

Not So Funny as He Thought.

Impudence occasionally meets with its just reward, and probably none would envy the feelings of the youth who, when Sir Evelyn Wood was appointed quartermaster-general of the British forces, attempted to show his wit at the expense of his wisdom.

Sir Evelyn was little known at the office, and it happened that some of the clerks in a certain room were engaged in "larking" when a quiet-looking gentleman walked in. The most impudent of the young men, thinking that the stranger was a visitor who had by mistake come into the wrong room, demanded in a peremptory voice:

"What is your business here?"

"My business," repeated the stranger, in a tone of mingled surprise and sternness.

"Yes sir: your business," persisted the clerk.

"It is with the duke," was the answer.

"He has been suddenly summoned to Windsor, and Lord Wolsley's in bed with the mumps," ventured the young man, bent on carrying on his joke at the expense of the inexperienced stranger, as he deemed him.

"Your name, sir," demanded the stranger, in an imperative tone.

"My name is Plantagenet Zama, distant relation to her Gracious Majesty."

"Indeed; and mine is Sir Evelyn Wood. I am quartermaster-general of the forces, and I see now how her Majesty is served."

The unfortunate clerk, who was not yet aware that his impudence had cost him dear, looked around with a grin, expecting to meet with applause for his talent, and became suddenly aware that his companions were working away with the most extraordinary earnestness. Instantly the full force of the situation dawned upon him.

"Horrors!" he ejaculated. "I took you for a crank with a grievance!" and then he subsided.—*Youth's Companion.*

Queer Articles Patented.

A Vermont man has applied for letters patent on a mechanical device under the workings of which a bell rings automatically when the water in which eggs are boiled reaches the ebullition point. An inventor at Helena, Mon., has patented a horseshoe sharpener. Two ladies of Harrisburg, in Pennsylvania, have patented, jointly, a "serving maid's step-ladder," guaranteed not to upset when in use. A Wisconsin man has patented a collapsible coffin, separated into subsections and as portable as a handsatchel. A Minnesota man has patented a disappearing visor or peak whereby mechanically a soldier's hat may be turned into a polo cap by pressing a button to be found over the left ear. A more practical invention is that of an axe the handle of which is held in position by a roughened metal handle hole which makes "slipping off" impossible, and a Rhode Islander has devised an electric nail the attractive power of the head of which gives inordinate power to the hammer.—*N. Y. Sun.*

Ambiguity.

Fogg says that should any one ask him the meaning of the word "ambiguous," he would point to this sentence: "The merchant failed to make money."—*Boston Transcript.*

PUNGENCIES.

"When I get utterly low-spirited," said the nervous man, "I find a spin on my wheel does me a world of good." "It is the exercise," said his friend. "I think not. I am so glad to get home alive that I feel good all the rest of the day."—*Indianapolis Journal.*

"I did my best to be entertaining," said the young man, in a voice of sorrow. "Did you succeed?" "I'm afraid not. I recited Hamlet's soliloquy. She looked at me reproachfully for several seconds, and then exclaimed, 'I don't think that's very funny!'"—*Washington Star.*

Recently a public school teacher wrote the sentence, "Them boys are sliding down hill," and requested some one in the school to "correct and why." One bright youngster held up his hand, and, on being asked, said: "Correction: Those boys are sliding down hill. Why: Because they can't slide up."—*Journal of Education.*

A Boston firm of book publishers received by mail a request for a book, entitled "Who is your Schoolmaster?" by Edward Eggleston. "The Hoosier Schoolmaster" was promptly forwarded, and it proved to be the desired book. Another firm of booksellers received a request for a book on "Soshel Etikette" that would "learn a lady how to behave in fashionable sowsiety."—*Exchange.*

This new Oliver Herford story is afloat. After some of his best verses submitted to the editor of *Life* had been twice returned, he sent them in for a third time with this note: "My dear Mr. Mitchell,—During your recent absence from your office, your office-boy has been returning masterpieces, one of which I enclose. Please remit at your earliest convenience." This "fetched" the editor, and the verses went through.—*Exchange*

The things Hixon does during his frequent attacks of absent-mindedness are of a character that gives his friends grave fear. The other day he came out of his house, walked to the edge of the pavement, threw his right leg into the air with a vaulting movement, and fell sprawling to the ground. A friend, who came along in time to witness this singular performance, said to him, "Why, Hixon, what in time do you mean by such a performance?" Hixon got up, brushing the dirt from his garments, and rubbing his bruises; while he said: "Well, I thought I was getting on my wheel. I forgot that I didn't have the wheel with me!"—*Bazar.*

A traveller was riding on one of the coaches in the Trossachs of Scotland, when the driver said to him: "I've had a coin giv to me to-day 200 years old. Did you ever see a coin 200 years old?" "Oh, yes," was the reply. "I have myself one 2,000 years old." "Ah," said the driver, "have ye?" And he spoke no more during the rest of the journey. When the coach arrived at its destination the driver came up to the man with an intensely self-satisfied air and said: "I told you as we came along that I had a coin 200 years old." "Yes." "And you said to me as you had one 2,000 years old." "Yes, so I have." "Now you be a liar!" "What do you mean by that?" "What do I mean? Why—it's only 1899 now!"—*London Answers.*

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