

THE MEN WHO TALK.

Crackers, Not Barbers, the Cause of Conversation, Says One of the Latter.

The little barber was inclined to be uncommunicative and confined his attention strictly to shaving his customer. This rather unusual mood bothered the customer and after several ineffectual attempts to engage the little barber in conversation he asked:

'Why don't you say something more than 'yer' or 'no'? Usually you are perfectly willing to talk especially so when the man you are shaving wishes to be let alone.

'That's right,' retorted the little barber as he made a vicious dab with his lather brush and managed to insert the tip of it in his victim's mouth. 'That's right. Of course, we barbers always want to talk—noe. It's just you people that come in here expecting to be entertained while you lie back in the chair that cause barbers to keep up a conversation while they are shaving you. It's a funny idea that everybody seems to have that a barber is a sort of an encyclopedia anxious to furnish information on every conceivable subject. The truth of the matter is that the barber would rather that there should be no conversation. It takes his mind off his work and then, unless he agrees in every particular with the man in the chair, the latter is very apt to take offence and quit the place.

'That may seem drawing it rather strong but it is mild. One day last week there was a man in the chair who made about the same remark that you did just now and I told him just about what I have said to you. He wanted to make a bet, and I accommodated him. I bet that the great majority of men who come in during the day would begin the conversation, while he took the opposite view. We each had a piece of paper and after we had noted down twenty seven men he handed me the money and went out without a word. Out of that twenty seven all but four had started the conversation and had done their best to prolong it.

'The first man had a small package wrapped up in a newspaper in his hand when he entered. As I was lathering him he asked: 'Do you know what there is in that package?' I hastened to assure him that I was no mahatma and was willing to let it go at that. 'Well, I'll tell you, he said. 'It's a couple of pieces of gas-pipe that have been subject to electrolysis and are curiously worn.' And with that he started to talk about the thing and tell what a great scheme he had to prevent electrolysis and what a fortune he would realize from it. He was still talking about it when the boy helped him on with his coat and then he talked to a man sitting in one of the chairs and waiting for his turn until the man went over to the stand in the corner and had his shoes shined to escape from him.

'Next came a man who knew all about prize-fighting. I had to listen to the history of every fighter of the past twenty-five years. And it was only when a man in the next chair turned and called him down for slipping up on a date that he stopped talking. At that, he waited until the man who had called him down left the shop and then informed me that he could prove what he said.

'Then there was one of these real wise guys came in and wanted a shampoo. He was pretty near the limit. There wasn't a subject that he wasn't thoroughly informed upon—in his own estimation. And he wanted everybody in the place to know



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what he knew. He could give you more misinformation in less time than anybody I ever met before. One of my regular customers came in then and as he appeared good natured I smiled at him. 'Who told you about it?' he asked when he saw me smile.

'About what?' says I.

'Why my little adventure with that toupie you picked out for me,' he answered and then he went on and told me all about it.

'It kept up that way all morning—religion, politics, sport, business and everything you could think of. And I had to appear interested in each subject. Out of all the men who came in no two talked on the same subject. All but four began the conversation. Half of them went out dissatisfied because I had dared to disagree with their views, and the other half probably set me down as a fool. And yet you say the barber always wants to talk. Come in here some day and sit for a while and then wonder why I don't care to do a rapid fire conversation turn with every man that sits in the chair.

'Pay at the desk. Thank you, sir. Next.'

AN AMUSING HISTORIC SCENE:

How a Woman Proved her Courage in a Trying Hour.

No doubt in the trying days of the Revolution our forefathers showed the heroic temper of their souls. Nevertheless, they were not all heroes; and there were some occasions on which even those among them who were, momentarily lost their self-control in a wave of panic.

Several great Revolutionary frights are matter of historical record, but none is more amusing than that which swept at one time over Windham County, Connecticut.

In one neighborhood especially it sped with marvellous swiftness and power, since not far away lived the rich Tory, Malbone who owned a dreaded gang of negro slaves; while in another direction, equally near, was a reservation still occupied by the remnant of a tribe of 'Paygan Indians.' It was expected that these copper and ebony citizens—equally peaceable, as it proved—might at any moment be excited to arise and slay. Bonfires ready for light were kept piled on the hills, and a kettle of tar was suspended from the liberty pole.

A single spark of rumor lighted all these combustibles. A post galloped through the town without stopping to communicate news, and a saucy boy on Dudley Hill had his ears boxed by a suspected Tory. Quick through the town flew the report of immediate onset!

At the terrifying cry that the Tories were coming, that the Indians were upon them, that 'Malbone's niggers' were up, the population fled to the nearest swamp. Sam Cheese raced along, ramming bullets into his musket without any powder. Limping Uncle Asa hobbled over the rough ground, hissing piteously as he went. 'Thither! Thither! I've forgot my shin plaster!' while his sister was heard grimly adjuring him, 'Come along, Asa! You'll never dress your shins again in this world!' Old people were left behind hid in cupboards or haymows or remote corners of attics.

One woman, Rebekah Larned, proved the heroine of the hour. Instead of running away, she prepared to defend her home, and with it the three young children and the aged grandmother under her care.

She heaped a huge fire on the hearth, thrust every iron implement that could be mustered into the blazing embers and hung a kettle of water upon every hook of the crane, ready to give a warm reception to the first intruder. The fugitives sent back a messenger to beseech her to join them in the swamp, but in vain.

'Tell Becky,' they enjoined him, 'hot irons will never do for the British.'

But Rebekah remained firm; so did the

Chairs Re-seated, Cases, Splints, Perfected, Duval, 17 Waterloo.

poor old grandmother, who was entreated to leave her if she would not listen to reason.

'If I am to be killed by the Tories to-night,' said the old woman, settling herself meekly in the chimney corner, 'why, then I shall be; so I'll stay with Becky.'

As neither Tory, Indian nor negro appeared to disturb her household, Rebekah Larned survived unharmed, and had the right to laugh as much as she pleased at her more timid neighbors.

CHARGED SIX HUNDRED.

How a Brave American Boy Won His Medal of Honor.

A medal of honor—the highest compliment which can be given to an American soldier—has been recommended for presentation to each of the ten surviving members of a band of twelve scouts who performed a brave feat near San Miguel de Mayumo Ori, in the Philippines, on May 13, 1899.

These scouts were under the lead of William H. Young, a civilian who had been a famous scout on the Western plains in America, and whom General Lawton made his chief of scouts in the San Ysidro campaign this year.

On the day mentioned, General Lawton was advancing on San Miguel. A small body of Oregon volunteers came suddenly upon the enemy, drawn up in an advantageous position in front of San Miguel, the right flank resting on a stream, the left on an elevation made secure by a dense thicket.

It was afterward ascertained that the Filipino force in this position numbered about six hundred men.

Without waiting for the reinforcing battalion to support them, or to be in a position to do so, this squad of ten scouts, led by Mr. Young and by Private James Harrington of the Oregons, an old frontiers man,—twelve men in all,—charged the enemy's line, about one hundred and fifty yards distant.

The line fired, then wavered, and then completely gave way to be followed up by the reinforcing battalion, and driven from the city and environs of San Miguel, a place of great importance.

Young and Harrington, while shouting and cheering and leading the men up, were shot and killed.

Cutting.

The law court is the modern substitute for the tournament, and a pretty good substitute it proves when a battle is on between rival lawyers quick witted and outspoken.

The late Col. John Atkinson was opposed in an important case by another able lawyer, James H. Pound, and they were fighting like giants for every point of advantage. Pound had won a majority of the jousts; the colonel was nettled, and was lying low for a chance to deliver a swinging blow.

'It came,' says the judge, 'when I decided a point against Pound. It had been fiercely argued by both attorneys, and in deciding it as I did, I stated my reasons at length, giving authorities. I saw Pound shake his head at one of my conclusions; his lips moved, and I supposed he had made some comment, so when I concluded my decision, I asked:

'What did you say, Mr. Pound?'

'Quick as a shot, and in his most cutting tones of intense sarcasm, the colonel replied:

'Mr. Pound did not speak, your honor. He merely shook his head. There is nothing in it.'

Origin of Fairy Rings.

These curious green circles in fields and pastures, appearing both on level ground and on hillsides have given rise to many superstitions and called forth a variety of more or less scientific explanations. The famous Doctor Priestly strongly advocated the view that they were of electric origin. The real cause of their formation, has long

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been known to be the growth of a species of fungi, which, starting from a single seed, spreads circularly and makes a broad disk on the ground. The fruit and seed form at the outer rim. The soil in the middle is exhausted, and consequently, as the ring grows larger the grass in the inner part withers. One of these circles near Stebbing, England, attained a diameter of 120 feet.

Proof Positive.

Walls have had ears since curiosity began, now it seems they have eyes, too, if we may generalize from the story of a contemporary.

A well known photographer of New York recently had his country house overhauled. A new skylight was added, and alterations were made in the roof. The men took their time and did not overwork themselves, but this did not prevent the roofer from presenting a bill almost as 'steep' as his calling. When the owner of the house expostulated, it was explained to him that the men had to be paid for their time, and they had spent several days on the job.

'No wonder,' said the photographer; and then he produced a number of snapshot photographs, representing the men on the roof of his house as taken from the attic window of an adjoining building. Some were sitting smoking, some were reading newspapers, and others were lying on their backs.

'Why,' said the astonished roofer, 'these are my men!'

'Exactly so,' replied the photographer, 'and they are earning my money.'

'What do you find to be the principal expense in running an automobile?'

'Paying the instalments on its purchase.'

A Good showing.

Mr. J. S. Currie, the manager of the Situation Department of the Currie Business University, is meeting with great success in placing students in good situations. The following is a list of positions recently filled, the majority of which were secured through the Situation Department.

Miss Mabel Lingley of Westfield, with L. G. Higgins & Co., wholesale Boot & Shoes, Montreal.

E. L. MacDonald of Alma, with Sydney hotel, Sydney, C. B.

Annie G. Laskey, city, with Nice & Nice, Counsellors-at-Law, Boston, Mass.

Chas. A. Seely, city, with Peabody Foundry, city.

Geo. N. Duffy, city, with Mt. Morris bank, New York city.

Laura Parker, Alyesford, N. S., with Chas. W. Boyer, Mechanical Engineer, Somerville, Mass.

W. J. McGuire, city, with Alfred Heans city.

Gertrude M. Gowan, city, with A. A. McClaskey, & Son, Confectioners, city.

Myrtle Waring, Amherst, with Cumberland Pork Packing Co., Ltd., Amherst, N. S.

Arthur Abbinette, Hillsboro, with Dufferin hotel, city.

Fred Patterson, city, with F. C. Colwell & Co., Confectioners, city.

Millie Williams, Kingston, with Armington's grocery, Worcester, Mass.

Ethel Wheaton, Norton, with Excelsior Life Ins. Co., city.

Ethel Matthews, Clarendon station, with E. R. Chapman, barristers, City.

Howe Cowan, city, with Confederation Life Ass., Co., city.

C. T. Gard, Hopewell Cape, with E. J. Armstrong, printer city.

D. I. Buckley, Corn Hill, with F. E. Williams, grocer city.

Bertrand Beckwith, Sheffield Mills, N. S., with Dufferin hotel city.