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THE BUTLER CITIZEN.

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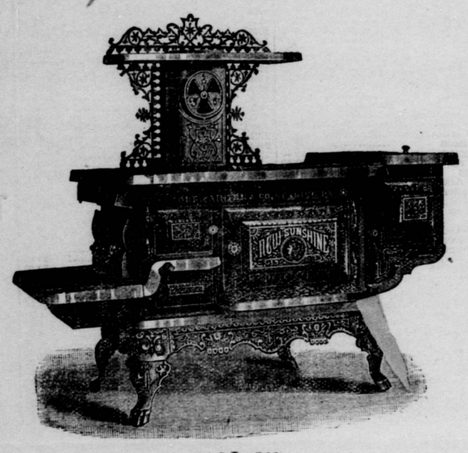

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MY NAME is Ethel Cox.

I'm not a boy—don't be too smart and say: "Of course, I know that—Ethel is a girl's name"—for I am not a girl, either.

What am I? Well, listen, and find out. Nearly a year ago a lady and gentleman had left their country home to winter in New York. One afternoon as the lady was sitting alone in her room word was brought to her that Miss Ethel Cox wanted to see her.

"Miss Ethel Cox!" said the lady, "Is she waiting in the parlor?"

"No, ma'am," was the answer, "it was a telephone message. Miss Ethel Cox wants you to call on her at once."

When the boy went away the lady sat and thought. She did not know any person named Ethel Cox, and being of a jealous turn of mind, she concluded it was some female person of her husband's acquaintance who had had the temerity to telephone for him. When somewhat later her husband came in she said never a word about Miss Ethel Cox, although she was boiling over with remarks; she bided her time until he was going to bed and had his boots off, then quite sweetly she told him of the lady who was wanting to see him immediately.

The gentleman protested that he knew no person named Ethel Cox, but despite his most eloquent disclaimers his wife went to her bed distant and skeptical.

Next morning came a letter from the country home telling the news that a heifer calf had been born the preceding day. The lady immediately hurried off home, for the cow was an especial favorite of hers and she wanted to see that it had been properly cared for. When she reached home she began to scold because she had not been told about the calf sooner—and her sister, who was an Englishwoman and who was caring for the house in the lady's absence, told her that she had sent her word by telephone and had been surprised that she had not arrived the day before. Then it all came out. The sister had telephoned about a heifer calf, and the operator, unaccustomed to the English accent, had mistaken "heffer kawf" for "Ethel Cox."

When it all came out it was too good a joke against the lady to be suppressed, so the calf was named Ethel Cox, and when I tell you that that is my name you will know just what I am—neither a boy nor a girl, but just a heifer calf.

What are you laughing about? Does the idea of a calf writing a story strike you as funny? You must be very inexperienced, then, for I've heard my master say that any donkey could write better stuff than a critic, and if he thinks that a donkey who wastes half his time wagging his ears and making heathenish noises has more intellect than a critic, why shouldn't a calf have more intellect than either, or both? I don't do a thing all day but chew my cud and think. I think fearfully. From what my master says a critic never does, and my master ought to know, for he says they are always trying to sit on him.

CURIOUS TREATMENT FOR A REAL MOTHER.

I wonder what kind of an animal a critic is! It must be big or else my master, who is quite a tall gentleman, wouldn't mind its sitting on him.

Before my horns grew, when I was quite a silly little thing, I used to fancy that a critic was a big dog who had puppies—like our Snoozer—for she sits on all the other dogs the moment they go near the barn where her puppies are—but since I have grown older and listened more carefully to the conversation of cultivated people, I have learnt that a critic is something much bigger and crosser than our Snoozer. A foolish thing like Snoozer couldn't say things that my mistress would mind and cry over; if she had even tried to, my mistress would just have whipped her and had her chained up in the barn for her impudence. Still finding out that Snoozer was not a critic didn't help me to learn who a critic was.

I asked Beauty one day—Beauty is a cow who also belongs to my mistress, and who has the foolishness to pretend that she is my real mother. As if I believed her! First of all she is a very silly cow and has no ideas whatever; and second of all, if she was really my mother she would give me her nice rich milk when I'm thirsty, instead of kicking at me, and saving it all for Patrick—who is a man, not a calf, and who can't possibly want milk—while I want it so badly that I have to steal it from a friendly neighbor's cow, whenever she is tethered near enough.

As I said, I asked Beauty who a critic was; her answer was just what I might have expected.

"My dear Ethel," she said, "I don't know, or care any thing about a critic. I have all I can do to attend to my own business. If I wasted my days wondering about a critic I shouldn't have time to eat grass, then I should fall off in my milk, and biff—Crisfield would be poking me in the ribs to see how fat I was, and driving me off to make beef of me just as he did to Dean's Sadie, who was the belle of Westchester County in her day. Don't bother your head about a critic, my child; gambol round and get strong until you go into the milk business yourself, and then stick to it, my dear, stick to it."

I strolled contemptuously away from her, but the indignant reflections I might have indulged in were cut short, for at that moment I saw my master and mistress coming out of the garden gate toward me.

I like my people very much. They are always very kind to me. My mistress used to feed me with her own hands when I was small, and take me up and down the yard with a rope, and give me dainty bits of grass—and take me out on the lawn sunny days, when Patrick—who I should have told you is my groom—used to want to keep me cooped up in the stable.

My master is a very nice person, too, but I don't see so much of him. He's a painting man, so I heard Patrick tell a friend. I don't quite know what that is, and Patrick had some difficulty in explaining it to his friend, but anyhow he does something that keeps him sitting all day in front of a board while my mistress and I stay the other side of the brook, and he looks at us. I got over one day when he had gone to speak to Beauty and looked to see what he was doing, but all I saw on the board was a little cow's head something like Beauty's, and a little lady's head something like my mistress,' and before I could find out more my master had chased me away.

My master generally stays at this board till afternoon, then he says he has worked enough, and comes over to my mistress, and they sit together under the willow and pat me and tell me how pretty I am; you can't think how happy we all are.

At times they get a little more absorbed with each other than I think quite polite. I spoke to James (the horse) about it—he says they are the most affectionate couple he has ever seen—that half the time, when he takes them out, he has to do all the driving himself, for they will get so interested in each other that if he didn't turn round sharp and bring them home they would drive on forever. He told me that at first he wanted to leave—for he had always lived in high families, and it is considered so unfashionable for married people to like one another—but that after awhile he found them pleasant people and the stable comfortable and the oats good and plentiful, so he decided to put up with them.

When he told me this I decided I could also afford to put up with their want of manners, and indeed I suppose that it would be hard to better oneself in a small country town, for the time I ran away to the house over the hill I found the barn so draughty and dirty, and the hay so inferior to my own, that I was glad when Patrick came for me and took me home.

But pardon me for digressing. As I was saying, my master and mistress came over as usual and sat down by the brook; after giving me a little attention they began to talk, and strangely enough their conversation chimed in with my own thoughts.

"Don't be so cast down, darling," said my mistress, "they'll understand you and acknowledge you some time. I wouldn't be worried by any thing a critic said."

"No!" said my master. "And yet you cried like any thing this morning after you heard a critic's remarks—and your eyes are red yet."

"Well, I can't help being a little disappointed. I know that one day you will be appreciated, and the world will see you with my eyes, and every time your work comes before the public I say to myself: 'Perhaps this is the time!' When I find that we have yet a little longer to wait, it pains me, and being only a woman, I cry—not because we have to wait, but because not a critic understands what you have been aiming at, and appreciates the endeavor, even if the achievement was a failure."

"That's where it hurts," said my master, gravely. "I labor for months to put the best that is in me into my work, and when it comes before the public, this that has taken me so long to produce is dismissed with a few curt, unthinking remarks, and except for the harvest of abuse I have reaped, I have gained nothing by my long years of earnest, honest work—nothing but a dastardly attack like that which made you weep this morning: 'It is said that the unfortunate public is about to have another picture inflicted upon it from the incompetent brush of Mr. —— and so on.' Ah, wifie, I am no nearer the goal than I was ten years ago."

"Nonsense—you are nearer—much nearer. The fact that you are of sufficient importance to be abused in advance ought to tell you that; and then, husband dearest, consider that you are still a very young man. Suppose that you had already made lots of fame and lots of money, you might be inclined to idle and enjoy life; and, instead, these slights which are hard to bear have proved very beneficial to us; haven't they spurred you on to do this last work, which I prophesy will turn the tables for us; but even if we have one more set-back, what does it matter? You improve all the time, and I have such an ambition for you, such a determination that you shall gain the very highest pinnacle of fame, that I don't care how long they keep nagging you so long as it spurs you on to greater endeavor."

"That sounds very fine," said my master, sighing, "but in the meantime, how do we live?"

"Now, don't talk about money and bread and butter; those departments belong to me. We can never be poor as long as we have each other's love, and even if we have to give up our pretty home and go to smaller and poorer quarters we will be happy. Indeed, I think I could make them so much nicer than our present ones that they would inspire you more than these have ever done. Nothing can hurt us while you love me and I love you. All you have to do is to love me."

May be I ought to have walked away at this, but I wasn't going to just when things were getting interesting, so I watched them, and under the shadow of the big willow saw my master embrace my mistress.

"I will love you always," I heard him say, "as long as there is a critic left to abuse me."

"Don't," she cried, "don't make our love the price of our ambition. You couldn't find a critic who would want to work us such harm."

Then they went away, and I stood wondering and wishing that I knew what a critic was like, that I might tell it how sad it made my dear mistress, and ask it not to; and if it persisted after that that I might show it what a calf could do towards settling a person's troubles.

THEN THEY WENT AWAY AND I STOOD WONDERING.

For several days after this my master and mistress seemed very uneasy and restless—they would be always searching the papers, bringing them out under the willow to read, and hardly noticing me.

One morning Patrick was quite late in fetching us in to breakfast, and Beauty had not been milked, and we were both beginning to let them know at the house that we didn't approve of their ways, when out came my master and mistress and stood looking down the road. In a few moments there was a great cloud of dust and up came James in a lather with Patrick astride him carrying a great bundle of papers. My master seized them and hurried over to the willow; then began to open them nervously and search through them. My mistress stood looking over his shoulder. Suddenly they both gave a great cry and fell into each other's arms.

"At last! At last!" my mistress cried, "they have acknowledged you at last!"

"Yes," said my master; "but I wonder how much of my success is due to the lovely face I copied?"

"The two lovely faces," laughed my mistress, blowing a kiss to me.

My master smiled, and twirled his mustache, and looked so happy that I wanted to know what it all meant, and trotted up to them to find out, when Patrick must needs come up and chuck me off to breakfast. I was very mad, for I hated not to know what it was all about.

After that morning things changed a little. My master was never at home any more. The talks under the willow were over, and I only saw him in the early morning when he would come out with a high hat and gloves on and pat me in absent-minded way, and say to my mistress:

"You don't mind my going to town to-day, do you, darling. Now that things are beginning to look brighter for us I ought to go round amongst the boys a little."

My mistress used to smile and say she liked him to go, but I noticed that after he had said the same thing every morning for about six weeks, my mistress smiled less and seemed to be less cheerful when she told him she liked to have him go.

Quite a wet spell came after this. I saw nothing at all of my mistress, but I used to see my master driving away with James and Patrick as usual. It worried me to know what was the matter. James could not tell me any thing, and none of the dogs came to the barn, so I absolutely knew nothing. I could not stand it, and set to work to call my mistress with all my might the first morning that it was fine enough for her to get out.

Some hours passed—I kept on calling, but nobody came. At last Patrick put his head over the fence.

"That calf beats all!" was all he said, and disappeared.

A few moments later out came my mistress. Her eyes were red; she had evidently been crying. She came up to me and I was so sorry to see her sad that I licked her hand and tried to comfort her. At this she broke down completely, and laying her head on my neck began to cry.

"Oh, Ethel, Ethel!" she said, "he doesn't love us any more! He isn't happy with us any more! He is restless and wretched until he can get away from us. Now that he has nothing but praise from everybody and there isn't a critic left to abuse him he has no use for us! When I longed for a critic to find out his worth I little thought I was longing for the wrecking of my own happiness!"

She seemed so unhappy that I began to cry, too, for sympathy.

"Mistress," I said, "just show me what a critic is like and you shan't have to cry any more; I will take care of you."

Before she could reply Patrick came through the gate.

"Well, he do bawl!" he said. "I guess I'd better change his food."

"Is any thing the matter with her?" asked my mistress, starting up.

"I dunno," Patrick replied; "he's been bawling that way all mornin'. Tain't for the want of food; he's fat enough. Mebbe he's lonesome. A man's never done foolin' with a calf that's been reared by wimmin."

"Poor little thing, may be she misses her master," said my mistress.

"Humph!" said Patrick. "He's a lad, he is! If he keeps up that bawling I'll give him some condition powder and have done with him."

My mistress turned away, not heeding my indignant protest, and I was left to my fate.

After she had gone in I was very much troubled. I hated to see my dear, good, kind mistress unhappy, and I wanted to help her, but how could I when all her trouble came from a critic, and I didn't even know what a critic was like.

I asked the chickens.

They couldn't tell me.

I asked the neighbor's cow: she had never heard of such a thing.

I asked James. He said he supposed it must be a dealer in poor oats, for that was the only thing he could think of which could possibly make a person cry.

I asked the dogs.

The puppies giggled, but my mistress' pet dog, Sport, a very arrogant Cocker Spaniel, who thinks himself clever, paused a moment to throw an answer at me over his shoulder; he was too superior to waste much time on me, and this is what he said:

"A critic is the only person who can make my mistress cry."

"But—" I asked, "what is he like?"

Sport gave an angry bark.

"I have told you all you need to know," he said; "if you are not smart enough to think the rest out for yourself, I am sorry I wasted my breath over you."

Sport walked into the house, and I recommenced on my cud, while I thought.

At last it was all as clear as daylight to me. A critic was the only person who could make my mistress cry, so if I ever saw any one make my mistress cry I might be sure it was a critic, and all I had to do was to horn him, and trample him to pieces, and then my dear mistress would never cry again.

I jumped and began to practice with my new horns on the willow tree to see if they would dent it; they didn't seem to hurt it much, but I resolved to use them every day so that I would be quite ready for a critic when it came.

Time passed on. I never saw my master, and there was no sitting under the brook, no tender embraces under the shadow of the trees. My mistress came every now and then, but she had grown silent and sad and hardly ever petted me.

One afternoon the gate opened. I looked up hoping to see both my friends, but it was only my mistress and a little dark man with whiskers. They came over beside me and sat down under the willow.

"It is a shame," he was saying, "for you to be left here alone day after day like this."

"No," she answered, "you find me a little dull, I suppose, because I have been so long accustomed to have him with me that I don't quite understand how to do without him yet—but I shall learn," and she gave a sigh that went right to my heart.

"If I had such a home and such a wife you wouldn't catch me leaving them," he said.

"Oh yes," she answered, with a sort of feeble imitation of her old merry laugh, "if you had ever such a nice home you would find its hold on you very slight when art called you from it."

"Art doesn't often call so loudly nowadays."

"What do you mean?"

"The call of pleasure is often disguised under the call of art."

My mistress turned on him with angry eyes.

"Do you mean to hint that my husband leaves me for his own enjoyment—or for any other reason than the furthering of his work?"

"Don't let's talk personalities," said the little man with the whiskers.

"But we must. You mean something personal."

"Indeed you are mistaken—I was speaking generally—with so many husbands the call of art comes in the shape of golden hair, a girlish figure, and a pretty foot, and I was merely mentioning the fact."

My mistress sprang to her feet.

"You are a bad man," she said. "Go—I never want to speak to you again!"

With a few hurried steps she reached the garden gate, and had passed in out of sight and slammed the gate behind her.

The little man with the whiskers stood watching her, gave a short laugh, and walked away down the road.

I stood there fuming; I hated him without knowing why. I was quite sure he had no business under the willow with my mistress—for he kept trying to sit as close to her as my master does, and she was all the time edging away from him and was not a bit comfortable. He looked at her in such a cross way, too—not a bit gently, as my master does, but so fiercely that if I had been her I should have been afraid, and horned him first on the chance that he was going to attack me.

As I watched him I thought he must be a critic, and I kept close at hand in case he was; but he did not make my mistress cry, so I did not dare to interfere; but I wished he had, I was so near him.

To be Concluded Next Week.

He Appreciated Courtesy.

Mr. Kulpepper, an epicurean smoker, was traveling on a railway with a passenger from Berlin who was smoking a horrid cigar. As all hints and signs proved unavailing, Mr. Kulpepper had recourse to an often tried experiment. Rising from his seat, he politely said:

"Will you allow me to open the window?"

At the same time he "quite accidentally" brushed against the hand of his fellow-passenger, causing him to drop his cigar. Mr. Kulpepper had the additional misfortune to step on it and said, in alarm:

"Oh! I beg a thousand pardons. Allow me to offer you one of mine. They are not half bad."

"With your kind permission," answered the Berliner, quite pleased. He took three cigars out of the case presented to him and put them into his pocket, saying:

"These are a first-rate brand. I'll smoke 'em on Sundays."

And with that he proceeded to light another one of his own.—Neueste Nachrichten.

As Natural as Life.

"How many cards did you say?" said Postmaster Shattuck as a gentleman asked him for some postal pasteboards, yesterday.

"Give me three," said the inquirer, as he hastily looked at his hand.

Another gentleman just behind, who was waiting, here "chipped in" with the remark that he "would take five." The number was promptly shuffled out to him.

Then as the gentlemen stood there looking at each other, a funny thought seemed to strike them simultaneously, and they smiled, bunched their hands, and quietly separated.—Titusville Herald.

Consequential Damages.

"That was a terrible accident on the New York Central yesterday."

Guest—There was nothing terrible about it. The train ran off the track, but nobody was seriously hurt.

Waiter—Nobody seriously hurt! I guess you didn't know that my wife's mother, who was going to leave to-day, got scared when she read about the accident and changed her mind.—Texas Siftings.

A GOOD POKER HAND.

—Texas Siftings.

His Proud Soul Revolted.

"Yes, I have plenty of cold victuals," said the lady, "but I will give you a nice hot breakfast if you will fill this coal-box and sweep the snow off the sidewalks."

"I can't accept it on those terms, mum," replied the tourist, as he turned away, a hot flush of insulted pride mounting to his dirty cheek. "I have Indian blood in my veins."—Chicago Tribune.

Nothing Very New.

Mrs. De Visite—Good afternoon, Miss Blank; is your mother at home?

Miss Blank—No. She has gone to Mrs. De Mugg's Progressive Conversation Party. By the way, what sort of a party is that, Mrs. De Visite?

Mrs. De Visite—It is one at which the conversation begins with art, science and literature, and progresses very rapidly to fashions, gossip and servants.—Good News.

Not Satisfied.

Rothschild in Paris once broke his arm. Prof. Dupuytrien was at once sent for, who bandaged the limb and attended the patient until he was cured. Rothschild thereupon remitted him a check for 20,000 francs. Dupuytrien then wrote to his patient, saying:

"I did not expect that Rothschild would only pay by installments."—Aus Medicinischen Kreisen.

Another Refutation.

Mr. Einstein—Aaron, it vas von lie in dis newsbaber dot marriage vos a failure.

Mr. Colinsky—I don'd know about dot, Isaac.

Mr. Einstein—Vell, uf marriage vos von failure, vy don'd I git somethings from my Rebecca, ain'd it?—Judge.

An Engagement.

Jackson—Do you know, Gibbs, that there is a possibility of war between the Jones and Brown families?

Gibbs—Is that so?

Jackson—Yes, already there is an engagement between Tom Jones and Sallie Brown.—Boston Herald.

The Incurable Kind.

Wideawake—There's one kind of hams you can not cure.

Butcher—What kind is it?

Wideawake—The stage variety.—Boston Herald.

A Plausible Reason.

Pennoyer—Why do so many of these prize-fighters call themselves the kid?

Prettiwit—I suppose it is because it's so hard to put a kid to sleep.—Jury.

In the Editorial Rooms.

Manager—Peter Jackson has challenged Sullivan. How shall I head it?

Editor—Oh! just put it in with the death notices.—Texas Siftings.

ABOUT STRAWBERRIES.

Topics Discussed at the Meeting of the Ohio Horticultural Society.

The "Ideal Strawberry Row" was one subject discussed. E. H. Cushman said the perfect strawberry row had not been discovered, but the nearest approach we could make to it was to contrive to have the plants use all the ground and not crowd each other. He planted in rows 3½ feet apart and set the plants every 18 inches. In July he let some runners start and let two plants set on each side of the plants set in the spring. All other runners were kept off. This style of row gave very fine fruit but cost considerable labor. He uses a tool contrived by his father for cutting runners. It was a hoe with the shank straightened so the hoe blade was in the line of the handle, like a spade. It was kept sharp and in the hands of a careful person did nicely. W. W. Farnsworth said it was easy to start an ideal row but quite another thing to keep it so. He planted in the spring, in rows 3½ feet apart, and kept the runners off as long as he dared. It was difficult to tell just when to allow them to grow, the object being to put it off as long as the season would permit and still get plants of sufficient maturity to bear fruit next season. If it turned dry after midsummer it was difficult to get a good stand, and if it was wet then too many plants started. He cut runners with sheep shears.

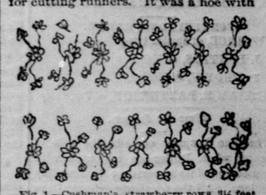

Fig. 1.—Cushman's strawberry rows, 3½ feet apart, plants 18 inches apart in row. Four plants allowed to root from each plant set in the spring, making a narrow quadruple row.

Henry Young planted in double rows, eighteen inches between the rows and eighteen inches between plants. He left a space of three feet between each pair of rows. This space was cultivated with a horse while a hand wheel-hoe was run in the narrow spaces. The picking was done in the wide spaces, and they admitted light and air to the plants, that, at the close of the season, pretty nearly filled the narrow space. This narrow space not being trampled, was much mellower than the wide one, and thus the roots had some mellow soil at all times of year. Planted in this way, a bed could be made to bear a full crop for three years. All runners were cut with shears.—Ohio Farmer.

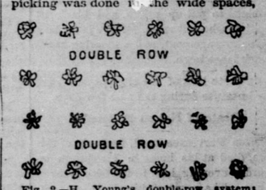

Fig. 2.—H. Young's double-row system; spaces 3 feet and 1½ feet alternately; plants 18 inches apart.

GRINDSTONE FRAME.

A Treadle Attachment That Obviates Many Difficulties.

The great objection to running a stone with a treadle is the "jerky" character of its revolutions, making it difficult to give a true bevel or a sharp edge to the tool that is being ground, to say nothing of the inconvenience to the operator. The arrangement shown in the illustration largely obviates these difficulties. A fly-wheel is attached at sufficient distance to one side to give freedom of movement when sharpening an ax or scythe. A wheel of this kind can frequently be found among the old iron of a hardware dealer, or can be purchased new for a small sum. It is important that it be of sufficient weight to give steadiness to the stone, and momentum to the revolutions, so that little effort need be expended on the treadle to keep the stone in motion when once well under way. The stone itself should, of course, be hung perfectly true.—American Agriculturist.

IMPROVED GRINDSTONE FRAME.

POULTRY PICKINGS.

A HEN will lay more eggs, keep in better health and her eggs will hatch better if she can have a good variety in her feed, both in soft food and grain.

GUINEAS are among the best foragers of all the fowls usually kept on the farm, and if allowed a good range will pick up the greater part of their own living.

WHILE an exclusive diet of grain is objectionable as a rule, yet at this season some grain must be supplied in order to keep the fowls in good, thrifty condition.

FULLY one-half of the failures with brooders are due to want of care in keeping warm. Brooders should be arranged so that there will be no corners into which the chicks can crowd.

IF the fowls appear droopy and lose appetite, it will often be a good plan to feed them linseed meal. A gill of the meal given to ten hens twice a week will aid in maintaining good health and thrift.

THE principal item with the bantam is its small size, and in breeding them everything should be sacrificed in order to have them as small as possible. If they get beyond a pound and a half in weight they are getting too heavy.

BONES make a good feed for poultry occasionally, and on many farms a good supply could be readily secured with a little care in picking them up and breaking or grinding them into such condition that the fowls can eat them.

He Must Be Paid.

"Those who dance must pay the fiddler," quoted Miss Bleecker.

"Yes," replied Miss South-Church, of Boston; "the individuals who indulge in terpsichorean exercises must defray the expenses incurred by the engagement of a violinist."—Judge.

Would Rather Dilute It Himself.

"Look here," said Jay Gould to his milkman; "there is water in this milk you are furnishing me."

"Yes, sir," replied the milkman; "I thought you preferred it that way. I read the newspapers, sir."—Judge.

A Counterfeit.

Hicks—I take my dinner now at Maynew's. You ought to try some of his English plum pudding.

Wicks—I have tried it, and all I've got to say is it's a confounded humbug; not the real thing at all. Why, I ate two plateful's of it t'other evening and then went home and slept like a baby. No indigestion, no bad dreams and no heavy weight in my stomach in the morning. It's a confounded humbug, I tell you.—Boston Transcript.

Carved by a Barber.

"How's this? What do you charge for a shave?"

"Ten cents."

"But I gave you a quarter."

"Yes, sir."

"And you handed back only ten cents."

"Yes, sir. I don't make a cent on the court-plaster, but I'll have to charge you just what it costs me."—Chicago