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An Attic.... Salt-Shaker

CHATTY WEEKLY
BUDGET OF
STORIES ABOUT
FAMOUS PEOPLE

—BY—
W. ORTON
TEWSON

THE news that John D. Rockefeller is writing his autobiography, reminds me of a story Sir Hall Caine tells. It was at the "tainted money" period—"ain't mine and 'ain't yours," as Mark Twain called it—that Hall Caine, during a visit to New York, was invited to speak from the pulpit of the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church—the Rockefeller family church. He accepted, but stipulated that he be allowed to choose his subject. That was readily agreed to.

ON the eventful Sunday, an expectant congregation filled the church. When the time came for Hall Caine to deliver his sermon, he caused a stir by announcing as his text:

"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

"And for half an hour or so," said the novelist, telling me the story with a twinkle in his eye, "I preached to them on the subject of my text."

I THINK it was on the same trip, too, that the New York reporters played a joke on Hall Caine. Some friends arranged a slumming party for the novelist, to show him something of the night life in the local underworld. The newspapers got to hear about it in advance and reporters and camera men were awaiting the party at a red-hot Bohemian resort. Sir Hall had scarcely seated himself at a convivial table when

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THE WARDEN

suddenly a blinding flash lit up the room. A second previously a prepossessing young damsel had hopped in to his lap!

THE sequel came the following Sunday when a newspaper printed the picture showing Hall Caine seated at a table with a merry little lady perched upon his knees. Lady Hall Caine—who told me the story—has a keen sense of fun and enjoyed the joke immensely and still does. But those who know the novelist will appreciate that it is not the brand of humor that appeals to him.

BY THE WAY I see that both Sir Hall Caine's sons—Derwent and Ralph—are members of the new British Parliament, Ralph as a Conservative and Derwent as a Laborite. And that, too, reminds me that over the wonderful Jacobean fireplace in the Hampstead home of the Hall Caines—I don't think they live there any more—was this carved motto:

"What is spoken here is sacred everywhere."

It was Derwent who, after hearing outside the home a lot of garbled gossip of "sacred" conversation inside the home, altered the motto, making it read:

"What is sacred here is spoken everywhere."

E. W. HORNUNG, of "Raffles" fame, was Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's brother-in-law, and a noted wit. Once when he was shown the printed record of some one who claimed to have run the hundred yards in under ten seconds, he said:

"It's a sprinter's error."

CONAN DOYLE is a great believer in boxing which he holds to be the finest single-man sport, with football as the best collective one. In his younger days he was no mean performer with the gloves.

"Better that our sports should be a little too rough," he believes, "than that we should run a risk of effeminacy."

Sir Arthur's story "Rodney Stone," contains one of the most exciting accounts in fiction of a prize fight.

ANOTHER well-known novelist AND now let me tell you an amusing little story about John. When

Art of Self-Defense," is Jeffrey Farnol. Only recently there was published a book by Farnol called "Famous Prize Fights." Many readers of his novels, "The Broad Highway" and "The Amateur Gentleman," have marveled at his descriptions of fistic encounters. The truth is that Farnol is a useful boxer himself. He made the trip from England in 1921 to attend the Dempsey-Carpenter fight at Jersey City. And that, if you please, is enthusiasm indeed.

EVERY ONE knows of George Bernard Shaw's interest in boxing—through his loud talks with Gene Tunney. But G. B. S. has no use for brutality or commercialism. In a preface to "Cashel Byron's Profession," he offered the opinion that bare-knuckle fighting lived by its blackguardism and died of its intolerable tediousness. And Harry Preston, famous boxing expert, is on record as saying that the old knuckle-fighters could never have survived twenty rounds of modern boxing. "A blow with a gloved hand, scientifically delivered, is harder than a blow from a naked fist," he declares. And he should know, being an old-time amateur champion.

THAT versatile man of letters, John Drinkwater—he is poet, playwright and biographer—was recently asked what he considered his greatest achievement. He replied:

"When I was thirteen years old I created a record for my class at the Oxford High School in the long jump, 15 feet 8 inches, which has never been beaten."

Class will tell!

DRINKWATER—name pronounced as spelt, not Drinkwater as quite a lot of people mispronounce it—has been over here to see his new play, "Bird in Hand," safely launched. Before sailing home he dined with President Hoover, an old friend, to whom, by the way, he dedicated his famous Lincoln play. Drinkwater is an enthusiastic stamp collector and has a particularly fine collection of U. S. A. issues.

A LITTLE more than three years after his appointment, the post office at New Salem was closed for lack of business. It is said, relates Alvin F. Harlow (in "Old Post Bags"), that the government traveling auditor did not come around to settle with the ex-postmaster until long after the office had been discontinued. When he finally appeared in Lincoln's law office at Springfield and asked for a settlement of the balance due the government, about \$17, Lincoln went to an old trunk and took from it a cotton rag, tied into a packet with string. Untying it, he produced the exact amount.

"I never use any man's money but my own," was his laconic comment.

A REMINISCENCE of the method on conveying intelligence before the advent of the telegraph, is seen in the row of cannon posted eight or ten miles apart along the Erie canal and the Hudson River in 1825, which carried to New York City in eighty minutes the news of the starting from Buffalo of the first boat to go through the new waterway.

AT the time of the Boer War, Colonel Douglas Haig—as he then was—achieved a great respect and liking for the Boer Generals Botha and Smuts, which respect and liking, I may add, was reciprocated. Later, a warm friendship developed between the three men, and in 1921, when Field Marshal Earl Haig—as he then was—visited South Africa during his world trip, he stayed with General Smuts, who was Prime Minister, at his official residence—Cecil Rhodes' old home.

THERE was a happy re-union. It was a visit that Haig had been looking forward to. With him was Sergeant Secrett, his soldier-servant of Boer War days.

"Well, Sergeant Secrett," was Smuts' greeting to the orderly. "I see you are still looking after the Field Marshal."

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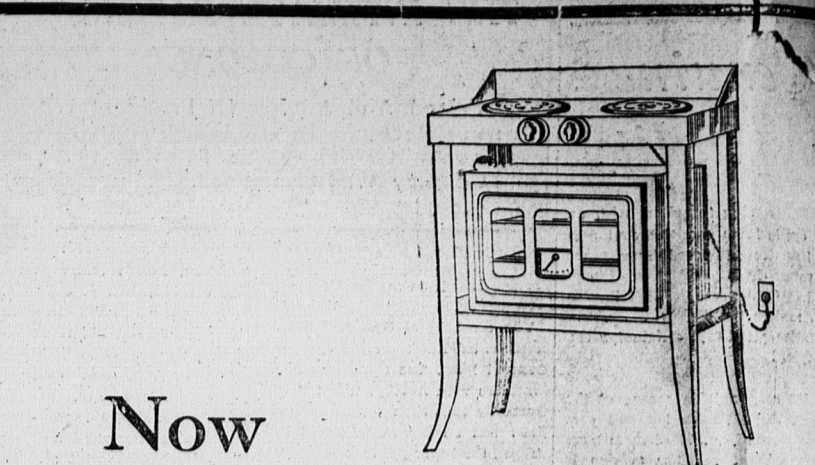
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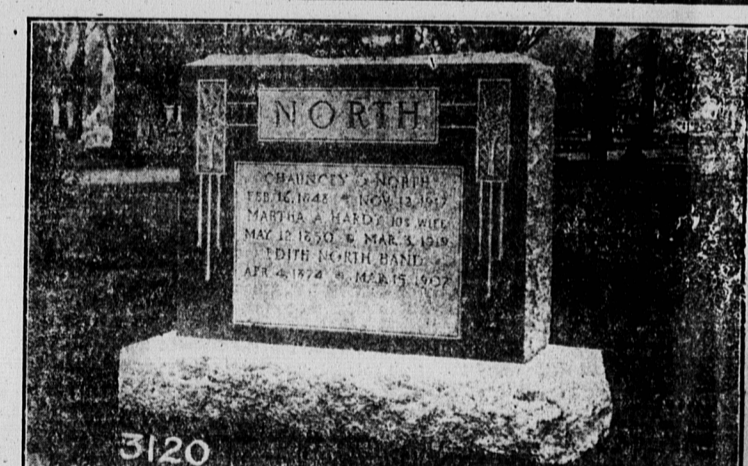
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But what I like best is this picture of Mrs. Smuts, given by Secretary in "Twenty-Five Years With Earl Haig."
"I remember seeing Mrs. Smuts personally 'doing-up' the collars for her husband—the Prime Minister! Many people would not understand that, but I did. There is a certain satisfaction in doing things personally, yourself, with your own hands, for those you regard highly. Do I not know?"
"Cheer up," his opponent said. "Remember you win at the first. You'll probably be burying me someday I expect."
"Even then," said the preacher, "I will be your hole."



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