

# Funny Happenings of Real Life

**V**ALIANT and venturesome were the American soldiers in the Spanish war, and valiant, too, were the Spaniards. It rejected Colonel Greene of the signal corps to tell the story of a gallant Spanish flagman, which Gen. A. W. Greely repeats in his article in the Century Magazine on the United States Signal Corps in war-time.

At El Caney the Spaniards occupied the graceful stone fort of El Viso. It was the key to the situation on their left, and they built a telephone line from Santiago to the fort, which they equipped as a signal station.

On July 1st the American attack began at 6 in the morning and our left, pushing forward to cut off the enemy's line of communications, occupied the highroad to Santiago about 8 o'clock. Espying the telegraph wire that bound together El Caney and Santiago, the American soldiers, obedient to military instincts, promptly cut it.

But the beleaguered fort was no more cut off from communication with Santiago than was Corse at Altoona from Sherman at Kennesaw mountain. In a few minutes a Spanish flagman appeared on the commanding summit of El Viso and began signaling to Santiago.

His figure showed sharp and clear against the morning sky, within rifle-range of 2,000 keen-eyed Americans who were pouring a fire into El Viso. At intervals the deep notes of Capron's battery roared over the shrill music of the bullets.

Indifferent to shot and shell, the Spaniard rhythmically waved his signal flag to and fro until he had sent his message. In telling the story Colonel Greene added: "How long the flag waved or what it said I do not know, but as no signal flag was reported among the trophies at El Caney, I hope that he escaped. Here's to him if alive! If not, peace to his manes!"

#### Jim Hill and Diamond Joe.

James J. Hill, the railroad president, began his connection with the transportation business through steamboating, but he soon deserted it for railroading. The road which he has since made so widely known was at that time considered the slowest in the country. Mr. Hill listened good naturedly to the fun that was naturally poked at his road, and worked the harder to improve it.

Meeting Mr. Hill one day in the street in St. Paul, "Diamond Joe" Reynolds, of upper river steamboat fame, said:

"Jim, I'll match one of my steamboats against one of your trains in a fair race for 1500 a side."

"Well, I don't know," hesitated Mr. Hill; "some of your boats are pretty fast."

"Come, I'll race you upstream," urged Reynolds.

"Oh, thunder!" returned Mr. Hill in a disgusted tone; "if you're going to stick to the river then you might as well drop the notion of a race. I thought you meant you'd bring your boat out on the prairie alongside the track and give me some show."—New York Tribune.

#### One Experience Enough.

Myron T. Herrick, governor-elect of Ohio, referring to the hard work of his recent campaign, told this story about Senator Hanna: The senator had made five speeches during the day and was pretty badly used up when he returned to the private car in which the spellbinders were traveling at night. He accepted a proffered glass of brandy, but before drinking it, said:

"Boys, I feel like a fellow who enlisted in the early days of the civil war and was

soon in a battle. Being wounded, he was left on the field for dead, while the army, defeated, beat a retreat.

"As the wounded man, sore, hungry and bloody, but still able to walk, staggered along in the wake of the army, he talked to himself as follows:

"I love my country. I love it a lot. I am willing to fight for it. Yes, I am willing to die for my country. But, by thunder, when this war is over I will never love another country!"

"When this campaign is over," concluded the senator, "I'll never—"

He was not allowed to finish the sentence.—New York Times.

#### Fame's Hall Marks.

Truly is the mark of genius beyond hiding. The delightful author-artist, F. Hopkinson Smith, has his title written clear in many ways. He has the mark of genius even to his dress. Mr. Smith is remembered in the Franconia Notch of the White mountains, not for his attainments in the field of art, but as a lover of the red and a "picture feller," but more especially clearly for his trousers.

It happened recently that a follower of Isaac Walton, returning from an afternoon spent with the trout in a brook near the Franconia range, was halted with the hail of all anglers, "What luck?" from a mender of wagons by the roadside, bare of foot and picturesque. The talk from fish and fishing fell to fishermen, "Do you know Frank Smith?" inquired the wagon mender. The fisherman admitted knowledge of many Smiths of high and low degree, but was not positive in his identification of the specified Frank.

"Frank Hopkinson Smith, I mean," explained the mender of wagons.

Pleasant reminiscence lighted up the face of both men. "I," mused the wheelwright, "used t' know him well. Great feller, Frank. Never knowed anybody quite like him. Used t' see him pretty often 'most every summer for fifteen year. Made pictures and fished. Never dressed like other folks. When anybody got anything like his he jes' lined out fer something different. Wore the first short pants even seen on a man up here, and the hull darned suit looked as if it was made outen an ingrains carpet with big figgers. Ain't ever seed another suit like it, and don't expect to. Mighty good feller and painted purty pictures. But them pants—say! I can't ferget 'em! They was the gol-durndest pants I ever see!"—Saturday Evening Post.

#### Mr. Riley's Wife.

A friend of James Whitecomb Riley tells a story of an encounter the bachelor poet once had with a woman reporter. The energetic young woman, after strenuous effort had finally caught Mr. Riley at the telephone. This is the conversation that followed:

"Is this Mr. Riley?"

"Yes. That is Miss—?"

"Miss Jones, of the Courier-Journal. I've been trying all day to get an interview with you, Mr. Riley."

"Ah, would it were now a view instead of an interview," said the poet, gallantly.

"Oh, thanks. How long will you remain in Louisville, Mr. Riley?"

"Only a short time."

"Is your wife with you?"

"No, Ma'am, she is not."

"Where is she, may I ask?"

"You may ask, my dear Miss Jones but I find it very difficult to answer. I am in absolute ignorance as to her whereabouts. For aught I know to the contrary, she may right now be at the other

end of this telephone."

There was much of laughter, and afterward an effort to resume the interview. But in vain. Mr. Riley had escaped.—New York Times.

#### A Mixup in French.

W. B. Yeats, the Irish poet, talking to reporters in Philadelphia, told them that America reminded him of France. The comparison of the Quaker town to Paris must have delighted the Philadelphians. But perhaps Mr. Yeats mentioned the likeness only to tell a story. He said that the clear air and gay sunlight made him imagine himself in Paris, so that he was often under the impulse to enter the American shops and ask the price of things in bad French.

"My French is very bad," he explained. "I have no doubt it is as bad as the English of a Frenchman whom I met in Paris once."

"I had told this Frenchman that a young lady whom we both knew was ill. He became sympathetic."

"She is ill?" he said. "Eet is too bad. And what is ze mattress?"

"What is the mattress?" said I. "Oh, I see. You mean, 'What is the matter?'"

"Ah, but," objected the Frenchman, "is eet not of ze feminine gendaire zat we speak?"

#### A Southern Incident.

Congressman Carter Glass of Virginia holds to the belief that party politics can be played with fairness, even in the house of representatives. He was discussing the point with Judge Sims of Tennessee, who agreed with him partially, but declared that he intended to vote with the democrats at all times. "And I'll tell you why," he added. "It's because of my observations. I remember that a few years ago there came to this house a brilliant lawyer from Georgia. He had large knowledge of parliamentary practice and such exalted convictions of fair play in politics that he was moved more than once to vote against his party. That man from Georgia," concluded Judge Sims in a confidential whisper, "isn't here now."

#### Interviewing Senator Hoar.

A young man from Florida came to Washington to represent a newspaper in his state. A few days after he arrived Senator Hoar introduced a bill referring to a lottery in Florida. The young reporter hastened to see the senator, with visions of a column interview from him concerning the bill and its effect, and all that. The servant said that the senator would see him.

"What is it?" asked Mr. Hoar, when the young man had been shown in.

"I want to ask you about the bill you introduced today."

"What do you want to ask me about it?" inquired the senator.

"Why, I am from Florida and represent a Florida paper, and I thought you might give me an explanation?"

"Have you read the bill?" asked Mr. Hoar.

"Yes, sir."

"Do you understand it?"

"I think so, sir."

"Well, if you do not, no explanation I could make would help you to do so. Good evening."

And that was another of those interviews never printed.

#### Trouble Enough.

The late Amos Cummings of New York used to tell this story of his first assignment as a newspaper reporter. He was

sent out to write up an accident where an Irish hodcarrier was injured in a fall from a building. He arrived just as two officers were assisting the injured man into the ambulance.

"What's his name?" asked Cummings of one of the officers, at the same moment pulling out his pad and pencil.

The Irishman heard him, and mistaking him for the timekeeper on the job, exclaimed, with a look of disgust covering his face:

"Isn't it trouble enough to fall three stories without being docked for the few moments I lose goin' to th' hospital?"—Philadelphia Ledger.

#### Say No More.

A story is told of Count Schouvaloff, a former Russian ambassador to England. He greatly admired English women and was heartily annoyed when he offended any one of them. While he was here he learned English, and having heard one famous English beauty say "Shut up!" to another, he imagined it to be a phrase of polite agreement, such as, "Say no more." In this sense he himself addressed it to an illustrious woman the next night at dinner, to her consternation and his own, when later he discovered his mistake.

#### Getting Acquainted.

In the days when the late Sir Charles Gavan Duffy was a leading figure in Victorian politics there sat in the Melbourne Parliament a wealthy but not well informed butcher. The chief secretary of the day was deprecating the attitude of the leader of the opposition, whose conduct was, he declared, worse than Nero's.

"Who was Nero?" interjected the knight of the cleaver, with equal scorn and sincerity.

"Who was Nero?" replied the delighted chief secretary. "The honorable gentleman ought to know. Nero was a celebrated Roman butcher."

#### Changed the Mood.

General Leonard Wood attended in his boyhood a school in Middleborough, Mass., and in Middleborough they will speak of the direct and original mind that the boy had.

"I remember one day in school," said a Middleborough man recently. "Wood was called up in the grammar lesson. The teacher said:

"Leonard, give me a sentence, and we'll see if we can change it to the imperative mood."

"The horse draws the cart," said Leonard.

"Very good. The horse draws the cart. Now change the sentence to a neat imperative."

"Gee-up," said young Wood."

#### The Court Fixed.

"I fear," said Senator Teller, "that the Colombian delegates who have come to see if something cannot be done to get Panama back into their country are like the justice of the peace I tried a case before in Colorado once. The suit was over an old debt for supplies. The defense was that the bill was paid. The justice was a pompous old chap who knew no law. After we had finished the justice said: 'The court knows all about this case. The court has heard what the witnesses had to say and the talk of the lawyers. The court will not decide the case just now. The court will take the case under advisement for three days and the court will then decide the case in favor of the plaintiff.'"

