

Billings Josh

# Josh Billings on Ice, and Other Things



Josh Billings

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**Billings J.**

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# Henry Wheeler Shaw

## Josh Billings on Ice, and Other Things

### I. JOSH ON ICE

Having herd mutch sed about skating parks, and the grate amount ov helth and muscle they woz imparting tew the present generashun at a slite advance from fust cost, i bought a ticket and went within the fense.

I found the ice in a slippery condishun, covering about 5 akers ov artyfishall water, which waz owned bi a stock company, and froze tew order.

Upon one side ov the pond waz erekted little groserly buildings, where the wimmin sot on benches while the fellers (kivvered with blushes) hitched the magick iron tew their feet.

It waz a most exsiting scene: the sun waz in the skey – and the wind waz in the air – and the birds were in the South – and the snow waz on the ground – and the ice lay shivering with a bad kold – and angells (ov both genders) flucktuated past me pro and con, 2 and fro, here a littl and thare a good deal.

It waz a most exsiting scene; I wanted tew holler "Bully" or lay down and rool over.

But i kept in, and aked with glory.

Helth waz piktured on menny a nobell brow. Az the femail angells put out ov the pond, side by side with the male angells, it waz the most powerfull scene i ever stood behind.

The long red tape from their necks swum in the breeze, and the feathers in their jockeys fluttered in the breeze, and other things (tew mutch to menshun) fluttered in the breeze.

I don't think i ever waz more crazy before in mi life – on ice.

For 2 long hours i stood and gazed with dum exsitement.

I felt like a kanall hoss turned suddinly out to grass.

I didn't kno how tew proceed.

Az one ov the angells, more sudden than all the rest, cum flying down the trak, 3 lengths ahed ov her male angell, awl eyes ware gorging with her heavenly bust ov speed; she seemed tew hav cut luce from earth, and waz bound South, for the Cape ov Good Hope, when awl tew onst, with gorgous swoop terriffick, down-crumbling into a limpid heap she went with squeak terriffick, a living lovely mass ov disastrous skirt and tapering ankle.

Awl gathered around the bursted angell; but lo! in a minnitt's space, her wings agin was plumed, and evry feather waz in its lawfal plase; and on she fled laffing like wine thru its buteous blushes.

I had saw enuff – more happyness than belonged tew me – and az i sloly wended back tew mi home at the tavern i felt – good.

## II.

# SUM NATRAL HISTORY

Thare iz no tuition so cheap and so handy az natral history.

It prevails evrywhare; the cockroach and the behomath are built out ov it, the lizard and the elephant are full ov it, it is the monkey's right bower, and the kangaroo's best jump.

The grass, the dandelion and the spinnage are its children; it is the language ov creeping things, the majesta ov the mountin, the soul ov the talking brook, and the inspiration ov the lambkin's tail.

Natral history iz dogg cheap.

To open our eyes, and think while we are looking iz aul the capital necessary for the naturalizing bizzness.

Who wouldn't be a naturalizer, when natur makes such cheap sacrifices upon aul her alters, and holds the insense under our very nozes?

This iz what ails me this morning, tew study the light-hearted grasshopper, the relentless bed-bugger, and the elastick flea.

The Bible sez, "The grasshopper is a burden," and i never knu the Bible tew say anything that warnt so.

When the grasshop begins tew liv they are verry small, but in a little while thare gits tew be plenty ov them.

They only liv one year at once, and then go back, and begin agin.

Their best gait iz a hop, and with the wind on their quarters they can make sum good time.

They are a sure krop to raize, but sum years they raize more than others. I hav seen sum fields so full ov them that you couldn't stick another grasshopper in, unless you sharpened him off tew a pint.

When they git so very plenty, they are very apt tew want tew start, and then they bekum a traveling famine, and leave the road they take az barren az the inside ov a country church during a week day.

Grasshoppers don't seem tew be acktually necesary for our happiness, but they may be; we don't even know what we want most.

I don't want grasshops tew giv entirely out, not if they are a blessing, but i hav thought (to myself) if they would let the grass and cornstalks be, and pitch onto the burdoks and Canada thissells, i would bet a few dollars on the thissells, jist tew encourage the fight, and wouldn't care a cuss if they both got finally licked.

But mi best judgment would be tew bet on the grasshops.

I never see ennybody yet but what despised *Bed Bugs*. They are the meanest ov aul crawling, creeping, hopping, or biteing things.

They dassent tackle a man bi dalite, but sneak in, after dark, and chaw him while he iz fast asleep.

A musketo will fight you in broad dalite, at short range, and giv you a chance tew knock in hiz sides – the flea iz a game bugg, and will make a dash at you even in Broadway – but the bed-bugg iz a garroter, who waits till you strip, and then picks out a mellow place tew eat you.

If i was ever in the habit ov swearing, i wouldn't hesitate to damn a bed bugg right tew hiz face.

Bed bugs are uncommon smart in a *small* way; one pair ov them will stock a hair matrass in 2 weeks, with bugs enuff tew last a small family a whole year.

It don't do enny good to pray when bed bugs are in season; the only way tew git rid ov them iz tew bile up the whole bed in aqua fortis, and then heave it away and buy a new one.

Bed buggs, when they hav grone aul they intend to, are about the size ov a bluejay's eye, and hav a brown complexion, and when they start out to garrote are az thin az a grease spot, but when they git thru garroting they are swelled up like a blister.

It takes them 3 days tew git the swelling out ov them.

If bed buggs have enny destiny to fill, it must be their stummuks; but it seems tew me that they must hav bin made by acksident, jist az slivvers are, tew stick into sumboddy.

If they waz got up for sum wise purpose, they must hav took the wrong road, for there kant be enny wisdum in chawing a man aul night long, and raising a family, besides, tew foller the same trade.

If thare iz sum wisdum in aul this, I hope the bed buggs will chaw them folks who kan see it, and leave me be, bekause i am one ov the hereticks.

The smallest animal ov the brute creashun, and the most pesky, iz the *Flea*.

They are about the bigness ov an onion seed, and shine like a bran new shot.

They spring from low places, and kan spring further and faster than enny ov the bug-brutes.

They bite wuss than the musketoze, for they bite on a run; one flea will go aul over a man's subburbs in 2 minnits, and leave him az freckled az the meazels.

It iz impossible to do ennything well with a flea on you, except sware, and fleas aint afraid ov that; the only way iz tew quit bizzness ov aul kinds and hunt for the flea, and when you have found him, he ain't thare. Thiz iz one ov the flea mysterys, the fackulty they hav ov being entirely lost jist as soon as you hav found them.

I don't suppose thare iz ever killed, on an average, during enny one year, more than 16 fleas, in the whole ov the United States ov America, unless thare iz a cazualty ov sum kind. Once in a while thare iz a dogg gits drowned sudden, and then thare may be a few fleas lost.

They are about az hard to kill az a flaxseed iz, and if you don't mash them up az fine az ground pepper they will start bizzness agin, on a smaller kapital, jist az pestiverous az ever.

Thare iz lots ov people who have never seen a flea, and it takes a pretty smart man tew see one ennyhow; they don't stay long in a place.

If you ever ketch a flea, kill him before you do ennything else; for if you put it oph 2 minnits, it may be too late.

Menny a flea haz past away forever in less than 2 minnits.

### III.

## LIVE YANKEES

Live Yankees are chuck full of karakter and sissing hot with enterprize and curiosty.

In bild we find them az lean az a hunter's dorg, with a parched countenance, reddy for a grin, or for a sorrow; ov elaastick step: thortful, but not abstrakted; pashunt, bekauze cunnin; ever watchful; slo to anger; avoiding a fight; but rezolute at bay.

In dress alwuz slik, but not stuck up; their harness alwuz betrays them wherever they go.

The oil ov their langwidge iz their dezire tew pleze, and their greezy words foreshadder a proffit.

They are natral mechanicks; the histry ov man's necessitys iz the histry ov their invenshuns.

The Live Yankee haz no hum; hiz luv ov invenshun breeds a luv ov change, and wharever a human trail shows itself we find him pantin on the trak.

He never gits sick at the stummuk in a furrin land, or grows sentermental; the buty ov a river tew him iz its capacity for a steambote; its sloping banks checker into bildin lots, and its poetry waters might do the drudgery ov a cottin mill.

He looks at a marble pyramid, guesses at its height, kalkulates the stone by the perch, and sells the magnifisent relick in Boston at a proffit.

He climbs the Alpin hights, crossed by conkerin heroes, and iz struk with the proprierty ov tunneling it.

He sits, cross-legged, beneath the sheltring vine and listens to the oneazy sea, sees the warm promise ov the grape, and forgettin the holy memrys ov the land ov song, grinds the smilin vintage into wine and maiks a happy bargin.

You can meet him in Constanternopel, makin up in grimace what he lacks in langwidge, spreadin a plaster with hiz tounge, for the man ov Mahomet.

Go where you will, from the numb palsied North tew the swetting limberness ov the South, from the top ov earth's mornin tew half past eleven at night, and the everlastin Yankee you will find, either vehement in an argue, or purswazive in a swop.

Hiz religion iz praktikal; he mourns over the heathen, and iz reddy tew save them by the job.

He luvs liberty with a red pepper enthuziasm, and fully beleafs Nu England kan whip the universe.

If the phlegmattick Englishman brags about roast beef and hiz ansesters, Jonathan haz a pumkin pie and a grandpop tew match them.

If the Frenchman grows crazy over a frigazee ov frog's hind legs, Jonathan pulls out a donut and a Rhode Island greening.

If the dusky Italian talks about the mad vomits ov Vgesuvius, Jonathan turns in the water power ov Niagara.

In argument alwuz ernest, and in reazoning alwuz specius, this progressive phenomena tramps the world with the skeleton ov a pattent right in hiz carpet bag, and, in his ever open hand and face a pleasant "Heow air yer?"

If you would save your pride from bein sandpapered, risk it not in a dicker with Jonathan.

Hiz razor is the true Damascus, strapped on the wand ov Midas for a golden harvest; hiz sanctity iz often shrewdness, and hiz sweet savor iz often the reflekted halo ov the comin shillin.

Constitushunaly and by edukashun honest, he iz alwuz reddy tew cry for the deeds dun in the boddy; hiz hospitalitys and charities are cerimonial dutys, and if hiz religion iz sometimes only the severitys ov a sabbath, it iz bekauze hiz bias iz the thursting impulse ov a creatin genius chained tew the more sordid pashun for lucre.



## IV. LINCH-PINS

I want to bet 3 Dollars, that no man ever matched himself agin the Devil, but what he got beat.  
And I want to bet one dollar and seventy-five cents more, that there is no villin on airth so gratefully mean az he who recommends a vice that he has too much prudence to indulge in himself.

I hav held, that if a man iz virtuous, he kan't be ignorant; and i still hold it.

Aim hi, if you strike low. The man who undertakes tew jump 375 feet ahead, will sertainly make a good try.

I never knu a man who was alwus anxious tew repent uv his sins before he had committed them, who didn't want the sharpest kind ov watching.

"Don't put oph till to-morrow what kan be did to-day." It is better even to do a foolish thing at onst, if you have positiffly made up yure mind to do it.

I never bet enny stamps on the man who iz always telling what he would have did if he had bin *thare*; I hav notised that this kind never git *thare*.

Faith don't appear to me tew be ennything more than tip top good sense; all the faith there is in this world now wont keep a man from falling to the bottom of a well if he lets go ov the curb to spit on hiz hands.

When i git to not having enny good luck, it duz seem to me that i kan hav more ov it than enny man i ever knu, and not half try; i suppose it seems jist so to you, my friend, don't it?

I kant think ov enny talent now, that iz so apt to descend from father to son, untarnished, as the gift ov exaggeration.

"Thare aint ennything nu under the sun." The old feller in Connekticut, who carried the same old jack-knife for 43 years, and wore out 9 new handles, and 12 setts ov blades, sez so.

Thare aint, after all, but one right way to dew things. I hav seen kows that you could milk on both sides, but they wan't more than haff broke.

A man may hav a perfek right to be born single, but I dought whether he haz a right tew continny on so.

I take it, that the excellence of human natur consists in lifting the greatest amount ov sorrow with the least amount ov grin.

Them who make the most blow, hav the least fragranse – it iz jess so with the hollerhauk.

The best edukashun a man receives in this life, he gits just before he dize, and it mostly consists in forgetting what he haz larnt before.

The world looks with kold respek upon an ackt ov justiss, but heave up their hats at a display ov mersy. Yet the one iz the strength ov virtue, while the other iz most often its gratest weakness.

A mind that haz more imaginashun than sense iz like a goose – fust rate tew fli down hill.

I don't think the world haz enny Civilizashun tew spare, but i think she haz more than she kan manage well.

Poetri, tew be excellent, wants tew be like natur, but about 4 times az big.

## V. GOOSE TALK

The goose is a grass-animal but don't chaw her cud.

They are good livers; about one aker to a goose iz enuff, altho there iz sum folks who thinks one goose tew 175 akers, is nearer right.

These two calculations are so fur apart, it iz difficult tew tell now, which will finally win.

But i don't think, if i had a farm ov 175 akers, awl paid for, that i would sell it for half what it was worth, just bekauze it didn't hav but one goose on it. Geese stay well; sum ov our best biographers say, 70 years, and grow tuff tew the last.

They lay one egg at once, about the size of a goose egg, in which the gosling lies hidd.

The gosling iz the goose's babe.

The goose don't suckle hiz young, but turns him out tew pasture on sumboddy's vacant lot.

They seem tew lack wisdom, but are considered generally sound on the goose.

They are good eating, but not good chawing; the reason ov this remains a profound sekret to this day.

When the femail goose iz at work hatching, she iz a hard bird tew please; she riles clear up from the bottom in a minnit, and will fight a yoke ov oxen, if they show her the least bit ov sass. The geese iz excellent for feathers, which she sheds every year by the handful.

They are also amphibicuss, besides several other kinds ov cuss.

But they are mostly cureiss about one thing: they kan haul one leg up into their body, and stand on tuther, awl day, and not tutch ennything with their hands.

I take notis, thare ain't but darn few men kan dew this.

## VI.

### JOSH BILLINGS: HIZ SHADE TREE

Sum fu years ago, when i want so old nor near so hansum az i am now, i waz a feller citizen in one ov the sudden towns, which during the past 25 years, hav fairly sprung up, az it were, by necromancy, in the western country. At that time I waz verry ritch and owned a house, and lot. At one corner, on mi lot, stood, or rather leaned, a tree, az awkward az a shanghi rusetor; it bent at least 3 different ways, and its limbs were az sprawling az tho it had bin born in a nort-west storm. I had sum pride in them days, and longed to put that shade tree out ov misery.

The tree was a nondescribe, but seemed tew be a mingling ov the silver popular, which haz sich uneasy leaves, and a species ov soft maple. I would hav cut it down if mi heart had bin sharp enuff; but altho i hav lived on the edge ov the wilderness for more than half ov mi life, i never yet saw a tree fall before the choppers, but a shudder crept out ov me, it seemed so mutch like a wanton cruelty.

But i had manned mi guns fur one thing, and that waz, the tree had got tew be trimmed. I had four nabors near at hand; two lived upon the same side ov the street that I did, and the other two didn't.

They were mi Apollos, and when i wanted enny soothsaying done, i went tu them.

I will say one thing for these nabors, they waz always willing tew give *advice*.

Accordingly i asked each one ov them, az opportunity offered, how the tree should be clipped.

The first one suggested to leave the lower branches intact, and take oph the head ov the tree, and then it would soon form a cone, compact and graceful, like an umbreller on duty.

This plan pleased me, bekauze it had bin mi plan.

The next one picked out certain limbs, that positively must cum off.

The third one had hiz noshun, which he knu waz right; and the fourth one never saw a tree ov that kind trimmed but one way, which he suggested in sich an unmistakabel manner, that I felt like a pashunt in the hands ov a root dokter, willing tew take enny thing.

After fully elaborating each one ov the four diagnosiss ov the kase, i went tew work like a humbel christshun tew carry the whole ov them out.

I had no trouble in doing this. But the tree (the Lord watch over mi poor shade tree!) was nothing but a gaunt stick about 10 feet hi, too crooked to fall, not a limb nor a leaf on it, and too frightful even for a hitching post.

1st Moral – Advice iz good only az corroborating testimony.

2nd Moral – If yu put yureself into the hands ov yure frends, yu must expekt that the kindness ov their hearts iz no protekshun aginst the willfullness ov their judgments.

3rd Moral – Advice iz like a doktor's pills: it iz often advisabel tew *receive* them without *taking* them.

4th Moral – One man kan alwus milk a cow better than 4 kan.

## VII.

### JOSH CORRESPONDS FREELY WITH 3 FELLOWS

*Shortfellow.*— Yure views are korrekt; thare iz no telling what hosses will trot by looking at them. Lady Thorne and Dexter are no more bilt alike than the Black Crook and Flying Scud. Neither do i think that pedigree ever makes a hoss fast enny more than it makes a man smart. Hambletonian and sum ov the kings ov England hav both sired lunkheads. If a hoss iz made right, he can proceed fast, i don't kare who made him. Flying Dutchman lived and died, and left a two-mile heat on the books that haint bin duplikated yet, and about aul that iz known ov him iz that he waz got in a brickyard in Pensilvany. Tom Thum went the fust 100 miles in 10 hours that waz ever did, and he had no more pedigree than a prary dorg, or a Digger injun. Who ever heard ov Flory Temple having enny pedigree?

If she ever gits one, it will be like menny ov the epitaffs we read in the graveyards – courteous libels.

I hav seen French ponys go on the ice faster than you could telegraff, bilt like a pumpkin seed, and with a pedigree just about as pure as a dock rat's.

Still, if you or i should talk these things among the literati ov the hoss stabel, we should probably git our front teeth knocked out. If i waz going tew buy a trottin hoss i would't ask about his pedigree enny more than i would ask who made a mint julep. If the hoss didn't suit me, i am dredful certain the pedigree wouldn't. Old Eclipse never waz beaten in hiz day, and his full brother wasn't fast enuff for a modern hearse hoss.

*Bigfellow.*— Trout fishing iz a good deal like painting picktures – you have got to be born how; you kant learn how. It don't require the genius ov a statesman tew know how tew ketch a trout; but the two best trout fishers I ever knu waz Daniel Webster and old Ishmael. Both were natiffs ov Nu England; one ov them everyboddy iz proud to remember, and the other waz a simple old nigger; but i think the old dark waz the best fisher ov the two.

He would walk up tew a hole in the brook, whare a big trout lay az careless and yet az still az a hen turkey, and stand thare till the fish mistook him for the stub ov a tree, then would drop his worm, or hiz grasshopper, or (if the season waz right) would danse hiz flie above the trout's head so literal that the fish would bite merely from the force ov habit, whether he waz hungry or not.

This old Afrikan alwus started out for trout just as a dorg duz for mischief, the other way from whare he waz going, and never cum back without a trophy. The best kind of a trout pole for brook-fishing grows along side ov the brook. They are black alder, and have the same kind ov a taper that a rat tarrier's tale duz. Twelve foot is long enuff for the pole, and the brook that don't raize them somewhere on its banks iz not a good trout stream. But thare aint room enuff in a letter for me tew talk trout. Go with me sumtime next May among the mountains, and i will show yu how tew win theze little spotted morsels from their wet and noisy homes. But – though I like company generally – tew be honest about it, trout fishing iz a good deal like sparking – one feller at a time iz enuff.

*Littlefellow.*— Yu tell me in your letter "that musik iz yure egstatick bliss; that yure soul iz sot tew musick, and feeds on its gorgous viands." I am glad tew hear yu say so, for now i know yu won't never du enny big mischief in this world. Ennyboddy who loves musik az much az yu say you do, don't want enny other kind ov oats. I am unfortunate in this direkshun. I don't kno one note from another, unless it iz a bank-note, and i never had enny ear for musik since i waz a boy. Once in a while, in them daze, the schoolmarm, in lifting me up off from the bench by the ears tew see how heavy i waz, would start the musik out of me. I never tended but one gorgous opera in my life, and it won't never be convenient for me tew tend another. A forrin woman sung sum ov the "gorgous viands" yu speak ov. She was very fat herself, and want very thoroughly drest about the neck and naber hood. She threw her head back like a sled runner, and yelled az tho she had a rat on her. I

expekted every minnit tew see her arrested for breaking the piece. I suppose if i had the right kind ov taste for gorgous vittles, this kind ov musick would eat me good. I heard a milkmaid once sing, in a cow-yard, as she sot by the side ov a heifer just as the sun waz setting. It waz a love story song. Perhaps there was no gorge in it; but there waz sumthing in it that made me feel sorry aul over. This iz aul i kno about musick. I could listen aul day tew that kind ov soft sadness she sung about, and feel lonesum and lonesummer aul the time.

## VIII. MONOGRAPHS

The *Jealous Man* iz alwus a-hunting.

He is alwus a-hunting for sumthing that he don't expeckt tew find, and after he haz found it then he iz mad bekauze he haz.

Theze fellers don't beleaf in spooks, and yet they are about the only folks who ever see enny. A jealous man iz alwus happy, jist in perposhun az he iz miserable.

Jelosy iz a disseaze, and it iz a good deal like sea sickness – dreadful sick, and kan't vomit.

The *Anonymous Man* boards at a red tavern, and pays for hiz board bi tending bar occasionally. He hain't got any more karakter than the jack ov spades haz, when it ain't trumps.

He iz a loafer bi profession, without enny vices.

He rides on the box, once in a while, with the driver, and noboddy thinks ov asking him for hiz stage fare.

He iz az useless az an extra pump would be in the desert ov Sarah.

He sprung from a respektable family; his great grandfather woz a justiss ov the peace; but he has not got vanity enuff tew brag on it.

He ain't necessarily a phool, enny more than a bull's eye watch iz; if enny boddy will wind him up, he will sett still, and run quietly down.

The *Stiff Man* looks down, when he walks, upon folks. He don't seem tew hav but one limber jinte in him, and that iz lokated in hiz noze.

He is a kind of maskuline turkey, on parade in a barn-yard.

He iz generally loaded with wisdum clear up tew the muzzell, and when he goes oph, makes a noize like a cannon, but don't dew enny dammage.

I hav seen him fire into a crowd, and miss evry man.

This kind ov *stiff man* iz verry handy tew flatter. They seem tew know they ain't entitled tu a good artikle, and, tharefore, are satisfied with hard soap.

Thare ain't but fu men who git stiff on what they acktually know, but most aul ov them git stiff on what they acktually feel.

Stiff men are called aristokrats, but this ain't so. Thare ain't no such thing as aristokrats in this country.

The country ain't long enuff yet, unless a man haz got sum Indian in him.

Az a gen'ral thing, stiff men git mad dredful eazy, and have tew git over it dredful eazy, bekauze folks ain't apt tew git a big skare at what they ain't afraid ov.

*Stiff man* had a grandfather once, who went tew Congress from our distrikt, and thare ain't one in the whole family that hav been able tew git limber sinse.

The *Model Man* never disturbs a hen when she iz setting; never speaks cross tew a lost dogg; always puts a five cent shinplaster in hiz vest pockett late Saturday night, tew hav it ready Sunday morning for the church platter; rizes whenever a lady enters the street kars; remembers your uncle plainly, and asks after all the family. If he steps on a kat's tail, is sure to do it light, and immegiately asks her pardon; reads the Phunny Phellow, and laffs bekauze he kan't help it; hooks up hiz wife's dress, and plays hoss with the children. Never meddles with the cream on the milk-pans; goes eazily of errands and cums back in season; attends every boddy's phuneral; kan always tell when the moon changes; thinks just az yu do, or the other way if you want him to; follows evry boddy's advice but hiz own; praktices most ov the virtews without knowing it; leads the life ov a shorn lamb; gits sick after a while, and dies az soon az he kan, tew save making enny further trubble.

The model man's vices are not feared, nor hiz virtews respekted. He lives in the memory of the world just about az long az a pleasant day duz.

He may be called a "clever feller," and that iz only a libel; but he will git hiz reward herafter – when the birds get theirs.

## IX.

### HONESTA IZ THE BEST POLISY

The author ov this proverb waz either a very shrude man, or he acksidentily spoke what he didn't think.

Honesta iz, in mi opinyun, a mere matter ov polisy.

Man iz, waz, and alwus will be, a dishonest critter by natur.

It iz az natral for him tew steal when he wants tew, az it iz tew blo hiz noze.

In order tew git sosiety into decent shape, so that the masheen could be run without a continual bust, it waz absolutely necessary that man should make himself honest.

If that hadn't hav bin did, it wouldn't hav bin safe tew leave a saw-mill out of doors after dark. Hence honesta bekum a matter ov polisy, and it works well.

The fear ov the law here, and the law hereafter, haz furnished us sum very clever specimens of Christianity.

Serpoze thare waz no law agin 2 wives, how menny men iz thare in yure naberhood, that wouldn't sustain the law?

I hav thought that aul the virtues, and aul the affekskuns, (except the few which are instinkts, and which we and the dogs have just about alike,) are mere opprashuns of polisy.

Ov course the virtews improve by hoeing, and mankind haz bekum better, just az they hav bekum richer, by keeping their munny and morals at 10 per cent. interest.

Menny folks are down on luxurys, and plum puddin, but i aint; the more puddin folks hav, the more they will develop.

Stop the hanker in human natur for any more plum puddin, and nu bonnets, and in about 450 years, men and wimmin would all go tew grass, az Nebucunesser did.

Once more, honesta and virtew, in the lump, are not natral, but matters ov polisy; i may be wrong about this, but if i am, enny boddy else kan git wrong the same way i hav, by asking himself about hiz own human natur.

Human natur iz the same aul over north amerika, except in those places whare they subsist by playing poker, and thare it depends a good deal upon the number of aces in a pack; i hav seen sum packs that had 9 aces in them, upon the principle that 5 aces will beat 4 aces and a king.



## **X. GREAT AGRIKULTURAL HOSS-TROTT**

### **AT BILLINGSVILLE**

**Oct. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, & 20th**

### **JOSH BILLINGS, REPORTER**

Agrikultur iz the mother ov provisions; she iz also the grandmother.

If it want for agricultur, thare wouldn't be enny beans, and if it want for enny beans, thare wouldn't be enny suckertash.

Agrikultur waz fust diskovered by Cain, and has been diskovered since to be an honest way to get a hard living.

Pumpkins owes aul her success tew agrikultur, so duz lettis, and buk wheat.

The Billingsville agrikultural society opened Oct. ten, and waz a powerful success.

The reciepts ov the Agrikultural Fair waz upwards ov \$30,000 (if mi memry serves me rite, and i think she duz.)

The Hon. Virgil Bickerstaff, the next agrikultural member ov Congress from our district, sold the agrikultur pools.

### **FUST DAY**

A puss ov ten dollars waz trotted for by sucking colts, that had never trotted before for munny. Thare waz thirteen entries.

Thare waz 60,000 people on the track to witness the rase, (if mi memry serves me rite, and i think she duz.)

The puss waz won amid vociferous exclamashuns by a red colt, and the waving ov handkerchiefs, with a strip in his face, and the fainting ov several fust-class females, and one white foot behind.

### **SEKOND DAY**

It rained like a perpendikular aul day, and no trotting could be had, so the audience aul went hum, cussing and swaring, and offering tew bet four tew six on the Pete Tucker colt.

### **THIRD DAY**

The sun highsted up in the east more butyfuller than i ever saw her before, (if mi memry serves me rite, and i think she does.)

It waz a fust rate day for agrikultur, or enny other man.

A puss ov 30 dollars waz trotted for, by sum 2 year old colts.

This rase did not attract much affection, on account ov the time being so slow.  
Time, 2 minnits and 38 seconds.

#### **FOURTH DAY**

This waz fur 3 or 4 years old, who hadn't never beat 2.25.

Thare waz 26 entrys; they couldn't aul trot tew once, so they took turns.

This rase waz won after a bitter contest, by Pete Tucker's colt.

He waz immediately offered a thousand dollars and a fust-rate farm, well-stocked, for the colt, by three different agrikultural men, but with a grate deal ov indignant good sense, he skorned to stoop so low.

Pete Tucker, and his whole family, are aul hoss.

#### **FIFTH DAY**

It rained agin like thunder and lightning, and the day waz spent in betting on the weight ov hosses.

Sevral good hoss-swops waz also did.

One man swopped two hosses fur one; this struck me as a devilish good thing, but everyboddy else said it waz soft.

At the end ov the fifth day i cum away.

I got so full ov hoss, that ever since when i laff i kant keep from whinnering.

The fare waz kept up for 10 daze, and sum red hot time waz made.

I think 2 minnits and 10 sekunds waz made, (if my memry serves me rite, and i think she duz.)

I forgot tew say that thare was two yoke ov oxens on the ground, beside sevral yokes ov sheep and a pile ov carrots, and some worsted work, but they didn't seem to attrakt enny simpathy.

The people hanker fur pure agrikultural hoss-trots.

## XI. JOSH BILLINGS DEFINES HIS POSITION

Dear World: —

I got yure letter by acksident, and reply verry mutch az follers:

I am a black Republican, with white antycedents.

I alwus waz agin slavery ov enny kind; not bekause it was constitutional, but bekause it waz ungodly.

I don't beleave the best judges ov color kan pick out a negro's soul in the Kingdom ov Heaven.

I believe in the doktrine ov secession – if i don't like my home, and am 21, i have a rite tew go oph, but i haint got enny rite tew take the old man's farm or hiz tin-ware with me.

I am in favor ov being made Post-master in our city, but i am about the only man that iz, which speaks well for the disinterestedness ov our citizens.

I am also in favor ov short stories, when a man haint got mutch tew say.

*Yours, tenderly,*

*Josh Billings.*

## XII. COLD PIECES

It don't appear tew me that envy kan pay well, for those whom we envy most are alwus envying somebody else.

Hope often cheats us, but yet how eazy it is tew forgiv the sassy jade.

Men ov talents kan be criticised, but a genius kant, – criticism is a mere string and plummet, – the eagle roosts too hi for tape lines.

Mi idee ov fust-rate poetry iz that kind that reads just exactly az I should have wrote it.

Yu kant phool a wise man with praise that aint true.

Persekution will make even kanada thissells grow.

If you trade with a Yankee, steal hiz jack-knife fust; for if he gits tew whitling, yu are gone in spite of thunder.

Passion makes more mistakes than ignorance duz.

Fools don't kno their strength; if they did, they would keep still.

Buty iz a dangerous gift; for it is seldum accompanied with much virtue, energy, or wisdom.

Most ennyboddy kan slide down hill: thare iz only now and then one who can slide up hill.

A man may be a very good judge ov a county court, and yet be a very poor judge ov himself.

What a cumfort it iz tew be pittied by a 200-thousand-dollar friend! tew be told that better daze are coming! that perseverance will overkum all obstakles! such a warm friend iz just about az much use to you az a painted sun, on a garden wall, would be to ripen sass with, in a cloudy day.

One ov mi ideas ov a perfect gentleman iz, the man who is eazy to please.

I kno ov no love, that is so much love, and nothing else, az the love ov a father for a daughter.

I love the old primeval forests. I love them bekause they kant be cut up tew enny advantage into village lots.

I hav got a dreadful poor memory, and think I aint sorry for it, for mi experiences in life, thus far have 2 thirds ov them been more pleasant tew forgit than tew remember.

Tru happiness seems tew consist in wanting awl that we kan enjoy, and then gitting awl we want.

I don't belief in total abstinence, enny more than I belief in total blindness, but I do belief in the reasonable gratification ov awl the desires that God haz given us.

Politeness iz dreadful simple if yu take the ceremony out ov it, but, in sifting out the ceremony, yu will often sift out the politeness.

The most selfish persons I hav ever known hav been those who are alwus professing grate luv for others.

Prudery iz virtue, always willing to be tempted.

Thare iz nothing that will hu a man tew a sharp point like adversity, – adversity iz the hunger ov the soul.

Gold iz the standard ov value, but wisdom iz the standard ov perfekshun; united, they are the standard-bearers ov the world.

## XIII. LETTER FROM JOSH BILLINGS

My Dear Press:

Yu ask me "how i like the lekturing bizzness," and "what success i hav met with," and "what iz the tru natur ov the lektur i hav bin dispensing?"

Briefly thus i reply:

Two years ago I jined the band ov lekturin marters, and hav "tramp'd – tramp'd!" ever sinse, and az near az i kan rekolekt now, i think i kant tell.

Mi lektur iz an attempt tew be comick.

Humor iz hybrid, and iz a nice cross between sense and nonsense.

I don't think it haz ever bin well defined: it iz like the smell ov a flower, hard tew diskribe.

Thare iz just about az mutch real humor in the best ov geniuses az thare iz juise in a lemmon: one good squeeze takes it out, and thare iz nothing but seeds and skin left.

It soon bekums hackney'd, and its authors live prekariously for about 3 years on the fust 6 months ov their reputashun, and then go in their holes and only cum out onst in a while to sun themselves and be stupid.

I hav known men tew tell 4 good storys, and then spile them awl bi telling one poor one.

Thare iz nothing the world iz so slow to applaud az success, and nothing they are so smart at diskovering az a failure.

Mutch ov a humorist's success depends upon the physick ov hiz aujence: a man who haz the dispepshee fust rate laffs under protest, but if hiz dinner rides easy you kan tickle him with a skoop-shovel.

Humor sometimes lurks in the way a thing iz ced, and i hav seen men who earned their fun in the wrinkles ov their face.

Nonsense ain't humor, it iz only a jest.

Humor must hav sum truth in it, and a good deal don't hurt it.

I have seen a fust rait story spilte in being told, and i hav seen a poor story so well told, that if the man had applied for it he could hav had it pattented and no questions asked.

If an aujence refuse tew be tickled, yu might az well talk tew a grave-yard in the ded ov winter; but if yu git them onst mellow yu kan then stick yure thumb into them anywhere.

But mi opinyun now iz that thare ain't no rule for success with a comick lektur.

A cold-blooded philosphick lektur is just az eazy az turning a grinstone: the aujence are obliged tew hold their hatchets on, and they are sure tew git ground out after a while: but you kant tell a man when tew laff; he knows what pleazes him, just az well az he knows what eats good; yu kant play a burnt slapjack, nor one that ain't well dun, onto him.

Thar ain't nothing more straining tew a humorist than tew have tew stop and explane a joke.

I hav just got hum from Boston: i put 2 spokes into the hub at Tremont Temple the two fust nights in Febuary: I lektured 15 nights in Massachewsetts.

I don't kno whether it waz a success or not: awl i kno iz i felt good myself.

Humurous lekturs, without the aid ov canvass or pantomime, are tuff tew do.

I think now i shall either git up a philosophical lektur on the culler ov the Red Sea, or the hump ov the cammel's back, or quit lekturing.

I kan steal a good philosophical lektur out ov sum library; but these cussed humurous lekturs hav so mutch original in them (or ought to hav) that yu kant kalkulate on them for certain – they are like twins, they kant be had nor they kant be stopped.

Upon the whole, az near az i kan guess, mi opinyun iz that humor iz a natral dissease, that a man kant ketch nor kant giv tew ennyboddy else.

## XIV. WISDUM CHUNCKS

The best time ov the moon to plant beans iz when – the grownd iz aul rite.

Slovens are always the fust tew caul our attenshun tew their slovenness, by their exkewses for it.

Don't tawk so mutch, my friend! Yu don't kno but little, and ort tew be saving ov it.

Book critiks shoold be treeted az the farmers do their swine – rung, and then turned out to critysize.

The man with little branes, and the man with little ammunishun, shoold hunt alike; they shoold take ame a good while, and then always shut, into a flock. Avoyd single burds.

Deer reeder, don't find fawlt with an awthur who makes yu laff; it is no more an evidence of weekness to laff than it iz ov strength tew look mad.

Menny ov the enormittys ov life have bin committed in the name ov religun – enormittys that make h – l blossom like the rose.

Bewty never dies; it iz like truth; they both hav an immortality sumwhare.

I hav got a fust rate opinyun ov resignashun, but i don't think enny man iz in dewty bound to thank the Lord every time sum careless cuss steps on hiz soar tow.

We hear a grate deel about progresshun, and the importunse ov it, but i am just big phool enuff to think that 8 or 10 ov the new things are either false, or are old things spiled bi altering.

What mankind stand most in need ov, just now, is simplissity.

Men judge each other bi their suksess, not bi their undertakings; but the Lord judges bi the undertaking, not bi the suksess.

Thare iz a grate deel more timidity among men than thare iz temerity; one iz the attribute ov littleness, and the other ov grateness.

The best kind ov purfewm for the person, that i know ov, iz cleanness.

Truth iz radicul; fickshun iz consurvativ.

What a man must hav, he kan most ginnerally git.

Thare iz no such thing az clozing our ize to the fakt that tilting skirts enable us to see a good deel more ov fashunable sosiety.

Sudden ritches don't often improve ennybody.

Vertchew walks without help, but vice goes on crutches.

Thare iz one advantage in being poor: thare ain't no danger ov mistaking flattery for praze.

Bobtaled peekox don't travel mutch on their pride.

Take the axidents out ov this life, and how menny men iz thare who wood sukseed or fale?

Friendship iz a mirror which we hold up tew uthers, tew see ourselves in.

Deep thinkers laff with their mowth.

A man iz a phool just in proporshun az he iz known better bi sumboddy else than he knows himself.

Novelty iz a good deel like a kitten's tale, soon played out.

The world owes most ov its refinement tu 2 verry difrunt things – the Bible, and the looking-glass.

Trew critysism consists in giving a man credit for the good things he sez, and not cussin him for the good things he don't say.

## **XV. BILLIARDS**

Evryboddy seems tew be gitting crazy over a new game, which haz jist bin diskovered, called billyards.

It iz played on the top ov a tabel which iz a little longer than it iz square, and the game seems tew konsist in pushing sum round red bawls agin sum round white bawls, until they drop into sum little pudding bags which are hung unto the outside ov the tabel.

It takes 2 men tew play the game, but 4 or 5 can look on.

They take oph their coats, and stand clus up to the tabel, with a short piece ov a fishpole in their hands, which has a chalk mark onto the end ov it.

Then one begins, by giving one ov the bawls a punch in the belly, which sends it agin the next one's belly, and so on, till the other fellow's turn fur punching comes on.

But yu ought tew see the game; it kant be delineated bi words.

One feller generally beats the other feller, and then he pays the landlord ov the consarn 25 cents fur the privilege ov gitting beat, and buys sum gin, with lemonade in it, and aul hands drink.

Then 2 more takes holt ov the fishpoles, and they punch fur a spell, and so it goes on till 2 o'clock in the morning; then each goes hum, having enjoyed fine exercise, a little drunk perhaps; but the muscles in their breast are so expanded that they can't ketch the consumption nor the smaul pox.

*This iz billyards.*



## XVI. JOSH BILLINGS "RIZES."

Gentlemen and Mister Chairman: —

I rise with grate diffidence fur the fust time in mi life, tew address an impromptew assemblage. What i can say iz instant, and i kant alter it; i kant sit down, or stand up, and studdy a thing out, enny more than i kan sit down and think how tew lift a ton. We have met here just fur fun; and i beleaf that aul things, including truth, hav a fun redikilous side tew them, and i fully beleaf, that while Satan, with consumate skill, fills hiz ranks bi the arts ov seduction, virtue should resort tew the same means. I beleaf in sugar-coated pills, and i beleaf that virtue and wisdom kan be smuggled into a man's soul bi a good natured proverb, better and deeper than to be morticed into it with a wormwood mallet and chisel. We hav met tew celebrate the birth-day ov a Sunday newspaper; the child iz a year old and iz growing nicely. Sum people doubt the propriety ov Sunday newspapers; they seem tew think that the Sabbath waz made only fur the acts ov sectarian worship, but i beleaf that religion was never designed az a bizness, but only tew regulate and correct bizzness with, — I should az soon think ov tunnelling Hoosick Mounting bi prayer, — when a people devote aul their time tew religion, superstition and bigotry are sure tew prevale.

Man iz the only thing created with power tew laff; birds and flowers can almost dew it, and dogs would like tew. Mules smile with their heels.

Fun waz made fur the million, ethicks fur the few, and the man who kan invent a generous and healthy sauce tew enliven a dish ov biled greens with, iz a Christian. Fun may never have furnished a splendid dinner, but it has helped swaller menny a poor one.

"Six days shalt thou labor, and on the seventh rest," — thare iz no labor in fun, and a Sunday newspaper does aul its work on Saturday.

I had rather tend one wedding than a dozen funerals; and a birth, even if it aint ennything more than the hatching ov a duck's eg, iz alwus another suckcess.

Life iz short, and that iz one grate reason whi it ought alwus tew be cheerful, and i fully beleaf, that when Gabrel blows hiz horn, the first ones that will rise, will ware a smile on their faces.

Judas betrayed with a laff, and a kiss, but the fun ov the thing waz, he went oph and hung hisself. He that kant laff iz tew be pityed, and him that wont laff iz tew be feared.

I am clean thru. This iz my maiden speech, and i will bet 10 dollars that i won't never run the risk ov doing it agin. Adew.

## XVII. BILLINGS ON PILLS

*P'o keepsie, Jan. 1st, 1867.*

Dear Dokter Bonesett:

Thru the politeness ov Mr. John Smith, i cum in possession ov yure valuabel letter, at about 9 o'clock night before last, in which yu offer me 10 dollars for a poultiss.

I hay had a fair chance to use yure pills upon several important occasions, and can sware posatively that they kan beat enny pills ov their size i ever contended with.

Underneath this letter yu will find a poultiss which i think will draw.

If yu see fit to use it, yu kan emit the 10 dollars by mail, at our risk.

In the mean time, bet freely than i am yure humble servant,

Josh Billings.

### POULTISS

Barnabass Bonesett, M.D., (mutch dokter,) chuck full ov faith, bloze his horn, and bi these presents duz blo hiz horn about hiz "Lightning Express and Serio-Sensation pills" a cumfert and a joy to man.

Theze pills are of rutes – rutey, and kost the Author 4 years in the wilderness, besides sleepless nights, and anxious days, tew git them down to a spot, without blemish and filled with fun.

These pills will kure deffness, diphtery and dandruff – are good for baldness, bronkreeters and baksliding – are sertin tew heal hedake, hifalutin, and hangnails – will remove warts, windgauls and wens – destroy awl longings, lassitudes, laziness – will soothe the sorrowful, cam the crazy, and kure a common sized fit in 2 minnits.

They are closs packed in little round boxes, and each little box kontains 2 dozen and 2, or no sail.

Each box iz dun up in a trakt, which sez that they are az sure to cure, az lightning iz tew strike what it starts for.

On the top ov the box iz a full sized painting ov the Author, with a grub hoe in one hand, and a whole parsell ov roots in the other – with a napsack on hiz back, and mountains in the distance, tew which he iz pinting with the grub hoe – them iz the mountains whare he gits the rutes.

On the top ov each little round box, iz these words, in a forrin tung, "*Hocus pocus, quod constallus*," which being biled down means, "*purely vegetabels*."

For sum more partikulars, cummune with the author.

*(Signed) Barnabass Bonesett, M.D.*

## XVIII. JOSH IN SARATOGA

*Saratoga, Sept. 8, 1867.*

Dear Weekly: – Don't think I am going to ruin, don't think i am totally spilte, bekauze yu happen to hear from me at this grate drinking place. I am here on urgent and melankolly bizzness, looking for mi Newfoundland pup, not quite 5 months old yet, that I lost lately.

Saratogy never appeared tew me so free from *white swellings* az it duz now. I haint seen a dozen people ov the ballon purswashion, but almost evry one i meets ackts just az tho they had sum good common sense, and had brought enuff along with them to last while they staid.

Shoddy & Petroleus hav gone tew Europe, to astonish Paris with their paste diamonds and fire gilt familys.

Thare is about 4 thousand strangers here just now, and the liberal way that they invest in the katharticks ov the situation iz suggestive.

Yesterday i saw a bride and her new feller at Congress Spring. She waz a rosy and a roomy bride. He waz bilt to run in shallow water, rather a light draft chap, i thought; but he took 9 konsekutiff glasses without flinching, and, i think, would have held one more.

He looked a hundred pounds bigger. I waz filled with horror at the sight, but soon had aul mi fears soothed, when i saw almost everybody present wash themsels internally with five or six tumblers full ov this liquid salts and perilash.

Congress Hall iz being rebuilt with bricks on the old ground, and iz at least 15 rods front on Broadway, with 2 wings az menney rods deep, and will cost 400 thousand dollars, and will feed, sleep, and physick one thousand festive sons and daughters at onst.

Evry house here, except the churches, iz a boarding house; aul the femail seminaries, and akademys of the arts and sciences, fill up their summer vakations with spring-water pupils.

The great tiger ov the place iz the hi rock spring; this now flows over its conical summit, something that it haz not done before for 300 years, and besides being a good artickle ov physick, is probably the greatest natral curiousness this side ov the temple of Solomon, his 500 wives and 300 good-looking collaterals inkluded.

Take the kathartics out ov Saratogy, and thare wouldn't be ennything left ov deep interest, but a pale yeller, sandy sile, that haint got moral strength enuff in it tew hold a fense-post up straight, unless the hole waz well manured first.

But, with some 10 or 15 ov theze mineral springs that will kure ennything, from a broken heart tew the spring halt – water the most sparkling – water that biles and bubbles, without money, and without even stamps, and has biled ever since Cain waz a babe – I say, with such a legacy, Saratogy iz today the surest place on the breast ov the earth to git a good loose drink.

My stay here will necessarily be small; i kant git no track ov mi Newfoundland pup, with one white foot and a star in his forehead; and bizzness before drinking being one ov mi best holts, i shall leave here before long for Montreal or Saint Lewis, in search ov the dogg.

The annual races passed oph with the usual amount ov burglarys, and pocket-book thieveries, but I was told yesterday, by one ov the first citizens, that yu kan leave a roll ov bank bills (since the races) lying on the sidewalk, and noboddy would pick it up for the fust two days.

I haven't tried this myself, nor don't intend to, for fear thare might be just one slippery cuss left in the place, and one man could raize up a rowl ov bills for me, just as eazy az 40 could.

I havn't got munny, nor grit enuff, to indulge in sich moral experiments.

The ground, whare the old United States Hotel stood, remains kivered with the debris ov that melankolly and hot fire, which reduced tew ashes and old bricks, the most popular and fashionable dry goods emporium in the universe ov America.

I have it from *Jenkins*, (who is here now gitting himself pliable,) that az soon az one or two objectionable partners can be smoked out ov the ring, then the balance ov them will build on the grounds a hotel that will make – Rome howl.

The Union and the Clarendon are the two champions now, and both ov them hav a full stummuk ov clean looking, and very decent ackting passengers.

Thare iz sum very elaborate rigs here; one that I saw yesterday waz quite "*uneak*." (I don't know whether this word iz just the thing tew use in this spot, but it sounds big, and strange, and that iz awl that I care for.)

The rig consisted ov a yello buggy, with a black bugger driving, clothed in drab broadcloth, with bras buttons, and cockade on a plug hat with a velvet belly band around it, and salmon colored gloves, and a 10 foot whip-stork, with a spotted dogg under the front axletree, and 3 hosses in injun file, two blacks, and the one on the lead the color ov cream.

*Jenkins* told me, that they were the only shoddy team here, and belonged tew a young fellow from Melankton 4 corners, in the state ov Conneckticut, whose father has raked in 2 millions, by making beeswax out ov a very little mutton tallow, and a good deal ov injun meal.

But it won't do to believe awl that *Jenkins* sez; he has lied so consekutive for the last 15 years, that hiz front teeth hav awl decayed out.

One ov the perennial feeters ov Sarotogy, iz a drove ov tame injuns, with their squaws, and young porpoises, who cum here each drinking season, from the outlines ov Kanada, laiden with braided baskets, bags ov beads, and harmless bows and arrows.

Theze people might hav bin good injuns onst, but each successive porpoise grows paler, and meaner, and if it want for their nastyness, there aint 3 boarding-school misses in the whole land, with poetry enuff in their bild tew call them "the noble red men ov the forest."

The fact ov it iz, thare iz more truth than poetry in injuns, and the *truth* iz, that keyenne whiskey, and other kinds ov civilization, has outflanked them.

It requires a grate deal ov good sense tew stand whiskey and civilization.

A wild injun iz a most magnificent cuss without doubt, but a tame injun, one with more milk than molasses in hiz face, iz almost az near good for nothing, az a counterfit bill, on the bank ov Newfoundland.

Injuns, tew be good and profitable, must live at least 2 thousand miles from ennyboddy else, and always stay at home, and never see a missionary.

P.S. – I hav just this minnit received a dispatch that thare iz one more nufoundland pupp in Freehold, New Jersey, this morning than thare waz yesterday at this time, with a fu white hairs on the end ov his tail.

I shall start immediatly, and if i kan only rescue mi pup before he gits contaminated, I shall be az proud az a rooster. In haste, good bye.

*Josh Billings.*

## XIX. SUM VEGETABEL HISTORY

The strawberry is one ov natur's sweet pets.

She makes them worth fifty cents, the fust she makes, and never allows them tew be sold at a mean price.

The culler ov the strawberry iz like the setting sun under a thin cloud, with a delicate dash of the rain bo in it; its fragrance iz like the breath ov a baby, when it fust begins tew eat wintergreen lossingers; its flavor is like the nektar which an old-fashioned goddess used tew leave in the bottom ov her tumbler, when Jupiter stood treat on Mount Ida.

There iz menny breeds ov this delightful vegetable, but not a mean one in the whole lot.

I think i have stole them, laying around loose, without enny pedigree, in sumboddy's tall grass, when I waz a lazy schoolboy, that eat dredful easy, without enny white sugar on them, and even a bug occasionally mixed with them in the hurry of the moment. Cherrys are good, but they are too mutch like sucking a marble, with a handle tew it. Peaches are good, if yu don't git enny ov the pin-feathers into yure lips. Watermelons will suit ennyboddy who iz satisfied with half-sweetened drink; but the man who can eat strawberrys, besprinkled with crushed shuggar, and besmattered with sweet cream (at sumboddy else's expense), and not lay hiz hand on hiz stummuk, and thank the author ov strawberrys and stummuks, and the phellow who pays for the strawberrys, iz a man with a worn-out conscience – a man whose mouth tastes like a hole in the ground, that don't care what goes down it.

Kokernuts grow up in the air, in a hot climate way over the ocean, about 80 feet from the ground – on the top ov a tree.

They are generally picked bi the monkeys in that naborhood, who throw them at the natives, in exchange for the stones that the natives heave at the monkeys.

## **Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.**

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