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A Queer Old Shoe,

BY THE YOUNG 'UN.

It's an easy thing to be mistaken.—Old Saw

Some dozen years or more ago, I was journeying in Western New York State. I halted at a well known and popular hotel, kept by a worthy landlord, whose chief fault consisted in his occasional irritability—a poor qualification, by the way, for a landlord—but, in the present instance, the affliction could not be helped.

I used to get mad mighty easy,' he said to me one evening, as we sat enjoying our segars, after a busy day with him. 'I used to get mad, and tip the gentry a jostle; but I've grown wiser with age.'

'We live to learn,' I replied.

'Exactly, you're right, sir. I never had a quarrel with one of my guests since the occurrence—it was mighty nigh six years since—I mean the 'old shoe affair,' continued my host, thoughtfully puffing at the recollection of the incident.

'The old shoe?' I queried. 'What was that pray?'

'Did you ever hear of that joke?'

'Never.'

'Haven't been in these parts of late, I reckon, 'away up?'

'Not latterly.'

'Well then, I'll tell you all about it; it was a funny scene.

'You see—as I remarked at first—I am a native of Vermont, and used to be. But, about five years ago, I became almost tired of the humdrum—a trifle I mean, which might tend to kill time and make me die sooner. Besides, I could make a good deal more money out here, and so I sold out, and came West.

'Having made a small fortune, and should not like to lose it, I concluded to open a house of entertainment for the benefit of the weary traveller. Having been settled in this village some time, and having got my business under way, I began to look around me for some means of attracting custom to my house. Now, I knew that the best way to get a run of custom was to have a good table, and to be attentive to the wants of my guests. But I knew that many others would do the same thing, and I must have something more than that to attract the attention of the public. I was about to call in the assistance of a friend, when a bright idea struck me, and I determined to do the thing myself.

'I had a sign painted, and hung it out, and then waited for the result.

'It was not long coming. The sign took, and I had more than I could do. I should have engaged help, but I was afraid that I should not be able to keep it when my business should fall off, which I knew it must do in a few weeks. So I kept up the high pressure system myself. It was about a month after I had opened my house, when the following occurrence took place. It was about 11 o'clock at night, and I was just closing the house for the night, when a traveller rode up to the door, and asked for accommodations for himself and horse. I told him that I could accommodate him, and he dismounted. I ushered him into the bar-room, and called up the boy.

'"Lead up Dobbin," said the traveller.

'"Yes, sah. The gentleman dat has Dobbin?"

'"He's the minister here, John. Open the room and light a fire in the grate."

'The servant went off, and in three minutes returned.

'After the clock had struck eight, the following conversation took place between the traveller and myself.

'"Landlord, I suppose you have no objection to my smoking a cigar?"

'"Not the least in the world, sir."

'"Have you any good ones?"

'"Yes, sir, I have a few of the best."

'"Then bring me a couple, and a glass of brandy and water."

'I brought the articles, and placed them on the table. He lighted a cigar, and then asked me to sit down and have a glass with him. I complied with his request, and we sat and smoked and drank for some time in silence. At length he broke the silence by saying:

'"Landlord, you have a very pretty place here."

'"Yes, sir, I think it is a very pretty place."

'"You have a very pretty sign, too."

'"Yes, sir, I think it is a very pretty sign."

'"Have you any pictures?"

'"Yes, sir, I have a few."

'"Then bring me a light, and I will look at them