Miscellaneous.

A Quaker Jumping a Ditch.

Hezekiah Broadbrim was a fat Quaker in the State of New Jersey, who sold molasses, cod-fish, China, earthenware, cloths, and all sorts of liquors. We like the Quakers, in deed, as well as in name; but Hezekiah was a Hickory Quaker. He was somewhat of an old bachelor—and had a sister who was somewhat of an old maid. But she was the best creature alive; straight as a candle, blooming as a rose, and smiling as charity. Her name was Dorcas.

Hezekiah and Dorcas walked out one Sunday afternoon, in the blooming month of May, to breathe the fresh air, and view the meadows. The walking was smooth and delightful, with no manner of obstructions, except here and there a ditch full of water, spanned by a few bridges, and too wide for any man of ordinary jumping capacity to cross at a single bound. But Hezekiah valued himself, as fat people commonly do, on his agility—and instead of walking a few additional rods for the sake of a bridge, must needs leap every ditch he came to.

"Thee'd better not try that Hezekiah," said his kind and considerate sister.

"Never thee mind, Dorcas," returned Hezekiah—there's no danger, I've jumped many a bigger ditch when I wasn't half my present size."

"All that's very likely. But recollect thee's grown exceedingly pussy since thee was a young man."

"Pussy! Well if I have that's *no* reason why I should not be as agile as before, I tell thee Dorcas I can jump this ditch without so much as touching a finger."

"Aye, but the'll touch thy feet to the bottom."

"Thee's but a woman, Dorcas, and thy fears magnify this ditch even to a river. Now stand thee aside, that I may have a full sweep according to my abilities."

"Nay, brother Hezekiah, thee'd better not. The ditch is wide, and the bottom muddy: and thee'll assuredly spoil thy Sunday clothes, if no worse."

"A fudge for thy fears, girl; thee shall not stay me a jot. Nay do not hold me; for I'm resolved to jump this ditch, if it were merely to convince thee of my agility."

Accordingly Hezekiah went back a few yards, in order that he might have a fair run, and that the impulse thereof might carry him over. Having retreated far enough, he came forward with a momentum proportioned to his weight and velocity—and found himself in the ditch. The water splashed around on all sides, and bespattered the Sunday clothes of Dorcas, who could not, with all her Quaker sobriety and kind feeling, help bursting into a loud laugh. There was Hezekiah showing his agility, and floundering in the mud like a whale. The water was not so deep as to be dangerous—and the scene was too irresistibly comic for even a saint to abstain from laughing, though on the Lord's day.

At length when her risibility would allow her the power of speech, Dorcas kindly held out her hand and said—"Come hither Hezekiah, and I'll help thee out."

"Well! well!" returned the floundered in a tone of vexation—"Thee does well Dorcas, to stand there and laugh at me—as though it were mere sport, to stick in the mud and water up to my very middle."

"Nay, nay, Hezekiah, thee has shown thy agility so marvelously, that I could not help being pleased for the life of me—and I now take shame to myself for having opposed thee so strenuously, or for having a single moment doubted thy capacity for jumping. But if thee's satisfied with thy exploit, and is ready to come forth, I'll lend thee a hand to help thee out."

Thus saying, Dorcas drew dear to the edge of the ditch—but Hezekiah having got himself in by his own unaided power—declared he would get himself out in the same way. But the mud was deep and adhesive, and as he got one foot out, he got the other in—and thus he continued to labor and plunge, till he was full satisfied his own ability was better calculated to keep him in, than to help him out of the ditch. He grew wroth and used hard words—and so far forgot the plain language that he exclaimed—"by——."

"Don't thee swear, brother Hezekiah," interrupted Dorcas.

"Swear!" roared Hezekiah, "thee'd swear too if thee was in here."

"Swear not at all, Hezekiah, but even lend me thy hand, and I'll use my ability to pull thee out, according to the Scripture which saith, "If thine ox or thine ass shall fall into a ditch on the Sabbath day—"

"Now sister thee is too bad. Verily thee would not make me so heavy as the former animal; nor so stupid as the latter."

"As to thy weight, returned Dorcas, thee must be pretty well satisfied by this time—as for thy stupidity, it was indeed unsisterly to liken thee to the long eared animal. But if thee is satisfied on those points, and will forthwith reach me thine hand, I'll do as much as in me lieth to bring thee safe to land."

Hezekiah was pretty well convinced by this time that his own ability would never fetch him out, wherefore, humbly reaching his hand to Dorcas, he said—"Verily, sister, I will accept thy aid in as much as my own ability doth greatly deceive me."

Dorcas kindly lent him assistance, and by pulling vigorously, Hezekiah at length came to land. Shaking off the mud and water like a spaniel, he returned home; but charged his sister, by the way, never to mention how he came to his catastrophe. Dorcas promised, of course; and as she was a girl of truth and kind feelings, she was as good as her word. But once or twice, when they were in company with sundry other Quakers, discoursing soberly about matters and things, Dorcas looked archly at another girl, and merely said, "Did I ever tell thee, Rachel, how brother Hezekiah one Sunday—"

Hezekiah turned an embarrassed and imploring look towards her, and she said, "Nay nay, Hezekiah, I'm not going to tell—merely to ask if ever I told how thee showed thy agility one Sunday and jumped into the middle of a ditch."

Human Labor.

In the history of the world there is nothing more startlingly melancholy, and to a sober mind, more incomprehensible, than the degradation which has accompanied labor. The man who has taken up the chain of God's creation where he left it, and sought to make the artificial a continuation of the natural world, has ever been despised. The greatest nation of antiquity, Rome, pronounced labor infamous. The highest philosopher of the most refined of the Grecian States, Socrates, considered the study of philosophy and the practice of mechanical labor inconsistent. Work and slavery—not constructive slavery but actual slavery, with its chains and crucifixions, went together. The mechanic was bought sold, and murdered, at his master's pleasure. The annals of Rome tell of the degradation and punishment of a Senator for dishonoring the dignity of the order by holding an interest in a manufacturing establishment, so absolute and damning was the perversson of opinion regarding that labor by which man is enabled to live. But now after a long night of suffering and shame, labor has the dawn of its day. It begins to act and live with dignity and profit. It displays its symbolic designs and actual means with honor and pride. A triumph of production, as glorious as the old one of destruction is infamous, is now seen approved and applauded. Those arts which temper heat and cold, which shelter and protect society, and render liberty practical, are illustrated in a long, curious, moving array, to the admiring eyes of great communities. The tribute of beauty is given to him who wields his gallant arm to create, not to destroy. This single truth established, that labor is honorable, and the basis of sound ethical and political science is already secured.

Force of Imagination.

A Lucchese peasant shooting sparrows, saw his dog attacked by a strange and ferocious mastiff. He tried to separate the animals, and received a bite from his own dog which immediately ran off through the fields. The wound was healed in a few days, but the dog was not to be found; and the peasant after some time began to feel symptoms of nervous agitation. He conceived that the dog, from his disappearing, was mad and he began to feel symptoms of hydrophobia. They grew hourly more violent; he had all the evidences of a most violent distemper. As he was laying, with the door open, to let in the last air that he was to breathe he heard his dog bark. The animal run up to the bedside, licked his hand, and frolicked about the room. It was clear that he at least was in perfect health.—The peasant's mind was relieved at the instant: he got up with renewed strength and dressed himself, plunged his head into a basin of water and thus refreshed walked into the room to his astonished family. The statement is made in a memoir by Professor Barbantiti; it is not improbable that many attacks of a disease so strongly dependent on the imagination might be curred by ascertaining the state of the animal by which the bite was given.

"Appearances are Deceitful."—Under this caption somebody discourses thus; "It is no sign because a man eats bull-frogs, that he can jump a ten rail fence, nor because he dines on snails occasionally, that he should travel slow."

Advance of Intelligence.—Such is the progress of knowledge, that even the fish on the banks of Newfoundland won't bite the hooks as they used to did.

That's the *point* they say while taking the bait and avoiding the barb.

The Parent who punishes his children for doing evil, while he sets them a bad example, is like the rider who continually spurs his horse forward, while he holds him back by the reins.

London Atmosphere.—Punch says that Professor Howard, in analysing the climate of London, took some fog home in a basin, and found it to contain nine parts smoke to one part porter!

An Old Lady once remarked that the only healthy corset for a waist, is a gentleman's arm. She spoke from experience.

Superscription to a Letter.—There is a letter in the Portland Post-Office, directed "To the pastor of the Church of God in Portland."

Manner is something with every body, and everything with some.