

## POPULAR NEGRO MELODIES.

A Sudden Partiality for Ethiopean Themes With "Honey" in Them.

The vagaries of public taste are almost inexplicable, and theatrical managers of judgment long ago abandoned the effort to keep track with the popular fancy where songs or stage characterizations are concerned. For many years May Irwin, when on the specialty stage, the late Annie Pixley, and Maud Huth, a Georgia girl now well known in the continuous performances in an act with her husband, Billy Clifford called "The Chappie's Visit," sang plantation songs with considerable success diversifying the musical features with the peculiar stride which colored women regard as one of the distinguished beauties of a cake walk. Theatregoers accepted such specialties as an unimportant feature of lively performances, but recently there has been a decided craze for them, and no farce comedy or "comic opera" is now thought to be complete without them.

May Irwin, now appearing in "The Widow Jones" and the pioneer in many similar stage crazes (she was the first singer to make "After the Ball" popular in New York city), started the ball in motion with "Mamie, Come Kiss Your Honey Boy," sung in "The Country Sport." Later Fay Templeton in "Excelsior Jr." sang and made popular "I want Yer, Ma Honey." Then Flora Irwin, May's sister, in "Gentleman Joe" sang "Honey, Does Yer Love Your Man?" One of the features of "A Black Sheep" at Floy's theatre is the singing of the plantation song by Jeannette S. Henry in the third act "Love Me, Honey, Do."

Though this requirement is not essential, plantation songs with a cake walk chorus nowadays to be entirely successful should include in some part of the title and certainly in the chorus the word "honey"; and to that word in part as well as to the charm of the music is due the popularity of the song rendered by George Evans and by Willis P. Swannam, "I'll Be True to My Honey Boy." Some ingenious individuals have claimed to trace the present craze for popular songs of the plantation variety to a precursor "Honey O!" but there is no sufficient corroboration of this view to make it generally accepted. Others find the start of the craze in Percy Gaunt's song, "Push Dem Clouds Away," which was sung with considerable success in "A Trip to Chinatown" by Anna Boyd and her associates. The chorus of the song was accompanied with a cake walk movement which helped to make it very popular, and the music was quite catchy. This season May Irwin has been singing two negro plantation songs without "honey" in either, "The New Bully" and "The Hoodoo." Peter F. Dailey and Jennie Yeamans introduced a cake walk song at the end of the first act of "The Night Clerk" at the Bijou recently, and Maud Huth has been singing at the continuous performance of the song "I Care for Nobody," the chorus of which has helped to make it very popular.

The old-fashioned negro melodies were generally of a plaintive character, based on such pathetic episodes in the home life of the sunny South as "the Slave's Dream" or "Liza Harris's escape." Colored men and colored women were represented as sitting in or about the cabin or the lowlands of the plantation, either bemoaning their fate or smothering their regrets in music. Afterward, when the song-and-dance men began, as an outgrowth from the minstrels, to appear on the variety stage with black faces, the negro music with which the New York public became familiar was of the "Big Sunflower" or "Shoo Fly" variety. But since the close of the war and the permanent establishment in Northern cities of the colored population, not as fugitives or transients, the intricacies and the attractions of the cake walk have come to be understood by white patrons at theatrical entertainments, and a cake walk, nowadays, draws usually a big crowd. From the cake walk has come, logically, the music of the cake walk, with a peculiar type of song which has "honey" or something similar as its melodic trademark. At the present time the supply of such songs by no means keeps pace with the demand.

While it has generally been thought necessary on the stage for men to blacken their countenances with burnt cork and grease paint in order to maintain the illusion of negro character delineation, it has never been thought necessary or even desirable for actresses playing similar character parts to do likewise, except, of course, in such plays as "Uncle Tom's Cabin," wherein a negro character is presented in its entirety and not in a fragmentary way.

Left on the Cars.

The lost article room of the elevated road system in New York receives about 30,000 miscellaneous deposits a year. Nearly 10 per cent are umbrellas, and ranking second are the satchels. About half the articles are called for, and the remainder, after being held for six months or a year, according to the value, are sold at auction.

Good Rule.

Scotland Yard, London, has issued an order to the police force to the effect that a constable sees a drunken man approaching a public house he is to prevent his entrance, and if a drunken man does get inside a public house the policeman is to call the landlord's attention to his condition.

## THINGS TO REMEMBER.

A cold in the head is the first cause of catarrh. Catarrh is an unhealthy disease and is often followed by consumption. Hawker's catarrh cure positively cures catarrh, cold in the head and all catarrhal troubles. Cause and effect: constipation is the cause of a host of diseases. Hawker's liver pills cure constipation, thereby preventing its consequent ills. For children's cough and colds Hawker's balsam of eucalypti and wild cherry is unequalled. It is the children's favorite.

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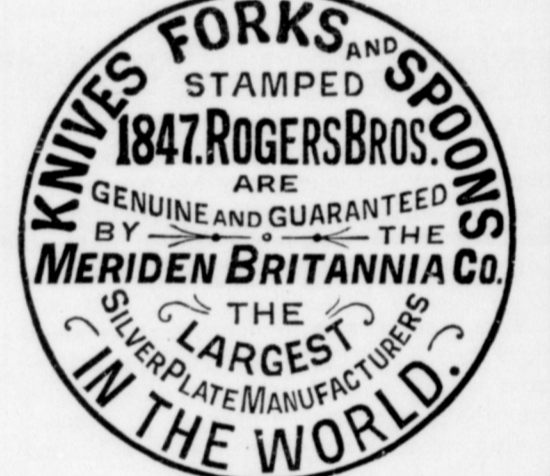
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## "JOHNNY ON THE SPOT."

A New Phrase Which has Become Very Popular in Town Nowadays.

Current additions to contemporary slang find their way into popularity by odd means. An expression once made and often repeated gets finally a sort of vogue, especially if it seems peculiar. Such an expression, popular for a long time, was "out of sight," though there was no special significance to the phrase when distorted to cover a variety of cases. A person was said to be "out of sight" when, for any reason, he or she was superior to other persons in any particular, and a man might be "out of sight" because he was less well dressed than his poorly attired associates, and a woman was said to be "out of sight" because her apparel was a good deal brighter and more stylish than that of her associates. Similarly the word "nit," recently so popular has been answered [from its original meaning to serve many other purposes. It is of German-American origin being a corruption of "nicht," and among Germans it is not an unusual thing to state an affirmative proposition by first stating the proposition and then adding the word "nicht."

The grammatical genesis of "Johnny on the spot" cannot be traced very clearly, but the phrase certainly originated from the longer and less expressive one, "Johnny is always on the spot when wanted." A "Johnny on the spot" is a man or youth who may be relied upon to be at a certain stated place when wanted and on whose assured appearance confident expectation may be based. It is not sufficient that an alert and trustworthy individual, to be thought deserving of the name "Johnny on the spot," should restrict his beneficent activity to the matter of being at a certain place when needed. He must in addition, render such service and attend to such business when there as the occasion may require, and such a "Johnny" must be on the spot not merely to attend to the business of others, but also to look after his own. Hence an individual who is prompt and far-seeing, alive to his own interests, and keenly sensible of means for promoting his own advantage, is a "Johnny on the spot." The expression is, to some extent, a variation or rather a continuation of that other phrase "he gets there." The expression, "Johnny on the spot," has come into popularity very suddenly, and it will probably go out of popularity after some pretty hard usage in paragraphs, columns, variety theatres, campaign speeches, and cheap plays, in an equally unconventional way, but until a successor is found it is likely to be in pretty general use hereabouts.

## Some Modern "Big Things."

One of the largest checks ever drawn in this country was \$16,000,000, by President Roberts, of the Pennsylvania Railroad, in payment of 200,000 shares of P. W. & B. R. R. stock.

The English Royal Naval architect says that a "perfect" modern man-of-war should weigh not less than 25,000 tons, and cost at least £2,000,000 or \$10,000,000.

The pavement in front of the William H. Vanderbilt's residence in New York city cost over \$10,000. The single stone lying directly in front is the largest known paving stone, and cost, transportation and all, \$9,000.

A redwood plank exhibited at the Kansas city exposition was 16 feet long, 7 feet 9 inches wide and 5 inches thick.

The largest bronze casting ever made in America is the buffalo head which hangs at the eastern entrance of the Union Pacific bridge between Omaha and Council Bluffs.

The largest statue in the United States is Bartholdi's "Liberty Enlightening the World," which stands on Bedloe Island, New York harbor. The statue alone, without base or pedestal, weighs \$400,000 pounds.

The highest building in the world, monuments and towers not considered, is the Cologne Cathedral. The height of its building from the pavement to the copper tip on the spire is 511 feet.

The great hammer at the Woolwich Gun Works, Woolwich, England, weighs forty tons, and its drop is a sheer fall of forty-four feet three inches.

The 3,000-horse-power pumping engine in the mines at Friedensville, Pa., raises 17,500 gallons of water at each revolution of its gigantic fly-wheel—St. Louis Republic.

## A Dashing Russian Sailor.

Rear Admiral Makoff, of the Russian navy, who was recently a guest of Chas. H. Cramp, is one of the most conspicuous figures of modern European naval history. Although only 47 years of age, he is first on the list of Russian rear admirals, and is senior to a large number of officers who he supercedes by special promotion. He it was who, during the last Russo-Turkish war, was regarded the Skobeleff of the Russian navy, and like that great general, whose portraits he resembles, was several times promoted for his daring and enterprise. His career in that war was an interrupted series of dashing attacks on Turkish ships in the Bosphorus and other Turkish harbors of the Black Sea, in which his skill was second alone to his daring. That is why he is the senior rear admiral at the age of 47 years. He recently commanded the Asiatic Squadron and is now on his way home to assume command of the Baltic fleet.—Philadelphia Record.

## The Boer Penny.

The Transvaal penny is a noteworthy coin, and for more reasons than one. As a specimen of coinage it is fairly good—better, perhaps, than its English equivalent. The reverse is ingeniously significant; the lion stands for African savagery, which the boer has vanquished, transported on his war chariot, the trek-wagon. The reverse shows President Kruger's head.

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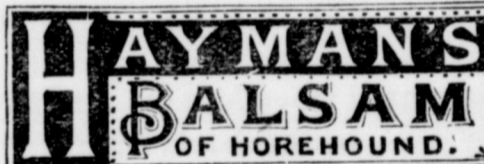
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## ROMANCE OF A FRENCH SOLDIER

Deserted Twice for Love of a Woman, and Twice Repented and Surrendered.

The story of a French soldier named Massiault, recently acquitted by the court martial of Montpellier, reads a little like a romance. Young Massiault enlisted in 1882 in the ninety-first regiment of infantry at Mezieres. He proved an excellent soldier, and was promoted successively to the grades of corporal, sergeant, sergeant-major and adjutant. In 1888 he was a pupil in the Administration school, and was on the point of being again promoted when he made the acquaintance of a young woman, with whom he fell desperately in love. To the astonishment of all, he deserted and ran away with her to Belgium. A few months later he returned to Mezieres and gave himself up. He was tried by court martial, sentenced to four years' hard labor, and to be reduced to the ranks on the expiration of his term of punishment. Under the amnesty law of 1889 he was released and was incorporated in the 100th Regiment, garrisoned at Narbonne. The military authorities doubtless imagined that by sending him to the other end of France they would place him out of the influence of the beauty that bewitched him.

But in this they were mistaken. She found out where he was, and soon she arrived at Narbonne. Once more he deserted and went with her, this time to Spain. This second desertion was aggravated by the fact that he carried off his uniform and arms.

Not daring to return to France, he led a miserable life in Spain for eighteen months, but at last he could not stand it any longer, so he returned to Mezieres, where he entered the service of the Foreign Legion for five years under the false name Stooch. He was sent off to Tonquin, where once more he proved himself to be a good soldier, and rapidly regained the grades of corporal, sergeant, and sergeant-major.

But the recollection of his desertion weighed upon his mind, and his false name troubled him. Moreover, for seven years he had not seen his parents. He became homesick, and longed to visit his native place in the Ardennes. His term of service being about to expire, he went to the Colonel and told him who he was. He was sent back to Narbonne, and thence to Montpellier, where once more he appeared before the court martial. He was tried and acquitted on account of his good record, and the soldiers and spectators who were present at the trial cheered him. But he had to be again reduced to the ranks because Sergeant-Major Stooch no longer existed in the French army. At the present time his friends and admirers are making energetic efforts with a view of getting him restored to his former rank.

## Mrs. Howe's Husband.

Apropos of the "new woman," somebody has resurrected an old story about Mrs. Julia Ward Howe that may or may not be true. At all events, it was worth resurrecting. The story goes that Mrs. Howe was one fine morning walking down Beacon street, Boston, when she met a friend who asked her how Dr. Howe was. "Dr. Howe?" repeated Mrs. Howe, vaguely. Then as it suddenly recollecting herself, "Oh, he's quite well, I'm sure. I remember seeing in the morning paper that he presided at some meeting or other last evening."

## The Boy's Way.

Max O'Rell tells this story in the course of a paper of Peculiar Children. A boy, reading from a play that was being translated at sight in class, came across the phrase, "Calmezvous, monsieur." He naturally translated this by "Calm yourself, sir." I said to him: "Now, don't you think this is a little stiff? Couldn't you give me something a little more colloquial? For instance, what would you say yourself in a like case?" The boy reflected a few seconds, and said, "Keep your hair on, old man."

## A New Woman.

Chloroform and ammonia killed a centipede and saved a cat at Springfield the other day. The centipede dropped from a bunch of bananas upon the cat, and at once buried its poisonous fangs in the animal's legs. Its mistress, with rare presence of mind, dropped chloroform on the insect, which succumbed, and then she applied ammonia to the cat's leg. It was a triumph of presence of mind, apparently.—Boston Herald.

## Mistakes.

It has been said that the only people who never make mistakes are in the graveyard. Next to the desirability of making no mistakes is that of getting the most good from our mistakes. Horace Greely once said: "I have made plenty of mistakes in my life, but they were always new mistakes." It is not only the part of wisdom to avoid making the same mistake twice, but to also study the disposition and tendencies that lead to mistakes, and seek to make correction there.

## A Pink Bridge.

The bridge to be built over the Tennessee river at Knoxville is to be a remarkable structure in many respects. It is to be entirely of pink metal with one arch of 240 feet, 1,600 feet long, with one arch of 240 feet, 20 feet longer than any other arch in the world. At its highest point it is to be 105 feet above the water, and it is to have a roadway 50 feet wide.

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