

SOME GOOD STORIES THAT BRING A LAUGH WITH THEM

Robert Rudd Whiting Makes a Collection of Tales and Anecdotes in Which Many Old Friends Combine with New Ones to Entertain the Reader.

In a little volume which he calls "Four Hundred Good Stories" (The Baker & Taylor Co.) Robert Rudd Whiting has brought together a series of anecdotes—some of which come in the familiar guise of old friends, while others have the savor of novelty. The following have been chosen from Mr. Whiting's collection:

A number of years ago, when Alvin A. Adeo was Third Assistant Secretary of State, an employee of the department was called to the phone.

"Will you kindly give me the name of the Third Assistant Secretary of State?" asked the voice at the other end of the wire.

"Adeo."

"A.D. what?"

"A.A. Adeo."

"Spell it, please."

"Adeo."

"Yes."

"A."

"Yes."

"A."

"You go to hell!" and the receiver was indignantly hung up.

"Man is not yet in a position to abolish war," Eihu Roof once said. "There is still too much of the animal in him. Even when he seems most mild and good he may have cruel, bestial thoughts revolving in his mind. As an illustration: A prison chaplain one day found a convict feeding a rat.

"'Aha!' the chaplain said, 'so you have a pet, eh?'

"'Yes, Sir,' said the convict, his hoarse voice softening and a gentle smile illumining his hard face. 'I feed him every day. I think more of this here rat, Sir, than I do of any other livin' creature.'

"The chaplain laid his hand on the convict's shoulder.

"'In every man,' he said, 'there is something of the angel, if we can but find it. How came you to take such a fancy to this rat?'

"'It bit the jailer, Sir.'"

Clang, clatter, bang! Down the street came the fire engines.

Driving along ahead, oblivious of any danger, was a farmer in a ramshackle old buggy. A policeman yelled at him: "Eh there, look out! The fire department's coming."

Turning in by the curb the farmer watched the horse cart, salvage wagon and engine whiz past. Then he turned out into the street again and drove on. Barely had he started when the hook and ladder came tearing along. The rear end of the big truck sliced into the farmer's buggy, smashing it to smithereens and sending the farmer sprawling into the gutter. The policeman ran to his assistance.

"Didn't I tell ye to keep out of the way?" he demanded crossly. "Didn't I tell ye the fire department was comin'?"

"'Yeth, ma'am," said the peeved farmer. "I did git outter the way for th' fire department. But what in tarnation was them drunken painters in sech an all-fired hurry fer?"

"Wind," wrote a little boy in his composition at school, "is air when it gets in a hurry."

A new caddy had taken up his stand at Union Square.

"Gettin' in a new horse?" asked one of the old-timers, eyeing the bony nag critically.

"A-w, wotcher givin' us!"

"See yer got the framework up already?"

A big, husky Irishman strolled into the civil service room where they hold physical examinations for candidates for the police force.

"Strip," ordered the police surgeon.

"Which, Sor?"

"Get your clothes off, and be quick about it," said the doctor.

The Irishman undressed. The doctor measured his chest and pounded his back.

"Hop over this rod," was the next command.

The man did his best, landing on his back.

"Double up your knees and touch the floor with your hands."

He lost his balance and sprawled upon the floor. He was indignant but silent.

"Now jump under this cold shower."

"Sure an' that's funny," muttered the applicant.

"Now run around the room ten times. I want to test your heart and wind."

"This last was too much. 'I'll not," the candidate declared defiantly. "I'll stay single."

"Single?" inquired the doctor, puzzled.

"Single," repeated the Irishman, with determination. "Sure an' what's all this funny business got to do wid a marriage license anyhow?"

He had strayed into the wrong bureau.

"John, John," whispered an alarmed wife, poking her sleeping husband in the ribs. "Wake up, John; there are burglars in the pantry and they're eating all my pies."

"Well, what do we care," mumbled

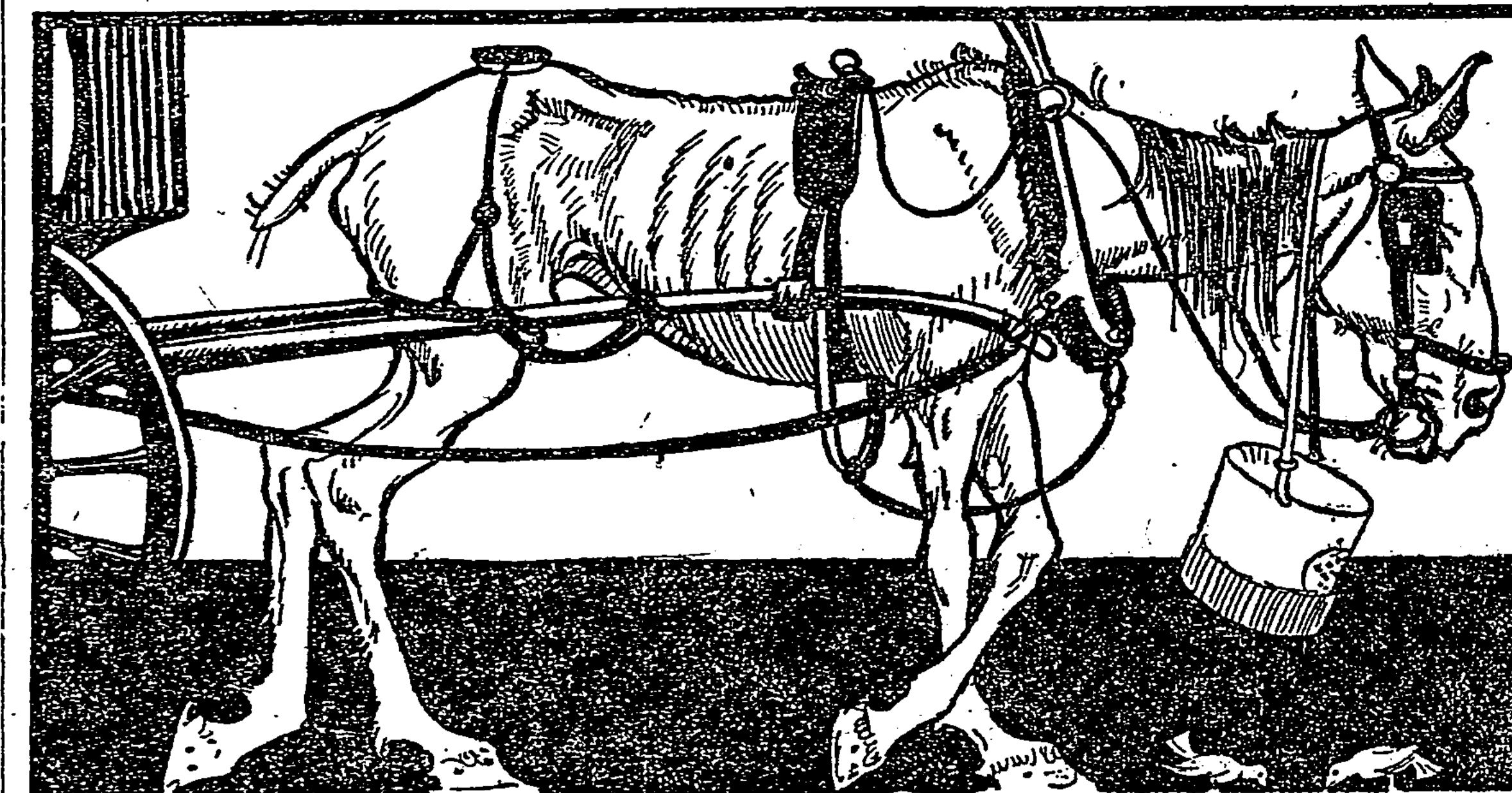
John, rolling over, "so long as they don't die in the house?"

It had been anything but an easy afternoon for the teacher who took six of her pupils through the Museum of Natural History, but their enthusiastic interest in the stuffed animals and their open-eyed wonder at the prehistoric fossils amply repaid her.

"Well, boys, here have you been all afternoon?" asked the father of two of the party that evening.

The answer came back with joyous promptness: "Oh, pop! Teacher took us to a dead circus."

A disheveled man, much the worse for liquor, staggered out of a Maine "speakeasy" and laboriously propped himself against the door. For a while he owlishly surveyed the passers-by. Suddenly



"See Yer Got the Framework Up."

his foot slipped and he collapsed in a heap on the sidewalk. A moment later he was snoring.

A hurrying pedestrian paused, reflectively surveyed the fallen man for a few seconds, and then poked his head in the door.

"Oh, Frank," he called. "Frank, come out here a minute."

Presently the proprietor of the joint, smoking a fat cigar, emerged. He blinked in the bright sunlight.

"Hello, Hud," he said pleasantly. "What's up?"

Hud jerked his thumb toward the slumberer on the sidewalk.

"'Yer sign has fell down," he explained, and briskly resumed his walk uptown.

"George," said the Titian-haired school marm, "is there any connecting link between the animal kingdom and the vegetable kingdom?"

"'Yeth, ma'am," answered George promptly. "'Hash."

It may have been George's sister, Nel-



"What Are Them Drunken Painters in Such a Hurry For?"

He, who when asked how to make a Maltese cross replied: "Step on its tail."

Misrepresentation is not among the faults of the following advertisement written by the late Bill Nye:

"Owing to ill-health I will sell at my residence in township 19, range 18, according to government survey, one plump raspberry colored cow, aged eight years. She is a good milker and is not afraid of the cars nor anything else. She is of undaunted courage, and gives milk frequently. To a man who does not fear death in any form she would be a great

boon. She is very much attached to her house at present by means of a stay chain, but she will be sold to any one who will bid her right. She is one-fourth short-horn and three-fourths hyena. I will also throw in a double-barreled shotgun which goes with her. In May she generally goes away for a week or two and returns with a tall, red calf with wabby legs. Her name is Rose. I would rather sell her to a non-resident."

"I tell you I won't have this room," protests the old lady to the bellboy who was conducting her. "I ain't a-goin' to pay my good money for a pigsty with a measly little foidin' bed in it. If you think that jest because I'm from the country—"

Profoundly disgusted, the boy cut her short.

"Get in, mum. Get in," he ordered.

"Medicine won't help you any," the doctor told his patient. "What you need is a complete change of living. Get away to some quiet country place for a month. Go to bed early, eat more roast beef, drink plenty of good, rich milk, and smoke just one cigar a day."

A month later the patient walked into

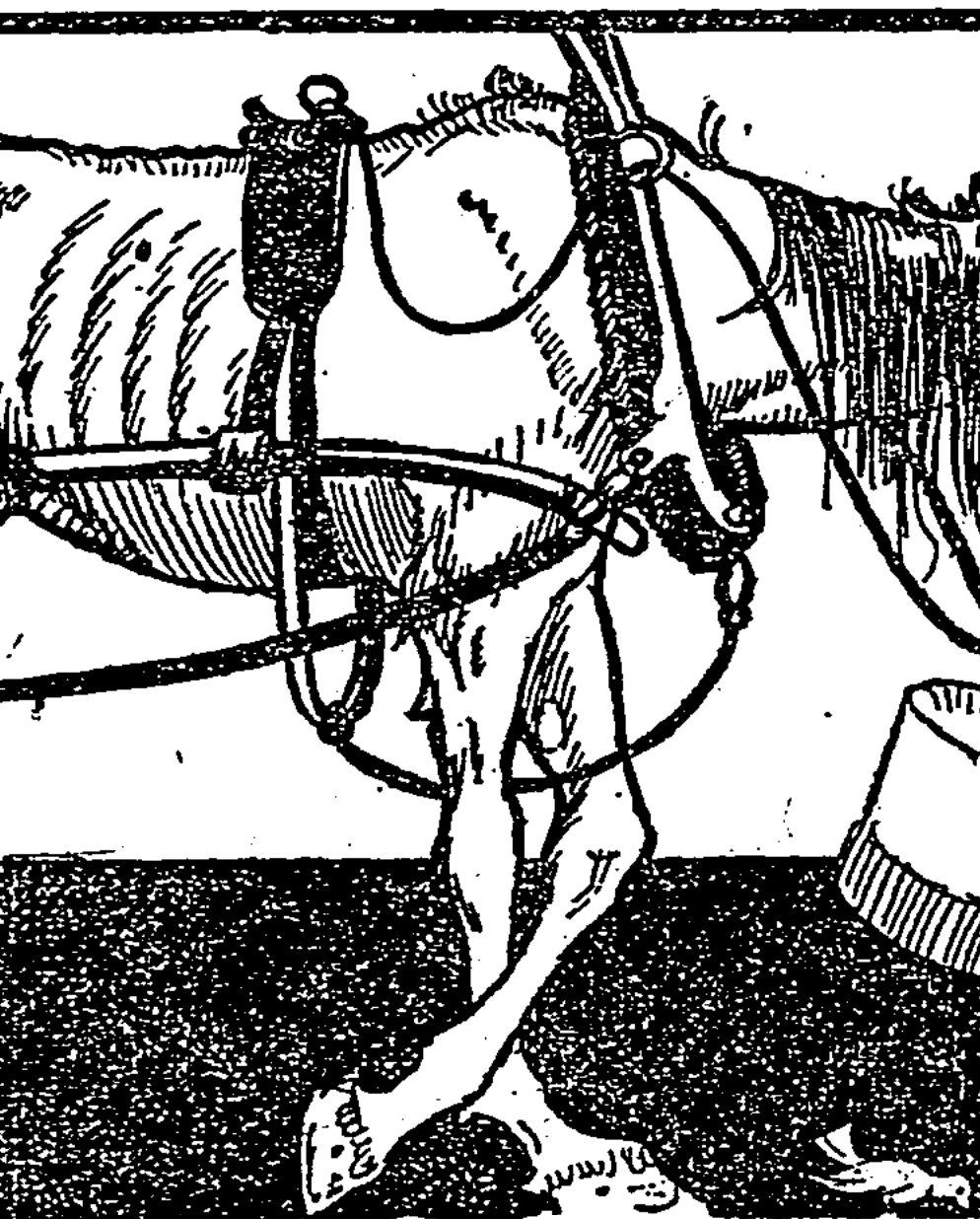
the doctor's office. He looked like a new man, and the doctor told him so.

"'Yes, doctor, your advice certainly did the business. I went to bed early and did all the other things you told me. But, say, doctor, that one cigar a day almost killed me at first. It's no joke starting in to smoke at my time o' life."

A Revolutionary veteran, running for Congress in days before the civil war, had as his opponent a young man who had never been a soldier. In his speeches the Revolutionary hero made the most of his "record."

"Fellow citizens," he would say, "I have fought and bled for my country. I have helped repulse the British tyrant; I have helped repel the savage Indian. I have slept upon the field of battle with no other covering than the canopy of heaven. I have plodded barefoot over the frozen ground until every footstep was marked with blood."

And thus spoke Sewell Ford: It was a dark night. A man was riding a bicycle with no lamp. He came to a crossroads, and did not know which way to turn. He felt in his pocket for a match. He found but one. Climbing to the top



of the pole, he lit the match carefully and in the ensuing glimmer read: WET PAINT.

Speaking of the policy of the Government of the United States with respect to its troublesome neighbors in Central and South America, "Uncle Joe" Cannon recently told of a Missouri Congressman who is decidedly opposed to any interference in this regard by our country. It seems that this Spring the Missourian met at Washington an Englishman with whom he conversed touching affairs in the localities mentioned. The Westerner asserted his usual views with considerable fervor, winding up with this observation:

"The whole trouble is that we Americans need a good hiding!"

"You do, indeed!" promptly asserted the Britisher, as if pleased by the admission. But his exultation was of brief duration, for the Missourian immediately concluded with:

"But there ain't nobody can do it!"

A middle-aged farmer accosted a sergeant of the pole, he lit the match carefully and in the ensuing glimmer read: WET PAINT.

James McNeill Whistler and a friend, strolling through a London suburb, met a small boy. Whistler asked him his age.

"Seven," the boy replied.

On his sympathies too much, tried to assuage his grief, but he refused to be comforted.

"'Mamma, Mamma," he sobbed convulsively, pointing to the picture, "there's a poor little lion over there in the corner that ain't gettin' any! Boo-hoo! Boo-hoo!"

The Hon. John Sharp Williams had an engagement to speak in a small Southern town. The train he was traveling on was not of the swiftest, and he lost no opportunity of keeping the conductor informed as to his opinions of that particular road.

"Well, if yer don't like it," the conductor finally burst out, "why in thunder don't yer git out an' walk?"

"I would," Mr. Williams blandly replied, "but you see the committee doesn't expect me until this train gets in."

"Oh, you must be more than seven," said Whistler doubtfully.

"Seven," insisted the boy, rather pleased at being taken for older.

Turning to his friend, Whistler said, "Do you think it possible that he really could have gotten as dirty as that in only seven years?"

A man, driving along a country road, saw the roof of a farm-house ablaze. He gesticulated and called to the farmer's wife, who was standing calmly in the doorway:

"'Hey, your house 's afire!"

"'What?"

"'I say your house 's afire!"

"'What did y' say? I'm a leetle deaf?"

"'Four house 's afire!" he yelled at the top of his lungs.

"Is that all?"

"It's all I can think of just now."

A regiment of regulars was making a long, dusty march across the rolling prairie land of Montana last Summer. It was a hot, blistering day, and the men, longing for water and rest, were impatient to reach the next town.

A rancher rode past.

"Say, friend," called out one of the

regulars, "how far is it to the next town?"

"Oh, a matter of two miles or so, I reckon," called back the rancher. Another long hour dragged by, and another rancher was encountered.

"How far to the next town?" the men asked him eagerly.

"Oh, a good two miles."

A weary half hour longer of marching, and then a third rancher.

"Hey, how far's the next town?"

"Not far," was the encouraging answer. "Only about two miles."

"Well," sighed an optimistic sergeant, "thank God we are holdin' our own, anyhow!"



"Your Sign Has Fell Down."

This story. The only question is, how did he do it?

"Don't you want to buy a bicycle to ride around your farm on?" asked the hardware clerk, as he was wrapping up the nails. "They're cheap now. I can let you have a first-class one for \$35.

"'I'd rather put \$35 in a cow," replied the farmer.

"But think," persisted the clerk, "how foolish you'd look riding around town on a cow."

"Oh, I don't know," said the farmer, stroking his chin; "no more foolish, I guess, than I would milkin' a bicycle."

"Sure, an' what the divvil is a chaffin'-dish?" asked Pat.

"Whist, man," answered Nora, "it's a fryin'-pan that's got into society."

Perhaps it was this same Nora who once defined steam as "wather that's gone crazy wid th' heat."

A man entered a drug store in a hurry and asked for a dozen two-grain quinine pills.

"I put 'em in a box, Sir," the clerk asked as he counted them out.

"Oh, no," replied the customer, "I want to roll them home."

"Good morning, ma'am," began the temperance worker. "I'm collecting for the Inebriates' Home and—"

"Why, me husband's out," replied Mrs. McGuire, "but if ye can find him anywhere's yer's welcome to him."

Joe Lincoln, whose Cape Cod folks are well-known characters, recently attended a lecture. When asked how he liked it, he related this little story:

A stranger entered a church in the middle of the sermon and seated himself in the back pew. After a while he began to fidget. Leaning over to the white-haired man at his side, evidently an old member of the congregation, he whispered:

"How long has he been preaching?"

"Thirty or forty years, I think," the old man answered. "I don't know exactly."

"I'll stav, then," decided the stranger. "He must be nearly done."

The Shakespeare Club of New Orleans was noted for its amateur performances. Once, a social celebrity, gorgeous in the costume of a lord in waiting, was called upon to say: "The Queen has swooned."

As he stepped upon the stage his friends applauded vociferously. Bowing his thanks, he faced the King and, in a high-pitched voice, said: "The swoon has quenched."

There was a roar of laughter. He waited patiently until it had subsided and tried again: "The swoon has cooned."

Again the house roared and the stage manager, in a voice that could be heard all over the theatre, said: "Come off, you doggoned fool!"

But the ambitious amateur refused to surrender, and in a rasping falsetto, as he was being assisted off the stage, screamed: "The coon has swooned!"

A very stout old lady, busting through the park on a sweltering hot day, became aware that she was being closely followed by a rough-looking tramp.

"What do you mean by following me in this manner?" she indignantly demanded. The tramp slunk back a little. But when the stout lady resumed her walk he again took up his position directly behind her.

"See here," she exclaimed, wheeling angrily, "if you don't go away at once I shall call a policeman!"

The unfortunate man looked up at her appealingly.

"For heaven's sake, kind lady, have mercy an' don't call a policeman; yer's the only shady spot in the whole park."

Mr. Jones had recently become the father of twins. The minister stopped him on the street to congratulate him.

"Well, Jones," he said, "I hear that the Lord has smiled on you."

"Smiled on me!" repeated Jones, "He laughed out loud at me!"

One Eastern railroad has a regular form for reporting accidents to animals on its right of way. Recently a track foreman had the killing of a cow to report. In answer to the question, "Disposition of carcass?" he wrote: "Kind and gentle."

The House Committee of a New York club recently received this unique complaint:

"I have the honor to inform you that I lunched at the club this afternoon and had as my guests three gentlemen, all well-known gourmets. Among the other things an omelet was served. It contained only three flies. As an old member of the club, jealous of its reputation, I naturally found this very embarrassing, as, in order to make an equitable division of the omelet, it was necessary either to divide a fly—a nice bit of carving, as you must concede—or forego a fly myself. I beg to suggest that in the future, when an omelet is served for four persons, it should be either with (a) four flies, or (b) no flies at all."

"Sir, at Austerlitz."

"And were you not decorated?"

"No, Sirs."

"Then here is my own cross, for you; I make you chevalier."

"Your Majesty names me chevalier because I have lost one arm! What would your Majesty have done had I lost both arms?"

"Oh, in that case I should have made you Officer of the Legion."

"Whereupon the old soldier immediately drew his sword and cut off his other arm."

There is no particular reason to doubt