

A PUZZLER.

The Enigma the Secretary Was Unable to Decipher.

From Horace Greeley's time great men have been noted for their poor chirography, and in this connection Joaquin Miller, the "poet of the Sierras," is no exception. But the best story regarding the poet's handwriting that I have heard came recently from the secretary of a well known local club. It seems that the club desired to have the poet address the organization at an annual affair at which an elaborate program had been prepared. The secretary addressed a letter to the poet telling him of the purpose of the jinks and requesting his co-operation. He was scheduled for a recitation.

In due time there came an answer from the poet. It was in his own hand and covered four pages. In vain the secretary pored over the manuscript. He turned it over to the president, the board of directors and the members in turn, but all failed to decipher the scrawl. The question before the club was, Has Miller accepted or has he declined?

The secretary finally took the matter into his own hands and addressed the following note to Miller:

My Dear Mr. Miller—Your letter received, but I have been unable to determine whether you have accepted or declined our invitation. If you will be present on the date mentioned will you kindly make a cross on the bottom of this letter? If it will be impossible for you to appear will you kindly draw a circle?

In due time the letter came back marked as requested, but the secretary could not decide whether it was a cross or a circle.—San Francisco Call.

Don't Seek Trouble.

Dispel that prophetic gloom which dives into futurity to extract sorrow from days and years to come and which considers its own unhappy visions as the decrees of Providence. We know nothing of tomorrow; our business is to be good and happy today.—Sydney Smith.

A Popular Role.

Mrs. Rogers had the barrel of russet apples placed in the attic because they were not quite ripe enough to eat, and she warned her three boys, whose ages range from five to eleven years, not to touch them.

Then one rainy day when she sought the attic to get something from a trunk she came full upon her sons surrounded by apple cores. At her approach two of the boys drew closer together, but the third, a little distance



"WHAT'VER ARE YOU DOING?"

off, who lay on his stomach contentedly munching an apple, apparently paid no attention to his mother's entrance. "Jack! Henry! Willie!" she exclaimed reproachfully. "Whatever are you doing? And those apples! Didn't I tell you not to touch them?"

"Yes, mamma," replied Jack, the eldest, "but we're not really eating them. We're acting the garden of Eden. Willie and I are Adam and Eve, and Henry, over there, is the serpent trying to lead us to our downfall by showing us how good the apples are."

"But," began the mother as sternly as she was able, "you two must have been eating apples. Henry hasn't done it all. I see as many as ten cores around you."

"Oh, yeth," returned Willie, the youngest, "we've all been taking turnth being the therpent."—Green's Fruit Grower.

Mistaken Identity.

A man going home at a late hour in the night saw that the occupants of a house standing flush with the street had left a window up, and he decided to warn them and prevent a burglary.

Putting his head into the window he called out:

"Hello, good peop!"

That was all he said. A whole pall of water struck him in the face, and as he staggered back a woman shrieked out:

"Didn't I tell you what you'd get if you wasn't home by 9 o'clock?"

Counterfeiters.

Tommy had been reading a great deal in the newspapers about senators and congressmen and lawmaking, and his mind was filled with legislative matters. On many occasions his father had explained as best he could the articles of which the newspapers treated and took pains to voice his opinion, which was not always favorable.

With his mind so actively fertilized and growing Tommy could not help asking his father one day:

"Say, pop, why is a senator like a counterfeiter?"

"That's too strong for me," replied his father. "What's the answer?"

"Because," answered Tommy triumphantly, "he makes and tries to pass some pretty bad bills."

The Scrap Book

An Embarrassing Blunder.

Toward the close of a lawsuit in Massachusetts the wife of an eminent professor arose and with a flaming face timidly addressed the court.

"Your honor," said she, "if I told you I had made an error in my testimony would it vitiate all I have said?"

Instantly the lawyers for each side stirred themselves in excitement, while his honor gravely regarded her.

"Well, madam," said the court after a pause, "that depends entirely on the nature of your error. What was it, please?"

"Why, your see," answered the lady, more and more red and embarrassed, "I told the clerk I was thirty-eight. I was so flustered, you know, that when he asked my age I inadvertently gave him my bust measurement."—Everybody's.

Life's Compensations.

Why should we ever weary of this life? Our souls should widen ever, not contract;

Grow stronger and not harder in the strife, Filling each moment with a noble act. If we live thus, of vigor all compact, Doing our duty to our fellow men

And striving rather to exalt our race Than our poor selves, with earnest hand or pen,

We shall erect our names a dwelling place Which not all ages shall cast down again. Offspring of time shall then be born each hour,

Which, as of old, earth lovingly shall guard To live forever in youth's perfect flower And guide her future children heavenward.

—James Russell Lowell.

The First Patient.

An eminent New York surgeon, now very wealthy and the envied possessor of a large practice, often tells with glee of an incident of his younger days.

When he first hung out his shingle and started in to win fame and fortune things looked pretty gloomy. Six whole weeks he sat in his modest little office without a call from a single patient, and his first fee seemed a long way off.

At last, one night, there came a ring at the office bell. The servant flew to the door. The doctor could not make up his mind whether he would rather be called to a good chronic patient or to some sensational accident to a well known citizen. He opened the door of the consulting room as calmly as he could and saw a young man there.

"Excuse me, doctor," the young man said. "I wished to know if I could arrange to collect your bad debts on commission."

Her Aim.

Two men who had apparently been doing the town and not missing any of the places where liquors were dispensed were unsteadily ambling homeward at an early hour after being out nearly all night.

"Don't your wife miss you on these occasions?" asked one.

"Not often," replied the other. "She throws pretty straight."

One Way of Doing Business.

Billy Emerson, the minstrel, took a company of black face artists to Australia in the old days and had hard luck. On the way back he landed at Shanghai and gave a show.

Emerson saw there was a good house. "Doing pretty well," he said to the box office man.

"Fine" that official replied. "We've got in \$400 in money and \$1,400 in chits."

"In what?" gasped Emerson.

"In chits."

"What are chits?"

"Why, promises to pay. Everybody uses chits here. Give a chit and settle at the end of the month."

"Do you mean to tell me that you have let \$1,400 worth of cents go for them chits, as you call them?"

"Sure! Why not?"

"And those people just signed their names and didn't pay cash?"

"Certainly."

"Heavens! What a business I could do that way in the States!" groaned Emerson.—Saturday Evening Post.

No Prayer Needed.

The story is told of the Rev. James Patterson of Philadelphia that he once declared in a circle of his brethren he thought ministers ought to be humble and poor, like their Master. "I have often prayed," said he, "that I might be kept humble. I never prayed that I might be poor. I could trust my church for that!"

An Anecdote of Macready.

One of the most amusing anecdotes of Macready's petulance of temper relates to a revival of "Henry VIII," under the management of Maddox at the Princess' theater, in London. The part of Cardinal Campelus was assigned to a brother of Mr. George Augustus Sala, whose stage name was Wynn, for whom Macready had an inveterate dislike. The tragedian had implored the manager to see that Campelus was furnished with a costume which should not seem entirely ridiculous beside the splendid robes he himself wore as Wolsey, but Maddox, of course, disregarded the injunction.

At the dress rehearsal Macready, enthroned in a chair of state, had the various characters to pass before him. He bore all calmly until, clad in scarlet robes bordered by silver tissue paper and wearing an enormous red hat, Wynn approached. Then, clutching both arms of his chair and closing his eyes, the great tragedian gasped out, "Mother Shipton, by heaven!"

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Postponed.

The first appearance of the Grew Stock Company at the Parmele has been postponed to February 9th instead of February 4th as has been advertised. They will play the "Invader" at the opening.

Dr. A. P. Barnes, moved his household effects into the Wilson three story dwelling on south Ninth street, formerly occupied by ex-county treasurer J. L. Barton. The Doctor will will be properly equipped to take roomers.

It has become necessary to postpone the first appearance of the Grew Stock Company at the Parmele and instead of showing on next Friday night they will be here on the following Wednesday night and will open with "The Invader."

MASQUERADE BALL.

The Jolly Six Indians will hold their Masquerade ball at Coates hall on Saturday evening Feb. 5, to which the public's attention is called. Thoe. Lieben the Aksarben costumer is to furnish the costumes and will be in Plattsmouth from noon Saturday till midnight, having a special room at the Coates block for the purpose of displaying the suits. Phone Anton H. Koubek No 87.

George Hild accompanied by Joseph Beril went to Omaha on the first train this morning. Mr. Beril has been in America but eleven months yet he speaks English very well. He came from Bagern, Germany. In that country the farmers live in villages and till the land adjoining, having their schools and churches more convenient than in this country.

John Fredrick of McClean Nebr. and Philip Phorniff, of Pekin, Ill. arrived from the east this morning, and will visit relatives in Cass county for a time.

Over the Hill to Ferry.

Yesterday County Clerk D. C. Morgan, appointed Fred Patterson as viewer of the road from Winterstine Hill over to the ferry, with instructions to report by Feb. 10. After the report of the viewer is in the hands of the parties interested they will have not less than sixty nor more than ninety days to make their objections and requests for damages. As fast as the law will allow the matter will be pushed so that before many moons the highway to the ferry will be in shape for autos and other vehicles.

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