

Nebraska's St. Louis Fair Commissioners



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Gleanings from the Story Tellers' Pack

SENATOR MARK HANNA is quoted as authority for this story: "When Robert G. Ingersoll came to Washington from the west, his head filled with legal lore and infidelity, or it would be better to call it agnosticism, he encountered in one of the corridors of the capitol an old negro woman vigorously scrubbing the floor when she heard anyone coming, and, when the footsteps died away, busily reading her bible."

A drummer whose business calls him to the Sunflower state relates the champion drouth story of the season. "I was driving across the country to a little town in western Kansas the other day, when I met a farmer hauling a wagon load of water."

"Where do you get water?" said I.

"Up the road about seven miles," he replied.

"And you haul water seven miles for your family and stock?"

"Yep."

"Why, in the name of sense, don't you dig a well?"

"Because it's just as far one way as the other, stranger."

A story is told of Governor Shaw of Iowa in last year's campaign. Populists in the audience were asking a good many questions, especially one half drunken fellow. Governor Shaw answered patiently and bided his time. A man well down in front insisted on asking a question every five minutes on an average. He usually prefaced them by such remarks as, "Just a minute, please," or, "Let me interrupt for a minute." In an unhappy moment he broke in with, "Pardon me, but—" Before he could finish the governor, a rather self-satisfied look spreading over his face, replied: "Well, I've pardoned lots worse fellows than you in my time and I suppose it would be unjust to draw the line here."

"If stories about Mr. Roosevelt are in order I may narrate a little domestic incident," said a political friend of the president to a New York Times man. "One

evening at dinner Mr. and Mrs. Roosevelt were discussing an old program which she had preserved, and both referred to the entertainment, saying how much they had enjoyed it at the time. The youngest child listened very closely and at length burst forth in genuine grief and disappointment.

"Why didn't you take me?"

"Hush, my dear," said paterfamilias.

"That was before your mother and I were married."

"They thought no more of the incident. A few days later the tot was telling some wildly improbable tale to the eldest. Mr. Roosevelt, who overheard the weird narrative, demanded sharply:

"When did you do all that?"

"Oh, that was before you and mamma were married," replied the tot, with the utmost gravity."

A client recently asked Thomas B. Reed whether a jury could be relied upon to pronounce accurately as to the intentions of a man accused of crime. Said Mr. Reed:

"When I was a young man studying law I was one day asked to give an illustration from Blackstone on the very point. I quoted the well known incident wherein the law which prohibited the shedding of blood on the streets of London would not apply to the act of a surgeon bleeding a man who had a fit."

"The reply was satisfactory to the questioner, but a fellow student, celebrated for keen, intelligent exceptions, put in his oar at once.

"The surgeon would be guiltless," he admitted. "But how about the fellow with the fit?"

Dr. John V. Shoemaker of the Bureau of Charities and Corrections of Philadelphia, who has been having a few words with City Solicitor Kinsey, has attended more public men and politicians in his professional capacity than perhaps any physician in the state, reports the Philadelphia Telegraph. Several years ago he was a member of the campaigning party of General Hastings. At Norristown it became neces-

sary to treat the future governor's throat to a soothing spray from an automatic sprayer, worked by a bulb and small rubber tube. A burly countryman with a broomstick in his hand kept guard at the stairway leading to General Hastings' room, to prevent curious ones from intruding.

"You can't go up," was his invariable answer to callers.

"Why can't I go up?" finally demanded an indignant republican.

"'Cause there's a feller up there doctorin' him," replied the guard, referring to Dr. Shoemaker's spraying process.

"What's he doing to the general?" persisted the visitor.

"Blame ef I know, but he's pumpin' wind er water into the general, an' I don't know which. Anyways ye can't go up."

President McKinley was deeply appreciative of the consideration so generally shown to Mrs. McKinley on account of her well known invalidism and spoke frequently of the kindness she met with on all sides. His pastor, Rev. Mr. Bristol, tells the following touching story of his last trip eastward, which he had from the president's own lips shortly before he died. The special train stopped at a little town in Ohio to coal and the president went out on the platform to find his car surrounded by a throng of silent people, who made no loud demonstration on his appearance and no noisy response to his genial greetings. Finally a little boy, rather ragged and wearing a great straw hat that came down over his eyes, stepped up to the president.

"Be you the president?" he inquired.

"I am, my son," responded the president, smiling.

"Be Mrs. McKinley inside there?" asked the interlocutor, pointing to the car.

"Yes, my boy, Mrs. McKinley is inside," said the president.

"Then you'll 'scuse us from cheerin,' won't you? If she's inside we ain't a-goin' to make no noise."

The late Eugene Stanislas Kostzka de Mitkewicz used to tell a story of

the cynicism of Li Hung Chang, relates the New York Times. Mitkewicz, a professional "promoter," spent some of the best years of his life in an unsuccessful attempt to engineer the establishment of a great Chino-American bank. Millions were involved and it was necessary to secure the favor of Earl Li. Mitkewicz obtained an interview with him and explained his scheme. The Chinaman listened gravely.

"It is a philanthropic plan, is it not?" he said at length. "You desire by means of this bank to bring about moral and social reforms in my country, I suppose. You wish to civilize us, to save our souls."

"We wish to do nothing of the kind," answered the adventurer. "This is simply and solely a commercial enterprise. We don't care a rap for your morals and I may say for myself, personally, that it is a matter of supreme indifference to me whether any of your souls are saved or not."

Li's almond eyes twinkled.

"Ah," he said, "you are not like other Europeans who come to China. They are all interested in our moral well being. You say you want merely to make money. It is strange. I have heard of such men before, but till now I have never met a European who had not the spiritual good of China at heart."

It is related that a Chicago man whose family wealth came from the shoe business and whose name is still associated with it, happened to be one of a little supper party after the theater on Saturday night. One of the other guests was a young woman who is described by her friends as "perky" and whose social ambitions are such that she resented the shoe man's presence, though his wealth is large and his manners good. She directed several shafts at him during the evening, which he apparently overlooked, much to the amusement of the other guests. This annoyed her and finally she said:

"I frequently wear your shoes."

"Yes?" he said, noncommittally.

"Oh, yes," she continued, "and now that I think of it, I wish you would have a pair

of the kind I usually get sent to my house tomorrow."

"Certainly," said the shoe man. "I know just what you wear and to make sure of remembering I will just note it down: Miss So-and-So, one pair of walking shoes, size 6, extra wide."

The young woman drew her feet, which were large, well under her skirts and left the shoe man alone for the rest of the evening.

A certain society woman who had taken offense at Harry Lehr, the former wine salesman, on some trivial ground, undertook to humiliate him in the presence of some fashionable friends. She waited for her opportunity and then remarked, with a sneer:

"Mr. Lehr, will you please send a case of wine to our house? We are all anxious to help you along, you know."

"Same as last?" queried Mr. Lehr, calmly.

"If you please."

The squire of dames turned to his valet: "Make a note of some wine for Mrs. X," he said. "One dozen sherry—\$1.95."

In England, says the Candid Friend, an officer is court-martialed for being drunk, and everybody will recollect the story of the young officer who was accused of this "crime" and was very nearly got off by his servant. The servant, who was an Irishman, was asked by the court whether his master was sober on the night when he was stated to have been drunk.

"Yes, sir," the servant replied, "he was quite sober."

"How do you know he was sober?"

"Because he asked me to call him early?"

This was a convincing answer. But one of the officers of the court-martial, remembering that there was no early parade on the following morning, asked the servant what reason his master gave for wishing to be called early. Without a moment's hesitation the servant replied:

"He said he was the queen of the May, sir."

That, of course, concluded the case.



NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION AND THE KEEPING OF IT—Photos by a Staff Artist.