

A Parting Dinner

By ALAN HINSDALE

"Our marriage," said the wife, "has been a mistake. The sooner a mistake is rectified the better. I am going to leave you."

"That's not a bad idea," said the husband. "A bit of freedom from this new life that neither of us has yet become used to will give us a breathing spell, and if we come together again we will appreciate each other all the more for it."

"That is well put in."

"And if we don't come together again just think of the fun we'll have!"

"Fun?"

"Yes, I can remain out at a poker party till 3 o'clock in the morning if I like, smoke and drink to my heart's content, spend no end of time sitting on a stool before a glove counter with a pretty girl on the other side smoothing down my fingers with her soft hand."

"If these things are so delightful to you why did you marry?"

"I haven't come to your own enjoyment consequent on the break yet. You can sit all day, beside your mother, holding her hand and listening to her advice to you how to manage a husband. Won't that be just too nice for anything?"

"If you loved me, wife, as well as mamma does, there would be no need of a separation."

"Oh, I could never compete with a mother's love! That is not to be expected. I suppose that's what gives her a right to tell you just what course to take respecting your husband. Now that you're going to leave me, her advice with respect to me will be no longer necessary, and I wonder what you and she will talk about when you nestle down for a morning, h-h-h-h."

"She was inclined to think that, the one interesting topic being removed, the h-h-h-h would be rather dull, but she did not say so."

"There's one thing I propose to do, continued the provoking husband. "As soon as you get home, I'm going to take down those curtains I have ordered them simply for your sake. They shut out the light."

"Indeed, you will do no such thing!"

"Why so? It will not matter to you whether there are curtains here or not. I shall make a smoking room of this, and when smoke gets into curtains it's hard to get it out."

"A smoking room of this cozy apartment! Why, I arranged everything here myself!"

"So you did, and a delightful room you made of it. I remember when I first saw it, I thought how many delightful scenes we would have here. I little thought that a few short months would end it all!"

"Whose fault is it?"

"Mine."

"Who don't you do better?"

"I can't. I'm naturally wicked. If I were not you wouldn't need to leave me."

"Of course I don't want to leave you, but you can't expect me to endure such a treatment forever."

"Certainly not. I deserve it all. But it's sad to think of my having to dismantle this pretty room for a lot of fellows who will throw clear and pipe ashes all over the carpet and..."

"They will do no such thing! I, you're going to have those horrid mice here! I won't!"

"Won't go?"

"Yes, I'm going. I have come to that decision after long and careful deliberation."

"And consultation with your mother."

"This was a home thrust."

"If there is any one who knows what is best for the child, she has cared for and protected her throughout her life, surely her mother."

"I agree with you. Therefore the daughter should never leave her mother."

"The daughter is not expected to marry a-a."

"Brute! But we are wasting time. When do you go?"

"Are you in haste to be rid of me?"

"Not at all. I merely wish to make arrangements for your departure. Will you permit me to see you to your mother's house?"

"Who said I was going to mamma?"

"Very well. I will take you wherever you wish to go."

"You'll have to dine elsewhere to day. I have made no preparations for dinner here."

"Suppose we have a last dinner at Skinner's with a bottle of that wine you like so well?"

"She hesitated and he suggested that she telephone her mother that she would not arrive till after dinner. This last reference to her mother, though highly respectful, only a frozen to the wife's brow. Nevertheless, she went to the phone and sent the message. Then she dressed for the dinner and came downstairs looking very languid.

"Have you sent your baggage?" he asked mildly.

"No," she snapped.

"They dined with handsomely dressed ladies and gentlemen to distract their attention from their troubles, and music soothed them, and the wine warmed them. The dinner was excellent, and they spent an enjoyable evening together. When they drove away he made no mention of the fact that she had expected to go to her mother, but directed the driver to take them to their own home.

"And that was the end of the fracas."

OBSCURE HEROES.

These Humble Workers Only Do Their Duty and Wear No Medals.

Twelve boys took an abandoned band car and placed it on the Lackawanna tracks near the Paterson station. By chance the station agent saw them speeding by and telegraphed to a town some miles away at Paterson Junction to stop them. The townsmen knew that an express was just behind the boys and opened a switch, throwing them and their stolen car down an embankment; then he closed the switch as the express came around the curve behind them, and little they knew that they had thrown dice with death and won. Thanks to the foresight of these two men on the job.

These are the heroes of peace, these obscure, unknown men, doing their duty practically 365 days out of the year in the news account the name of the townsmen was not even mentioned, but he has twelve lives to his credit, and twelve homes have been spared from mourning, and twelve boys are given another chance to finish their careers.

We get so accustomed to the men on the job that we forget what part the integrity of the workman plays in the mechanism of modern life. From the man in the tower to the trackwalker, from the engineer to the chief of the patcher. If all these cogs were not true and working in unison every minute in the hour, where would the safety of our lives be?

These heroes of peace, who wear no ribbons and medals, and no service colors, give the lie to those who say human nature is not essentially honest.—Philadelphia Bulletin

ORIGIN OF PUNCHINELLO.

A Memory of the Days When Harper's Weekly Was a Power.

In the days when Harper's Weekly was at the height of its popularity and influence it commanded the services of the foremost illustrators in America, including the cartoonists. Every once in awhile a group of these artists would become dissatisfied with the Harper parental control and would leave to establish an independent illustrated paper.

Having squandered their substance in riotous prinking, these artists would come to themselves and return to the Harper home, where was bread enough and to spare. No fatted calf was killed on the return of such prodigals, but Henry Mills Alden, the veteran editor of Harper's Monthly Magazine, asserted that the house of Harper never held a grudge against any contributor, whether artist or writer, who left to try other pastures. Such was the origin and such was the end of Punchinello, a comic cartoon weekly which first appeared in New York city on April 2, 1870.

In calling attention to the fact that the first number was dated the first day after All Fools' Day, Punchinello remarked: "This is cheering, since thus it is manifest that Punchinello leaves all the fools and jesters behind and is therefore first in the race for the crown of comic laurel and the quiver of satire shafts." During its short life—less than a year it was entitled to that honor.—Cartoons Magazine

FAILED TO LOOK AHEAD.

A Blunder That Has Brought Many a Family to Grief.

In the American Magazine a writer says:

"A man engaged in business in one of the trades or professions is strong and healthy, and his earnings are adequate to meet the needs of himself and family and lay a little by to combat the probabilities of old age.

"In trying to make a good appearance among his friends he lives up to his income, sells the birthright of his family for a mess of pottage in order to gratify his vanity or over-ambitious habits. He is strong and the future seems a long way off.

"Eventually on account of an accident or disease he leaves the scene of action and his wife and a number of small children must face the gloomy days of the future unassisted by a bank account or life insurance policy simply because he failed to look ahead.

"Another man has a mortgage upon his property, and he solicquizes in his next year being paying off the mortgage. The years pass, the mortgage is foreclosed, and he realizes when too late that he failed to look ahead.

"Still another man lived upon the principal of his physical bank account. He failed to bank energy and conserve health in the form of proper physical exercise and careful hygienic living and exacted his nature foreclosed by striking his victim with apoplexy."

Canton's City of the Dead.

In Canton, about eight miles from Hongkong, there is a place known as the City of the Dead. There are 19 small houses, in each of which a corpse is lodged, at the rate of \$25 for the first three months and then at a reduced rate until the gossamer curtains are placed by the relatives of the dead person inside and where the corpse shall be buried. Six of paper lanterns and imitation fruit are hung from the roof. There are a row of in each room between the door and the coffin. Two feet and any other kind of food which the dead person liked when on earth are placed on an altar before the coffin each morning. There are candle-lights and standing about to wait on him with pipes or cardboard cups of tea. There are also two hand-some paper females placed there to guide his spirit on the way to heaven.

Attaching to a Star.

Many people interpret the familiar phrase "Hitch your wagon to a star" as being an injunction to "aim high." Emerson, who introduces this expression in his essay on Civilization, meant no such thing. He says his imagination is greatly stirred by the waves. If an engine could be built which would accumulate all the power of the waves since the tide makes the waves and the moon makes the tide, we could use this enormous power to run our manufactures and move our wagons. Thus we would "hitch our wagon to a star."—Professor John Erskine at Chautauque

Don't Be Envious.

Crush all envy out of your heart. The envious person is in pain upon all occasions which ought to give him pleasure. The selfish of his life is lost on the objects which adulterate the highest satisfaction to those who are exempt from this passion, give the quickest pang to persons who are subject to it. All the pleasures of their fellow creatures are odious. Don't be envious.

Its Speed.

"The fact that Aunt Jennie has a bad cold does not seem to affect her talking capacity in the least."

"I noticed she had considerable hoarse power left."—Baltimore American

A Well Pleased Man.

"Why don't you get married, Colonel?"

"I am not so cruel. It would make me happy and a hundred unhappy."—Flegende Blaetter.

Quicksilver is thirteen and a half times heavier than water.

Was It an Anniversary Ghost?

By WILLARD BLAKEMAN

One night—it was 12 o'clock—a cab man was juggling along through Wall street, New York, half asleep on his box, when he was accosted from the sidewalk by a man whose appearance made coachy blink his eyes to assure himself that he saw aright. To begin at the top of his head, he wore a beaver hat with a large bell crown and a rim curled at the sides. His coat was very high in the collar, his necktie was voluminous lace, the buttons on his clothes were brass, his breeches were what we call knickerbockers.

Coachy drove to the sidewalk, and the gentleman, without asking permission, opened the door and stepped inside.

"To Greenwich," he called as he closed the door behind him.

"Up Greenwich street, sir?"

"Yes."

That part of New York which was originally Greenwich Village is several miles from where the stranger entered the coach, and the cabman would rather have declined to make a fare so late in the evening. But there was something about the stranger that was compelling. When the cab reached Greenwich and coachy asked for further instructions the man inside only said, "Drive on." Coachy seemed awed by the tone in which the words were spoken and dared not ask another question, so he drove on in the direction he was going, northward, till he reached the river bank. The man inside stepped from the cab without calling on coachy to stop, and when he touched the ground there seemed not to be the slightest shock. As he walked away he fixed his eyes on the cabman with a look that made him forget all about the omission to pay the fare. Indeed—a cold chill ran down the man's back. Going to the margin of the river, his figure seemed to float along, growing more and more indistinct till it was lost, as coachy thought, in the water. But this could not be, for there came from where he had disappeared a sound of oars. The sound passed up the river, gradually dying away in the distance.

Now, although the stranger had given no orders to the cabman to await his return, the latter felt no power to do otherwise. He did not think that by going away he would lose the money he had already earned; he remained fixed where he was by the look his fare had given him when he walked away with that unearthly tread.

It was the season when the days are long and dawn begins about 5 o'clock. Coachy sat for perhaps an hour, perhaps two—he could never recall how long it was—waiting there on the river bank, with no human being near, for he says that he was not conscious of the surrounding traffic of the present day. He saw about him only the green bank of the river, behind him the village, in which all were wrapped in slumber. But he is not sure that he was awake, not sure but that he was dreaming. At any rate, he was oblivious to the stranger's return, for the first he knew of it he heard a voice ordering him to drive home. Rousing himself and looking down from the box, he saw his fare's face thrust without the window, looking up at him. The cabman will never forget that face. It was singularly handsome, though so pale as to be rather of the dead than of the living. The expression was that of one who had committed some dreadful crime, one who had killed some one. But in it there was no remorse. It was rather triumphant.

"Home!" said the stranger.

The cabman did not know and did not dare ask where home was. He knew that he had taken up his fare on Wall street, and for that location he headed.

In the twilight the city seemed changed. All the landmarks of a metropolis were missing.

Turning out of Broadway at Wall street, he drove down till he reached the point where Broad joins it. This was where he had taken up his fare. Here, too, was not the office of the great banking house which is there, but a small brick dwelling. The stranger called on him to stop, and he drove up to the curb.

Coachy says that when this singularly beautiful ghost cast his eye at a dwelling on the opposite side of Wall street a short distance down toward the East river and looked for a moment at it with malignant triumph; then, turning, without mentioning the money he owed for his ride, he mounted the steps of a dwelling before him and seemed to pass through the door, without opening it.

Coachy was found that morning in a stupor on his box and about to fall. He was removed to a hospital where he did not emerge for several weeks. When he did so he narrated the adventure of that memorable night to a gentleman, who happened to be a scholar. All the information he received was this:

The house the strange man entered was once occupied by Aaron Burr. Alexander Hamilton lived on the opposite side of Wall street a little way farther down toward the East river. The night of the adventure was the hundredth anniversary of the duel fought between Hamilton and Burr, in which Hamilton was killed.

Perhaps the vision came to the cabman as he was entering a silver mine rather than being the cause of it. The singular feature in that it should have come to an illiterate man.

Dents in Wood Furniture.

When wood is badly dented or scratched it is often a problem to know how to get rid of the marks. This is quite easy if the following plan, suggested by the Scientific American, is adopted. First of all fold a piece of blotting paper at least four times, then saturate with water, finally allowing the superfluous moisture to drip away. Now heat a flatiron until it is about the warmth required for laundry work. Place the damp blotting paper over the dent and press firmly with the iron. As soon as the paper dries examine the mark. It will then be found that the cavity has filled up to a surprising extent. Where the dent is very deep a second or even a third application on the lines indicated might be tried. Sooner or later even serious depressions can be drawn up, and most people who have not tried this plan will be surprised at the result of the treatment. Repolishing will clear away even the slight marks that might finally remain.

A Chinese Hero.

At Loping Hsien is a statue draped in full dress of a mandarin (the putting or police master) named Chin, who gave his life for the people. An exile who was in the camp at Jauchow and who owed the hsin district magistrate a grudge, rode a black horse to Loping and, having killed the hsin, got back for the Jauchow roll call next morning. As the murderer could not be found orders came from the capital that a large number of the people should be killed. To prevent this slaughter of innocent folk the putting, a good old man, said he stabbed the hsin after a few words over the wine cups, and he was consequently beheaded. No resident of the district would deal the fatal blow, but an itinerant cobbler or bamboo worker did it for a reward of 40 taels. Tradition adds that he was struck dead by lightning after leaving the execution ground.

Tennyson's Tactlessness.

Several stories are told of Tennyson's thoughtless speeches. "What fish is this?" he once asked his hostess when he was dining. "Whiting," she replied. "The meanest fish there is," he remarked, quite unconscious that he could have wounded any one's feelings.

Var his husband's name.

When his partridge was attacked when given him almost raw he ate steadily through it for fear his hostess might be vexed.

On one occasion Tennyson was very rude to Mrs. Brotherton, a neighbor at Freshwater. The next day he came to her house with a great cabbage under each arm.

"I heard you like these, so I brought them," he said genially. It was his idea of a peace offering.

Quick Hitting.

Dr. White was once a champion boxer in Philadelphia. One day he asked a big teamster to move his wagon forward about two yards, but the teamster, instead of doing that, called the physician a wicked name.

Like a flash White knocked him flat in the gutter, and of course the teamster had him arrested. Magistrate Devlin heard the case, and the injured man complained bitterly that Dr. White had struck him so quickly he had no time to defend himself.

"Well," said the indignant magistrate, "what did you expect him to do—send you a postal card to tell you he intended to knock you down?"

The doctor was discharged without a fine.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Moving Pictures and Silver.

The moving picture industry is using a large amount of silver. There are about 20,000 picture houses in the United States, using approximately 120,000,000 feet of film regularly. The average life of a film is three weeks. Silver salts, used for sensitizing, are lost forever on being exposed to the light. It is estimated that 15,000,000 ounces of silver a year—a figure equal to Gtoli's total production—are used for this purpose.—Metal Mining Journal.

Insurance a Luxury.

To an old dorky haled before him a southern judge put this question: "Why did you burn your house down just after getting it insured?"

Whereupon the dorky replied: "Yo' honah, a pore man like me can't afford to have a house and insurance too."—Case and Comment.

Alligators' Eggs.

Alligators often lay from thirty to sixty eggs in a single nest. The eggs are similar in shape to those of a duck and about three inches in length. When they first appear the young alligators are about the same size as lizards and almost as lively.

Ambiguous.

When Bilkins was away from home on a long business trip he got a letter from his wife that still puzzled him. It ended thus:

"Baby is well and lots brighter than she used to be. Hoping that you are the same, I remain, your loving wife."

He Succeeded.

"Is that Eddie Jones, the artist, with an automobile? I never thought he would succeed."

"He succeeded to a million dollars from his grandmother."—Puck.

Summed Up.

Knicker—Of what does a shad consist? Becket—A backbone, a whole bone, a funny bone and then some.—Chicago Herald.

Nothing is more simple than greatness. It is to be simple to be great.—Emerson.

HIS GREATEST GAME.

The Climax of Mathewson's Fame as a Baseball Pitcher.

We always have believed that the greatest game that Mathewson ever pitched was the eighth and deciding contest between Boston and New York in the world's series of 1912. He should have shut the Red Sox out in that battle, but his team faltered and broke behind him, and Boston finally won in ten innings by a score of 3 to 2. Matty had been the unanimous choice of his comrades. He felt that it might be the last world's series game he ever would pitch, and he put into his work all the cunning and skill that the years had given him. In those ten innings he gave everything he had, and it was a marvelous exhibition of twirling.

When he entered the box his step was springy and his head held high. He looked almost boyish. When he left the mound after the game it was with bent head and lagging feet, but the Boston crowd stood up in the stands and cheered, not their team, which had just won the world's championship, but the defeated Mathewson. Hard headed ball players had tears on their cheeks as they ran to Matty to throw their arms across his shoulders, and McGraw hurried across to meet him from the bench, saying: "It wasn't your fault, Matty. You pitched the greatest game I ever saw."—New York World.

FREE FROM BEETLES.

Spitzbergen is the Only Land in the World Without Them.

One of the most amazing things in natural history is the way in which beetles have triumphed in the struggle for existence, says the Popular Science Monthly. Of all creatures they are by far the most numerous, no fewer than 150,000 distinct species having been identified—three times the number of backboned animals.

Beetles are found practically everywhere—in the frost-bound tracts of Iceland and in the hot desert sands of Africa, on the highest mountains, under the ground and in fossils in the deepest strata, on land and in water, on plants, among stones and in wood and earth and even in the very crevices of volcanoes.

But there is one place where no beetle has yet been found. It is the ice-bound table land of Spitzbergen, to the north of Russia. Here are found the mammoths, birds, fish, mollusks, crustaceans, a few insects of varied species and many spiders, but not a single beetle.

While other insects have succeeded in some way in migrating from the mainland, the beetles have apparently been unable to cross the wide, icy waters.

When Parasols Began.

Parasols when they first came into use must have been cumbersome. Henri Estienne, writing in 1575, speaks of a parasol as capable generally of sheltering four persons from the sun. And when they diminished in circumference the material still remained of the heaviest. Red velvet parasols, with heavy gold fringes, were carried by ladies of fashion in the days of Louis XIV. At that time it was possible when crossing a bridge in Paris to hire a parasol at one end and deposit it at the other, the charge for the accommodation being a sou. Under the regency fashion went to the other extreme. Men's parasols folded into the shape of a three cornered hat and could thus be carried elegantly under the arm. Ladies' parasols were hinged so that they could slip into the pocket, for ladies had pockets then.—London Spectator.

Seven Bells.

Everybody who knows anything about nautical matters understands the methods of keeping time at sea—eight bells every four hours. From 0 to 8 in the evening is the second dogwatch, but on British ships seven bells (half past 7) of the second dogwatch are never struck. All other ships, even the American, strike these bells. During the Napoleonic wars there was a great mutiny in the British navy. The crews of the fleets lying at Spithead and the Nore agreed to rise simultaneously against their officers. The signal agreed upon was seven bells of the second dogwatch. The mutiny actually began at the arranged time, but failed, the ringleaders being executed. Ever since then seven bells of the second dogwatch has never been struck on British ships, naval or mercantile.

The Misguided Friend.

De Chappie—If there's any one out-gance I hate more than another it's a fellow who is always going around introducing people. There's Goodheart, for instance. Bouttown—What's been doing? De Chappie—The idiot! The other day he introduced me to a man I owed money to, and I'd been owing it so long I'd forgotten all about me. Now I'll have to pay up or be sued.—London Telegraph.

Serene Sarcasm.

"You have completely upset my train of thought," exclaimed the intransigent man.

"I shouldn't call anything so easily upset a train," commented his irritating wife. "It's more like a canoe."—Washington Star.

A Natural Mistake.

The Confused Lady Shopper—Beg pardon, sir, but are you a floorwalker? The Muddled Man Shopper—Where else could I walk? Do I look like a fly?—Buckeye.

If you bring a smile to the trembling lips of another you will soon discover that a smile is alighting on your own lip.