

HIS INSPIRATION.

IT CAME TO THE LAUNDRY CLERK
AT A CRITICAL MOMENT.

A Tale of the Mysterious Disappearance of a Shirt That Was Finally Accounted For After a Great Deal of Trouble.

"We meet all kinds of nerve trying people in this business," growled the clerk in a steam laundry, "but the worst of the lot is the fidgety young wife who looks after her husband's linen and sends it out to wash. She is always fancying that something is lost, and she then proceeds to make our lives a burden until it turns up, which is usually in four or five days, when the whole force is on the verge of distraction—not this verge, but the other verge. Here, for instance, is an experience I had only last week:

"Bright and early Monday morning a young married woman of the type I mentioned came rushing into the office and declared that her husband's linen had been returned from the laundry Saturday night minus one shirt. I sighed, because I had heard the same kind of a story once a week for at least six months, but I took down the check files and went carefully over our memorandum of that particular lot. Of course we make mistakes, the same as other folks, but under our system it is practically impossible for a mistake to remain undetected, and I showed her that our duplicate list corresponded exactly with the one she had checked off herself at her house. That ought to have settled it, but she stood her ground.

"I don't care," she said. "All I know is that one shirt is gone. I am sure," she added, "because there were 18 in all, and there are only 17 now."

"She wanted us to settle for the shirt at once, but I insisted on time for further investigation, and after arguing fully an hour she went away. Next day she came back.

"Well, have you found that shirt?" she asked.

"No, ma'am," I replied. "Have you?"

"No, I haven't," she snapped, "and I want pay for it right away."

"Have you counted those shirts carefully, madam?" I asked, sparing for time.

"Certainly," she said; "there were 18 altogether, and I've gone over them 40 times and can only find 17. The other has been lost in the laundry, and I intend the laundry shall replace it."

"We had another talking match of an hour or so, and when she finally departed I was in a state of collapse. When I saw her coming in the following morning, my feet turned icy cold.

"I called to get the money for that shirt," she said, in a deadly sort of calm; "I presume you must be tired by this time of your pitiable evasion."

"I am somewhat fatigued," I admitted, "but you should remember, madam, that I am only an employee, and the rules of the shop—"

"What do I care about your old rules?" she cut in, her eyes blazing. "Once for all, will you or will you not pay for the garment you have lost?"

"Pon my word I was about to pay her out of my own pocket when I had a sudden inspiration.

"One moment, madam," I said. "I believe you told me there were 18 shirts in all—originally, I mean."

"I did," she replied.

"And at present you can only find 17?"

"Exactly," she said.

"Would you like to know where the eighteenth is?" I asked, smiling.

"Of course," she answered.

"Your husband is wearing it," said I. "You overlooked the fact that one of the collection is always in use."

"She stared at me a moment in stupefaction.

"I—er—I—really—I forgot about that," she faltered.

"Then she grabbed her parasol and flew. It was a pretty victory," added the clerk, sighing, "but it won't make any difference. She'll be around next Monday, same as ever."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Waning Affection.



"What makes yer t'ink dere's no hope fer yer?"

"She's begun ter call me 'Fatty.'"

A Provider.

"Is your new husband much of a provider, Malindy?" "He des ain't nothin else, he ain't. He gwine to git some new kyahpets fo' de house, providin he git de money; he gwine to git de money, providin he go to work; he go to work, providin hit suits him. I never see sich a providin man in all my days."—Indianapolis Press.

As She Saw It.

"How did you like the concert, Kitty?" "Pretty well, only I didn't like the way that man acted who sat on that high chair away up in front and kept making funny motions with a stick to get the people to look at him. I was mighty glad the musicians didn't let him bother them any."—Chicago Tribune.

Lots.

"Your lot is rather lonely, isn't it?" we asked the village sexton.

"My lot?" he exclaimed. "Law, no! I've picked out the best lot in the cemetery."

Nothing lonely about this, we thought.

He Hadn't Lost a Burglar.

"John," she said, suddenly shaking him, "there is a burglar in the house."

"Are you sure?" he asked.

"Positive," she replied. "Don't you hear him?"

He got up and began to dress hastily, but quietly.

"What are you going to do, John?" she inquired.

"I am going to sneak out the back way and get a policeman," he answered.

"But if you go right down stairs now," she said, "you'll find him in the dining room."

"Oh, I'll find him, will I?" he retorted sarcastically. "Well, now you just look me over carefully."

"Yes, John; what of it?"

"Do I look like a man who has lost a burglar anywhere?"

"No; of course not, but—"

"Do I have the reputation of being an impertinent fellow who is always interfering with other people's business? Do I in any way resemble the lost and found department of a daily newspaper?"

"No."

"Then why should I get tangled up with other people's property?"

"You're afraid, John."

"Afraid nothing!" he retorted indignantly. "I am looking at it from an ethical point of view. This burglar undoubtedly has been lost by the police, and if I took charge of him they might think I was trying to steal him and make a lot of trouble for me. Besides, I'm no searching party. You women don't understand the ethics of business at all."

Testing the Schoolmaster.

In the town records of the city of Boston there is a curious passage which records how a schoolmaster was examined and what happened. The manner in which the visit of inspection is recorded makes one incline to the view that the unlucky schoolmaster may not have had fair play, although if he was really inefficient he may be said to have been judged by his peers.

In the record for the 22d of May, 1722, it is set forth that:

"Coll Pen Townsend, Jeremiah Allen Esqr., & John Edwards together with the Select men, Vissitted the wrighting School at the Southerly End of Boston on Thursday the 24th apill 1722. and Examined the Scholars under mr Ames Angers tuition as to their proficiency in Reading writing Scyphering & the masters ability of teaching & instructing youth his rules & methods therefore And are of Opinion That it will be no Service to the Town to Continue, mr anger in that Employ."

Whereupon it was voted that the said Mr. Ames Anger should not continue master of the "Said South school."

It is true that nothing is said of the methods of spelling inculcated at the "wrighting School," and it is also possible that a clerk rather than the committee was responsible for the errors of the record, but there is certainly something absurd in the passage as it stands.

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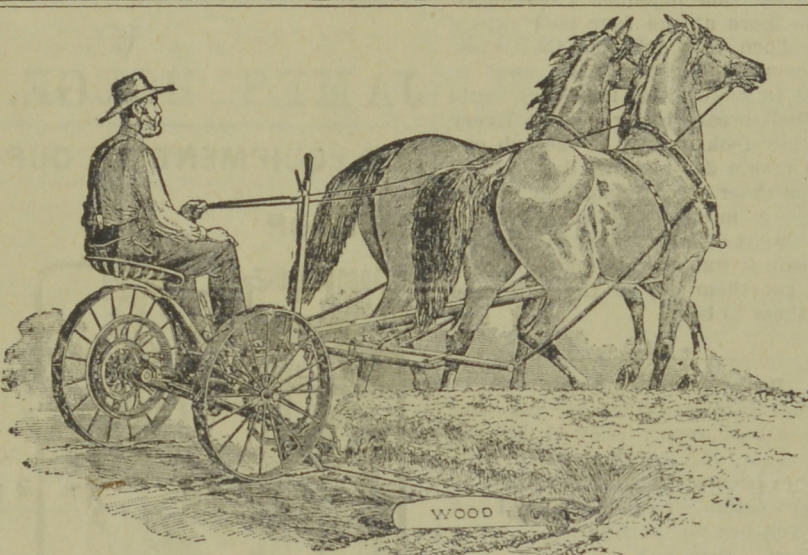
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