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AGENTS

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Another Reminiscence

Bocaratone, Fla., January 1.—To the Architect, Whether Common or Not: "J. H. McG." tells in The Commoner of December 25 what a tough time he had with his boots when a boy. Good gracious, why didn't he grease them? Greasing boots was a regular Saturday night job when I was a boy, forty-five years ago. The grease was a mixture of tallow and lard, or neats-foot oil when we could afford it, with a little soot to give color. He was quite an expert who could dry the grease into the boots over a hot stove without burning the leather. Jumping into a pair of warm, pliable boots was like entering the pearly gates. The boots were bought in the fall and one pair had to last until spring. Two pairs of boots in one winter was an extravagance not to be considered for an instant. If, by reckless usage or poor material, the boots failed to fulfill their mission for the allotted time, we forthwith returned to nature by the barefoot route. With the first balmy days of spring our little hoofs began to yearn for the virgin soil, but the mandate was that we couldn't go barefoot until the first yellow butterfly hove in sight, "sweet harbinger of spring." The second mandate was, once off, off for all summer. Then, sometimes, when some fool winter weather planked down in the lap of spring we hardly knew whether we had any feet or not. Great fun to rouse the cows up on frosty mornings and get the benefit of the warm spots they had made.

Do you remember how you were initiated into the art of milking? My father was away from home late one evening when I was eleven or twelve years old, and I thought he would be overjoyed to find the cow milked upon his return. So I bravely tackled the job and with much labor on my part and much patience on the cow's part, I succeeded in extracting most of the milk. When father got home I casually remarked: "I have milked." Then he casually remarked: "Is that so? Well, you can keep right on milking." And so long as I remained at home he never milked another cow.

Well, it didn't hurt me any.
F. H. C.
P. S.—All this happened in Michigan.

In Washington

After a pleasant call upon the representative from my district I thought it only courteous to inquire if he cared to join me in a good cigar. He opined he would, but upon emerging from the house he looked about with the air of one who feared a hold-up, or something of the kind.

"What is the matter?" I queried.

"O, I'm just looking around to see if I can spot the particular secret service agent who has been assigned to shadow me."

Having located the dark complexioned gentleman who was on the scent we proceeded to the nearest cigar stand.

Duly Acknowledged

The architect of this department stops the press long enough to acknowledge the receipt of a pair of fine, sky-blue, fancy-trimmed suspenders from some unknown but appreciated friend. The postmark on the package is rather blurred, but

seems to be "Sharon Grove, Ky." But wherever it may be from, and whoever the donor may be, the architect will wear the suspenders and for once in his lifetime rejoice at being the proud possessor of two pairs of suspenders at one and the same time. But better than the possession of the suspenders is the knowledge that down in Sharon Grove lives a friend. And may that friend live to enjoy scores and scores of Happy Christmas days and Prosperous New Years.

Warning

The new congressman, anxious to get a line on what might be coming to him in the national capital, visited Madam Graftleigh, the world-famed seeress. After crossing her palm with something more than silver the congressman extended his palm for reading.

"Ah, I see some one," exclaimed the seeress. "He seems to be following you. Beware of a dark, stealthy man, with something bright and pointed pinned to his shirt under his vest. He is—"

"By thunder, that's one of Wilkie's men on my trail already," growled the new member.

As Usual

Now comes the man who said he'd swear
Off all his habits bad,
And start the new year fair and square
In manner bright and glad—
Now comes this man, as we have said,
With pipe a-go'in', then
Remarks, "Old man, I thought I'd quit in 1910."

At Last

"Ah, my fortune is made!" exclaimed the inventor.

"What have you got now?" queried his wife, who had learned by bitter experience not to grow too sanguine.

"I've hit upon the idea of making it a match at one end and a toothpick at the other!" cried the inventor.

Then the wife really did begin entertaining hopes of a new silk dress and possibly a visit back to the old home.

Gustatory

You may talk of royal banquets
Till your throat is raw and hoarse;
You may sing the alleged virtues
Of each dainty little course;
But I'm going to sing the praises
In a loud and lusty tone
Of the fine old home-made sausage,
Buttermilk and hot corn pone.

Disillusioned

"Do you believe in ghosts?"

"Well, I did once," mused Hamlet DeFatterly, "but that was before I embarked upon the theatrical stage."

Being not unacquainted with stage lore we saw the point and piloted the way to the nearest beanery.

Papa Goose Rhyme

If all the world were kerosene
And you could be the seller,
And the sun be a shining bright
The livelong day and through the night—
Wouldn't it rock a feller?

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