

"But you had such a sad look in your eyes just now."

"I know. I've been reading about the unhappiness that the wives of men of genius have always had to bear. Oh, Alfred, dear, I'm so glad you're just an ordinary sort of a fellow."

SORRY TOO LATE.

An Irishman dreamt he was on a visit to the king, who presently asked him what he would take.

"Shure, your Majesty," said he, "I'll take a drop of whisky."

"Hot or cold?" inquired the King.

"Hot, may it please your Highness."

Before the kettle had time to boil Pat awoke from his dream.

"Well," said he, "and it's sorry I am now as I didn't have it cowl'd."

WOULD HAVE TO.

A man whose every word and action betokened a son of the soil stepped up to the booking office of a provincial railway station. After a cheery, "Gude marn-in' to yer!" he asked the clerk for a ticket to London.

"You will have a return, won't you?" inquired the clerk.

"What do you say?"

"Why, you'll want to come back, won't you?"

"Noa, that I shan't; but ye'd better give me a return all the same."

"Rut," expostulated the clerk, "if you don't want to come back it's only a waste of money."

"Look 'ere, young man," replied the old fellow, in a tone of subdued confidence, "that's my business. I sartinly shan't want ter come back; but I shall jest as sartinly have to!"

ALL THE SAME FAMILY.

The new recruit walked into the orderly room and made himself at home with the clerks there. "Say, who is the General Staff I hear so much about these days? I see his name in the papers almost as much as Marshal Foch's. I never heard of him before."

"He's a son of Major Operations," said the Sergeant Major.

"And a brother to Corporal Punishment," said the Post Corporal.

"Also a cousin to Private Entrance," said the orderly room clerk, as he showed him out. "Didn't you see their names on the door as you came in?"

SMILE RAISERS.

Little Willie: "Dad, what is 'sheet music'?"

Dad: "Snoring, my son."

Benny (having difficulty in teaching little sister to whistle): "Aw, just make a hole in your face and push."

Caller: "How is your new office boy getting along these days?"

Business Man: "Oh, fine; he's got things so mixed up now that I couldn't do without him!"

"You've 'eard of Cleopatra, ain't yer, Jack?"

Jack (referring to ship of that name): "Yes, I was out in China with 'er in '96."

"The dooce yer was! Then she ain't been dead so long as I thought."

Man from Town: "What very changeable weather you get down here."

Old Fisherman: "Changeable do ye call it, sir? If it 'ad been changeable we'd 'ave changed it long ago."

Sergeant: "Now then! Line up alphabetically for pay. What's your name, my lad?"

Private: "Phillips, sir."

Sergeant: "Well, what yer doing up here? Get back among the F's at once!"

SCIENCE SIFTINGS

By "VOLT."

Peat-Coal Fuel.

The Belfast correspondent of the *Irish Times* writes: "Mr. S. C. Davidson, the founder and chairman of the Sirocco Engineering Works, Belfast, has patented a method of dealing with peat and forming from it a synthetic coal, which should relieve the situation due to the coal shortage. Mr. Davidson's method is the simple one of putting back into the peat some of the oil substances which have been washed out owing to its greater proximity to the surface of the ground. The peat is first disintegrated and mixed with about 15 per cent. pitch dust. This mixture is placed in the hydraulic press, and comes out in a solid block of what looks like polished hardwood. The fuel burns readily.

The Coldest Spot on Earth.

The coldest spot on the earth's surface is near Werkhjansk, Siberia. There, it is said, "the culminating point of excessive climate in all the world is reached." In other words, it is the pole of the greatest known cold. The lowest reading of the thermometer, taken by Sir George Nares, was noted there—81 degrees below zero Fahrenheit. For a long time it was supposed that Yakutsk, 400 miles from Werkhjansk, was the coldest place in the world; recent observations, however, have exploded that notion. The soil at both places above mentioned is frozen to a depth of nearly 400 feet. It is believed to have been deposited in a frozen state during the glacial epoch, as no amount of cold could penetrate the earth to such an enormous depth.

Earth's Crust not Rigid.

To the layman nothing may seem more rigid than the crust of the earth, but men of science say that it bends and buckles appreciably under the pull of the heavenly bodies. Observation has shown that the shores on opposite sides of a tidal basin approach each other at high tide. The weight of water in the Irish Sea, for example, is so much greater at that time that the bed sinks a trifle, and in consequence pulls the Irish and English coasts nearer together. Thus the buildings of Liverpool and Dublin may be fancied as bowing to one another across the channel, the deflection from the perpendicular being about one inch for every 16 miles. It has also been shown that ordinary valleys widen under the heat of the sun and contract again at night.

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