

ENGLISH JESTS AND ANECDOTES

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English jests and anecdotes by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

**ENGLISH JESTS
AND ANECDOTES**

SHORT TALES
FOR TRAVELLERS

JESTS AND ANECDOTES
ENGLISH



Charles Lamb



ENGLISH ANECDOTES.

LACHRYMAL CANALS.

A lady who kept a boarding-school some years ago, near London, wrote a novel, in which, among other extravagant expressions, occurred the following:—“His Lordship could not weep; the tale of sorrow had frozen his lachrymal canals.” A person to whom the fair author lent a copy of her work, returned it, after a perusal, with this note appended in pencil to the word *canals*: “Madam, I am a keen skater; would they bear?”

THE DUCHESS OF NEWCASTLE.

This famous lady, who wrote many plays and romances, in the most extravagant taste of the reign of Charles II., asked Bishop Wilkins, how she could get up to the world he had discovered in the moon; for, as the way must needs be long, a person travelling thither would require to have some resting places by the way? “Oh, madam,” said the bishop, “your grace, who has built so many castles in the air, can be at no loss.”

PENNANT'S ANTIPATHY TO WIGS.

Mr. Pennant had an unaccountable antipathy to *wigs*. Dining at Chester with an officer who wore a wig, when they had drunk pretty freely, he, after much impatience, and many wistful looks, started up, seized

the wig, and threw it into the fire. It was in flames in a moment, and so was the officer, who ran to his sword. Down stairs flew Pennant, and the officer after him, through all the streets of Chester. But Pennant escaped from superior local knowledge. This a wag called *Pennant's Tour in Chester*.

A LINE FOR THE OTHER WORLD.

A felon who was just on the point of being turned off, asked the hangman if he had any message to send to the place where he was going? "I will trouble you with a *line*," replied the finisher of the law, placing the cord under his left ear.

WIT AND THE OPPOSITE.

Dryden and Otway lived opposite to each other in Queen Street. Otway coming one night from the tavern, chalked upon Dryden's door, "Here lives John Dryden; he is a *wit*." Dryden knew his handwriting, and, next day, chalked on Otway's door, "Here lives Tom Otway; he is *opposite*."

PURGATORY.

"With regard to purgatory," says an old popish writer, "with regard to purgatory, I will not *say* a great deal; but this much I *think*,—that the Protestants may go farther, and fare worse."

GREED IN LETTERS.

It being proved, on a trial at Guildhall, that a man's name was really *Inch*, who pretended that it was *Linch*. "I see," said the judge, "the old proverb is verified in this man, who being allowed an *Inch*, has taken an *L*."

KEEPING ONE'S BED.

A drunken fellow, to maintain himself at his pot,

having sold all his goods, except his feather bed, at last made away with that too; when, being reproved for it by some of his friends, "Why," said he, "I am very well, thank God; and why should I keep my bed?"

JUDGE JEFFRIES.

When Jeffries was told that the Prince of Orange would very soon land, and it was reported that a manifesto, stating his inducements, objects, &c., was already written: "Pray, my lord chief-justice," said a gentleman present, "what do you think will be the heads of this manifesto?" "*Mine will be one,*" replied he.

A WARLIKE PRELATE.

Richard II., on the pope reclaiming, as a son of the church, a bishop he had taken prisoner in battle, sent him the prelate's *coat of mail*, and, in the words of Scripture, asked him, "Know whether this be *thy son's coat* or no?"

OTHER IRONS IN THE FIRE.

Mrs. B— desired Dr. Johnston to give his opinion of a new work she had just written; adding, that if it would not do, she begged him to tell her, for she had other *irons in the fire*, and in case of its not being likely to succeed, she could bring out something else. "Then," said the Doctor, after having turned over a few of the leaves, "I advise you, madam, to put it where your *other irons* are."

FAMILY PRIDE.

The proud Duke of Somerset employed Seymour the painter to make some portraits of his running horses. One day, at dinner, he drank to him with a