

A WISE TOAD.

A knowing toad one summer's day
 Unto a fly was heard to say:
 "You're pretty sure to see me here
 Before this year is over."
 "But," said the fly, "it seems to me
 That you demolish some of me
 By passing in and out."
 And ground to dust without a doubt.
 "Oh," smiled the toad, "all things pass,
 I never am afraid of that."
 And the fly's end was soon at hand.
 To purchase here but few pass in.
 The toad's plain, if you but think:
 This merchant shunthrift printer's ink.

AN EVENING'S FUN.

It was an impromptu entertainment,
 which, we all know, is usually the most
 successful. It was just after the holi-
 days, and we had a house party of a
 dozen congenial spirits at the Hender-
 son's country house. It had been a gay
 week, and for this particular evening a
 long sleighride had been planned; driv-
 ing rain, all day, prevented this, how-
 ever, and imposed the necessity of some
 indoor amusement.

Why not have an old-fashioned even-
 ing of candy pulling and games? sug-
 gested some brilliant spirit—a proposi-
 tion we all hailed with acclamations of
 delight!

The coachman, dispatched to two or
 three of the nearest houses, brought an
 assortment of half a dozen confectioners,
 so a lively party soon crowded the laun-
 dry kitchen, where we had free scope for
 our candy. This part of our entertain-
 ment needs no description, for we all
 know that one candy pull is much like
 another.

But nine o'clock found us all adjourn-
 ed to the wide old hall, with its great
 fireplace and huge back log. This was
 always our favorite rallying ground.
 Being nearly all old friends, we were
 ripe for a regular romp.

"We must have the broomstick trick
 first," cried Alice Henderson, "and Har-
 old is dying to distinguish himself in it."

Harold shrugged his shoulders good
 naturedly.

"Alice, you are bent on manslaughter
 with that broomstick business," he pro-
 tested, but the others, who had never
 seen it, were clamorous, and Harold
 consented.

A broom was brought, one having an
 unusually strong handle. It was laid
 across two chairs which faced each
 other. On the back of one was balanced
 a pair of gloves. This arranged, Har-
 old, armed with a stout cane, very care-
 fully seated himself on the broomstick,
 facing the gloves. If you think this is
 an easy matter, try it! You will find
 judicious management very necessary.

Once balanced on the narrow resting
 place of the broomstick, the object is
 to knock the gloves off the chair back
 with the cane, while retaining one's
 balance. It is exceedingly simple to
 describe, but, ye gods, and little fishes!
 to accomplish it!—"Hoc opus, hic labor
 est!"

Harold soon succeeded, for he had
 grown expert by oft-repeated trials, and
 the others, therefore, were easily per-
 suaded to attempt it. But the involun-
 tary gyrations that the victim makes to
 retain his equilibrium, and the wild
 tumbles aside that result from the
 first efforts, are convulsively funny.
 We always expect to laugh ourselves
 sore over this, and we always do.

Harold made the next suggestion.
 "Come, Judith, you and Holt haven't
 eaten as much candy as the rest of us,
 so we'll put you to feeding each other
 with crackers."

Judith knew what this meant; but
 Holt had never seen the performance,
 and he professed his eagerness for an
 extra course. Alice disappeared to
 make preparations. She returned with
 a sheet over her arm, and behind her a
 smiling maid with a big bowl of cracker
 crumbs, two saucers and two spoons.

The sheet was spread on the floor—a
 necessary precaution—and the two mar-
 tials to the cause were invited to seat
 themselves, Turk fashion, upon it, fac-
 ing each other. This done, they were
 carefully blindfolded, and each was
 given a saucer of crumbs and a spoon.
 Then they began to feed each other.
 The ridiculous earnest expression of
 each face, coupled with the wide-open
 mouths, as each endeavored to insert a
 spoonful of crumbs therein, convulsed
 the lookers-on, and their gibes and
 raucous preparations, complicated matters
 further. A heaping spoonful struck
 against Judith's chin, and most of the
 contents went down the open neck of
 her dress. Her vaguely directed spoon
 encountered Mr. Holt's nose, and his
 brown beard was thickly powdered.

"This is on the order of a Barmecide
 feast," laughed Mr. Holt, at last, flour-
 ishing an empty saucer. "Miss Judith,
 are you satisfied with what you didn't
 get? Suppose we appoint some other
 victims now."

It was some time, however, before
 the company considered itself suffic-
 iently amused by this exhibition, and most
 of us were obliged to take a turn.

"Did you ever pick up potatoes with
 a teaspoon?" asked Miss Emmet, after
 a lull, while we took breath. "Not
 well, if you'll send for ten big potatoes,
 Alice, we'll try it. We can use these
 spoons, though after dinner coffee are
 more fun."

"If this sort of thing continues,"
 laughed Alice, leaving the hall, "we
 would better transplant the ladder here
 at once."

"Oh, bring two small baskets, also,"
 called Miss Emmet.

When the things appeared, Miss Em-
 met arranged the potatoes, which were
 of good size, in two lines of five each.

"Now, Ned," she said, "shall we run
 a race with this? We each take a
 basket and a coffee spoon, and we will
 can pick up the potatoes first in our re-
 spective lines. The one who does can
 impose a forfeit on the other."

"That sounds," observed Ned, "as
 easy as rolling off a log. I have your
 forfeit in mind, Miss Grace."

"Don't be too sure," laughed Grace
 Emmet.

The took spoons and baskets and
 stood ready for the word "Go!" But
 when Ned began he found the operation
 more complicated than he had imagin-
 ed. The potatoes wobbled and rolled
 around unconsciously.

"My stars! Miss Grace," he cried at
 last. "You don't mean to say that you
 have them in already?" as he mopped
 his perspiring brow, surveying his still
 empty basket and his five potatoes in
 different parts of the hall. Grace had
 reduced it to a science. Of course one
 was not allowed to push the potato
 against anything to steady it; but she
 rolled them sideways, and, holding her
 spoon in readiness, caught them as the
 impulse carried them upon the bowl of
 the spoon.

"Ha! ha! young lady! I see your lit-
 tle game," Ned exclaimed, going to
 work again. But at that moment
 Grace deposited her last potato in her
 basket and gayly cried out: "Mug-
 ging!"

"And now, by way of forfeit," she
 went on, judiciously, "I condemn you
 to allow me, in the sight of all this com-
 pany, to place your finger on your nose
 in such a way that you cannot leave
 this hall without removing it. Do you
 believe I can do it?"

"Ordinarily, no," returned Ned, in
 much dejection; "but after the potato
 episode I am not prepared to be dog-
 matic. I will only say to the unen-
 lightened mind it seems impossible."
 Nobody knew how Grace would ac-
 complish the feat, and we watched her
 with much curiosity.

"How many of you think I can do it?"
 she asked, laughing. "Affirmative, say;
 contrary minded, no. The noses have it.
 Well—"

She led Ned to the staircase and seat-
 ed him on the lowest step. She quickly
 slipped his arm through the railing,
 and bringing it round the novel post,
 placed his finger on his nose. There
 was a shout of laughter, as they saw it
 was obviously impossible for Ned to
 rise without removing his finger.
 "Beaten again," laughed Ned. "But
 in return for this, young woman, I pro-
 pose to hypnotize you so you can't stand
 alone."

"Oh, no," said Grace, shrinking back.
 "I can't be a subject of yours."
 "Try me," said Alice, good-naturedly,
 knowing her friend was really very sen-
 sitive about hypnotism. "Though I
 fancy I shall be a difficult subject."

"I think not," returned Ned, with his
 head on one side. "I shall do nicely.
 Indeed, I never failed yet."

He seated her and made mystic passes
 before her eyes.

"I don't feel a thing," she protested,
 at last, as one and another inquired
 with much solicitude how she felt.

"You shouldn't talk on the subject,"
 objected Ned. "However—" with a
 final grand flourish—"it is accomplish-
 ed! You cannot stand alone—try it!"

"Indeed I can," returned Alice, spring-
 ing up lightly. "Behold!"

"Yes, behold!" laughed Ned, with a
 low bow; "but you are not standing
 alone, for all of us are standing with
 you."

"Oh, you wretch! nothing but a mis-
 erable pun!" cried everybody, while
 Alice remarked that her good nature
 in releasing Grace from the situation
 had met with the usual reward of vir-
 tue in this world.

"Do you know, my friends," remark-
 ed one of the outsiders, "that it is
 eleven o'clock—time honest folks were
 in bed, and rogues a-jogging? You
 know there is to-morrow's grand smash-
 up in prospect."

"Oh, that's very early yet," pleaded
 Alice. "We must have the blind lan-
 cers, anyway. Did you never do it? It's
 great fun. Mamma, will you play for
 us? Choose your partners, gentlemen,
 for the lancers. No, we can't have two
 sets, because it's as much fun to look on
 as to do it; and in a trice Alice had
 unmarshalled a set on the floor."

"Now, out with your handkerchiefs!"
 she ordered. "Yes, you are all to be
 blindfolded, and dance that way." And
 amid much laughter she bound up their
 eyes.

Mr. Henderson struck up the open-
 ing bars, and directly they were all
 wildly making aimless courtesies, bal-
 ancing at imaginary partners, and trying
 to turn opposites—when they found
 them. All these amid the derisive
 shouts of the lookers-on, and their ur-
 gent entreaties to "keep up with the
 music."

Each figure involved them more hope-
 lessly than the last, as they grew more
 complicated. It was irresistibly ridi-
 culous to see profound courtesies made to
 another person's back or to empty space,
 or to see partners vaguely feeling for
 each other. The grand chain utterly
 demolished them; and when they drop-
 ped last, laughing and breathless, in-
 to their seats, we all concluded that
 past experience to the contrary, there
 was infinite amusement to be had out
 of a square dance.—Demorest's Maga-
 zine.

HIS AMBITION.

Just after the memorable three days
 of July, 18—, the floating population of
 Paris was much interested by the ar-
 rival in that city from his native pro-
 vince of Symphonien Bailleu.

The owner of this curious and not en-
 tirely euphonious patronymic was a
 young man of about twenty-five years,
 neither handsome nor ugly, fat nor lean
 —the type, in fact, that one daily en-
 counters on the boulevards and never looks
 at twice.

I need not add, of course, that such
 was not his own opinion; on the con-
 trary, he was deeply conscious of the
 consciousness of his own charms, and
 equally determined to profit by them for
 the attainment of the object of his am-
 bition—notoriety.

"Everything is in my favor," said he,
 "good looks, money and a determina-
 tion to succeed. All I want is a short
 cut to celebrity; a duel will give me
 that."

The next evening while he was treat-
 ing himself to a banquet at the Hotel
 de Ville, he was approached by a short,
 muscular individual, dressed in the
 latest mode, with a bristling mustache
 and a self-satisfied air, took his
 seat at an adjoining table.

The provincial, after a critical inspec-
 tion of the newcomer, rose from his
 chair, and, saluting him courteously,
 requested him to favor him with the
 address of his tailor.

The stranger glanced askance at his
 questioner.

"Why?" inquired he, curiously.

"Because I am struck, monsieur,"
 said Symphonien, "with the good taste
 of your costume. That green coat with
 silver buttons becomes you so admir-
 ably."

"You think so? Well, your wish can
 be easily gratified, for I chance to have
 a card of my tailor in my pocket. Be-
 hold it!"

"Thanks, monsieur. May I ask if
 you have also the address of your
 shoemaker in your pocket?"

"The same thing in my pocket, mon-
 sieur," the little man answered with
 great suavity, and tearing out a leaf
 from his notebook he wrote on it the
 required address and handed it to Bai-
 leu.

"Is there any more you desire to know,
 monsieur?"

"Only this—your latter's name, if I
 may be so bold."

"That, I regret to say, sir, I cannot
 afford to repeat. I have it at home,
 and to-morrow morning two of my
 friends will bring it to you if you will
 kindly oblige me with your address."

"With pleasure, monsieur," replied
 Symphonien; "here is my card."

"And here, monsieur, is mine,"
 Bailleu, as exchanging a polite bow
 with the stranger and paying for his
 bonavore, he strolled leisurely out and
 down the boulevard.

He drew the card from his pocket,
 approached a lighted window, and on
 the little square of pasteboard, in clear,
 sharp etching read: "Martial Roque."

"Roque!" said he, starting back and
 peering visibly, "the great duelist who
 never sees his man, but either spits
 him with a thrust impossible to parry
 or brings him down with a blow sent
 evenly between the eyes. Bon Dieu!
 What a mistake I've made, and for the
 sake of a little celebrity. I'll be cele-
 brated to-morrow, that is certain. But
 will it will do me if I'm not there to
 see it?"

A secluded spot on the Bois de Bou-
 logne—less frequented in those days
 than now—agreed upon at four o'clock
 in the afternoon, proposed and accepted.
 M. Roque's friends announced that their
 principal, having the choice of weapons,
 selected pistols, and, this formality
 over, left Symphonien to his meditations,
 none of the cheerfulness, as you can see.

While ruefully reflecting on whom he
 could apply to in his dilemma, he chance-
 d to pass from his pocket the two ad-
 dresses given him by Roque.

And without a second's delay he dis-
 patched a message to MM. Stamb and
 Sakosky, the fashionable tailor and boot-
 maker, of that epoch, requesting their
 immediate attendance at the hotel where
 he was stopping.

Thirty minutes later they were there,
 and as wise measure of conciliation,
 Symphonien was no fool, after all—he
 gave them an order considerably larger
 from their most extravagant customers,
 then, the necessary elegant meas-
 urements made, he amazed them still

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Chatham Sept. 5, 1894

more by demanding the amount of the bill, as he desired to settle it before-hand.

With one accord they protested against the need of so speedily a settlement; they had every confidence in monsieur's solvency, and were not in the slightest hurry!

"That may be," replied he, "but I am. I have a duel this afternoon with Martial Roque, and though I am no novice in such matters and have caught a swallow on the wing many and many a time, one cannot be sure with so dangerous an antagonist what may happen."

Stamb and Sakosky stared at each other aghast. Such an offer proceeding took the breath out of them.

They reflected on the chance—most unlikely of course, but still possible—of his proving himself the better shot of the two. Roque owed them a regular pot of money, and if he should chance to fall by Symphonien's bullet, who would pay their bills?

Stamb looked at Sakosky, Sakosky looked at Stamb. It was enough. They understood each other.

"Monsieur," said Stamb, "in a case like yours the choice of seconds is a matter of great importance. May I take the liberty of enquiring the names of those who act in your behalf?"

"I have none as yet," replied the young provincial. "I shall probably take the first two soldiers I meet anywhere, in short. I have no acquaintances in Paris to whom I can apply."

"Then, monsieur," said Stamb, "I may venture to make you a proposition. Whenever I have leisure moment I am generally to be found in some shooting gallery where our skillful marksmen congregate. Therefore, as you are unprovided with seconds, if you will condescend to accept my services and those of M. Sakosky—"

"Willingly, monsieur," interrupted Symphonien, who desired nothing better. "You anticipate my wish and save me an infinity of trouble."

Three hours later the two principals and their seconds, pursuant to the minute, arrived at the spot fixed upon for the encounter.

"W!" exclaimed Roque, "he has chosen you?"

"He could not do otherwise. You gave him our names and addresses, and as he knows no one else in Paris he was only too glad to avail himself of our services."

Roque's sense of humor—small as it was—was so irresistibly tickled by the absurdity of the situation that he laughed outright. Encouraged by his unusual gentility his two creditors began eloquently to implore him to be merciful.

"Consider, monsieur," urged Sakosky, "if you deprive us of so excellent a customer the loss it will be to both of us. A perfect treasure, who pays without bargaining and before the goods are delivered! These are hard times, M. Roque!"

"And you have so many debts on our books, M. Roque," Stamb added, insinuatingly.

There was a parley. Roque was clearly perplexed. He stood a moment in thought, evidently wavering between passion and mirth. Finally he walked over to the outwardly calm but inwardly agitated Symphonien.

"Monsieur," said he, with a courteous bow, "you are sharper witted than I took you to be."

"Eh! In what way, monsieur?" Symphonien demanded.

"You know how to save your skin without compromising yourself. But see you, tell me what made you so bent on a duel last night?"

"Ambition," frankly confessed the provincial. "I wanted to be celebrated and saw no other way."

"Ah, you have the mania, too, then? So had I once—till I met you. Well, no matter; you're brave, and your wish shall be gratified more easily and safely than mine was. Get into my cabriolet. When they see us re- turning together people will say of you: 'Behold the only man who ever went out with Roque and came back safe and sound.' Jump in before I change my mind, which would be all the worse for you."

Then, agreeably conscious that he was the object of universal attention, Bailleu proceeded to the Cafe de Paris—the restaurant most in vogue at that time—where he lengthily dined, knowing that every eye from the waiter to the dame de comptoir, was fixed upon him with an interest and curiosity that satisfied, even beyond his anticipation, his thirst for notoriety.

Alas for the unstableness of human felicity. Next morning there was a panic in the boulevards. What the felly, Tortoni's for breakfast no one noticed; they were too much absorbed in the profits and the losses.

It was the coup de grace to Bailleu's brief celebrity, and weary and dispirited he returned to his province home.—N. Y. Commercial Gazette.

Where Rain is Unknown.

There is, perhaps, no more curious place on the Pacific seaboard than Lytle, Tex. It stands in a region where rain has never been known to fall, and where, as was remarked by Darwin when he visited Lytle in 1835, the inhabitants live like people on board ship. These numbers about 14,000, mostly all connected with the stupendous industry of the port, due to the development of the nitrate industry on the adjacent pampas. The rain gauge at Lytle, close to the Pacific, record absolutely no rainfall.

There are several parts of the earth where no rain ever falls. Such are the great desert of Africa, and considerable tracts of Arabia, Syria, Persia, Tibet and Mongolia in the north, while in South America the rainless districts comprise narrow strips on the shores of Bolivia and Chili