

The Top o' the Mornin'. By W. D. Nesbit.

Dignity, child, is that quality which enables a man to look as if he had never had a nickname.

Another trouble about getting near to nature's heart is that mosquitoes are always first in that vicinity.

COULD GUESS AT IT.



"What," shouted the prosy fourth of July orator, after two hours of aimless speechifying, "what would our forefathers say if they were to be here this afternoon?" "I can't give you their exact language," replied a weary man in a side seat, "but if you like I can give you the gist of it."

The Confession of Eli Diddat.

To my neighbors and my family I am a mechanical genius of the highest class. To myself I am a bald and arrant fake of the first water. It all came in the summer of '98, when I was twenty-four years of age. Ever since the warm weather began I have been reminded each day by the flies that we must have the windows properly screened. To this proposition I agreed. Yet when a lowbrowed bandit with a stubby pencil and a deep yearning for wealth came and did something that he called "estimating," I began to feel that after all window screens were not the only essentials to happiness in this life. About all the man estimated was the probable amount of my wealth, making no allowances for the leechman and the pirate who cuts my grass. At any rate I astounded all who knew of my marked antipathy to physical effort by announcing that I would construct my own window screens from the raw material. I argued that I had plenty of spare time, which I was frittering away by sitting on the front porch and resting, to build all the window screens we should need for years to come. There are but twenty-four windows in the house, anyhow. Until I counted them I had no idea that there were more than six. The best way to surprise yourself is with the amount of lighting and ventilating facilities in your residence is to decide to make your own screens. I procured the frames, ready to be cut to the proper sizes and joined together, and a roll of wire netting. The dealer also sent along a few boxes of tacks of the right size to get stuck under finger nails, and some cast iron brackets to clamp the corners of the frames. The day they arrived I got a copy of a magazine that excels in hints for householders. I also hunted up the hammer and saw and a tape line, and began work, surrounded by sympathetic friends and advisers. I took the necessary strips of wood and carefully measured them against the window that was to be the first monument to my skill. With airy grace I sawed the strips to the right length and nailed them together. The process of stretching on the wire screen was not unattended by unpleasant incidents. But what is to be expected of a man with the sun hitting the back of his neck at forty horse power, perspiration running into his eyes, and strands of wire impaling his finger tips? Is it reasonable to think that he will respond lightly to the merry badinage of the innocent bystanders when, under such circumstances, he whacks his thumb with the hammer? Not unless he keeps his thumb in his mouth for a sufficient length of time to permit the hot flow of language to cool off. My thumb was not held in my mouth that long, and half of my audience left before the show was fairly on. Then, when the first screen was finished, it would not fit the window for which it was designed. Here was an embarrassing state of affairs. One of the onlookers suggested that I remodel the window to fit the screen. He got a hard look. Then I discovered that I really had meant that screen as the lower panel for a new form of screen door. Also that I had an important business engagement and the screen manufacturing must be discontinued for the day.

Little Henry's Slate.

UMKEL BILL ZEZ WE APREZHIATE MOAZT THE COMPLIMUNTZ THAT WE DONT DESERVE

Next day was circus day. I buried all my religious scruples against circuses, and indeed my family to take all the neighbors and the servants with them to see that great educational exhibit of trained dogs and trapeze artists. After all had gone I dragged my window screen plant to the back yard once more. Just at that moment Mr. Nailer, the local carpenter, happened along. He wanted to know what I was doing. A happy thought struck me. I said I was looking for him. It took but a few moments to arrange the details of the plan, although he had to be paid extra to insure secrecy on his part. Nothing shall be divulged here, but long before the circus party had returned all the screens but one were finished and in place. I waited until the crowd rounded the corner, then busily began fastening the corner clamps on the last screen. It required all my modesty to prevent my swelling visibly under the shower of compliments that greeted the work. The neighbors vied with each other in praising the screens and me. They had never, they said, seen such perfectly built screens, to be the handiwork of a man whose proud boast had been that he had never driven a nail in his life. Tomorrow I am going down to Neighbor Long's to advise him about constructing his own window screens. I know just how it should be done, having seen every part of the work. Still, I am worried at times because it is now too late for an open confession on my part to be of much good.

He Canceled the Date.

The famous orator starts for his home, revolving in his mind the groundwork of the fourth of July oration he is to prepare. The title shall be "The Land of the Free," and his talk shall be one in which special stress is laid upon the great blessing of liberty which one and all enjoy. As he hastens down the street he is stopped by a policeman, who makes him go back and pick up a crumpled envelope he has thrown upon the sidewalk; farther along another policeman orders him to move on, when he is merely standing in front of a show window trying to decide upon a white vest; near his home he is ordered to go around the block by a third policeman who is guarding the fire lines—a barn in an alley is burning; at his gate he is met by the tax assessor, and when he enters the house he is given a notice from the health department to cease throwing rubbish in the alley. Instead of writing his address, he writes a letter canceling the engagement.

COMPLETE.

"What have you there?" we ask of our neighbor when we see him bringing home a new piece of machinery. "Another labor-saving contrivance for the house," he tells us. "Another? What can you possibly need? Already you have self-winding clocks, self-lighting and feeding stoves, self-dusting furniture, self-making beds, and self-playing instruments, and goodness only knows how many other self-operating things, from a self-swining hamcock to a self-locking cellar door." "Yes, but this is an automatic self-regulating phonograph which will swear fluently for me whenever any of the other self-operating machines gets out of order." Optimism, reduced to first principles—having your right leg cut off and glad it was not both.

A Tip.

The person with the long hair and the flowing necktie sits at the table and reads and repudiates a type-written note. Finally he turns to the waiter who has brought his lunchon and says: "Can't help feeling happy today, my man. Just got a note from an editor accepting the first poem I have ever sold." "Yes, sir," says the deferential waiter. "Makes a man feel joyful—more than joyful. I can't describe the strange thrill of exultation that possesses me." "Yes, sir? Something, I should presume to say, like a pussion feels when he gets his first tip."

Stingy.

"There goes old Scrimpen. Did you hear what he did last fourth of July?" "No," says the person who has to ask the necessary question. "What did he do last fourth of July?" "Got some firecrackers for his children and made them about them off in a soundproof box in the cellar. Said he wasn't going to be so extravagant as to buy noise for all the neighbors."

Ingenious.

"Yes," says the narrator of the story, "we got into the boat and rowed out to the island, eight miles away, and then we climbed up the hill to get the view. Along about noon we went back to the beach, and to our consternation discovered that the boat had become loose from its moorings and had drifted across the bay to the other side." "Wasn't that awful?" exclaimed the girl with the sympathetic eyes. "Yes, they were eight miles from the mainland, with no means of communicating with our friends." "Terrible," said the girl with the drooping waist. "What were we to do?" "What, indeed?" echoed the girl with the stuffy psyche knob. "Eight miles from the mainland, the day drawing to a close, no food, no shelter, and no way of getting word to our friends. How were we to get that boat over the yawning waste of water that separated us from shelter and comfort?"

Historical.

"And what other great event of the past happened on the fourth of July?" asks the teacher. "The freed boy in the rear seat hit his hand." "You may tell us, Freddie." "De New York beat de Phillips nine to nuttin'!"

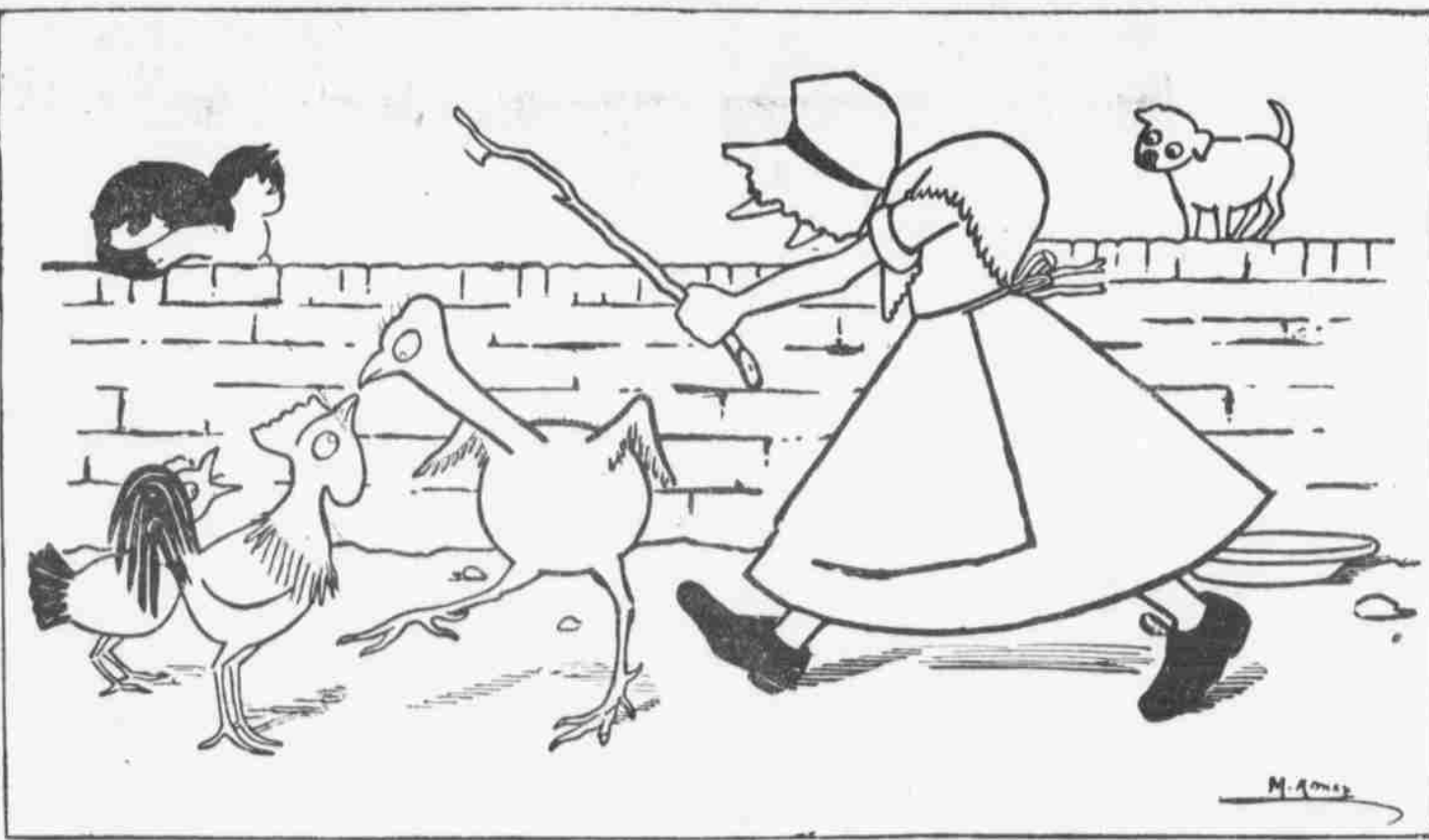
As an Example.



"But, papa, I don't see why we need to study these problems about the man who sold his wheat for one-fourth of what his corn was worth, and from both sales he made a profit of \$200. How much corn and wheat did he sell?" "Of course you can't see the good of it now, Johnny. But in later life these problems will all come back to you when you realize how much they have helped you." "Well, papa, do you remember the answer to this one?" "Why—er—. Run along, child. Don't see I am reading the paper?"

Yes, you've gotten along pretty well in the world, and you wear a Prince Albert coat and a silk hat every day, and people always call you "Mr.," and the papers print your name on an average twenty times a week, but deep down in your heart you know there was a time when you could only attract attention by rocking the boat at a Sunday school picnic.

PRIDE OF KNOWLEDGE.



"What's the old lady saying?" "Says she'll teach us to scratch her garden up." "Let her go ahead with the lesson. If she knows any more about it than we do she must be a bird."

NOT A GOOD SIMILE.

"O, Miss Kazoope," said the youth who was determined to be gallant even if he burst a blood vessel, "your pink veil is becoming." "Is it?" asked Miss Kazoope, languidly. "Indeed, yes, I suppose you wear a pink veil for the same reason that the fruit dealers fasten pink gauze over the peaches they display to the interested observers." "But," remarked Miss Kazoope, turning with a cold shoulder air, "those pink veils are always put over green peaches, are they not?" "And the youth who would be gallant afterwards declared that it was quite the sudden-heat cold wave of the summer."

CONSIDERATE.

After clambering over the feet of the obstinate person, who holds the end of the seat in the trolley car the lady makes several audible remarks about end seat hogs. At this the other passengers titter, whereat the obstinate person arises, bows, and says suavely: "Pardon me, madam, but in retaining this seat I was merely acting upon motives of gallantry." "Gallantry? Humph!" the lady sniffs. "Yes, madam, with all due respect to your judgment, gallantry. Far be it from me to allow a lady—even unconsciously to place herself in a position where those who want to get aboard the car next would refer to her even indignantly as an end seat hogger." Saying which, he sat down, and the car rolled on in silence.

IN THE FUTURE.

"Is there anything interesting in the magazines this month?" asks patron of the newsdealer. "Q, yes," responded the newsdealer. "Here's one that has an article on bridge building, another with a long account of the presidential inauguration, another with a symposium on market gardening, and all of them have special articles on the news of the week." "But I wanted some good short stories and serials." "Well, I guess you'll have to take a bunch of daily papers if that's what you want."

UNCONVENTIONAL.

"And you will wait for me, darling?" whispered the hero. The heroine studied the floor for a moment, then looked up with a glance that conveyed the impression that she was undecided. "You will wait for me?" the hero begged. "No, gentle reader. Don't get all stirred up and fancy that the hero was off for the wars to wrest fame and glory on the hotly contested field, or was about to plunge head first into the maelstrom of business to wrench wealth from the grasping hands of the world, and then after many years come back and lay his honors and his fortune at the feet of this fair young idol of his affections. Keep cool, and listen to her. "I'll wait a little while, Percy," the heroine remarked. "but if you can't get here by 7 o'clock I'll go on down to the church social with pa and ma, and you can come up there to take me home. It's a shame you have to work after closing hours, isn't it?"

Lacked Sporting Blood.

"What is the meaning of 'tempus fugit?'" asked the man with the pessimistic face. "Time flies," explained the individual with the sage expression. "Time flies?" sniffed the other. "Who the dickens wants to time the pesky things? Seems to me these scientists waste a lot of energy."

No, patient inquirer. When we refer to "the good old songs" we do not mean the ones that were written two months ago and became old two weeks since.

One of the most popular conversation-alises we know hardly ever says much more than "You're looking mighty well today."

If a girl delights in driving nails, painting fences, and doing other work which usually is done by a man, we say she is unconventional. If a boy shows a tendency to do embroidery, or even plain sewing, we talk about sending him to a sanatorium.

In the hands of a man entirely great the pen is mightier than the sword; and in the hands of a war correspondent the typewriter is busier than a whole army.

Ever notice that when you go somewhere to see the natural scenic wonders of the place you find that the natives have gone elsewhere to see something that is not half so attractive?

There are two varieties of unhappy married women. The first marries a man for his money; the second for his looks.

When we want to let our whole heart surge out in sympathy, we turn the tide of our feelings toward the child who has discovered that his parents expect it to say bright things all the time.

Funny, isn't it, that a man with big muscles in his arms can't even write a letter without taking off his coat?

If the men who put in so much time writing the declaration of independence had had their eyes open to the possibilities of this country they would have pooled issues and organized a fireworks trust.

It is just as patriotic to pay taxes as to shoot firecrackers; but burning money in fireworks makes more smoke.

FAMILIAR QUOTATION.

"The poets have sung the praises or dispraises of almost every bird and beast," stated the professor of literature, "with the exception of the humble mule. It is strange, is it not, that the faithful patient, long suffering beast of burden has not been used as a theme? The horse is the central thought in many—"

"Indeed?" asked the professor. "May I request you to inform us of that poem?"

"Yes, sir. It is Annie Laurie."

"Annie Laurie?"

"Yes, sir. The first line says that Maxwellton's brains are bonny. I presume Maxwellton is the name of Annie's mule."

SOME CONSOLATION.



"But," says the devoted wife, "I cannot understand why you need be so fearfully jealous of Mr. Otherboy." "Well, why doesn't he stop paying attentions to you now that we are married?" asks the husband. "It's enough to make me jealous." "But, my dear, he was just as jealous of you before I married you."

SIZING HIM UP.

Our friend the sympathetic person, with the magnanimous nose, sits gleefully upon the tree trunk by the lake and gloms at the crowd of merry-makers who have come to the sylvan haunts upon a picnic. "How that pop-eyed young fool in the striped sweater suit," he asks. "We see a young man in a striped suit, and say so, but do not altogether agree with him as to the rest of his statement." "No matter," he snaps. "He's a pop-eyed young fool, just the same. Know what he has done since that crowd came here? He has shot an unholod pistol, and by good luck only nipped somebody's ear; he has cut the ropes of two hammocks; he has put salt in the ice cream; and now he's out there on the water rocking a boat. What do you suppose 'e'll be fool enough to do next?" "We merely yawn that we are not a good guesser."

SURE.

"I've invented a very useful article," said the man with the long hair and the collared shirt. "Why don't you get it on the market?" asked the man with the polka dot vest. "Can't think of a good name for the thing. Want a name that will at once suggest its nature and use, and at the same time will be catchy and easily remembered."

HIS SYSTEM.

The maker of proverbs smiled happily as he bent over his desk. "This is simple," he mused. "I can take one subject and work it up into any number of proverbs." So saying, he wrote: "Time is money." "Time flies." "Riches take wings."

HIS SIGNATURE.

"What is the delay?" asked a reporter who was waiting in the anteroom of independence hall while the declaration of independence was being signed. "I understood that the document would be filed out and ready to be handed to the press long before this." "They haven't all written their names to it yet," explained the patriot who had come out to get some fresh air. "Losing heart?" "No. Had to send for more ink. John Hancock used up the last half of the bottle for his signature."

No doubt when Rip Van Winkle woke from his twenty years' sleep his wife was still talking about how hard it was to get a cook.

IT ALL DEPENDS.

"A man came along here a while ago and said I looked good enough to eat." "Well, if he eats you his future happiness depends on how good he has been."

An Observant Man.

"Now," said the architect, "here are plans and specifications for a neat and comfortable suburban home that will cost \$2,000." "I can't afford to put up any such house as that," says the caller. "But it only figures up to \$2,000." "I know, but I've noticed such things and don't feel able to attempt the erection of a \$2,000 house when I only have \$10,000 at my disposal."

An Alphabet of Jokes.

S is the Spinster joke, as well as the familiar "Sister-to-you." Likewise the Summertime hotel where everyone conspires to do you; it is the fierce Sea Serpent jest whose length make the sailors blow so; The Seamstress, too, who says with zest: "My business is only sew sew." It is the Soup which holds the fly; 'Tis the Sourette from every box eyed who vows that she would simply die Before she'd ever use peroxide. It is the Singer—here again We list this jest among the true ones: "I cannot sing the old songs." Then Somebody shouts "Nor the new ones!"