sane, healthy religious meditation. Religious life will die amidst the noisy and superficial things of the day when we break our companionship with great religious thoughts. In proper religious meditation in this day there must be complete detachment from surroundings. Not because men are to despise the hard work and clamor of life, and seek to leave it, but that in a moment or an hour of detachment they may feed on food that will strengthen them for the battle and turn with renewed courage to it.

Let men think on lines suggested by the great problems and duties of a practical, religious life and they will escape the peril of a fruitless meditation, and keep in helpful touch with their day.

### THE VISITOR FROM HEAVEN.

By Rev. Ebenezer Rees.

Text: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, I will open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."—Revelation iii, 20.

In reading the Bible, do you ever see pictures? Sometimes to me the pages glow with life. May I tell you my picture of this text? It came one evening long ago. I thought that I was journeying along a country road on a tempestuous winter's night. The sky wept upon a dreary world. It was dark and desolate and very lonely, as I journeyed up the hills and down the valleys, with nothing but a pale, young moon to cheer the way. Presently I saw in the distance a light. I watched it wonderingly, drawing nearer and nearer to it, until at length I stood beside a cottage. I went up to the door and knocked; a man within unbolted the door and opened.

The stranger drew near to the householder and took hold of his hand, gripped it kindly yet firmly. Oh! the touch of that hand said much. The light and gladness of the one face passed over into the other.

There are two kinds of welcome. There is the skinny little welcome—if you will pardon a word which is more expressive than classical; as when we say, "I am so glad to see you;" while you really mean—and somehow show—that we shall be gladder still when he has gone. That is not the welcome which we must give the Savior. There is another welcome. Let me try to translate it into words. "Come in!" Oh! we see it in the face; we feel it at the door; the very gate as it swings on its hinges learns the secret and rings with it. "Come in; I rejoice to see you. This is my house; let it be yours; go upstairs, downstairs; sit where you like; roam where you will. This is my home; let it be yours." That is welcome. We go to that house again. And there is a sense in which the human heart is very like a house. It has many rooms and corners, some of which have not been swept out, maybe, since the house was built. Christ must have entry to those corners. We must say: "Come in, Jesus; live with me. Thou shalt know all about me. Thou shalt read every secret in my heart. Thou shalt know my motives. Thou shalt hear the things I have not whispered to others. Thou shalt hear me praying and watch me working. Welcome, Master! Live with me. Correct me. Chastise me. Bring the rod upon me when I deserve it. Only stay with me evermore." If we could but give Him such a welcome, how happy would we be!

### Short Meter Sermons.

Toil disarms temptation.  
Perspiration proves inspiration.  
No man can keep his sins to himself.  
Revenge is sweetest when renounced.  
Great faith is the secret of great facts.

There may be backbone without bigotry.

He has no faith in God who has no hope for man.

This would be a bitter world but for our tears.

Destiny is decided not by definitions but by deeds.

He knows nothing fully who knows nothing beside.

No man ever bought fortune by the sale of his friends.

The church with a mission never dies for lack of money.

You cannot tell much about God's army by its church parade.

A life is to be known by its output rather than by its income.

The man who boasts of never minding matters is likely to be chopping up somebody's reputation pretty fine.