

QUEER IDEAS OF FUN.

SAVAGES WHO LAUGH ONLY WHEN SOME ONE IS HURT.

The Writings of a Victim Under Torture Send Them into a Frenzy of Merriment—Part of Punishments That Evoke Yells of Glee.

The laugh, which is now so closely associated with good humor and kindly feeling, originally implied nothing of the sort. It expressed almost the reverse. It was the cry of triumph over a fallen foe.

Such is its nature still among savages and barbarous peoples, and its unexpected manifestations are occasionally very startling. Dancing on the body of a prostrate enemy is to them hilarious business. The writhing of a victim under torture is the funniest thing imaginable. A new device for torment is a clever jest. The inflicting of a ghastly wound as some poor wretch runs the guntlet makes them yell with glee. The things that shock or horrify or disgust the civilized man are about the only things worth laughing at from a savage's point of view.

With the exception, therefore, of rough practical jokes, which may possibly wrinkle his stolid features with a momentary grin, the barbarian has no appreciation of civilized humor. He can't see where the fun comes in if no body is hurt.

This was curiously illustrated not long ago when a considerable number of Chinamen went to a New York theater to see a burlesque performance. When the American part of the audience laughed, the delegation from Chinatown sat with faces absolutely blank, but the moment any hint of brutality, tragedy or tears appeared on the stage their heavy features lighted and were wreathed in smiles. It was a strange thing to witness, but it was all in perfect keeping with the cruel instincts of their race.

Even the knowledge that he is himself to be the next victim does not spoil the fun of a cruel spectacle for a barbarian thoroughbred. Here is an instance:

A number of Siamese who had been engaged in a bloody revolt were captured and sentenced to military execution. A platoon of soldiers was drawn up with loaded muskets, before whom the doomed men were led out in squads of five or six to be shot, while those who were waiting their turn stood by, under guard, looking on.

When the first volley was fired, the victims, torn by the storm of bullets, leaped into the air with violent convulsions and fell dead. And this to the poor wretches who were about to go through the same experience seemed so fine a show and so exorcisingly funny that they were fairly convulsed with laughter.

Such is the humor of savages, and such doubtless were the beginnings of mirth the world over. Strange as it may seem, there are many hints of this barbarous origin in the fun of the most highly civilized. We no longer laugh at really tragic occurrences, it is true, for other and more humane emotions are too strongly excited.

But if we chance to see a ridiculous mishap which does not quite rise to the dignity of tragedy—an accident by which some one is greatly inconvenienced and annoyed without being seriously injured—the remnant of the savage breaks loose in us, and we laugh till the tears come.

Why else are we amused when we see a well-dressed man thrown sprawling in the mud or deluged with dirty water from an upper window or driven up a tree by a cross dog or an ugly bull? Why else do we so keenly enjoy the agony of a man who has accidentally pounded his finger nail, instead of the tack he was driving into the carpet, or laugh at the unfortunate who blindly steps on a stray barrel hoop which flips up and slaps him in the face? Instances might be multiplied without limit.

It is noticeable that children often laugh at things which do not amuse adults, but, on the contrary, shock and pain them. That is because the child's finer sensibilities are as yet imperfectly developed. He is still near the savage state. There is a very prevalent sentiment to the contrary, but this is the fact.

In proportion as men become truly civilized, however, their sense of humor becomes refined, and they revolt at any suggestion of brutality. Yet it is worthy of remark that the gentlest among us are frequently amused at a picture or a story representing things the actual occurrence of which would shock us greatly.—Boston Post.

Cabby's Rich Fare. "Princess street, sir?" said a cabby outside a Yorkshire street railway station to his fare. "Why, that's not half a minute's walk from here."

"Never mind, drive away," answered the gentleman. "But I can't charge you less than 18 pence, sir; that's the legal fare."

"All right, my good man, only start quickly, and I'll give you a couple of fares."

Cabby jumped upon the box with a beaming face, flicked up his horse and shouted jocosely to an imaginary wife: "Don't wait dinner if I'm late, Mary Ann! I'm taking the king of Klondike to 'is imperial habode!'"—London Telegraph.

The Insurance Man's Guess. "He is the stupidest man—he never opens his mouth without putting his foot in it," said the young girl of the clerk who had taken her to the natorium.

"Perhaps that is the only way he can make both ends meet on his small salary," remarked the insurance man.—Spokane Spokesman-Review.

The Desert of Sahara is as large as all that portion of the United States lying west of the Mississippi.

MICA MINES OF INDIA.

The Methods of Hundreds of Years Ago Still in Use.

The mica mines of India are in the interior of the country and very inaccessible. The Abruker mine, it is stated, produces the finest mica that has ever been mined, both for lamination and color. It has been sunk about 200 feet, following the pitch of the vein, and all this mica and refuse have been raised and carried away by the natives. No machinery of any kind except drill and hammer is used in their mining operations.

The refuse and the mica are placed in baskets each holding ten pounds, the baskets being passed up from hand to hand by women, who stand in a line on ladders. The contents of the baskets are deposited at the top, and the baskets are returned down the ladder in the same manner as they went up, but by another line of women. Water is taken out of the mines by means of jugs. It is supposed that this method of operation has been carried on for many hundreds of years, except that there is more care to protect the miners.

After the crude mica is taken from the mines it is first roughly trimmed and then sorted into different grades, according to sizes and quality. It is then taken to the mica workers, who split it up and scribe out the size for it to be cut into by the shearers, the cut pieces then being cleaned, weighed and packed ready for shipment. The mica is then transported to general warehouses in baskets on the backs of bullocks and in bullock carts. In this way it is carried hundreds of miles to shipping points at a speed of about ten miles a day.

The mica can be split down to .0003 of an inch in thickness. Being both fireproof and transparent, it is very useful for many purposes in the arts, besides being an excellent insulator.—Electrical World.

COLOR BLIND PAINTERS.

A London Oculist Asserts That There Are Such Artists.

To speak of a color blind artist sounds like joking, said a noted oculist; but, strange as it seems, there are several persons so affected who can nevertheless paint extremely well. Numbers of color blind people there are, of course, who draw perfectly in pencil, ink and crayons, but I myself know a scene painter attached to a provincial theater who, though "color blind," paints all his scenery, and has quite a local name, not only for his "interiors" and oak chambers, but even for landscapes.

I can tell you also of two London ladies who consulted me for color blindness who paint really beautiful pictures. One is the daughter of a late famous artist and was taught painting by her father. She is quite unable to distinguish red from green, but her colors are all labeled with the names, and she has been taught which to use for certain effects. Possibly her painting may seem to her eyes, as it were, drawing with a brush and "shading" with the colors.

The other is a lady artist of some celebrity, who has for years exhibited annually in London. The public is not aware that she is color blind. She painted the "Wedding Group" for a certain noble bridegroom a year or two ago and also several public men's portraits and one of an eminent physician fetched 600 guineas.

There is a gentleman residing at Kensington who, having years ago left the navy through finding his advancement hopelessly barred by his color blindness, is at present making several hundreds a year by his brush as an artist, designing most artistic and brightly colored picture posters for advertisement boardings.—London Answers.

Carved His Epitaph and Died.

"John Harmon died here from the bite of a rattlesnake."

This is an inscription on a beech tree standing on the knobs, in Monroe township, back of Jeffersonville. A date once followed the words, but it is now indistinct. There is a strange story connected with the inscription. An old resident relates it.

"Years ago, when that section of Indiana was little explored and when the heavy bush was the dwelling place of the wild turkey, deer and rattlesnake, John Harmon started to Charlestown to attend court. He was armed with an old-fashioned rifle. A rattler bit Harmon's leg. Harmon killed the reptile. Then he began to prepare for death. It was he who carved the words in lighter lines on the tree, with the request beneath, long since obliterated by the tree's growth, to bury him on the spot. A few days later Harmon's body was found. A grave was dug by the tree and there it can be seen today."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Excessive Precaution.

A southwest Georgia couple going to be married, the prospective husband said:

"Molly, the last time I was married I lost the ring 'fore I got to the parson's. But I'm shore of it this time."

"What is it, John?" she asked. "I've got it in my mouth," he said. "I'm shore of it now."

But when they stood before the preacher the latter asked:

"Where is the ring?"

The groom gulped—choked—stuttered, and finally exclaimed in despair:

"Fore de Lord, I done swallowed it!"—Atlanta Constitution.

The Feeder. Bandin—Killumkwick, the reading editor of The Asterisk, is a busy fellow. I saw him at the office today with a wastebasket beside him filled to the brim.

Tellow—Yes, confound him! But I'll bet I furnished the most of the material. He couldn't fill the basket if he didn't have the stuff to fill it, could he?—Bee-Hive Transcript.

FEATHERED BAROMETERS.

Sailors Warned by Them of a Coming Storm.

While a British brig was gliding smoothly along before a good breeze in the south Pacific a flock of small birds about the size, shape and color of parakeets settled down in the rigging and passed an hour or more of resting. The second mate was so anxious to find out the species to which the visiting strangers belonged that he tried to entrap a specimen, but the birds were too shy to be thus caught and too spry to be seized by the quick hands of the sailors. At the end of about an hour the birds took the brig's course and disappeared, but toward midnight they came back and passed the night in the maintop.

The next morning the birds flew off again, and when they returned at noon the sailors scattered some food about the decks. By this time the birds had become so tame that they hopped about the decks, picking up the crumbs. That afternoon an astonishing thing happened. The flock came flying swiftly toward the brig. Every bird seemed to be piping as if pursued by some little invisible enemy on wings, and they at once huddled down behind the deck-house. The superstitious sailors at once called the captain of the brig, who rubbed his eyes and looked at the barometer. A glance showed that something was wrong with the elements, and the brig was put in shape to outride a storm.

The storm came about 20 minutes after the birds had reached the vessel. For a few minutes the sky was like the waterless bottom of a lake—a vast arch of yellowish mud—and torrents of rain fell. Why it did not blow very hard no one knows, but on reaching port two days later the captain learned that a great tornado had swept across that part of the sea. The birds left the vessel on the morning after the storm and were not seen again.—Maryland Bulletin.

Ways and Means.

Home Seeker (inspecting a flat)—How in the world are people to live in such little cubby holes as these?

Agent—Easy enough, mum. All you need is folding beds and camp chairs and self-doubling up tables and a few things like that.

"Humph! I can hardly turn around in these rooms myself."

"I see, mum. It's too bad to be so afflicted, mum. You should take anti-fat."

The Syrians regarded the rose as an emblem of immortality, the Chinese planted it over graves, and in the Tyrol it is said to produce sleep. Rose leaves are sometimes thrown on the fire for good luck. In France and Italy it is believed that rosy cheeks will come to the lass that buries a drop of her blood under a rosebush.

Hot Business. "Fightin's hot business," said Willie as he read about the regiments. "First thing, they got peppered at by the enemy, an they get mustard on by their own government."—Harper's Bazar.

It takes 73,000 tons of paper to make the post cards used in England each year.

In Ptolemy's time any one who killed a cat was put to death.

ACTIVE SOLICITORS WANTED EVERYWHERE for "The Story of the Philippines" by Murat Halstead, commissioned by the Government as Official Historian to the War Department. The book was written in army camps at San Francisco, on the Pacific with General Merritt, in the hospitals at Honolulu, in Hong Kong, in the trenches at Manila, in the insurgent camps with Aguinaldo, on the deck of the Olympia with Dewey, and in the rear of battle at the fall of Manila. Bonanza for agents. Briefs of original pictures taken by government photographers on the spot. Large book. Low prices. Big profits. Freight paid. Credits given. Drop all trashy unofficial war books. Outfit free. Address, F. T. Barber, Sec'y, Star Insurance Bldg., Chicago.

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PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD.

Philadelphia & Erie Railroad Division. In effect Nov. 20, 1898. Trains leave Driftwood as follows:

EASTWARD 9:05 a. m.—Train 8, weekdays, for Sunbury, Wilkesbarre, Hazleton, Pottsville, Scranton, Harrisburg and the intermediate stations, arriving at Philadelphia 6:25 p. m.; New York, 9:30 p. m.; Baltimore, 9:30 p. m.; Washington, 7:15 p. m.; Pullman Parlor car from Williamsport to Philadelphia and passenger coaches from Kane to Philadelphia and Williamsport to Baltimore and Washington.

4:08 p. m.—Train 6, weekdays, for Harrisburg and intermediate stations, arriving at Philadelphia 4:30 a. m.; New York, 7:15 a. m.; Pullman Parlor car from Harrisburg to Philadelphia and New York. Philadelphia passengers can remain in sleeper undisturbed until 7:30 a. m.

10:12 p. m.—Train 4, daily for Sunbury, Harrisburg and intermediate stations, arriving at Philadelphia 6:52 a. m.; New York, 9:30 a. m. on week days and 10:25 a. m. on Sunday. Baltimore, 6:25 a. m.; Washington, 7:45 a. m. Pullman sleepers from Erie and Williamsport to Philadelphia and Williamsport to Philadelphia and Washington will be transferred into Washington sleeper at Williamsport. Passenger coaches from Erie to Philadelphia and Williamsport to Baltimore.

WESTWARD 4:38 a. m.—Train 9, weekdays, for Erie, Ridgeway, DuBois, Clermont and principal intermediate stations. 9:44 a. m.—Train 3, daily for Erie and intermediate points. 5:47 p. m.—Train 15, weekdays for Kane and intermediate stations.

THROUGH TRAINS FOR DRIFTWOOD FROM THE EAST AND SOUTH. TRAIN 9 leaves New York at 7:40 p. m.; Philadelphia 1:20 p. m.; Washington, 10:45 p. m.; Baltimore 11:50 p. m.; daily arriving at Driftwood at 9:44 a. m. Pullman sleeping cars from Phila. to Williamsport, and through passenger coaches from Philadelphia to Erie and Baltimore to Williamsport. On Sundays only Pullman sleeper Philadelphia to Williamsport.

TRAIN 15 leaves Philadelphia 9:30 a. m.; Washington, 7:50 a. m.; Baltimore, 8:50 a. m.; Wilkesbarre, 10:15 a. m.; weekdays, arriving at Driftwood at 5:47 p. m. with Pullman Parlor car from Philadelphia to Williamsport and passenger coach to Kane. TRAIN 3 leaves New York at 7:40 p. m.; Philadelphia, 1:20 p. m.; Washington, 10:45 p. m.; Baltimore, 11:50 p. m.; daily arriving at Driftwood at 9:44 a. m. Pullman sleeping cars from Phila. to Williamsport, and through passenger coaches from Philadelphia to Erie and Baltimore to Williamsport. On Sundays only Pullman sleeper Philadelphia to Williamsport.

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