

MELONS IN STORAGE

HOW PEACE JUSTICE DECIDED COMPLICATED CASE.

Both Sides Seemed to Have the Law on Their Side, and the Judge Arose Sublimely to the Occasion.

Problems worthy of Solomon's acumen are often submitted to these rural arbitrators, justices of the peace. In the Macon county (Mo.) archives is a case of this sort:

Timothy Kain, a farmer of Easley township, set out some watermelon vines which thrived so luxuriously that they trespassed upon the field of his neighbor, Felix Hopper. When garnering time came Kain's attempt to harvest his runaway product was rebuked by Hopper and his shotgun. The controversy got into court and Squire William Easley, for whom the township was named, was asked to decide the ownership of ten watermelons worth 15 cents apiece. The lawyers for Kain read books to show that his rights of property followed the vines clear into the next county should they travel so far. Hopper's lawyers produced equally sound reading to prove that Hopper was entitled by law to anything that camped on his premises. It was Hopper's fault, they said, if the vines wanted to spread out and go visiting; he had the same right to them that he would have to a colony of honey bees that might get tired of being with Kain and concluded to move over and make honey for Hopper.

Squire Easley let the lawyers spout until they had read through all their books, then arose to his six feet and said:

"Mitchell has read books that make it absolutely certain them melons belong to Kain. I hadn't any doubt in the world about that till Guthrie here got up and turned Mitchell's law bottom side up. There's no question but what's there enough law in the books for both Kain and Hopper, and that ought to make 'em happy. The court decides, under the circumstances that with the law deciding both ways, there's nothing to do but to hand out justice as he sees it. The judgment of the court is that those are Kain's melons."

"Thank you, your honor," said Mitchell, arising and bowing.

"but that he's indebted to Hopper 20 cents apiece for storage," finished the justice.

"But, your honor," said Mitchell, indignantly, "you can't do that. They haven't fled any claim for storage, besides, you're allowing them more for their melons than they're worth on the market."

"The court will take judicial notice of the defendant's rights, offset or no," said Squire Easley, with some asperity. "And your own evidence shows Hopper was diligently guarding Kain's property for him. That's worth something."

"Guarding it?"

"Yes, Kain himself testified Hopper was there with a shotgun when he climbed over the fence."—Kansas City Star.

Shakespeare's Phrases.

Users of everyday catch-words are constantly quoting that ubiquitous person Shakespeare. "Dead as a door-nail," "long and short of it," "getting even," "tag-rag," "birds of a feather," "that's flat," "mum," "scarecrow," "solid," "milkop," "joggerhead," "bag and baggage," "a mere song," "dancing attendance," "send him packing," "kill with kindness," "Greek to me," "ill wind that blows no good," "give and take," "an eyesore," "to boot" and "the man in the moon" are all his.

A Get-Rich-Quick Scheme.

Katcker—I save 20 cents every time I shave myself.

Mrs. Katcker—Then why don't you shave five times a day and save more?—The Circle.

Larboard and Starboard.

"Larboard" was formerly used to designate the left side of a ship, just as "starboard" is used to-day for the right side. In 1845 the British admiralty changed "larboard" to "port," in order that the word should not be confused with "starboard." "Starboard" is commonly explained as "steerboard," since in the old Norse days, when the steering was done with an oar, it was on the right side that the steersman stood on his elevated platform. "Lar" is supposed to represent "lower," the nonsteering side being the lower, or humbler. But the Italians explain the word as "questa borda" and "quella borda," "this side" and "that side." "Port" is connected with "port," to carry.

The Useful Smile.

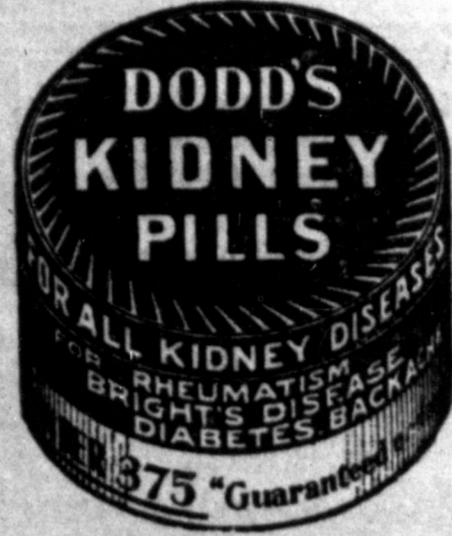
Few women realize the value of a smile. The smile that is useful is the smile that is dangerous to man, the smile that even fascinates women, the smile that will coax the most severe, that will soften tempers, that will secure favors here and service there, and go twice as far as a tip or a command.

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