AN ANGEL UNAWARES.

On This Occasion, at Least, the Insurance Agent Was Welcomed.

An insurance agent, albeit a useful and at times attractive person, is not always a welcome visitor, says the Detroit Free Press. To some people, indeed, he is a decided bore. One of this class owns a handsome residence, and even the thought of an agent provokes his ire. One evening recently he was enjoying his otium cum dig, when a man walked in on him very unceremoniously. The visitor was a total stranger to him, and before he had time to throw an inkstand at him or to ask him to sit down he began calmly and in a most business-like tone to talk.

"Have you any insurance on this house?" said he.

Well, Mr. Otium-cum-dig, was afire in a minute.

"What do you mean, sir," he stormed, "by breaking into my house, sir, in this manner—breaking into my house, with your infernal insurance business? It is no concern of yours, sir, whether this house is insured or not. Get out, or I'll throw you out."

The visitor was as calm as a May morning.

"It is no concern of mine, whatever," he replied, "but I thought——"

"You have no right to think about what doesn't concern you, sir," interrupted the house owner. "I want no insurance agents forcing themselves upon me, sir."

"I understand that perfectly, and I am no insurance agent. I was merely passing your house, and I observed that it was on fire in the rear, and it occurred to me that if you had no insurance on it, perhaps you did not wish it to burn down."

That's what the visitor said, but Mr. Otium-cum-dig, didn't hear it all: he had gone to the fire, and the visitor smiled and followed him.

Hibernation of Snails.

It is believed that all shell-bearing land mollusks either hibernate or aestivate according to conditions of climate. Most of the snails close the aperture with a membranous or coriaceous covering, consisting of lime and mucus, which is called an epiphragm. W. G. Binney has thus described the operation: "The animal being withdrawn into the shell, the collar is brought to a level with the aperture and a quantity of mucus is poured out and covers it. A small quantity of air is then emitted from the respiratory foramen, which detaches the mucus from the surface of the collar and projects it in a convex form like a bubble. At the same moment the animal retreats farther into the shell, leaving a vacuum between itself and the membrane, which is consequently pressed back by the external air to a level with the aperture or even farther, so as to form a concave surface, where, after becoming desiccated and hard, it remains fixed. These operations are nearly simultaneous, and occupy but an instant." As the winter advances the snail withdraws deeper and deeper, shutting itself out by other epiphragms, like a retreating army covering its front by breastworks as it retreats, until sometimes it has made no less than half a dozen, one within the other. With the snails such as ours, that inhabit moist wooded districts, this protecting wall is thin and nearly transparent, while in those of arid regions it is thicker and often calcareous. Some of the large helices of south Europe secrete a somewhat shelly epiphragm resembling the coating of a turtle's egg, convex externally, with the edge turned in and roughly cemented to the aperture of the shell. In this condition, if not resuscitated by moisture, the snails will remain alive for an indefinite period. —Popular Science Monthly.

Uses of Cotton-seed Oil.

Cotton oil ranks next to sperm oil and above lard oil for illuminating purposes, and it may be burned in any lamp used for either. Mixed with petroleum, it increases the freedom of burning, but this requires a change in the wick. As a lubricating oil cotton seed is useless, because it is half way between the drying and the non-drying. For the same reason it cannot be used for paints, for wood filling, or for leather dressing. It has some use as a substitute for vaseline and similar products. The oil enters into the production of laundry and fancy soaps for woolen mills. The American sardines, properly known as young shad and herring, are put up with this oil, and the use of it extends so far that nearly all the real sardines of Europe are now treated in the same way. The oil forms an emulsion in medicine and a substitute for cod liver oil. On the market the crude oil is known as either prime, or off quality, or cooking. There are also the white summer, the yellow winter, and the white winter. All these, except the crude, bring an average of about fifty cents a gallon in the wholesale market. After the oil has left the seeds, they become food for stock in the shape of oil cake, while the ashes from the hulls make a fertilizer for root crops.—Popular Science Monthly.

Old Time Extrazagance.

So many complaints are made of the extravagance of nineteenth century women, and its deterrent effect upon marriageable young men, that it is interesting to read of a certain Miss Phraser's gown, made in the year 1676, which cost $1,676, and of which it is thus recorded: "It frights Sir Carr Scroope, who is much in love with her, saying his estate will scarce maintain her in clothes." Every story repeats itself in time. There is nothing new under the sun; but not for centuries has there been made a gown so resplendent as that worn by the Medicis queen, whereon were embroidered 3,200 pearls and 2,000 diamonds. And what belle in the last cycle has been arrayed so resplendently as Madame de Montespan, who wore at a great court festival "a gown of gold on gold, broidered in gold, bordered with gold, and over that gold frieze stitched with a gold thread, which makes the most divine stuff that has ever been imagined?"

How Could it be Warm.

The Publisher—You say you are aspiring to be a realistic novelist and report things as they are?

The Author—Yes, certainly.

The Publisher—Then what do you mean by saying "the beautiful Boston hostess gave her guests a warm reception?"—Chicago Record.

CURRENT CURIOS.

Indians believe that mirages are caused by evil spirits.

The correct medical name for the "grippe" is Myxoidoedema.

The first sawmill in Minnesota was built in 1821, at the Falls of St. Anthony. Now there are 330 mills, employing 17,472 men.

The largest sharks ever seen on the Pacific Coast was recently caught at Monterey, Cal. It is forty feet in length, and weighs several thousand pounds.

Officials of the Smithsonian Institution have discovered evidences which lead them to believe that the mound builders were the progenitors of the modern Indians.

Some cigar makers moisten the ends of cigars with saliva, to make the wrapper adhere. It is asserted that disease is thus spread, especially the germ of consumption.

The home of the Hebrews was about the size of New Hampshire, that of the Greeks was not as large as Maine, and that of the Romans was smaller than Montana.

The American Bible Society no longer supplies Bibles to hotels, as has been the custom. The gift seemed to be little appreciated, and the volumes were defaced and neglected.

They have a new evangelist in Baltimore. He was formerly a drummer, and, oddly enough, his name is Fife. He ought to be able to make a noise in the word, remarks the Christian Register.

The skull of a man who has died from delirium tremens contains an alcoholic gas. A small opening in the skull, soon after death, permits this gas to escape, and it can be ignited, and burns with a bluish flame.

The type-setting machine is responsible for a good many startling statements. When one reads that "John Blank, while a man of great wealth was nevertheless a hyxmopscil man," one feels that though it may be perfectly true, it ought not to be said, under the circumstances.

The following, if not true, is well founded, says the London Globe. A French priest who was passionately addicted to card-playing is said by a writer in the Paris Temps to have inadvertently remarked, instead of "O Lord, who holdest in Thy hand the hearts of kings," "O Lord, who holdest in Thy hand the king of hearts."

A late scientific authority states that by saturating a bullet with vaseline, its flight may be easily followed with the eye from the time it leaves the muzzle of the rifle until it strikes the target. The course of the flight is marked by a beautiful ring of smoke, caused by the vaseline being ignited on leaving the muzzle of the gun. This smoke ring will remain suspended in the air for some little time after the bullet strikes, if the day is not too windy.

JEDGE WAXEM'S PROVERBS.

Taxes is nessesary evils.

The money power is mity ni a majority all the time.

What a statesman don't kno is sometime wuth knoin'.

Evry now and then Goddess uv Liberty wonders what she is here fer.

Thars mity little uv the purity in polliticks that don't need disinfectin.

A party platform has got to be something moren a campane dockerment.

Mity flew candidates kno what they cant do till they hav tride it two er three times.

Polliticks ain't lejislashun, but its gittin so that lejislashun is mity ni all polliticks.

Ther ain't no way uv tellin how many votes thar is to a gallon uv licker tell the jugs emty.

The more parliamentary rules a Congressman knos the less likely he is to tend to the bizuns he was lected.

It takes a good menny shocks uv fodder and sum purty hi haystacks to make a statesman as iz a statesman.

Taint thery the peepel wants in money matters, its condishuns thats waronted not to swag down in the middle.

Ef the American eagel cood tawk, he'd be likely to git mity ni perfane when he seen how sum things wuz goin on.

A statesman's hart may be in the right place, but his mouth gits almity fer away frum hedquarters evry now and then.

Becus a farmer has to fasten his galluses with a nale he has an idee that he kin help himself by gitting into polliticks.

A man kin be a pollitician, and he kin be honest, but he hain't got no time to spair ef he trize to be both at the same time.

When a man wants to go into polliticks, he ain't ast ef heze a patriot, but how much money he kin put up fer campane perposes.

Thars a lot uv good hoss sense goin to waste in the halls uv congress because thar aint enay boddy around that seems to kno how to yuse it.

The country wood be full uv monuments hiern church steaples of evry statesman had as big a one as he thinks he ought to have.—Detroit Free Press.

The diferents betwean a pile uv congresman's speaches a year old and a bale uv hay uv the same age is that the bale uv hay has got sum nourishment in it.

TOOTS FROM THE RAM'S HORN

The same opportunity never knocks at any door twice.

The man who will say a mean thing will sooner or later do one.

The man who goes to school to his mistakes will have a good teacher.

To be contented with what we have is about the same as to own the earth.

If you know what laws have to be passed to restrain a man you know the man.

As soon as some people get a little money they prove by the way they use it that they shouldn't have it.

No one can get out of life more than he puts in, and what he loves to do will be his life's work.

True riches do not consist in the things the world can give, but in those it cannot take from us.

IN AN UPPER BERTH.

Conspicuous Advantages of Being Near the Roof of a Pullman.

"Why do I prefer an upper berth to a lower in a sleeping car?" repeated the drummer, as he counted out and swallowed six pellets without explaining whether they were for his liver or lungs.

"Yes, why?" queried the man who was felicitating himself on having secured lower No. 7, says the Detroit Free Press.

"Well, there are various reasons. When I first began to travel, fifteen years ago, the wheel of a car on a train passing us flew off and killed a man in lower No. 6. The chap over him never got a scratch. Later on, a fellow threw a rock at the car, and it entered the window of lower No. 4 and broke the sleeper's thigh. Man over him never even woke up. Again, a car I was on ran over a lot of dynamite. Man in lower No. 7 was blown up with the floor and killed, but the one over him didn't even know that anything had happened. Once more, a man in a lower berth can be easily robbed, while one in an upper is seldom troubled. Last, but not least——"

"What?" was asked as he paused.

"I always undress, same as at a hotel. There's no telling when an accident may come. In case the car goes off, the upper berth is apt to close up, and you are thus secure from the gaze of the vulgar public until the porter can put up a tent alongside the track and get your clothes there and help you to dress. Modesty is my chief reason, but as all you fellows broke your necks to get lower berths, of course I can't expect you to understand or appreciate it."

She Was Lucky.

"My husband is so unsympathetic," said the young wife, as she adjusted the new hat. "He does not understand me at all."

"You are lucky," replied the milliner, who knew a thing or two. "That's half the charm of a woman—her husband's inability to understand what she is going to do next. I find all my best customers have such husbands."

He Liked Some Things Better.

"Some of the backwoods districts in Wisconsin send very peculiar men to the Legislature," said the Hon. T. C. Isbell, of that State, as he chatted with acquaintances in the corridor of the Lindell. "I remember one of them who was particularly a curiosity. He had never seen a town as large as Madison in his life, and the State House was a constant revelation to him. On the opening day of the Legislature a page brought in a bottle of ink and a bottle of mucilage for each desk. The latter was a curiosity to the backwoodsman. 'M-u-c' 'muck,' 'l,' 'l,' 'l-a-g-e' 'lage,' he spelled out 'mucklage.' 'What's that fur?' calling to his seatmate. 'To eat,' was the sententious reply. Nothing further was noticed of the new legislator until the next morning, when he called the page, and, handing him the empty bottle said 'Git me some more. I like some things better, but it's kinder sweet. It's too sticky, though. Hev to drink a heap of water to git it all swallered, but I reckon I kin git along with it. Don't seem to be nothin' else to eat here, 'thout goin' cl'ar back to the boardin' house, an' not much thar.'"—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

His Views on Pants.

A boy in the Wichita schools has been suspended for reading the following essay on pants:

"Pants are made for men, and not men for pants. Pants are like molasses; they are thinner in hot weather and thicker in cold. The man in the moon changes his pants during the eclipse. Don't you go to the pantry for pants, you might be mistaken.

"Men are often mistaken in pants. Such mistakes make breeches of promise.

"There has been much discussion as to whether pants is singular or plural. Seems to us when men wear pants they are plural, and when they don't wear pants it is singular.

"Men go on a tear in pants, and its all right; but when the pants go on a tear it is all wrong."—Union Printer.

Suspiciously Familiar.

Police magistrate—This ain't the furst toime you've been arristed fur bein' droonk.

Prisoner—It's injoostice yez do me, y'r anner.

Magistrate—Moind phwat ye say! Oi 've seen your face scores av toimes; an' lately, too.

Prisoner—Plaze, y'r anner, Oi'm the new bartinder at Mickey Doolan's.—Puck.

It was Too Great.

"I'll not stand your abuse any longer, sir," thundered an irate judge, who had been violently criticised in his rulings by a junior counsel. "You are fined fifty dollars for contempt of court."

"If you want to fine me for it," was the attorney's reply, "fifty dollars won't come anywhere near covering it. —Town Topics.

Where Prejudice Lay.

An old negro being on trial, his lawyer challenged a number of the jury who, his client said, had a prejudice against him.

"Are there any more jurymen who have a prejudice against you?" inquired the lawyer. "No, sah, de jury am all right, but I want to challenge de judge."—The Green Bag.

His Duties and Hers.

Brooks—So you're married at last, Newton, my boy. Well, how do you and your wife get along? Does she lay down the law?

Newton—Yes, but I have to lay down the carpets.—Town Topics.

Hardly What He Wanted.

"Do you like it?

"Like it, Harry? Why, it's the finest engagement ring I ever wore."—Forget-Me-Not.

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