

FACTS AND FANCIES.

BY ALLAN D. MAY.

There is no reason why a man who likes to talk and shout, should suffer for the want of things to "chew the rag" about, For in this busy world where live the foolish and the wise, The man who wants an argument, can find one if he tries.

One stormy winter afternoon when loudly roared the blast, and with the gray wind driven clouds the sky was overcast; a day that makes man think about the bill for coal he owes, the Crackerjack Debating club had met at Beaulieu's. In order that some question might be brought up and discussed, a certain member lightly made a reference to a trust. That word was like a lighted match tossed in a powder can—there came a spluttering sound and then the argument began.

Up spake an aged patriot and said in solemn tones, "This country's going to the dogs, I feel it in my bones. Why teach our noble youth to strive and gain by honest toil the gold that they eventually must pay for Standard Oil? What chance will our sons ever have to get and hold a job compared to that of Vanderbilt or Morgan, or of Schwab? The rich are getting very rich, the poor are going broke; none may complain if stings the goad or heavy grows the yoke.

Oh blasted foe! Oh goldarned hand, That grasps thy throat, my native land!

It breaks my heart to see the land so burdened and accursed. I am ferninst the government. Hurrah for Willie Hearst!" Just then his son came in the door and in his hand he had an official looking letter which he handed to his dad. The old man broke the seal and read the letter to the end and found the oil stock that he owned had drawn a dividend. He cut his stirring speech off short and in his sleeve he laughed, and went up to the nearest bank and promptly cashed the draft.

A moment hung the silence on the smoke beclouded air, and then another patriot moved forward in his chair and spat against the red hot stove and raised his voice and said, "The man who howls calamity had better far be dead. Across this fair and fertile land from mountain range to sea, the people are as prosperous and as happy as can be. Across the ocean far away each foreign nation waits to buy the cargoes that we ship from these United States. And they are sending back their gold to swell our treasure chest—of all the nations on the earth, we are the richest blest. Our navy carries the starry flag where it had never gone; the constitution in its wake, goes hurrying

on and on. Our factory wheels turn 'round and 'round, the busy miner delves—just give the darned trusts rope enough and they will hang themselves. I'm proud to live in such a land where no one need be poor. Three cheers for Uncle Samuel and hurrah for Theodore!" He paused to catch his breath and ere a word escaped his lip, a man stepped up and handed him a little paper slip. Across his face an awful look of bitter anguish stole—he fainted but his hand still held the unpaid bill for coal.

The subject then was quickly changed and someone made remark about the armor plate they used when Noah built the ark. This led to talk of battle ships and navies spick and span, which led in turn to hostile acts of Russia and Japan. One man there was who made a noise that sounded like a sneeze preceded by a dying groan and followed by a wheeze. When pressed by others to explain just how he caught the grip, he said he simply spoke the name of some big Russian ship. A storm of protest loud arose—men swore with all their might, the name was not pronounced that way, the accent wasn't right. One man said it was not a ship but was instead a town and he pronounced it in a way that jarred the stove-pipe down. When Tom Glines tried to put it back his hands were sadly burned—the Crackerjack Debating club, on motion stood adjourned.

Each for his principle argued;
Nobody faltered or winced;
Each may have proved his position,
But no one at all was convinced.

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RACING WITH A MOOSE.

A Maine Man Well Mounted Tries to Run It Down and Fails.

Ernest G. Judkins, bookkeeper for the Kineo company, had a remarkable experience with a bull moose on the carriage road to Deer Head farm, two miles from Kineo, says the Bangor Commercial.

Mr. Judkins was taking a morning ride, galloping along a level stretch, when the horse came to a standstill with a jolt and a snort. Looking ahead, Mr. Judkins saw a bull moose feeding on the tender sprouts of the bushes growing by the roadside, not 60 yards away. Mr. Judkins' first impulse was to ride the moose down, but he thought better of this, and hooted to attract the animal's attention, and possibly to frighten him from the road, so that he could proceed, but the moose fed calmly on. At the end of a few minutes the beast moved down the road in search of more food, and Mr. Judkins followed at a respectful distance, hooting until his throat was hoarse, but he might just as well have whispered as far as the moose was concerned. This proceeding was repeated over half a mile of the road.

At the end of that distance the moose faced about and began feeding toward the horse and rider, casting an unconcerned look in their direction every now and then, and Mr. Judkins' steed did the backstep for a few rods. This was a little too much for the horseman, and, becoming impatient, he gave a tremendous yell to attract the attention of the moose, which was successful, plunged spurs into the horse, and made for the impudent highwayman pell mell.

With the first leap of the horse the indifference of the moose

changed to concern, and, turning abruptly about, he started down the road at a great, clumsy trot. This put a new and interesting phase to the situation, and, urging on his horse, Mr. Judkins proceeded to have his turn at the sport, only hoping that the moose would keep to the road. The moose obliged in this particular and the horse was a good one and entered into the spirit of the chase, but try as he could the distance between him and the fleeing animal did not lessen materially.

"I never saw anything like it," said Mr. Judkins to the correspondent. "That great, ungainly animal trotting on ahead as clumsily as a razor-back runs, and maintaining his lead with apparently no effort whatever, while my horse was legging it for all that was in him. I had heard that moose had speed, but when I started after that bull I would have laid ten to one that I could overhaul him inside of 200 yards—that I could have ridden all around him."

After a hot race covering fully half a mile, the moose turned into the forest and disappeared.

School of Few Pupils.

The little islet of Nordstrand-schmor, in the North sea, boasts what is probably the smallest school in the world. Oceanic upheaval has wrenched the islet away from the island of Nordstrand, and the action of the sea is continually wearing the earth away. A century ago there were 50 inhabitants, who lived by fishing and rude husbandry, and in 1836 a little school was erected, capable of providing for about a dozen children. With the dwindling of the islet, however, the population has thinned, and now numbers no more than 15 souls. For five years past the school attendance has varied from nothing to half-a-dozen children.